

EUROPEAN UNION COMMUNICATION REDESIGN – DIGITAL PLATFORMS ROLE
FOR AN ACTIVE CIVIC PARTICIPATION

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ABSTRACT

The world is nowadays going through a bewildering era. Long decades of political corruption have progressively led to distrust inside countless communities, and Donald Trump's election is one of the first and most evident consequences of those symptoms. Similar situations have been replicated since, and what is more alarming is that people are accepting it as the new *status quo*.

In Europe, the populist discourse has reemerged, fueled both by the consequences of the 2008 Economic Crisis and the current Refugee Crisis. Exploiting xenophobia, former extremist forces are currently dominating more prominent places than a decade ago.

In this daunting scenario, the European Union, acting as a pacification agent, has the enormous responsibility to congregate diverse interests into a common outcome. Simultaneously, it must fight the installed distrust on the project, mobilizing citizens to act and help to decide their country's faith. The challenge here is, through a communication strategy, regain popular support, especially among younger voters, as they represent the generation who will decide about EU's future.

In a first stage, this case will frame the problem by providing a comprehensive contextualization of the situation, by including relevant academic concepts inside the marketing field. Then, the pedagogical objectives and practical questions will be presented, and, in a final stage, a resolution proposal will be provided. Especially focused on the Portuguese situation, in the end, the objective is to have a clear idea of how can political institutions address their current communication challenges in order to better engage with citizens.

Keywords: Marketing, Digital Communication, Political Communication

JEL Classification System: M31 - Marketing

M37 - Advertising

RESUMO

Vivemos hoje numa era desconcertante. Longas décadas de corrupção levaram progressivamente à desconfiança de inúmeras comunidades face aos políticos. Resultado de uma opção extremista, a eleição de Donald Trump é uma das mais evidentes consequências desses sintomas. Desde então, situações semelhantes têm vindo a replicar-se e o mais alarmante é que as populações começam a aceitá-las como o novo *status quo*.

Na Europa, o discurso populista ressurgiu, alimentado pelas consequências da crise económica de 2008 ou pela actual crise dos refugiados. Alimentando-se da xenofobia, as forças extremistas dominam actualmente lugares mais importantes do que há uma década atrás.

Neste cenário assustador, a União Europeia, enquanto agente mediador, tem a enorme responsabilidade de traduzir objectivos diversos num objectivo comum. Simultaneamente, precisa de combater a desconfiança instalada no projeto, mobilizando os cidadãos a agir e a decidir o destino do seu país. O desafio aqui reside na comunicação, e em como esta pode ajudar a recuperar o apoio popular, especialmente no eleitorado mais jovem, pois este representa a geração que decidirá o futuro da UE.

Numa primeira fase, este caso enquadrará o problema, fornecendo uma contextualização abrangente da situação, incluindo conceitos académicos relevantes dentro do campo do marketing. De seguida, serão apresentados os objetivos pedagógicos e as questões práticas e, subsequentemente, será apresentada uma proposta de resolução. Especialmente focado na situação portuguesa, no final, o objetivo é ter uma ideia clara de como as instituições políticas podem enfrentar os seus actuais desafios de comunicação, a fim de melhor interagirem com os cidadãos.

Palavras-chave: Marketing, Marketing Político, Comunicação, Comunicação Digital, Comunicação Política

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1. CASE STUDY CONTEXT

1.1. The European Union – A brief history

The aftermath of the Second World War presented a devastated Europe, countless lives lost, paralyzed industries and a massive amount of people with no home or anything to eat. Thus, it was urgent to start rebuilding almost the entire continent, providing people the necessary means to satisfy their basic needs.

In order to prevent another conflict, one key point was to reestablish dialogue between the nations through trading. Even before the conflict ended, the exiled governments of Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg signed the Benelux treaty in 1943, which fostered the economic cooperation in terms of free circulation of workers, capitals, goods and services inside the region. Then, after the war, in 1948, the Marshall Plan was put into practice. Proposed by U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall, it encompassed a four-year strategy to rebuild damaged cities, and respective industries and infrastructure, while eliminating trade barriers between European nations and strengthening commercial bonds with the United States.

In practical terms, those agreements formed the basis for the modern European Union to exist as we know it nowadays. It begun with the creation of the ESCS (the European Coal and Steel Community), born in 1951 in Paris, when six European countries decided to jointly regulate their steel and coal production, at the time crucial raw materials to fuel their economies. Enthusiastically purposed by Robert Schuman, French minister, his objective was not only to prevent war but also to make it materially not feasible. From the common market of steel and coal, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands soon welcomed many other nations in the following decades, progressively extending their cooperation to another political, economic, technological and social matters.

Some relevant milestones include the Treaty of Rome (1958), when ESCS became the EEC (European Economic Union) and established a customs union, the Treaty of Maastricht (1992) which purposed the creation of the Euro and the Treaty of Lisbon (2009), which restructured and updated several legal aspects of the European institutions.

1.2. Europe and the European Union in a challenging geopolitical order

Being in a group with so many different nations, languages and interests, naturally means that are punctual clash of interests that, through a consistent dialogue and mediation, can be solved.

And, in fact, for several decades, being a member of the European Union was something for a country to strive for, as the increasing number of countries interested to join the union can attest. It meant stricter obligations in economic or financial terms, but also a decisive contribute to boost science/ education through exchange or research programs, culture, by providing auxiliary funds to maintain public historic monuments, transportations, by covering the cost of massive infrastructures like highways or railways and business, by providing the necessary means for a citizen to start his/her own company. And this is just a very short list of improvements provided by this international organization.

The 2008 Debt Crisis that spread from the United States to the old continent and to the rest of the world, marked a decisive turning point in terms of the stability and endurance of the European Project. After the collapse of important banks like the Lehman Brothers, southern countries like Greece, Ireland, Spain, Portugal and Cyprus were not able to repay their government debt or to bail out over-indebted banks. So, their governments were forced to ask for financial rescue to other institutions like the European Central Bank (ECB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other eurozone countries.

Considered by many as the worst world crisis since the 1930's Great Depression, those events severely shook the foundations of the European Institutions and, in way, opened the door to some friction and chaos inside state members that are still echoing nowadays. The aforementioned contrasts were accentuated and the whole system suffered a massive shift and previous, stable assumptions are no longer to be considered.

Martins (2017) emphasized other relevant elements to the instability equation: "As a consequence, Brexit and Trump's victory translate the inauguration of new, old, regressive times, with unparalleled levels of uncertainty, simultaneously with the continuous terrorist threat in European territory, which stresses the need to find an European strategy able to respond to those new challenges in terms of external policy, security and defense, as well as in the new model to adopt regarding the UK-EU relationship." (Martins, 2017: 114).

Simultaneously, Immigration has never been consensual among EU's participants and reaching a common ground to solve it seems like an authentic mirage. Several countries are increasingly closing their borders in order to prevent any type of interference not only within their territory but also regarding their national sovereignty. This is quite a sensitive topic that only few nations were bold enough to step ahead, the best example being Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel.

In the British Isles, David Cameron's heritage (Brexit) heavily undermines many attempts for the EU to keep a solid, reasonable partnership with the United Kingdom, notwithstanding their imminent withdrawal from the Union. Besides this, Theresa May's disorientation keeps fueling even more the severe social issues that were already evident before the referendum. What it showed was that British society was clearly divided when it comes to emigration, healthcare and social benefits for foreigners. After months of fierce internal and external negotiations, May's resign and Boris Johnson's subsequent takeover indicates that turbulent times are not over yet for the United Kingdom.

As if this was not enough, in Central Europe, Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, is proudly implementing a xenophobic, censorial political orientation that severely compromises the principles of freedom of speech and press. Thus, this naturally collides with the European Union's chart of fundamental rights. As a consequence, Orbán's proposal to criminalize individuals and organizations (such as NGO's) who helped asylum seekers was vehemently condemned by the Union. In this scenario, if Hungary does not withdraw the law (colloquially known as the "Stop Soros Law"), the Union will proceed to legal measures.

In such a scenario, trans European nationalist movements are seizing the perfect opportunity to accuse the EU of being an "(...) insufficient, ineffective and usurper political creature, disseminating an authoritarian projection of the organization" (Gonçalves, 2017: 66), while simultaneously exploiting its' excessive bureaucratic profile. Exploiting popular distrust and profound disenchantment with politics, those organizations have registered an alarming reappearance in the political scene. One of the most appealing targets is the young electorate, an extremely fragmented and alienated mass who, generally speaking, neither identifies nor engages to any type of traditional civic/ political activity. Particularly the ones who did not benefit from the advantages of the European project and feel left behind.

Nevertheless, alluding to the plurality of situations, Motti-Stefandi and Cicognani (2018) provided an interesting diagnosis on the present situation of young European voters “. A number of studies show that they tend to be more active in non-governmental and local associations than in political parties (Barrett & Zani, 2015). Some young people use alternative ways to make their voices heard, often mixing traditional with new forms of participation. The latter are often based on the use of social media (e.g., Coleman & Rowe, 2005). Alarming, others seem to take a passive stance towards politics (Amnå & Ekman, 2013).” (Motti-Stefandi and Cicognani, 2018: 244). And is precisely the percentage who feels “discarded” that can enroll into far-right parties or movements or even into civil disobedience actions through more radical associations.

As such, to fight this tremendous apathy and thus guarantee the continuity and the sustainability of the project, European (and global) institutions need to actively listen to their voters, adopting citizens inputs and concerns into decision-making processes. Proximity is paramount. If successfully achieved, this will translate into concrete, tangible improvements into Europeans’ everyday life and simultaneously restore their trust in political institutions.

1.3. EU Communication Current Diagnosis

1.3.1. Share Europe Online Report

In 2013, and aware of this intricate zeitgeist, the European Commission and the European Parliament launched a pilot project called “Share Europe Online” (SEO), whose main objective was to assess in which new ways could both institutions promote an active, consistent dialogue with citizens through public online social media.

SEO’s main outcomes translate the incoherent internal pattern that punctuates the social media strategy of the different European Institutions. Despite a good underlying objective, the efforts were insufficient to promote a solid, updated image of the institutions.

While the European Parliament presents a more spontaneous, straightforward language in social media, the European Commission still conveys a strict, bureaucratic posture that does not cater for a wider audience to get interested and involved. Social Media communication is quite scattered through various languages, as posts are published in all the state-member idioms.

Occasionally, there are some good initiatives to mitigate that physical and psychological distance, but those are not powerful enough to produce an impactful shift on attitudes and minds.

Present times require a very balanced, meticulous approach to extremely fragmented audiences, whose attention span is undoubtedly decreasing to record low levels. The key to solve those issues lies in an efficient transformation of political matters from a tedious topic into an important, appealing subject. It definitely needs to stop being confined to a certain restricted bubble.

Additionally, this report also emphasized the evident need for Representation Offices to have adequate media equipment as well as social media training to better understand and develop their communication strategy. Despite providing some improvements to the communications of those institutions, a solid strategy was not applied, and those positive outcomes rapidly faded away.

Annexes 3.17 to 3.31 illustrate the current status of different digital platforms of the EU.

