IHECS Academy

Executive Master in European Communication and Policy

Master's Thesis

Revitalizing Europe – An EU-branding campaign as a tool to regain public support for the European Union and to overcome its political crisis

Volume II – Campaign conceptualization

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Abstract :

Building on the findings of the first Volume, this second volume aims to shape and develop the concept of a possible EU-branding campaign. Based on a detailed analysis of the current communication activities of the EU commission and on interviews of European communication experts, this paper proposes a substantial change to current EU-branding efforts. One of the key findings is that European communication especially misses out on creating an emotional attachment between the citizens and the political system of the EU. This paper therefore proposes to apply the *Lovemark* concept, developed by Kevin Roberts, CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi, to a future EU-branding campaign. Using emotions, the EU could become an *inspirational brand*. Yet, according to the *Lovemark* concept, this is only possible if the *EU-brand* respects its *brand community*, the citizens. Therefore, in the conceptualization process of an EU-branding campaign, the inclusion of citizens will be primordial. Based on the results of an online survey that the author designed for this study, a creative concept proposal will be developed in parallel.

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1. Introduction

The author of the first volume, Thomas Bergmann, made it clear that, according to David Easton's concept of political support, it was necessary for a political system to stimulate the citizens' faith in the legitimacy of the system (*diffuse support*), their sense of political community or their *we-feeling*, in order to secure the system's persistence. Since the European Union is facing a decline in the support of its citizens, the author argued that the creation of an *EU-branding* campaign could help revitalize public support for the European Union. By focussing on the cultural-critical approach of the concept of *nation-branding* – the influence *nation-branding* has on national identities, social power relations and agenda-setting – he observed that branding can help build a positive image of the European Union and give European citizens a sense of belonging to the political system.

The aim of this second volume is to go a step further and find out how to build an *EU-branding* campaign that effectively enhances the citizens support towards the EU. This conceptualization process will consist in giving guidelines on how to formulate and implement an *EU-branding* strategy. In order to do so, this paper will follow three guiding questions, as proposed by Dr Keith Dinnie[1] in his framework to develop such a strategy : 1) Where are we now? 2) Where do we want to go? 3) How do we get there?

Thomas Bergmann already answered the first question when he built a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) matrix of the current state of play of the EU-brand highlighting the external factors (threats and opportunities) to which the EU is exposed, and the internal weaknesses and strengths that influence the EU's capability in being recognised as a brand. What I will now do as a first step is to describe how and by whom Europe is communicated and assess the communication strategy of the different actors involved with regards to their abilities to use internal strengths of the EU brand "to match existing attractive opportunities in the environment, while eliminating or overcoming its weaknesses and minimising the threats" (Armstrong and al. 2013, p.55). As EU institutions are the main driving force in European communication, I will concentrate my analysis on their role in communicating Europe and evaluating the cost-effectiveness of communication services and instruments in place.

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[1] Nation branding : Concepts, Issues and Practice, 2nd Edition, August 2015, ISN 978-1138775848

The second step of this thesis will be to clearly define "where do we want to go". I will first describe the concept of *Lovemark* of Saatchi and Saatchi and see how *emotion* can revitalize the brand image of the EU, increase trust and effectively bring the European Union closer to its citizens. I will then compile key findings from this theory together with the recommendations made by Thomas Bergmann in the previous volume, taking into account the challenges in implementing an EU-branding strategy.

The third step of this study will focus on the last question: "how do we get there". I will define how an EU-branding campaign could be structured. Its overarching objective is already clearly defined: (re-)gain public support for the European Union and involve citizens in overcoming its political crisis and building an inclusive future. In the conceptualization of an EU-branding campaign, I will compile findings from a survey conducted for this paper, as well as the main assessments that I draw from the previous chapters.

2. Critical review of the EU communication strategy

"Communication policy is not governed by specific provisions in the Treaties, but stems naturally from the EU's obligation to explain its functioning and policies, as well as 'European integration' more generally, to the public. The need for effective communication has a legal basis in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, which guarantees the right for all citizens to be informed about European issues." (European Parliament 2016)

As public organisations, the EU institutions therefore communicate their activities and their image. In order to do so, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU provides them "with a common framework for linking EU achievements to the underlying values of the EU when communicating to the public at large" (European Parliament 2016).

In May 2005, with the 'no' votes in the referenda on the European Constitution in France and the Netherlands, the EU acknowledged that EU institutions have to improve the way they communicate with its citizens. Not only by informing and better explaining how EU policies have an impact on their daily lives but also by engaging EU citizens in constructing an ever-closer Europe, enabling them to exercise their right to participate in the democratic life of the Union.

In fact, the 2004-2009 Barroso European Commission was the first one to officially make communication a strategic objective and it produced several key policy documents on communication that have played a major role in shaping the European communication strategy.

An **Action Plan**[2] was first established in 2005 and came up with a new approach and three strategic goals aimed at earning people's interest and trust: better listening to the citizens' needs, communicating on EU policies and activities and their impact on citizens' daily lives and connecting with citizens by 'going local' (in the sense of meeting the local needs of citizens). The Action Plan was then complemented by the Communication[3] '**Plan-D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate'** which aimed to foster debate on the future of the EU

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[2] European Commission (07/2005), Communication to the Commission SEC(2005) 985, Action plan to improve communicating Europe by the Commission, Brussels.
[3] European Commission (10/2005), Communication from the Commission COM(2005) 494, The Commission's contribution to the period of reflection and beyond: Plan-D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate

between the EU institutions and citizens. Plan D also included a feedback process demonstrating the direct impact those debates have on the political agenda of the EU as well as a set of key initiatives to "strengthen and stimulate dialogue, public debate and citizens' participation". The **White Paper**[4] on a European Communication Policy released in 2006 by the European Commission finally intended to 'close the gap' and emphasized the need of a partnership approach to make those two previous initiatives successful. A partnership approach means that all key players must be involved, including EU institutions and bodies, national, regional and local authorities in the Member States but also European political parties and civil society. The next document on communication policy was released in 2007 under the name of "**Communicating Europe in Partnership**"[5]. The overall objective of this paper was to strengthen "the coherence and synergies between the activities undertaken by the different EU institutions and by Member States". This was translated into four main measures: a more cohesive and comprehensive communication, empowering citizens, developing a European public sphere and reinforcing the partnership approach.

The aforementioned policy documents and strategies clearly show that the EU recognizes the fact that a two-way communication approach has to be implemented in order to earn citizens' interest and trust in the European project. However, it appears that those documents operate largely at the rhetoric level and do not show which concrete actions should be made and how.

Therefore, in the following sub-chapters, I will describe the role of the EU institutions and their communication services in informing and engaging with citizens across Europe. I will take a closer look at the role of the European Commission Directorate General Communication (DG COMM) in coordinating communication policies across the EU institutions and internal departments. I will then assess the cost-effectiveness of those communication instruments and programmes in place to effectively bring Europe closer to its citizens.

2.1. The role of EU institutions in communicating Europe
In its role as the European executive body, the European Commission appears as the main

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[4] European Commission (02/2006), COM(2006) 35, White paper on a European Communication Policy
[5] European Commission (10/2007), MEMO/07/396, Communicating Europe in partnership

actor of the European communication. Michelle Cini, professor of European Politics, describes its four main functions: 1) As the 'inspirator of the integration process', the European Commission is responsible for the political agenda by holding the initiative of proposing legislations and is then habilitated to "elaborate global representations of the Union to build a long-term strategy" (Foret 2014, p.2). 2) The European Commission is directly in charge of the management and implementation of EU policies that affect daily citizens lives. This role makes the European Commission the "first interlocutor of all social actors" (Foret 2014, p.2). 3) Being the 'guardian of the treaties and the legal order', the European Commission controls the implementation of the European law and promotes its integration, functions that clearly identify the political body as the protector of a unified Europe. 4) And finally, as the 'builder of consensus', it promotes the interests of the European Union as a whole, taking into account positions of regional, national, local, private and public actors.

When analysing its role with respect to the other institutions, the European Commission provides the more 'proactive communication approach which is captured in yearly management plans' (Stroeker et al 2014, p.49). The European Parliament (EP) and the Council of the European Union communicate more in an 'apolitical, non-aligned and reactive manner, since the politicians and Member States are key actors in communication, leaving the EP and the Council to play more of a facilitating role' (Stroeker at al. 2014, p.49). This is the reason why I will put more efforts to describe the role of the European Commission in shaping the European Union's perception towards its citizens and will consider the European Commission and its related communication services as the initiators of all communication efforts. Within the European Commission, Directorates-General (DGs) implement specific activities, and in the case of communication, this role is allocated to the DG Communication (DG-COMM) that coordinates communication policies across EU institutions and internal departments. Starting from the overall objective of its communication strategy for 2016-2020, I will further analyse the mission statement of DG-COMM and how its communication services and tools operate to support this strategy.

2.2. European Commission, Directorate-General Communication

Regarding the coordination of all communication activities between all its DG's departments, the European Commission recently acknowledged in its new strategic plan for 2016-2020, that "Communication can only be successful if the Commission speaks with

one voice, reflecting the principle of collegiality" (European Commission 2016b, p.3). Consequently, the EC's DG COMM defined one Commission-wide objective for external communication:

> "Citizens perceive that the EU is working to improve their lives and engage in the EU. They feel that their concerns are taken into consideration in European decision making process and they know about their rights in the EU" (European Commission 2016b, p. 3).

In order to reach that goal, the Commission observed that more alignment of sectorial communication to the 10 political priorities of the Juncker Commission, in place since 2014 and operating until 2019, is needed and that DG COMM's role is to launch and sustain communication aligned to those priorities by devising an appropriate multimedia approach.

2.3. Mission statement of the European Commission, Directorate-General Communication

In order to implement an appropriate multimedia approach, the EC's DG COMM has developed the following mission statement: "Listen, Advise, Engage" (European Commission 2016b, p.3). A mission statement answers the following question: "Who are you and why are you here" (Tom Peters). According to Patrick Vastenaekels, CEO of ICF Mostra, any communication efforts should be in line with the organization's mission statement. I will therefore present the three components of the DG COMM mission statement that define specific communication tools and actions intended to bring Europe closer to its citizens.

2.2.1. 'Listen'

'Listen' refers to the executive role of the EC's DG COMM in ensuring that "high quality country specific information and analysis are fed into the College's decision-making process" (European Commission 2016b, p.10).

It is mainly the role of the **Representations** (REPs) that are considered as the "eyes, ears and voices of a more political Commission" (European Commission 2016a, p.3). Through the production of political reports based on country profiles, they act as political influencers but also as media actors and communication channels. Indeed, they have the responsibility

to support and shape the local angle to centrally developed messages as well as prepare and follow up road-shows, citizens' dialogues and visits of Vice-Presidents and Commissioners covering the Member States. A more detailed description of the increasing importance of the Representations in communicating Europe to its citizens will follow in sub-chapter 2.2.4 on "engaging citizens through social media".

Headquarter's[6] (HQ) media monitoring and analysis as well as **Eurobarometer** (EB) services provide also country specific input and feedback upstream in the policy making process.

2.2.2. 'Advise'

'Advise' refers to the corporate role of the EC's DG COMM in ensuring that "all relevant Commission's services contribute to a coherent and effective corporate communication on the Commission's priorities" (European Commission 2016b, p.10).

The first specific objective of the corporate service is to build "a coherent web presence on the European Commission, by implementing the digital transformation project by 2017" (European Commission 2016b, p.16). This project consists of creating a new user-centred web presence of the Commission, moving away from a communication aligned to the organisational structure of the Commission's departments to a thematic approach organised along 15 themes. This evolution focused on moving online services closer to the expectations of European citizens to strengthen their understanding in the EU, should be implemented by the end of 2017. The expectations are that this increased understanding will lead to a corresponding increase in trust.

Two other specific objectives fall under the corporate service. The first one includes the implementation of corporate communication *actions* that raise citizens' awareness of the Commission's 10 political priorities, in particular delivery on 'jobs, growth and investment' as the overarching priority. The second one ensures the coordination of the Commission's communication networks through the *alignment* of their sectorial communication strategies to the corporate messaging. "The outcome of corporate communication (both alignment and

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[6] DG COMM as a Presidential Service is composed of three distinct entities, firstly the Spokesperson's Service (SPP) under the direct authority of President, secondly the Representations in the capitals of the Member States plus 9 Regional Offices and thirdly Headquarters, spread across 3 locations in Brussels (BERL, CHAR and LOI 56).

actions) should be increased coherence of the Commission's messages, stronger relevance to target audiences and more cost-effective communication" (European Commission 2016b, p.9). In the box below, I suggest to take a look at the evaluation of a pilot campaign called "The European Union: Working for You" undertaken by DG COMM in order to assess if this new corporate approach of communicating is able to create the desired outcome defined above.

"The European Union: Working for You" – Evaluation of the European Commission corporate communication campaign

The European Commission, Directorate General Communication (DG COMM) took the initiative of running a pilot campaign in order to test its new corporate approach of communicating and use evaluation and other research to better understand if and how this new approach could be taken forward.

The pilot campaign was implemented in six countries (Germany, Spain, Finland, Latvia, Poland and Portugal) with one main federating message: "The European Union: Working for You". The message was translated into seven languages and a specific theme[7] was set for each country. A common visual identity was established for the adverts, using the EU emblem.

The main overarching objective of the campaign was to give an "opportunity for every citizen in the six Member States to reach a more informed view of the EU, its policies and programmes and the extent to which they contribute to growth and job creation". The target audience within the six Member States was defined as "individuals with a neutral opinion on the EU" while raising awareness for people having positive or negative opinions about the EU is considered as a collateral benefit.

