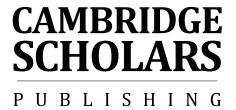# Public Communication in the European Union

Public Communication in the European Union:
History, Perspectives and Challenges

Edited by

Chiara Valentini and Giorgia Nesti

CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS

P U B L I S H I N G

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I: THE POLICY BACKGROUND

PART II: COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE

PART VI: PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

PREFACE

> When dealing with people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but creatures of emotion.
> — Dale Carnegie

Communicating effectively with people from different nations is extremely challenging and complex in practice. There is no certitude that the message delivered is interpreted in the same way by all individuals. Yet, we cannot avoid communicating because we are afraid of misunderstandings: as human beings we need to interact, talk and share ideas, feelings and concerns. We ought to exchange opinions and try to find solutions to common problems. Sometimes we have to compromise something for the general well-being of the community. Concessions are frequently the result of political games, but they can also simply be an irrational decision, taken just for the sake of knowing that it is the "right thing to do".

Communication cannot make the European Union (EU) function better, nor solve its economic, social, political and environmental problems. However, it helps in raising awareness and mobilising people. Communication can be a leading tool for enhancing identity, integration, respect and democracy. Communication, in fact, in its Latin origin *communicare,* means to impart, share, or make something in common. Communication can create even emotions and attachments. In this regard, communication can help the EU to understand its citizens even "emotionally", and through this understanding the EU will be able to improve its institutions, politics and policies.

We hope with this book to pave the road for a better comprehension of the challenges and difficulties of communicating in an enlarged Europe. We are, however, aware of the impossibility of covering all possible means of communicating to, with and towards citizens. Therefore, this book should be considered a collection of insights concerning the main questions in current EU public communication.

To conclude, we would like to express our gratitude to all the people that in one way or another helped in making this editorial project possible. Special thanks are due to Helle V. Dam, Head of the Department of Language and Business Communication at Aarhus School of Business,

Last but not least, we wish to express our love and gratitude to our respectively beloved families for their understanding and endless love through the duration of this editorial project.

— Chiara Valentini and Giorgia Nesti
Aarhus and Padova, 30 April 2010

INTRODUCTION

CHIARA VALENTINI AND GIORGIA NESTI

Communicating the EU: A renewed institutional priority

The launch of the Convention on the Future of Europe in 2002 and the signature of the Constitutional Treaty in Rome in 2004 had a profound symbolic impact on European supporters' imaginations. The hope for a new direction in the process of integration was palpable as it opened up new perspectives for the creation of a real democratic, united, supranational polity that would replace the present economic and political Union.

But the failure of the ratification of the Constitution after the negative referenda in France and the Netherlands in 2005 dramatically dashed all those expectations, paving the way for the "period of reflection" about the future European Union (EU), its institutions, activities, and perspectives. As part of this process, great attention was devoted to improve communication flows between institutions and citizens. As Commissioner Margot Wallström admitted, in fact:

> the French and Dutch "no" votes in 2005 reminded us very forcefully that the European integration project cannot go ahead without wide public support. It must be a project which the citizens of Europe understand and in which they are actively involved. The people need to take ownership of the project and set the agenda. This can only come about if there is real communication between the people and the policy-makers — and between the people of the twenty-seven EU countries (Wallström, 2007: 2).

Thus the President of the Commission, José Barroso, and Vice-President Wallström have launched a communication plan to improve the public understanding of EU and its activities and to strengthen a common sense of belonging between citizens. This strategy comprises several measures: the publication of programmatic documents, the improvement of already existing services, the adoption of new online tools, and the provision of funds for civil society's initiatives. This wide-ranging spectrum of activities undoubtedly testifies to the Commission's renewed

interest in communication and its potentialities after decades of limited interventions. The EU information and communication policy, in fact, has been present in the European agenda since the very beginning of the integration process and has known growing importance at least since the Maastricht crisis, after the Danish rejection of the Treaty on the EU, but only from 2005 it has become a binding institutional priority.

