#18
2022

convergences

Public communication in Europe | Communication publique en Europe

FOCUS ON

Florence plenary, June/July 2022
- the Conference on the Future of Europe: *the way forward*
- crisis communication: *War in Ukraine and COVID*
-capacity building: *academies, comms hubs, ad hoc wp*
- climate change: *communicating the way to COP27*

Venice plenary, December 2021
- synchronising work on the CoFE
- COVID-19 and the recovery plans
- Climate change communication as a triggering factor
- Capacity building, Hybrid threats

Plenary on line (in coop. with Serbia), June 2021
- Crisis communication and COVID new waves
- CoFE in progress: *how to deliver*
- Communicating enlargement
- Synergies with the media sector

5th Stratcom seminar - London, March 2022
Professionalizing Strategic Communication
to tackle social and technological challenges

1st seminar on citizenship and local communication's catalyst role - Toulouse, February 2022
-The public communicator in a polarised society
-Placing the citizen at the centre of the European debate
-Civic education and democracy on the ground

Rebalancing migration narratives

Communicating solutions on the EU Green Deal

Club of Venice | Club de Venise

Summary

Editorial - Le « fou », le « magicien » et l'autre... face à l'avenir **4**

Club of Venice plenary meeting - 10-11.3.2021

Introductory concepts 8
La pandemia induce a un'idea strategica che manca / The pandemic leads to a strategic idea that is missing 9
Agenda 20
Six recommendations to promote balanced migration narratives 22
"It Takes A Community" to recover from COVID-19 24

Workshop on "Communication and Open Governance in a Time of Crisis"-18.3.2021

Key take-aways (joint outcome) 26
Club of Venice Memo for Action 30
Concept note 31
Agenda 32
Contributions (extracts) 34

4th Stratcom Seminar - 25.2.2021

Conclusions/outcome 36
Contributions (extracts) 40
Agenda 41

Club of Venice plenary meeting - 3-4.12.2020

Outcome 44
Intervento introduttivo / Opening Statement / Discours d'ouverture 49
Contributions (extracts) 53
Agenda 58

The Conference on the Future of Europe

Joint Declaration / Déclaration commune 56
La Conferenza sul future dell'Europa : rafforzare la democrazia europea... / Conference on the Future of Europe: strenghten European democracy... 66
European Movement "Manifesto" 70
Finding new ways to speak with stakeholders 78
Comment réussir la participation des citoyens ? 80
Ten ways to make the Conference on the Future of Europe a good thing for European democracy 82

Communications and the media: state of play

Joining forces to preserve good values 84
Beyond Brussels policies: the Europe's news media sector 85
Comment transformer les medias et l'audiovisuel de l'UE? 88

Countering disinformation as an outright collective mandate to safeguard democracy

Debunk.org analysis center : countering disinformation "evidence" 90
Conspiracy theories in Poland 97
Social media trends - the power of MEMEs 99
Tackling misinformation (OECD news) 103
Negazionismo e legge dei piccoli numeri / Negationism and the law of small numbers 104

Co-operation in Open Governance, resilience building, public diplomacy and reputation management: work in progress

Climate Resilience needs Community Roots 106
Reputation and the art of communicative leadership 110
#DigitalDiplomacyRevolution 112

Calendar of Club meetings 2021-2023 **114**

Aknowledgments **116**

Les textes n'engagent que la responsabilité de leurs auteurs.
Ils peuvent être reproduits avec mention des sources.

The textes are the sole responsibility of their authors.
They may be reproduced provided that the source is acknowledged.

Accettare la sfida
Accepter le défi
Taking up the challenge

Di Vincenzo Le Voci e Philippe Caroyez

Ripercorrendo questi ultimi cinque anni, per i comunicatori pubblici si potrebbe davvero parlare di un crescente periodo di sofferenza.

Le crisi che si sono avvicendate nel panorama geopolitico europeo e mondiale, talvolta sovrapposte l'una all'altra, hanno trovato ancora una volta i governi, le istituzioni e le organizzazioni internazionali sguarnite, disorganizzate e impreparate ad affrontarle perché deficitarie di strategie integrate e di capacità di confronto e di open governance. L'aspetto più grave di questa carenza cronica è costituito da due elementi interdipendenti: la lentezza nella pianificazione strategica delle risorse umane dedite alla comunicazione pubblica in modo permanente e i modesti investimenti sulla formazione, con un inevitabile impatto su competenze e know-how.

La stessa public diplomacy ha conosciuto un preoccupante declino. Le crescenti tendenze sovraniste, illiberali, intolleranti registrate a causa delle recenti crisi (sanitaria, economica, geopolitica) hanno acuito un clima di cattiveria, di irrispettosa superficialità e diffidenza reciproca che ha inevitabilmente influenzato il tenore delle relazioni internazionali in chiave negativa. Sodalizi intergovernativi consolidati da decenni sono stati messi a dura prova da rigurgiti di conservatorismo e han visto indebolirsi i parametri-chiave sui quali si basavano i rapporti di collaborazione e di reciproco rispetto di ruoli e immagini. Allo stesso tempo, le strategie di country branding e soft diplomacy hanno spesso subito le "incursioni" di spregiudicati piani strategici d'investimento mascherati da "promozione di valori e opportunità", in realtà imponendo nel frattempo la legge del più forte.

Gli avvicendamenti nella governance, spesso di natura opposta rispetto ai precedenti governi, hanno determinato scossoni nella res publica, nella visione politica, nelle leggi talora abrogative rispetto a misure prese dalle maggioranze dissolte e negli obiettivi conseguenti. Non stupisce l'accresciuto disorientamento, la sfiducia, l'apatia e l'insofferenza dei cittadini ormai radicata nei confronti delle loro autorità.

Istituzioni e governi, che dovrebbero difendere proteggere e onorare il principio di democrazia rappresentativa, hanno tuttora notevoli margini di miglioramento e fanno spesso a gara a chi mostra i denti più affilati. I principi e le dinamiche dello stato sociale che erano al centro delle politiche dei precedenti decenni non sembrano più essere sufficientemente tutelate - e la pandemia ha inferto un duro colpo a buona parte del substrato artigianale e dei piccoli commerci. I camion militari che nel marzo 2020 trasportavano in notturna le salme delle persone decedute per COVID-19 hanno creato un profondo sentimento di sconforto e una percezione di abbandono nei confronti di molti cittadini. Nel frattempo, il collasso economico e la difficile riorganizzazione dei corsi scolastici hanno generato uno sconcerto mai riscontrato.
Da qui il crescente disprezzo, la disillusione e il disinteresse nei riguardi delle recenti tornate elettorali, in tutta Europa e overseas. In Italia, non scorre inosservata la percentuale deludente di voto (meno del 40% di votanti nell'ultimo voto alle elezioni amministrative).

Di fronte a tale sconcertante scenario, a fronte di una pandemia che ha sconvolto le coscienze e ha disfatto un tessuto economico e sociale costruito con cosí tanta fatica nei decenni successivi al primo dopoguerra, in che modo potrebbero i comunicatori pubblici rigenerare i rapporti con i cittadini? Come reagire di fronte ad un quadro talmente complesso di apatia e di scarso attaccamento dei cittadini ai valori civici, di solidarietà, di partecipazione e rispetto del prossimo? Come riorganizzarsi e rilanciare il ruolo dei comunicatori pubblici in un contesto cosí preoccupante come quello che ci vede spettatori sgomenti di fronte all'attuale, crescente conflitto in Ucraina? E soprattutto, come rafforzare lo scambio di informazioni e migliori pratiche e la cooperazione a tutto campo tra comunicatori nazionali e tra questi e le istituzioni europee, per rendere un servizio più efficace e testimoniare un massimo livello di prossimità e di rappresentatività?

Il Club di Venezia si è posto molte domande sulla capacità di utilizzo del potenziale di esperienza, di competenza e professionalità dei suoi membri al servizio e beneficio dei cittadini e sul ruolo di interfaccia e di mediazione che il comunicatore pubblico è tenuto ad esercitare tra essi e le autorità politiche. Compito arduo, ma non impossibile; rischioso, ma onorevolissimo.

Nell'ultimo quinquennio il Club ha moltiplicato i suoi sforzi intensificando il proprio calendario dei lavori, aggiungendo alle consuete riunioni plenarie molti seminari tematici e avvalendosi della collaborazione crescente di molti partners internazionali accomunati da interessantissimi temi d'interesse comune. La frequenza delle riunioni del Club è aumentata notevolmente (in media, cinque-sei riunioni annuali) e abbiamo anche collaborato ad iniziative congiunte organizzate dall'OCSE, dalle associazioni di comunicatori e media dei paesi ex-jugoslavi (SEECOM, SEEMO), dalla Fondazione Konrad Adenauer, dal Centro internazionale per lo sviluppo delle politiche migratorie, da associazioni rappresentative delle realtà nazionali, regionali e locali (COMPA,

CAP"COM) nonché da e con altre organizzazioni della società civile (una su tutte, la Democratic Society) .

Una delle maggiori sfide per il Club consiste nell'analizzare obiettivamente le problematiche all'origine delle maggiori crisi dei nostri tempi e esaminare in modo concreto e costruttivo le opzioni più efficaci per poter comunicare i piani governativi e istituzionali per poterle risolvere rispondendo alle esigenze e alle attese dei cittadini. Questo sforzo comune si è concretizzato approfondendo le conoscenze alla radice dei problemi e intensificando notevolmente, grazie al carattere informale del Club, lo scambio di esperienze tra vari paesi, avvalendosi anche della competenza di comunità scientifiche, professionisti e collaboratori esterni:

- verificando sul terreno l'incidenza delle varie crisi (ad esempio, visitando le realtà degli hotspots ad Atene, Lesbos, a Malta e in Italia e organizzando seminari in loco sul fenomeno migratorio)
- incrementando l'analisi dei crescenti fenomeni di disinformazione e dell'utilizzo improprio e nocivo delle nuove tecnologie digitali
- organizzando seminari sul ruolo della comunicazione nella cooperazione alla lotta contro il terrorismo e sull'impatto di questo fenomeno sulla sicurezza pubblica e sulla country reputation
- creando due gruppi di lavoro specifici in materia di capacity building e resilienza nei riguardi delle minacce ibride (il primo gruppo rilancia la sua agenda in questi giorni in plenaria a Firenze, mentre il secondo ha appena tenuto il suo 5° incontro e ha relazionato sui suoi lavori nel corso del seminario Stratcom organizzato in marzo a Londra)
- organizzando sessioni sul tema della libertà d'espressione, scambiando esperienze con professionisti del settore dei media, analizzandone le attuali difficoltà in una società spesso polarizzata e pervasa da crescenti rischi di anti-democratizzazione e esplorando forme di collaborazione.

La gestione delle crisi non può essere vincente né convincente se non è accompagnata da un concreto piano di comunicazione di crisi.

In tale contesto, negli ultimi cinque anni il Club ha progressivamente consolidato un eccellente rapporto di collaborazione con il Servizio di comunicazione del governo del Regno Unito, che si è concretizzato nell'organizzazione di 5 seminari di comunicazione strategica e sottoscritto una serie di Carte per confermare la condivisione di princîpi di capacity/capability building, lotta alla disinformazione, resilienza nei riguardi delle minacce ibride, rafforzamento delle relazioni tra comunicatori pubblici e il settore dei media. Abbiamo inoltre pubblicato 10 ricche edizioni della rivista semestrale "Convergences" e pubblicato un compendio sulla nostra attività , presentato a Venezia in plenaria nel dicembre scorso in onore del 35mo Anniversario del Club.

La plenaria di Venezia del 2 e 3 dicembre 2021 ha segnato il ritorno alle riunioni in presenza e marcato l'ingresso di tutti noi comunicatori pubblici in una fase di profonda analisi dell'opinione pubblica su temi strettamente legati alla gestione delle crisi (di natura sociale, sanitaria, climatica e politica), nonché delle reali capacità strutturali e organizzative e delle prospettive di collaborazione tra governi e tra questi e le istituzioni UE - tutto questo mentre si apriva il secondo semestre dei lavori della Conferenza sul Futuro dell'Europa.

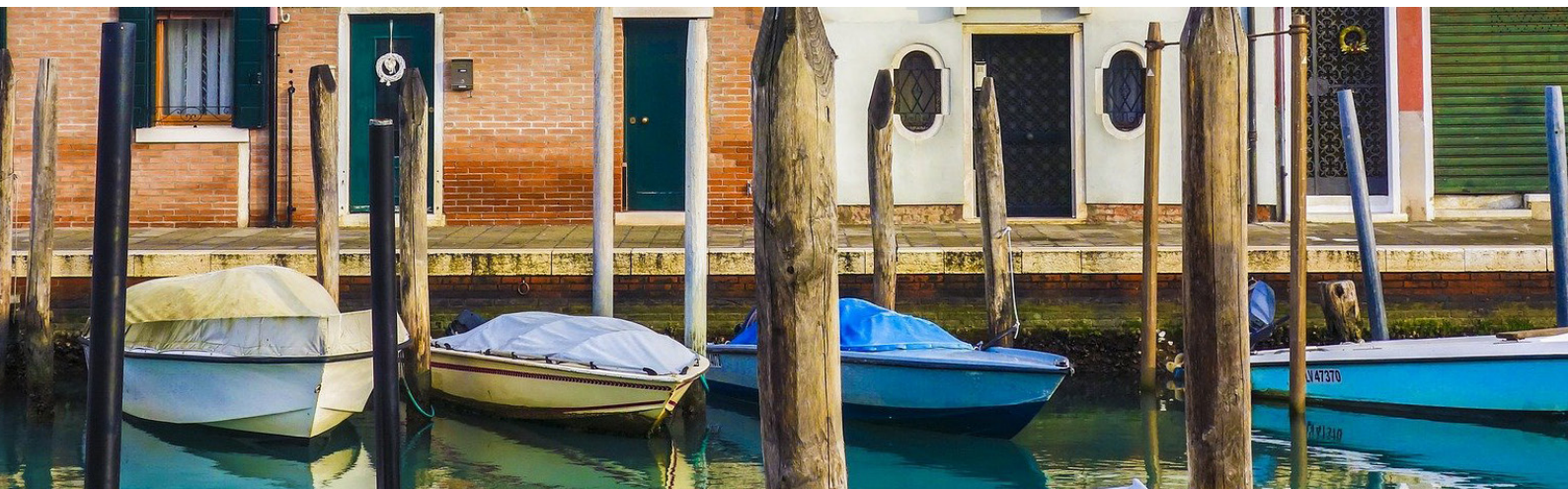
Non abbiamo alternative - dobbiamo scrollarci di dosso l'etichetta di "fatalisti" e di "parolai" e moltiplicare gli impegni per difendere e diffondere i valori democratici e riuscire a parlare al cuore della gente.

Dieci anni prima dello storico allargamento dell'Unione, Vaclav Havel, nel 1994 di fronte all'Assemblea parlamentare europea di Strasburgo, riconoscendo la diversità e peculiarità dei vari popoli d'Europa, avvertí tuttavia la necessità di sedersi attorno ad un tavolo e dialogare, perché l'unica alternativa al dialogo sarebbe il conflitto.

Parafrasando in tale contesto un intervento di Paul-Henry Spaak settant'anni addietro nello stesso emiciclo nel marzo del 1953 consegnando il Trattato europeo sul Carbone e l'Acciaio, la comunità d'intenti e la determinazione hanno consentito di "conservare le inestimabili ricchezze e il patrimonio intellettuale che l'aggressione non ha fatto altro che rendere più caro", non può esservi nulla di più "prossimo" e di più esplicito di quanto questo messaggio possa rappresentare per aiutarci a rinnovare il nostro impegno di comunicatori a beneficio della società nella quale e per la quale noi operiamo.

Ecco perché ci attende ancora un lungo cammino, ma possiamo ritrovarci e rigenerare la comunicazione pubblica lavorando assieme, con umiltà e determinazione.

Lunga vita al Club di Venezia!



Taking up the challenge

By Vincenzo Le Voci and Philippe Caroyez

Looking back over the past five years, one could really speak of a growing period of suffering for public communicators.

The crises that have alternated in the European and global geopolitical panorama, sometimes superposed on each other, have once again found governments, institutions and international organizations unmanned, disorganized and unprepared to face them owing to the lack of integrated strategies and capacity for discussion and open governance. The most serious aspect of this chronic lack consists of two interdependent elements: the slowness in the strategic planning of human resources dedicated to public communication on a permanent basis and the modest investments in training, with an inevitable impact on skills and know-how.

Public diplomacy itself has experienced a worrying decline. The growing sovereignist, illiberal, intolerant tendencies highlighted due to the recent crises (health, economic, geopolitical) have exacerbated a climate of wickedness, disrespectful superficiality and mutual distrust that has inevitably influenced the tenor of international relations in a negative way. Intergovernmental partnerships consolidated for decades have been severely tested by the upsurge of conservatism and have seen fading the key parameters on which the relationships of collaboration and mutual respect for roles and images were based. At the same time, country branding and soft diplomacy strategies have often suffered the "incursions" of unscrupulous strategic investment plans disguised as "promotion of values and opportunities", actually imposing in the meantime the law of the strongest.

The changes in governance, often of an opposite nature compared to previous governments, have caused shocks in the res publica, in the political vision, in the laws that sometimes abrogate measures taken by the dissolved majorities and in the consequent objectives. Not surprisingly, the growing disorientation, mistrust, apathy and intolerance of citizens by now ingrained towards their authorities.

Institutions and governments, which should defend, protect and honour the principle of representative democracy, still have considerable room for improvement and often compete to see who shows the sharpest teeth. The principles and dynamics of the welfare state that were at the heart of the policies of previous decades no longer seem to be sufficiently protected - and the pandemic has dealt a severe blow to much of the artisanal substrate and small businesses. The military trucks that in March 2020 transported the bodies of people who died of COVID-19 at night created a deep feeling of despair and a perception of abandonment towards many citizens. In the meantime, the economic collapse and the difficult reorganization of school courses have generated an unprecedented bewilderment.

Hence the growing contempt, disillusionment and disinterest in the recent elections, throughout Europe and overseas. In Italy, the disappointing percentage of votes does not flow unnoticed (less than 40% of voters in the last vote in the local elections).

Faced with this disconcerting scenario, in the face of a pandemic that has upset consciences and unraveled an economic and social thread built with so much effort in the decades following the first post-war period, how could public communicators regenerate relations with citizens ? How to react in the face of such a complex picture of apathy and lack of attachment of citizens to civic values, solidarity, participation and respect for others? How to get [re]organized and relaunch the role of public communicators in a context as worrying as the one that sees us as dismayed spectators in the face of the current, growing conflict in Ukraine? And above all, how to strengthen the exchange of information and best practices and cooperation across the board between national communicators and between them and the European institutions, in order to render a service more effective and testify to a maximum level of closeness and representativeness?

The Club of Venice has asked itself many questions on the ability to use the potential of experience, competence and professionalism of its members at the service and benefit of citizens and on the role of interface and mediation that the public communicator is required to exercise between them and political authorities. Difficult task, but not impossible; risky, but very honorable.

In the last five years the Club has multiplied its efforts by intensifying its calendar of works, adding many thematic seminars to the usual plenary meetings and making use of the growing collaboration of many international partners sharing very interesting topics of common interest. The frequency of the Club's meetings has increased significantly (on average, five to six meetings per year) and we have also collaborated in joint initiatives organized by the OECD, the associations of communicators and media of the former Yugoslav countries (SEECOM, SEEMO), the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the International Center for the Development of Migration Policies and associations representing national, regional and local realities (COMPA, CAP'COM), as well as other civil society organisations (one for all, the Democratic Society).

One of the greatest challenges for the Club consists in objectively analysing the problems at the origin of the major crises of our times and examining in a concrete and constructive way the most effective options to be able to communicate government and institutional plans, in order to resolve such crises by responding to the needs and expectations of citizens. This common effort has materialized by deepening the knowledge at the root of the problems and significantly intensifying, thanks also to the informal nature of the Club, the exchange of experiences between various countries, also making use of the expertise of scientific communities, external professionals and specialists:

- verifying on the ground the impact of the various crises (for example, by visiting the realities of the hotspots in Athens, Lesbos, Malta and Italy and organizing on-site seminars on the migration phenomenon)
- increasing the analysis of the growing disinformation phenomena and the improper and harmful use of new digital technologies
- organizing seminars on the role of communication in cooperation in the fight against terrorism and on the impact of this phenomenon on public security and country reputation
- creating two specific working groups on capacity building and resilience towards hybrid threats (the first group is relaunching its agenda in these days in plenary in Florence, while the second has just held its 5th meeting and reported to the Stratcom seminar organized in March in London)
- organizing sessions on the theme of freedom of expression, exchanging experiences with media professionals, analyzing their current difficulties in a society that is often polarized and pervaded by growing risks of anti-democratization and exploring forms of collaboration.

Crisis management cannot be successful or convincing if it is not accompanied by a concrete crisis communication plan.

In this context, over the last five years the Club has gradually consolidated an excellent collaborative relationship with the UK government communication service, which has resulted in the organization of 5 strategic communication seminars and signed a series of Charters to confirm the sharing of capacity/capability building principles, fight against disinformation, resilience towards hybrid threats, strengthening relations between public communicators and the media sector. We have also published 10 rich editions of the biannual "Convergences" magazine and published a compendium on our activity, presented in Venice in plenary last December to honor the 35th anniversary of the Club.

The Venice plenary session of 2 and 3 December 2021 marked the return to face-to-face meetings and the entrance of all of us public communicators in a phase of profound analysis of public opinion on issues strictly related to crisis management (of a social nature, health, climate and politics), as well as the real structural and organizational capacities and the prospects for collaboration between governments and between them and the EU institutions - all this while opening the second semester of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

We have no alternatives - we have to shake off the label of "fatalists" and "buzzwords" and multiply our commitments to defend and spread democratic values and be able to speak to the hearts of the people.

Ten years before the historic enlargement of the Union, Vaclav Havel, in 1994 in front of the European Parliamentary Assembly in Strasbourg, recognizing the diversity and peculiarity of the various peoples of Europe, nevertheless felt the need to sit around a table and dialogue, because the only alternative to dialogue would be conflict.

Paraphrasing in this context an intervention by Paul-Henry Spaak seventy years ago in the same hemicycle in March 1953, handing over the European Treaty on Coal and Steel, the communality of purposes and determination made it possible to "save the inestimable riches and intellectual heritage which aggression has only rendered more dear", there can be nothing closer and more explicit than this message to help us renew our commitment as communicators for the benefit of the society in which and for which we operate.

This is why we still have a long way to go, but we can find ourselves and regenerate public communication by working together, with humility and determination. Long live the Club of Venice!

Long live the Club of Venice!

Accepter le défi

Par Vincenzo Le Voci et Philippe Caroyez

Si l'on regarde les cinq dernières années, on pourrait vraiment parler d'une période croissante de souffrance pour les communicants publics.

Les crises qui ont secoué le panorama géopolitique européen et mondial, parfois superposées l'une l'autre, ont de nouveau trouvé des gouvernements, des institutions et des organisations internationales sans pilote, désorganisés et non préparés à les affronter faute de stratégies intégrées et de capacité de discussion et de gouvernance ouverte. L'aspect le plus grave de cette carence chronique consiste en deux éléments interdépendants : la lenteur dans la planification stratégique des ressources humaines dédiées à la communication publique sur une base permanente et les modestes investissements en formation, avec un impact inévitable sur les compétences et les capacités de performance.

La diplomatie publique elle-même a connu un déclin inquiétant. Les tendances souveraines, illibérales, intolérantes croissantes enregistrées en raison des crises récentes (sanitaire, économique, géopolitique) ont exacerbé un climat de méchanceté, de superficialité irrespectueuse et de méfiance mutuelle qui a inévitablement influencé négativement la teneur des relations internationales. Les partenariats intergouvernementaux consolidés depuis des décennies ont été mis à rude épreuve par la montée des conservatismes et ont vu s'affaiblir les paramètres clés sur lesquels reposaient les relations de collaboration et de respect mutuel des rôles et des réputations. Dans le même temps, les stratégies de branding et de soft diplomacy ont souvent subi les « incursions » de plans d'investissements stratégiques peu scrupuleux déguisés en « promotion de valeurs et d'opportunités», entre-temps imposant en réalité la loi du plus fort.

Les changements de gouvernance, souvent de nature opposée par rapport aux gouvernements précédents, ont provoqué des chocs dans la res publica, dans la vision politique, dans les lois qui abrogent parfois les mesures prises par les majorités dissoutes et dans les objectifs qui en découlent. Sans surprise, la désorientation croissante, la méfiance, l'apathie et l'intolérance des citoyens sont désormais ancrées envers leurs autorités.

Les institutions et les gouvernements, qui doivent défendre, protéger et honorer le principe de la démocratie représentative, ont encore une marge de progression considérable et rivalisent souvent pour savoir qui montre les dents les plus acérées. Les principes et la dynamique de l'État-providence qui étaient au cœur des politiques des décennies précédentes ne semblent plus suffisamment protégés - et la pandémie a porté un coup sévère à une grande partie du substrat artisanal et des petites entreprises. Les camions militaires qui, en mars 2020, ont transporté les corps de personnes décédées du COVID-19 dans la nuit ont créé un profond sentiment de désespoir et une perception d'abandon envers de nombreux citoyens. Entre-temps, l'effondrement économique et la difficile réorganisation des cursus scolaires ont généré un désarroi sans précédent.

D'où le mépris, la désillusion et le désintérêt croissants face aux récentes élections, partout en Europe et outre-mer. En Italie, le pourcentage de voix décevant ne passe pas inaperçu (moins de 40% des électeurs lors du dernier vote aux élections locales).
Face à ce scénario déconcertant, face à une pandémie qui a bouleversé les consciences et défait un tissu économique et social construit avec tant d'efforts dans les décennies qui ont suivi le premier après-guerre, comment les communicants publics pourraient-ils régénérer les relations avec les citoyens ? Comment

réagir face à un tableau aussi complexe d'apathie et de manque d'attachement des citoyens aux valeurs civiques, de solidarité, de participation et de respect d'autrui ? Comment réorganiser et relancer le rôle des communicants publics dans un contexte aussi préoccupant que celui qui nous voit en spectateurs atterrés face au conflit actuel et grandissant en Ukraine ? Et surtout, comment renforcer l'échange d'informations et de bonnes pratiques et la coopération transversale entre communicants nationaux et entre eux et les institutions européennes, pour rendre un service plus efficace et témoigner d'un maximum de proximité et de représentativité ?

Le Club de Venise s'est posé de nombreuses questions sur la capacité d'utiliser le potentiel d'expérience, de compétence et de professionnalisme de ses membres au service et au profit des citoyens et sur le rôle d'interface et de médiation que le communicant public est appelé à exercer entre eux. et les autorités politiques. Tâche difficile, mais pas impossible; risquée, mais très honorable.

Au cours des cinq dernières années, le Club a multiplié ses efforts en intensifiant son calendrier de travaux, en ajoutant de nombreux séminaires thématiques aux réunions plénières habituelles et en profitant de la collaboration croissante de nombreux partenaires internationaux partageant des sujets d'intérêt commun très intéressants. La fréquence des réunions du Club a considérablement augmenté (en moyenne, cinq à six réunions par an) et nous avons également collaboré à des initiatives conjointes organisées par l'OCDE, les associations de communicants et de médias des pays de l'ex-Yougoslavie (SEECOM, SEEMO), la Fondation Konrad Adenauer, du Centre International pour le Développement des Politiques Migratoires, d'associations représentatives des réalités nationales, régionales et locales (COMPA, CAP"COM) ainsi que de et avec d'autres organisations de la société civile (au premier rang desquelles le Société).

L'un des plus grands défis pour le Club consiste à analyser objectivement les problèmes à l'origine des crises majeures de notre temps et à examiner de manière concrète et constructive les options les plus efficaces pour pouvoir communiquer les plans gouvernementaux et institutionnels pour pouvoir les résoudre en répondant aux besoins et aux attentes des citoyens. Cet effort commun s'est concrétisé en approfondissant les connaissances à la racine des problèmes et en intensifiant considérablement, grâce au caractère informel du Club, l'échange d'expériences entre différents pays, en s'appuyant également sur l'expertise des communautés scientifiques, des professionnels et des collaborateurs externes:

- vérifiant l'impact des différentes crises sur le terrain (par exemple, visiter les réalités des hotspots à Athènes, Lesbos, Malte et l'Italie et organisant des séminaires sur place sur le phénomène migratoire)
- renforçant l'analyse des phénomènes croissants de désinformation et d'utilisation abusive et nocive des nouvelles technologies numériques
- organisant des séminaires sur le rôle de la communication dans la coopération dans la lutte contre le terrorisme et sur l'impact de ce phénomène sur la sécurité publique et la réputation du pays
- établissant deux groupes de travail spécifiques sur le renforcement des capacités et la résilience face aux menaces hybrides (le premier groupe relance son agenda ces jours-ci en plénière à Florence, tandis que le second vient de tenir sa 5ème réunion et rendre compte de ses travaux lors du séminaire Stratcom organisé en mars à Londres)
- organisant des sessions sur le thème de la liberté d'expression, échanger des expériences avec des professionnels des médias, analysant leurs difficultés actuelles dans une société souvent polarisée et traversée par des risques croissants d'anti-démocratisation et explorant des formes de collaboration.