The main conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation conducted by Coffey and Deloitte are summarized below.

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[7] See table 1 in the Annexes

1) Main conclusions

It appears that the campaign "contributed to addressing the gap between the public and the EU institutions" and that "for the first time, the European Commission communicated to the public as one, using the EU, a term that citizens use interchangeably when they talk about EU institutions".

Qualitative segmentation is missing

Furthermore, the campaign achieved a very high level of reach[8] via a multimedia approach "combining TV, print, digital, PR and e-PR channels" and thanks to a good quantitative research based on channel and tool usage, age groups and locations of highest concentration. On the other hand, experts point out that a better qualitative research into the views and motivations of the target group (people with a neutral opinion of the EU) should have been conducted in order to "provide an understanding of the type of content, issues and approach to delivery that would have resonated best with the individuals with a neutral view". In the same vein, the adverts could have been better targeted and more relevant to people's everyday considerations.

Issues in implementing a multi channel approach

The added value of the print adverts is questionable since they are essentially a copy of the TV ads and do not reinforce them in a complementary way. In addition, there was not enough promotion of the website with no call to action neither on the print nor in the TV adverts to find out more on the platform. Plus, the website was not designed and thought through in the same way and using the same graphical chart as the adverts, but had the look & feel of a "standard" EC website. The Public relations (PR) aspects of the campaign could have benefited from storytelling in order to support the advertising elements of the campaign. The engagement with the media was then limited partly due to the fact that journalists are not so interested in the existence of a new information campaign but in the "success stories" it was built upon.

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[8] "circa 115 million EU citizens across 6 EU Member States, with a combined total population (aged 15-70) of circa 131 million citizens" (Kitchener and al., p. 9)

2) Main recommendations

Evaluators conclude that "there is a call and need for EU corporate communication" because individuals want to know more about the EU. However, they recommend using story-based approaches by choosing topics that are relevant to people's everyday life, with which they can identify and find a personal benefit. Furthermore, the target "individuals with a neutral view" was too broad to be considered as a target group. If there is a desire to impact people's opinions about the EU, evaluators recommend that different viewpoints (positive, neutral and negative) should be included within the basic demographics (age, gender, level of education) that are used to collect public opinion data. A qualitative research is then also needed to define themes, concepts and ideas that will better resonate with the identified target groups.

When implementing a multi-channel approach, they recommend to keep TV where possible because they noticed that it was the most effective medium with people keeping the TV adverts in mind. They also added that the website should be more coherent with the overall visual identity and effectively act as a "gateway to more information" with stories about concrete projects supported by the EU in each country.

Finally, they concluded that the corporate EU approach should be continued and developed within a "consistent branding strategy" by integrating the different elements of the campaign to ensure that they contribute effectively to the overall campaign. They also underlined the importance of using local EC Representations' knowledge to communicate at local and country level, feeding journalists with "success stories" that involve real people and present PR case study examples that reinforce the main messages of the campaign.

(see Kitchener and al., 2015a)

A corporate communication is needed and I truly believe that the alignment of every sectorial communication to the 10 political priorities improve the coherence of the Commission's messages. Even though, that does not imply that the corporate communication actions on those 10 priorities automatically create more relevance to target audiences. As a pre-condition, the targets need first to be well-defined and understood in order to activate the appropriate channels in an adequate way.

2.2.3. 'Engage'

'Engage' refers to the communication role of the EC's DG COMM in ensuring that a "simple, clear and understandable message focussed on Commission's priorities is communicated to the media and other multipliers and to EU citizens and engages with them" (European Commission 2016b, p.10).

The first objective of the communication service focuses on ensuring that the Commission "receives targeted media coverage through relevant publications and continuous engagement with the media" (European Commission 2016b, p.18). Thanks to both pro-active and reactive communication, the **Spokesperson's Service (SPP)** has the overall purpose to provide media and, ultimately, citizens, with clear, precise, understandable and up-to-date information via all media channels. Channels include daily midday press briefings, press conferences, technical briefings, audio-visual services / Europe by Satellite (EbS), through the political web pages and social media.

The second specific objective is that "citizens are better informed about the EU, in particular about the Commission's political priorities and their rights" (European Commission 2016b, p.18). Information provision is ensured by the organisation of activities of the Commissions Visitors' Centre as well as the various Europe Direct services and Representations outreach activities and events as well as paper and online publications and the Commission's presence on the EUROPA website and in traditional and social media.

Europe Direct services are divided into two types of centres: the Europe Direct Contact Centre (EDCC) and the Europe Direct Information Centres (EDICs). They are both dedicated to providing information to citizens on the EU and its policies as well as raising awareness and trust in the European Union. The EDCC answers very diverse EU-related questions, in 24 different languages, and is structured around four channels: email, phone, web-chat and SMS. The latest evaluation of the EDCC conducted by Coffee and Deloitte was released in 2015. The EDCC handled 112 990 queries in 2013[9], which represents a very small percentage of the EU's 500 million population even if those users indicated that the EDCC delivered a high quality service. A number of reasons were proposed as

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[9] 283 569 enquiries have been handled from February 2012 to June 2014

justification for this low level of enquiries. First, the service is quite difficult to access with a too long phone number (00 800 6789 1011) and does not provide a 24/7 service (9.00-18.00). Second, there is no marketing strategy to promote the service. Third, the EDCC does not act as a unique central platform for public enquiries since there are other services that share the same purpose (EUROPA portal, SOLVIT, the EC-Representations, Your Europe Advice and the Europe Direct Information Centres etc).

The second type of centres, the EDICs, have a dual mission: they inform European citizens at local and regional level but also "promote participatory citizenship" through various communication channels (website, social media, publications, …) and by interacting with local and regional stakeholders, multipliers and media. They organise conferences and events in order to stimulate the debate with citizens, providing feedback to the EU. The objectives and activities of the EDICs network are more broadly defined than those of the EDCC, making it even more complex to monitor the progress of the network. However, the last evaluation of the EDICs conducted in 2012[10], shows that users were highly satisfied with the services delivered. It shows also that the EDICs network undertook more events, developed more information materials, engaged more with local stakeholders and worked more extensively with media. However, similar to the situation for the EDCCs, the EDICs are not well-known among the general public. Indeed, the main groups informed by and engaged with EDICs are: teachers, students, employees in public authorities, various stakeholders looking for funding and, in some countries, retired people.

Through this brief evaluation of the EDICs, it appears that there is a huge, and as yet unexploited, potential of increasing the level of knowledge and understanding of the EU as well as fostering the engagement of citizens with EU issues. The major asset of EDICs is their local anchoring that puts them in an ideal position to build strong relationships with local and regional authorities, local or regional media and partners working on EU issues as well as possessing knowledge on local issues and information needs. However, it appears that the network is unevenly distributed within the EU leaving some regions without any EDICs. This situation prevents some EDICs to reach and assist other stakeholders communicating the EU towards the general public. Furthermore, it appears that EDICs are

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[10] GHK and Technopolis group. 2012. Mid-Term evaluation of Europe Direct Information Centres (2009-2012). http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/evaluation/search/download.do?documentId=2848197

increasingly engaged with media and social media while at the same time present a certain lack of skills and competences in media communication.

They are many other communication instruments and tools used by the European Commission that share the aim to contribute to a more important and more sustainable coverage of EU affairs. These include TV channels (Europe by Satellite and Euronews), the radio channel Euranet Plus, the general website EUROPA, press releases/events, the production of publications and audiovisual materials on the EU and so on.

Euronews is an independent, pan-European news TV channel broadcasting non-stop in 13 languages, including 8 official languages[11]. Its role is to strengthen the European identity and integration. Euronews is considered as the leading news channel in Europe with 3,9 million daily TV viewers in Europe and 97 million unique visitors in 2015. Euronews also gradually expanded its digital presence on Facebook, Twitter and Youtube. Euronews differentiates itself from the other editorial channels by "presenting different hierarchy of headlines or covering themes largely absent on other screens" (Dembek 2015, p.6).

Euranet Plus is a network of international, national, regional and local European radio broadcasters. It is currently present in 16 EU countries with 18 radio stations involved and reaches out to 22 million daily listeners. By ensuring an important and sustainable radio coverage of EU affairs, Euranet Plus aims at providing accessible information of EU issues to EU citizens as well as stimulating exchange of opinions and debate. External research studies highlight that Euranet Plus is delivering more and better EU content than its main competitors on the market. In addition, listeners of Euranet Plus radio programmes are highly satisfied and feel much better informed about EU affairs. Euranet Plus thus presents a strong potential to be at the forefront of the radio digital shift by delivering an assessed content quality and a well-organised multichannel distribution.

The last evaluation of the **EUROPA website,** the official website of the European Union, carried out in 2008, shows that the website is mainly used by students and employees, a large number of them working in public administration and education. At that time, there were concerns about the website structure and its ergonomics, seen as too complex for the

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[11] English, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Portugese and Spanish

general public and not organised enough for civil servants and professionals. However, those evaluations should be treated with caution since the site has undergone some developments since September 2009 taking into account users feedback through the implementation of periodic surveys on the EUROPA homepage. Even so, it seems that no promotion strategy has been thought in order to reach non-users.

DG COMM included in its 2016 management plan that they will continue to produce a variety of publications and other information material for general public in all official EU languages, including regular up-dates. Their aim is to explain the Commission's political priorities and policies, how the EU works and what it offers to citizens in easy-to-read language. An emphasis is also made on the communication potential of the General Report which is produced once a year in order to give an account of the EU's major initiatives and achievements of the preceding year. According to the European Commission, the report presents the EU's activities in a "citizen-friendly way" and is intended to be "interesting and accessible not only for those familiar with EU affairs, but also for the general public, including those who know little or nothing about the EU's activities"[12]. They also added that this year "the interactivity and the visual impact have been significantly increased through extensive use of hyperlinks, photos, videos and infographics". What they obviously omit to say is that the General Report consists of 96 pages divided into ten chapters corresponding to the 10 political priorities. In addition, the release of the report has only been announced on the website and social media pages of the European Commission, aka to those who are already familiar with the European Union.

The third specific objective of the communication service focuses on stimulating citizens' interest in EU affairs and on the contribution to restore trust in EU institutions. Through Citizens' Dialogues and other forms of direct communication (like Social Media), it aims to encourage citizens to express themselves towards- and engage with- EU Commissioners.

Citizens' Dialogues "allow the Members of the Commission to listen directly to citizens in their own regions and reply on issues that matter most to them" (CWP 2016 DG COMM). Citizens' dialogues "give citizens the opportunity to discuss the initiatives being delivered under the 10 political priorities of the Commission and give the Commission the

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[12] http://ec.europa.eu/news/2016/03/20160309_en.htm

opportunity to gather citizens' views about them" (European Commission 2016a, p.4). DG COMM received the mandate "to further develop this communication tool" and "increase the number of Dialogues organised per year for Members of the College, involving also Members of the European Parliament, Committee of Regions, Economic and Social Committee and national governments" (European Commission 2016a, p. 4). I gathered key findings about the contribution of the Citizens' dialogues in the scope of the 2013 European Year of Citizens. It appears that the presence of European Commissioners as well as European, national and local decision-makers increased the credibility of the approach and was strongly appreciated by the citizens who generally had the impression that their opinions have been heard. The initiative seems to have received a very good coverage in both traditional and social media. Social media not only gives the opportunity for citizens to engage in peer-to-peer communications as well as with the European Commission representatives but it appears to be an effective tool to improve the buzz and the outreach after the physical event. A high level of participation was also observed with around 300 participants in average per Dialogue[13]. The citizens' positive feedback gave the impulsion to continue the project on a long-term basis.

2.2.4. Engaging citizens through social media – Share Europe Online as an example

DG-COMM also acknowledges the fact that "social media plays an increasingly prominent role in social interaction, public dialogue and democratic life, having made possible to share information and opinions on EU policies, to engage in debate, to campaign, and to connect with and build communities of interest across the EU and beyond" (European Commission 2016a, p.5).

In 2013, the European Commission and the European Parliament jointly launched a pilot project called **"Share Europe Online" (SEO)**. MEP Marietje Schaake initiated the project with the following goal: achieve "interactive communication with citizens online". The objective of this pilot project was to observe if the two institutions could exploit public online social media platforms to communicate with citizens in a new way, locally and conversationally, in local languages and responding directly to local concerns and interests. In order to do so, the strategy relied on empowering EC Representations and European Parliament Information Offices (EPIOs) in the 28 Member States by providing them with

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[13] A total of 51 Citizens' Dialogues were organised across the 28 Member States between Spetember 2012 and March 2014. In total, more than 16,963 citizens took part in the Dialogues.

training and expertise on social media. Therefore, external social media experts, or community managers, were assigned to work in cooperation with the Reps and EPIOs' Line Managers.

In 2014, Coffey International Development released a final report assessing the outcomes of the project and providing a list of recommendations on the use of social media at local level. The main conclusions and recommendations provide a good overview of what has been improved in the way in which both institutions present themselves using social media and what could be further improved to better engage locally with citizens online.

The assistance of Community Managers has proven to be relevant and effective for enhancing social media communication and building social media capacity in the Reps and EPIOs. It appears that the Reps and EPIOs are now far better equipped to communicate with citizens on social media and are convinced of the benefits social media brings to their regular communication activities.