The scientific debate: Outlining the public sphere and Europeanisation in EU communication

The importance assumed by the information and communication policy among the EU institutions and the interest risen around the European Commission's initiatives to improve the dialogue with citizens have stimulated a wide academic debate on the EU, its democratic legitimacy and its communicative efforts. The greater part of the scientific literature developed on EU communication is focused on the concept of "public sphere", which is generally referred to as the place where the public opinion takes form through the discussion of problems, political issues and decisions and where the political power is placed under scrutiny (Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007: 1).

The research on the European public sphere could be grouped into three streams[1]. The first comprises studies in political philosophy that discuss theoretical issues concerning the EU's democratic deficit and the way communication processes could solve it while promoting the creation of a supranational public sphere (see, for example, Kielmansegg, 1996; Eriksen, 2000; Schlesinger & Kevin, 2000; Habermas, 2001; Schlesinger, 2002; Habermas & Derrida, 2003; Grimm, 2004; Eriksen, 2007; Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007; and Kaelble, 2007).

A second stream of literature refers to research which tries to empirically assess the existence of a transnational public sphere, as it emerges from the experiences of trans-national media[2] (Schlesinger, 2002, 2003, 2007; Ionescu, 2008). As concern in the development of a European public sphere, that research mainly focuses on structural conditions for, and practical experiences with, trans-national communication and

---

[1] For a brief literature overview on the idea of a European public sphere, see also Chapter Three in this volume.
[2] See, for example the newspapers *The European*, *L'Européen*, and also *the Economist*, *The International Herald Tribune*, *The Financial Times*, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, or the audiovisual channel Euronews.

discourses about European topics, and on the quality of these communication processes.

A third conceptualisation of public sphere revolves on the idea of the Europeanisation[3] of national public spheres. Since Europe is characterised by many differences in languages, values, identities, and media systems (Gerhards, 1993, 2000), the creation of a supranational homogeneous public sphere as in the nation state — argue scholars belonging to this stream — does not seem possible. Empirical research carried out in this field therefore measures the degree of Europeanisation of national public spheres, that is how frequently European issues are covered by national

---

[3] "Europeanisation" is a very up-to-date concept increasingly utilised in social science literature since 1999 (Featherstone, 2003: 5). It generally refers to changes induced by the EU in the way domestic institutions, policies and interests are organised and framed. Ladrech describes Europeanisation as

> an incremental process re-orienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organisational logic of national politics and policy-making (1994: 69).

Hix and Goetz broadly define Europeanisation as "a process of change in national institutional and policy practices that can be attributed to European integration" (2000: 27). For Risse, Cowles and Caporaso, Europeanisation means

> the emergence and developments at the European level of distinct structures of governance, that is of political, legal and social institutions associated with political problem-solving that formalise interactions among the actors, and of policy networks specialising in the creation of authoritative European rules (2001: 3).

Although the concept of Europeanization has been prevalently applied in the field of European studies to explain variations and changes in national policies and politics, some scholars (Checkel, 2001; Risse et al., 2001) have noticed that changes might also encompass other dimensions such as citizenship and national identities. Respecting to this, Radaelli offers one of the most widely accepted (and exhaustive) definitions of Europeanisation as a

> process of (a) construction, (b) diffusion, and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, "ways of doing things", and shared beliefs, and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures, and public polices (2003: 30).

For an overview of theoretical issues and research findings about the Europeanisation of Member States across various policy areas, see Featherstone and Radaelli (2003) and Graziano and Vink (2006).

media and in which terms. Van de Steeg and Risse (2007: 5), in fact, hypothesise that

> an ideal typical European public sphere for the European Union would […] emerge *if and when the same (European) themes are discussed at the same time with the same criteria of relevance* [emphasis in the original].