La gestion de crise ne peut être menée avec succès ni être convaincante si elle ne s'accompagne pas d'un plan concret de communication de crise.

Dans ce contexte, au cours des cinq dernières années, le Club a progressivement consolidé une collaboration très satisfaisante avec le service de communication du gouvernement britannique, qui s'est traduite par l'organisation de 5 séminaires de communication stratégique et la souscription d'une série de Chartes pour confirmer le partage des principes de capacité / renforcement des capacités, lutte contre la désinformation, résilience face aux menaces hybrides, renforcement des relations entre les communicants publics et le secteur des médias. Nous avons également publié 10 riches numéros de la revue semestrielle « Convergences » et publié un compendium sur notre activité, présenté à Venise en plénière en décembre dernier pour célébrer le 35e anniversaire du Club.

La session plénière de Venise des 2 et 3 décembre 2021 a marqué le retour des rencontres en présentiel et l'entrée de nous tous, communicants publics, dans une phase d'analyse approfondie de l'opinion publique sur des questions strictement liées à la gestion de crise (social, santé, climat et politique), ainsi que les capacités structurelles et organisationnelles réelles et les perspectives de collaboration entre les gouvernements et entre eux et les institutions de l'UE - tout cela en parallèle avec ledémarrage du second semestre de la Conférence sur l'avenir de l'Europe.
Nous n'avons pas d'alternative - nous devons nous débarrasser de l'étiquette de "fatalistes" et de "mots à la mode" et multiplier les engagements pour défendre et diffuser les valeurs démocratiques et pouvoir parler au cœur des gens.
Dix ans avant l'élargissement historique de l'Union, Vaclav Havel, en 1994 devant l'Assemblée parlementaire européenne à Strasbourg, reconnaissant la diversité et la particularité des différents peuples d'Europe, a néanmoins ressenti le besoin de s'asseoir autour d'une table et de se parler, car la seule alternative au dialogue serait le conflit.

Paraphrasant dans ce contexte une intervention de Paul-Henry Spaak il y a soixante-dix ans dans le même hémicycle en mars 1953, délivrant le Traité européen du charbon et de l'acier, ce n'était que grâce à une communauté de buts et de détermination qu'on avait été capable de «préserver l'inestimable richesse et le patrimoine intellectuel que l'agression n'a fait que rendre plus cher", il ne peut y avoir rien de plus" proche "et de plus explicite que ce message pour nous inspirer et nous aider à renouveler notre engagement en tant que communicants, au profit de la société dans laquelle et pour laquelle nous agissons.

Voilà pourquoi nous avons encore un long chemin à parcourir, mais nous pouvons nous retrouver et régénérer la communication publique en travaillant ensemble, avec humilité et détermination.

Vive le Club de Venise !

AGENDA

Preliminary draft

DAY 1 - Thursday 30 June (9:00 - 12:30)

9:00 – 9:15

Opening Session

Welcome statements :

- **Marco DEL PANTA** - Secretary-General of the European University Institute (EUI)
- **Diana AGOSTI** - Head of Department for the European Policies, Presidency of the Council of Ministers
- **Fabrizio SPADA** - Head of the Institutional Relations Department, European Parliament Information Office in Italy
- **Richard KUEHNEL** - European Commission DG COMM, Director, "Representation and Communication in Member States"
- **A representative of the City of Florence**

9:15 – 9:45

Key addresses

- **Enzo AMENDOLA** - Minister for European Affairs, Italian Government (TBC)
- **Stefano ROLANDO** - President of the Club of Venice

9:45 – 10:00

Coffee break

10:00 – 12:30

Plenary session - Round Table

"The Conference on the Future of Europe - What is at stake"

- ex-post analysis of the communication strategies and information campaign (cooperative platforms, inclusiveness, transparency)
- an assessment of the cooperation between institutions and governments and between MS' authorities and civil society sectors
- analysis of the public opinion sentiment
- follow-up:
  - future road map/calendar envisaged by institutions and Member States
  - what and how to communicate: realistic objectives vs. chimeric targets

Moderator:

- **Marco INCERTI** - Communications Director, European University Institute (EUI)

Key Note speakers:

- **a representative of France** - (S.I.G. or MFA) (TBC)
- **Nicolas LE POLAIN** - European Parliament, DG Communication, Acting Head the Concept and Design Unit, in charge of the communication campaign around the CoFE

Panellists:

- **Diana AGOSTI** - Italy, Head of the Department for European Policies, Presidency of the Council of Ministers
- **Franca Maria FEISEL** - EUI Researcher, Co-Moderator European Citizen Panel ECP1
- **Igor BLAHUSIAK** - Czech Republic, Director of the European Affairs Communication Department, Office of the Government

- **Richard KUEHNEL** - European Commission DG COMM, Director, "Representation and Communication in Member States"
- **Kevin KELLY, Ireland** - Director of Press and Communications, Department of Foreign Affairs
- **Susanne WEBER** - Austria, Head of Digital Communication at the Federal Chancellery
- **Leda GUIDI** - President of the Italian Association of Public Communicators (COMPA)
- **Adam NYMAN** - Director, Debating Europe

14:15 – 16:45

Plenary session

"Crisis communication: focus on war in UKRAINE and resilience vs. the COVID-19 pandemic - challenges for strategic communication and possible inter-governmental synergies to provide and promote reliable information and condusive interactive frameworks"

- WAR in UKRAINE:
  * communication on consequences of war affecting citizens (refugees, sanctions, energy crisis, cost of living)
  * the role of civil society and social networks
- COVID-19:
  * stepping-up resilience against future health crises
  * evaluating and strengthening cooperation networks between governments and scientific communities
- common challenges:
  * analysing narratives, asynchronies, behaviours and collaborative strategies
  * reinforcing coordinated fight against disinformation
  * relations with the media in a mutually trustworthy environment

Moderator:

- **Vincenzo LE VOCI** - Secretary-General of the Club of Venice

Key Note speaker:

- **Irene PLANK** - Germany, Communications Director at the Federal Foreign Office and member of the Steering Group of the Club of Venice

Panellists

- **a representative of Italy's MFA** (TBC)
- **Ruslan DEYNYCHENKO** - Ukraine, Executive Director and Yevhen FEDCHENKO, Chief Editor, Stopfake.org
- **Ave EERMA** - Estonia, Head of the Integrated Political Crisis Response Crisis Communication Network (IPCR CCN); National Coordinator for Risk and Crisis Communication, Strategic Communication Department
- **Jānis SĀRTS** - NATO, Director of the Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, Riga
- **John CHRYSOULAKIS** - Secretary-General for Greeks Abroad and Public Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greece, member of the Steering Group of the Club of Venice
- **Rebecca O'CONNOR** - Ireland, Department of the Taoiseach, Communications Specialist
- **Delphine COLARD** - European Parliament, Head of the Spokesperson's Unit and Deputy Spokesperson
- **Maja MARICIC** - European Commission, Information Officer at the Spokesperson's Service
- **Lauri TIERALA** - Programme Director, EDMO, EUI
- **Luke HAVIL**L - United Kingdom, REOC Communications
- **Marco RICORDA** - Communications Manager, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)
- **Nikola HOŘEJŠ** - Czech Republic, International Affairs Programme Director, Society and Democracy Research Institute (STEM)

16:45 – 17:45

Interactive capacity building exercise

"Immersive, scenario-based group exercise designed to encourage collaborative discussion around the topic of capacity building in communications, including identifying the skills required for effective modern communicators facing crisis situations"

Moderator:

- **Fiona SPEIRS** - United Kingdom, Cabinet Office

18:15 **Networking cocktail with the EDMO Advisory Board members (EUI premises)**

19:30 **Dinner - offered by the EUI hosting authorities (venue: EUI premises)**

DAY 2 - Friday 1 July 2020 (9:00 - 12:45)

9:30 – 11:30

Plenary session

ROUND TABLE - CAPACITY/CAPABILITY BUILDING - 1) New projects to strengthen professionalization and 2) reactivation of the ad Hoc Working Group of the Club on Capacity Building

- the role of Academies and public communications' hubs/centre of expertise: promoting new synergies at international level
- developing a change culture / Coping with advanced technologies in a rapidly evolving information and media ecosystem
- monitoring stratcom capacities and mapping efficiency and effectiveness
- Elaborating a Memo for Action on Capacity Building objectives

11:30 – 12:45

Plenary session

CLIMATE CHANGE - A pressing communication priority overshadowed by war and pandemia

- communicating roadmaps to save the planet (in view of the UNCCC COP-27 foreseen on 6-17 November 2022 in Egypt)
- making climate change communication effective
- communicating civil society inclusive projects' added value

Moderators:

- **Carlotta ALFONSI** - Policy Analyst, Open and Innovative Government, Public Governance Directorate, OECD (*Capacity Building session*)
- **Marco RICORDA** - Communications Manager, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) (*Climate Change session*)

Panellists:

Capacity Building:

- **Alex AIKEN**, United Kingdom, Executive Director of Government Communications, International Relations and National Security
- **Robert WESTER**, Netherlands, Managing Director, Berenschot EU
- **Anthony ZACHARZEWSKI**, Director of The Democratic Society
- **John VERRICO**, Former President of the U.S. National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC)
- **Yves CHARMONT**, France, Délégué-général, Cap'Com
- **Viktoras DAUKSAS**, Director of DebunkEU.org

Climate change:

- **Key-note by Andreas LANG**, Germany, Federal Foreign Office
- **Viktoria FLODH LI**, Sweden, Ambassador, Head of Communication, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **Paolo CARIDI**, European Commission, DG CLIMA, Head of Unit E2 "Communication, Civil Society Relations and Climate Pact"
- **Ilaria CONTI**, Florence School of Regulation - Energy - Patricia SCHERER, ifok - a Cadmus Company, Director, EU Relations & Projects
- **Martina FONDI**, Treedom, Partner & Forestry Coordinator
- **Pier Virgilio DASTOLI**, President of the European Movement - Italy

12:30 – 12:45

Closing session

Reflections on the issues emerged during the plenary meeting

- **Stefano ROLANDO** - President of the Club of Venice
- **Marco INCERTI** - Communications Director, European University Institute (EUI)

Planning for 2022, with focus on:

* poss. seminar on the future of public communication (Bergamo) (early October 2022, tbc)
* Crisis Communication seminar - Prague, 13 and 14 October 2022
* Venice plenary (24-25 November 2022)
* Joint events in cooperation with Cap' Com and ICMPD (November 2022)
* Work in synergy with international partner organizations

- **Vincenzo LE VOCI** - Secretary-General of the Club of Venice

13:00 – 14:15

Lunch offered by the hosting authorities (TBC)

14:30 – 16:00

Social event organized by the EUI authorities: Visit to the Historical Archives of the European Union

Titre

Texte

Titre

Texte

Club of Venice
5th Strategic Communication Seminar

30-31 March 2022 - London

The event: unity in communications and values

At the end of March 2022, senior communicators from across Europe, from nearly 30 countries, met for the 5th Club of Venice Strategic Communication seminar. This year's event was different, held as it was under the shadow of the Russian government's aggression towards Ukraine.

In his opening address, His Excellency, Piotr Wilczek, the Polish Ambassador to the UK, stated that disinformation lies at the heart of this war. Ambassador Braze, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy, endorsed this view in her address, outlining NATO's approach to countering hostile information: engage audiences, reassure them and be proactive and consistent with our communication narratives.

Both speeches highlighted the importance of clear and honest communication, the ability of governments to join forces, and the capacity for communicators from governments and institutions across Europe to cooperate with international organisations. This will enable us to optimise outreach, enhance proximity and continue to detect and neutralise Russian disinformation, debunking lies and supporting trustworthy sources of information.

Concerning Ukraine, discussions at the seminar focused not only on contingencies but also, and in particular, on strategic communications planning, what we can do to mitigate the impact of the conflict, provide hope to the Ukrainian people, and show what democratic unity can achieve. In this context, the Club also managed to connect on line with the managers of the Ukrainian StopFake platform, who provided an update from the front line. They described the difficulties encountered by the media operating in the field and asked the audience to spread the voice of Ukrainians and develop interconnections to spread the democratic society's messages as much as possible.

Strategic communication is vital to provide coherence and structure to our joint communication strategies. There was a

consensus that we must work collectively to maximise support for Ukraine. As well as our ongoing work to support international communications, we must also encourage humanitarian donations, facilitate the efforts of Ukrainian communicators and welcome them in European and international forums.

We must also establish a way to measure the impact of our governmental actions and communication initiatives on the Russian people. This will enable us to gauge the success of our efforts to provide factual information, challenge disinformation, and to highlight the cost of war to all the sectors of our society.

Further, communicators should multiply their efforts to ensure visibility and unity of messaging across audiences, while also taking care to tailor messages to individual audiences in Russia, Eastern Europe and Ukraine. This will help counterbalance the Russian government's ongoing deluge of disinformation. Moreover, the role of democratic infrastructure, including a free press, is a vital part of the media ecosystem and a powerful way to maintain freedom and facilitate communication.

The top 7 communications lessons

As communicators, we must be conscious of the impact of our work. This impact has become increasingly well understood in the security community as well as amongst our adversaries. The quality and the objective nature of our narratives must be supported by the capacity to optimise outreach and ensure consistency.

Information is central to Russia's war on Ukraine, and the Russian tradition of deception has deep roots. Soviet textbooks on psychological operations taught students that, in defending the state, "a lie is not a lie, but a weapon". Our information space is under attack, and we, as global partners, should expose and counter false Russian claims, calling out the Kremlin's playbook of deception.

During the seminar, we also heard that, just weeks before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the UK's Government Information Cell had been set up as a cross-Government team to counter Russian information operations against the UK and its allies. The Cell has used the disinformation expertise in the UK Government and among allied governments, and has applied that expertise to help protect us all.

I. Don't wait

- In a crisis there is often a temptation for people to hold off engaging publicly until there is more clarity, or until a policy decision is made. Communicators must engage without hesitation, and without waiting for policy perfection.
- Use senior representatives to help shape the public narrative; daily morning ministerial media briefings alongside background briefings for UK and some international media have helped to shape the public narrative.
- This high-volume, high-tempo communications approach, which the UK Prime Minister has described as noisy but effective, has helped maintain support in the UK for the government's approach. As a result, 43 per cent of the public believes that the UK Government is handling the situation well, an increase from 35 per cent at the start of the war.

II. Align comms to policy

- Policy and comms must be completely integrated. The national security community is not used to using communication to achieve national security objectives, which means that we need to keep demonstrating the effect that comms is achieving.
- It is helpful to be clear about shared policy and comms goals. In the case of the UK, that is: to ensure that Putin's invasion of Ukraine fails, and the security of the UK and its allies is protected.
- Key senior officials should attend ministerial meetings as a means to shape the analysis and decisions there.

III. Innovate!

- This crisis has seen us use communication in ground-breaking ways. For example, we declassified intelligence use on social media and to try to pre-empt and prevent Russia's invasion.
- While we did not succeed in stopping the invasion, Russia's efforts to generate pretexts for the invasion were rendered meaningless. No one outside of Russia or its clients believed Ukraine was committing "genocide" against Russian-speakers in the Donbas.
- Declassifying intelligence in this way would have been unthinkable as little as 6 months ago. It is now the most engaged-with content MOD has ever carried on digital channels, and has reached 99 million people.

IV. Find your audience

- At the beginning of February, we were able to reach Russians through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc, and we reached 8.4 million people in Russia promoting our Prime Minister's speech expressing UK opposition to Putin's war, solidarity with Ukraine, and regret for the impact the crisis will have on the Russian people.
- After Putin shut down his country's access to social media channels, we had to pivot to buying advertising on websites to reach the Russian people. With creative work arounds like display ads, we have reached 2 million Russians with our #NoToWar campaign.

V. Try different angles

- Another thing we have learned from our deterrence comms for the Russian elite is the importance of emphasising multiple costs for Russia's aggression.
- Early polling suggested that economic cost was the most effective cost to highlight. However, that changed with the invasion, when it became clear that the human costs, to the Russian people and their Slavic cousins in Ukraine, had more resonance.
- We should draw on all appropriate tools to deter actual or potential adversaries from attempting harm against the UK.

VI. Measure your impact

- It is critically important to set key performance indicators, or measures of success, early, track impact, and revise your approaches.
- Our Covid response taught us the value of consistently tracking the same set of measures over time, which allowed us to assess progress and demonstrate the impact of our communications activity.
- For our Russia/Ukraine communications, we set benchmarks early and are tracking our progress using weekly research and regular social media analysis. This means that we aren't just measuring what we're doing - but what impact it is having.

VII. Never underestimate the power of allies

- Russia does not have international allies or partners it can depend on. The Russian government hugely underestimated the power of allies when it invaded Ukraine, and is paying the price now.
- The international response has been united and damning. The West is speaking with a common voice and we are isolating Russia. The messaging exposing Putin's lies under the narrative of #KremlinPlaybook has been shared in 108 countries.
- Together we have surprised Putin by the strength and unity of our opposition to his war machine, and have played our part in stalling it.

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a fundamental enabler of effective communications and campaigns. The world is data-driven and using advanced technologies will strengthen our analysis and critical insight so that we both understand and respond to the digital world in which we live.

Current trends of globalised and digitised communications, which also include disinformation and cyber-attacks, underline the need to develop specific communication responses. These stem from understanding the ways in which high technologies, computer algorithms and social networks function.

There is a strong correlation between AI and the way governments and institutions will apply new technologies in their strategies to optimise the 5D communications model (Direct, Digital, Diverse, Data-driven and counter-5 Disinformation) approach created by the UK.

The more we can use AI, in a regulated and transparent way, to achieve positive outcomes, the more efficiently governments, institutions and international organisations will be able to strengthen their communication capacities and optimise their outreach.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the UK's Government Communication Service International team (GCSI) worked with DeepSeer during the assessment of the G7 Global Vaccine Confidence Summit in June 2021. GCSI and DeepSeer worked closely to build communities that represent key Global Health opinion leaders and the politically influential within a number of the G7+ countries.

DeepSeer applies proprietary analytics to open source social data on Twitter to understand who is reaching the people who matter, what is influencing them and why it is important. Impressions are the key metric, in this case, the number of times Vaccine Confidence Summit content or conversation appeared in the Twitter timelines of Global Health opinion leaders and the politically influential.

In the French Health Security Network, summit content landed in 61 per cent of community members' timelines with strong visibility across the senior tier of French politics. Key individuals who had an opportunity to see Vaccine Confidence Summit content included President Macron's Europe adviser, Alexander Adam, and Finance Minister, Bruno Le Maire; both received 19 timeline impressions.
We need to collaborate, to learn from each other and to build rigorous data sets and analysis. Organisations that have the resources to develop AI tools should work with those who do not to pool collective resources. There is also an important role for public institutions in educating the public about AI, how they are using it, and demonstrating their adherence to ethical practices.

Countering disinformation

Countering Disinformation in times of social turbulence is a priority for many administrations around the globe. With Putin's invasion of Ukraine, it is becoming increasingly important for governments to detect, disrupt, defend and deter harmful information practices from hostile actors.

If governments wish to deliver agile and effective responses to hostile activity, they must build greater links between detection and disruption, and defence and deterrence. Disinformation specialists need to move beyond analysis of the information space and begin to routinely deliver advice to seniors and ministers on the most appropriate counter approaches to information operation activity, so that all insight comes with corresponding recommendations for action.

Governments should also put more time and effort into building media literacy with vulnerable audiences. Media literate and informed citizens will be more resilient to disinformation. Building a dialogue with audiences will also reduce susceptibility to hostile activity as it will be harder for hostile activity to sow division if people feel listened to and understand governments' policies and processes.

The information space does not respect traditional national borders. Countries need to move beyond countering disinformation in their own backyards if disinformation is to be defeated globally, with partners and allies sharing information to protect audiences and deter disinformation actors, especially with those administrations that might lack the capability or resources to carry out activity without support.

OECD Report - Public Communication can inform future collaboration

Innovative, collaborative and aligned strategic communications are our strongest tools in both peace-time and times of war and conflict. This means that it is more important than ever to ensure that communicators are highly skilled and have access to the latest tools.

The OECD report[1], illustrated in the session, The way forward: *how Public Communication can inform future collaboration*, states that we need to allocate sufficient resources to training government communicators in strategic communication. This will enable us to professionalise the function by creating core curricula, setting out skills and priorities for communicators working across agencies, ministries, and departments at all levels of government.

Alongside this it is vital that we develop an assessment framework and international standard to set out key principles for public comms from a government perspective, including: good governance and democracy. We must also develop and implement robust methods of evaluation which inform practice; this is currently a structural weakness across the profession. In several countries there is also currently a divide between frontline communications approach and integrated public communications functions across governments, which must be addressed.

Further, while public communication can tackle disinformation and misinformation, the approach should form part of an ecosystem which stands to uphold democracy. This should include collaboration across government and include approaches to increase cross-border mutual trust in the exchange of data, to strengthen accountability and to tackle corruption. There are currently varied standards of practice across governments.

1 OECD Report on Public Communication The Global Context and the Way Forward

Social Media

Governments have not always used social media in the most flexible or effective way. However, we need to adapt to the new hybrid world; people expect a tone of voice that is close to the one they use. Communicators need to use direct and emotive language as we try to cut through the sheer quantity of online information. Communicators must also know their audiences. The UK government is prioritising audiences via GOV.UK/ASK. This uses the information from 650k questions submitted by the public to provide invaluable insight about what matters to the public.

Social media can be a battleground; Putin has instituted a media lockdown and shutdown of social media, but is also using global social platforms to spread disinformation. Nonetheless, a significant proportion of the news about the war in Ukraine comes from social media. News is immediate, but this rapid flow of information carries a disinformation risk. We have seen how the Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, has used story-telling tactics to land his messages and shape his image. His use of professionally-shot, short, frequent videos with moving visuals, and powerful and memorable messages have contributed to him becoming a heroic figure in Ukraine and abroad.

Digital communication is most successful when it is campaign-based. Social media platforms are fast-moving and this means that your approach must be consistent with your visual identity and tone of voice - think of it as simple storytelling. Social media listening is a useful tool and, provided that governments and institutions invest wisely, concretely and strategically, can provide data which demonstrates how communications activity is affecting the public conversation. Social media will continue to expand. For any new social media channel that emerges, communicators must be well prepared to get on board, even if your institution is not open to change.

Behavioural standards

The use of behavioural insight can influence audiences to make changes, or adopt behaviours, for the public good. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government Information Service (GIS) in the Department of the Taoiseach, in Ireland, focused their communications efforts on:

- Protecting the most vulnerable in communities
- Protecting the health service and
- Keeping as much of society and the economy as open as possible

Before, and in the early stages of, the Covid-19 vaccine roll-out personal behaviour was the main protection against the virus and the means to stop or slow its spread. As a result the GIS were trying to effect significant behaviour change at population level in a very short period.

The team used the wealth of available data tracking cases, contacts, testing, the number of people in hospital and, in conjunction with colleagues in the Department of Health, via the Armarach opinion poll survey, valuable insights on what people were thinking. However the insight did not provide intelligence on how people were behaving.

The GIC felt that behavioural analysis would enhance their understanding and provide valuable information to inform both policy and communications. In collaboration with the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) they developed SAM, an anonymous, interactive online behavioural study to survey people about their recent activity. The fortnightly study offered insights into where and how risks of transmission arise.

A number of interesting predictors of behaviours emerged; for example the level of worry about the pandemic was a key predictor of behaviour; those who were more worried were more likely to comply with restrictions. Overall the study provided significant value to the GIS by identifying trends of activity and behaviour to inform policy and communications activity. This type of research is best used in situations that are clearly for the common good and where behavioural change is essential.

Crisis Communications

Crisis communications become necessary when an organisation or government's core values come into conflict with how they have to report on, or handle, specific issues. These types of situation are invariably fast-moving and know no borders. The situation, or coverage of it, may generate negative external commentary, but will not necessarily affect the organisation's long-term reputation.

As Italy has done with their new government strategic centre, governments should consider the need to differentiate political messaging from institutional information and calls to action. This new directorate is working to integrate cultural diplomacy into communication and policy strategy while tackling misinformation.

As a global community, the biggest challenge is the need to deal with a multi-crisis environment. Lithuania, for example, is dealing with the multiple crises of the Ukraine/Russia war and the potential domestic impact, while also anticipating a refugee crisis, and managing the long-term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Digital diplomacy can play a significant role in managing crisis communications. NATO colleagues work across varied media channels and digital platforms to ensure that NATO's priorities reach the vast number of countries and people that are encompassed by its work. Given that most of those people will never interact directly with NATO, the team has to build diplomacy

into their work, widening their remit to include officials' and staffs' social media.

Very few governments have plans in place to deal with crisis situations before they happen. Governments need to have both communications plans and institutional systems in place to respond quickly and effectively. In setting up their crisis strategies, governments need to:

- build trust with their audiences and stakeholders;
- be open and transparent;
- work with local people, stakeholders and influencers;
- refrain from oversimplifying information; and
- stand their ground, ensuring that communications align with their ongoing priorities and values.

Resilience vs Hybrid Threats - a continuous stress test for strategic communication

Collaboration and sharing ideas is at the centre of the Club of Venice. The ad hoc Working Group of communication experts in resilience versus hybrid threats is one of the two Club of Venice key working groups, the other focuses on capacity building. The group meets regularly to discuss the latest trends and developments, particularly in technology, that enable practical solutions to hybrid threats.

The Club of Venice wishes to increase the frequency, scope and scale of discussions around hybrid threats, allowing a wider network of contributors to develop practical responses. All members of the Club of Venice are welcome to join the working groups, to share information and ideas and to collaborate where possible.

Attendees heard two case studies, both of which focused on technological responses to hybrid threats.

Tech against terrorism - the terrorist content analytics platform (TCAP)

- The hybrid threat landscape shows increasing overlap between terrorist content, extremist content, disinformation, conspiracy theory, and terrorists are using disinformation as a tool.
- If terrorist content is wrapped within disinformation, it is less likely to be identified and removed by online platforms meaning that is reaches those susceptible to disinformation, who may also be vulnerable to radicalisation
- TCAP was launched in 2020 with support from Public Safety Canada. The platform is desinged to facilitate quick and accurate identification and removal of terrorist content online, while respecting human rights.
- The platform has the ability to identify threats to life, following which alerts are provided to governments and relevant authorities. So far they have provided over 15,000 alerts, with 94% of content removed by tech companies

Digitalis - Twitter insights dashboard

- Digitalis uses digital intelligence and proprietary technologies to protect their clients' online interests. A significant amount of the work focuses on analysing disinformation campaigns as well as other forms of hostile comms campaigns online across a variety of channels.
- The Twitter dashboard tool is able to collect and interpret a large amount of information, for example by showing 60,000 tweets relating to the Sputnik campaign in Dec 2020 - Jan 2021.
- There are varied forms of output, including an export option for raw data, automated analytics around assessing signs of coordinated inauthentic behaviour (large number of tweets in short space of time), analysis of user creation dates over time, and analysis of top followed accounts to identify primary bot or troll accounts.

Conclusion

Strategic communication continues to be a vital tool to provide coherence and structure to our joint communication strategies. We must continue to work collectively to maximise global support for Ukraine, fight disinformation and amplify the efforts of the Ukrainian government to tell the true story of the war.

Information is central to Russia's war on Ukraine, and disinformation is one of Russia's primary weapons in this war, Putin has closed social media and other media is Russia, and so we must use innovative and creative approaches to reach Russia and its satellites, to understand the impact of our communications and use intelligence and insight to create and iterate our strategies.

This is why we, as global partners, should expose and counter false Russian claims and call out the Kremlin's playbook of deception. We have learnt and are applying key lessons from our communications efforts at the start of this war and will continue to apply these seven principles in all that we do:

1. Don't wait - do not wait for policy perfection, get information out as soon as you can.
2. Align comms to policy - ensure that communication and policy are completely integrated.
3. Innovate - think about how you can use new approaches and technologies to achieve your communication objectives.
4. Find your audience - if usual routes to your audiences change or no longer exist, consider speedy and creative ways to reach them via other channels.
5. Try different angles - use all appropriate tools to achieve your objectives.

6. Measure your impact - set measures of success early, track them, and use them to revise your plans.
7. Never underestimate the power of allies - a joint response and use of a common voice will increase the impact and outcomes of communication.

Social media is constantly evolving; governments must use it more flexibly and adapt to the needs of the audience. It is important to communicate with audiences using the most compelling tone of voice if we are to cut through the sheer volume of online information. The use of behavioural insights will help us to understand the motivations of our audience and to understand the most effective ways to reach and influence them. This works particularly well in situations where behaviour change is essential for the common good.