1.3.2. Academic Views

1.3.2.1. Horizon 2020 CATCH-EyoU project

In terms of academia, another relevant effort was the Horizon 2020 CATCH-EyoU project, (standing for Constructing Active Citizenship with European Youth: Policies, Practices, Challenges and Solutions). A solid, concrete example of how researchers can effectively assess how to bridge the gap between young voters and European institutions. In this case, scientists in Psychology, Political Science, Sociology, Media and Communication and Education from eight European countries (Sweden, Estonia, United Kingdom, Germany, Czech Republic, Greece, Portugal, Italy), focused to assess how European youth relates and identifies itself with the EU as well as which type of societal and individual background promotes or obstructs an active citizenship role in this context.

Based on the collected results from the first two years of this project, combined with the inputs of other researchers, Motti-Stefandi and Cicognani (2018) accentuated several relevant aspects to build a youth active citizenship. Essentially, the need to implement a more inclusionary approach to understand how young people engage with the European Union, incorporating critique and dissonant views into the discussion (as opposed to the more normative, “strict” forms of participation). Moreover, the decisive importance to grasp the peculiar link between national and EU identity, as well as the absolute necessity to combat

apathy and especially alienation (which can translate into unconventional ways of political participation). In addition, the importance to create favorable socio-economic backgrounds (and respective resources) to promote solid participation habits in European citizenship, along with the need to reinforce mobility programs as a way to strengthen students' bonds with the EU. Last but not least, the necessity to better understand the actual media context, and in which ways it would be possible to use alternative media outlets as allies, thus countering their actual tendency to oppose institutions *per se*.

1.3.2.2. *Javier Ruíz Soler*

Another interesting input came from Javier Ruíz Soler, Ph.D in Political Communication from the European University Institute and an expert on online communication and European matters. The following input is the result of a one-hour Skype interview conducted in July 2019.

From his viewpoint, the focus should then switch from a top-down perspective to a more horizontal one, in which dialogue is based on a more egalitarian premise. As such, communication teams need to go where the conversations are effectively happening. Instead of only producing embellished campaigns with hashtags that not many will be aware or promote (Like “This time I vote”, the campaign for the last European Elections in May 2019), Mr Soler believes that it would be more useful for the European institutions to actively participate in discussion forums in Twitter or even on Reddit. Not necessarily an interventive approach, but one that can listen and promote dialogue among different demographic sectors.

Moreover, resources should be allocated in order for those listening teams to be replicated on each state member representation office, in order to monitor trends and develop solid, pertinent strategies. In addition, Eurobarometers should be upgraded by applying social media data to more “traditional” information. (Ex: Voting enquiries in Spain, in which people are asked about their preferences.)

1.4. The Portuguese Case

The following segment aims to depict the current panorama in terms of attitudes towards politics and civic participation among Portuguese citizens.

When it comes to the country's relationship with the European Union itself, the most recent Eurobarometer (from March 2018) identified a positive traversing trend in terms of individual perceptions about the project. On average, 68% of the European respondents considered that belonging to the EU was a positive for their country. In fact, Portuguese responders were more optimistic than the average, since 78% of them defended that same position.

Regarding the national political profile, José Santana Pereira (2018), a political science teacher and researcher from ISCTE-IUL, highlighted some relevant features. Young people (ranging from 15 to 24 years old) are rarely exposed to political information, evaluating as ineffective the different participation modalities in the political life. Moreover, active participation in civic associations and activities is scarce and one in five doesn't even have a formed opinion towards the country's democracy and respective performance. Additionally, the author defends that the newer generation is more alienated than the previous one, thus excluding age as the main explanatory factor. In fact, this stems from an incipient political "socialization" youngsters received, which can still be seen as a mild but related output of 41 years of dictatorship, in which the political participation was strictly controlled and confined to a very small elite.

On the other hand, the European Social Survey¹ from 2017 provided a different perspective on those matters. Complemented with information from the Portuguese government, Pordata and INE (the national statistics institute), it concluded that one out of eleven youngsters (with ages from 15 to 30 years old) was involved with one activity or political organization, thus placing the country among the top European nations in this regard. In this case, the United Kingdom, Germany and Austria.

¹ "The European Social Survey (ESS) is a biennial cross-national survey of attitudes and behaviour established in 2001. The ESS uses cross-sectional, probability samples which are representative of all persons aged 15 and over resident within private households in each country".

Considering seven types of organizations or activities, political ones were on sixth place, while Sports, Youth and Cultural ones occupied the top positions, respectively. Notwithstanding, 47% of the respondents of that same survey were not involved with any type of organization, which can actually draw a parallel with the aforementioned abstention and alienation pattern in general population.

Besides this, the survey also contributed with some data about the political stance of the respondents, analyzed through the participation in specific political oriented activities. Thus, 38% of the respondents shared political content online, 27% signed a petition, 15% approached a politician, 8% boycotted a product, 8% used the symbol of a campaign and only 6% went to a demonstration. Nevertheless, there were two key demonstrations that took place in 1992/94 and in 2011/12 that successfully proved that young people still can mobilize and commit to a cause. In the first case, against college fees and the university access exam and in the second one against labor precariousness and austerity measures imposed by the government.

Concerning tangible voting habits, it was concluded that, in 69 election moments since 1975, there has never been such a low number of apt young voters as in 2017 (14% in 2014 against 21% in 1985), reminding how serious the present demographic crisis is.

Another relevant explanation lies on the virtually inexistent renovation of the political system, and its' consequent ageing process. In fact, recent stats show that only 38% of deputies are under 35 years old, while 42% are aged between 35-50 and 20% are more than 50 years old.

Distrustful about the future, younger generations are fragmented and deeply alienated from politics and civic obligations in general. The meager share that does is quite suspicious of more traditional participation forms (youth organizations, parties), resorting to another platforms (Such as MyPolis, a web plus mobile app that, with a touch of gamification, submits proposals to online voting) to actively and responsibly exercise their citizenship. Thus, it should be through those new structures that young citizens should be addressed, essentially leaning on a sincere, consistent strategy that would successfully make them aware of their vital role as future decision-makers.

1.5. Millennials Psychographic Profile

So, since this case is mostly tailored to a Millennial target, it becomes essential to understand who are Millennials. What are their like, which are their wants, needs and aspirations. To achieve that, this project's "team" resorted to different sources in order to better describe this target and draw its' respective psychographic profile.

1.5.1. Global Features

First and foremost, as different generations will be addressed, age cohorts should be clear for the reader. Based on the definitions from the Pew Research Center, Generation Z is composed by citizens born from 1997 up until the present, Millennials between 1981 and 1996, Generation X between 1965 and 1980 and Baby Boomers between 1946 and 1964.

To shed light on the subject, The Deloitte Global Millennial Survey from 2019 provided some pertinent outputs that will be further described in the subsequent sections. This report was based on the answers of 13, 416 Millennials from 42 countries and 3,009 members of Generation Z from ten different countries in all five continents.

Living through turbulent, disrupted times, this survey depicts a pessimistic generation, skeptic about a bright future when it comes to overall economic or social wealth. Unsurprisingly distrustful about governments and big business leaders in general, Millennials and "Z's" opt to choose brands/companies that are consistently aligned with their views. They tend to value more a specific experience (like travelling, for instance) rather than focusing their investments on an asset (a car or a house, for example). Environmental causes are on their top concerns and they firmly believe social relevance can be achieved through volunteer/ community work. Nevertheless, this is still an ambitious generation eager to earn high salaries and to be wealthy. However, their priorities have shifted. Having children, buying homes, and other similar achievements are further delayed mostly due to financial constraints

This pessimism stems from all the political, economic and social turmoil that the economic recession brought and that still echoes in multiple societies. In fact, positive economic sentiment registered the lowest value in six years Deloitte has developed this survey. Only 26% of the respondents effectively believed the economic landscape in their country would improve

in the near future. Among other examples, for instance, in the United States, Millennials who started their careers during the recession achieved a lower economic growth in their first decade of work when compared to any other generation. With a lower income, they buy fewer assets than previous generations at similar ages, though accumulating higher levels of debt.

Thus, despite being the most well-prepared and educated generations, Millennials and Z's did not benefit from the encouraging post-war conjuncture, which included multiple efforts on international cooperation, a baby boom and a prolific economic growth that would only cease with the 1973 oil crisis. In this regard, Baby Boomers and Generation X had lower obstacles to emancipate themselves through work or moving to their own house, for example. Success seemed more attainable and social progression was a solid possibility.

Back to the present and discarding the Global Crisis as the only accountable agent for the current challenges to exist, Deloitte's Survey further specified some relevant explanatory factors for that pessimistic stance to occur. Those comprise:

1. Sheer rise of economic inequality,
2. Scattering of social security nets,
3. Incompetent and dysfunctional governments,
4. Increased tribalism fueled by social media,
5. Disruption 4.0 technologies have brought to daily habits.

1.5.2. Views on politics and information

Number 3 is especially pertinent, as it alludes to something that has already been mentioned in the present case. According to this survey, Millennials do, in fact, value government as an institution but, at the same time, they are deeply frustrated with their inaction towards multiple issues. Inevitably, this translated into very low opinions about politicians, which have also been a constant in previous surveys. In this 2019 edition, about 73% of the respondents said that political leaders are failing to have a positive impact in the world. Moreover, 70% of Millennials believe that politicians are mostly focused on their own agendas rather than on their constituents' interests, while 63% argued that leaders had no other ambition rather than retaining or strengthening their power.

Additionally, 45% stated that they did not rely on those leaders as trustworthy, accurate information sources. And, speaking of information, respondents' views on traditional media can be disturbing, as more than 43% accounting traditional media for negative impacts in the world. In terms of reliability, 53% expressed some trust on traditional media, while an appalling 27% had zero trust in the media as trustworthy information sources. As such, this uncertainty adds another instability factor to the pessimism equation, strengthening it even more. As traditional media outlets fail to achieve their function to inform citizens, thus helping them to know and understand the world they live in, leaders of nongovernmental/ nonprofit organizations instead became the reliable information sources Millennials seek for.

1.5.3. Views on Brands and Consumerism

Savvy and highly conscious, Millennials are an extremely demanding target that brands are still struggling to adapt their strategy to. Any customer can be displeased by punctual poor product quality or performance, but this would not be enough for previous generations of customers to cease their relationships with a specific brand. Conversely, Millennials can in fact start or end an association with a company based on very personal reasons, often attached to the type of impact that same company produces in the world.

As a matter of fact, 42% of Millennial respondents effectively said they have begun or deepened a business relationship based on the positive assessment they made about a company's impact in the world or in the environment. 37% of respondents said that they have stopped or diminished a business relationship with a specific company due to its' negative ethical behavior. The opposite effect was also verified, as 36% started/deepened a relationship because they believed that particular company was ethically solid.

To some extent, companies seem to be paying attention to those results. In a 2019 Deloitte Global survey of CXOs, 73% of the respondents stated that their organizations had changed or developed products or services in the past year in order to bring positive societal impact in the world.

Furthermore, political leanings have also some impact in terms of brand preferences. Inopportune positions or remarks can lead to PR scandals and damage control might not be as effective as brands desired. Actually, more than 25% of Millennial respondents stated that they

ceased their relationship with a brand due to its' political stance, while 29% did the same as a result of a specific comment by a single leader.

In the era of constant information demand and dubious associated usage by companies, data protection is also a serious concern for this age cohort. In fact, more than 33% of respondents said that they have cut-off or lessened the relationship with a brand due to the amount of personal information the company asked them to provide. Around 25% took the same option either because the company was not able to protect their data or due to the brand's intrusive tracking habits in terms of online actions or shopping habits.