A definitive assessment of the presence of a European(ised) public sphere is far from being reached, since empirical outputs produced in this field has been not always consistent. Research findings, in fact, depict a not thoroughly united picture of the process of Europeanisation. Some scholars argue that an Europeanised public sphere, notwithstanding fragmented, is emerging (van de Steeg & Risse, 2003, 2007; Trenz, 2004, 2007b). Others studies claim that an Europeanisation has not totally occurred yet, as the debate about EU matters is still domestically oriented and steered by national political elites (Downey & Koenig, 2006; Schlesinger, 2007; Sifft et al., 2007). Finally, other scholars, more cautiously, conclude that there is no empirical evidence nor of the presence neither of the lack of a Europeanised public sphere because the answer depends on which European policy areas are selected for the analysis (Koopmans & Erbe, 2004). What thus emerged is that the ideal-typical model of (national) public sphere needs to be replaced by a model of multiple, segmented networks of communicative spaces (Schlesinger & Fossum, 2007; Trenz, 2007a, 2008) more capable to grasp the complex nature of the EU[4].

Literature on the public sphere has the merit to have tackled the question of the EU democratic legitimacy by taking into particular consideration the communicative dimension. The importance bestowed on the presence of communicative flows between the civil society and the politico-administrative system to discuss social problems and support or oppose political decisions (Habermas, 1996: 356) represents an unavoidable point of departure for our reflections. This is also the reason why some authors in this book have chosen to assess the "communicative

---

[4] In the Habermasian model of the "circulation of political power", democratic legitimacy stems from the possibility for civil society to form and express its public opinion and to funnel it within the decision-making through the mediation of intermediate corps such as political parties and interest groups. Such an ideal type has been criticized by Fossum and Schlesinger (2007: 6–9) for at least two reasons. It presupposes, in fact, first, that opinion formation takes place outside the political system, within an homogeneous community, due to the presence of a shared sense of what is the common good; and second, that the circulation of information among the different parts of the system happens linearly, without conflicts and/or problems of aggregation of preferences.

performance" of the EU in light of the theory of the public sphere. Nevertheless, in our opinion such an approach suffers of several limits both at the theoretical and at the empirical level. First of all, the theory of the public sphere has an intrinsic bias toward the nation state model. Some scholars have, indeed, recognised that the debate about the EU is characterised by a sort of "methodological nationalism" that would hamper the elaboration of more appropriate conceptualisations of the European feature (Fossum & Schlesinger, 2007: 11; Trenz: 2007a: 1). But they appear to us not to have proposed a clear alternative description and explanation of how the mechanism of communication is actually operating at the EU level and of how it should function in order to enhance democratic legitimacy. Moreover, empirical research aimed at assessing the presence of a European public sphere have mainly concentrated on press coverage thus disregarding the role performed by other (new) types of communicative tools and strategies, both on- and off-line, in fostering democracy.

For this reason the book analyses the EU communication activities against the backdrop of the theory of input and output legitimacy elaborated by Scharpf (1999). This approach will help us in investigating all the different dimensions of the institutional communication process. It would also offer an alternative normative model against which assessing the relationship between communication and democratic legitimacy in the EU.

Looking for an alternative approach: Legitimacy and public communication in the EU

In liberal democratic systems, legitimacy performs a crucial function, guaranteeing political institutions' stability. Legitimacy, in fact, entails

> a *socially sanctioned obligation to comply with government policies even if these violate the actor's own interests or normative preferences, and even if official sanctions could be avoided at low costs* (Scharpf, 2006: 1; emphasis in the original).

Through voluntary citizens' compliance with policies, government effectiveness is ensured and democratic stability is preserved. In Scharpf's theorisation, legitimacy derives from the free will of the people who, through election, grant power to their representatives. Political representatives, in turn, should guarantee that their conduct conforms to the preferences of the electorate. This type of legitimacy is called by Scharpf "input legitimacy" or "government *by* the people". Input

legitimacy, therefore, is ensured where the governed participate in policy-making and where governors are accountable toward the electorate. The second source of legitimacy stems from the capacity of those who have been elected to adopt effective policies, respondent to citizens' needs and solving collective problems. This type of legitimacy is called by Scharpf "output legitimacy" or "government *for* the people".