We should continue to use the new tools at our disposal to help us to strengthen our communications. Artificial intelligence is a fundamental enabler of effective communication; the more we can use it in a regulated and transparent way, the more efficiently governments, and other institutions, will be able to strengthen the reach and impact of their communications.

Countering disinformation is a particular priority for governments during times of social turbulence. The more media literate audiences are, the better they will be equipped to resist disinformation. Governments should, therefore, put more time and effort into building media literacy with vulnerable audiences. Disinformation is not constrained by national borders. This is why partners and allies must share information. This will enable them to protect audiences and deter disinformation actors, especially with those administrations that might lack the capability or resources to carry out activity without support.

To do all of this governments, and other global organisations, need a skilled and engaged cadre of communicators. Governments should ensure that they allocate sufficient resources to training and strategic communication and use rigorous assessment criteria to understand the impact of their work.

The need to deal effectively with a multi-crisis environment is a significant challenge, and governments and other global organisations should consider the need to differentiate political messaging from institutional information and calls to action. Very few governments have plans in place to deal with crisis situations before they happen. This is why governments should have both communications plans and institutional systems in place to respond quickly and effectively. The Club of Venice will endeavour to enhance cooperation with international organisations in resilience plans, facilitate mutual exchange of expertise and best practice and help maximise the impact of coordinated crisis communication strategies.

The Russian government underestimated the global response to its war with Ukraine. The West's approach, which is well-aligned, mutually supportive, and which places honesty at its heart, continues to expose the Russian government's disinformation, champion global unity, and tell the true story of the war.

Arguably most importantly, organisations and their communicators must collaborate, share resources, systems, training, and intelligence and insight. Partnerships and collaboration mechanisms such as the Club of Venice working groups are important enablers of this type of collaboration.

CLUB OF VENICE – STRATCOM SEMINAR

Address by H.E. Piotr Wilczek, Ambassador of Poland to the UK

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to be here today at the invitation of the Cabinet Office and Club of Venice. I am aware that the main topic of the conference is strategic communication in times of crises. The war in Ukraine, in all of its aspects, constitutes one of the biggest challenges for global security since the Second World War. I was asked to share a few thoughts on the Russian aggression in Ukraine and to tell you about the Polish support to our Ukrainian friends.

It is hard to believe that a mere five weeks have passed since Vladimir Putin launched his barbaric invasion into Ukraine. Having arrived in London on the 15th of February I met with my friend and colleague, the Ukrainian Ambassador Vadim Pristaiko. Even then, we were hoping that the worst scenario will not happen, and that the unthinkable chasm of war will not return to Europe. Our hopes turned out to be futile. During the past few weeks, we have seen things that, until February 24th, we had only known from history books: the shelling of residential areas, of, ruthless attacks on hospitals, humanitarian aid convoys and humanitarian corridors, forced deportation and countless blatant human rights violations. These brutal acts of aggression are inhumane and are not justified in any way. We are all outraged by the increasing brutality of the Russian army. The evidence of possible war crimes in Ukraine is being collected and it is our collective responsibility that the perpetrators be brought to justice.

But what we have also seen is that Putin failed in a sense – an opinion I share with the British Prime Minister. He failed to achieve his short-term objectives – seizing Kyiv, destroying the Ukrainian democracy and installing a puppet regime. Needless to say, it is first and foremost due to the fierce resistance of the Ukrainian people, who are still boldly defending their homeland. They are now taking the initiative and even regaining some of the previously lost territories. President Volodymyr Zelensky has become the symbol of their fight. His heroism, his resolve, as well as the bravery of the whole Ukrainian nation standing up to their aggressor must not only be admired, but also supported.

I know it might be difficult to imagine that Russia can lose this war, especially taking into consideration the firepower available to both sides. But we believe that thanks to international support, Ukraine might have a chance to win, not only with the aim of gaining a better position in peace negotiations. The people of Ukraine are fighting for our security and defending Europe. We need to keep helping them. And in order to provide Ukraine with the most effective assistance, we need to maintain absolute unity (among allies). Our perseverance will give the Ukrainians a chance to tip the balance of this war.

What can we do to help and what has been done already?

Firstly, we need to provide the military and logistic assistance for Ukraine to help them continue to defend their territory. Ukraine's actions are based on the right to self-defense (art. 51 of the UN Charter). In such a situation, the international community has the right to assist.

I am aware the United Kingdom has been at the forefront of providing military assistance, sending anti-tank weapons, air defence systems and defensive equipment. Polish military assistance consisting of artillery ammunitions, portable anti-aircraft rocket systems and defensive equipment has also been significant. As Ukraine's neighbouring country, Poland has been functioning as a multidimensional, logistical hub in the international chain of military assistance to Ukraine. What we need to focus on now is making our military support more systematic, especially when the first phase of an emotional reaction is over. We need to ensure that it is consistent and thought through, and that it addresses key needs reported by Kyiv. Most of all, it has to remain uninterrupted as long as the conflict goes on. Any hesitation on our part, will be used by the aggressor to destroy Ukraine's defensive capabilities.

Secondly, we must focus on diplomatic and political activity. We are already on the right path, by having put political pressure on Putin's regime with severe economic sanctions aimed at entities and individuals supporting the Kremlin, as well as forcing Russia into diplomatic isolation.

Poland believes we must never underestimate the importance of high-level contacts, at best in person. On March 15th Prime Minister Morawiecki travelled to a heavily fortified Kyiv, together with the PMs of Slovenia and the Czech Republic, to meet Ukrainian authorities. I would also like to mention that Poland still maintains diplomatic and consular presence in Ukraine. Our Embassy in Kyiv and the Consulate General in Lviv have been operating non-stop since the beginning of the war. Close, permanent contacts between the Presidents of Poland and Ukraine as well as between Prime Minister Boris Johnson and President Zelenskyi are other good examples of our engagement. Finally, the visit of President Biden to Poland and his participation in the meeting of foreign and defense ministers of the US and Ukraine was a clear message that the entire democratic world stands with Ukraine.

The international political support has to be continued and increased, also with regards to the future settlement. While respecting and supporting every decision of president Zelenskyi and Ukrainian authorities during negotiations, we must ensure, Ukraine is not intimidated by Moscow and we do not repeat the

mistakes of the past. We also support the idea to grant Ukraine a candidate status by the EU. The prospect, we know it from our own experience, that will give the Ukrainians strength and hope they need now and in the future.

Thirdly, we need to help those who need it most – the civilian population staying in the war-zone as well as their relatives seeking shelter beyond Ukraine.

Poland's response to humanitarian crisis makes me proud to be a Pole. This deep understanding of the human toll in conflict, the self-solidarity and generosity of Polish people has been breathtaking.

This is the biggest humanitarian crisis in the heart of Europe for generations. There were over 10 million people displaced because of the conflict – which means 1 in 4 people in Ukraine were forced to left their home. 3,6 million people sought shelter in the neighbouring countries and almost 2,5 million found it in Poland. On top of the efforts of national authorities and humanitarian agencies, Polish citizens and local organizations have come out in force to support the new arrivals. We opened our borders, our hearts and our homes to Ukrainian neighbours and friends. Poles were offering free rides, sometimes over a distance of a few hundred miles, to Ukrainians with family links in Poland at the border, holding up cardboard signs in Ukrainian asking: "Where do you want to go?". Thousands of Poles were granted, in the spirit of solidarity, time off work to be able to volunteer at reception centres, providing food, sleeping bags, blankets, battery packs or phone chargers to make sure Ukrainians are in contact with their families in their homeland. Many, many Poles have been vacating rooms in their flats or houses to invite guests from Ukraine. Thanks to them, our neighbours found safety and some comfort. Polish authorities also facilitate further integration of our Ukrainian neighbours into Polish society by approving a quite innovative bill in mid-March. Citizens of Ukraine can now apply for Polish IDs and are provided with fast track to setting up their businesses in our country. Ukrainian children are now being incorporated into the Polish schooling system –over 80 thousand have already been included.

Poland has also been closely collaborating with the United Kingdom on providing and distributing humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. The United Kingdom has been one of the biggest donors of humanitarian aid and we also appreciate schemes like "Homes for Ukraine" that were developed to let people from Ukraine seek refuge across the Channel.

But the war in Ukraine and humanitarian crisis are far from over. My compatriots are determined to support their Ukrainian neighbors in moments of hardship, but the situation is increasingly difficult as nowadays people come to Poland without any possessions, there are people that are wounded, sick or in psychological trauma. The emergency that Poland and Europe are facing now needs a broader systemic financial and technical response. We also need to think about Ukraine's post-war reconstruction. We constantly appeal to our partners around the globe to engage and help.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In closing, let me refer briefly to the main subject of your seminar. We are all aware the Russian aggression against Ukraine is not only the traditional, kinetic character. Disinformation and lies are at the very foundation of this war. They have been used in months prior to the invasion. Russian authorities were searching for a pretext to justify the forthcoming aggression. We saw the accusations of alleged persecution of Russian speakers or ethnic-Russians living in Ukraine and even of a so-called genocide committed by Ukrainian authorities. Finally, "denazification" was named as one of the main purposes of the so-called "special military operation" in Ukraine. And recently we observed Russian reports on alleged development of biological weapons in Ukraine or nuclear attacks prepared by Kyiv.

I believe Ukraine, along with the allies and partners, has been effectively countering Russia's disinformation activities. It remains possible also because of the carefully crafted exposure of intelligence by the USA, United Kingdom and other allies revealing the real intensions of Kremlin. Russia is losing the information war, but this conflict will be a long-lasting one. We need to be prepared and our response has to be unified. Let me wish you fruitful discussions at the seminar, while remembering, we all stand united with Ukraine and we will support our Ukrainian friends, as long as they need us to do so.

I started by saying that Putin has failed. Let me conclude by saying that the unity of West, proved also by this event, the revival of NATO, our strong support to Ukraine, renewed belief in the rules-based order and the unwavering condemnation of aggression and the use of brutal force will be his biggest failure of this war.

AGENDA
5th Seminar on Strategic Communication

Professionalizing Strategic Communication to tackle social and technological challenges

Meeting venue | 1 Great George St, London SW1P 3AA

Meeting language: English
Meeting held under "Chatham House" rule

DAY 1 - Wednesday 30 March 2022

6:00 – 7:30

Welcome statements

Presentation of the structure and objectives of the seminar
An outline of the communicator report: optimizing professional standards

- **Alex AIKEN** - Executive Director of Communications, International Relations and Security, UK Government
- **H. E. Piotr WILCZEK** - Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the United Kingdom
- **Gerald MULLALLY** - UK, Director of Government Communications International and Angela KELLETT (UK GCSI) (Global Data Dashboard)
- **Michael HOARE** - UK, Director of National Security Communications Team (Lessons learned: Russia/Ukrainian conflict)
- **Vincenzo LE VOCI** - Secretary-General of the Club of Venice

DAY 2 - Thursday 31 March 2022 (9:00 - 17:45 Brussels Time)

8:30 – 8:45

Welcome statements

9:30 – 11:30

Plenary session - Smeaton Room

Address by:

- **Ambassador Baiba BRAZE** - NATO, Assistant Secretary-General, Public Diplomacy : Professionalizing Strategic Communication in a world of geopolitical challenges

Poss. Q&A

11:30 – 12:45

Introductory Plenary - Session 1

Shaping communication strategies in times of crises

- enhancing standards, capability and campaigns
- the war in Ukraine and the socio-geo-political impact - strategic challenges for public communication and the media - how to behave, to deliver and to cooperate

Key-note by Andreas LANG, Germany, Federal Foreign Office

Moderators:

- **Vincenzo LE VOCI** - Secretary-General of the Club of Venice
- **Alex AIKEN** - Executive Director of Communications, International Relations and Security, UK Government

Panellists:

- **Liubov TSYBULSKA** - founder of the Center for Strategic Communications and Information Security, Ukraine
- **Ruslan DEYNYCHENKO** - Executive director and Yevhen FEDCHENKO, Chief editor, StopFake (Ukraine)
- **Anja TREBES** - Germany, Head of Unit Communication Europe, Press and Information Office of the Federal Government
- **Ana FEDER** - Regional Portfolio Manager, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)
- **Christophe LECLERCQ** - Executive Chairman of the MediaLab, Founder of EURACTIV Media Network
- **Marco INCERTI** - Director of Communications, European University Institute, Italy

11:00 – 11:15 *Coffee break*

11:15 – 12:30

Break-Out Sessions - 1st part

Session 2 | Artificial Intelligence contribution to public communication - analytics and interaction - transforming communication for good? risk for drifts?

Moderator:

- **Angela KELLETT** - UK GCSI

Panellists:

- **Carlotta ALFONSI** - Policy Analyst, Open and Innovative Government, Public Governance Directorate, OECD
- **Evangelia MARKIDOU** - Head of Sector "Artificial Intelligence Technology, Deployment and Impact", European Commission, DG CNECT
- **Beatrice COVASSI** - Minister Counsellor for Digital, Tech and AI, European External Action Service (EEAS)
- **Vincenzo LE VOCI** - Secretary-General of the Club of Venice
- **Dave WORSELL** - Head of Commercial, Hello Lamp Post, UK

Session 3 | Countering disinformation and misinformation in time of societal turbulences

Moderator:

- **Ivar NIJHUIS** - Netherlands, Counsellor for Justice and Home Affairs, Dutch Embassy to the UK, former communications Director at the Ministry of Justice and Security

Panellists:

- **Birgitte MATHYS** and **Clément COLTELLARO** - Belgium, Coordination Unit for Threat Analysis (CUTA-OCAM)
- **Mikko KOIVUMAA** - Finland, Director General of Communications, Communications Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **Elpida CHLIMINTZA** - Seconded National Expert, DG RELEX, Civil Protection Unit, Council of the EU
- **Chris COAKLEY** - European Parliament, Spokesperson's Team
- **Istvan PERGER** - European Commission, Head of Sector, 'Governance and Strategic Coordination', DG Communication, 'Strategy & Corporate Campaigns' Unit
- **Goran GEORGIEV** - Analyst, Security Program, Center for the Study of Democracy (CSD) (https://csd.bg/)

12:30 – 13:45 *Lunch*

13:45 – 14:30

Plenary - Session 4

Introduced/Moderated by:

- **Vincenzo LE VOCI** - Secretary-General of the Club of Venice

Address by:

- **Alessandro BELLANTONI** - OECD, Deputy Head of the Open and Innovative Government Division and Head of the Open Government Unit

"The way forward: how the OECD report on Public Communication can inform future collaboration"

Poss. Q&A

Break-Out Sessions - 2nd part

Session 5 | Social media : analysing governments' and institutions' capacities and engagement and the added value of an enhanced technological landscape

Moderator:

- **Marco RICORDA** - Communications Manager, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

Panellists:

- **Peter HENEGHAN** - UK, Deputy Director of Digital, Prime Minister's Office and Cabinet Office Communication
- **Susanne WEBER** - Austria, Head of Digital Communication, Federal Chancellery
- **Robert HUQI** - Social media expert, European Parliament, DG Communication, web communication team
- **Elliot GRAINGER** - Strategic Communications Advisor, UK

Session 6 | Behavioural standards and contingencies:

- measuring Stratcom impact on external audiences;
- analysing societal trends and measuring organizational capacities in countering disinformation and misinformation

Moderator:

- **Erik DEN HOEDT** - Netherlands, Director of Operations, Ministry of General Affairs,
- Vice President of the Cub of Venice

Panellists:

- **Louise FRANCE** - Ireland, Cross-Government Communications Manager, Government Information Service, Department of the Taoiseach
- **Irene PLANK** - Germany, Director of Communications, Federal Foreign Office, member of the Steering Group of the Club of Venice
- **Elina LANGE-IONATAMISHVILI** - Senior expert or Annie GEISOW, Chief Operational Support Branch, NATO Strategic Centre of Excellence, Riga (Latvia)
- **Viktoras DAUKSAS** - Director of DebunkEU.org (https://www.debunkeu.org/)
- **Nikola HOŘEJŠ** - International Affairs Programme Director, Czech Republic, Society and Democracy Research Institute (STEM)
- **Paolo CESARINI** - Communication specialist, member of the European Media and Information Fund (EMIF), former Head of the Communication Unit in the European Commission DG CNECT

Session 7 | Efficiency and effectiveness of crisis management and crisis communication and impact on public diplomacy and reputation management

Moderator:

- **Marco INCERTI** - Director of Communications, European University Institute (EUI), Italy

Panellists:

- **Viktoria FLODH LI** - Sweden, Ambassador, Head of Communication, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **Dante BRANDI** - Italy, Head of Communication Coordination Unit, Directorate General for Public and Cultural Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
- **Marius JANUKONIS** - Lithuania, Director, Communication and Cultural Diplomacy Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, member of the Steering Group of the Club of Venice
- **Johanna WAJDA** - Poland, Deputy Director, Department of Public and Cultural Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **Rebecca OBSTLER** - Head of Digital Outreach and Communications Services, NATO HQ
- **Giulia DINO GIACOMELLI** - Lecturer (P-CVE Strategic Communications), University of Ghent, Belgium

15:45 – 16:00 *Coffee break*

16:00 – 16:45

Plenary - Session 4

'Resilience vs. Hybrid Threats - a continuous stress test for Strategic Communication' - An insight of the works of the Club of Venice ad hoc Working Group of communication experts in resilience vs. hybrid threats: objectives, meetings, roadmap

Moderator:

- **Vincenzo LE VOCI** - Secretary-General of the Club of Venice

Panellists:

- **Marius JANUKONIS** - Lithuania, Director for Communication and Cultural Diplomacy Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, member of the Steering Group of the Club of Venice
- **Anne CRAANEN** - Tech Against Terrorism (Content Analytics Platform - TCAP) - *a case study of information shared in the Ad Hoc Working Group*
- **James HAHN** and **Caris WHOMSLEY** (Digitalis)

16:45

Concluding Session

- **Debriefing from the breakout sessions (three key points to highlight from each session)**
- **Main issues emerged from the seminar and possible follow-up**
- **Closing remarks**

AGENDA - Recap

Time	Session Name	Room
08:30-11:00	Welcome Statements, Plenary session and introductory plenary	Smeaton room
11:15-12:30	Session 2: AI contribution to public communication	Council room
11:15-12:30	Session 3: Countering disinformation and misinformation	Smeaton room
13:45-14:30	Session 4: Plenary	Smeaton room
14:30-15:45	Session 5: Social media	Smeaton Room
14:30-15:45	Session 6: Behavioural standards and contingencies	Council Room
14:30-15:45	Session 7: Efficiency and effectiveness of crisis management	Palmer Room
16:00-16:45	Session 8 - Plenary	Smeaton room
16:45 onwards	Concluding sessions	Smeaton room

Citoyenneté et participation dans les territoires

Le rôle de la communication publique locale dans les différents pays de l'Union européenne

Seminario promosso da Cap Com, CDV, Regione Occitania, Parlamento europeo
Toulouse, 16-17 febbraio 2022

Relazione introduttiva

Di Stefano Rolando[1]

Cari Amici e Colleghi,

i patrocinatori di questo importante seminario (**Cap Com** e **Club di Venezia**, con il patrocinio di **Regione dell'Occitania** e del **Parlamento europeo**) mettono in chiara evidenza il perimetro in cui è collocato il tema della nostra discussione.
Le due istituzioni segnalano la dimensione regionale ed europea.
Il Club di Venezia esprime l'informale adesione della comunicazione governativa dei paesi membri della UE (insieme a quelli candidati e a confronto con le istituzioni europee e a molti soggetti e agenzie che agiscono nel processo comunicativo transnazionale europeo).
Cap Com – soggetto centrale dell'iniziativa – esprime la dimensione professionale della comunicazione territoriale.

Ringrazio chi ha ritenuto che io potessi dare anche un minimo di contributo introduttivo alla nostra discussione. Faccio appello al mio percorso, ormai diciamo abbastanza compiuto, solo per dire che può servire aver lavorato negli anni per le città (ho guidato il comitato brand della città di Milano), **le regioni** (sono stato segretario generale dell'Assemblea legislativa della Regione Lombardia), **le nazioni** (almeno la mia per dieci anni direttore generale dell'informazione del governo), le **istituzioni europee** (in vari contesti e funzioni).

E anche attraverso forme associative e professionali, che si sono molto esercitate sul tema delle interazioni tra processi comunicativi e livelli istituzionali. Quello del Club di Venezia è un terreno di metodo importante. L'informalità, la marginale difesa di interessi, la non decisionalità legata a doveri di rappresentanza. Ma in cambio anche la libertà di dialogo e di confronto; l'attenzione ai processi trasversali; la scelta sempre innovativa dei temi in agenda.

La velocità e la vastità dei cambiamenti

Nei 36 anni di vita del Club abbiamo visto un cambiamento radicale – cioè concettuale, tecnologico, civile – della comunicazione pubblica.

- Era verticale (nei dieci anni prima di internet), si è progressivamente orizzontalizzata.
- Era schiacciata professionalmente dalla comunicazione di impresa, da cui progressivamente ha assunto una ampia autonomia deontologica e anche tecnica.
- Era concentrata sulla riscoperta di due valori (la trasparenza e l'accesso); poi si è sviluppata nel quadro di almeno **dieci grandi specialismi**, che ne fanno comunità professionali distinte.
- In Europa aveva una contraddizione nord-sud e adesso sta crescendo la tematica est-ovest, mentre il nord-sud è diventato questione globale e certamente euro-mediterranea.
- Era piuttosto separata tra dinamiche locali e dinamiche nazionali ora – in evoluta globalizzazione – l'Europa (la cui legislazione ha un crescente recepimento automatico nelle legislazioni nazionali) interseca tutti i livelli e ogni livello ha una relazione convergente e conflittuale (in sostanza quindi competitiva) con gli altri. Ma gli ambiti si influenzano tutti di più e stanno in rete insieme.

Potrei andare avanti a lungo con questo modo di sfogliare il tempo e le trasformazioni.

Segnalo solo un punto fermo del mio pensiero. Che tende a vedere l'immensa centralità della trasformazione tecnologica e ora digitale, continuando tuttavia a vedere **la questione tecnologica come un mezzo e non come un fine**. Così come continuo a pensare che la vera vitalità in trasformazione di questo settore professionale sia quella di cogliere il cambiamento della domanda sociale. Cioè di contribuire, nella propria percezione diciamo istituzionale a generare o comunque a facilitare risposte

1 Presidente del *Club di Venezia*. Professore di *Comunicazione pubblica e politica* all'Università IULM di Milano. Già direttore generale (*Informazione ed editoria*) alla Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri; già segretario generale dell'Assemblea elettiva della Regione Lombardia; già presidente del *Comitato Brand della città di Milano*

in termini di cultura della spiegazione e dell'accompagnamento. Propongo schematicamente alcuni argomenti per dar corpo ma anche per semplificare questa complessità relazionale (senza cui non ha senso parlare solo della comunicazione puramente territoriale).

Il primo argomento riguarda **il nesso che la comunicazione pubblica ha con la politica**. Parlo quindi delle culture e delle regole che partono dalla società, lottano attorno ad idee e proposte, conquistano infine la rappresentanza democratica. E a quel punto devono convivere – possibilmente orientando e non "occupando" – con il quadro istituzionale e amministrativo che dovrebbe avere i propri binari di conduzione e gestione delle attività comunicative.

Tre brevi annotazioni:

- **L'origine costituzionale della funzione istituzionale** prevedrebbe in democrazia che lo Stato legiferi, che il Comune renda servizi e che le Regioni svolgano la ben difficile funzione di "integratore". Peccato che la politica abbia scelto di orientare la sua prima fila di dirigenti a svolgere la politica nazionale; la sua seconda fila a svolgere la politica locale e solo la sua terza fila a svolgere la politica regionale, ovvero intermedia. Non sempre, non dappertutto. Ma questa è stata la tendenza. Fare l'integratore in realtà è il mestiere più innovativo e complicato. Se non lo si fa si aprono conflitti inter-istituzionali.
- Nel tempo **la politica ha perduto caratura**, autorevolezza, e capacità progettuale. Ha però accentuato la funzione comunicativa. Ha cercato di incrementare la visibilità per proteggersi dal suo diminuito prestigio. E questi due aspetti hanno creato confusione di ruoli, in alcune realtà anche invasione di ruoli che ha sviato molta parte dell'autonomo sviluppo della comunicazione istituzionale.
- Si è però **creata dal basso una corrente di civismo articolato** (associazionismo di scopo, organizzazioni territoriali, esperienze civili legate a culture professionali e di impresa, ambientalismo, eccetera) che riesce anche nei territori a contrastare un po' la crescita dell'astensionismo elettorale, che modifica i termini del rapporto tra politica e amministrazioni.

Il secondo argomento riguarda **i grandi processi che hanno scosso, turbato, ma anche meglio focalizzato e quindi migliorato la qualità dei processi comunicativi trasversali tra le varie dimensioni** accennate.

Abbiamo al riguardo dei veri e propri cantieri aperti in cui si stanno formando nuove generazioni di operatori.

Che qui posso solo toccare per cenni. Ma a cui abbiamo dedicato non poche sessioni di lavoro del CdV oppure a cui abbiamo partecipato unendo l'agenda con altri organismi. Mi riferisco a:

- **I processi migratori** (attorno a cui va ricercato un nuovo equilibrio di interpretazione e di iniziativa tra Europa del nord ed Europa del sud con il coinvolgimento decisivo delle realtà territoriali)
- La **nuova dialettica città/campagna** che è alla base di molti fenomeni di polarizzazione del rapporto attuale con la globalizzazione (salute, ambiente, processi alimentari, energia, traporto, mobilità, eccetera); che tuttavia ha creato conflittualità anche nei processi di comunicazione pubblica (l'esempio maggiore ha riguardato la vicenda della Brexit).
- **La rivoluzione cognitiva e quella organizzativa che sta procedendo attorno alla realtà della pandemia in atto**, dividendo la società tra la passività e la reattività e mettendo in movimento ambiti di riprogettazione che sono rilevanti sia nel campo imprenditoriale, sia nei servizi pubblici sia nel campo della formazione, sia nelle dinamiche promozionali di territori in cui cambiano radicalmente i paradigmi della mobilità e della velocità.
- L'immensa **trasformazione della comunicazione generazionale** che sta segnando separazione di contenuto, di tecnologie e di processo; tagliando a fette anagrafiche le nostre società e inquadrando nuove priorità di attenzione ma anche di conflitto attorno ai diritti di genere, ai processi educativi ai diritti di accesso al mercato del lavoro, eccetera.
- E a proposito di questioni generazioni dobbiamo mettere in agenda un tema inaccettabile per tutti i paesi membri dell'Europa: la crescita del numero dei **giovani che dai 15 ai**

25 anni vivono senza studiare e senza lavorare. Parlo per il mio paese: il dato del 22% è inaccettabile, inaccettabile, inaccettabile.

Per la comunicazione territoriale: la prospettiva del *Public Branding*

I miei amici di Cap Com sanno che da anni – nel quadro dei **nuovi specialismi che originano dalla Comunicazione Pubblica** – ritengo che il ***Public Branding*** sia una grande opportunità (culturale, professionale e politica) di affrontare il tema della promozione del territorio in modo meno riduttivo, ovvero non solo per ragioni di marketing commerciale ma con **attenzione ai temi storici, identitari, narrativi e relazionali.**

Per le nostre comunità "vendere" il territorio non è tutto. E molto spesso non è neppure questo il problema principale. Conta avere chiaro che la coesione identitaria (su cui incide il passato e il nuovo cambiamento) chiede di essere governata in equilibrio con i messaggi che riguardano reputazione e attrattività.

La pandemia ci ha insegnato molte cose al riguardo. Che rafforzano l'aspetto sociale e civile della missione, non solo quello tecnico legato agli aspetti di mercato.

Comunicatori pubblici: cambiare parte della formazione e parte della mission

A fronte di **come si combinano le realtà** a cui mi sono riferito (la crisi di rappresentanza della politica, la crescita di fenomeni sociali anche nel quadro di processi globali che producono discontinuità) **la comunicazione pubblica deve profondamente interrogarsi ponendosi domande sulla sua condizione formativa e sulla sua missione etica e culturale**.

Parto dall'approccio che proprio in questi due anni di pandemia mi ha portato a **riscrivere tutti i testi e i manuali di comunicazione pubblica e di public branding che nel corso degli anni avevo prodotto.**

Anche qui vado solo per cenni.