1.5.4. Views on Social Media

After the initial enthusiasm around it, both Millennials and Generation Z have a complex, "love/hate" relationship with social media. Notwithstanding the plethora of benefits that connectivity and social media brings, both generations recognize the serious risks it presents both to their own personal balance and well-being and to society as a whole.

As such, 64% of Millennial respondents admitted they would be physically healthier if they decreased the amount of time spent in social media, while 60% stated it would make them happier. Moreover, an expressive 45% said that social media causes more harm than good. Unsurprisingly, Anxiety is one of the most frequent negative outputs heavy social media usage brings to users. In fact, 44% of respondents considered that not being able to check their SM accounts for one day or two would make them anxious. 40% were even more drastic, stating that they wish they could stop using SM completely, which underlines the highly addictive profile those platforms have.

1.5.5. Priorities and Aspirations

When it comes to priorities and aspirations, and still following the Deloitte Global Millennial Survey from 2019, survey respondents (both Millennials and Generation Z) presented similar options. The five most voted options were, respectively:

1. Travel the World (57% of answers from both cohorts)
2. Be wealthy (52% of answers from Millennials and 56% from Generation Z)

3. Buy own home (49% of answers from Millennials and 52% from Generation Z)
4. Make a positive impact on society (46% of answers from Millennials and 47% from Generation Z)
5. Start a family (39% of answers from Millennials and 45% from Generation Z)

1.5.6. Global concerns

In terms of global societal concerns, and among 20 different options, respondents were asked to select the 3 most relevant concerns according to their individual perception. In the end, the most voted issues by Millennials were:

1. Climate Change (29%)
2. Inequality issues/ Wealth distribution (22%)
3. Unemployment (21%)
4. Crime/ Safety and Corruption in business or politics (both 20%)
5. Terrorism (19%)

Additionally, the “education factor” was found to have a special influence in the results, as high school graduates tended to choose more personal issues, like unemployment, personal safety, healthcare while university students seemed more inclined for broader/societal problems like political instability or cybersecurity.

1.5.7. US Features

Information collected by Goldman Sachs and the Pew Research Center in 2019 mirrored coincident trends with the Deloitte Survey. Here, considering exclusively the United States population, some main features associated with the Millennial generation were:

- Millennials are largest generation cohort in the US history, when compared to other groups such as Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964²) or Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980³). In this sample, provided by the US Census Bureau, in terms of total yearly births, there were 77 million people born

² Based on the definition from Pew Research Center of 2019.

³ Based on the definition from Pew Research Center of 2019.

during Baby Boomer generation, 61 million during Generation X against 92 million Millennials.

- The first digital natives, as they have grown up with computers, internet or smartphones. To corroborate it, there are some relevant numbers:
 - When asking the three generations about “Which online activities do you regularly do for fun and entertainment ?” and giving as first option “Play Video Games”, 50% of affirmative answers came from Millennials, against 27% from Generation X and 16% from Baby Boomers. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex 3.1
 - When answering the same question with the option “Instant Messaging/Chat”, 45% of affirmative answers came from Millennials, 31% from Generation X and 10% from Baby Boomers. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.2
 - Regarding “Download Music/Video”, 44% of affirmative answers came from Millennials, 33% from Generation X and 17% from Baby Boomers. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.3
 - In terms of “Use social media”, results were slightly more even, 37% of affirmative answers coming from Millennials, 35% from Generation X and 23% from Baby Boomers. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.4
 - The final option was “Watch TV online”. 38% of affirmative answers came from Millennials, 26% from Generation X and 18% from Baby Boomers. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.5
- Social and connected, through multiple online platforms. Here, in terms of platform usage for communication/ commercial purposes, results were clearly distinct between age groups.
 - When asking Millennials “After searching online, how do you communicate with others about a service, product, or a brand”, 44% of respondents answered “Text Messaging”, against 38% resorting to “Social Media”, 38% to “Instant Messaging” and 16% to “Blogging”. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.6

- Confronted with the same question, 32% of Generation X sample answered “Text Messaging”, 25% “Social Media”, 19% “Instant Messaging” and 7% “Blogging”. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.7
- Baby Boomer replies differed, as only 15% chose “Text Messaging”, 11% “Social Media”, 8% “Instant Messaging” and 2% “Blogging”. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.8
- Millennials usually turn to brands that can offer maximum convenience at the lowest cost. In fact, 57% of them compare prices in the store.
- As indicated before, Millennials have a lower buying power, as a result of smaller incomes which still reflects the echoes of the Global Crisis. At the same time, Millennials are more encumbered with debt, as student loan payments constitute a growing section of their expenditures.
 - According to data from the Federal Reserve, the Mean Student Loan Balance for 25 year olds (In US Dollars) has been increasing from \$10,649 in 2003 to \$17, 284 in 2008 and to \$20,926 in 2013. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.10
- Big life decisions like Getting married or Buying a house are not as important as they were for older generations
 - Based on data collected by the Pew Research Center regarding the “% of adults 18-31 married and living in their own household”, the number has been drastically decreasing throughout the decades. From 56% in 1968 to 43% in 1981, 27% in 2007 and 23% in 2012. The matching graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.11
 - However, and despite postponing it, an expressive number of Millennials do actually want to buy a home in the future. According to Trulia Housing Data, when considering the “% of renters who plan to buy a home some day”, 93% of positive answers came from respondents aged 18-34, 75% in the 35-44 cohort, 72% aged between 45-54 and 39% in respondents more than 55 years old.

- As customers and consumers, this group mostly relies on a “sharing economy” system, as an alternative to exclusive ownership of a specific asset.
 - In terms of brand preferences, the power of social media is undoubtedly growing inside communication strategies. In fact, according to information from the Association of National Advertisers, Barkley, SMG and BCG, when asked about “When a brand uses social media, I like that brand more”, 34% affirmative answers came from respondents aged 18-35, against 16% affirmative answers from people with more than 36 years old. The matching graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.15
- When it comes to value assessment, AIMIA Inc.’s US Millennial Loyalty Survey from 2012, verified that Quality is still very important for Millennials. However, Price assumes a more prominent weight than it did for other generations. In fact, when answering the question “What factors make you loyal to a brand?”, factor “Price” received 33% of choice from Millennial respondents against 27% from Non-Millennials. Moreover, “Quality” gathered 55% of preferences of Millennials against 59% from Non-Millennials.
- In terms of buying options, and departing from data collected from Goldman Sachs Fortnightly Thoughts intern survey of 2013, and answering to the question “How important is it for you to own the following?”, some pertinent highlights include:
 - Regarding the “Car” option, 15% of the respondents found it “Extremely important”, 25% found it “Important, but not a big priority”, while 5% did not “feel strongly about it”. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.12
 - When it comes to a “House”, 40% of the respondents found it “Extremely Important”, 30% found it “Important, but not a big priority” and only 8% did not “feel strongly about it”. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.13

- Another good indicator of this sharing trend is the renting market. In fact, 25-34 years old renters as a % of total population rose from 52% in 2005 to 60% in 2013 , according to the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development . The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.14

1.5.8. European Voters

Once described, the subsequent section addresses some important features about European voters. The information source was a European Parliament post-electoral survey from 2019, based on collected data from the last European Elections in May

From a sample of 27,464 citizens from EU's 28 members, 68% of respondents stated that their country benefited from being in the EU, which translates the highest value in more than 10 years. Conversely, those who demonstrated an opposite view, believing that their country did not benefit from belonging to the EU, registered the second lowest proportion since 2018, as only 24% of respondents had answered in this manner. Coincidentally or not, the highest proportion (>35% of votes) was verified approximately during the Global Crisis/ Recession years (from 2010-2016).

Furthermore, about 56% of respondents effectively believed their voice counted in the global EU context, which is also the highest value in more than 10 years. Country wise, 82% of the 28 members believed their voice counted in the Union's global context.

Concerning electoral participation, last elections registered the largest value of turnout in the last 20 years with 50,6% of participation. Numbers have been decreasing since 1994 (the lowest being in 2014 with 42% of participation), but have now registered an inflection which can augur some hope for the years to come.

Nationally, however, values differed. Largest participation levels were verified in Belgium (88%), Luxembourg (84%) and Malta (73%) and lowest came from Slovenia (29%), Czech Republic (29%) and Slovakia (23%). Portugal was among the last countries, as only 31% of the voting population has exercised its' duty. Nonetheless, turnout increased in 19 of the 28 countries.

In terms of age groups, this survey verified that young people have mobilized more, in comparison with last results from the 2014 Elections. For the sake of consistency in the present case, and despite minor differences between the intervals of age cohorts here and the ones defined for Millennials and Generation Z, one can say that the first ones showed 35% of participation in 2014 and 47% in 2019, while the second group's participation grew from 28% in 2014 to 42% in 2019.

As voting reasons, more than half of the respondents (52%) answered it was a civic duty, 35% because you should always vote and 25% because they are in favor of the EU. Also, an interesting 18% voted since they believed that, through voting, they could bring change. This option gathered 6% more voters than in 2014. In fact, apart from the second option which decreased 6%, both the first and third options grew 11% in preference when compared to the last suffrage in 2014.

Moreover, Civic Duty was the most popular reason in Cyprus (79%), Denmark (77%) and Lithuania (74%) and least in Hungary (41%), Slovakia (40%) and in the Czech Republic (35%). Being in favor of the EU was most chosen in Germany (39%), the Netherlands (30%) and Malta (29%) and least voted in Greece (14%), Czech Republic (13%) and Cyprus (11%). Despite not making the top 3, showing disagreement scored 6th on a total of sixteen presented reasons. This option was most voted in the UK (22%), Hungary (17%) and Belgium (14%) and least chosen in Portugal (4%), Denmark (3%) and Lithuania (2%).

Finally, in terms of tangible issues that compelled citizens to vote in the European Elections of 2019, top choices revolved around Economy (44%), Climate/Environment + Human Rights/ Democracy (both scored 37%) and Future EU working method (36%). Curiously or not, the first option was most voted in countries like Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain or Croatia while the second one was mostly chosen by respondents from Denmark, Sweden, Netherlands or Germany. The third one scored highly in Finland.

1.6. Considerations on Digital Media Strategy

Now that the target has been defined, it becomes necessary to shed some light on how to develop a Digital Media Strategy for that same audience. The following sections will be dedicated to that same purpose.

When merging politics with digital communication, the relationship should be built on the basis of mutual trust and respect. Apart from entertaining/leisure purposes, social media tools in this case are a vehicle for citizens to make their voice heard, getting actively involved and make a change.

Moreover, politicians and organizations should strive to promote transparency and a true willingness to transform citizen's proposals into actual policies. However, this implies a deep cultural shift in the relationship with citizens, as they are no longer simple communication targets but relevant strategic partners that will help to shape the future.

Due to the increasing proliferation of available contents, cybernauts have become more and more demanding about the "products" they consume. More than ever, visual content is king, and the majority of today's websites gravitates around static or moving images. But, in the end, more than everything else, people do only care for interesting, meaningful content for their lives.

In a political campaign, the key for a successful result lies in a carefully tailored strategy based on a set of topics that voters effectively care about. In other words, candidates should focus their message on pressing, everyday life specific issues that will more likely get the voters' attention and support.