Input and output legitimacy are connected each other by a circular relation (Nesti, 2008). Voters grant power to the elected who, in turn, act on their behalf. Then governors' capacity to produce effective policies, responsive to governed preferences (responsiveness), could be sanctioned or rewarded by voters through the accountability mechanism. But citizens' participation is not confined only to elections. They could also take part to policy-making through interest groups and associations' lobbying activities, or through the ever-more-available channels for direct political action. Public institutions need to engage their constituencies — citizens and any potential stakeholder — into the decision-making process. It is through this participation of different ideas and opinions, in fact, that public organisations can reach a consensus on policy decisions and can best represent the interests of their citizens.

An essential mechanism that operates for supporting the production of democratic legitimacy is communication (Eder, 2007: 46). Communication in public organisations is often referred to as public communication, that is the combination of communication strategies and activities directed to specific publics, either internal or external to the organisation, aimed at providing information, raising awareness and influencing their attitudes or even behaviour towards specific issues and policies (Mancini, 2002). A public in a "Deweyan definition" is as a set of conscious and aware people who are affected by the consequences of organisational decisions or objectives in which they did not take part (Dewey, 1927). In general terms, the internal public of a public organisation are all the members of the institution, while external publics refer to citizens, civil society associations, business organisations, other institutions, experts, professionals, etc. — all the different stakeholders, in sum — that interact with the public organisation. In this conception, public communication serves to the organisation to internally and externally legitimise itself, to consolidate its position and to make the external environment more predictable.

Alongside the input-output legitimacy chain, communication fulfils important tasks:

1) It allows for *electoral participation* by improving citizens' knowledge about politics (Campus, 2008: 121);

2) It enables citizen *participation in policy-making* by giving information about issues at stakes, policy options, process and procedures, actors involved; citizens are, therefore, helped in understanding and participating in public discourses and decision-making (Valentini, 2008);

3) It promotes political actors' *responsiveness* by improving their knowledge about citizens' preferences;

4) It fosters elected *accountability* towards citizens, that is justification and explanation about chosen policies and their main implications. On the basis of justifications provided by public actors, citizens can evaluate their actions and then exercise an (informed) right of vote in the next electoral turn, thus "granting or punishing" the candidates for the achieved results.

Especially for the EU, communication is a particularly important strategic resource that covers different dimensions of communicating towards, with and by different publics, such as journalists, citizens, civil society organisations, companies, civil servants, Member States' governments, etc. For EU institutions, the number of potential and active publics is extremely large due to its multi-level nature that encompasses different institutional settings (supranational, national, and local) and different types of actors involved in the policy-making (governments, administrations, experts, civil society organisations, associations, etc). Knowing how the EU communicates with its different publics can help to better grasp to what extent the EU is still suffering from a legitimacy deficit, and how communication could help in solving this problem.

The aim of this book is, therefore, to present the features of EU public communication taking into consideration that the functions and activities of the EU institutions are complex and at the same time in progress. In addressing the challenging of communicate within and outside the EU institutional organisation, this book asks:

*   Which kind of communication has the EU developed in terms of strategies, contents, tools, and activities during the past fifty years?
*   How does public communication contribute to EU legitimacy?
*   What is the role of public communication in the future of the EU?

In order to identify, describe and analyse the main characteristics of the EU public communication, this book focuses on the communication activities developed by the European Commission, as it is the main

executive institution of the EU setup and holds a pivotal role in planning and managing the whole communication strategy.

The EU public communication approach is also evaluated by looking at its two components: 1) systemic, and 2) organisational (Meyer, 1999: 622). The first dimension relates to all those information and communication activities that should be developed by a public organisation alongside the input-output legitimacy chain in order to make the process transparent. We will assess, therefore, whether the Commission has provided mechanisms for:

- Collecting information *from* citizens about problems and demands;
- Disseminating information *to* citizens about: issues discussed, decision taken and policies formulated; actors involved in the policy-making and related responsibilities; procedures followed and entry-points available to decision-making; policy effects.