1. Dobbiamo **esplicitare di più nella definizione della mission della comunicazione pubblica nazionale e territoriale dei nostri paesi la lotta all'analfabetismo funzionale** che (classificazioni OCSE) arriva in alcuni paesi a toccare livelli inauditi rispetto alla definizione di "paese civile" che diamo a noi stessi. Significa persone che sanno magari leggere e scrivere ma che non capirebbero neanche una parola di ciò che ci stiamo dicendo in questi due giorni. Questa è la base sociale di ogni e qualunque negazionismo che si sta sviluppando in Europa e nel mondo.
2. Dobbiamo spingere perché resti in tensione **la comunicazione scientifica** anche alla fine di questa pandemia.
3. Dobbiamo **investire nell'ambito della relazionalità**, una parte delle funzioni che credevamo bastasse svolgere davanti a un video, a un pezzo di carta o a un telefono. Parlo proprio del concreto **accompagnamento sociale** soprattutto in materia di coesione, integrazione e forma di vecchie e nuove disuguaglianze.
4. Dobbiamo costruire nel territorio **concrete forme di sussidiarietà comunicativa tra pubblico e privato** per razionalizzare un po' il corso dei processi comunicativi coinvolgendo soggetti beneficiari dell'attuazione di compiti non facilmente delegabili.
5. Dobbiamo essere **attivi nel patto con il sistema educativo** per diminuire i tempi di contrasto dell'**analfabetismo digitale** soprattutto lavorando nel campo della terza età.

Individuare e depotenziare gli stereotipi

Tutte le volte che ci si propone una trasformazione di percorso bisogna **individuare gli stereotipi** che abbiamo accumulato per combatterli.

Chiudo con questo breve elenco.

1. **Il quadro operativo non è più verticale**. Lo sanno tutti ma una parte del sistema fa finta di dimenticarlo.
2. Nella cultura di impresa è **il marketing** che traina la comunicazione (perché abbassa i costi commerciali generali) e la politica ha mutuato questa cultura. **Ma le istituzioni devono parlare a tutti** e quindi devono ammettere solo un marketing attuativo che si limiti a distinguere e adeguare la produzione dei messaggi.
3. **La politica ha invaso molti campi** di azione della comunicazione istituzionale. Non c'è difesa possibile da parte dei funzionari, che sono poco sindacalizzati e molto preoccupati della loro carriere. Dunque bisogna promuovere regole applicabili.
4. Le stesse regole dovrebbero contenere professionalmente l'eccesso **di giornalistizzazione** che c'è stato nel settore pubblico, essendo tuttavia quella dei giornalisti una cultura importante per la semplificazione e per ricerca della notiziabilità.
5. L'Europa, infine, sa che la comunicazione istituzionale è **un terreno di gelosia delle nazioni**. Arriveremo a processi uniformati quando faremo gli Stati Uniti d'Europa. E non basterà perché, almeno per i territori, sarà necessario arrivare anche al *federalismo*. Ma almeno cominciamo a creare un **sostegno concreto da parte dell'Europa a piani di formazione professionale** con aiuti concessi a chi ha simili regole di perimetro. Questo sarebbe un passo avanti con benefici enormi in poco tempo.

Il mio tempo è scaduto.
Ringrazio per l'ascolto.
Confermo la mia felicità per essere in una città che ho conosciuto da bambino perché una parte della mia famiglia stava a Montpellier e si facevano viaggi istruttivi regionali. E la sentivamo un po' come "casa nostra" perché la prima cosa che spiegavano era che Tolosa era "una città romana". Auguro a questa conferenza di far fare alcuni passi avanti per le nostre consapevolezze che sono magari più uniformi di quel che crediamo.

Citoyenneté et participation dans les territoires

Le rôle de la communication publique locale dans les différents pays de l'Union européenne

Rapport introductif

Par Stefano Rolando[1]

Chers amis et collègues,

les partenaires de cet important séminaire (**Cap Com** et **Club de Venise**, avec le patronage de la **Région Occitanie** et du **Parlement européen**) mettent bien en évidence le périmètre dans lequel se situe le sujet de notre discussion.
Les **deux institutions** représentent la dimension régionale et européenne.
Le **Club de Venise** exprime l'adhésion informelle de la communication gouvernementale des pays membres de l'UE (avec les pays candidats et en comparaison avec les institutions européennes et avec de nombreux sujets et agences qui agissent dans le processus de communication transnationale européenne).
Cap Com, sujet central de l'initiative, exprime la dimension professionnelle de la communication territoriale.

Je remercie ceux qui ont estimé que je pouvais même apporter un minimum de contribution introductive à notre discussion.

J'en appelle à mon parcours, disons maintenant plutôt accompli, seulement pour dire qu'il peut être utile d'avoir travaillé au fil des années pour les villes (j'ai dirigé le comité de marque de la ville de Milan), les régions (j'ai été secrétaire général de l'Assemblée législative de la région de Lombardie), les nations (au moins le mien, pendant dix ans directeur général de l'information gouvernementale), les institutions européennes (dans divers contextes et fonctions).

Et aussi à travers des formes associatives et professionnelles, qui se sont beaucoup pratiquées sur le thème des interactions entre processus de communication et niveaux institutionnels.

Celui du Club de Venise est un **champ méthodologique plutôt important**. L'informalité, la défense marginale des intérêts, la non-décision liée aux devoirs de représentation. Mais en échange aussi la liberté de dialogue et de discussion ; l'attention aux processus

1 Président du *Club de Venise*. Professeur de *Communication Publique et Politique* à l'Université IULM de Milan. Ancien Directeur Général (*Information et Edition*) à la Présidence du Conseil des Ministres ; ancien secrétaire général de l'assemblée élective de la Région de Lombardie ; ancien président du comité de marque de la ville de Milan

transversaux ; le choix toujours innovant des sujets à l'ordre du jour.

La rapidité et l'ampleur des changements

Au cours des 36 années de vie du Club, nous avons assisté à un changement radical - c'est-à-dire conceptuel, technologique, civil - dans la communication publique.

- Elle était verticale (dans les dix ans avant internet), elle est progressivement devenue horizontale.
- Elle a été écrasée professionnellement par la communication d'entreprise, dont elle a progressivement assumé une large autonomie éthique mais aussi technique.
- Elle était centrée sur la redécouverte de deux valeurs (transparence et accès) ; puis elle s'est développée dans le cadre d'au moins dix grandes spécialités qui en font des communautés professionnelles distinctes.
- En Europe, il y avait une contradiction nord-sud et maintenant l'enjeu est-ouest s'amplifie, tandis que l'axe nord-sud est devenu un enjeu global et certainement euro-méditerranéen.
- C'était assez séparé entre les dynamiques locales et nationales maintenant - dans une mondialisation évoluée - l'Europe (dont la législation a une transposition automatique croissante dans les législations nationales) croise tous les niveaux et chaque niveau a une relation convergente et conflictuelle (essentiellement donc concurrentielle) avec les autres. Mais les domaines s'influencent davantage les uns les autres et sont en réseau.

Je pourrais continuer indéfiniment cette façon de parcourir le temps et les transformations.
Je ne fais qu'indiquer un point fixe de ma pensée. Qui tend à voir l'immense centralité de la transformation technologique et désormais numérique, tout en continuant à voir la question technologique comme un moyen et non comme une fin. Tout comme je continue à penser que la vraie vitalité de ce secteur professionnel doit être d'intercepter l'évolution de la demande sociale. C'est-à-dire contribuer, dans sa perception, disons institutionnelle, à générer ou en tout cas à faciliter des réponses en termes de culture d'explication et d'accompagnement.

Je vous propose schématiquement quelques arguments pour donner corps mais aussi pour simplifier cette complexité relationnelle (sans laquelle cela n'a aucun sens de ne parler que de communication purement territoriale).

Le premier argument concerne **le lien entre la communication publique et la politique**. Je parle donc des cultures et des règles qui sortent de la société, se débattent autour d'idées et de propositions, et finalement conquièrent la représentation démocratique. Et à ce moment-là, elles doivent coexister - éventuellement orienter et non « occuper » - avec le cadre institutionnel et administratif qui doit avoir ses propres voies de conduite et de gestion des activités de communication.

Trois brèves notes :

- La distinction de la fonction institutionnelle exigerait, dans une démocratie, que l'Etat légifère, que la Commune rende des services et que les Régions remplissent la très difficile fonction «d'intégrateur». A vrai dire, dans de nombreux pays, la politique a choisi d'utiliser son premier rang de dirigeants pour mener à bien la politique nationale. Utiliser son deuxième rang pour faire de la politique locale. Et de n'utiliser que son troisième rang pour mener à bien la politique régionale, ou intermédiaire. Ce n'est pas toujours et pas partout. Mais c'était la tendance. Être un supplément est en fait le travail le plus innovant et le plus compliqué. Si cela n'est pas fait, des conflits interinstitutionnels surgissent.
- Au fil du temps, la politique a perdu son calibre, son autorité et sa capacité de planification. Cependant, il a accentué la fonction communicative. Il a essayé d'**augmenter la visibilité** pour se protéger de son prestige diminué. Et ces deux aspects ont créé une confusion des rôles, voire dans certaines réalités un envahissement des rôles qui a détourné une grande partie du développement autonome de la communication institutionnelle.
- Cependant, un courant de civisme articulé s'est créé par en bas (associations à vocation, organisations territoriales, expériences citoyennes liées aux cultures professionnelles et d'entreprise, écologiste, etc.) qui parvient également à contrecarrer la croissance de l'abstention électorale dans les territoires, qui modifie les termes de la relation entre politique et administration.

Le deuxième argument concerne **les grands processus qui ont secoué, perturbé, mais aussi mieux focalisé et donc amélioré la qualité des processus de communication transversale entre les différentes dimensions** évoquées.
À cet égard, nous avons des chantiers ouverts dans lesquels de nouvelles générations d'opérateurs sont formées. Qu'ici je ne peux qu'effleurer brièvement.
Mais auquel nous avons consacré pas mal de séances de travail du CdV. Ou auxquelles nous avons participé en combinant notre agenda avec d'autres instances. Par exemple :

- Les **processus migratoires** (autour desquels un nouvel équilibre d'interprétation et d'initiative doit être recherché entre l'Europe du Nord et l'Europe du Sud avec une implication déterminante des réalités territoriales)
- La **nouvelle dialectique ville/campagne** qui est à la base de nombreux phénomènes de polarisation dans le rapport actuel à la mondialisation (santé, environnement, agro-alimentaire, énergie, transports, mobilité, etc.) ; qui, cependant, a également créé des conflits dans les processus de communication publique (le principal exemple concernait l'affaire du Brexit).
- La révolution cognitive et organisationnelle qui s'opère autour de la réalité de la pandémie en cours, divisant la société entre passivité et réactivité et mettant en branle de nouveaux projets pertinents tant dans le domaine des entreprises, tant dans les services publics que dans le domaine de la formation, et dans des dynamiques promotionnelles de territoires dans lesquelles les paradigmes de la mobilité et de la vitesse changent radicalement. L'immense **transformation de la communication générationnelle** qui marque la séparation des contenus, des technologies et des processus ; découper nos sociétés en tranches et définir de nouvelles priorités d'attention mais aussi de conflit autour des droits de genre, des processus éducatifs, des droits d'accès au marché du travail, etc.
- Et en parlant de **questions générationnelles**, il faut mettre à l'ordre du jour une question inacceptable **pour tous les pays membres de l'Europe** : la croissance du nombre de jeunes de 15 à 25 ans qui vivent sans étudier et sans travailler. Je parle de mon pays : le chiffre de 22 % est inacceptable, inacceptable, inacceptable.

Pour la communication territoriale : la perspective du *Public Branding*

Mes amis de Cap Com savent que depuis des années - dans le cadre des **nouvelles spécialités issues de la *Communication Publique*** - je crois que le ***Public Branding*** est une belle opportunité (culturelle, professionnelle et politique) pour aborder la question de la valorisation du territoire dans une manière moins réductrice, ce n'est pas seulement pour des raisons de marketing commercial mais avec une **attention aux thèmes historiques, identitaires, narratifs et relationnels**.

Pour nos collectivités, « vendre » le territoire n'est pas tout.
Et très souvent ce n'est même pas le problème principal.

Il est important d'être clair sur le fait que la **cohésion identitaire** (qui est affectée par le passé et le nouveau changement) doit être régie en équilibre avec les messages concernant la réputation et l'attractivité.

La pandémie nous a beaucoup appris à ce sujet. Qui renforcent l'aspect social et civil de la mission, et pas seulement l'aspect technique lié aux aspects marchands.

Communicateurs publics : changer une partie de la formation et une partie de la mission

Face à la manière dont se conjuguent les réalités auxquelles j'ai fait référence (la crise de la représentation du politique, la croissance des phénomènes sociaux aussi dans le cadre de processus globaux qui produisent la discontinuité), **la communication publique doit profondément s'interroger en s'interrogeant sur sa formation condition et sa mission éthique et culturelle**. Je pars de l'approche qui, au cours de ces deux années de pandémie, m'a amené à réécrire tous les textes et manuels de communication publique et de marque publique que j'avais produits au fil des ans. Même ici, je ne vais que pour des indices.

1. Nous devons préciser dans la définition de la mission de communication publique nationale et territoriale de nos pays la **lutte contre l'analphabétisme fonctionnel** qui (classifications OCDE) dans certains pays atteint des niveaux sans précédent par rapport à la définition de « pays civilisé » que nous nous donnons eux-mêmes. Cela veut dire des gens qui savent peut-être lire et écrire mais qui ne comprendraient même pas un mot de ce que nous nous disons pendant ces deux jours. C'est la base sociale de tout déni qui se développe en Europe et dans le monde.
2. Nous devons faire pression pour que la **communication scientifique** reste en tension même à la fin de cette pandémie.
3. Nous devons investir dans le **domaine de la relationnalité**, une partie des fonctions que nous croyions suffisantes pour remplir devant une vidéo, un bout de papier ou un téléphone. Je parle justement d'**accompagnement social concret**, notamment en matière de cohésion, d'intégration et de forme des inégalités anciennes et nouvelles.
4. Il faut construire des formes concrètes de **subsidiarité communicative entre espaces publics et espaces privés** sur le territoire pour rationaliser un peu le déroulement des processus de communication, impliquant les bénéficiaires de la mise en œuvre de tâches difficilement déléguées.
5. Nous devons être actifs dans le pacte avec le système éducatif pour **réduire le temps d'analphabétisme numérique** contrasté, notamment en travaillant dans le domaine des personnes âgées.

Identifier et affaiblir les stéréotypes

Chaque fois qu'une transformation du parcours est proposée, il est nécessaire d'identifier les stéréotypes que nous avons accumulés pour les combattre.
Je termine avec cette courte liste.

1. **Le tableau de bord n'est plus vertical**. Tout le monde le sait mais une partie du système fait semblant de l'oublier.
2. Dans la culture d'entreprise, c'est **le marketing** qui anime la communication (parce qu'il diminue les coûts commerciaux généraux) et la politique a emprunté cette culture. Mais les institutions doivent parler à tout le monde et ne doivent donc admettre qu'un marketing de mise en œuvre qui se limite à distinguer et adapter la production des messages.
3. **La politique** a envahi de nombreux champs d'action de la communication institutionnelle. Il n'y a pas de défense possible de la part des fonctionnaires, peu syndiqués et très soucieux de leur carrière. Il faut donc promouvoir les règles applicables. Et discuter avec les plus jeunes.
4. Les mêmes règles devraient contenir professionnellement **l'excès de journalisme** qui a eu lieu dans le secteur public, cependant celui des journalistes est une culture importante pour la simplification et la recherche de l'actualité.
5. Enfin, l'Europe sait que la communication institutionnelle est une **jalousie des nations**. Nous arriverons à des processus uniformes lorsque nous créerons les États-Unis d'Europe. Et ce ne sera pas suffisant car, au moins pour les territoires, il faudra aussi arriver au fédéralisme. Mais commençons au moins à créer un soutien concret de l'Europe aux plans de formation professionnelle avec des aides accordées à ceux qui ont des règles de périmètre similaires. Ce serait un pas en avant. Ce qui apporterait d'excellents résultats en peu de temps.

Mon temps est achevé.
Merci de votre attention.
Je confirme mon bonheur d'être dans une ville que j'ai rencontrée enfant car une partie de ma famille était à Montpellier et faisait des voyages pédagogiques en région. Et nous nous sommes sentis un peu "chez nous" car la première chose qu'ils nous ont expliquée était que Toulouse était "une ville romaine".
Je souhaite que cette conférence fasse avancer notre prise de conscience. Ce qui est peut-être plus uniforme qu'on ne le pense.

Citizenship and participation in the territories

The role of local public communication in the different countries of the European Union

Rapport introductif

Par Stefano Rolando[1]

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

the sponsors of this important seminar (Cap Com and Club of Venice, with the patronage of the Occitania Region and the European Parliament) clearly highlight the perimeter in which the topic of our discussion is located.
The two institutions highlight the regional and European dimension. The Club of Venice expresses the informal adhesion of the governmental communication of the EU member countries (together with the candidate countries and in comparison with the European institutions and with many subjects and agencies that act in the European transnational communication process). Cap Com - the central subject of the initiative - expresses the professional dimension of territorial communication.

I thank those who felt that I could even make a minimum of introductory contribution to our discussion. I appeal to my path, now let's say quite complete, only to say that it can be useful to have worked over the years for the cities (I led the brand committee of the city of Milan), the regions (I was secretary general of the Legislative Assembly of the Lombardy Region), nations (at least mine for ten years general director of government information), European institutions (in various contexts and functions).

And also through associative and professional forms, which have practiced a lot on the theme of interactions between communication processes and institutional levels.
That of the Club of Venice is an important methodological field. Informality, the marginal defense of interests, the non-decision-making linked to the duties of representation. But in exchange

1 President of the Club of Venice. Professor of Public Communication and Politics at the IULM University of Milan. Former General Manager (Information and Publishing) at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers; former secretary general of the elective assembly of the Lombardy Region; former president of the Brand Committee of the city of Milan.

also the freedom of dialogue and discussion; attention to transversal processes; the always innovative choice of the topics on the agenda.

The speed and scale of the changes

In the 36 years of the Club's life we have seen a radical change - that is, conceptual, technological, civil - in public communication.

- It was vertical (in the ten years before the internet), it has gradually become horizontal.
- It was professionally crushed by corporate communication, from which it gradually assumed a broad ethical and also technical autonomy.
- It was focused on the rediscovery of two values (transparency and access); then it developed within the framework of at least ten major specialisms, which make it distinct professional communities.
- In Europe it had a north-south contradiction and now the east-west issue is growing, while the north-south has become a global and certainly Euro-Mediterranean issue.
- It was quite separate between local and national dynamics now - in an evolved globalization - Europe (whose legislation has an increasing automatic transposition into national legislations) intersects all levels and each level has a convergent and conflictual relationship (essentially therefore competitive) with the others. But the areas all influence each other more and are networked together.

I could go on and on with this way of browsing through time and transformations.
I only point out a fixed point of my thought. Which tends to see the immense centrality of technological and now digital transformation, while continuing to see the technological issue as a means and not as an end. Just as I continue to think that the real vitality in transformation of this professional sector is to grasp the change in social demand. That is to contribute, in one's perception, let's say institutional, to generate or in any case to facilitate answers in terms of the culture of explanation and accompaniment. I schematically propose some arguments to give substance but also to simplify this relational complexity (without which it makes no sense to speak only of purely territorial communication).

Three brief notes

- The constitutional origin of the institutional function would foresee in a democracy that the State legislates, that the Municipality renders services and that the Regions perform the very difficult function of "integrator". Too bad that politics has chosen to direct its front row of leaders to carry out national politics; its second row to carry out local politics and only its third row to carry out regional, or intermediate, policy. Not always, not everywhere. But that was the trend. Being a supplement is actually the most innovative and complicated job. If this is not done, inter-institutional conflicts arise.
- Over time, politics has lost its caliber, authority, and planning capacity. However, it has accentuated the communicative function. He tried to increase visibility to protect himself from his diminished prestige. And these two aspects have created confusion of roles, in some realities even an invasion of roles that has diverted much of the autonomous development of institutional communication.
- However, a current of articulated civicism has been created from below (purposeful associations, territorial organizations, civil experiences linked to professional and business cultures, environmentalism, etc.) which also manages to counteract the growth of electoral abstention in the territories , which changes the terms of the relationship between politics and administrations.

The second argument concerns the great processes that have shaken, disturbed, but also better focused and therefore improved the quality of the transversal communication processes between the various dimensions mentioned.

In this regard, we have real open construction sites in which new generations of operators are being formed.
Which here I can only touch for hints. But to which we have dedicated quite a few working sessions of the CdV or to which we have participated by combining the agenda with other bodies. I mean:

- Migratory processes (around which a new balance of interpretation and initiative must be sought between Northern Europe and Southern Europe with the decisive involvement of territorial realities)
- The new city / countryside dialectic which is at the basis of many polarization phenomena in the current relationship with globalization (health, environment, food processes, energy, transport, mobility, etc.); which, however, has also created conflict in public communication processes (the main example concerned the Brexit affair).
- The cognitive and organizational revolution that is proceeding around the reality of the pandemic in progress, dividing society between passivity and reactivity and setting in motion areas of redesign that are relevant both in the entrepreneurial field, both in public services and in the field of training, both in the promotional dynamics of territories in which the paradigms of mobility and speed change radically.
- The immense transformation of generational communication that is marking the separation of content, technologies and processes; cutting our societies into slices and framing new priorities of attention but also of conflict around gender rights, educational processes, access rights to the labor market, and so on.
- And speaking of issues for generations, we must put on the agenda an issue that is unacceptable for all member countries of Europe: the growth in the number of young people aged 15 to 25 who live without studying and without working. I am speaking for my country: the figure of 22% is unacceptable, unacceptable, unacceptable.

For territorial communication: the perspective of *Public Branding*

My friends at Cap Com have known that for years - in the context of the new specialisms that originate from Public Communication - I believe that Public Branding is a great opportunity (cultural, professional and political) to address the issue of promoting the territory in a less reductive way. , that is, not only for commercial marketing reasons but with attention to historical, identity, narrative and relational themes.

For our communities, "selling" the territory is not everything. And very often this is not even the main problem. It is important to be clear that identity cohesion (which is affected by the past and the new change) needs to be governed in balance with the messages concerning reputation and attractiveness.
The pandemic has taught us a lot about this. Which strengthen the social and civil aspect of the mission, not just the technical one linked to the market aspects.

Public communicators: change part of the training and part of the mission

Faced with how the realities to which I have referred are combined (the crisis of representation of politics, the growth of social phenomena also in the framework of global processes that produce discontinuity), public communication must deeply question itself by asking itself questions about its formative condition and its ethical and cultural mission.
I start from the approach that in these two years of pandemic has led me to rewrite all the texts and manuals of public communication and public branding that I had produced over the years.
Even here I go only for hints.

1. We must make clearer in the definition of the national and territorial public communication mission of our countries the fight against functional illiteracy which (OECD classifications) in some countries reaches unprecedented levels compared to the definition of "civilized country" that we give to us themselves. It means people who may know how to read and write but who would not understand even a word of what we are saying to each other in these two days. This is the social basis of any and all denialism that is developing in Europe and in the world.
2. We must push for scientific communication to remain in tension even at the end of this pandemic.
3. We must invest in the area of relationality, a part of the functions that we believed were enough to perform in front of a video, a piece of paper or a telephone. I am speaking precisely of concrete social accompaniment, especially in matters of cohesion, integration and the form of old and new inequalities.
4. We must build concrete forms of communicative subsidiarity between public and private areas in the area to rationalize the course of communication processes a little, involving beneficiaries of the implementation of tasks that are not easily delegated.
5. We must be active in the pact with the educational system to reduce the time of contrasting digital illiteracy, especially by working in the field of the elderly.

Identify and weaken stereotypes

Whenever a transformation of the path is proposed, it is necessary to identify the stereotypes that we have accumulated to fight them.
I close with this short list.

1. The dashboard is no longer vertical. Everyone knows this but part of the system pretends to forget it.
2. In business culture it is marketing that drives communication (because it lowers general commercial costs) and politics has borrowed this culture. But the institutions must speak to everyone and therefore must only admit an implementation marketing that is limited to distinguishing and adapting the production of messages.
3. Politics has invaded many fields of action of institutional communication. There is no defense possible from officials, who are not very unionized and very concerned about their careers. Therefore applicable rules must be promoted.
4. The same rules should professionally contain the excess of journalism that has taken place in the public sector, however that of journalists is an important culture for simplification and the search for newsworthiness.
5. Finally, Europe knows that institutional communication is a jealousy of nations. We will arrive at uniform processes when we make the United States of Europe. And it will not be enough because, at least for the territories, it will also be necessary to arrive at federalism. But at least let's begin to create concrete support from Europe for vocational training plans with aid granted to those with similar perimeter rules. This would be a step forward with enormous benefits in no time.

My time is up.
Thank you for listening.
I confirm my happiness for being in a city that I met as a child because part of my family was in Montpellier and did regional educational trips. And we felt a bit like "our home" because the first thing they explained was that Toulouse was "a Roman city". I wish this conference to take some steps forward for our awareness that is perhaps more uniform than we think.

AGENDA

International Seminar - Séminaire international

Citizenship and civic participation in the territories: the role of local public communication in the different European Union's countries

Toulouse (France), 16-17 February 2022
Interpretation in French and English

DAY 1 - Wednesday 16 February 2022

10:30 – 11:00

Plenary Opening

Welcome speech by:

- **Yves CHARMONT** - délégué général, Cap'Com

Address by:

- **Olivier ROMERO GAYO** - Occitanie Regional Council member, rapporteur on participative democracy

Inaugural speech by:

- **Stefano ROLANDO** - President of the Club of Venice

11:00 – 12:30

Introductory session

The challenges for the public communicator in a polarised society, faced with multiple crises

Panellists:

- **Olivier ROMERO GAYO** - Occitanie Regional Council member, rapporteur on participative democracy
- **Isabelle COUSTET (Expert key-note)** - Head of the European Parliament Office in France, Directorate-General for communication
- **Marco INCERTI** - Director of Communications, European University Institute, Florence
- **Christophe ROUILLON** - President of the Socialist group of the European Committee of the Regions, Mayor of Coulaines
- **Erik DEN HOEDT** - Director, Ministry of General Affairs, Netherlands, Vice President of the Club of Venice

12:30 – 14:00

Lunch

14:00 – 16:00

Session 2

Placing the citizen at the centre of the European debate: civil society mobilisation and national and local interactive realities

Panellists:

- **Pier Virgilio DASTOLI** - President of the European Movement - Italy, President of the Scientific Committee of the Italian Association of communicators of the Public Administration (COMPA)
- **Franck BOUSQUET** - professor, Toulouse University, author, press specialist
- **Alessandro GIORDANI** - Head of Unit, "Networks in the Member States", Directorate-General for Communication, European Commission
- **Anthony ZACHARZEWSKI** - Director of The Democratic Society (DEMSOC)
- **A representative** of the Ministry of Ecological transition, France
- **Marius JANUKONIS** - Director of Communication and Cultural Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lithuania

15:30 – 16:00

Coffee break

16:00 – 17:30

Session 3

National and local governance faced with global crises (climate/environment, health): joint analysis, coherent planning, structured and integrated action

Panellists:

- **Laurène STREIFF** - Director responsible for participative democracy, Occitanie Region
- **Ave EERMA** - Head of the Integrated Political Crisis Response Crisis Communication Network (IPCR CCN), National Coordinator for Risk and Crisis Communication, Strategic Comms Dept, Government Office of Estonia
- **Verena RINGLER** - Director, European Commons and AGORA European Green Deal
- **Céline PASCUAL ESPUNY** - Professor, Aix-Marseille University, Co-Director of the Mediterranean Institute, Information and Communication Sciences (IMSIC)
- **George SURUGIU** - Senior Communication Advisor, General Secretariat of the Government, Romania
- **Giuseppe MACCA** - Researcher, University of Enna 'Kore', co-founder and CEO of Ethics4growth

17:30 – 18:00

Plenary Session

Re-organising communication: cross-border cooperation, partnerships and twinning

Address by:

- **Olivier ROMERO GAYO** - Occitanie Regional Council member, rapporteur on participative democracy

DAY 2 - Thursday 17 February 2022

10:00 – 11:30

Session 5

National and local governance faced with global crises (climate/environment, health): joint analysis, coherent planning, structured and integrated action

Moderated by:

- **Marco INCERTI**

Panellists:

- **Alessandro LOVARI** - Assistant professor of sociology of communication, Department of Political and Social Sciences, University of Cagliari, Italy
- **Elizabeth WILTSHIRE** - Technology and Public Policy specialist, Associate Fellow, Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, Brussels
- **Susanne WEBER** - Head of Digital Communication, Federal Chancellery, Austria
- **Robert WESTER** - Managing Director, Berenschot EU

11:30 – 12:15

Plenary Session

Civic education and respect of ideals: communicators and citizens allied to defend democratic values

Key-note by Emilie Cazenave - Policy Analyst, Open Government Unit, Public Governance Directorate, OECD

12:15 – 14:00

Lunch

14:00 – 15:10

Session 6

Democracy on the ground – regional citizen participation and the voice of regions at EU level

Address by:

- **Christian SPAHR** - Secretary-General, European Assembly of the Regions (AER)

Roundtable:

- **Anthony ZACHARZEWSKI**
- **Erik DEN HOEDT**
- **Verena RINGLER**
- **Pier Virgilio DASTOLI**
- **Stefano ROLANDO**
- **Vincenzo LE VOCI**

15:10 – 15:30

Session 7

Merging/joining forces investing in awareness-raising, information and storytelling: communicating tolerance, inclusiveness and solidarity

Presentation by:

- **Pierre PIRARD** - Director of Almolu (Belgium)

  live documentary on local dynamics and citizens' mobilisation in view of May 16th 2022 International day of living together in peace

15:30 – 16:00

Closing plenary

Summing up

Addresses by:

- **Vincenzo Le Voci** - Secretary-General of the Club of Venice
- **Dominique Mégard** - Founder of Cap'Com

10th South East Europe Government Communication Conference

"How to earn public trust in times of clash of values"

Zagreb, Croatia, 8 April 2022

DRAFT CONCLUSIONS

Challenges

The return of war in Europe in 2022, in the form of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, underlines the perils of taking core democratic values for granted, as well as the importance of earning and retaining public trust in those values and in democratic institutions.