The SEO project helped increase the reach and visibility of the Reps and EPIOs, particularly among audiences already engaged in thinking about the EU. However, the report underlined that the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were only focussed on quantitative outcomes (increase in social media activity, number of interactions with citizens,..) and thus leave no room to understand the relevance and impact of engaging with citizens. A more strategic approach should be implemented in order to set at first who are the Reps and EPIOs trying to reach out and why, and what target group response are the Reps and EPIOs trying to engage with. The fact that Reps and EPIOs barely know who there are engaging with doesn't give them the ability to personalise relevant insights from social media activities in the political reports they regularly provide to decision-makers (see sub-chapter 2.2.1).

Evaluators finally expressed that there is a need for a central steering by the European Commission and the European Parliament to define an overarching vision for Reps and EPIOs' communication on social media. With this vision in place, it would allow them to focus better on their local communication strategy. This process should be done with an interest-driven approach that focuses on concerns raised by the target group and relevant specific themes, rather than simply relay central messages. That requires research and

understanding of national audience interests as well as an appropriate selection of more purposeful and focussed content.

2.5. General assessment

In the previous sub-chapters, I provided an overview of the different communication services and channels activated by the European institutions, especially by the European Commission, with a main focus on the role of the European Commission's DG-COMM in coordinating those communication activities. I used the three components of the DG COMM's mission statement: "Listen, Advise, Engage" to assess if the instruments deployed are in line with their respective expressed objectives as well as complying with the overarching goal of the European Commission's communication strategy. One general conclusion can be drawn on the basis of this study, that "Communication is viewed as a matter of policy presentation, reaction, education, information provision via local offices and websites" (Moore 2009, p.333). Indeed, the EC *produces* information about new policies and decisions taken but does not succeed in *marketing* this information to the general public to make it more appealing and relevant and lay the ground for initiating a conversation and engaging with EU citizens.

As Charlelie Jourdan, Creative director of Old Continent[14], argued:

> "Training people who are in charge of the marketing of the EU […] would be the very first step to actually produce useful, relevant and efficient communication. The rest of the construction is for me impossible if this first step is not properly addressed. It is much more difficult to become an expert in communication than to understand how the EU works – so there is absolutely no single rational reason to recruit people on the basis that they understand the EU – to put them at communication position."

The correctness of this view has been demonstrated through the evaluations referred to in the previous sub-chapters. Indeed, most of the communication services and channels that I describe above reach only the 'usual suspects', those who originally have in some way an interest in EU affairs. Despite the fact that some of the EU media channels seem to be successful in terms of volume of reach, there is limited data on whether citizens are in fact becoming better informed or engaged. This problem is recurrent in every evaluation I

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[14] Taken from the interview held on June 17, 2016 (see Annex 2)

presented and seems to come first from an inappropriate manner in defining the communication strategy. Twice a year, the Eurobarometer quantitative surveys give some information about how citizens perceive the EU and what Europe means to them. Qualitative surveys are also released on an nearly continuous basis, investigating in-depth the motivations, the feelings, the reactions of selected social groups towards a given subject or concept, by listening and analysing the way of expressing themselves in discussion groups or with non-directive interviews. However, those surveys are not statistically representative of the general public's opinion; rather, it creates a basis for further in-depth analysis. The EC representations, EPIOs, or even the EDICs, could fulfil this role thanks to their national and local anchoring. From what I learned from their respective evaluations, I see two reasons – among many others – as to why these decentralised services do not totally comply with their mission. One is purely financial: insufficient budget is allocated to those services preventing them to undertake communication activities and events where they could actually meet citizens, know them and engage with them. The other one lies in a lack of skills in media communication from those who work in these services. As the 'Share Europe Online' project demonstrates, this second issue could be resolved in a cost-efficient manner. Instead of producing more websites and more leaflets with a lot of crowded information, substantial costs should be saved by first training those civil servants to effectively use the low-cost media that citizens use the most today: social media.

I do not argue here that social media communication should be the one and only channel to use, what I want to demonstrate is that the process is wrong and too much driven through a top-down approach. The EU institutions activate every communication channel that exists in order to ensure a greater and more sustainable coverage of EU affairs. The problem here is that those channels are not properly used to reach out citizens who are not already interested in the EU.

Before activating a multimedia approach, there is a strong need for prior strategic planning to define different target groups to reach out to, and why. This will thus demand further strong insight analysis to find out what their interests are, which media they read and interact with, which values they support, etc. The second step will then be to identify the optimal media strategy and rethink the use of every communication channel. Every media targets different audiences and then displays a different content and uses a different tone. I noticed that this dimension is not properly understood when I analysed the evaluation of the

project "The EU is working for you". Indeed, there was a lack of complementarity between all communication channels used in the scope of the campaign and this had consequences on the delivery of the main messages.

At this stage of the study, I can already conclude that the EC – in the way the institution is communicating with its citizens – is not using both internal strengths and existing opportunities influencing the EU's capability in being recognised as a brand[15] at its maximum. The diverse policy areas on which the institutions are active lay the ground for a rich communication content that could meet diverse citizen's interests and needs if it was properly translated and targeted to them. In addition, the communication process delivers very little on strong and well-known societal and political values for which the EU stands for[16]. Consequently, the EU-as-institutions miss a chance to develop an emotional attachment to its political system. Furthermore, as we saw, the EU has a plethora of communication services and tools at its disposal. Because of a lack of skills in media communication, the EU is not able to break the EU bubble and reach out the general public. Finally, this prevents the EU institutions to make use of external opportunities in creating social engagement or synergies. A better use of the functionalities of social media communications or a proper coordinated activation of its EU stakeholders network could make the difference.

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[15] See chapter 4 in the first volume written by Thomas Bergmann
[16] "Amongst others, the EU stands for peace, cultural diversity, democracy, rule of law, freedom of movement, economic development and human rights". See chapter 4.2. in the first volume written by Thomas Bergmann.

3. Turning the EU into a Lovemark

"The EU faces obstacles because it is does not engage its public; it cannot do so until it communicates effectively; it cannot communicate effectively until it harnesses emotion. Neglect of emotion reinforces unhelpful communication behaviour. Because the EU does not recognize emotion as a critical part of public discourse, "it continues to operate in an unemotional, bureaucratic manner" (Moore 2009, p. 330).

The tone of the EU communication is indeed impersonal and distant. As I described in the first chapter, the EU is struggling to connect with its citizens and has not yet "confronted its own communication weakness" (Moore 2009, p.336). The EU doesn't integrate people's every day considerations in its communication activities and thus fails in creating an emotional relationship with the general public. Embedded with technical jargon and policy considerations, the communication deployed by the EU has created "an EU-brand that only exists in the European bubble sphere, that stands only for the 'elite' and for those who work in the European institutions"[17] (Huvenne 2016).

Thomas Bergmann also demonstrated in the first volume, that numerous external factors threaten the EU-brand image[18] in being positively perceived by the European citizens. Anti-EU propaganda from third countries, the rise of challenger parties and Euro-scepticism in general, and national governments competing with the EU, were described as such. In addition, the fact that national media still focus on their national political and economic contexts results in creating 28 different public spheres, leaving no room for the existence of a European one.

Since 2006, the EU's positive image has undergone the biggest decline. Whereas 50 percent of EU citizens still had a positive image of the EU in 2006, only 34 percent today perceive the EU as positive[19]. People's trust in the EU has also fallen by 17 percent since

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[17] Taken from the interview held on June 20, 2016 (see Annex 1)

[18] *Brand image* is the perception of the brand that exists in the minds of the consumers or the brand's audience. It is virtually the same thing as *reputation*. It includes a range of associations, memories, expectations and other feelings that are linked to a product, a service, a company or a political system (see chapter 3.3 in the first volume written by Thomas Bergmann).

[19] See Figure 8: The EU's image between 2006 and 2016 – Eurobarometer data analysis. See Volume I written by Thomas Bergmann

2004[20]. It appears that the EU failed in developing a branding/communication strategy that is stronger enough to counteract those aforementioned external threats. The latest evolution in the UK and the BREXIT vote has further shown that the EU has not demonstrated improvements in this direction.

In the second part of this study, I will attempt to define the direction a EU-branding strategy could follow in order to succeed in creating a sense of common belonging among EU citizens. "The related problems of nationalistic passion, alternative senses of belonging, and democratic engagement cannot be satisfied by policy explanation, or the generation of mere "facts". Emotion must be used by the EU to close the emotional deficit" (Moore 2009, p.339). As Moore argued, the stimulation of emotion is currently missing in the way the EU communicates with its citizens. Therefore, I will first assess how emotion could be seen as a communication asset for the EU in order to (re)connect with them. Afterwards, I will describe the concept of *Lovemark* introduced by Kevin Roberts, CEO of the advertising agency, Saatchi & Saatchi and see how this concept could be used to turn the EU-brand into a powerful and inspiring brand that stands for every EU citizens.

3.1. Emotion as a communication asset

"Brands struggle to connect with people since it is hard to understand today's consumers that are multi-generational, multi-ethnic and multi-national" (Roberts 2005, p.35). Indeed, the creation of an EU-brand is a process where the realities of socially and culturally diverse EU societies – namely the 28 Member States – have to be carefully considered. The challenge is then "to look for commonalities without losing distinctness" (Baygert 2013). This distinctness is expressed through a multitude of identities, contrasting opinions, different needs and interests, diverse languages and dialects, different habits and disparate beliefs and values.

Simon Moore argues that "emotion is an important criterion, given that the EU is a political project, requiring cooperation and consent from many people and nations" (Moore 2009, p.329). In order to create a common sense of belonging, he further adds that "emotion must be the priority, over and above the minutia of political and legislative information. An emotion-conscious strategy must evoke feelings of trust, likeability and personal

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[20] See Figure 7: The citizens' trust in the EU and national institutions between 2004 and 2016. See Volume I written by Thomas Bergmann.

commitment among EU target audiences" (Moore 2009,p.337). According to him, if the EU wants to earn trust from its citizens and attract strong commitment from members and supporters, the creation of emotional connections with them has to be at the core of a EU-branding strategy.

He also makes two assumptions: "First, that emotion, whether raw or refined, has always been a powerful influence on managing public perceptions" (Moore 2009, p. 331). "[Second,] Emotion's future […] is evolving as the world's growing online population takes up new social media" (Moore 2009, p.331). Therefore, the EU needs to learn how to fit communication, emotion and information in new innovative ways in order to build a consistent and meaningful relationship with its citizens.

"Whereas the appeal to emotion often raises doubts as to the legitimacy of political intents, it can be assumed that a political or institutional brand that does not create an emotional connection is not a strong brand"[21] (Baygert 2015, p.140). Indeed, the advent of social networks and collaborative platforms showed that "people are looking for new, emotional connections. […] they want more ways to connect with everything in their lives – including brands" (Roberts 2005,p.36).

Peter Van Ham, went a step further and proposed in an opinion piece released in 2005 to turn the EU into a *Lovemark* claiming that "branding Europe is less about knowing the EU than it is about loving it" (Van Ham 2005, p.123). He advocates that the EU mission is to find a contemporary "raison d'être" which inspires its own citizens and positions Europe as a stronger force in the world. For Peter Van Ham, the EU has to create an inspirational European lifestyle to which every EU citizens can refer to and be proud of.

3.2. The concept of *Lovemark*

The concept of *Lovemark* was first introduced by Kevin Roberts, CEO of the advertising agency Saatchi & Saatchi. The marketer has always followed and trusted its emotions. He advocates that "human beings are powered by emotion, not by reason. […] Emotion and reason are intertwined, but when they are in conflict, emotion wins every time" (Roberts 2005, p.42). The comparison between reason and emotion has received broad attention in

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[21] Translated from original: "Tandis que l'appel à l'émotion suscite souvent des doutes quant au bien-fondé des intentions politiques, on pourra émettre l'hypothèse qu'une marque politique ou insitutionnelle qui ne crée pas un lien émotionnel n'est pas une marque forte".

the marketing field in order to understand the motivational process that drives individual to engage in a behaviour that he or she believes will satisfy his or her needs.

> "[The rational motives] imply that consumers select goals – that will satisfy their needs – based on totally objective criteria, such as size, weight, price, etc. Emotional motives imply the selection of goals according to personal or subjective criteria such as pride, fear, affection or status" (Schiffmann 2007, p.88).

Since several brands offer the same products with the same utilitarian features, it is obviously the emotional benefit – that is perceived differently from person to person – that will drive the consumer's choice.

Kevin Roberts separated emotions into primary and secondary emotions: "Primary emotions are brief, intense, and they cannot be controlled" (Roberts 2005, p.44). People can feel these primary emotions when they are on their own like joy, sorrow, anger, fear, surprise or disgust, to name a few. "Secondary emotions […] make up the volatile mix from which human relationships are formed, which makes them pretty fundamental" (Roberts 2005, p.44). This second category implies that people need the company of someone else to feel love, guilt, shame, pride, envy or jealousy. According to Kevin Roberts, the most fundamental of them is Love.

> "Love is about a profound sense of attachment. […] Love is always two-ways. When it is not, it cannot live up to the name Love. […] Love has history. Love gives us meaning and makes us who we are. Finally, and perhaps most profoundly, Love cannot be commanded or demanded. It can only be given. Like power, you get Love by giving it" (Roberts 2005, p.52).

For those many reasons, Kevin Roberts was thus convinced that only an emotion like Love could create the next level of a brand in becoming a *Lovemark*. Its main goal is to create "loyalty beyond reason" (Roberts 2005, p.69). It is about creating a meaningful and very close relationship that lasts forever. "Lovemarks are the charismatic brands that people love and fiercely protect" (Roberts 2005, p.79). The magic recipee to create "loyalty beyond reason" is composed by the alchemy of three ingredients: Mystery, Sensuality and Intimacy.