The second dimension pertains to the organisational level of public communication and assesses whether the EU public communication management guarantees:

- The elaboration of differentiated message content for each stakeholder involved in the legitimacy chain;
- The adoption of appropriate tools of communication for each activity;
- The integration and coordination of communication activities;
- The presence of an adequate staff and budget;

In our opinion, it is only with the adoption of an approach that integrates both the systemic and the organisational dimensions of public communication that the EU will be able to manage complexity, strengthen its image and reputation and consequently its role. An integrated communication approach cannot solve the EU democratic deficit nor improve EU governance as these issues are mostly related with the current EU political structure[5]. However, it can provide the means for communicating better within and among the different EU institutions and can enhance the EU reputation among the general public. A good reputation among different stakeholders can be understood as reputational

---

[5] In their recent analysis of the question of the democratic deficit in the EU, Føllesdal and Hix (2006) mention, as causes of its weak popular legitimacy, the excessive power hold by national executives within the Council against the legislative, the limited competencies conferred to the European Parliament, and the presence of weak electoral mechanisms.

capital. In studies on organisations, reputational capital has been claimed to contribute to reduced transaction costs through trust, added employee loyalty as well as legitimacy (Luoma-aho, 2008). Therefore, a good level of reputation can lead towards more legitimised EU institutions and more trusting relationships and eventually support. This could also be the kick-off for putting in place a mechanism for improving EU performance.

The structure of the book

To better grasp the multi-dimensional nature of EU communication, the chapters are organised into six parts that reflect on what it means for the EU to communicate in a multi-level system. The book, in fact, adopts a multi-disciplinary approach that encompasses theories from public relations, political science, cultural studies, public diplomacy, and journalism. Each part offers insights both on the systemic (how communication supports legitimacy) and the organisational (how communication is managed) dimension of EU communication. Some authors also present data drawn from empirical analysis conducted using different qualitative and quantitative methods (document and web analysis, interviews, content analysis, surveys). The following sections briefly describe the aims of the six parts and the contents of the chapters to help the reader in understanding the relation between the systemic and organisational dimensions of EU public communication and authors' main arguments. After examining all six parts, the reader will notice a common pattern of discussion dealing with the challenges of communicating Europe. As most of the authors point out, the EU's communication plan struggles between a delocalised, unstructured communication approach and a more integrated one. This apparent conflict forces authors to question, as well to offer new ways of understanding communicative dynamics of complex supranational organisations.

Mapping the EU communication and policy discourse
of the past sixty years

Part I describes historical developments in the EU information and communication policy from the 1950 to current years of integration on the background of different theoretical approaches: public policy, communication and public relations. Specifically in order to understand how the EU manage public communication activities, a consideration of how the EU defines its strategy, the contents of the messages conveyed, its own and other partners' roles, types of tools and activities adopted must be

put forward. Policy analysis can let us describe and understand how the EU has envisaged its communicative plan and how it has been managing them. Authors here discuss the communication strategy of the EU trying to identify main frames around which it was developed and to assess critically the roles that such a strategy has in legitimising EU institutions among its citizens.

In Chapter One, Giorgia Nesti describes the main steps towards the development of EU information and communication policies between the 1950s and the 2000s through the adoption of a neo-institutionalist theoretical framework. She firstly summarises the main developments of the EU information and communication policy placing them in the more general context of the European integration. Then she identifies main issues of fifty years of policy discourse about communication. The chapter ends with an explanation of how EU information and communication policies are deeply embedded into the process of institutionalisation and legitimation of the European Commission.

In Chapter Two, Ana Lúcia Terra presents and analyses the information policies developed by the European Economic Community (EEC) during the 1970s and 1980s. Through an historical review, the author describes how information programmes drawn up by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Information as well as Parliamentary reports and resolutions on this matter have emphasised the need to transmit the European message to the general public in each Member State. Indeed, the association between information and communication policy appeared for the first time in the 1980s in a Parliamentary report.