The brutal reality of destruction in Ukraine reveals the actual objectives behind the years of targeted disinformation and state-sponsored propaganda campaigns.

This further accentuates the need for effective communication with and active engagement of citizens in protecting and advancing the democratic values of human dignity, freedom, equality, rule of law and respect for human rights.

The atrocities of war, blatant lies and sinister propaganda, sit in sharp contrast with and shed a completely new light on the European Union's ongoing effort to engage citizens in a debate on Europe's present-day challenges and future priorities, through the Conference on the Future of Europe.

However welcome and important the Conference may be for fostering meaningful communication with and engagement of citizens, the real value of this undertaking will be measured by the level of European citizens' long-term trust in democratic institutions and support for shared values.

People tend to appreciate engagement opportunities to the extent they see purpose and results of their engagement. Democratic institutions should, therefore, be completely honest about the participation process, while carefully managing people's expectations and always delivering on the promise of meaningful and impactful engagement.

To this end, communication needs to be an integral part of policymaking, as political follow-up remains vital for maintaining the credibility of the process and sustaining motivation for engagement.

In one important aspect, the dialogue on the future of Europe did not fully succeed in breaking the bubble. Namely, in the countries aspiring to join the EU, the involvement of future EU citizens in a debate about their own future was largely perceived as more of an afterthought, than an integral part of a well-structured process.

In cases when Europe is not delivering on its commitments, as in the notable case of North Macedonia's EU accession bid, lack of political action inevitably cripples communication and seriously undermines the transformative power and credibility of the EU enlargement policy as a whole.

In addition, the urgency of Europe's crisis response and recovery efforts poses a general risk of insufficient involvement of regional and local authorities and local audiences in policy dialogue and communication.

Opportunities

The Budva Declaration, SEECOM's founding document and Europe's first transnational declaration of core professional and ethical principles of public sector communications, is as relevant today as it was when it was first adopted back in 2012.

The past ten years have offered plenty of evidence that professional and ethnical institutional communication, as one that provides avenues for citizens' impactful engagement in policymaking, is a powerful means of earning public trust for democratic institutions and securing long-term support for core democratic values.

Russia's aggression on Ukraine has shed a completely new light on the relevance and value of public engagement as a way of giving people a say in how democratic institutions perform on their behalf. Public engagement not only enables institutions to keep track of citizens' expectation and ensures that public policies are better tailored to people's actual needs, it also allows citizens to demand change and brings greater transparency and accountability of democratic institutions.

It is, therefore, no wonder that one of the key takeaways from the Conference on the Future of Europe is that Europeans want more avenues for meaningful engagement and participation in EU policymaking. This input poses a major opportunity to make the bodies and institutions of the European Union more accountable, transparent and responsive and, therefore, more in tune with the views, concerns and needs of European citizens.

In the increasingly complex communication environment, marked by the clash of values, vibrant free press is an essential asset of any democracy. Journalists are never the enemies of institutional communicators, as both professions aspire to serve the public interest and as both are accountable to the citizens.

Civil society organisations and networks can be powerful allies in ensuring meaningful and impactful dialogue with citizens, which is especially relevant at the regional and local level.

Culture, including popular culture, holds great potential for rallying Europeans around their shared identity, values and future. Whenever a cultural product of an aspiring EU member state is recognised and appreciated within the Union, that recognition and appreciation inevitably reinforces pro-European sentiments among the people of that country.

Ways forward

In times of clash of values, communication about Europe should go back to basics, as people need to be engaged in a dialogue about the importance of a peaceful, democratic society for their lives, and the role that the shared European values play in this.

The Conference on the Future of Europe should herald many new opportunities for European citizens to have a greater say in what the Union does and how it works for them. It should allow for an open, inclusive, transparent and structured debate, and make it easier for European citizens to get involved in democracy, beyond the European elections.

The way European democratic institutions respond to Russia's invasion on Ukraine will have a direct impact on the credibility and popular support for a united Europe. Therefore, the level of popular support for shared European values will be largely dictated by the level of Europe's policy support for those values.

Engaging Europeans in how Europe works and delivers for them is a vital step in making European democracy fit for the future. The best way of planning for the future is to discuss it with young people. In the EU accession countries, in particular, meaningful and impactful dialogue with the youth should be part of an integrated policy and communication response to the fact that the growing number of young people are leaving those countries impatient with the slow pace of EU accession process.

In times of crisis, speed of institutional communication is of essence, in order to be able to limit the effects of disinformation. Proactive approach of public institutions in engaging citizens in a dialogue on core democratic values is a vital tool in countering disinformation narratives.

To ensure meaningful and impactful engagement of citizens in key public policy issues, institutions need to ensure impactful presence through many channels of communication, which requires continued investment in professional development of institutional communicators.

For any meaningful dialogue to take place, mutual respect between the parties involved is vital. Which is why decent and respectful institutional communication is of essence. Institutional communication must always be truthful and institutions should never pretend that disruptive ideas do not exist, however ludicrous they may appear to be. If they are prominent and impactful enough, they need to be addressed.

At the same time, communication about the European Union should manage people's expectations. The EU's complexity and its intricate and often lengthy process of consensus building should be honestly acknowledged.

AGENDA

South East Europe Government Communication

Conference 2022

"How to earn public trust in times of clash of values"

Zagreb, Croatia - 8 April 2022
Sheraton Zagreb Hotel, Kneza Borne 2, Donji Grad

DAY 1 - Thursday 7 April 2022

19:00 | **Dinner reception**

DAY 2 - Friday 8 April 2022

9:00 – 9:30 **Registration**

9:30 – 9:45 **Welcome notes**

- **Hendrik SITTIG** - Head of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Media Programme South East Europe, Sofia
- **Ognian ZLATEV** - SEECOM Chairman; Head of the European Commission Representation in Croatia, Zagreb

Moderated by:

- **Vuk VUJNOVIĆ** - SEECOM Secretary General, Podgorica

9:45 – 10:00 **Keynote address**

- **Zdenko LUCIĆ** - State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia

10:00 – 11:30 **Panel 1 | Involving citizens in the European project: Beyond the Conference on the Future of Europe**

Lessons learned from the Conference on the Future of Europe and what next for participatory democracy in Europe.

Moderated by:

- **Vuk Vujnović** - SEECOM Secretary General, Podgorica

Panellists:

- **Suzanna MATVEJEVIC** - Senior Advisor for Outreach, Directorate for Communication, European Committee of the Regions, Brussels
- **Petar MARKOVIĆ** - Ambassador, Head of the Mission of Montenegro to the European Union, Podgorica
- **Vincenzo LE VOCI** - Secretary-General of the Club of Venice, Brussels
- **Ivana ĐURIĆ** - Head of Communications, Ministry of European Integration of Serbia, SEECOM Board Member, Belgrade

11:30 – 12:00 *Coffee break*

12:00 – 12:45

Plenary Talk, Impuls and Q&A

- **Steffen SEIBERT** - Former German Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesperson

13:00 – 14:30 *Lunch*

14:30 – 16:00

Panel 2 | Communicating European recovery

How to make EU recovery efforts work for citizens?

Moderated by:

- **Christian SPAHR** - SEECOM Board Member; Secretary General, Assembly of European Regions (AER), Brussels

Panellists:

- **Lilijana MADJAR** - Director, Regional Development Agency of the Ljubljana Urban Region, Ljubljana
- **Violeta STANIČIĆ** - Head of the European Parliament, Liaison Office in Zagreb
- **Dinka ŽIVALJ** - Spokesperson, City of Zagreb, Zagreb
- **Petar KARABOEV** - Deputy Editor-in-Chief at Dnevnik (Economedia), Sofia

16:00 – 16:30 *Coffee break*

10:00 – 11:30

Unconference | 10 years of Budva Declaration

Government communicators and journalists discuss the role of communication in advancing government transparency, accountability and public participation in policy making in South East Europe.

Facilitation by:

- **Leila Bičakčić** - Director at Center for Investigative Reporting (CIN), Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Nebojša REGOJE** - Head of Public Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina

18:00 – 18:10

Closing remarks

- **Ognian ZLATEV** - SEECOM Chairman; Head of the European Commission Representation in Croatia, Zagreb

19:00 *Dinner*

DAY 3 - Saturday 9 April 2022

9:00 – 10:30

SEECOM General Assembly

10:30 – 12:00

SEECOM Partners Meeting

Follow-up to the CoFE: Communicating institutional reforms?

Par Michaël Malherbe

The European Movement in Italy warmly welcomes the decision of the EP to **open the way to a deep reform of the EU** consistently with the proposals adopted by the **Conference on the future of Europe**.

The European Movement in Italy subscribes **the need and the urgency to change the Treaty of Lisbon** before the end of this legislature:

- with a **simplification** of the EU institutional architecture,
- with more **transparency** and **accountability**,
- reshaping the EU in a way that will guarantee its open **strategic autonomy** with a **single foreign and security policy** including a **common defence**,
- in the **effective and democratic decision making**,
- and with a **new reflection on EU competences**.

The European Movement in Italy is ready to support the EP proposals to amend the treaties:

- concerning the inclusion of health, healthcare, education, and energy among the **shared competences**,
- introducing an **emergency clause** whereby the Council by qualified majority voting and the EP can empower the Commission to act with extraordinary competences and to mobilize all necessary instruments in case of major crises in fields such as security and defense, health, and climate,
- changing unanimity decision making to **qualified majority voting** in the Council,
- providing the EP with **full co-decision legislative rights** where it has a consultative role and co-decision rights on the Budget including on the revenues,
- a **genuine legislative right of initiative** complemented by the **European Citizens Initiative** directly addressed to the EP,
- introducing an **EU-wide referendum**,
- introducing a **social progress protocol** to ensure that social rights are fully protected and safeguarded in case of conflict with economic freedoms, while respecting the competences of the social partners,
- introducing a **European citizenship statute** including the non-EU residents and a specific appeal to the Court of Justice on Fundamental Rights.

The European Movement in Italy draws the awareness of the EP to clarify the question of the **political borders of the EU**, the **institutional architecture of the Continent**, and the division of competences in a **multispeed European integration** and it is ready to submit its proposals before the start of the Convention.

However, and in view of the **enlargement** of the EU, the European Movement in Italy is convinced that the **political deepening** of the European integration to achieve its **federal goal** is inescapable - overcoming the conflicts between absolute sovereignties which risk blocking the way to a deep EU reform - by the **constituent role of the EP** elected in May 2024 on behalf of EU citizens.

At the same time, it is necessary to create a public space where the European interests prevail empowering by appropriate methods the participation of structured civil society, social partners, local and regional authorities in the unification of Europe, maintaining and enhancing the innovative dynamic created by the Conference on the future of Europe with the direct and deliberative engagement of the citizens.

Consistently with the role of the Convention, emphasized by several CSOs networks as well as Citizens Take Over Europe - considering the deadline of the 8th of June for the amendments in AFCO, the deadline of the 14th of June for the opinion of the other committees and the next plenary session of 22nd of June - the European Movement in Italy suggests:

- to strengthen the effectiveness and the democracy of the EU,
- additionally introducing shared competences in the fields of industrial and SMEs policies, training, culture, youth, and Civil Protection,
- exclusive competences in the Articles 208 to 221 TFEU,
- suggests to pursue social progress reinforcing EU competences to raise minimum standards and setting up European facilities for upward convergence in the social field,
- changing unanimity decision making to qualified majority voting in the European Council and in the Council by amending Articles 22, 42.2, 42.4, 46.6, 48.4, 48.6 TEU and Articles 19, 103, 153.2.b, 192, 311, 314, 352 TFEU,
- providing the EP with full co-decision rights notably in the Articles 5 and 121 TFEU always where the unanimity decision making change to qualified majority voting and in the nomination of the Members of the Court of Justice.

Moreover, and in accordance with the principle "no taxation without representation" the European Movement in Italy suggests submitting the multiannual financial framework on expenses and genuine own resources to an inter-parliamentary conference (assises interparlamentaires) where all the members split in political and transnational groups acting by a qualified majority.

Even more, the European Movement in Italy suggests providing the EP a full constitutional right to modify the treaties following the assent of an inter-parliamentary conference (Assises interparlamentaires) acting by a qualified majority voting without an intergovernmental Conference.

Rome, 23 of May 2022 (thirty-six anniversary of Altiero Spinelli's death)

Extracts of the Conclusions of the Conference on the Future of Europe[1]

INTRODUCTION

On 10 March 2021, European Parliament President David Sassoli, Prime Minister of Portugal António Costa, on behalf of the Council of the EU, and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen signed the Joint Declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe. Their pledge was simple: to allow, by way of a citizens-focused, bottom-up exercise, all Europeans to have a say on what they expect from the European Union and have a greater role in shaping the future of the Union. Their task was, by contrast, immensely challenging: the organisation, for the first time, of a transnational, multilingual and interinstitutional exercise of deliberative democracy, involving thousands of European citizens as well as political actors, social partners, civil society representatives and key stakeholders in accordance with article 16 of the Conference Rules of Procedure.

On 9 May 2022, after months of intense deliberations, the Conference concluded its work, putting forward a report on the final outcome that includes 49 proposals to the three EU Institutions. The proposals reflect the expectations of European citizens on nine topics: A stronger economy, social justice and jobs; Education, culture, youth and sport; Digital transformation; European democracy; Values and rights, rule of law, security; Climate change, environment; Health; EU in the world; and Migration. All of them are presented in this final report, which also aims to provide an overview of the various activities undertaken in the context of the unique process that the Conference on the Future of Europe has been.

Steered by three Co-Chairs – Guy Verhofstadt for the European Parliament, Ana Paula Zacarias, Gašper Dovžan and Clément Beaune successively for the Council of the EU, and Dubravka Šuica for the European Commission – and driven by an Executive Board (consisting of an equal representation of the three Institutions as well as observers from key stakeholders), the Conference has constituted an unprecedented experience of transnational deliberative democracy. It has also proven its historical relevance and importance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian aggression of Ukraine.

The Conference on the Future of Europe involved the establishment of the Conference's Rules of Procedure on 9 May 2021, the setting up of a Multilingual Digital Platform allowing European citizens to contribute in 24 EU languages, and the organisation of four European Citizens' Panels, six National Citizens' Panels, thousands of national and local events as well as seven Conference Plenaries. It is the result of unparalleled determination from the EU institutions, the Member States, but also and above all from European citizens, to debate the European Union's challenges and priorities and to introduce a new approach to the European project.

But this is only the beginning. In line with the founding text of the Conference, the three Institutions will now examine swiftly how to follow up effectively on this report, each within the framework of their competences and in accordance with the Treaties. The three Institutions' commitment in this regard is paramount.

EUROPEAN CITIZENS' PANELS

Citizens' Panels 1 . European Citizens' Panels The European Citizens' Panels were one of the main pillars of the Conference, together with the National Panels, the Multilingual Digital Platform and the Conference Plenary. They lie at the heart of the Conference on the Future of Europe and brought together around 800 citizens from all backgrounds and corners of the European Union. If the concept of Citizens' Panels or assemblies has been used for decades by municipalities and is increasingly visible at national and regional level, the panEuropean dimension was essentially uncharted. The European Citizens' Panels were the first transnational and multilingual experience of this scale and with this level of ambition. The remarkable interpretation set-up accompanying the process allowed for inclusive, respectful and efficient dialogue between the panellists, thereby ensuring the respect of multilingualism.

The European Citizens' Panels were organised by the three Institutions on the basis of the Joint Declaration, the Rules of Procedure and the modalities established by the CoChairs, under the supervision of the Executive Board. They were supported by a consortium of external service providers composed of a mix of experts in deliberative democracy and a logistical support team. The Executive Board was kept informed of the Panels' work, it received updated practical modalities and adjusted the provisional calendar of the European Citizens' Panel sessions during the process as needed.

The participants of the European Citizens' Panels were selected in summer 2021. European Union citizens were randomly selected (random telephone calling was the main method used by 27 national polling institutes coordinated by an external

1 https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/conference-on-the-future-of-europe/

service provider), with the aim of setting up 'Panels' which were representative of the EU's diversity on the basis of five criteria: gender, age, geographic origin (nationality as well as urban/rural), socio-economic background and level of education. The number of citizens per Member State was calculated according to the degressive proportionality principle applied to the composition of the European Parliament, taking into consideration that each Panel should include at least one female and one male citizen per Member State. As the Conference had a specific focus on youth, one third of the citizens composing a Citizens' Panel was between 16 and 24 years old. For each group of 200 persons, an additional 50 citizens were selected as a reserve.

Four European Citizens' Panels were organised. The topics for discussion for each of the four Panels were based on the themes from the Multilingual Digital Platform and clustered in the following way: (1) Stronger economy, social justice, jobs/ education, youth, culture, sport/digital transformation; (2) European democracy/ values and rights, rule of law, security; (3) Climate change, environment/health; (4) EU in the world/migration.

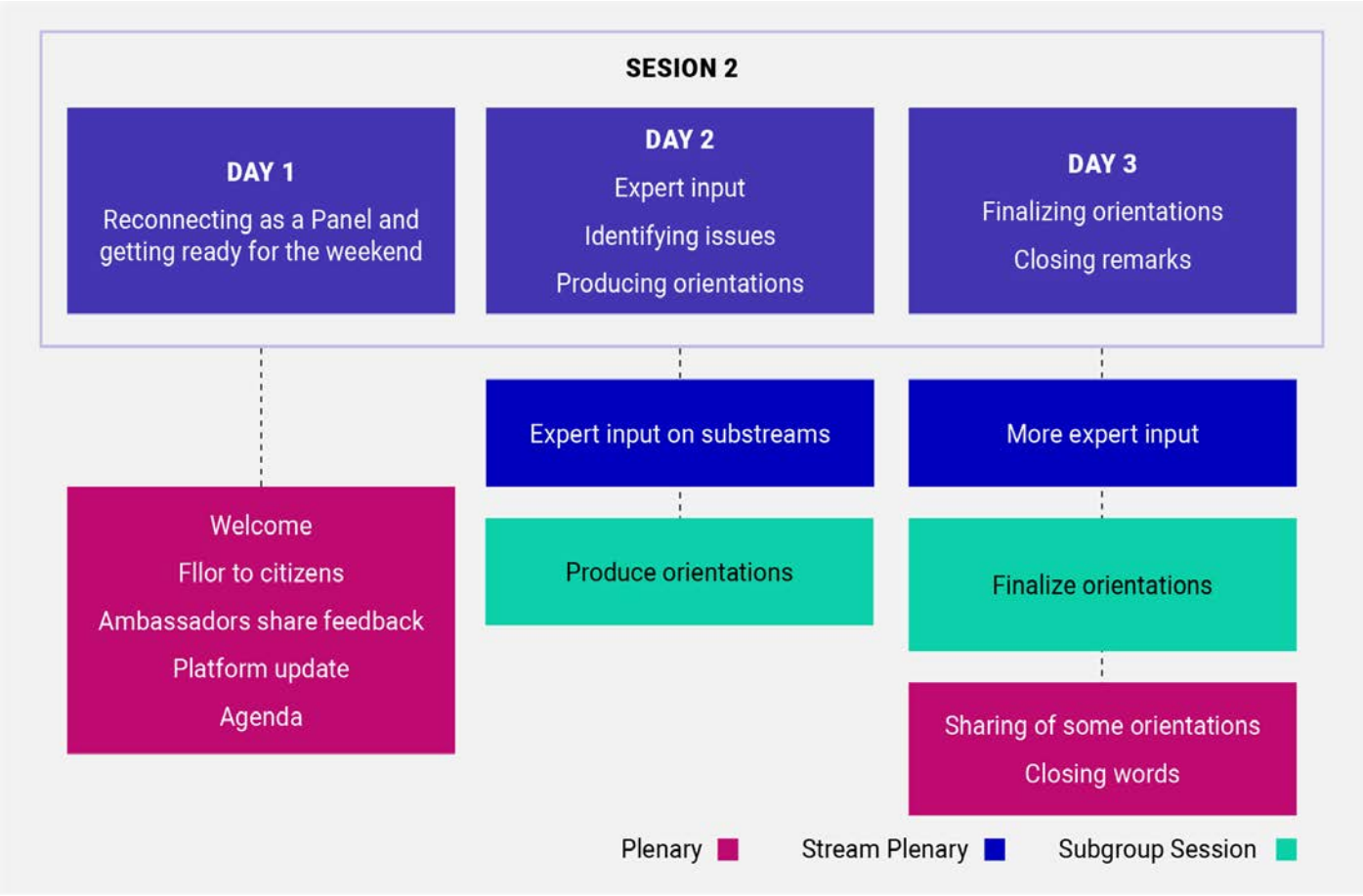
Each Panel met over three weekends. The first sessions were held in Strasbourg, the second online and the third in four cities (Dublin, Florence, Warsaw/Natolin and Maastricht), hosted by public higher education institutes and with the support of the local municipalities.

FIRST PANEL SESSIONS

The first session of each Panel was held in person in Strasbourg. The objective of the session was to define the agenda for the deliberations. The citizens participating in the Panels started by reflecting upon and building their vision for Europe, starting from a blank page, and identifying the issues to be debated, within the framework of the Panel's main themes. They then prioritised the topics which they wanted to concentrate on more deeply in order to generate specific recommendations for the European Union institutions to follow up on. 16 The discussions and collective work were in two formats: J In subgroups composed of 12 to 14 citizens. Four to five languages were spoken in each subgroup, each citizen being able to speak in his/her own language. Subgroup work was guided by professional facilitators selected by the consortium of external service providers. J In plenary, with all participants. Plenary sessions were led by two main moderators. The priority topics resulting from the discussions were organised in so-called 'streams' (i.e. headline topics) and 'substreams' and served as a basis for the second sessions. To this end, the participants received basic information about the topics, and the relevant input, including analysis and mind maps, from the first interim report of the Multilingual Digital Platform and presentations from high-level external experts. During the first sessions, the 20 representatives of each Panel to the Conference Plenary were selected by a draw, from a pool of citizens volunteering.

SECOND PANEL SESSIONS

The European Citizens' Panels continued their work by convening online throughout the month of November. For this purpose, a special setup was prepared, involving a studio in Brussels hosting the main moderation and the Plenaries and a system allowing connection with the participating citizens from all over the EU and interpretation. In the second sessions, with the support of experts and fact-checkers, the citizens identified and discussed specific issues and drafted 'orientations' for each of the thematic streams they had identified during the first session. Particular attention was paid to ensuring balanced groups of experts in terms of gender and geographical diversity and balanced inputs from each them, via extensive briefings providing citizens with facts and/or the state of play of the debate while avoiding sharing personal opinions. They were also provided with the interim reports of the Multilingual Digital Platform. With the support of experts' input on the topics, citizens' own knowledge and experiences, and through deliberations during the second sessions, citizens identified and discussed issues related to the topics allocated to them. Issues were defined as problems that needed solutions or situations that needed to change. Citizens then addressed the issues by drafting orientations. Orientations represented the first step towards producing recommendations, which was the objective of Session 3. Additionally, citizens were asked to formulate justifications for those orientations.



Discussions and collective work were carried out in three formats:

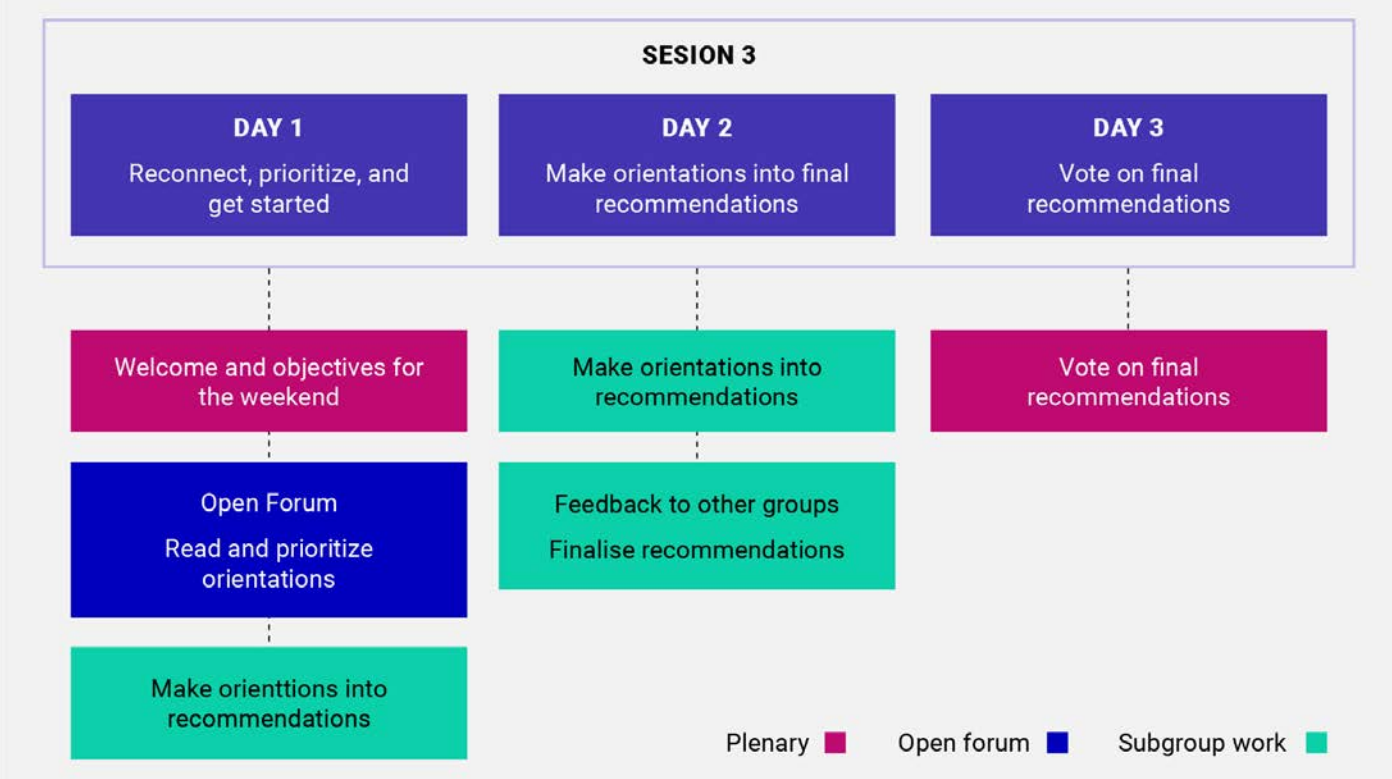
- In subgroups. Each of the 15 subgroups was composed of 12 to 14 citizens. Four to five languages were used in each subgroup to allow citizens to express themselves in their own language or in a language in which they felt comfortable. Each subgroup was led by a professional facilitator from the consortium of external service providers.
- In 'stream plenaries'. Stream plenaries gathered together the subgroups working within the same thematic stream. The stream plenaries were moderated by professional facilitators, with interpretation covering all the languages needed for the participants.
- In plenary, with all of the participating citizens, to introduce and wrap up the session. Plenary sessions were led by two main moderators from the consortium, with interpretation in 24 languages.

THIRD PANEL SESSIONS

The third and final Panel sessions took place in person in educational institutions in four Member States. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated measures in Ireland and in the Netherlands, the third sessions of Panel 1 (A stronger economy, social justice and jobs / Education, culture, youth and sport / Digital transformation) and Panel 4 (EU in the world / Migration) had to be postponed until February 2022, in consultation with the national authorities and associated partners.

Discussions and collective work were in the following formats:

- In plenary with all of the participants at the start of the session to introduce the programme and at the end of the session, as explained below. Plenary sessions were led by two main moderators from the deliberation group, with interpretation in the 24 official EU languages.
- Citizens started by examining all of the orientations produced by the Panel during Session 2 in an 'open forum' setting. Each citizen then prioritised up to ten orientations per stream. Once prioritisation at Panel level was completed, citizens joined the same subgroups they worked in during Session 2 and collectively acknowledged – and confronted with their own assessment – which of their group's orientations had been prioritised by the rest of the Panel. For the development of recommendations, each subgroup was given an indicative range for the number of recommendations to draft, namely between one and three, with a maximum of five.
- In each of the 15 subgroups, work was carried out to develop orientations into recommendations. Citizens discussed the orientations that had received the most support (in order of rank) and started the process of drafting the recommendations.