Despite the fact that social media is fundamental mean for strategists to get "immersed" into public opinion, this huge open forum does not feature the position of a specific group of voters. Social Media is more about immediate action, quick judgment and fast decision making. From politicians to journalists, SM platforms usually attract people who feel very strongly about a specific topic, leading to authentic virtual contends between users that quite often border extremism. Eventually, this discards more moderate, cool-headed users, that would also like to participate in the discussion but do not want to get involved in such a dispute. And is precisely on those voters that campaign experts should put their efforts on.

While never neglecting its' potential, campaign strategists should consider small focus groups in order to assess the true opinion of a group of citizens about a specific topic. Moreover, they should also take into account that people most often trust on what they can do for their friends, their inner circle and Social Media can be a vehicle for parties and candidates to start acting on that micro level, which is nowadays more important than ever.

Naturally, there should be a decisive emphasis on time and resources to produce an efficient communication operation, as great content demands a correspondent investment. In other words, meticulous planning, “brick by brick”, one person at a time.

Relevance should be the main focus. And by relevance, it means an effective, proactive outcome, a specific interesting subject presented through an attractive “package”. Something that users will want to share with their inner circle and that, in a deeper level, will produce some influence in the way people want to present themselves to their friends and to the world. And, as in many other processes, it is also crucial to test, correct and optimize strategies, in order to better suit them to the audience.

In this regard, Adrian Monck, Head of communication in the World Economic Forum, added that “Audiences are always local even when issues are global. You have to make your subject matter and relevant to those audiences, be open to constructive criticism and true to your purpose”. (Monck, as cited in Sandre, 2015: 67)

The candidate’s humanity and ability to inspire are also very important and, depending on his or her curriculum, it can act as a facilitator in the communication process. Naturally, if one’s life is more inspiring, he or she can act as role models and thus produce a positive image and influence among voters.

Additionally, social media privileges charisma and a humorous approach, which can lead to higher likability levels. This can be a benefit for young, good-looking, witty candidates that can quickly make a comment or a tweet about some subject and gain immediate attention. All combined, the aforesaid factors will contribute to solidify loyalty levels to a certain politician or political party, a critical success factor to conquer an extremely diffuse audience.

Different approaches and engagement levels should be promoted through different accounts. For instance, a more formal and institutional one for the official account of an organization and a more casual one for the candidate, aiming to provide more authenticity to the organization or institution. Both should be linked, by mutual promotion, in order to more easily concentrate followership.

Naturally, each platform has its’ own “auditorium”, and a closely-knit approach is mandatory for all cases.

1.6.1. Establishing a Social Media Policy

This section was developed according to the perspective of Antonio Deruda, a Digital Communication Consultant and Senior Trainer at Facebook Community Boost EU program, in his book *Digital Diplomacy Handbook* (2015). Before developing a specific social media campaign, and in order to guide the whole organization through the process, it will be relevant to develop two different documents:

1. **The Internal SM Policy:** This regulation will explain to employees what organizational tools will be used as well as the functions and rules of SM management. Divided in 2 sections, the first one should include some topics such as:

- What are SM channels?
- Why are they important to the organization?
- Who is in charge of developing and applying the SM strategy?
- Where does the organization share content and engages w/ public?
- Organization's code of conduct

Then, the second part should cover the following practices:

- Employee use for official agency interests
- Employee use for professional interests
- Employee use for personal interests
- Good Guideline example: US Airforce
- No classified info
- Stay in your lane
- Obey requested laws
- Differentiate between opinion and official info
- Use your best judgement
- Replace errors with facts
- Be aware of your presented image
- Be cautious about the shared info
- Avoid an offensive tone
- Do not violate privacy

- Do not violate copyright
- Do not misuse trademarks
- No endorsements
- No impersonations
- Do not promote yourself for self (financial) gains
- Follow terms of service

2. **The External SM Policy:** This document will communicate to the audience how the organization will use SM and which rules should be respected in terms of language, topics, content, copyright, among other issues.

Its' main component is the Moderation Policy, which establishes basic rules for public participation on the online discussion. Hence, they should have a positive impact, promoting a useful type of participation and discarding anti-social, irrelevant, offensive, spam or other inappropriate cases, acting as a mediator. In case of content removal, it could be useful to have pre-written messages to tackle this kind of issue.

1.6.2. Developing a Social Media Strategy

Thus, still following Deruda (2015) and bearing in mind all the previous notions, here are seven steps to develop a solid Social Media strategy.

- **Identify Goals** (Seen here as general, broader intentions)
- **Set Objectives** (Objectives are more specific, measurable targets)
- **Identify the target audience** (Develop brand personas to better reach them and develop adequate messages)
- **Allocate Budget**
- **Develop a Content Plan** (The presented content should be adapted to each channel's features, For instance: A detailed document on LinkedIn, A straightforward infographic on Twitter, A story presented with pictures on Facebook, A video interview for Youtube). Moreover, organizations should develop platform-based personas in order to better engage with their target audience. Optimizing for mobile is also crucial, as more than 70% of web activity is made through mobile devices.

- **Focus on Trans-creation**, instead of in translation (Simply translating publishing content is not enough, as cultural nuances should be taken into account. Trans-creation consists on creating content adapted for the local culture. More than using the right words/expressions, it requires a broad knowledge of the place and respective culture. This could only be achieved if local employees are granted some creative freedom.

1.6.3. Tools & Analytics

With such a massive amount of information to treat and analyze, it becomes crucial to filter the adequate contents from the irrelevant ones, choosing the right search keywords.

Applying techniques like text mining will allow strategists to extract key concepts and themes, while uncovering concealed relationships and trends in a specific set of data. Additionally, using tools like Google Alerts, RSS Reader will allow communication managers to get notified if any new search results appear for a specific set of keywords, while monitoring the web and informing the user about any new related updates. Netvibes can create a personalized, dynamic dashboard for the user with all the personalized content he/she chose. Other relevant monitoring tools include Radian6, Sysosmos and Viralheat for instance.

According to Deruda (2015), and after the analysis process, the resulting outcomes should be examined in terms of:

- **The Audience** (By assessing its' composition, tastes, interaction patterns...)
- **The Sentiments it awakens** (Are they positive or negative feelings ?)
- **The resulting Feedback** (Is it good or bad ? Is it possible to improve it through users' replies? How?)
- **Existing Questions** (Are there frequent questions about the institution's actions ? If so, is it possible to answer them while creating specific content about that topic ?)
- **The transmitted Content** (Is it meaningful, valuable content ?)
- **Connection with Public Opinion** (Do the contents reflect broader trends in the public opinion ?)
- **Advocates** (Use SM to find advocates who actively address and discuss relevant topics to the organization. Afterwards, create and nurture an advocate community)

- **Press Opportunities** (Use SM as a bridge to reach media outlets, while assessing their preferences and agenda)
- **Influencers** (Similar to advocates, but act more like a “role-model”)

Nevertheless, the SM monitoring process should be extended to all the departments, as the respective outcomes will be useful for them to make decisions about different topics. Information should be shared and exchanged, promoting cooperation between different areas.

1.7. SM Dangers and challenges

According to Adrian Monck, and due to the medium’s somewhat ambivalent profile, strategists should be alert to the false sense of community SM platforms can actually produce, while providing fertile ground for radical thinkers and movements to arise. Technology here should be seen as an enabler for new approaches, business models and partnerships, but an attentive, vigilant approach is always recommended. One of the most prominent cases being the IoT and it’s enormous potential to cause harm and disruption from hackers or similar entities. In order to prevent that, adequate vigilance and control systems should be carefully developed and applied.

There is an evident need for a better measuring system in all those areas, as a way to better evaluate the system’s performance, behavioral impact on users, consumption patterns, among other issues.

One key lesson to be taken from the current transformation in communication is that digital platforms can complement the more traditional Public Relations activity, promoting a more direct interaction and giving a more active role to people to decide about the society they are living in. In practical terms, this can imply, for instance, make posts in several languages, condensing a large report into 3 or 4 tweets, filming and editing a short video about a certain topic or event and manage carefully negative comments.

From a marketing and communication perspective, Brussels has deployed punctual initiatives but that lack a consistent approach to foster discussion and promote interest among citizens, thus challenging media teams to act.

2. Questions

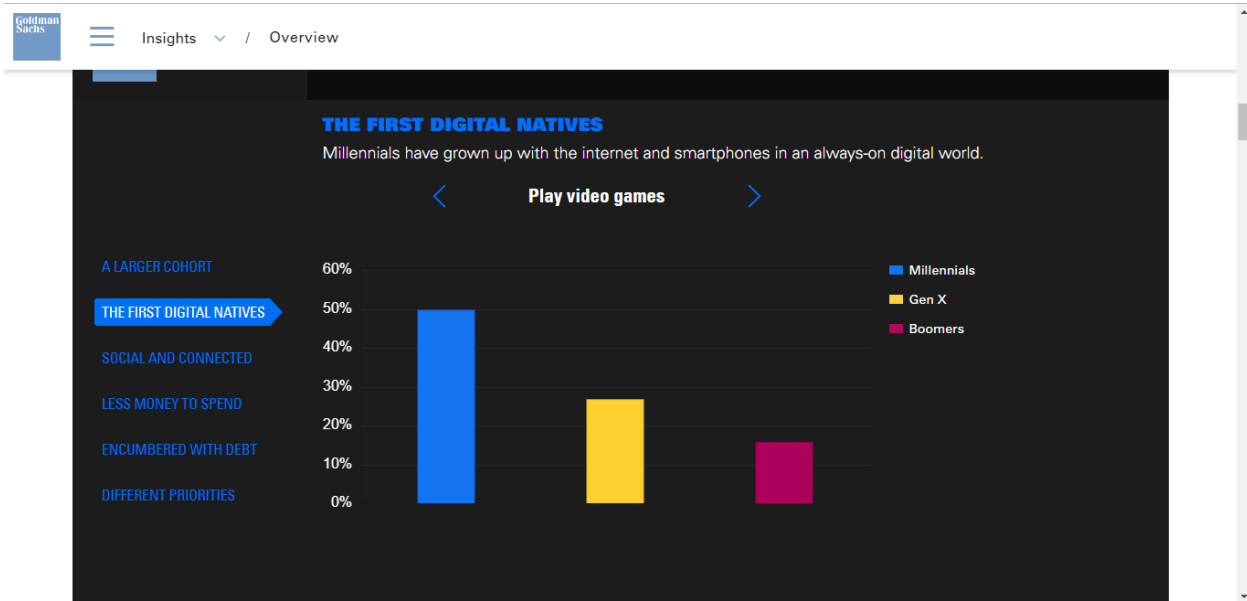
The following questions are based on the provided information in the present case.

1. Develop a SWOT Analysis of the European Union.
2. Mention the current communication constraints EU needs to address in the near future. Afterwards, purpose adequate resolution methods.
3. Characterize Millennials and assess their relevancy as the main target for the present case study.
4. Which are the main steps to develop a solid social media strategy?
5. Departing from the provided concepts, present the critical aspects to include in a future integrated communication strategy for a political/diplomatic organization like the EU.

For the online section, and in order to better structure your answers, consult annex images number 3.17 to 3.31, in which will better help to trace a diagnosis of the current strategy applied to the online platforms. Justify your options.