In Chapter Three, Michael Brüggemann discusses whether or not the new European Commission's information policy (i.e. a set of transparency rules and specific strategies of public relations) really have the potential to strengthen the European public sphere by effectively promoting transparency and dialogue. The author responds to this question by presenting a conceptual framework linking information policy to the notion of a democratic public sphere and by applying this framework to the case of the EU transparency regulation and the information campaign on the enlargement.

Identity-building, communication and culture

Communicating EU policy towards different publics also implies an understanding of cultural dimensions and of dynamics of community relations. Part II reflects on whether and how EU communication

initiatives take into consideration cultural factors in setting up communication strategies that foster dialogue within and outside Member States and whether culture can be seen as a vehicle for mutual understanding, trust and common sense of belonging. In this respect, a shared culture could be the paradigm that boosts citizens' support for the EU project. Furthermore, the cultural paradigm is another way to understand community relations and how EU institutional decisions and activities are correctly communicated to European and non-European citizens.

Specifically, in Chapter Four a cultural and semiotic perspective is adopted in order to identify the "rationale" underpinning the EU's communication strategy. Through the empirical analysis of some of the European Commission's initiatives in the field of new media, such as the launch of EUTube and the videos "Let's Come Together" and "EU Balloons over Canberra", Aneta Podkalicka and Cris Shore assess how the European Commission is using communication to enhance the creation of a supranational public sphere and to promote cooperation among citizens. According to the two authors, communication from the European Commission's perspective is still conceived too much in a hierarchical way, as contents flow vertically from institutions to citizens.

If the EU has been criticised by different scholars (Tumber, 1993, 1995; Mak, 2002) of using marketing and promotional techniques for fostering legitimation and support, positive effects related to the implantation of cultural communication programmes are visible. Chapter Five is a case study presenting data related to an exchange programme between German and Polish students. The study is a practical example of implementation of one of EU cultural policies into a concrete action. Birte Fähnrich analyses, through a social integrationist approach, the impact EU exchange programmes have in promoting social integration, i.e. cohesion among the different EU nationalities, and discusses how this kind of initiative conveys the idea of Europe and encourage intercultural dialogue and understanding.

The Commission's information service
as means for dialogue

Discourses on the level of involvement and support of citizens for the EU project is also conceived as a way to assess the capacity of EU institutions in building relationships, establishing practices and procedures that anticipate and respond to community expectations, concerns and issues, and focusing in support programmes that respond to community

apprehensions and strengthen the quality of community life (the systemic dimension). In Part III, relationship building is thus interpreted as the EU's intention of establishing partnerships and involving national, regional and local stakeholders and the concepts of civil society and partnership in the EU context are examined according to a multidisciplinary approach. Case studies are presented and critically discussed to assess the impact of EU communication actions on the involvement of civil society organisations and of information services in disseminating EU messages. In Chapter Six, Chiara Valentini analyses how the network of EU local information relays, Europe Direct centres, helps the Commission in implementing its communication strategy at the local level. The case study of the Italian Europe Direct and their activities to engage local civil society organisations is presented in order to evaluate the possible impact of those relays on the EU envisaged role of constructing a stronger civil society and enhancing citizens' interest and national debate.

In Chapter Seven, Jürgen Wilke and Jessica Zobel present and discuss the case of the Europe by Satellite (EbS) news agency, the EU's TV information service, providing EU-related audiovisual material via satellite to media professionals. The authors describe the structure and role of EbS in implementing EU public relations activities, as well as they dispute its functions *vis-á-vis* to media roles of being impartial providers of information that serve the public interest. The crucial question is whether EbS can be seen as an independent TV news service or primarily as a public relations instrument of the European Commission for implementing EU information and communication policies. Findings are based on official documents and interviews with EbS producers as well as German journalists from public and private TV channels.