In the third sessions, expertise/information was not provided through direct interaction with the citizens but through a specifically designed system – a 'knowledge and information corner'. This system centralised on-site all requests for information and fact-checking and sent experts' and fact-checkers' short and factual answers to the subgroups. It was devised to ensure that the expert and fact-checking input was prepared in a way that ensured the highest quality standards and avoided any undue influence at this stage of the process. Citizens were also provided with the interim reports of the Multilingual Digital Platform.

During the work in subgroups, inter-subgroup feedback sessions were held in order to help participants understand the work carried out in the other subgroups and to enhance their recommendations.

The recommendations from each subgroup were then voted on by the Panel on the last day of the session. Before the vote, all participants received a document with all of the draft recommendations generated the day before so that they could read them in their own language (automatically translated from English). Each recommendation was read out in English in plenary to allow the citizens to hear the interpretation simultaneously.

The recommendations were voted on one by one by all participants via an online form. According to the results of the final votes, recommendations were classified as follows:

- Recommendations reaching the threshold of 70% or more of the votes cast were adopted by the Panel.
- Recommendations failing to pass the threshold were considered not to have been validated by the Panel. In total the European citizens panels endorsed a total of 178 recommendations.

The voting procedure was supervised by a voting committee including two citizens who had volunteered for that task.

EUROPEAN CITIZENS' PANELS REPRESENTATIVES IN THE PLENARY

The recommendations adopted by the four European Citizens' Panels were subsequently presented and debated by the 80 European Citizens' Panels' Representatives in the Conference Plenary and Working Groups on 21 and 22 January 2022 (Panels 2 and 3) and on 11 and 12 March 2022 (Panels 1 and 4). The 80 European Citizens' Panels' Representatives (with an average of 70 on-site and 10 online) then continued promoting and explaining the European Citizens' Panels' recommendations both in the Plenary sessions and Working Groups during three consecutive meetings (25-26 March, 8-9 April and 29-30 April). They also exchanged views regularly in 'citizens' component' meetings (preparatory online meetings and during Plenaries on-site) with each other and with the 27 representatives of national events/panels. On 23 April, the European Citizens' Panels' Representatives met online with all their fellow panellists to explain how the recommendations had been debated and had made their way into the Plenary proposals, and to receive feedback from their fellow panellists. A group composed of members of the Common Secretariat and of the consortium supported the citizens' component in the Plenary.

TRANSPARENCY OF THE PROCESS

The overall process was handled in full transparency. The Plenary meetings of the European Citizens' Panels were live-streamed, while the documents of their discussions and deliberations were made publicly available on the Multilingual Digital Platform. The output report of each of the Panel sessions is available on the Platform, as are the recommendations. Output reports also contain information on all experts who supported the work of the Panels.

As a true democratic innovation, the European Citizens' Panels attracted a lot of attention from the research community. Researchers were able to be present at the European Citizens' Panels and observe the proceedings, while respecting certain rules and the work and privacy of the participants.

Migration
Migration and refugees

REPORT

The borders between EU countries are open. So countries work together in the EU, e.g. on managing the external borders and combating migrant smuggling. The fair distribution of refugees among EU countries is also under discussion.
How does the Netherlands view this?

Recommendations - Our view on migration and refugees

65 % of Dutch people find migration and refugees important and think that the EU should tackle these issues.

1. Stop the debate about refugees from losing sight of the finer points

70 % of Dutch people think that the borders on the fringes of Europe need better protection. And 72 % of those would still think that way even if it meant that more refugees would be sent back to unsafe countries. Dutch people think that more attention should be paid to the reasons why people flee unsafe countries. In some cases climate change is the reason, in others it is war. Often the underlying reasons are only discussed to a limited extent when talking about refugees. And the added value refugees can bring to a country often only gets limited mention. Lastly, we think that the EU should draw a greater distinction between people from unsafe regions who are at the borders and economic refugees. To summarise, we think that the debate about migration and refugees often ignores the underlying reasons and lacks nuance. European politicians ought to be able to do something about this by setting a good example.

> *'We should see refugees as fellow human beings. Because not many of us would stand by and let someone in need die.'*

2. Ensure that refugees are distributed fairly and sensibly

A European immigration service ought to be able to ensure that refugees are distributed fairly among EU countries. However, Dutch people think that there should be clear criteria for determining what is fair. A good social and welfare system can make a country attractive to refugees, for instance, but there are other factors of importance to both the refugee and the country concerned. In the Netherlands, for instance, we have a housing shortage. And some countries or sectors actually need more migrant workers. We think it is important for the EU to take this into account when distributing refugees. Clear agreements not only mean clarity, they also mean less discussion. Ultimately, that is a good thing for everyone concerned.

> *'Refugees must be allowed to use their talents in the country of destination too.'*

3. Use knowledge and experience to help refugees' regions of origin

67 % of Dutch people think that the EU should give more help to unsafe regions to prevent flows of refugees. We realise that refugees do not choose to leave their home countries just like that. That is why we should address the causes, such as climate change or conflicts, which make regions unsafe or unviable. Support from the EU to regions of origin of refugees could be in the form of knowledge, not just financial assistance. For instance, in the Netherlands we know a lot about agriculture. We can help other countries deal with drought and erosion better through modern farming methods. And people who have fled to Europe can do some training in a European
country and then provide help in their countries of origin themselves.

Discussions and ideas online and in person

'The EU should make provision for faster asylum procedures. Then there would be more room for people who really need it.'

'I know a lot of young people near me who want to buy a house but cannot find anything affordable. And in the meantime, refugees are given housing. I find that tough.'

'Climate change will continue to force people to flee their countries. You can't stop it, but perhaps you can regulate it better.'

'I live in Betuwe. We really need a lot of migrant workers here during the pear and apple season.'

'Unsafe regions are not unsafe for no reason; governments there are often corrupt. How do we know what happens to our help and money?'

IDEA: *'Also think about local strategies, such as citizen participation in the local reception of refugees, and financing local integration initiatives.'*

IDEA: *'Build 'tiny houses' in cities where refugees can live to start with. Then you would relieve the pressure on the housing market and increase support for taking people in.'*

Volunteers who were refugees themselves: 'People keep their distance in Europe.'

Taal Doet Meer is a voluntary association which helps people who are new to Utrecht and speak a foreign language get involved in the community. In the topical discussions with this association, it was not just migration but particularly integration that was talked about. Some participants came to the Netherlands as refugees themselves, including someone from Syria. 'After seven years I still don't feel Dutch. I still haven't found a job, even though I have a master's degree. I have noticed that European countries are mainly preoccupied with themselves and are not fully open to other countries and cultures.' Another participant said that Europeans often keep their distance from each other too. 'Most people are on their own; everyone does their own thing. Whereas I think we should talk to each other and learn from each other.'

Young people from the Nationale Jeugdraad (National Youth Council): 'Only let people in if you can take good care of *them.'*

In Utrecht members of the various working parties of the Nationale Jeugdraad (NJR) spoke to each other. The participants (between 16 and 23 years old) think that various aspects should be taken into account when distributing refugees across Europe, such as a country's population size, surface area, welfare and the number of reception centres. 'You should only let refugees into your country if you can take good care of them', said one of the participants. Young people also think that there should be consequences if a country does not live up to agreements on taking in refugees. They should be made to pay a fine, for instance. 'And refugees themselves should also have a say in where they go', one participant said. 'For instance, if they have family somewhere, you can't have them sent somewhere else.'

Health
Healthcare

Although healthcare is mainly run by individual countries, European policy can support and strengthen it. For instance, when tackling the coronavirus crisis or other (future) health crises. Or by joint research into serious illnesses. How does the Netherlands view this?

Recommendations - Our vision of healthcare

64 % of Dutch people consider healthcare an important issue and think that the EU should deal with it.

1. Take greater control of pandemic-countering measures

83 % of Dutch people think that countries in the EU should work together more to prevent infectious diseases from spreading across the world. Because viruses do not stop at borders. We have seen this now during the coronavirus pandemic. Policy in the EU can be confusing. That is not good for compliance with the rules. We think that measures to prevent viruses spreading in Europe should be better coordinated, but without the rules having to be the same everywhere. There should be room to make choices at local level. Not only because infection rates can vary, but also because Europe is made up of different cultures. Some measures work better in one country than in another.

'I live in the Netherlands near the German border. The different Covid rules in the two countries are driving me crazy.'

2. Provide affordable and reliable medicines for everyone

71 % of Dutch people think that the EU should make us less reliant on countries outside the EU for the development, production and supply of medicines. But if that would mean people having to wait longer for medicines as a result, opinions differ. Dutch people think that this would make the production and distribution of medicines complicated. On the one hand, the Netherlands is facing soaring care costs, and we think it is important to keep costs down for as long as possible. On the other hand, we want to be able to trust in medicines even if they come from far away. This is not just a question of quality, but also sustainable and ethical production. Generally we think that important medicines should be universally available, including in poorer countries.

'Care costs are almost unaffordable nowadays. So we should try and buy new medicines as cheaply as possible.'

3. Countries must act individually to make their healthcare systems fairer and more effective

Dutch people are worried about healthcare, and those concerns reach beyond the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, we are facing structural capacity problems in hospitals. Some Dutch people do not take a positive view of the effects of the market on healthcare. We understand that pharmaceutical companies have to earn back their investments and that health insurance companies want to buy care cheaply, but big companies should not abuse their power. The EU should do something about this through regulation. Otherwise, we regard healthcare as primarily a national matter. After all, countries themselves know best what the local problems and priorities are. We do, however, think it is important for European countries to learn from each other to improve healthcare.

Discussions and ideas online and in person

'We should be a bit more careful where the availability of medicines in Europe is concerned. We are giving too much away at the moment.'

'It's good that Germany has been taking COVID-19 patients from the Netherlands. I would like to see more of that sort of solidarity in Europe.'

'Wherever you live in the EU and whether you are rich or poor, everyone has the right to good healthcare.'

'When buying medicines don't just look at the price, but at the ethics too. That means no child labour, for instance.'

IDEA: *'Improve Europeans' health by making sure they have less stress. Reduce the number of working hours in a week, for instance.'*

IDEA: *'Use serious games or augmented reality to help young people make healthier choices.'*

People from Utrecht with a Moroccan background: 'Health comes at a price'

The association Marokkaans Dialoog Overvecht (MDO) fosters the participation of the Moroccan community in the Overvecht neighbourhood of Utrecht. It encourages dialogue in the neighbourhood in order to mitigate disadvantages. Participants in the topical dialogue for Visions of Europe think that European cooperation has many benefits. However, some participants think that the Netherlands is sometimes too dependent on other countries. The COVID-19 pandemic has been given as an example. The participants think that the lengthy deliberations in Europe meant that the Netherlands was too late in getting started with vaccinations. 'Maybe it would be more expensive if the Netherlands wanted to
take more decisions for itself', one participant said. 'But this is about health, and health comes at a price.'

School pupils in Helmond: 'Better to be smart and copy from each other than all take the same approach'

In the Dr. Knippenbergcollege in Helmond, 15- and 16-year-old pupils discussed the way Europe has handled the pandemic. Some pupils think that the EU Member States should have set the vaccination programme together. Most participants think that each individual country has a better idea of what is necessary and what works there and so is in a better position to determine what is best for the population. For instance, they know which sectors need to be vaccinated first and which sectors can
wait. 'Of course it's a good thing to discuss this internationally', said one of the pupils. 'When different countries have their own different approaches, they can watch and learn from each other.'

The EU's role in the world

The world is facing enormous challenges. The EU is convinced that issues such as climate change and pandemics can only be addressed by global cooperation. And the EU wants its voice to be clearly heard on the world stage, alongside the United States and China, for instance. How does the Netherlands view this?

Recommendations - Our vision of the EU's role in the world

56 % of Dutch people consider the role of the EU in the world an important issue and one that the EU should address.

1. Take advantage of the EU's strength, in particular on major international issues

The creation of the EU is one of the reasons Europeans have lived in peace for more than 75 years; many Dutch people see this as the greatest achievement of the EU. Apart from that, Dutch people think that the EU's strength lies in tackling big, international challenges together. For example, climate change, the pandemic and the refugee crisis. Member states can also have a greater impact vis-à-vis countries outside the EU by concluding international agreements jointly as the EU. We think the Netherlands is too small to make a difference to these issues on our own. Then again, Dutch people want our country to be able to continue making our own decisions, in line with our culture and our own interests. Cooperation in Europe should therefore be mainly about ensuring efficiency and impact.

> *'It is easier to conclude international cooperation agreements as the EU than as an individual country.'*

2. Encourage cooperation, not conflict, both inside and outside Europe

66 % of Dutch people think that the EU should form a stronger bloc against other international blocs of power. We think that there is less and less of a balance in the world. Countries such as China and Russia are acquiring more and more power in different domains. This is something we are quite concerned about. The EU should therefore address issues such as international security and protecting the European economy from unfair trade. We think that it is important for member states to agree a single approach more often and more quickly. Then we could make our voice heard more clearly. The fact that, as European countries, we are stronger together does not mean that we want to engage in conflict more often. Above all, we want to work together well with countries outside Europe too whenever we can.

> *'If we reduce internal differences and conflict, the visibility and impact of the EU on the world stage will grow.'*

3. Take a considered approach when offering to help resolve conflicts

With the EU's role in the world growing, 50 % of Dutch people think that the approach to conflicts in the world is an important issue. We find it hard to say what the best way of tackling conflicts is. Past experience has shown that military intervention does not always end well. It can generate unexpectedly high costs and extra flows of refugees. Countries should be allowed to decide for themselves whether they want to join a war, given the local impact. We generally see greater cooperation between European armies as a good thing: we think it is important for Europe to be able to defend itself properly. But our preference is always to solve conflicts without resorting to violence.

> *'During the evacuation from Afghanistan each country came up with its own plan. Surely that could have been done better?'*

Discussions and ideas online and in person

'The EU should put its own house in order before telling others what to do.'

'By buying Chinese products in great quantities, we Europeans are giving China a leg up.' 'The US is still hugely important to European defence.'
'Being a member of the EU means that you have a seat at the negotiating table too. So you can have your say in important decisions.'

'The EU has to stop seeing itself as a separate entity, because it is not. It is a cooperative association of European member states and should behave accordingly.'

IDEA: *'Just like the regular international climate summits, there should be a regular conference on human rights.'*

IDEA: *'Make European armies more efficient by, for instance, buying equipment together.'*

Moroccan-Dutch women: 'Stand up for human rights'

Femmes for Freedom is a Dutch association that campaigns against forced marriages, sexual repression and financial abuse of girls and women from a bicultural background. A meeting with a group of Moroccan-Dutch women was organised with the association. The participants think that the EU is currently too dependent on
Russia and China. 'You can tell that the EU simply doesn't dare do anything because it is scared of sanctions', one participant said. As an example they mentioned the manufacture of medicines, which can be far from cheap. 'If
there is a conflict, China can simply turn off the tap and we will be left with nothing', said another participant. The subject of human rights was also raised. 'We pretend to find this really important but we turn a blind eye to what China is doing to the Uyghurs', another participant said.

Pupils from Alkmaar STEM secondary school ('technasium'): 'No joint army'

During their topical dialogue, pupils from the Jan Arentsz STEM secondary school in Alkmaar spoke about the pros and cons of a joint European army. The participants made it clear that they were not in favour. 'If a country in the EU had a problem with a country from outside the EU we would automatically have to join a war. I think countries should be able to decide that for themselves', said a participant. The possibility of a third world war was also discussed. The pupils did not think it was very likely to happen, but if it did come to that, they thought that a
solution could still be found quickly. 'Armies can work well together too. As far as I'm concerned, there doesn't have to be a European army.'

Europe Day 2022:
End of the Conference on the Future of Europe but the beginning of a Europe for all Europeans?

By Ward Den Dooven

On Europe Day, May 9th, the final re- port of the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE) was presented to the Conference's Joint Presidency: Ursula von der Leyen, Roberta Metsola and, with France at the helm of the Council's rotating presidency, Emmanuel Macron.

One final time it was haunted by dual perception. On the one hand there were those closely keeping track of CoFoE noticing what was happening: a major experiment of participatory democracy that just might end up per- manently reshaping the democratic landscape. On the other hand, unfor- tunately enough, the attention given by the wider public to the closing event of the Conference was much in line with the entire Conference pro- cess: elements that could have been improved being eagerly debated on, many of its actual accomplishments went largely unnoticed.

An experiment of transnational citizen participation

This should however not temper en- thusiasm. In fact, this unique occasion – the end of the biggest experiment of transnational citizen participation to date – might even be the catalyst of making May 9th a Europe Day for all Europeans. Why so, one might ask? Amongst all proposals and measures included in the final report, rests the idea of making Europe Day a public holiday for all EU citizens. This should contribute to fostering a common European identity.

However, let us first shine a light on the final phase of the Conference, as the objectives of the process were much broader. With the goal of hear- ing citizens' voices on the future of Europe, did it contribute to the crea- tion of a European public sphere?

Reflecting on the Conference

With discussions on the future of the EU taking place on all levels of governance, what did the Conference deliver after involving and hearing European citizens for a full year? And what are the next steps to be taken?

In concrete terms, the different components of the Conference Plenary (including representatives of the European Commission, European Parliament, Council, national parliaments, and citizens) agreed on a report to be presented to the Conference's joint presidency. This report consists of 49 concrete objectives on all nine broad topics that were discussed throughout the process. These objectives are complemented by 325 measures to achieve them.

Looking at this final report, two initial reflections come to mind: one of the Conference's aims was to create debates on the EU's future on all political levels. Does the report accurately mirror the different channels in which this debate took place? And where does the discussion on treaty change currently stand?

1. From input to output

How did the different channels through which recommendations were formulated feed into the Conference? From a multi-level perspective, it quickly becomes clear that different input channels had different authority in the drawing up of the final report.

The primordial source of input for the final report clearly are the recommendations from the European Citizens'
Panels. Those are complemented with input from the national citizens' panels of some member states and aggregated output from the multilingual digital platform.

However, whereas the final report clearly and specifically linked some of its proposals to certain recommendations from national events, no such links were established with recommendations stemming from the multilingual digital platform. Rather, the
final report repeatedly referred to a summary of the proposals on the platform realised by the data company Kantar.

How does the absence of a direct link impact the evaluation of the process? It can be argued that for participants of the platform (as well as of other events than the European or national citizens' panels) a stronger link needs to be created between their input and the final report, and it is hard to refute this.

On the other hand however, the Conference, with support from local and regional authorities and civil society, created the opportunity for many to raise their voice and many of their recommendations resonate with proposals in the final report.

Although future formats need to establish clear ground rules on how all work streams feed into the outcome, it should be noted that opportunities were created where there were none before. This in itself is a major achievement of the process that should by no means be disregarded.

2. Treaty change: are the institutions up for the challenge?

Secondly, from the 49 proposals and 325 measures, some clearly require treaty change for their implementation.[1] It is here that a lot has hap- pened in recent weeks.

Although never considered an objec- tive as such, the European Commission has continuously reiterated that they would play their part if citizens proposed recommendations that re- quired treaty change. Even though underlining what the EU can already do within the current Treaty framework, von der Leyen explicitly reconfirmed this position at the closing ceremony of the Conference.

The European Parliament from its side has however clearly supported the idea of treaty change and although two of the political groups in the EP (ID and ECR) argue that the proposals do not reflect EU public opinion and will thus not support them; five other groups (EPP, S&D, RE, G/EFA, and the Left) agree on the major political achievement of CoFoE's outcome.
Consequently, during its May Plenary, the European Parliament already passed a first resolution demanding a Convention to revise the treaties, which EP President Metsola labelled as the logical next step.

The ball is in the Council's court

This puts the ball on treaty change in the Council's court. A couple of months ago, it was hard to envision that a simple majority of member states – the majority required for the treaties to be opened for revision – would vote in favour of a Convention. However, the current geopolitical sit- uation might force the hand of those

reluctant towards further EU integra- tion to revise their position. Combine this with an unusual balance of pro-EU coalitions at the helm of member states, this might open a window of opportunity to find such simple majority to support the start of a Convention. Not only did Macron, in line with von der Leyen and Metsola, speak out in favour of treaty change at the Conference's closing event, so did Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz on separate occasions.

On the very same day as Macron's statement however, no less than 13 member states released an open let- ter speaking out against "unconsid- ered and premature" calls for a Con- vention. Still, not all 13 are necessarily against treaty change. For example, one of its signees (Czechia) has indicated being 'not opposed to dialogue on the open- ing of the Treaties, but do not see this as the only possible approach', as stated by its Minister for European Af- fairs, Mikuláš Bek.

Moreover, six other member states replied with an open letter stating that they 'remain in principle open to nec- essary treaty changes. Would it not be holding the rotating presidency, France would probably be among its signatories

Even though only a simple majority of the Council needs to vote in favour to call for a Convention, the Council will not want to appear too divided, and the June European Council will be pivotal on whether agreement on their follow-up to CoFoE can be found or not. However this plays out, one should pay sufficient attention to the positions of the letters' signees and whether member states get divided around old frictions or rather find unity through diversity to build a com- mon position.

If not a Convention, perhaps an Inter- governmental Conference?

Is a Convention however the only op- tion to have a dialogue on possible treaty change? An alternative that re- ceives less attention would be an In- tergovernmental Conference (IGC).

This might be a quicker way towards treaty change, and perhaps even one more palatable for member states' governments. However, there are sev- eral considerations to be made when comparing it with a Convention.

Firstly, according to art. 48 (3) TEU, the European Parliament would have to give its agreement to an IGC. As the organisation of an IGC usually allows for narrowing down the scope of ne- gotiations, one can wonder whether the EP would delegate this responsi- bility to the member states. After all, several reform proposals

1 Such are for example the request for qualified majority voting instead of unanimity in several areas, a right of initiative for the European Parlia- ment, introducing a new EU citizenship statute, EU-wide referenda, creating a European Health Union, European minimum wages, strengthening the Parliament's right of inquiry, discuss- ing a Eu- ropean Constitution, introducing transnational electoral lists...

aim to in- crease the EP's competences (its right to initiative, its role in the EU budget, etc.).
Secondly, does it make sense to at- tribute the power of shaping treaty re- forms and thus the future of the EU to member states rather than allowing all institutions a seat at the table – es- pecially on the back of a consensus- seeking exercise like the Conference?

Thirdly, negotiations in an IGC usually conclude within a shorter timeframe. This however raises questions regard- ing the (perceived) opaqueness of in- tergovernmental bargaining. Compared with a Convention, in which in- stitutions and member states need to find a common denominator in the public eye, an IGC appears much less transparent and accountable.
The Conference on the Future of Eu- rope not only managed to get citizens' voices heard and created a window of opportunity for the creation of a genu- ine European public sphere; it also brought to the attention of the public eye the divergent interests of EU institutions and individual member states. Realising this is a crucial element in understanding how the follow-up to the Conference gets shaped, specifi- cally when opening the debate on pos- sible treaty changes.

3. Towards a participatory future?

A last reflection comes from von der Leyen's intervention at the closing event. In her remarks she announced that in the future (European) Citizens' Panels would be organized, allowing the Commission to take into account citizens' voices when tabling key leg- islative proposals.
The Conference has been an intense process. That the appetite for deliber- ation and citizens' engagement was not lost, but rather reinforced be- cause of it, is a promising sign for the future of (transnational) democracy.
Working towards von der Leyen's State of the Union speech in Septem- ber (when she will announce specific proposals for the follow-up of the Conference), many will try to shape what this participatory space could or should look like. But, as stated by Commissioner Dubravka Šuica, one thing looks certain: 'The train of delib- erative democracy has left the station and there is no going back'.
The participatory toolbox of the EU is set to be expanded. With it hopefully comes increased opportunity for those outside the EU-policy bubble to raise their voice on what is most im- portant to them.

End of the Conference, a time for optimism?

One could cautiously feel optimistic about the outcome of the Conference. For the best part of it, it was over- looked and neglected. Now all of a sudden, it is in the spotlight with many eyes seemingly pointed in the same direction. Cautiousness however is perhaps the most important senti- ment to take away from this experience.

Yes, the Conference was a big experiment of participatory democracy which can and should be repeated in different formats in the future, not- withstanding lessons learned.

Yes, the outcome is ambitious and some of these proposals can show the way for an EU fit for the future.

But even if both the institutions and member states can get aligned right now (which already will prove chal- lenging), one should also be mindful of why the previous attempt at a European Constitution failed in 2005. Its plug was pulled after citizens at large voted it down in adoption referenda in France and the Netherlands, creating a decades-lasting aversion of engaging in treaty change. On the one hand it should be noted that due a difference in perception an IGC reduces the risk of rejection in adoption referenda. On the other, the Conference aimed to get citizens and institutions aligned on the direction for the EU, reducing the risks related to a Convention.

Reality is however that throughout the Conference, only a very small fraction of citizens was aware of what hap- pened, and even fewer have actively engaged with it. Even if institutional mindsets have changed, the big ques- tion is whether societal mindsets have evolved in a similar way. Are citizens ready for more power being handed over to what is by many still perceived as a supranational organisation haunted by its democratic deficit?

Whichever way it goes, after all has been said and done, the Conference will prove to have created a watershed moment for European democracy even when many did not expect so at its conception.

This paper was first published as a contribution to the blog Der (europäische) Föder- alist; and co-published by Democratic Society and Egmont Institute – Institute for In- ternational Relations, where Ward Den Dooven is affiliated respectively as Project Officer for Networked Democracy and Associate Fellow. He holds an MA in Euro- pean Political and Governance Studies from the College of Europe and an MA in Economics, Law and Business Studies from KU Leuven.

Comment renforcer la communication entre l'UE et les citoyens ?[1]

Par Michaël Malherbe

La communication directe entre les institutions européennes à Bruxelles et les citoyens européens reste un défi car il y a conflit entre une conception rationnelle et technique de ce qu'est l'UE et une perception beaucoup plus émotionnelle des citoyens. Pour combler ce hiatus, l'UE doit nouer des liens avec les citoyens qui eux doivent interagir de manière proactive avec les institutions de l'UE, selon Víctor Villanueva Ferrer dans « Strengthening Communication Channels Between the EU and EU Citizens: An Audience-Centric Approach ». Plus facile à dire qu'à faire...

La Commission Juncker : un programme politique et une nouvelle stratégie de communication bidirectionnelle avec les publics

Juncker vise à créer des liens entre politique et communication avec ses dix priorités politiques. La Commission Juncker abandonne l'idée que la communication est une stratégie à part et procède à son intégration dans l'agenda politique.

Il semble que ce soit une bonne stratégie pour capter l'attention des publics : au lieu de se concentrer sur les aspects juridiques ou institutionnels de l'Union, l'UE considère les dix priorités comme les principaux sujets à communiquer. De cette façon, l'UE cesse de communiquer sur des sujets décisionnels perçus comme trop bureaucratiques et détachés de la vie quotidienne. Au lieu de cela, l'UE communique sur les dix priorités qui reflètent les priorités des citoyens de l'UE dans les enquêtes Eurobaromètre.

Face à la pression du Brexit, de Trump et des néonationalistes en Europe, le destin démocratique de l'Union est remis en question comme jamais auparavant, l'UE doit redoubler d'efforts pour gagner une légitimité renouvelée aux yeux de l'électorat européen, à « gagner les cœurs et les esprits » basé sur un « engagement émotionnel actif » qui ne repose ni sur des revendications populistes ni sur la propagande mais vise à construire une Europe centrée sur les citoyens.

Alors que l'approche unidimensionnelle des moyens de communication traditionnels, enrichis par les actions du Service du porte-parole auprès des journalistes, sont majoritairement utilisés par les personnes âgées de 55 ans et plus ; pour les moins de 40 ans, Internet étant leur principale source d'information, l'approche bidirectionnelle semble mieux fonctionner avec des outils de participation physique et électronique.

Les dialogues citoyens représentent le dispositif interactif permettant aux citoyens de s'exprimer. Ainsi, la Commission Juncker aura conduit 1 572 dialogues citoyens. D'autres outils de communication ont été considérés comme jouant un rôle de plus en plus important au niveau national comme les réseaux européens, les représentations dans les États membres et les centres d'information Europe Direct.

La Commission von der Leyen : une approche de la communication ascendante centrée sur les publics

Ursula Von der Leyen, première femme à occuper la présidence de la Commission européenne s'appuie sur son « agenda pour l'Europe » autour de six grandes ambitions : le Green Deal, une économie luttant pour l'équité sociale et la prospérité, une Europe adaptée à une ère numérique sûre et éthique, protéger le mode de vie et les valeurs européennes, une Europe plus forte dans le monde et un nouvel élan pour la démocratie européenne.