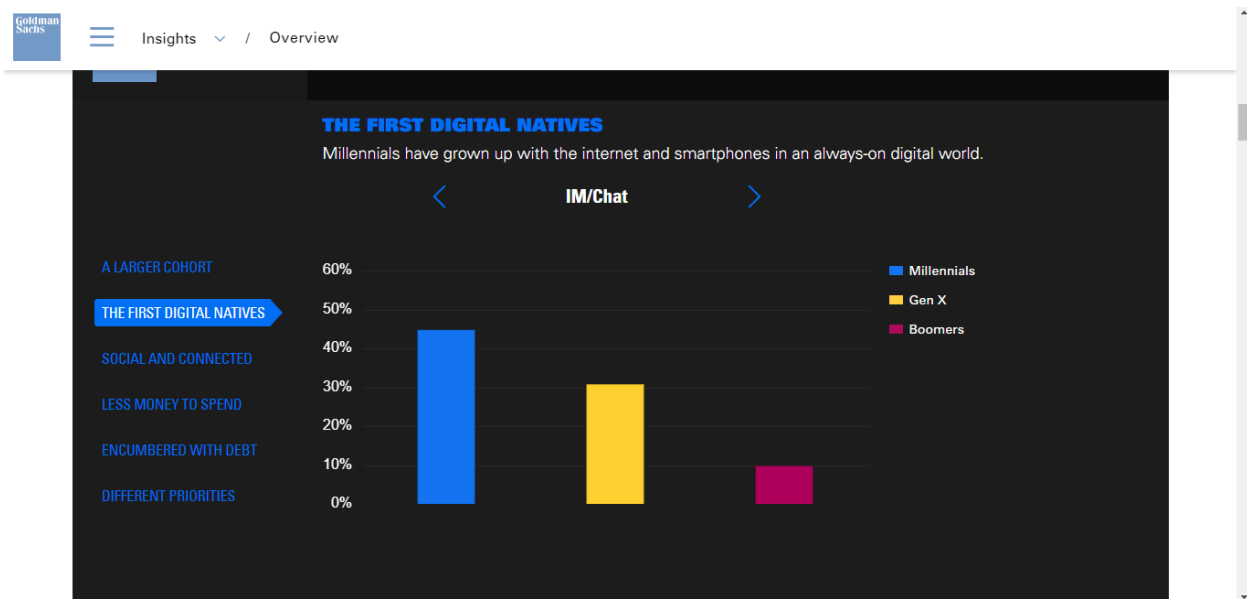
3. Annexes

3.1. Play Video Games by Generation



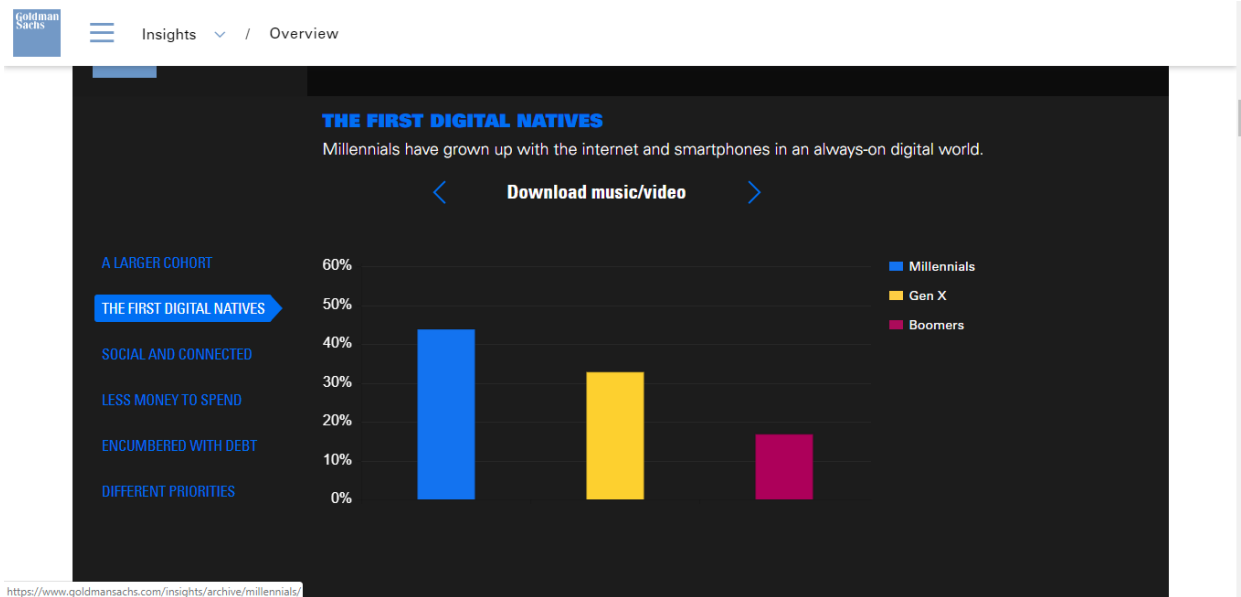
Source: Goldman Sachs and Prosper Insights & Analytics for the Media Behavior and Influence Study

3.2. Usage of Instant Messaging/Chat by Generation



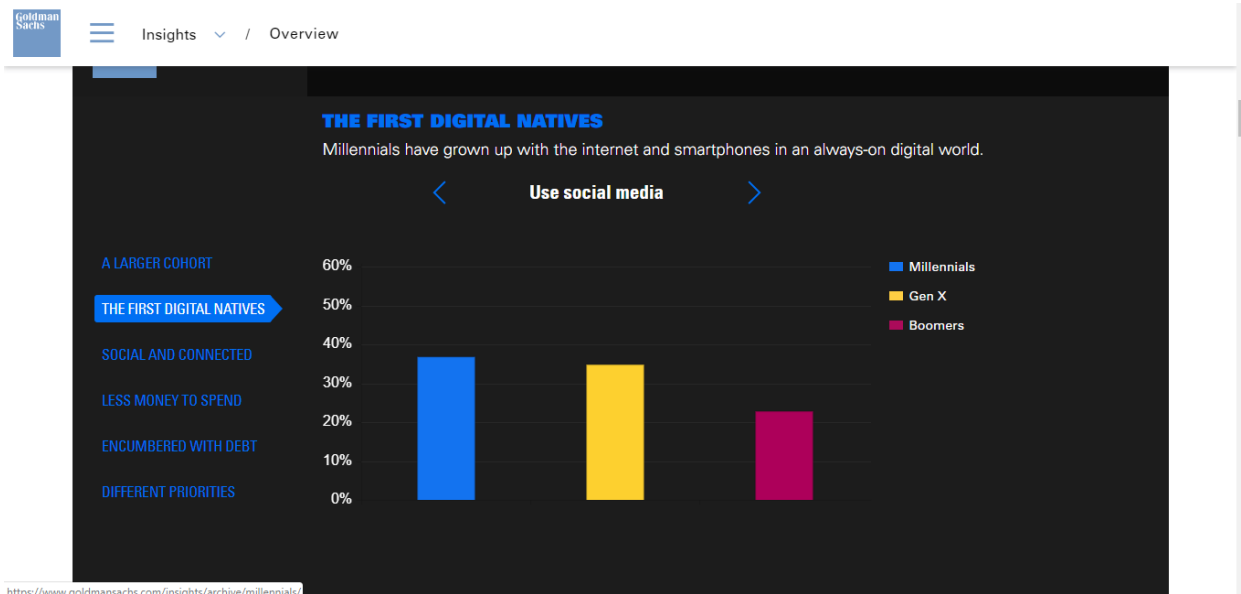
Source: Goldman Sachs and Prosper Insights & Analytics for the Media Behavior and Influence Study

3.3. Download Music/Video by Generation



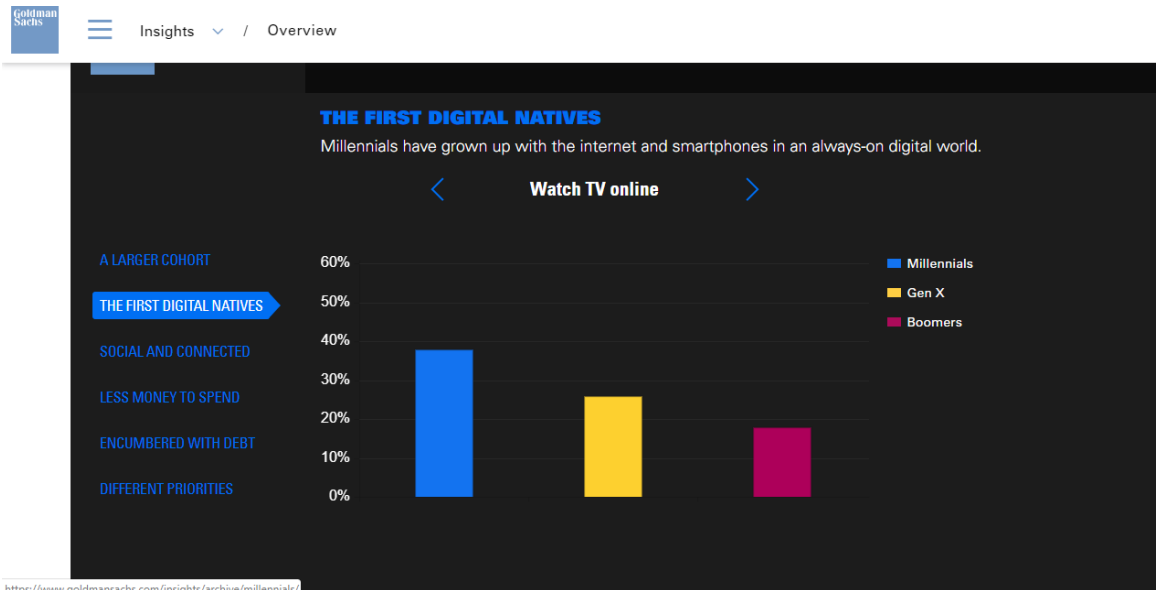
Source: Goldman Sachs and Prosper Insights & Analytics for the Media Behavior and Influence Study

3.4. Social Media Usage by Generation



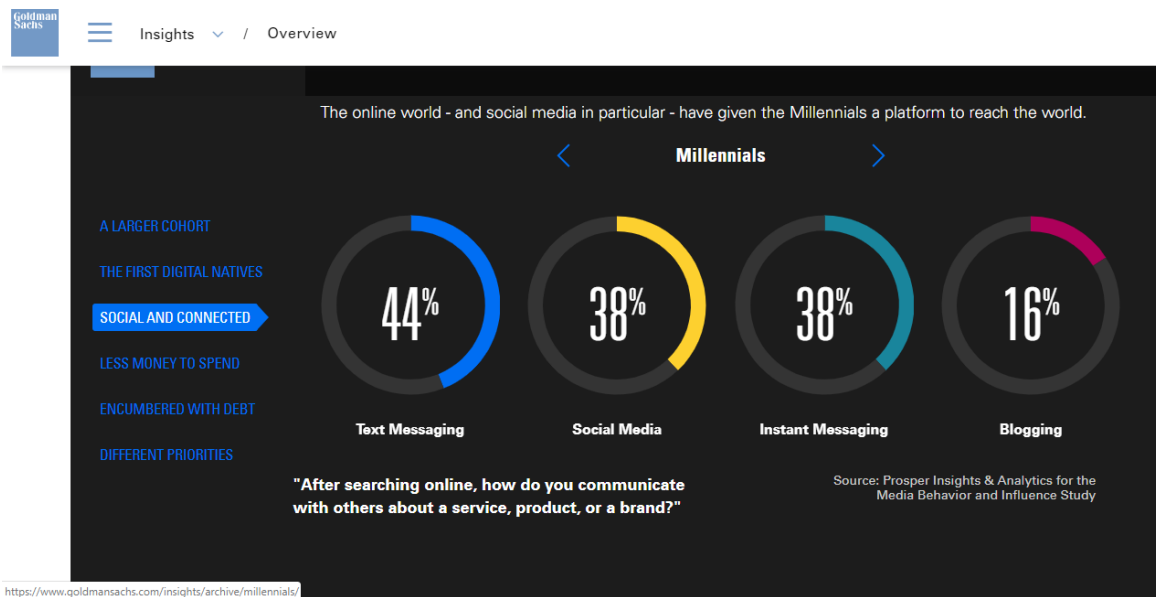
Source: Goldman Sachs and Prosper Insights & Analytics for the Media Behavior and Influence Study