The EU and the media: The challenge of communicating in multi-national frames

If relationships are at the base of cooperation, and cooperation between institutions, organisations and different stakeholders leads towards synergy and efficiency in achieving results among the different types of possible relationships with influential public, EU media relations retain a special position. The media is considered an important and influential stakeholder for the EU, as the media is the first and foremost channel of information for EU citizens on different matters. However, due to their nature of being state-bounded, media in Europe still function according to national media systems and policies. Consequently, media relations activities in the EU institutions face many more problems than

typically national governments face in obtaining media attention. Hence, Part IV tries to uncover some of the dynamics of engaging different media into EU media discourses.

The authors of this part discuss EU policies and activities launched in recent years for catching the attention of national media professionals on EU institutions and issues as well as the role performed by national journalists in reporting EU news. Chapter Eight examines the EU communication deficit and the issue of imperceptibility of EU's activities among the general public. Here, Bernd Spanier explains this phenomenon by arguing that the nature of EU affairs coverage origins in the arena of European news management, the place where spokespersons and journalists exchange information.

The nature of EU news production and the influence exerted on it by national-based reporters is analysed in Chapter Nine. John Price critically compares how EU news is reported by Brussels-based and national-based journalists. He identifies significant differences in the nature of the news produced, and discusses the reasons for these. In doing so, findings provide new and significant insights into the nature of EU news production, while highlighting important lessons for how the EU and its institutions may better design and direct its communications strategies.

An understanding of media systems, structures and dynamics is essential in order to frame news contents in different countries. Differences and similarities within European journalism, as well as the structures and forms of the media coverage of European politics are discussed in Chapter Ten. Accordingly, Holger Sievert focuses on the analysis of existing and current research in the field of publicity and communication sciences. He presents and discusses the results of a comparative content analysis conducted across various EU Member States, with close reference to journalism practices in Europe as well as their impact on media coverage of the EU, its institutions and different political discourses.

Involving citizens in EU debates trough the adoption of new information and communication technologies

Relationships are also a core concept of Part V, which analyses citizens' involvement considering the impact of mediated communications. In this respect, the EU new media communications may be considered a sort of cyber-relationship with different constituencies. The use of new media is believed to have the potential to increase levels of trust and solidarity, which are prerequisite of political and civic participation. Not

only do new media have an impact on local community interaction and communication (Nesti & Valentini, 2009), new media facilitates interaction between source and receiver of information and to certain extents it creates forms of cyber-dialogues. Especially for Internet and related computer technologies it is possible to detect a real revolution of the way in which individuals and organisations communicate. The involvement of citizens in EU debates can be explored according to new forms of communications that can bypass national contexts and timeframes and can escape from the traditional information gatekeepers' interpretation of facts (Nesti & Valentini, 2009). Specifically, authors of this part examines the impact of EU new media initiatives on citizens' participation and involvement by considering different EU experiences of using ICTs as new innovative forms of political interaction and participation.

In Chapter Eleven, Jordanka Tomkova critically evaluates how the European Commission and the European Parliament employ public consultations and their more recent online versions to advance civic engagement in policy-making. Critics observe that, though e-consultations provide new opportunities for the formation of new interactive spaces between citizens and political actors, promote cost effectiveness and contribute to citizens' sense of being involved, their impact on the quality of deliberation and decision-making has been less conclusive. In view of this observation, the second underlying objective of the chapter is to reflect on the participatory utility that public consultations bring to the political process and how can the latter be effectively evaluated.

Also in line with the goal of enhancing dialogue and debate is the Debate Europe website, launched in 2006 by the European Commission as part of the Plan D strategy. Promoting dialogue and debate between citizens and institutions as a means of democratic legitimation is, nevertheless, far from being unproblematic. In Chapter Twelve, Sine Nørholm Just theoretically explores main tensions within this dialogical process and empirically investigates how Debate Europe operates as an online platform for the exchange of opinions between citizens and the European Commission.

Questions related to the usefulness and impact of online communications are also discussed in Chapter Thirteen, which focuses on information and communication technologies and, more precisely on online tools and blogs, as central channels in the EU communication strategy. Here, Niina Meriläinen and Marita Vos examine EU online communication tools and how young Finns of twenty to thirty years old perceive and utilise those means to know better EU institutions, activities

and functions. An additional content analysis of online citizen blogs that concentrate on particular EU policies was conducted in order to see how those blogs were utilised by Finnish youth.