Selon le Plan stratégique 2020-2024 de la Direction Générale de la Communication, ces priorités sont au centre de l'attention de la DG COMM. Ursula von der Leyen vise à prolonger l'approche centrée sur les publics établie par Jean-Claude Juncker : « Je veux renforcer le lien entre les personnes et les institutions qui les servent, réduire l'écart entre les attentes et la réalité et communiquer sur ce que fait l'Europe » ; « Les Européens doivent avoir leur mot à dire sur la manière dont leur Union est gérée et sur ce qu'elle produit. C'est pourquoi je crois que nous avons besoin d'une conférence sur l'Europe ».

Même s'il est encore trop tôt pour voir les résultats des efforts de communication européenne ascendante, il semble que l'UE devrait continuer à ouvrir la voie à la pleine mise en œuvre de l'approche actuelle centrée sur les publics.

Afin de mieux tenir compte des opinions des citoyens de l'UE, l'approche ascendante de la communication européenne renforcée et améliorée permettrait non seulement de se conformer au principe de transparence et aux valeurs démocratiques de l'UE mais surtout de parvenir à la légitimation et à la responsabilité et la nature démocratique de l'Union.

1 https://www.lacomeuropeenne.fr/

Construire une infrastructure de participation citoyenne dans l'Union européenne

Bien que l'UE ait élargi sa boîte à outils participative au fil du temps, la participation des citoyens ressemble toujours à un patchwork d'instruments individuels sans influence visible et significative sur l'élaboration des politiques de l'UE. Toute démocratie qui fonctionne dépend d'une infrastructure institutionnelle qui fonctionne, l'UE doit évoluer vers une infrastructure de participation plus complète et plus cohérente, selon une vaste étude de la Fondation Bertelsmann...

Stratégie : la base d'une infrastructure de participation complète

Pour passer d'une mosaïque de participation à une infrastructure de participation, les institutions de l'UE et les États membres doivent élaborer et convenir d'une stratégie commune, d'une vision partagée et d'une compréhension partagée de la signification, de l'objectif et des avantages de l'infrastructure de participation de l'Union et d'une action coordonnée sur la manière dont améliorer et développer davantage la boîte à outils de participation de l'Union.

Les critères clés d'une bonne participation : visibilité, accessibilité, représentativité, capacité de délibération, transnationalité et impact sont les fondements essentiels d'une infrastructure de participation de l'UE et doivent tous être reflétés dans une stratégie globale de participation de l'UE.

Dans tous les cas, l'UE ne peut pas simplement copier n'importe quel système national : en tant que système politique unique, elle a besoin de sa propre approche pour impliquer les citoyens et leur donner une voix effective dans l'élaboration des politiques européennes grâce à une stratégie de participation sui generis.

Pleins feux : plus de visibilité pour la participation de l'UE

L'UE a besoin d'un effort de communication conjoint pour faire connaître l'infrastructure de participation au grand public : les citoyens de toute l'Europe doivent être mieux informés de leur capacité à s'impliquer dans l'élaboration des politiques de l'UE.

Ce n'est que lorsque les citoyens seront conscients des opportunités qui leur sont offertes et convaincus de leurs avantages qu'ils les utiliseront dans la pratique. Accroître la connaissance des instruments et leur visibilité nécessite une volonté politique et des ressources suffisantes pour promouvoir le système participatif de l'UE dans son ensemble.

Une stratégie de participation efficace nécessite une stratégie de communication efficace.

Orientation : une plateforme centrale pour la participation des citoyens de l'UE

Une infrastructure de participation de l'UE a besoin d'un hub central en ligne pour tous les instruments de participation afin de fournir des opportunités de mise en réseau, une communication efficace et une éducation civique sur la participation des citoyens de l'UE.

Une infrastructure de participation a besoin d'un point d'entrée central, y compris un site web convivial permettant aux citoyens d'explorer leurs possibilités de participation au niveau de l'UE, en s'appuyant sur les expériences existantes de l'UE, en particulier avec le portail Donnez votre avis, ainsi que la plate-forme numérique de la Conférence sur l'avenir de l'Europe et s'inspirer des bonnes pratiques des États membres.

Une plate-forme centrale au niveau de l'UE doit remplir quatre fonctions de base :

1. Renforcement de la cohérence : la plate-forme pousse les institutions de l'UE à organiser tous les instruments de participation selon une logique centrale ;
2. Mise en réseau : les citoyens doivent pouvoir interagir (de manière transnationale) entre eux et avec la plateforme dans n'importe quelle langue grâce à la traduction automatisée, partager leurs expériences avec les instruments et demander de l'aide pour être guidés vers un instrument pertinent ;
3. Communication efficace : communiquer sur les opportunités de participation et les instruments ;
4. Éducation civique : créer la possibilité de montrer le dynamisme et le fonctionnement de la démocratie européenne dans un format accessible, tout en transmettant des informations sur le fonctionnement de l'UE à un public plus large.

Aller de l'avant : potentiel numérique et nouveaux formats de participation

La participation citoyenne moderne a besoin de composantes numériques fortes. Les moyens numériques peuvent améliorer la visibilité et l'efficacité des instruments existants en les amenant à de nouveaux publics plus larges via les médias sociaux. Dans le même temps, l'utilisation accrue de nouveaux formats peut montrer la voie à suivre pour rendre la participation des citoyens à l'UE plus représentative, transnationale et délibérative. L'espace numérique ouvre de nouvelles possibilités pour accroître la visibilité et l'efficacité potentielle des instruments de participation existants.

Des opportunités de participation numérique nouvelles et en constante évolution avec des procédures interactives et délibératives permettent à davantage de citoyens qui n'ont jamais participé à la politique européenne de se connecter et de s'impliquer de manière intensive via l'apport de leur expertise personnelle ou rapidement pour partager leur opinion dans un processus de discussion et ainsi influencer l'élaboration des politiques de l'UE.

Créer une dynamique : changement culturel et volonté politique de Bruxelles et des États membres

Accroître et améliorer la participation citoyenne n'est plus seulement une note marginale à Bruxelles. Le débat sur la démocratie participative au niveau de l'UE s'est intensifié. Mais les institutions de l'UE et les États membres n'ont pas encore intégré la participation comme une caractéristique régulière de la démocratie de l'UE. Ils doivent surmonter leurs hésitations – voire leurs peurs – s'ils veulent que la démocratie européenne s'adapte aux besoins et aux évolutions du XXIe siècle.

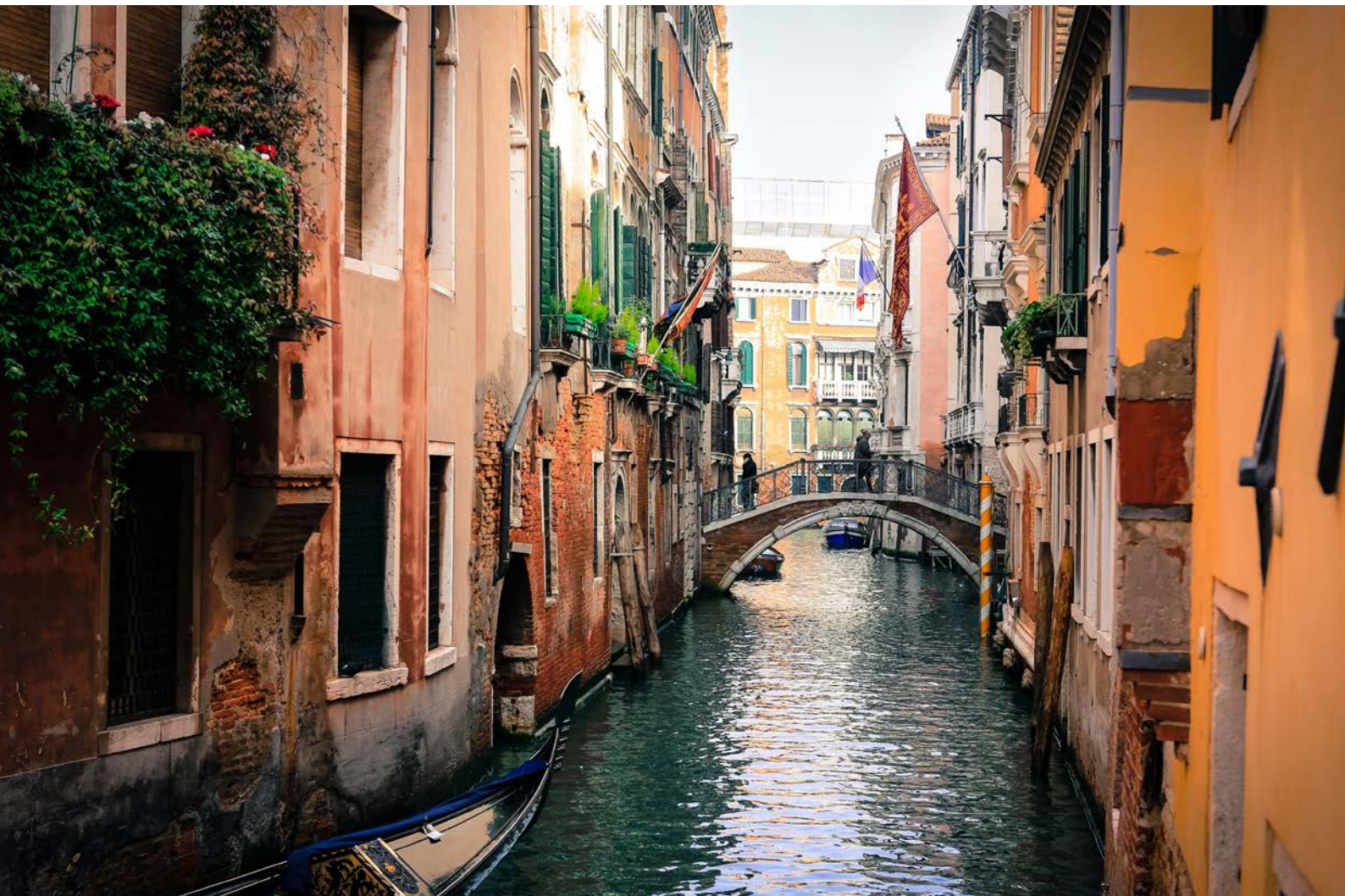
La tendance est claire : la participation citoyenne n'est plus simplement utilisée à des fins de communication ; lorsqu'ils en ont l'occasion, les citoyens de l'UE montrent leur volonté et leur capacité à s'engager dans des processus qui façonnent l'élaboration des politiques de l'UE.

Pourtant, l'un des principaux problèmes tient au fait que l'UE et ses États membres n'ont toujours pas une compréhension commune de la nature, des potentiels et des différents formats de participation citoyenne. Personne ne peut s'attendre à ce que cela change du jour au lendemain. Mais pour renforcer les instruments de participation individuelle et l'infrastructure de participation, il faut plus de leadership politique dans les institutions de l'UE.

L'UE ne pourra maintenir et renforcer sa légitimité que si les citoyens ont le sentiment que leur voix compte. Plus de leadership et un engagement plus fort en faveur de la participation citoyenne sont nécessaires – non seulement à Bruxelles mais aussi dans les capitales nationales.

Quelles seront la forme et la structure futures de la démocratie européenne ?

Cette entrée a été publiée dans Communication de l'UE, Communication sur l'Europe, et marquée avec citoyens, communication européenne, consultations citoyennes, le 23 mai 2022.



REBALANCING MIGRATION NARRATIVE TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

By Marco Ricorda, ICMPD

This article draws from a public intervention delivered at the International Seminar "Citizenship and civic participation in the territories: the role of local public communication in the different European Union's countries" organized in Toulouse on 16/17 February 2022 by the Club of Venice and Cap'Com

Migration is a natural phenomenon that has shaped the cities and territories of Europe along history for many centuries. Migration makes European cities, diverse places, very dynamic places and spaces where opportunity meets freedom. This brings a potential advantage in terms of innovation and development, but it also brings the need for significant resources to ensure social inclusion, integration, urban development and housing for all.

Unfortunately, though, the prevailing narratives around migration are very polarized and produce a debate that underestimates the complexity of human mobility and is neither pragmatic nor moored in evidence. While representing a small share of the infinite realities of migration, irregular migration flows receive a large share of the media attention and forms part of the general perception and narrative surrounding migration. The success of migration policies hinges in large part on the ability of local authorities to rebalance these narratives because it is at the local level that the reality of migration plays out and affects peoples' lives.

Over the past 10 years, we have seen several events shaping migration in the region: The European debt crisis; social tensions in North Africa and the Middle East; violent armed conflicts; poverty; and these past two years, the coronavirus pandemic, which adds new health-related concerns to migration management. While the essential contributions by migrant communities working at the forefront of the pandemic were acknowledged, migrants are still disproportionately affected by such crises.

While the politics of migration often appear volatile, public attitudes in Europe are actually stable. The volatility can be found in public opinion, which unlike underlying attitudes, shifts in response to short term events.[1] This volatility is exacerbated by narratives that appeal to values and identities and generate emotional reactions. As the perceived importance of immigration and irregular migration have risen in recent years, the fringes of the migration debate have occupied the public discourse, polarizing public opinion.

This is a vicious circle where migration is frequently presented as "out of control." Irregular migration, which makes up a tiny proportion of actual mobility and has been in decline in the European Union for the last six years, still dominates the discussion, despite the downward trend in overall asylum applications in comparison to the peak of migration pressure. The notion of migration perceived as a threat to host communities and cities and has become the norm across much of the region. The absence of real, majority, lived experience of human mobility distorts the narrative and policy responses on an issue that affects millions of people.

Due to their proximity to citizens and voters, local officials might be tempted to avoid communicating on such heated issues. However, communication is unavoidable and understanding perceptions and ways to address these, can help avoid conflict and unlock the full potential of migration at local level.

Most authoritative pan European surveys (e.g. European Social Survey (ESS) between 2002 and 2018) show that attitudes towards all types of immigration in most European countries have actually become markedly more positive, or at least less negative, in recent years. This also holds for a range of attitudinal types, including preferences to types of immigration, perceived effects of migration, and desired migration policy.

So the question is *"Why does the political discourse around migration appear volatile when underlying attitudes are stable?"*

The factors that condition attitudes toward migration are complex, but understandable. They include four broad categories: psychological, socialization, attitudinal and contextual. The first of these relates to personal foundations, such as values and morality. But the last of these is particularly relevant to local and regional government actors as factors include: neighborhood safety, contact with immigrants, media influence, local immigration rates, perception of immigrant levels.

4 CHALLENGES IN COMMUNICATING ON MIGRATION AT LOCAL LEVEL

As explained in the MC2CM thematic Learning Report "Communication on migration: Rebalancing the narrative to strengthen local governance ," migration can appear daunting as a topic for local authorities to address. The challenges cut both ways: there are capacity limits on the side of authorities and access issues for migrants themselves. Resources and capacity vary enormously across the Euro Mediterranean region. But communication is unavoidable and understanding mechanisms and perceptions can avoid conflict and prevent negative impacts on social cohesion, while unlocking the undoubted benefits of migration.

1 Impact of Public Attitudes to migration on the political environment in the Euro-Mediterranean Region – First Chapter : Europe, by Dr. James Dennison 2019

LIMITED CAPACITY AND EXPERTISE

- Working on communication on migration benefits strongly from specialised input, knowledge and skill sets that city authorities do not always have.
- The basis for good decisions are good data. Cities across the region do not have uniform access to up to date information on the migration context. This is essentially a tools issue.
- A shortage of resources and capacity can hinder the development of effective communication strategies, some of which require the commitment of time and financial investment.

LACK OF ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Migrants, and in particular new arrivals, do not always know how to access information that might help them adapt even when it is available. This is especially true for vulnerable groups who do not share a language with the host community, or who have irregular status and may therefore be wary of attempting to access services. This is in part a knock on effect of the shortage of capacity identified previously, which complicates the design of relevant services for immigrants.

DISINFORMATION

Local governments face organised, motivated opposition to an evidence based rebalancing of the migration narrative. The COVID-19 crisis has seen an acceleration of disinformation that has come to be known as the "infodemic." The purpose of such disinformation is to sow panic and distrust. There is fertile ground around the migration debate for stoking both panic and distrust. Malicious anti migrant rhetoric has long been a central theme within extremist mobilisation globally and a mainstay of disinformation campaigns. Anti migrant and far right networks in the Euro Mediterranean region and beyond are exploiting the COVID-19 situation, as they would do with any type of crisis, to spread disinformation targeting migrants, refugees and other vulnerable populations on and offline. The pandemic has seen migrants falsely cast as a threat to public health.

POLITICS AND PRIORITIES

Communication requires resources that were already scarce before the challenges the pandemic has presented. The allocation of scarce resources may see local authorities choose to invest in other needs or de prioritize communication. National debates on migration can often ignore the realities that cities already face. The denial of services to irregular migrants may be popular at the national level, while the consequences are keenly felt in municipalities where these people continue to reside.

LOCAL CHALLENGES AND APPROACHES

In recent decades, cities have become more active in migration policy, developing their own philosophy and spreading awareness that effective inclusion is critical to their viability as communities. Cities are the places where migrants develop social networks, start families, find jobs, access services. They are also the places where negative consequences of mismanaged integration can be concretely felt.

This greater activism has seen cities advocate before national governments but also reach beyond the national arena to become part of networks with other cities and international organisations. For instance, cities have developed specific working areas on migration within the existing networks (e.g. UCLG and Eurocities) in order to exchange know how, and to lobby supra national institutions, such as the European Union or the United Nations;

The increased activism and the accompanying network effect of cities talking to each other means there is an emerging playbook of effective approaches. All of them rely on shifting from reactive to strategic communication at the local level. A strategy that determines how the city communicates internally (within the administration and vertically with all levels of government) and externally (to the general public and target groups).

6 RECOMMENDATIONS TO HELP LOCAL AUTHORITIES IMPROVE COMMUNICATION ON MIGRATION

Diverse and inclusive cities are also successful and attractive cities. The force underpinning this diversity is migration. Cities need to take on the challenge of communication in order to fulfil these potentials as drivers of economic development.

Local contexts differ sharply in European cities. Some cities face a generational shift from points of departure, while other are places of transit or hosting. Some cities face unemployment crises, while others face acute skills shortages. Some municipalities find their positions on migration closely aligned with national governments, while others conflict.

Even before the arrival of the COVID-19, there were clear signs that perceptions of migration had become dangerously detached from the evidence base of its real impacts.

1. **Build an evidence base**: Collect data to inform and depict an accurate picture of your local migration context. When recent data is unavailable, include stakeholders with deep knowledge of local migration history and precedents.
2. **Build capacity**: Effective communication on migration requires specialist skills. Communication capacity can lag as a priority,

especially during times of acute crisis such as the pandemic. Make the argument for its importance. Cities remain the ideal platform for communicating success stories that will attract future resources and opportunities to exchange and grow.

3. **Build alliances**: Look beyond the national arena to international and supranational networks of cities, which are building effective alliances. These are also a repository of an increasing wealth of knowledge on best practices. Allies can be found among civil society organisations both as local implementing partners and force multipliers whose own networks and channels can provide crucial entry points to vulnerable or hard to reach groups.
4. **Beware of disinformation**: The joint crises in public health and the economy create fertile ground for malicious narratives, which seek to scapegoat migrants. The consequences of the "infodemic" can be as serious as those of the pandemic itself.
5. **Build bridges**: Various formulations have been established to express the division of opinion on migration (haters/ambivalents/lovers) and suggest a concentration on the largest group, the middle category of "ambivalents". Effective narratives will understand the anxieties of ambivalents and build positive associations between diversity and areas such as tradition and security. Identify shared local identities that speak to these concerns and emphasise common ground.
6. **Build for the long term**: Migration is not a crisis, it is a human condition. Ad hoc responses to issues such as disinformation may be necessary, but do not replace the need for a coherent plan. Think strategically about building internal capacity and, where possible, diversity in municipal teams. Train staff, practitioners and the media on the benefits of migration. Cultivate relationships with local media who are often the gateway to national coverage. Incorporate migration as a component in strategic plans on areas from jobs to education and culture.

Soil, Seeds & Senses: Solutions Communication in the EU Green Deal

by Verena Ringler

How a narrative of citizen engagement on soil and biodiversity can inspire communicators in Brussels and national governments in turbulent times.

In Europe today, all eyes are on the energy transition. That is urgent, necessary, and – right. And yet, individuals can only do so much to bring the energy transition to a comprehensive, successful outcome.

How can we invigorate quality communication on the European Green Deal in difficult times? What could be an uplifting, empowering, and positive twin narrative to enrich the public sphere and communicative space on the European Green Deal? This is what we at the new, non-profit hub AGORA European Green Deal asked ourselves in February and March 2022. We quickly decided to focus on the European Union's Soil Strategy as a key pillar of the EU Green Deal, and on the European Commission's New European Bauhaus initiative.

The new EU soil strategy for 2030 sets out a framework and concrete measures to protect and restore soils, and ensure that they are used sustainably. It sets a vision and objectives to achieve healthy soils by 2050, with concrete actions by 2030.

The New European Bauhaus is a creative and interdisciplinary initiative that connects the European Green Deal to Europe's living spaces and experiences. The initiative calls on citizens „to imagine and build together a sustainable and inclusive future that is beautiful for our eyes, minds, and souls." According to the NEB, „beautiful are the places, practices, and experiences that are:

- **Enriching**, inspired by art and culture, responding to needs beyond functionality.
- **Sustainable**, in harmony with nature, the environment, and our planet.
- **Inclusive**, encouraging a dialogue across cultures, disciplines, genders and ages."

AGORA European Green Deal thus set out to weave these two forward-oriented EU initiatives together. Just like the ancient Greek agora served as crossing point for innovation and ideas, but also as a place to debate and reconcile matters of governance and the law, we approach such a new challenge by identifying key themes and institutions and governance, but also in innovation and regional lighthouses or solutions.
Three ideas informed our creative and thematic process on soil care and the New European Bauhaus:

1. First of all, we aimed at a positive, empowering narrative on a key European Green Deal topic in these difficult times in the EU.
2. Secondly, many years of practical work in the EU Affairs space have shown us that our societies and regions might exhibit one or the other populist, cynicist, and provocateur – yet they equally exhibit many dozens of innovators, doers, and frontrunners, and these deserve a voice and the limelight.
3. Thirdly, we love the field, and experience-based communications that speak to all human senses.

Verena Ringler of AGORA European Green Deal has indeed submerged the idea of communications into the concept of experiences for top politicians, diplomats, and EU shapers for more than two decades. Imagine field trips instead of flyers, pop-up galleries instead of posters, backchannel exchanges instead of billboards.

No sooner said than done. AGORA European Green Deal identified 10 outstanding pioneers and practitioners around soil health along the Alpine Arc, and put together a „Celebration of Soil, Seeds and Senses". We contacted and invited these people to join us in Innsbruck, Austria, on 9 June 2022. A thematic experiment and expert kaleidoscope would be held at 2.334 meters above sea level. Why? Because mountain peaks allow us to see things in perspective, and to sort our priorities of attention and action in Europe. But also, because a barren landscape puts the preciousness and immense value of every cubic metre of healthy, living, and unsealed soil in sharp focus. Our „Celebration" would zoom in on the ecosystem functions and emotional, sensual gifts that blossoming landscapes give to humans. The communicative products of this mountain peak celebration would be seven short films on Youtube (watch them via agora-egd.eu).
AGORA European Green Deal's concept was chosen as official Side Event of the first New European Bauhaus Festival, and ultimately, Verena Ringler was asked to join in live with a 90-sec statement on the large screen during the Opening Ceremony of the New European Bauhaus Festival in Brussels and Rome, on 9 June 2022. In the ceremony, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen conversed on stage with the architect and Pritzer-prize winner Francis Kéré, and creative interventions and projects for the green transition were presented.

Here are the three underlying messages that were conveyed by AGORA European Green Deal's host, Verena Ringler, and ten experts and practitioners in their roundtable dialogues at the mountain peak above Innsbruck, Austria:

Message 1:

Soil is arguably the new gold. It is rare and non-renewable; its ecosystem functions are to be considered as common goods. One tablespoon of soil has more organisms than there are people on Earth, and 95 percent of the global caloric intake stem from soil. Soils are the second-largest resevoir of the planet's biodiversity after the ocean.

Message 2:

While the new EU Soil Strategy is ambitious and comprehensive, soil is spectacularly underrated, underresearched, and underestimated across sectors, countries, disciplines, and generations. Already Leonardo da Vinci complained 500 years ago that "**We know more about the movement of celestial bodies than about the soil underfoot.**" That still rings true today. Consider that soil sessions are largely absent from school curricula. Soil awareness and knowledge are missing in higher education and public administration academies, not to speak about diplomacy schools and international relations schools and think tanks. And yet, with a gigantic food crisis looming, every investment banker and economist, finance specialist and insurer needs to consult, and dissect, soil fertibility tables and soil projections. A turnaround is needed – from C-Suites to classrooms and Council meetings. EU attention, budgets, and policies need to shed a light on soil.

Message 3:

Soil care is a captivating theme for kids and diplomats, business leaders and mayors alike. The theme lends itself for participatory, co-creative formats. While individuals can only do so much to contribute to the energy transition, everyone can tend to plants, fruit, or vegetables, from the window sill to the street island. This means the potential for a bottom-up movement and effective impact on the European Green Deal is enormous, and yet to be unlocked.

The *Celebration of Soil, Seeds and Senses* became a highly successful, creative and unconventional EU communications event. It shows that solutions communications might be a promising and enriching approach to communicating the European Green Deal.

Find the films, pictures and thematic contributions by AGORA European Green Deal and 10 leading practitioners and experts on www.agora-egd.eu

10 pioneers and practitioners along the Alpine Arc who celebrated „Soil, Seeds, and Senses":

Alenka Smerkolj, Secretary General, Alpine Convention, says that cooperation among national governments remains worthwhile. The Soil Conservation Protocol of the Convention celebrates its 25th year after signing in 2023 and this might give fresh impetus to the theme.

Anna Heringer, Architect and Hon. Prof. of the UNESCO chair for Earthen Architecture. Envisions a revolution in Europe's construction sector: New projects to be considered carefully, and if new buildings are needed, mud provides a healthy, ultra-modern and fully recyclable solution.

Christian Steiner, Rural Development Coordinator, Lower Austria. Envisions the booming DIY concept of "Nature in the Garden" to inspire all regions and communities across the European Union.

Claudia Sacher, Agricultural Innovator and Leader, Global *Field Tyrol*. Envisions resource awareness and agricultural practice for all; regional food production and -markets.

Johannes Kostenzer, Environmental Ombudsman Tyrol and Commission Member at the International Union for Nature Conservation (IUCN), also Founder and Director of the international *Innsbruck Nature Film Festival* which stages its 21st edition in October 2022.

Julia Seeber, Soil Ecologist, Senior Researcher, EURAC, and Senior Lecturer, Innsbruck University. Envisions a boost of contact and exchange between scientists and citizens, and soil curricula for all.

Maria Legner, Sociologist and Spatial Planner, Climate Alliance Tyrol. Envisions participatory spatial planning.

Melanie Plangger, Expert on European cross-border cooperation and youth participation. Envisions a *European Youth Lab* on soil.

Stefanie Pontasch, Expert and Practitioner on biodiversity, especially with municipalities, scientists, and citizens. Initiator of the concept of *Citizen Biotopes*.

Thomas Peham, Soil Expert, Office of the Regional Government, Tyrol. Oversees 100-yr-old seedbank, which is the world's oldest seedbank besides St. Petersburg's.

VERENA RINGLER is incoming Helmut Schmidt Fellow on green transition leadership by the ZEIT Stiftung and the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMFUS). She founded and directs the new AGORA European Green Deal www.agora-egd.eu, a brand by *European Commons*. From Innsbruck, Austria, the non-profit AGORA serves as Europe's first cross-sectoral and innovation hub on the green transition. The focus is on non-technical research, transformation, and policy work at the interface of societies and institutions, including the EEAS.

In her innovative and qualitative approach, Ringler builds on more than two decades of hands-on and field work in international and European affairs. From 2002 to 2006, she worked as staff editor with Foreign Policy magazine in Washington D.C.. From 2006 to 2009, she built the communications side of an EU-led transatlantic diplomatic team in Pristina (EUSR/ ICO), Kosovo. From 2013 to 2018, she built and led the Europe programme of a large German foundation (Stiftung Mercator). In 2022, she was selected as this year's Helmut Schmidt Fellow by the ZEIT Stiftung and the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

Ringler got her MA from the Johns Hopkins University's School for Advanced International Studies in 2002. She also studied in Uppsala, Vienna, and her hometown, Innsbruck. She aims to foster dialogue between institutions, citizens, and multiplier groups in several boards or advisory groups for Europe, from the Strategy Council of the European Policy Centre and the Austrian Society for European Politics all the way to the NECE group of Germany's Federal Agency for Civic Education. Ringler appears regularly on stage or in the media. She has authored more than 500 contributions for print, online, or live formats (Keynotes, TEDx). In 2022, her case study, "Lawmakers without Borders", on the *Open European Dialogue* platform for national legislators across the EU will appear in the *Routledge Handbook on Collective Intelligence for Democracy and Governance*. Ringler's Situation Room® and European Commons® are registered trademarks in Austria and EU-wide, respectively.