3.5. Watch TV Online by Generation



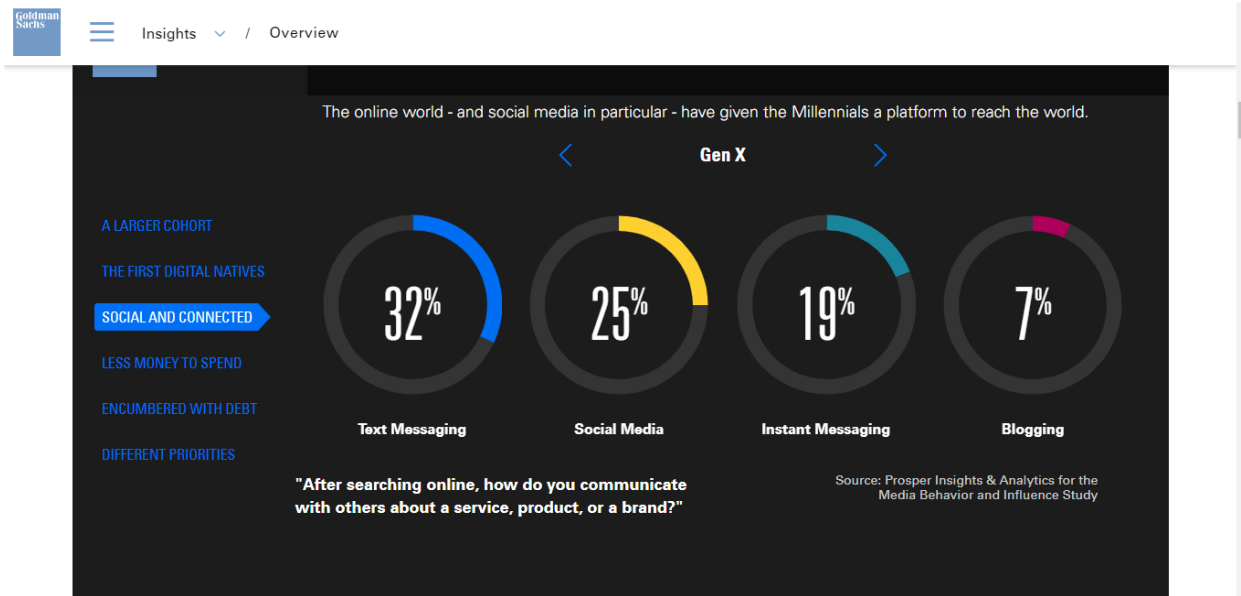
Source: Goldman Sachs and Prosper Insights & Analytics for the Media Behavior and Influence Study

3.6. Millennials' Communication habits



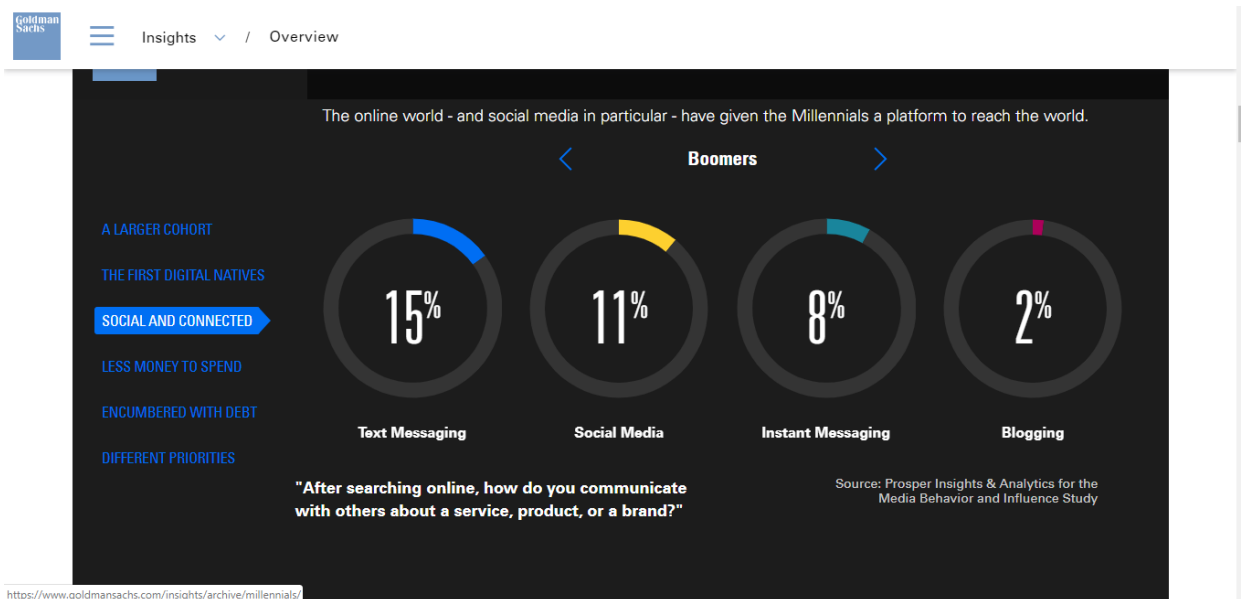
Source: Goldman Sachs and Prosper Insights & Analytics for the Media Behavior and Influence Study

3.7. Generation X' Communication habits



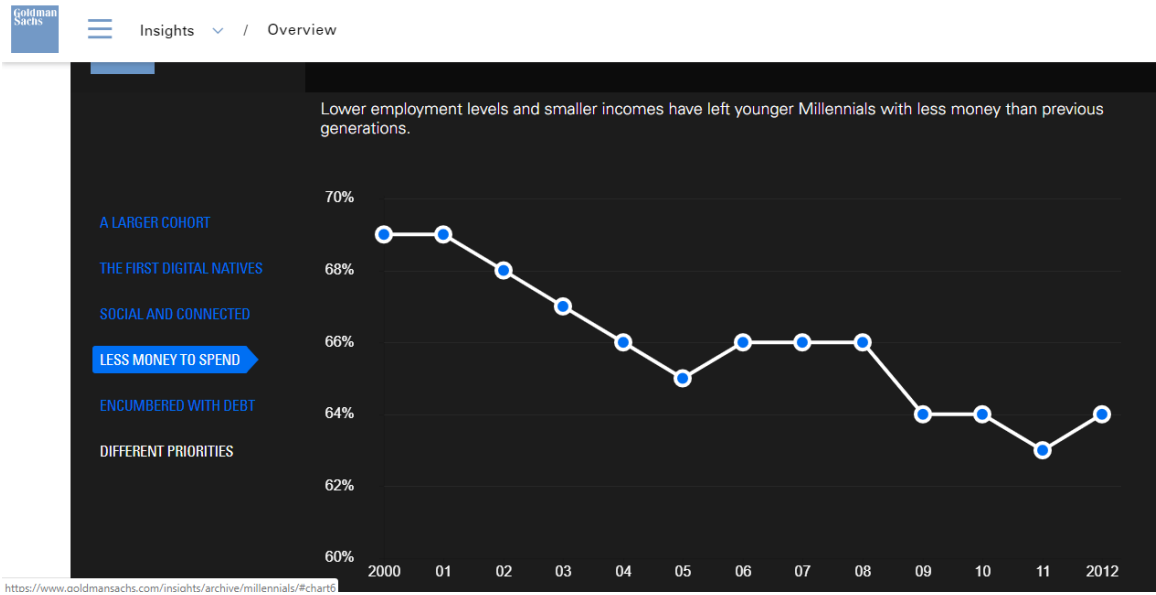
Source: Goldman Sachs and Prosper Insights & Analytics for the Media Behavior and Influence Study

3.8. Baby Boomers Communication habits



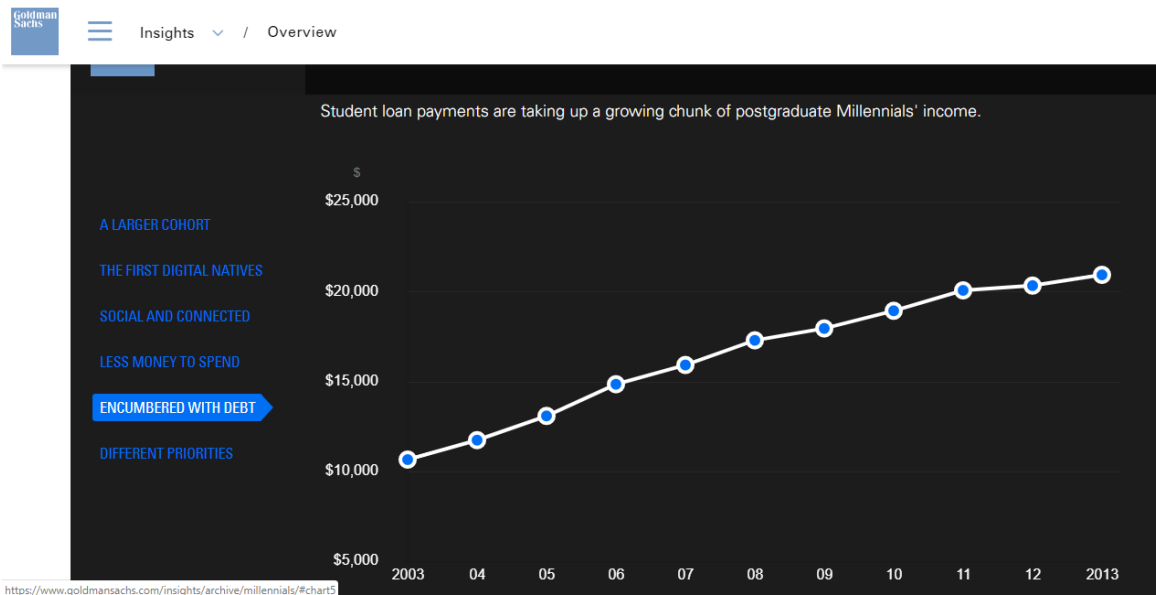
Source: Goldman Sachs and Prosper Insights & Analytics for the Media Behavior and Influence Study