3.2.1. Mystery

Mystery goes beyond storytelling: it is about creating love stories. "Mystery opens emotion. Mystery adds to the complexity of relationships and experiences. It lies in the stories, metaphors, and iconic characters that give a relationship its texture." (Roberts 2005, p.85).

A *Lovemark* relies first in the creation of great stories that inspires people. The most powerful brand stories touch the individuals so profoundly that they want to engage with the brand. People only identify with a narrative that reflects their experiences or their dreams, that refers to values they support or a lifestyle they share. It is a virtuous circle in which the stories are inspired by the people and vice-versa. Those stories should also "combine learning from the past with the dynamics of the present to create great futures" (Roberts 2005, p.91). A *Lovemark* lasts forever whatever happens. By making the most of its heritage, the story told doesn't become old-fashioned but even more innovative and lays the ground for future perspectives.

At the 7th Civil Society Media Seminar organised by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), Nicolas Baygert defined current "EU storytelling" as a counter-productive trend "which makes you think that Europe needs to be constantly 're-invented'. The EU still being interpreted as a new construct whose "identity" needs to be permanently redefined" (Baygert 2013).

On the contrary, he advised EU communicators to use "history telling" as a way to "refer to [the] common historical ground" on which the European project has taken form and could lead to the revival of what "united in diversity" really means today but also for the future. As Peter Van Ham also claimed, the EU "should shamelessly exploit its multicultural diversity"; that is the "style, shape and character of Europe" (Van Ham 2005, p.125). The EU should then start to tell stories in which the European citizens are the main characters. This is actually where the "[EU] real genius lies", it is in its people. The citizens should be told that the European project isn't just a list of policies or a set of values written in legal texts. The EU love story is about how people from different social and cultural backgrounds connect together, how different identities can build a future together. People are the "mythic characters and icons […] on the face of the *Lovemark*" (Roberts 2005, p.96). As soon as the 2016 British referendum's results were out, the net was instantly overwhelmed with pictures of the EU flag showing one star falling away; this is how

European people expressed the feeling that a part of their European identity was gone. This also proved that the EU flag remains a symbolic icon to which all Europeans refer to as the connection between multiple identities.

3.2.2. Sensuality

"*Lovemarks* are created by emotional connections with consumers in ways that go beyond rational arguments and benefits. We need to learn the language of the senses to make this happen. But this is tougher than simply adding fragrance, taste, texture. Pumping up the volume. In the sensual world, faster, brighter, louder hit the wall real quick. People turn off and you lose them. *Lovemarks* need sensuality, but they need it with a human touch" (Roberts 2005, p. 105).

The senses are what make people alive and alert about what is happening around them. According to Kevin Roberts, if a brand can connect with each of the five senses, it has the ability to connect with the human being in its entirety. The road to emotions runs through the sensory experiences that people actually live.

1) Sight

"The fact is that humans think in images, not words. Try saying 'TIGER' to a friend and ask her what she saw in her mind's eye. It won't be the letters T-I-G-E-R, I can tell you" (Roberts 2005, p. 111). Therefore, a EU-branding campaign should use images and visuals in order to capture human attention. However, visual images are far more effective and memorable when they are coupled with another sense like sound or smell.

2) Hearing

"Music is important to us because it can set moods and trigger powerful emotions" (Roberts 2005, p. 117). The Eurovision song contest is a good example of how music unites and creates powerful emotion among people. Indeed, Eurovision is a "strong, clearly defined brand that appeals at an emotional level to millions of Europeans" (EBU 2015, p.15).

3) Taste and smell

"Taste and smell are huge opportunities in the creation of *Lovemarks*. Both are generally limited to

the food and fragrance industries today. [...] Expanding the senses into organizations, into product development, into consumer relationships can be a fantastic inspiration and a potential game-breaker" (Roberts 2005, p. 122).

Kevin Roberts gave the example of iMac advertisements, which features computers in the shades of strawberry, grape and blueberry. Smell and taste are the most connected to our memory and can make people fly away. The evocation of those senses in visuals could be a great asset for the EU: e.g. food is one of its greatest assets as well as the beauty of its diverse landscapes.

4) Touch

"There is serious sense behind the idea of touchpoints with consumers. Every business is starting to realize this. From the supermarket shelf and the coupon book to the TV spot, the mailer, and all points in between, touching people matters". Touch refers more to the experimental side of the brand, when you are in direct relation with it.

3.2.3. Intimacy

"As we developed Lovemarks at Saatchi&Saatchi, mystery and sensuality were our immediate focus. They showed us big, new, and exciting ways that would help people to reconnect with brands in a deeper and more emotionally satisfying way. But as we moved in deeper we began to realize that something was missing. [...] What we were missing was intimacy" (Roberts 2005, p. 128).

Intimacy implies that *Lovemarks* have accepted that they are no longer the owner of their identity; they became an ingredient of people's life. It is about creating a two-way communication. It is only by creating a relationship with people that *Lovemarks* can become part of their family. Kevin Roberts distinguishes three faces of intimacy: empathy, commitment and passion.

Empathy is created by listening, "so that we can understand and respond to other people's emotions" (Roberts 2005, p.136). Before communicating, the EU must first listen to what people need. In order to become a *Lovemark*, the EU must respond adequately to those needs. This is how the EU could initiate a relationship with its citizens.

Commitment "proves that we are in the relationship for the long haul" (Robert 2005,

p.136). In the case of the EU, commitment is the stage where citizens become engaged with the EU because it was proven that their voices counted.

Passion "is the intensity and rush that accompanies only the strongest emotions. Put together with love it can transform the most insignificant product into a must-have. It has the power to give an intensity to a relationship that will carry it through good times and bad" (Roberts 2005, p. 142). No matter what, EU citizens will still trust the EU.

3.3. Respect as the founding principle

The concept of *Lovemark* proved that the stimuli of emotions have a key role to play in building strong brands in which people believe and to which they identify. Mystery, Sensuality and Intimacy are the three steps that the EU should incorporate – in a branding effort – in order to become an inspirational brand around which people gather and nurture their European *we-feeling*.

> "Lovemarks [are] the brands and businesses that create emotional connections with the communities and networks they live in. This means getting up close and personal. And no one is going to let you get close enough to touch them unless they respect what you do and who you are" (Roberts 2005, p.60).

As Kevin Roberts expressed, with no respect, there is no love. "Respect looks to performance, reputation, and trust as its organizing principles" (Roberts 2005,p.60). All three seem to be very low in the case of the EU. First and foremost, if the EU wants to be respected, it has to communicate a clear vision of what it really does for its citizens. However, the technical jargon in which the EU got caught has not helped develop an open, friendly and respectful image. And in the end, few people actually know what the EU really does.

According to Valérie Enjolras and Benjamin Hoguet, the main problem lies in the fact that two Europes currently co-exist that do not interfere with each other: the "Institutional Europe" and the "Experimental Europe".

> "The Institutional Europe, namely the European Union, its decision-makers and legislative bodies and its official ramifications. The Experimental Europe, which is the sum of the individual experiences lived by the Europeans who could never be

experienced if Europe did not exist"[22] (Enjolras and Hoguet 2010, p.36).

According to them, the emergence of a brand community – characterized by "the creation of a common sense of belonging, [the sharing of] rituals and traditions, a moral obligation for mutual assistance and the co-creation of values"[23] (Enjolras and Hoguet 2010, p.29-30) – could only emerge in the "Experimental Europe".

Michel Huvenne, concept leader at VO Communications, insists on the need of interconnectivity inside the European Union: "The EU should encourage exchanges by putting forward the cultural assets of every Member States and make them knowledgeable for every European"[24]. What Michel Huvenne underlined here is exactly what the 'Experimental Europe' is about. It is about experimenting the diversity of Europe made possible by the exchanges of services, products and persons. Enjolras and Hoguet mentioned the role of associative networks such as INTERREG in promoting a trans-border cooperation between regions of Europe. They also mentioned the Erasmus programme – now Erasmus + – in giving the opportunity to meet and live another culture and actually experience the European lifestyle.

They finally recommend "Institutional Europe should identify itself clearly as the brand that has made those experiences possible"[25] (Enjolras and Hoguet 2010, p. 63). Indeed, the EU must structure the link between the "Institutional Europe" and the "Experimental Europe" in order to be respected by its citizens. The EU has to be clear about the role it plays in making those human connections possible and thus celebrating the diversity that the EU offers. "In order for a country to brand itself effectively, it must build its brand based on its true qualities, and somehow find a way to portray itself in such a way as to improve its public perception" (Bassey 2012, p. 16f.). The true qualities of the EU lie in its diversity and in the experiences that the European citizens live on a daily basis. By identifying that the European project was born to make those stories happen, the EU can

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[22] Translated from original: "L'Europe institutionelle, à savoir l'Union européenne, ses organes décisionnaires, législatifs, ses ramifications officielles. L'Europe expérientielle, qui est la somme des experiences individuelles des Européens qui n'auraient jamais pu être vécues si l'Europe n'existait pas."
[23] Translated from original: "La création d'un sentiment d'appartenance […], [le partage de] rituels et traditions […], un sentiment moral d'entraide […], [et] la cocréation de valeur[…]".
[24] Taken from the interview held on June 20, 2016 (see Annex 1)
[25] Translated from original: "L'Europe institutionnelle doit […] s'identifier clairment comme la marque qui a rendu possible ces experiences européennes"

begin its journey to become a *Lovemark*.

> "The identity task for Europe is therefore mainly an internal one: to define what its job must be for the next 50 years, and to generate consensus, passion and ambition around this. Unless this purpose is relevant, credible and inspiring to people in the areas that they care about most, the brand of Europe-as-institution will never be more than a weak shadow of the brand of Europe-as-continent" (Anholdt 2007, p. 119).

In other to create this intimacy, the EU should first pay attention to what its citizens need and act in consequence. This is how it will gain their respect and the EU should envisage this in the short and long term, by proving every time that citizens are its main concern and that Europe continuously perform and innovate in that sense. This goes beyond 'simply' branding the EU, this implies a new approach to the way citizens engage in politics with the emergence of new participatory tools in order to convey to citizens the impression that the EU sets its priorities in accordance to their demands.

3.4. The path to love and to overcome the challenges of an EU-branding campaign

In Volume I, Thomas Bergmann highlighted several critical arguments as to why branding could also be a misleading approach or even result in even less public support for the EU. He gave an overview of the different challenges an EU-branding campaign will need to overcome in order to be as effective as possible. I will therefore present the principles of creating a *Lovemark* and see how "a path to love" could overcome those challenges.

3.4.1. "Make it easy"

"The increasing complexity of many goods and services has raised the stakes. The equation is simple. If it's hard to use, it will die."(Roberts 2005, p.61).

An EU-branding campaign should deliver simple communication messages that include the citizens in their diversity and reconnect with their daily lives. "Emotion hinges on repeating a single, clear purpose over and above related communication needs" (Moore 2009, p.337). The EU has to be open and has to speak with clarity and simplicity, if not, it will not be able to reach a wider audience.

3.4.2. "Don't hide"

"People can respect you only if they know who you are. Remember, in today's Internet environment there is nowhere you cannot be found. Don't try" (Roberts 2005, p.61).

Delivering simple communication messages must be accompanied by a "wider reaching approach to shaping perceptions" (Moore 2009, p.338). Indeed, the EU must rethink its media plan and segmentation approach in order to engage effectively with every audience, the EU should be everywhere but for a reason. By reconsidering its existing communication platforms, participatory channels should be used focusing more on their specificities in order to engage in a conversation and start a close relationship with citizens.

3.4.3. "Tell the truth"

"Front up. Be open. Admit mistakes. Don't cover up, it will get you every time. Believe in yourself – at times like this it may be the only thing you have. And at times like this your reputation is your premium defense" (Roberts 2005, p.61).

Charlelie Jourdan, Creative Director at Old Continent, insists on adopting an honest behaviour in order to bypass the rising Euroscepticism:

> "By recognising that there are massive dysfunction in the current system – that people do not understand anything of what is happening and that Euroscepticism is actually a very healthy reaction when facing something we do not understand. The EU elite does not yet acknowledge that Euroscepticism is built by their own way of doing things, so they do not address the fundamental need of explaining what they do to others" [26]

Being honest could be the key to regain citizen's trust in the EU. By building high expectations, the EU has led to unrealistic expectations that everything could be solved; first accepting that it is not the case will pave the way for other perspectives and new ways of taking the lead on what really matters to citizens. Therefore, the EU should stop hiding behind complex legislations but instead, explain what the EU has already achieved and what it really plans to do.

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[26] Taken from the interview held on July 17, 2016 (see Annex 2)

3.4.4. "Be passionate"

"Consumers can smell a fake a mile off. If you're not in love with your own business, they won't be either" (Roberts 2005, p.75).