Communicating in non-EU countries

Public organisations' activities and communication actions may encompass those of the community where they are operating. In the new millennium, communication is borderless and timeless, and fruitful and positive relations with different countries are crucial within the geo-political arena. Public organisations, therefore, need to take into consideration also external communication actions towards other countries and other people. Part VI analyses EU external communications, whereas external communications here refer to those communication activities towards countries not belonging to the EU.

According to corporate communication theories (Cornelissen, 2008), organisations should aim at integrating their communicative actions to speak in "one voice" and present a coherent image within and outside their territory of influence. It is important to underline that integration of internal and external communications does not necessarily mean employing the same communication plan, strategies and tactics but rather managing different contextual dimensions in a harmonic manner. Did the EU manage to integrate its internal and external communication actions? This question is addressed in György Szondi's chapter, which offers an overview of EU main public diplomacy activities. In Chapter Fourteen, the core issues concerning EU diplomatic communications are critically assessed by identifying the key challenges of communicating the EU to the world and analysing how the specific DG RELEX, in charge of EU external communications, approaches communication with publics outside the EU and the different ways it attempts to engage with those publics. This chapter provides a theoretical background for understanding EU's external communication activities and challenges related to communicating to an extended network of potential publics.

In the last chapter, Chapter Fifteen, a case study of EU public diplomacy is presented. Through a stakeholder-relationship approach, Serra Görpe explains the impact of EU information campaigns in Turkey, one of the EU candidate countries, considering the peculiarity of the Turkish culture *vis-à-vis* to EU external images and messages. The chapter thus focuses on evaluating EU information and communication strategies to and within Turkey. The findings of Görpe's study were based on a

qualitative investigation of the opinions of public relations/communication agencies' representatives who promote the EU in Turkey.

Bibliography

Campus, D. *Comunicazione politica. Le nuove frontiere*. Bari, Italy: Editori Laterza, 2008.

Checkel, J. T. "The Europeanisation of Citizenship?", in M. Green Cowles, J. Caporaso and T. Risse, eds., *Transforming Europe: Europeanization and Domestic Change*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 180–197, 2001.

Cornelissen, J. *Corporate Communication: A Guide to Theory and Practice.* 2nd ed. London, UK: Sage Publications, 2008.

Dewey, J. *The Public and its Problems*. Athens, OH: Swallow Press, 1927.

Downey, J., and T. Koenig. "Is There a European Public Sphere?" *European Journal of Communication*, 21 no. 2 (2006): 165–187.

Eder, K. "The Public Sphere and European Democracy: Mechanisms of Democratisation in the Transnational Situation." in J. E. Fossum and P. Schlesinger, eds., *The European Union and the Public Sphere: A Communicative Space in the Making?* London, UK: Routledge, 44-64, 2007.

Eriksen, E. O. "Deliberative Supranationalism in the EU." in E. O. Eriksen and J. E. Fossum, eds., *Democracy in the European Union. Integration through Deliberation?* London, UK: Routledge, 42-64, 2000.

—. "Conceptualising European Public Spheres: General, Segmented and Strong Publics." in J. E. Fossum and P. Schlesinger, eds., *The European Union and the Public Sphere. A Communicative Space in the Making?* London, UK: Routledge, 23-43, 2007.

Featherstone, K. "Introduction: In the Name of 'Europe", in K. Featherstone and C. M. Radaelli, eds., *The Politics of Europeanisation*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 3-26, 2003.

—. eds., *The Politics of Europeanisation*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Føllesdal, A., and S. Hix. "Why There is a Democratic Deficit in the EU: A Response to Majone and Moravcsik." *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 39, no. 3 (2006): 443–462.

Fossum, E. J., and P. Schlesinger. "The European Union and the Public Sphere: A Communicative Space in the Making?" in J. E. Fossum and P. Schlesinger, eds., *The European Union and the Public Sphere: A*