3.9. Millennials Employment Level 2000-2012



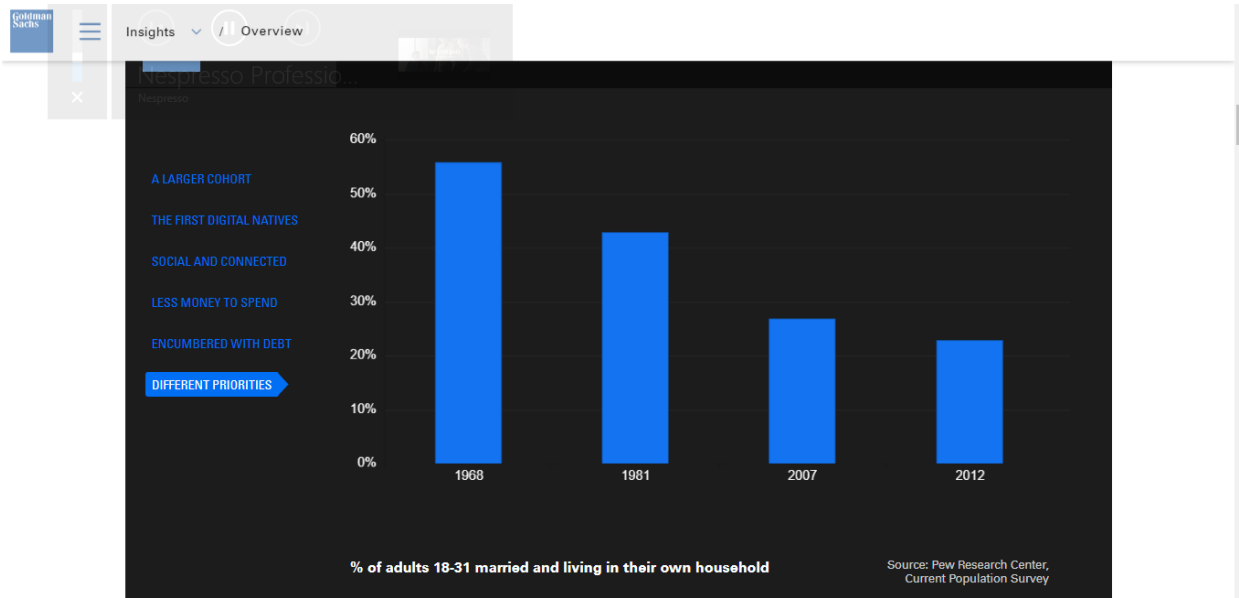
Source: Goldman Sachs and the Bureau of Labor Statistics

3.10. Average student payments value in US\$ 2003-2013



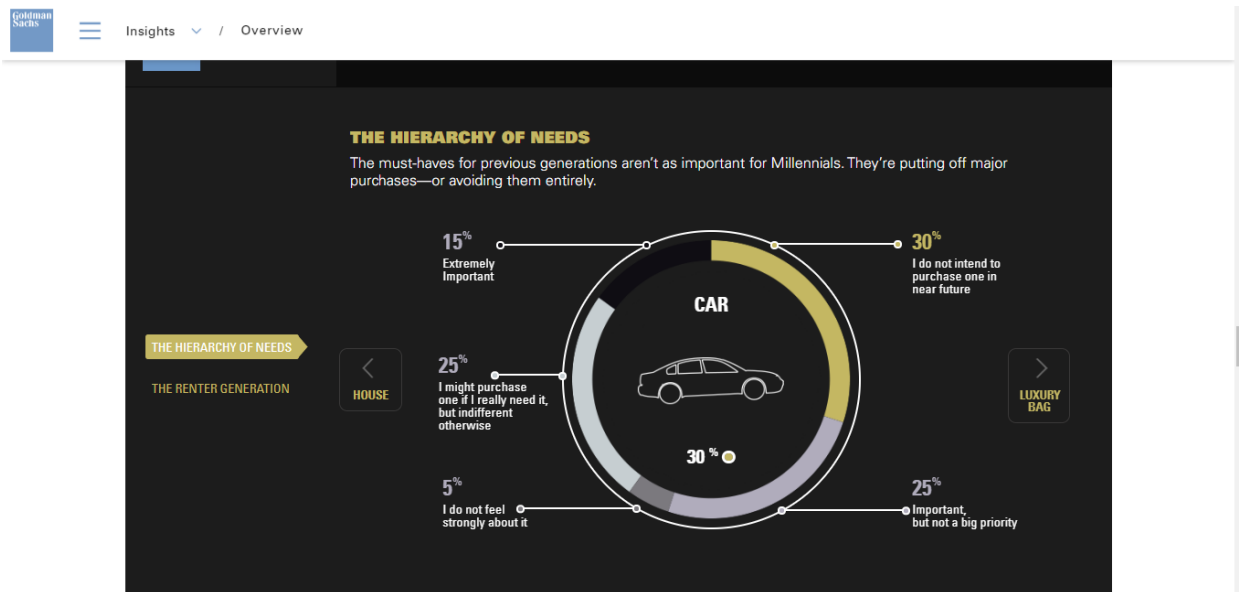
Source: Goldman Sachs and Federal Reserve

3.11. % of adults 10-31 married and living on their own household



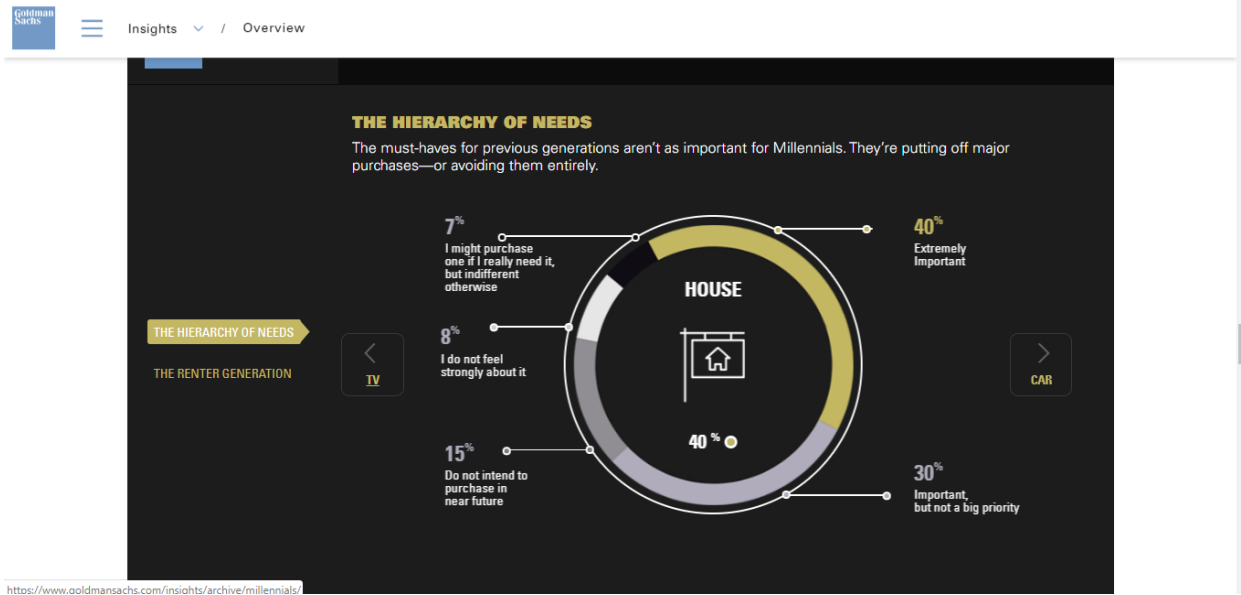
Source: Goldman Sachs and Current Population Survey from Pew Research Center

3.12. The Hierarchy of Needs by Millennials – Car



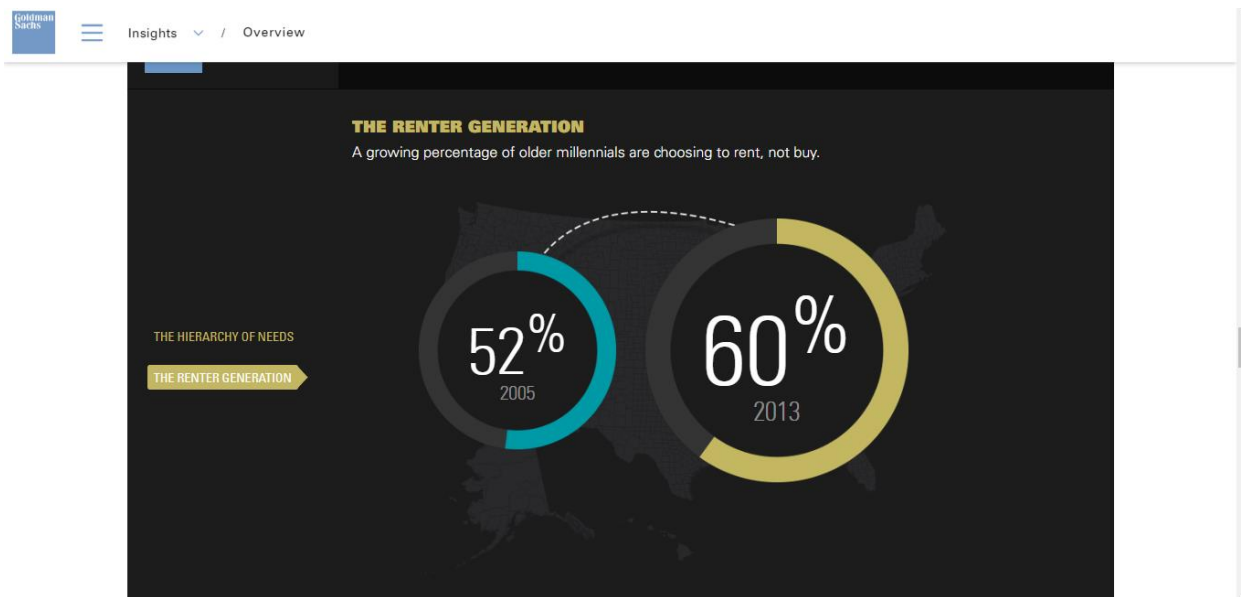
Source: Goldman Sachs Fortnightly Thoughts intern survey, 2013

3.13. The Hierarchy of Needs by Millennials – House



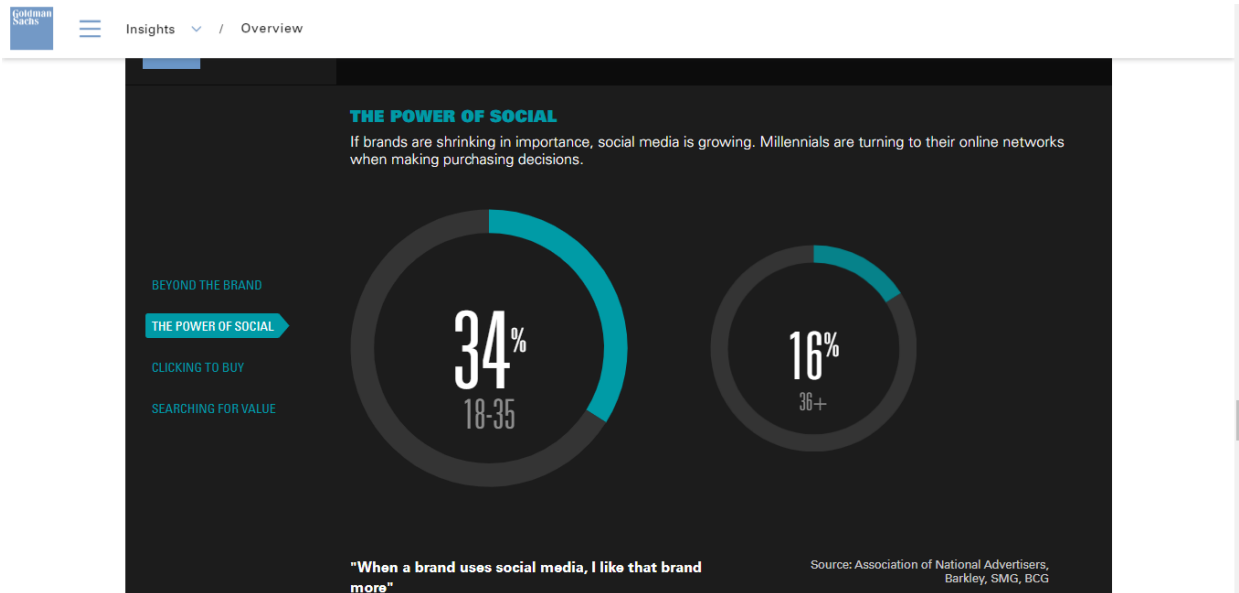
Source: Goldman Sachs Fortnightly Thoughts intern survey, 2013