An EU-branding campaign could only work, reach and engage with its audiences if every stakeholder is convinced. Charlelie Jourdan shares the view that in order to conduct a successful EU-branding campaign, the momentum should first come from the organisation itself:

> "By first restructuring fundamentally the way civil servants are told the story of their organisation. By focusing from the inside out on their capacity to tell a consistent narrative, be proud of what they do and only then trying to communicate to the rest of the world. When a boat looks fragile, with a relatively dull crew, and without a captain's crew to reach the next destination – it is definitely not very appealing to climb inside and go on a journey" [27]

3.4.5. "Celebrate loyalty"

"Loyalty demands consistency. Change is fine, but both partners must be full participants" (Roberts 2005, p.75). As I described, love is about a two-way communication and about seeking directions together. The EU must deserve the respect and trust of its citizens in order to create a love story that lasts forever. An EU-branding strategy does not serve a short-term purpose and should not propose a 'one-shot' image lifting. Instead, citizens must be conscious that the EU wants to engage with them on the long term and build an inclusive future together.

3.4.6. "Find, tell and retell great stories"

"*Lovemarks* are infused with powerful and evocative stories. [...] They recall the great adventures of the business, its products and their legendary consumers. Storytelling gives lustre by opening up new meanings, connections, and feelings" (Roberts 2005, p. 75).

The EU should take its citizens on an inspiring journey. Stories of the everyday live in which everybody feels free to express his/her chosen identities. The EU should not hesitate to remind citizens of the core essence of the European project, its history and founding principles. The EU should then remind that it is this heritage that has made unique

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[27] Taken from the interview held on July 17, 2016 (see Annex 2)

'products', used by all citizens, come alive: the euro, Erasmus, freedom of movement and so on. The EU should tell stories that tap into dreams, that inspires people and convinces them to be part of the project. The main character of those stories is the citizen and his current concerns. The EU must show that it kept its promises and that it will for the future, a future with and for its citizens, an inclusive future.

3.4.7. "Involve consumers"

"They need to be brought into advising on new product development and working up ideas for services. Involve them in everything, but there is no point in just reflecting back what they have already told you. Make your own commitment to change. Be creative" (Roberts 2005, p.75).

People must feel that their needs are taken into consideration. By choosing simple messages, relevant issues and adapted communication platforms, the EU must show that they understand who their citizens are. Listening is the key and the first condition in building an intimate relationship. This demands an adjustment in the internal culture of the EU administration in order to deliver a proactive (and not reactive), engaging and inclusive communication. All communication efforts must be consistent and backed up by a permanent monitoring of the audience's interactions. An EU branding strategy should mainly focus on shaping strong social relations between the EU and its citizens, on creating together a brand community such as defined earlier: "the creation of a common sense of belonging, [the sharing of] rituals and traditions, a moral obligation for mutual assistance and the co-creation of values"[28].

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[28] Translated from original: "La création d'un sentiment d'appartenance […], [le partage de] rituels et traditions […], un sentiment moral d'entraide […], [et] la cocréation de valeur[…]"

4. Conceptualization of a possible EU-branding campaign

In the previous chapter, I described the *Lovemark* concept and showed that emotion could be a great asset in any communication efforts, especially for the EU that appears to be very distant from its citizens. In an EU-branding effort, the use of emotions must be an inherent element of every part of the process; in its strategy, in its targeting, in its messages, in the way communication tools are used and shared. Indeed, in order to evoke feelings of trust, respect and likeability, an EU-branding strategy must consciously integrate emotions from the very start.

In the last part of this study, I will develop the concept of an EU-branding campaign that aims to (re)gain public support for the European Union and involve citizens in overcoming its political crisis and building an inclusive future. I will provide a set of recommendations for future actions to be taken in the implementation of an effective EU-branding strategy. I will formulate in parallel concrete proposals to give an idea of what an EU-branding campaign could look like. Those proposals should only be considered as an inspirational basis for a future campaign. While it provides a starting point, a more in-depth creative process is needed to fully define a comprehensive and concise EU-branding campaign.

I will first focus (section 4.1) on the importance of including citizens in the development phase of an EU-branding campaign. In order for an EU-branding campaign to be transparent and legitimate and based on my previous analysis, I postulated that it is compulsory to involve citizens in the process from the very start. To validate this approach, I conducted an online survey as part of this thesis. Survey results helped me develop the EU-branding campaign's slogan, values, communication channels and content. In a second step (section 4.2), I will present the assets of a market segmentation approach that focuses mainly on lifestyles and helps adapt to cross-border audiences segments. We will see how such an approach could lead to the creation of pan-European identities. In a third step (section 4.3), I will propose a media plan in which I will mainly concentrate on the importance of social media communication, the use of audio visual tools and the creation of events. Finally (section 4.4), I will underline the importance a stakeholders' network could play in the implementation of an EU-branding campaign.

4.1. Inclusion of the citizens

In other to be transparent, legitimate and inclusive, any EU-branding effort should be supported and developed by all relevant stakeholders at European, national, regional, local, public, private, authorities and citizens. This section focuses on how an EU-branding campaign could first reflect the needs and demands of its fellow citizens.

In the marketing field, "consumer research enables marketers to study and understand consumers' needs and wants and how they make consumption decisions" (Schiffmann 2007, p.21). Today, consumer researchers use two types of research methodology to study the consumer behaviour: Quantitative research and Qualitative research. Quantitative research serves to predict the reactions that various target segments would have towards a promotional message and then adjust the strategic directions according to the results. Quantitative research could be done at a large scale and the data collection is perceived as valid and reliable only if a well-defined objective is set at first. The data collection methods used in quantitative research generally take the form of questionnaires with close-ended questions and predefined possible answers but also open-ended questions. This could be done in person, by mail, by telephone or online. Qualitative research provides more insights about new projects in order to develop more precise strategies. Qualitative research could only be done at a small scale and thus is not representative of the general opinion. The methods usually involve in-depth interviews and focus groups (group discussions) in which respondents talk freely about their interests, activities and feelings on specific topics. Both researches should be combined to design more meaningful and effective marketing strategies. Those researches could also be complemented by "desk research" consisting of gathering information from press articles, websites and blogs, existing surveys, etc.

In the case of an EU-branding strategy, such research should be done in order to define around which values citizens are the most united, which communication channels do they want to use to interact with the EU, which content they find the most interesting and which message they feel best represents the EU. As part of this thesis, I conducted an online survey[29] in order to respond to all those aforementioned questions. However, this survey is not representative of the EU's audience diversity: 151 individuals answered and most of the respondents are 26-35 years old and live in Belgium. I will mainly use survey results as an

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[29] See the questionnaire at Annexe 5

indicator and I complemented it with "desk research" to elaborate my recommendations and concrete proposals.

As shown in figure 1, the respondents expressed with a practically unanimous voice (93,4%) that they want to receive a better information about what the EU does and what are the impacts of the decisions it takes. In figure 2, there is also a clear proportion of respondents (86,1%) that think that a European communication campaign should be undertaken in order to better understand better what the EU is about. Those results match with the assessments made in the first chapter; citizens do not have a clear vision of what the EU is really about and what it does for their everyday lives. There is also a need for an effective and accessible European communication campaign because citizens want to know more about the EU.

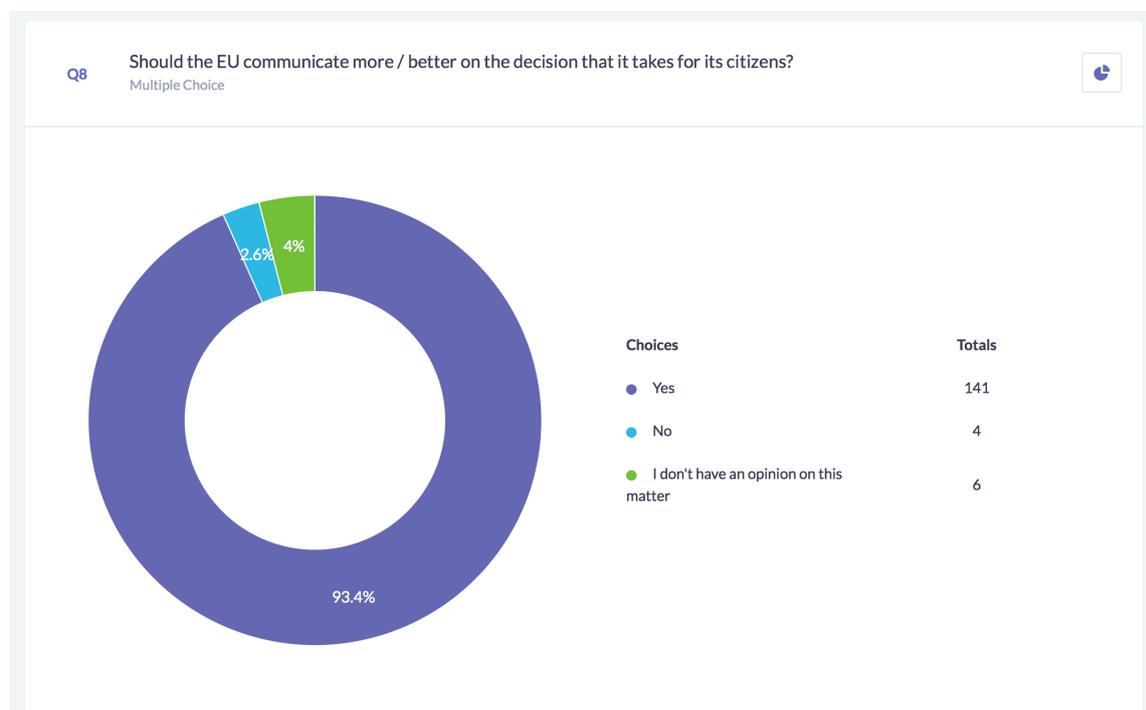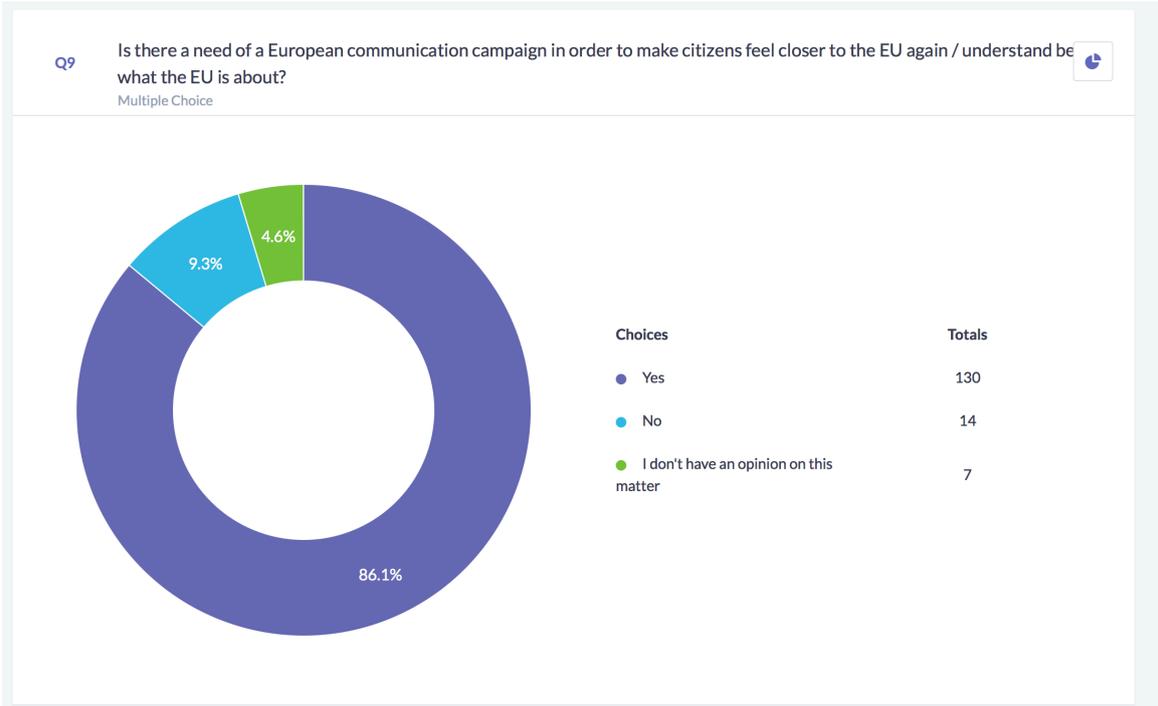Figure 1: "Should the EU communicate more/better on the decision that it takes for its citizens?"