The green deal is really an alternative or not?

The year 2020 could be considered the turning point regarding the **focus on sustainability**.

Anyway, 2022 is not a simple one. The Covid-19 and the recent Ukraine war marked a crucial moment towards a world that must increasingly take care of the environment and the land. Some Governments have decided to apply some policy reforms such as the **Draghi's government**, which has taken account of this moment of transformation and has included a ministry for ecological transition, following what had been done already in other EU countries.

Furthermore, other European countries have invested in green energy, creating environmental departments, preferring nuclear and gas power that has caused fighting and destruction decades-long.

In Italy, the data are below the average. According to ISTAT, referring to the indicators provided by the United Nations in 2020 - the SDGs Sustainable Development Goals -, the investments in research and development for businesses, innovation, and infrastructure was **only 1.39%**.

Across the Atlantic, in the US, President Biden proposes over $200 Billion for R&D in Infrastructure plan to boost the R&D capacity of the U.S. In 2018, the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) indicates that research and experimental development (R&D) performed in the United States totalled $606.1 billion.[1] **The ratio of U.S. R&D to GDP was 2.94**.

An organization like ethics4growth believes that a way of global improvements would be to take local commitments and incentivize business activities that can demonstrate, numerically speaking, a real impact (social and environmental) and promote the use of technologies that harness energy from 'alternative sources to fossil fuel".

The absence of such an approach is currently producing social consequences such as a failure to reduce pollution and a deterioration in the quality of life relating to one's own economic **'well-being'**.

Is the green deal really an alternative... Or not?

We can identify a massive problem in the absence of regulations clarity and less consistency by the European institutions.
A few days ago, the European Commission declared that nuclear and gas can be labelled as green and sustainable energy.

As well as Greta Thunberg's chatter, there is also a serious commitment to fight climate change (Goal 13), where levels of CO2 and other **climate-altering gases are still very high at 7.3 (CO2 equivalent per inhabitant).**

The Taxonomy regulation defines "*a classification system, establishing a list of environmentally sustainable economic activities*", setting a fine line determining what is green energy in the EU and what is not.

Our reaction to this new set of norms is aligned to one of many disillusioned others...that being: "Seriously?!"

Nuclear power as a solution could be a serious issue. The EU Commission sees the positive side where during normal operation nuclear energy has a low impact on health and the environment. In order to make a continuing contribution to sustainable development goals, nuclear energy will have to maintain its high standards of safety in spite of increasing competition in the electricity sector aging reactors and the expansion of the industry to new countries and regions.

According to a proposal presented to the EU Commission: "*Nuclear power plants would be deemed green if the sites can safely manage to dispose of radioactive waste. So far, worldwide, no permanent disposal site has gone into operation though.*"[2]

The real issues are two: **nuclear wastes** are difficult to work off, it takes more than 1000 years to digest it; secondly, **the proposal presented does not show how they will regulate this sector**, which method they are going to use and what kind (if any) of institution will have to check these emissions.

Hanging over this discussion, of course, is the threat of a divided Europe. There are two schools of thoughts: in one hand some European nations like **France, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Slovakia and Finland**, it seems that they are **promoting a nuclear vision** where they want to invest in new

1 https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/R44307.pdf
https://www.aip.org/fyi/2021/biden-proposes-over-200-billion-rd-infrastructure-plan
https://ncses.nsf.gov/pubs/nsf21324

2 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_711

nuclear power plants, particularly in new generations like small modular reactors. Especially now, that the war involving Russia is generating an energetic crisis, the call for nuclear power is understandably getting louder.

On the other hand, the second school of thought is represented by **Germany, Denmark, Austria and Luxembourg that** appears that prefer a different approach, **investing in gas and carbon fuel** until we don't have enough resources to give energy to everyone. Of course, goal to achieve, before 2050, the year when Europe is "supposed" to be completely climate-neutral.[3]

As above-mentioned in the very beginning of this article, **Italy does not close the door to the nuclear power**, but the main concerns are to re-convert nuclear factories and to digest nuclear waste; and also because it appears already "too late" to comply with the goals that Italy set for 2030 regarding the green energy transition. [4]

Moreover, there are several and different nuances with various nations:

- Spain prefers **"traditional" green energy** (wind and solar power) also because these renewable sources contributed around 47% to the total energy mix in 2021.[5]
- On the same page there was also **Portugal, which recently closed its last nuclear power plant**, moving to greener energy, prevalent generated from nature, and going to the decarbonization following the guidelines of COP26.[6]
- Tagging along, **Greece and Cyprus stated that will never turn to nuclear energy**. [7]

Are we serious? How can we consider nuclear and gas as green alternative energies? The war is also showing the delicate situation around the militarization of nuclear plants, threatening the world with another Chernobyl or Fukushima. Still, the fear that we shall not be able to eliminate and eradicate the dependence on carbon fuels, realizing that green energy might not be enough yet could be an input to forget the externalities of nuclear?

According to the **World Nuclear Waste Report**: "Over 60,000 tons of spent nuclear fuel are stored across Europe (excluding Russia and Slovakia), most of which in France. Within the EU, France accounts for 25 per cent of the current spent nuclear fuel, followed by Germany (15 per cent) and the United Kingdom (14 per cent). Spent nuclear fuel is considered high-level waste. Though present incomparably small volumes, it constitutes a vast bulk of radioactivity.

The main problem is nuclear waste, according to the World Nuclear Association (WNA), which points out that the radioactivity of nuclear waste will decay within a finite radiotoxic timeline[8]. Depending on the waste, that could be last for 1,000-10,000 years. Naturally, its hazard, too, would wane depending on its concentration. If we were to compare with other industrial wastes (such as cadmium and mercury) which could remain hazardous eternally, nuclear waste wouldn't sound that bad!.[9]

In the light of the above, it becomes crucial to communicate the real intentions of European Leaders and communicating clearly is more important than everything, especially during these difficult days that we face.

Communicators, strategists, and companies have to fight the misinformation, crap news and sometimes also the social media that influence negatively on people, being more harmful than helpful.

Where are the communicators — now? Communicators need to be close to the ordinary people using clear language with a transparent message, not only for general issues but especially on green energies.

In this way, it is possible to avoid any type of conflict that could be a verbal one or escalation that transforms into a real war.

Dear Europe, this is not acceptable. Rather than preferring the lobbies and lobbyists of oil enterprises and also other big companies, why don't you encourage nations, countries, towns and villages to be green, helping them in their green transition?

For example, there are numerous companies such as multinational and oil and gas corporations that were proclaiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but in reality, they have been increasing them due to their self-interests. A law on green labelling and on greenwashing should be on the following agenda to protect EU citizens from misleading information.

Regarding this type of **greenwashing**, it can be defined as "Organizations that make disingenuous claims risk greenwashing, or making deceiving claims about the sustainability of their products or companies".[10]

Of course, this taxonomy is unacceptable, it needs to be reviewed as soon as possible.

On the other hand, according to the latest data from Eurostat, the 13 EU Member States running nuclear electricity production

3 https://www.dw.com/en/european-commission-declares-nuclear-and-gas-to-be-green/a-60614990#:~:text=The%20European%20Commission%20has%20labeled,become%20climate%2Dneutral%20by%202050

4 https://www.ft.com/content/bbb79e85-0009-4459-a3fc-7d4795846594

5 https://www.google.com/url?q=https://english.elpais.com/economy-and-business/2022-01-03/spain-rejects-brussels-plan-to-classify-nuclear-power-and-natural-gas-as-green-energy.html&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1644484844538078&usg=AOvVaw28h_ogdRYGPlggsX6FG1If

6 https://www.motorpasion.com/futuro-movimiento/portugal-apaga-su-ultima-central-carbon-nuevo-paso-delante-para-producir-electricidad-limpia
https://www.theportugalnews.com/news/2022-02-03/iberian-anti-nuclear-movement-rejects-proposal-for-green-label-for-nuclear-investment/65021

7 https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/short_news/greece-will-never-turn-to-nuclear-energy/

8 https://worldnuclearwastereport.org/

9 https://www.virtual.prosperoevents.com/blog/where-is-europes-nuclear-waste#:~:text=Depending%20on%20the%20waste%2C%20that,which%20could%20remain%20hazardous%20eternally.

10 https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescommunicationscouncil/2021/09/09/the-environmental-benefits-of-virtual-events/?sh=22db65446aac

accounted **for almost 25% of the EU's total electricity production**[11]. Hence, it is fundamental to insist in research and invest in real alternatives to achieve EU energetic ***self sufficiency***.

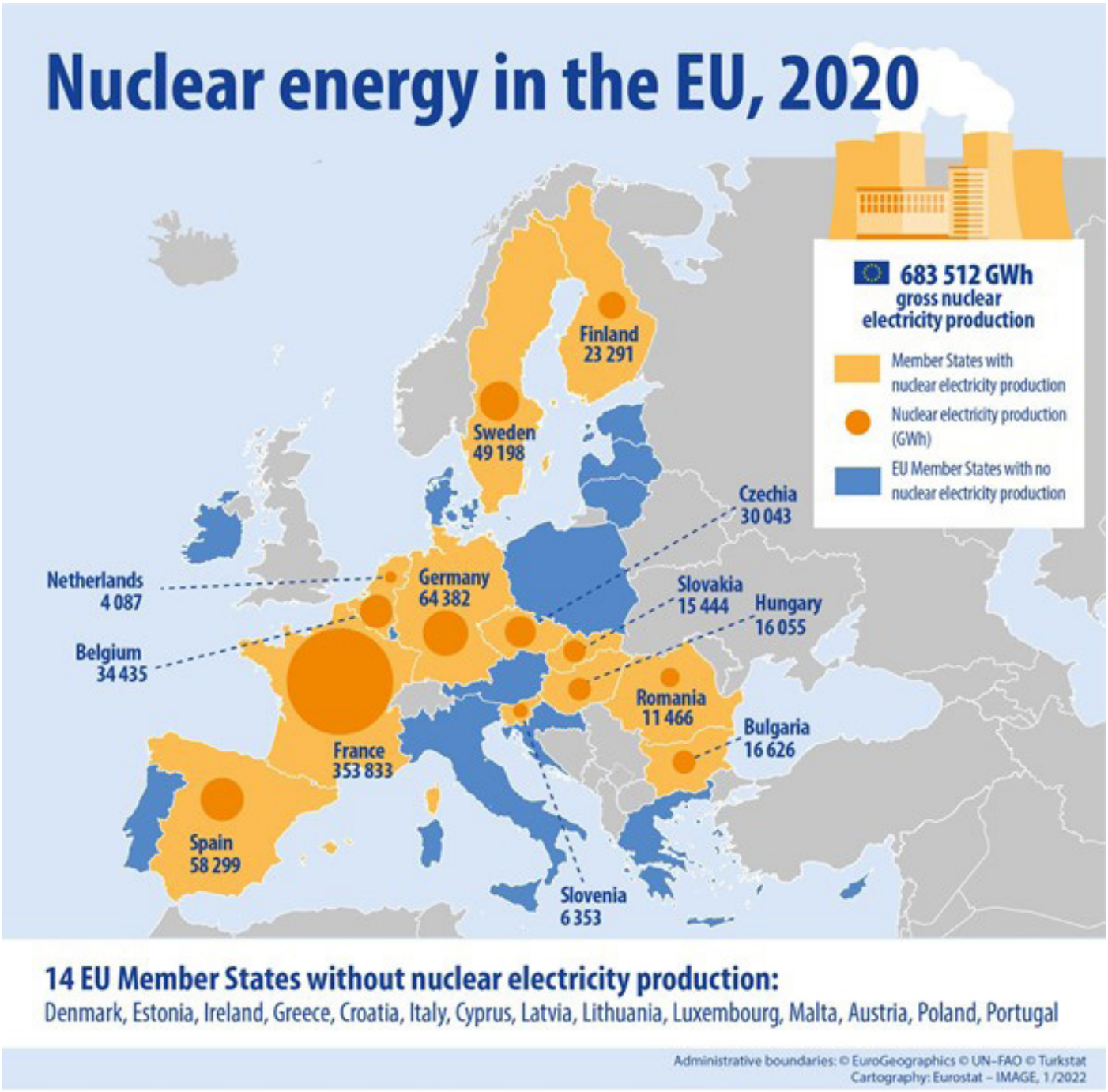
In ethics4growth, we face every day similar problems with small and medium enterprises that want to become greener, but they can't achieve it, due to a lack of culture rather than resources. We have to rethink the way of doing sustainability, we need to start from a local level to reach a global one, amplifying the social impact that can be generated from green energy.

At this rate, how do we expect to get out of the issue?
This is one of the reasons why we sponsor "innovations" that can provide people with what they need, but in a sustainable way that binds us to goal number 7 of the SDGs which includes access to clean energy for all.

In ethics4growth, we promote the idea that every single company should embrace the SDGs goals in its corporate policy and should attempt to bring about a revolutionary change towards much more sustainable countries. This could also be achieved through access to a series of European funds (Next Generation, Recovery plan, Green deal).

In Europe, many private companies are approaching this ecological transition, especially in the field of mobility. Ferrovie dello Stato and Snam have recently signed an agreement in which the mission is clearly to get the hydrogen train off the ground in Italy, as is already the case in some European countries such as Germany and the Netherlands.

11 https://greekcitytimes.com/2022/01/12/25-of-eu-electricity-production-from-nuclear-sources-greece-cyprus-yet-to-go-nuclear/



Regarding sustainable mobility, the European Commission has identified hydrogen as one of the crucial sectors for achieving the 2050 decarbonization targets. The introduction of hydrogen in transport will be one of the main drivers for Italy and represents a possible competitive advantage in the European market.

Taking again the example of Ferrovie dello Stato, which says that out of 16,779 kilometres of railway lines in operation in Italy today, non-electrified (diesel) lines account for around 28% of the total of 4,763 kilometers. Investing in the hydrogen train is an excellent, fully sustainable alternative to the diesel trains currently running on non-electrified lines and to modernize the train line.

Ethics4growth supports the growth of sustainable mobility solutions that can reduce the ecological impact, creating a strategic and synergistic long-term action plan that leads the transport world towards fully sustainable mobility.

In ethics4growth, we face every day similar problems with small and medium enterprises that want to become greener, but they can't achieve it, due to a lack of culture rather than resources. We have to rethink the way of doing sustainability, we need to start from a local level to reach a global one, amplifying the social impact that can be generated from green energy.

At this rate, how do we expect to get out of the issue?

This is one of the reasons why we sponsor "**innovations**" that can provide people with what they need, but **in a sustainable way that binds us to goal number 7 of the SDGs which includes access to clean energy for all**.

In ethics4growth, we promote the idea that every single company should embrace the SDGs goals in its corporate policy and should attempt to bring about a revolutionary change towards much more sustainable countries. This could also be achieved through access to a series of European funds (Next Generation, Recovery plan, Green deal).

In Europe, many private companies are approaching this ecological transition, especially in the field of mobility. Ferrovie dello Stato and Snam have recently signed an agreement in which **the mission is clearly to get the hydrogen train off the ground in Italy**, as is already the case in some European countries such as Germany and the Netherlands.[12]

Regarding sustainable mobility, **the European Commission has identified hydrogen as one of the crucial sectors for achieving the 2050 decarbonization targets**. The introduction of hydrogen in transport will be one of the main drivers for Italy and represents a possible competitive advantage in the European market.

Taking again the example of Ferrovie dello Stato, which says that out of 16,779 kilometres of railway lines in operation in Italy today, non-electrified (diesel) lines account for around 28% of the total of 4,763 kilometers. Investing in the hydrogen train is an excellent, fully sustainable alternative to the diesel trains currently running on non-electrified lines and to modernize the train line.[13]

Ethics4growth supports the growth of sustainable mobility solutions that can reduce the ecological impact, creating a strategic and synergistic long-term action plan that leads the transport world towards fully sustainable mobility.

12 https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/alleanza-gruppo-fs-e-snam-sviluppare-treni-idrogeno-ADrAdPx

13 https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/mobilita-sostenibile-cosi-snam-convertira-5mila-chilometri-linee-ferroviarie-non-elettrificate-idrogeno-ADoxxL6

DemSoc - A participatory design for Orléans' future[1]

By Mélodie Caraty and Raphaël Pouyé

In 2020 and 2021, Democratic Society's (Demsoc) team in France supported Orléans Métropole in designing and running their "Assises de la transition écologique", a 5-month participatory forum that called upon its 300,000 residents to jointly design an ambitious roadmap to carbon neutrality. With more than 100 workshops bringing the Métropole's residents together with city officials, public servants, civil society activists, and grassroots groups, the Assises was considered a milestone in harnessing citizens' energy towards new forms of local climate democracy.

The co-creation of a School of Transition

The Assises' design drew largely from the systems innovation approach shaped by Demsoc and our partners through the **EIT Climate KIC Healthy and Clean Cities** project in Orléans and 14 other cities across Europe. Its novel take on citizen participation for climate action inspired a **Carnegie Europe working paper**. Among other accolades, it was also awarded a 4-star "**Trophée national de la participation et de la concertation**" in 2022.

To keep this momentum growing, Orléans Métropole suggested that an in-house skills training programme be created and made available to all of Orléans Métropole's 3,500 public servants, as well as the dozens of elected representatives and employees serving its 22 municipalities. Since its inception, the School was thus shaped as a way of reinforcing Orléans Métropole's role as a local change-maker towards a sustainable model.

An approach based on knowledge sharing

Demsoc, together with French design agency Okoni, presented Orléans with a novel method to break silos and keep participation at the heart of this new phase: a co-design approach for and by the future students to invent a bespoke "School of transition".
In collaboration with Orléans Métropole's training and innovation teams, we ran two immersive collective intelligence sessions with a very diverse group of 30 public servants – bringing the voice of different competencies and levels of seniority to the table. The workshops were held on March 3rd and March 24th with facilitation by Mélodie Caraty and Raphaël Pouyé, with Okoni and Orléans' team members.

The vast majority of public agents and elected representatives who had volunteered to join this exercise were new to these participatory methods based on candour, mutual trust, and experimenting. The trianings were received very well by all participants.

1 https://www.demsoc.org/projects/a-participatory-design-for-orleans-future-school-of-transition

A new kind of school: Embracing a holistic view on climate to accelerate change

It soon became obvious to every "co-designer" present, i.e., all participants, that the School would break most existing habits in terms of public sector training, and would surely become a transformative journey for all involved. By ensuring that each new class produces and shares the knowledge and support materials for the next one, it sets itself a clear goal of encouraging agency and ownership of the school among all of its end-users across the Métropole.

By bringing together people who had seldom collaborated and having them uncover first-hand some hidden potentials of cross-silo cooperation on climate issues, the co-design sessions made everyone involved believe in the "School of Transition" as a new kind of space – one in which to experiment with all kinds of transitions. First, a managerial transformation, opening new areas for out-of-the-box hypotheses and real-life testing – but also, and much more broadly, a place in which to explore the social and governance transitions that can undergird the long-term transformations needed to face the climate challenge.

What's next

A starting point for Orléans Metropole to gradually identify its needs, these sessions confirmed that the School would focus on three challenges, namely (i) fostering the environmental transition, (ii) renewing relations with Orléans Métropole's residents and citizens, and (iii) imagining new ways of working and doing business inside and outside of Orléans Métropole's administration.

The 30 participants' growing ownership of the School of Transition's spirit has already made them future flag-bearers of its novel take on collective intelligence and cross-sector pollination. Most of them promised to become its tireless ambassadors, and to to form its first cohort.

Now that the workshops have produced the early building blocks for a new kind of school, its core concept and working principles will be polished by Orléans Métropole's Training and Innovation directorates and will be presented for approval in June 2022.

European Leadership & the Common Public Sphere

By Stavros Papagianneas

It is too early to assess the political repercussions of the corona pandemic in Europe. Still, decisions taken since February 2020 will have a profound impact. EU leaders have failed in communicating a shared vision and taking a real political commitment to reassure European citizens that the EU is there for them. Instead, different European countries have taken a national approach, focusing less on solidarity and coordination.

It looked like the corona crisis could be the final nail in the European project's coffin. The ***"biggest crisis since the EU was founded"***, said German Chancellor Angela Merkel in early April 2020. During the same year, export bans on urgently needed medical supplies and unilateral border closures gave the sense that "my country first" approaches had destroyed any remaining solidarity between member states.

Nevertheless, European cohesion has come about to an unprecedented degree over the last five years due to Brexit. The EU has ultimately responded more or less effectively to the crisis, agreeing on recovery funds for the hardest-hit member states. However, the coronavirus will either kill or cure the EU.

Just two weeks after the Joint Declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe was signed in Brussels by the European Parliament President David Sassoli, Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa - on behalf of the Presidency of the Council - and by Commission President Ursula van der Leyen, the Executive Board of the Conference on the Future of Europe held its constitutive meeting on 24 March 2021 in Brussels.

The purpose of the Conference was to establish how to give citizens a more significant role in shaping the Union's future policies and ambitions, improving its resilience. The Conference is an opportunity to underpin the democratic legitimacy and functioning of the European project. The aim is to discuss and collect views from EU citizens on matters about the Union that are of interest, whether it is the EU's Health Union, the Green Deal, digital transition, or the way European elections should be held. Those views will dictate the Conference's reform recommendations and hopefully define a sustainable future vision for a more united and effective continent.

At the beginning of the 2000s, the EU seemed to be a tremendous experiment in shared sovereignty that had banished war from Europe. The EU was perceived as the only equitably prosperous and rule-of-law-respecting superpower, even without the military determination to play global policeman. Many believed that its unique combination of open borders, integrated markets and democratic institutions made Europe's "soft power" equal to the "hard power of the US".

The EU received the Peace Nobel Prize in 2012 for preventing European countries from declaring war on each other in the past 60 years. However, Europe is perceived as being always too late and too slow. In their Lisbon Strategy (2000-10), the development plan for the EU economy, European leaders declared their aim of becoming the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world. However, these highminded words have not been accompanied by the structural reforms necessary for creating stable growth in the long term and for a dynamic response to globalisation.

The EU has to be united and speak with one voice if it wants to play any significant role on the planet. European citizens should understand that the relatively small countries that constitute the EU can no longer face significant global challenges on their own. European countries are now so interconnected that issues like the regulation of financial markets, research, and innovation investment, national security, economic recovery plans, or the fight against climate change should be dealt with as a Union.

The world will not wait for Europe to make up its mind. The EU must show leadership to solve the current global problems. It needs a system of governance with a better balance between efficiency and democratic legitimacy. The EU needs to reinvent itself. Indeed, today's environment does not seem ideal for new ambitions or grand ideas. Nevertheless, a solution-driven Union can only strengthen its legitimacy if its policies and successes are communicated clearly and comprehensively.

Europe needs to develop a stronger identity and a common public sphere. The European identity consists of a set of values shared by all EU citizens. Nowadays, the EU is characterised by two opposing trends. One emphasises the importance of national identities and the right to difference. The other advocates the right to a collective

identity and a cosmopolitan culture. These two trends do not necessarily exclude each other. A united Europe does not mean the extinction of national identities. On the contrary, it respects the right to difference and diversity while being cosmopolitan.

Jurgen Habermas, one of the most influential sociologists and philosophers of the 20th century, said that the public sphere encourages rational will-formation. This is a sphere of sound and democratic social interaction. During the 19th century, creating the United States of Europe gained support among European intellectuals. Several political leaders were convinced that a closer union between the European States could not be based only on governments and their administrations. A peaceful union of states had to be sustained by a rapprochement between European nations and their citizens. This perspective was frequently promoted inside many European networks of societies, clubs, associations, and academics.

Moreover, today the active involvement of civil society could be of tremendous support in the formation of a European public sphere. Civil society has grown in size and influence. Nowadays, mobile information and communication technology are becoming highly relevant methods to connect and obtain social change. The lines between communication and advocacy are not very clear anymore. Citizen-centred campaigns powered by digital and social media can drive social movements and achieve political change.

A European public sphere is exceptionally relevant for the future of EU integration because it influences the quality of democracy in the EU. A democratic Union requires that public discourse and discussion of issues are dealt with at EU level. Without a public sphere, institutional reforms of the EU that seek to make it more democratic are doomed to fail.

Is the Medium the Message?

By Stavros Papagianneas

"The medium is the message" is a phrase coined by communications theorist Marshall McLuhan back in 1964. He tried to explain that the form media takes actually embeds itself in the message and influences how that message is perceived. In his book *Understanding the Media: The Extensions of Man*, he states that:

> *"In a culture like ours, long accustomed to splitting and dividing all things as a means of control, it is sometimes a bit of a shock to be reminded that, in operational, and practical fact, the medium is the message. This is merely to say that the personal and social consequences of any medium-that is, of any extension of our-selves-result from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves, or by any new technology."*

In 1964, McLuhan was right. Messages that reached audiences through radio or TV were perceived differently than messages that came through print. McLuhan maintained that the ways the messages were delivered were, in fact, a part of the message. And that is absolutely right. The medium can be the message itself if it delivers content that would otherwise be impossible to access.

But he was also wrong. Born in 1911 and passing away in 1980, McLuhan had no opportunity to experience the Internet the way we know it today. There were no websites. There was no email. Nobody was writing biogs. There was no Facebook or Twitter. Even so, that didn't stop him from exerting a huge influence on digital media. It was McLuhan who first spoke about technology and communication having the ability to create a "global village".

As an early pioneer of the study of communication and its evolution over time, McLuhan introduced many observations about the impact of new forms of communications and media. Today, however, we sometimes have the impression that because we have posted something on our website, or sent out an email, or posted a blog, or sent out a tweet, that we have communicated.

Nowadays, communication disruption is present in all organisations - private and government; unilateral and multilateral. Digital technology is rapidly disrupting institutions and corporations. New technologies and innovative start-ups emerge every day. Simply put: the balance of power has changed. The reputation of a brand can be severely damaged in minutes. Brand loyalty, reputation, credibility, and trust are increasingly influenced by people's experiences.

As George Bernard Shaw famously said:

> *"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place".*

Your medium is not always your message. Your PC, laptop, smartphone, the Internet, social media platforms do not communicate. They are just tools, and you may not be communicating the message you think you are. Since the early days of communication, humanity has been captivated by its methods to deliver and preserve information. How we communicate with each other defines who we are. How we communicate makes a culture and an individual unique.

Effective communication is important in both personal and professional aspects of our lives, particularly as ineffective communication can create short- and long-term issues. Many organisations often do not think about communicating while doing it but concentrate on how sending and receiving information might eliminate problems and improve relationships.

Communication is effective if everything in the communication process goes as planned, and when the recipient understands the message in the way the sender intended.

Club of Venice:
Provisional programme 2022-2024

2022
Toulouse (hybrid mtg), 16/17 February 2022 **Joint international seminar on citizenship and civic participation - the role of local public communication in the different EU countries**
London, 30-31 March 2022 5th Stratcom seminar **(communication strategies in progress, resilience vs. hybrid threats, artificial intelligence, capacity/capability building)**
June 2022 - Florence (EIU, 30 June-1st July) **Plenary meeting**
Prague, 13/14 October 2022 **Thematic seminar** **Challenges for government communication in times of crisis**
Venice, 24-25 November 2022 (dates to be confirmed) **Plenary meeting**

2023
London, February 2023 **6th Stratcom seminar**
London, March 2022 **5th Stratcom seminar**
Brussels, early spring 2023 **Thematic seminar**
Greece, April 2023 (tbc) **Thematic seminar on public diplomacy, reputation management and crisis communication**
June 2023 (Croatia or Portugal - venue do be defined) **Plenary meeting**
September 2023 (venue to be defined) **Thematic seminar**
Venice, November 2023 **Plenary meeting**
2024
London, February 2023 **7th Stratcom Seminar**
May 2024 (venue to be defined) **Spring plenary**
Brussels, autumn 2024 **Thematic seminar**
Venice, November 2024 **Plenary meeting**
Venice, November 2023 **Plenary meeting**

Aknowledgments

The Club expresses its gratitude to its members from
Belgium, the Czech Republic, Italy, Serbia and the United Kingdom

Many thanks also to the Steering and the Advisory Committees of the Club, the European Parliament, the European Commission,
the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD),
the OECD, the Democratic Society (DEMSOC), Cap'Com,
the European Movement-Italy, DebunkEU.org, Ethics4growth, European Commons, StP Communications, the European Movement, Berenschot, Claudio Camarda, Yves Charmont, Pier Virgilio Dastoli, Viktoras Daukšas, Michaël Malherbe, Stavros Papagianneas, Marco Ricorda, Susanne Weber, Robert Wester, Anthony Zacharzewski
and our other external collaborators for their proactive support.

This edition was made possible thanks to the collaboration of the Directorate-General for External Communication of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister in Belgium