Figure 2: "Is there a need of a European communication campaign in order to make citizens feel closer to the EU again/understand better what the EU is about?"
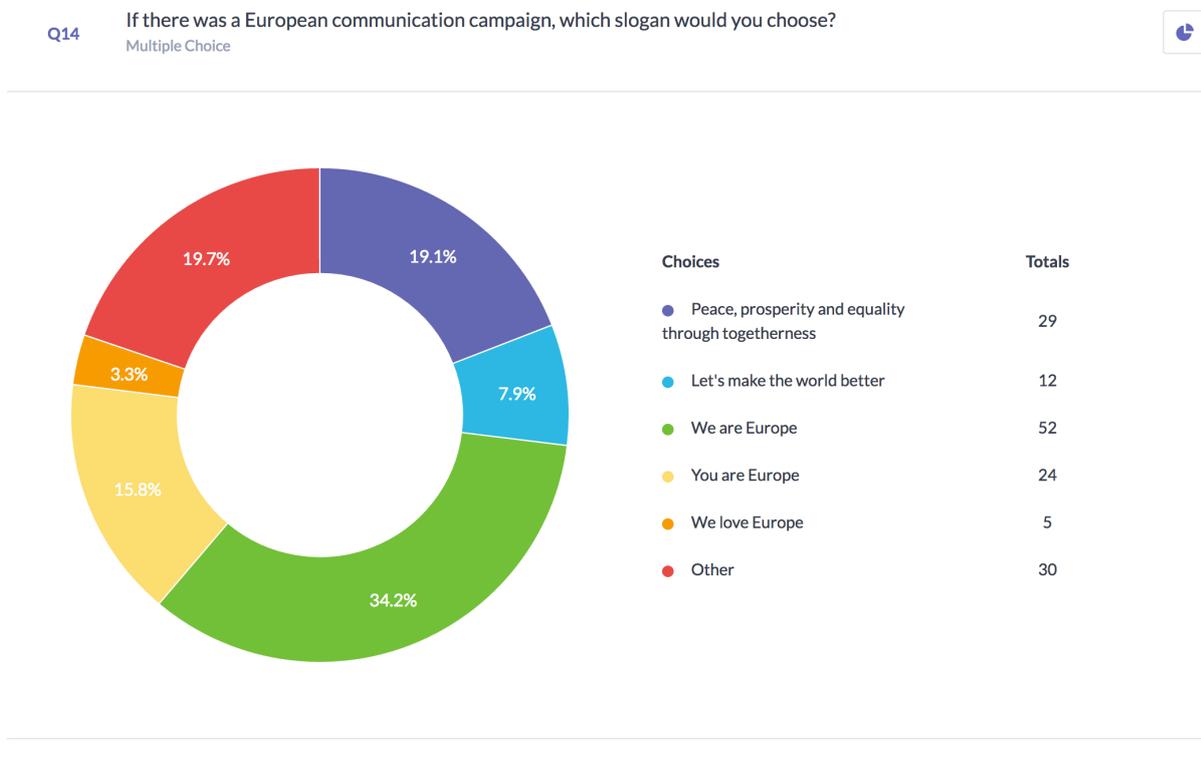
Concept proposal #1 – Name and key values

Name of the campaign: "We are Europe"

In this inclusion process of the citizens, I propose the name chosen by the majority of the respondents (34,2%) as shown in figure 3. The name of the EU-branding campaign should not only be used in one communication effort but on a long-term basis. It should become associated with the EU.

"We are Europe" is simple and accessible. It represents the bridge between the EU and the European citizen's lives. It should position itself as a brand that unites the "Institutional Europe" with the "Experimental Europe" explained in the previous chapter[30]. "We" evokes a close relationship while at the same time induces the creation of a common sense of belonging. It is the brand that connects the EU and its citizens in building an inclusive future.

Figure 3: "If there was a European communication campaign, which slogan would you choose?"

Q14	If there was a European communication campaign, which slogan would you choose? Multiple Choice

Choices	Totals
● Peace, prosperity and equality through togetherness	29
● Let's make the world better	12
● We are Europe	52
● You are Europe	24
● We love Europe	5
● Other	30

Percentages shown in chart: 19.1%, 7.9%, 34.2%, 15.8%, 3.3%, 19.7%

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[30] See chapter 3.3.

Key values:

Figure 4 below shows that the EU could refer to multiple values. Indeed, there isn't one value that stands out clearly from the different choices proposed. It is exactly the purpose of "We are Europe": the chosen name does not impose one value over another but highlights that every European citizen can freely express its chosen values and principles. Most respondents considered "solidarity" (13,8%) as the most important value to them when referring to the EU, this shows that the *we-feeling* of the chosen name makes total sense.

Figure 4: "Which values would you like to put forward in a European communication campaign?"

Q11	Which values would you like to put forward in a European communication campaign? (multiple choice possible)
	Multiple Choice

Choices	Totals
● Solidarity	105
● Free movement of persons	67
● Cultural diversity	90
● Anti-discrimination	75
● Peace	82
● Transparency	66
● Diversity	69
● Integration of immigrants	47
● Social justice	80
● Economic development	63
● Other	15

4.2. Cross-border audiences

As introduced in the previous chapter, carrying out qualitative and quantitative research as well as "desk research" should be undertaken at the very start of the EU-branding strategy. In addition, a market segmentation should also be chosen in order to manage the diversity and uncontrollability characterized by the EU. Indeed, an EU-branding campaign should represent the interests of its citizens, adapting to their diversity in backgrounds and cultures, taking into account their different needs, interests, and perceptions. An EU-branding campaign should also counteract the effect of "uncontrollability" characterized by the various influences of internal and external factors on the citizen's perception of the EU.

In the marketing field, market segmentation refers to the process of dividing a market into distinctive subsets of consumers that have, or are perceived to have, common needs and interests. In the case of the EU, it should be seen as audience segmentation, where we operate a division into specific groups of citizens that share common needs, interests and opinions. A segmentation strategy helps to further define tailored specific messages, diversify provision of information and use the right tone and communication channels. The first step in developing a segmentation strategy lies in the selection of the most appropriate segmentation basis on which to segment the audience.

In our case, I propose the combination of a psychographic segmentation with a demographic segmentation. Commonly referred to in lifestyle analysis, psychographic research "is closely aligned with psychological research, especially personality and attitude measurement" (Schiffmann and al., p.53). The psychographic profile of an audience segment is a mix of shared activities, interests and opinions (AIO). In order to create psychographic profiles, the AIO research seeks and collects responses to statements that measure activities ("how do you spend time"), interests (the citizen's preferences and priorities) and opinions (how the citizen feels about a wide variety of events, societal issues, political issues, the state of the economy, ecology etc.). "The appeal of psychographic research lies in the frequently vivid and practical profiles of consumer segments that it can produce" (Schiffmann and al., p.53). Demographic segmentation is a division of an audience according to its age, sex, marital status, income, occupation and level of education.

According to Schifmann and al., psychographic (including lifestyles) and demographic

profiles complement each other and are used for communication campaigns that answer the three following questions: "Whom should we target?", "What should we say?" and "Where should we say it?". The benefit of this so-called hybrid segmentation is that such detailed profiles are available in the media industry. Furthermore, a cultural segmentation might also be needed in order to cope with the different cultural beliefs, values and customs that co-exist in Europe.

"The EU, in collaboration with external experts, identifies cross-border identities and works more closely with them. This has been a success already, albeit inadvertently, with such audiences as tourists or business travellers. Other pan-European identities may be researched and located by personal interests or expertise, ethnicity, sport, age, youth, or personal lifestyle" (Moore 2009, p.338)

The EU is today increasingly interconnected; an increased human mobility results in the emergence of many people having mixed backgrounds, and a surge of social media platforms to which people from all over the world constantly connect. This interconnectivity has laid the ground to what Simon Moore calls "trans-border audiences – growing numbers of people sharing online identities that transcend national boundaries, and are centered on lifestyle, gender, religion or ethnicity" (Moore 2009, p.333). Simon Moore argues that the EU should pay more importance to these audiences and should identify them according to different demo-psychographic profiles "by personal interests or expertise, ethnicity, sport, age, youth, or personal lifestyle" (Moore 2009, p.338).

> "Most businesses working in the same field have access to the same market information as their competitors. They all research the same stuff using the same processes and – not surprisingly – get to the same numbers. But looking at the numbers is not where the game is going to be won. There is where curiosity counts. The very human quality of wanting-to-know, that's what I believe can transform research and put it back where it belongs: at the heart of the action and making emotional connections with consumers." (Roberts 2005, p.176)

What Kevin Roberts pointed out here is very relevant to our case study. Consumer research and market segmentation are not sufficient to create an emotional attachment with the audience. It is of course useful to know which issues are the most relevant to raise for

specific audience segments and which communication channels should be activated. However, those segmentation approaches are indeed used by every organisations and the difference lies in a deep understanding of their entire lives. In other for the EU to become a *Lovemark*, EU communicators should first go into the heart of the citizens and discover what inspires them. Those pan-European identities that are growing on the net could represent a first source of inspiring stories.

Concept proposal #2: Three citizen's profile

1) Young explorers – age group: 18-34 years old

Young explorers are energetic and always looking for new experiences and challenges. They are the so-called generation Y. Erasmus is part of their day-to-day lives. They are multicultural, freedom of movement is normal for them and they enjoy travelling around the world. They are very tolerant, open-minded, socially and environmentally conscious and engage in volunteering activities. Having friends and connections is very important to them. They are on every social media platform and read the news on their phones. They love electro music, going to festivals and being part of underground activities.

2) Family lovers – age group: 35-60 years old

"Family lovers" attach importance to spending time with their family. They enjoy going on holidays and are the most tourism-oriented consumers. They love organizing dinners with their friends, sharing a glass of wine and delicious food. Entrepreneurship is a principle of life; they want freedom coupled with responsibility in the workplace. They distrust authority and large institutions including corporations, religious institutions and the government. They attach great importance to consumer protection and social security. They love pop music. They grew up in a world without social media but now they have adapted to it.

3) Nostalgic – age group 61-75 years old

The "Nostalgic" love group enjoys spending time listening to classical music while they leaf through the pages of their favourite historic novels. They put high importance into traditions and cultural heritage. They lived through the war and appreciate peace and prosperity. Most of all, they love going to their country home and contemplate the soothing view of the nature's beauty.

4.3. Communication mix

Communication mix, or media planning, is the process of selecting which communication channels are the most relevant to the target audiences we want to reach out to but must also enhance the message's purpose. A multimedia approach is recommended, especially in the case of an EU-branding campaign that wants to reach a pan-European audience. A multimedia approach must carefully design which role will have every media chosen in order to effectively promote the campaign. I will present two communication tools that should be carefully and fully exploited in the development of an EU-branding campaign: audio visual and social media.

4.3.1. Social media communication in creating engagement

"If we strip everything back to why people are on social, you find one core thing. Connections. Connections to people. Connections to brands we love or influencers we fancy. […] People I knew. People I didn't, but had similar passions and interests with" (Hunton 2016).

Social networks are the platform where people gather to share their stories and build, or nurture, emotional relationships. People gather around brands they love and by developing a common sense of belonging, they build the brand community. This is the place where an EU-brand has the potential to become a *Lovemark*.

However, as I already noticed when describing the "Share Europe Online" (SEP) pilot project in the first chapter, it appears that the EU is not very technology-prone in terms of communication channels and does not show great ability to effectively engage in a relationship with citizens. Similarly to love, social media is a long-term investment; it requires time and talent, but also passion and commitment, to build a strong presence on social platforms. This is not the current reality of EU's presence on social media - rather than focussing on what really matters to its citizens, the EU uses social media to convey official statements and press releases that are embedded with technical jargon. This behaviour on social media leads to engage only "the people who are, in fact, residents of the Brussels Bubble themselves" (Lambrecht 2012). As a consequence, the general public is (or feels) excluded from the conversations engaged on the social sphere. Kwinten Lambrecht thus recommends that the EU should "unify its message, and therefore communicate not via various accounts […] but via one EU channel" (Lambrecht 2012). In

addition, he also argues that influential EU bloggers from every Member States must be identified and directly empowered by the EU to disseminate content about EU matters.

The use of social media in an EU-branding campaign should be seen as a *platform* where EU citizens can express themselves, can ask questions and expect quick answers, where they can connect with other citizens and thus create a very large EU-brand community.

Social Media analytic tools exist and they can be used to monitor what people do on social media and say about a brand, allowing the brand to adjust to the audience's concerns. The benefit of social media is that an EU-branding campaign can easily reach out to specific audiences. The condition is to have great relevant, clear and creative stories to tell and the ability to be very reactive in order to engage in great, to-the-point conversations.

4.3.2. The power of audio visual media

The second communication tool that an EU-branding campaign should imperatively use is the audio visual one. TV ads combine images and sounds, involving two human senses, contributing to higher impact on the viewer's emotions. Furthermore, it can potentially also involve the other senses - touch, smell and taste- by tapping into the viewer's memories of his/her past experiences.

Furthermore, Michael Malherbe argued that EU matters should be more integrated in the audio-visual sector. He added that TV is an appropriate medium to reach out to people who are not pro-actively looking for information about the EU. TV could therefore be used as a tool to raise awareness and, on a longer term basis, foster a deeper interest in EU affairs among the general public.

However, he added that representatives of the EU should first learn to communicate in a more accessible manner and especially on topics that really matter for the general public. Indeed, this could help give a human face to the institutions (see Malherbe 2016).

In an EU-branding strategy, the creation of spots should be not only deployed in the audio-visual national and local media but also on social media platforms in order to reach diverse audiences.
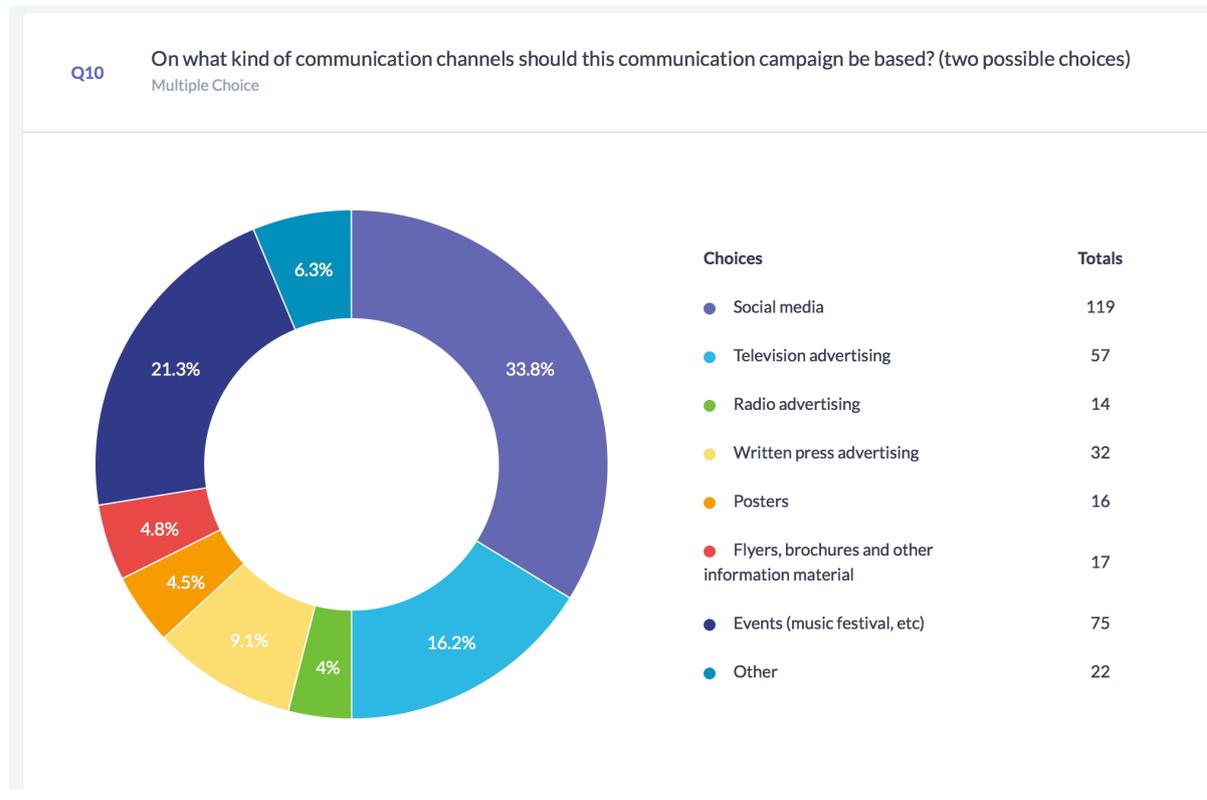
Concept proposal #3: Media strategy

As figure 5 below shows, three communication channels emerged as the top choices from the survey: social media (33,8%), events or real-life happenings (21,3%) and television advertising (16,2%). This confirms the relevance of the social media and audio visual regarding their power in creating social engagement, evocation of emotional feelings and in allowing the creation of powerful stories. In the same vein, real-life happenings can create neutral places where citizens could live the European diversity and meet other cultures.

In order to activate a proper multimedia approach, I suggest one other communication tool that will have to play a complementary role: the creation of a website acting as a gateway for more information.The website should first explain in a user-friendly and accessible way what the EU is and does. It should also resample all information with regard to the different possibilities of participations in EU politics: Citizen's Initiative, Right to Petition, Consultations, Right on Information. Finally, a header should be also created on the "EU in your region" with all the information on EU offices in the different regions, spending of regional funds, etc.

Furthermore, this is very important that the TV ads call to action to the website, that the website and social media used are intertwined, and that real-life happenings received a great coverage too.

Figure 5: "On what kind of communication channels should this communication campaign be based?"

Q10   On what kind of communication channels should this communication campaign be based? (two possible choices)
Multiple Choice

Choices	Totals
Social media	119
Television advertising	57
Radio advertising	14
Written press advertising	32
Posters	16
Flyers, brochures and other information material	17
Events (music festival, etc)	75
Other	22

Concept proposal #4: Creative concept

Based on the audience profiles (concept proposal#2) and communication mix (concept proposal #3), I will propose which content could be displayed in the TV ads and formats for a real life happening. I will also highlight the importance of delivering a coherent visual identity across all communication channels used.

1) **TV ads**

Video I: person gets out of demolished building (dull beat is the sound of bombs falling on Europe), around him everything is destroyed, Europe after WWII, then quick series of pictures conveying the story of the creation of Europe, then peaceful landscapes, etc.; Final slogan: *Europe is peaceful. Europe is better. We are Europe.*

Video II: character is at a party with friends (dull beat is the background music), friends are all from different countries, short series of pictures showing them in their home countries,

then on the way to the Erasmus city / the city they moved to in order to work; Final slogan: ***Europe connects us. Europe is open. Europe is freedom. We are Europe.***

Video III: a pregnant mother eating (dull beat is sound the baby hears inside his mother's womb), then a baby playing, child playing, child getting older, becoming a consumer, etc.; Final slogan: ***Europe protects us. Europe takes care of us. We are Europe.***

2) Festival "We are Europe"

A series of music festivals hosted in different European cities. To celebrate the multiculturalism of Europe. Where European citizens can experience their "europeanity" at its maximum. This is where all five senses are involved, where stories are written, where a brand community makes full sense. It is where the EU connects directly with the so-called "Experimental Europe". The slogan could be: ***Europe makes noise. Europe vibrates. We are Europe.***

3) A coherent visual identity

"The visual manifestations of a brand clearly play an important role in contributing to overall brand equity. For many consumers, a brand's logo, name, symbols, typeface, colour scheme and so on will represent a prime trigger of and a contributor to brand awareness" (Dinnie 2008, p. 64).

A visual identity should be defined and adopted in every communication channel used in this EU-branding campaign proposal, i.e. social platforms, TV ads, events and the website. It is very important because it will have an influence on the brand perception by the citizen. A coherent visual identity as well as the recurrent use of the name "We are Europe" will help citizens make the link and recognize that the tools with which they interact originates from the same sender.

4.5. A stakeholder network in creating synergies

According to Simon Anholt, the development and the implementation of a successful EU-branding campaign could only rely on effective stakeholder communications. What does it mean? It means that all stakeholders, namely the European institutions, the Member States, the regional and local authorities, the private sector as well as the associate one, the media and the civil society must be integrated in the development of a EU-wide branding strategy.

They should speak with one voice and have a common purpose.

The initiative "A new narrative for Europe" is a good example of an branding campaign that didn't work. Launched in April 2013, the "New Narrative" project was initiated by the EU in order to start a discussion around the core values, culture and history that link the Europeans together in order to build a new EU-brand story. However, as Nicolas Baygert noticed, the outcome of this promising project was quite disappointing. He pointed that "the discussions were held in closed meetings […] [with] an anonymous elite and was not relayed online" [31](Baygert 2015, p.147). In addition, the declaration "The Mind and Body of Europe" that was released in 2014 only reflect the voices of artists, scientists and intellectual that were selected in advance. As a consequence, the project has not gain much visibility among the general public and accordingly, has not lead to the creation of a new story that Europeans want to share. Indeed, a sense of community belonging cannot emerge if all stakeholders are not given the possibility to co-create the future they want to share.

"Du bist Deutschland", a campaign launched in 2005 by Multimedia corporation Bertelsman AG, is a good example of a nation-branding campaign that did work. The main goal was to activate all citizens and institutional representatives to take responsibility for Germany's future and to get active creatively and innovatively. The campaign targeted all citizens, national media, important advertising and PR agencies, enterprises and NGOs. The campaign was quite a success, seen as a movement of greater confidence and initiative. It also met quite of bit of criticism; with some saying the message was too reminiscent of the nationalist initiatives of the Third Reich. Apart from the negative perceptions, the German nation-branding campaign shows a great involvement of every part of the society and still remembered today.

"Lovemarks evolve from the essence of the local and light up a path to the global" (Roberts 2016). A narrative that speaks to every single citizens should find its impulsion in the local perspective, at the very core of the citizen's everyday life. By a decentralised cooperation between all levels, a two-way communication could then occur and open perspectives for the development of a centralised, co-ordinated strategy that every actors will support and lead to the creation of a common future.

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[31] Translated from original: "l'initiative se présentait sous formes de réunions ("assemblées générales"), des communautés de marques closes et éphémères aux modalités de sélection peu transparentes (une "élite anonyme"), dépourvues d'intéractivité numérique".

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the first Volume of this joint paper, I propose the concept of a EU-branding campaign that aims to (re)gain public support for the European Union through a strong engagement of citizens to help overcome Europe's political crisis and build an inclusive future.

The first challenge was to understand what was preventing the EU to communicate better with its citizens. After conducting a set of interviews with European communication experts and carrying out an in-depth analysis of the current communication strategy and activities of the EU Commission, I derived two key findings. First, civil servants suffer from a lack of skills in media communication preventing them to deliver a clear and accessible message. Second, the economic driven political guidelines of the Commission do not foster an approach through which the EU creates an emotional attachment with its citizens.

The second challenge was to elaborate a solution to overcome the bureaucratic way in which the EU story is told. I propose to build on the concept of *Lovemark*, developed by the CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi, Kevin Roberts. Through a unique combination of mystery, sensuality and intimacy, I transpose this concept to the EU context and introduce a detailed proposal as to how the EU can walk on the path to love. However, when analysing the *Lovemark* concept, I realized that Europe does not convey Respect for its citizens, the core principle on which the Lovemark concept is built. Without respect, you cannot be loved. The three organizing principles (performance, reputation and trust) on which respect is built are totally missing in the messages conveyed to citizens, and the EU appears as acting for its own purpose as a set of institutions strongly rather than oriented towards the citizens.

The third challenge was then to define and propose a concept for an EU-branding campaign in which the EU comes out of its hiding place and connects to its citizens to take them on a wonderful journey. By bringing step by step the EU through the path to love as defined by Kevin Roberts, I make a proposal as to how better involve EU citizens in the development of a shared story. Based on the outputs of a survey conducted for this thesis, I also provide creative inspirations on the content, format and channels of the proposed EU-branding campaign. These are derived from the main conclusions drawn from the survey, namely

that EU should focus more on the citizen's daily life and use its diverse communication tools to start a conversation and engage with citizens also in the long-term.

However, as Simon Anholt preaches, creating a nation-branding strategy is "80 per cent innovation, 15 per cent coordination and 5 percent communication". The EU should therefore decide on a strong EU-branding strategy focused on the citizen's needs but also enlist, in the process, the support of a relevant number of stakeholders. Secondly, the EU should help those stakeholders to perform at every points, and actually shows that those innovations can really have a benefice for them while being aligned with the strategy. And finally, enhance them to reflect and reinforce the EU-brand identity in everything they say and do.

At his 2014 opening speech, Jean-Claude Juncker, the European Commission's president, stated:

> "If Europe seems hard to understand, it is because all too often, we caricature it. Let us put national navel-gazing to bed. In Europe we should play as a team. Let us apply the Community method. Yes, it is demanding, but it is effective, it is tried and tested and it is more credible than intergovernmental wrangling. We need to restore the Community method." (Juncker 2014, p.16).

It is time to start.

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Annex 1

- Revitalizing Europe -
Could a EU-branding campaign be used as a tool
to regain public support for the European Union?

Questionnaire – European communication experts
How to make EU citizens love the EU and the concept of Lovemarks – Guidelines for
drawing some elements for a EU-branding campaign

Name: Michel Huvenne
Organisation / Company: VO Communications
Function: Concept leader
Phone interview – free traduction

1. In what way does EU-branding exist? What does the EU-brand represent for you?

   The EU-branding only exists in the Euro-bubble sphere. The EU-brand stands only for those who work for the institutions and for the elite.

2. Can branding be used to influence the citizens' support towards the political system? How?

   Yes, by starting going in the street.

3. The rising Euroscepticism represents a threat for the EU as a political project: How could branding help to by pass this trend?

   To fight against fair, which is related to a lack of knowledge. Teaching, give knowledge to people. Promoting an open mind behaviour and put knowledge at the heart of the campaign concept.

4. Is EU-branding working as it has been done so far? No

5. How would you improve EU-branding? See below

6. Could the EU become a Lovemark based on the branding concept of Saatchi & Saatchi? How?

   By putting forward interconnectivity. The EU should take the initiative of launching a campaign that features the multi diversity of Europe. The EU should encourage exchanges by putting forward the cultural assets of every Member States and make them knowledgeable for every European. Indeed, by fostering exchange and connectivity, this should contribute counteracting fears and attitudes on both sides that stem from the lack of knowledge of each other.

7. What are the obstacles of creating an EU Lovemark? /

8. What are the possible implications / effects of a EU Lovemark? /

9. Do you know the German nation-branding campaign "Du bist Deutschland"? Could this communication campaign be used as a positive example for creating a EU-branding campaign to regain public support? /

10. Could you present us a successful pan-European communication campaign that you put in place recently? Can you give an example of a poor EU-branding campaign?

    Be Brussels – it was mandatory to put the « Be-Brussels » in every institutional campaign whatever the topic was. It successfully create a sense of belonging.

Annex 2

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- Revitalizing Europe -
Could a EU-branding campaign be used as a tool
to regain public support for the European Union?

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Questionnaire – European communication experts
How to make EU citizens love the EU and the concept of Lovemarks – Guidelines for
drawing some elements for a EU-branding campaign

Name: Charlelie Jourdan
Organisation / Company: Old-Continent.eu
Function: Creative Director (organise the creative department & com strategy)

1. **In what way does EU-branding exist? What does the EU-brand represent for you?**

At the very moment, I do not believe the EU-brand exist in a cohesive and consistent way –
meaning that it would be built consciously – with a clear vision and a constantly repeated
message. I think the founding fathers understood the need for a narrative, and that what
constituted the first three decades "brand" of the EU. Today, each institutions, each
department, each employee being capable of interpreting the brand through its own
communication campaigns – only the flag remains a sort of cohesive element. The brand is
mostly reactive at the moment (when attacked, or confronted to large destabilising events –
such as the financial crisis, the refugee influx, or a potential Brexit) – but not pro-active in
the sense of creating its own story and sharing it.

2. **Can branding be used to influence the citizens' support towards the political system? How?**

In my understanding, the branding of a company is its vision shared towards the people. It's
a constructed narrative of what makes the company unique – which is endorsed by a
consumer as if it was his own personal philosophy (Just Do it – Think Different, etc.) and
that the consumer proves to the rest of the world by buying a product of his favourite brand.
The fact is, in the last 30 years, people have departed greatly from their "citizen" side, to
focus almost uniquely on their "consumer" side. We do not have problems being from the
"Apple" crowd – but we have massive problems telling others we believe in socialism or
capitalism. So sharing a narrative about the EU and how it impact lives, and how it is
different (branding it) – is very complex, as it requires first to persuade people again that
being a "citizen" is much more important than being a "consumer" – and then secondly
make the narrative resonate so deep into them that they feel connected, and adopt it as their
own personal philosophy.
To conclude, in a way the very usage of the word "influence" already show that we believe
that the political system should adopt the same manipulation techniques than the consumer-
marketing world – while it would be because it builds itself as an alternative that the
political system could actually build a real genuine brand.

3. **The rising Euroscepticism represents a threat for the EU as a political project: How could branding help to by pass this trend?**

By being honest. By recognising that there are massive dysfunction in the current system – that people do not understand anything of what is happening and that the Euroscepticism is actually a very healthy reaction while facing something we do not understand. The EU elite does not yet acknowledge that euroscepticism is built by their own way of doing things, so they do not address the fundamental need of explaining what they do to others.

4. **Is EU-branding working as it has been done so far?**

It worked from the inception of the EU to the last 30 years. Since the Single Market (Delors) there is no coordinated branding done – outside of episodic "new membership" campaign, "elections" campaign, and "we suppressed roaming charges" campaigns.

5. **How would you improve EU-branding?**

By restructuring fundamentally the way civil servants are told the story of their organisation. By focusing from the inside out on their capacity to tell a consistent narrative, be proud of what they do and only then trying to communicate to the rest of the world. When a boat looks fragile, with a relatively dull crew, and without a captain's crew to reach the next destination – it is definitely not very appealing to climb inside and go to a journey.

6. **Could the EU become a Lovemark based on the branding concept of Saatchi & Saatchi? How?**

I don't know the concept sorry. Maybe by phone if you explain it to me first.

7. **What are the obstacles of creating an EU Lovemark?**

I don't know enough the concept sorry. Maybe by phone if you explain it to me first.

8. What are the possible implications / effects of a EU Lovemark?

Same same

9. Do you know the German nation-branding campaign "Du bist Deutschland"? Could this communication campaign be used as a positive example for creating a EU-branding campaign to regain public support?

I don't know it sorry – maybe if you introduce it to me first.

10. Could you present us a successful pan-European communication campaign that you put in place recently? Can you give an example of a poor EU-branding campaign?

We never put in place a successful pan-European Communication campaign. With worked successfully in telling stories from the outside world toward Brussels (lobbies of any kind) and with have been moderately successful in trying to promote a photo competition for the European Commission DG REGIO.

https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanCommission/videos/1064558580258288/

We do have a lot of big fails to share though. Apart own competence into producing such campaigns – that can obviously be a reason we never have been picked up to produce one – we worked with large agencies such as Tipik to produce "pan-european" campaigns. If initially the concepts we pitched were quite persuasive for the audience in mind – (campaign about a new European tool to resolve problems when buying online) – the end result was a mixture of personal feelings from the EC unit in charge of the project, a fight with their own hierarchy and a very loose methodology from the Agency that recruited us.
Since we have repeated similar experiences at least a dozen times, we pinpointed the main problem as being the real lack of training in communication of said "communication experts" in the Commission (and the other institutions) – and a real problem of cartel among the agencies capable of answering large tenders.
This means very few competent agencies can bring actual reflections to create "pan-european" campaigns, and the one who try tend to escape as far as possible once done (ex. Ex-smokers are unstoppable by Saatchi&Saatchi Belgium – that from the CEO's words – was the worst ever experience in terms of Account management and production process they ever had. So they will never try their luck again on these sort of campaigns WHILE every one agrees it is one of the best campaigns produced by the EU).

Training people who are in charge of the marketing of the EU (in each institution, in each DG, in each NGO in Brussels, in each lobby) would be the very first step to actually produce useful, relevant and efficient communication. The rest is of the construction is for me impossible if this first step is not first addressed. It is much more difficult to become an expert in communication than to understand how the EU works – so there is absolutely no single rational reason to recruit people on the basis that they understand the EU – to put them at communication position.

Annex 3

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- Revitalizing Europe -
Could a EU-branding campaign be used as a tool
to regain public support for the European Union?

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Questionnaire – European communication experts
How to make EU citizens love the EU and the concept of Lovemarks – Guidelines for drawing some elements for a EU-branding campaign

Name: Juan Arcas
Organisation / Company: Serviceplan Europe
Function: /

1. In what way does EU-branding exist? What does the EU-brand represent for you?

   It does not. There is no "Brand Europe", only a set of universal values that are well represented in the EU communication: free circulation, Erasmus, democracy, etc. There is an <u>image</u> of Europe, and it needs improving.

2. Can branding be used to influence the citizens' support towards the political system? How?

   I fail to see clearly how to apply keys of corporate communication to government affairs. France does not do it, Germany does not, USA neither.. What we have is an <u>image</u> of these countries, that is not even consistent across campaigns, but that reflect our bias: Greece is sunny and unefficient, Germans are well-organized and tolerant, the French are always complaining, etc. But there never is a branding for governments or political systems. At least not so far.

3. The rising Euroscepticism represents a threat for the EU as a political project: How could branding help to by pass this trend?

   Branding will not help. Sound political communication will. After Brexit, Member States will either play soft, in order to minimize the impact of UK leave, or on the contrary, they will be very determined to make UK pay for this inept decision, in order to suffocate possibilities of other referenda in France (Le Pen), Holland (Wilders) and others.

   See: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/24/european-far-right-hails-britains-brexit-vote-marine-le-pen

4. Is EU-branding working as it has been done so far?

   Obviously not.

5. How would you improve EU-branding?

I do not believe in such a thing as a EU-branding.

6. Could the EU become a Lovemark based on the branding concept of Saatchi & Saatchi? How?

S&S have been in charge of several European communication activities, mainly for the European Parliament, and have never achieved any result at all. How could others implement it better? I do not foresee it.

7. What are the obstacles of creating an EU Lovemark?

See my article appended.

8. What are the possible implications / effects of a EU Lovemark?

See also the article.

9. Do you know the German nation-branding campaign "Du bist Deutschland"? Could this communication campaign be used as a positive example for creating a EU-branding campaign to regain public support?

Yes I know it. It is the typical campaign that resonates inside a country that already knows itself, and is proud of its own image, but is more difficult in a Union that is so diverse. See Ogilvy's campaign for European elections, it is almost identical, but it did not work to bring people to vote. You see the difference between promoting a country and publicising a political alliance. You do not see a campaign about the trade agreement between USA and Canada: you can <u>inform</u> about it but you cannot <u>brand</u> it. You can only explain the benefits. I hope this is clear.

10. Could you present us a successful pan-European communication campaign that you put in place recently? Can you give an example of a poor EU-branding campaign?

Despite its many difficulties (including the infamous video ;-) I think Girls & Science gave excellent results. As for bad campaigns, I suppose you remember the Kill Bill video.

Annex 4

Could a EU-branding campaign be used as a tool
to regain public support for the European Union?

Questionnaire – European communication experts
How to make EU citizens love the EU and the concept of Lovemarks – Guidelines for
drawing some elements for a EU-branding campaign

Name: Patrick Vastenaekels
Organisation / Company: ICF Mostra
Function: CEO

Phone interview – free translation

1. In what way does EU-branding exist? What does the EU-brand represent for you?

   It exists for those who live outside Europe but the EU-brand is really confusing for

   those who live inside Europe.

   Europeans are united around 2 or 3 ideas:

   - social protection

   - democracy and governance

   - public services

2. Can branding be used to influence the citizens' support towards the political system?
   How?

The main challenge that needs to be overpassed is a miscommunication problem: First,

Member States do not want to spread a good message about the European project.

Second, it is really difficult to have a unanimous voice – it is difficult to deal with

different opinions. Third, confusion exists between the European project in itself – the

operation of a political system that is stronger in its unity – and the policies that the EU

creates, that have a direct effect on the daily life of European citizens.

Europe also has a responsibility of political stability because of its geographical situation.

The closest to the Arab World, Europe has witnessed the arrival of over a million of

refugees on its shores and now appears powerless to solve this crisis. BREXIT is today a

consequence of the failure of the European Union to deal with this refugee crisis. (!!

Among other internal and external reasons).

3. The rising Euroscepticism represents a threat for the EU as a political project: How could branding help to by pass this trend?

The rise of Euroscepticism is an emotional reaction towards the European Union.

4. How would you improve EU-branding?

- Education. Constantly informing. Explain why and which effect a decision will have.

- Boosting reactivity. The European Union do not have the same reactivity as a company such as Mac Donald. The European Union belongs to everybody and to nobody at the same time. The EU is moving slowly towards the digital era. Mac Donald has Social Networks guidelines that are strictly defined. This is not the case for the European Union which is not a Federal State but a confederation of States that have to give a part of their sovereignty and ready to spread the similar message. There is a lack of means.

5. Do you know the German nation-branding campaign "Du bist Deutschland"? Could this communication campaign be used as a positive example for creating a EU-branding campaign to regain public support?

The process is the same. Deal with a lack of understanding – and get rid of false rumours circulating about the EU - and move forward to an attitude of enthusiasm – and adhesion – towards the European project. Storytelling is what the European Union is missing and this is generally the problem of every public government because of a lack of flexibility.

6. Could you present us a successful pan-European communication campaign that you put in place recently? Can you give an example of a poor EU-branding campaign?

A campaign created by Mostra about promoting tourism in Europe (The Wonders of Europe). The challenge wasn't easy because it concerns Europe as a whole and has to deal with its diversity. For the foreigners, it worked because Europe is generally compared to a good quality of life (especially in China). Every EU campaign that we launched always has less impact that we expected. First because of a lack of means and budget restrictions that prevent us to effectively run a campaign at a pan-European level. Second, because, in

today's world, many channels of communication are interfering between the sender and the receiver.

Annex 5 – Survey online

- Revitalizing Europe -
Could a EU-branding campaign be used as a tool
to regain public support for the European Union?

We are two young (idealistic) European students that regret that the citizens support for the European Union is declining and want to do something about it.

As part of our Executive Master in European communication and policy at IHECSacademy, we are making a final thesis titled as following 'Revitalizing Europe - Could a EU-branding campaign be used as a tool to regain public support for the European Union?'

It would take you 10 minutes to give your views and would help us a lot to draw some elements for a EU-branding campaign.

Thank you for your support !

Questionnaire – Citizens
The EU's need of public support – Guidelines to draw some elements for a EU-branding campaign

1. **What is your gender?**
   1. Female
   2. Male
   3. Transgender
   4. Other

2. **How old are you?**

3. **What is your nationality?**

4. **In which EU country do you live?**

5. **How do you feel about the EU? The EU is... (three possible choices):**
   1. Undemocratic
   2. Economic driven
   3. Technocratic
   4. Unrealistic
   5. Visionary
   6. Social
   7. Democratic
   8. Integrative
   9. Liberal
   10. Progressive
   11. Traditional
   12. Open-minded
   13. Other

6. **How would you like the EU to be? The EU should be... (three possible choices):**
   1. Undemocratic
   2. Economic driven
   3. Technocratic
   4. Unrealistic
   5. Visionary

6. Social
7. Democratic
8. Integrative
9. Liberal
10. Progressive
11. Traditional
12. Open-minded
Other

7. How strong is your European identity compared to your national one?
1. I don't feel European at all
2. My national identity is more important but I feel European
3. My national identity is at the same level as my European one
4. I feel European first

8. Should the EU communicate more / better on the decision that it takes for its citizens?
1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't have an opinion on this matter.

9. Is there a need of a European communication campaign in order to make citizens feel closer to the EU again / understand better what the EU is about?
1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't have an opinion on this matter.

10. On what kind of communication channels should this communication campaign be based? (two possible choices)
1. Social media
2. Television advertising
3. Radio advertising
4. Written press advertising
5. Posters
6. Flyers, brochures and other information material
7. Events (like music festivals or others)
8. Other

11. Which values would you like to put forward in a European communication campaign? (multiple choice possible)
1. Solidarity
2. Free movement of persons
3. Cultural diversity
4. Anti-discrimination
5. Peace
6. Transparency
7. Diversity
8. Integration of immigrants
9. Social justice
10. Economic development
11. Other

12. Which policy field represents the EU the most? (multiple choice possible)
1. Consumer protection
2. Erasmus
3. Free movement of persons
4. Anti-discrimination
5. Economic development
6. Environment protection
7. Cultural diversity
8. Research and innovation
9. Social affairs
10. Agriculture
11. Foreign affairs
12. Human rights
13. Digital economy
14. Other

13. Which person in your point of view represents the idea of the European project the best?
1. Conchita Wurst
2. Angela Merkel
3. Stromae
4. ABBA
5. Martin Schulz
6. Zinedine Zidan
7. Le petit prince
8. Jean Claude Juncker
9. Robert Schuman
10. Other

14. If there was a European communication campaign, which slogan would you choose?
1. Peace, prosperity, and equality through togetherness.

2. Let's make the world better.

3. We are Europe.

4. You are Europe.

5. We love Europe.

6. Other