3.14. Evolution of the % of Millennial renters in the US from 2005-2013



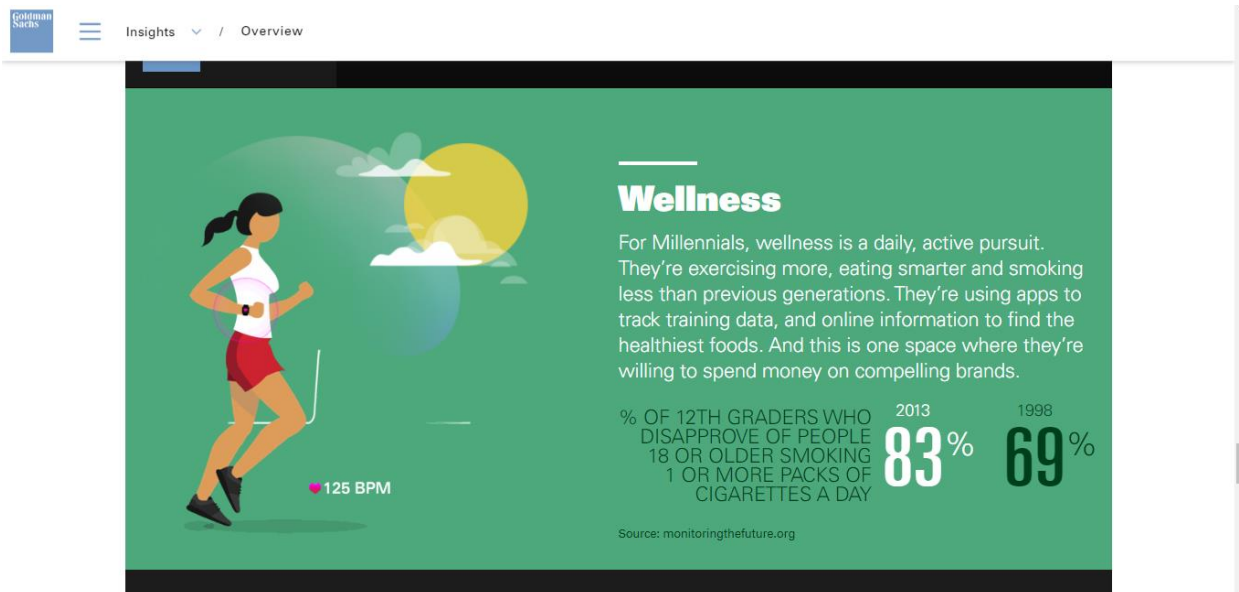
Source: Goldman Sachs and Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

3.15. The importance of social media for two age groups



Source: Goldman Sachs and Association of National Advertisers, Barkley, SMG, BCG

3.16. Importance of Wellbeing for Millennials



Source: Goldman Sachs and monitoringthefuture.org

3.17. Official Website of the European Union



Source: Official Website of the European Union

3.18. Official Website of the European Commission



Source: Official Website of the European Commission

3.19. Official Website of the European Parliament



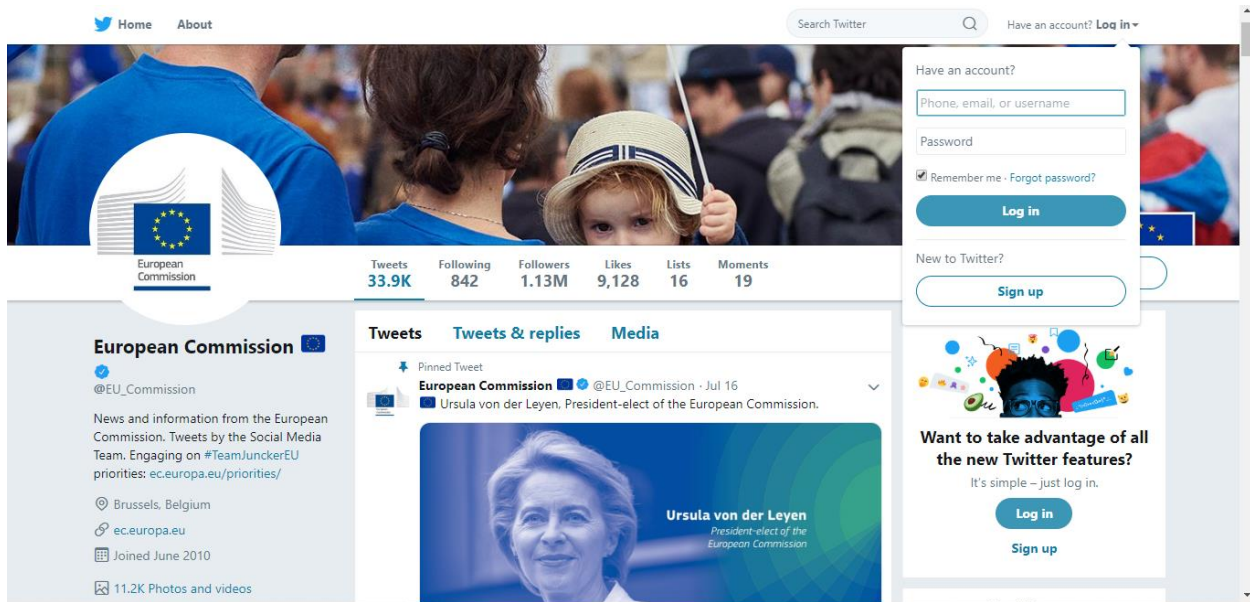
Source: Official Website of the European Parliament

3.20. Official Twitter Account of the European Parliament



Source: Official Twitter Account of the European Parliament

3.21. Official Twitter Account of the European Commission



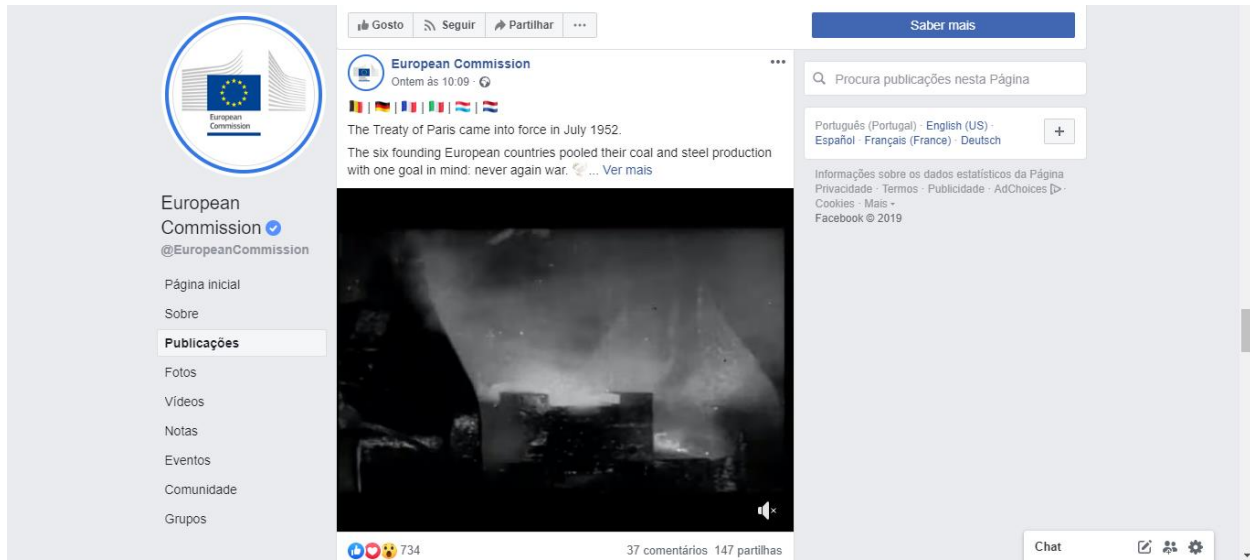
Source: Official Twitter Account of the European Commission

3.22. Official Twitter Account of the European Commission Representation in Portugal



Source: Official Twitter Account of the European Commission Representation in Portugal

3.23. Official Facebook Account of the European Commission



Source: Official Facebook Account of the European Commission

3.24. Official Facebook Account of the European Parliament



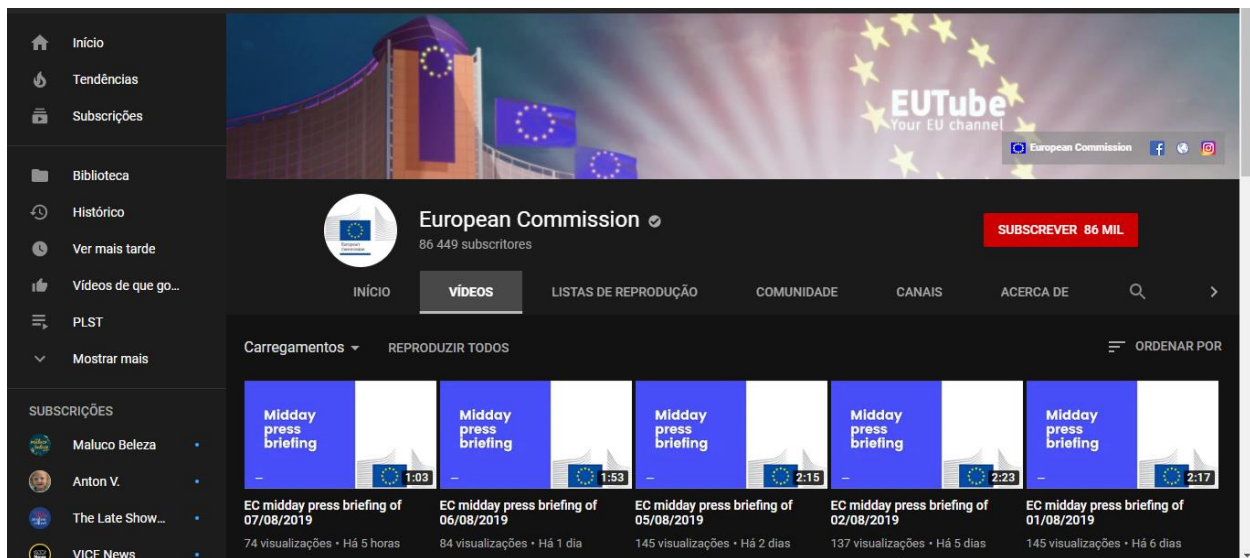
Source: Official Facebook Account of the European Parliament

3.25. Official Facebook Account of the European Commission Representation in Portugal



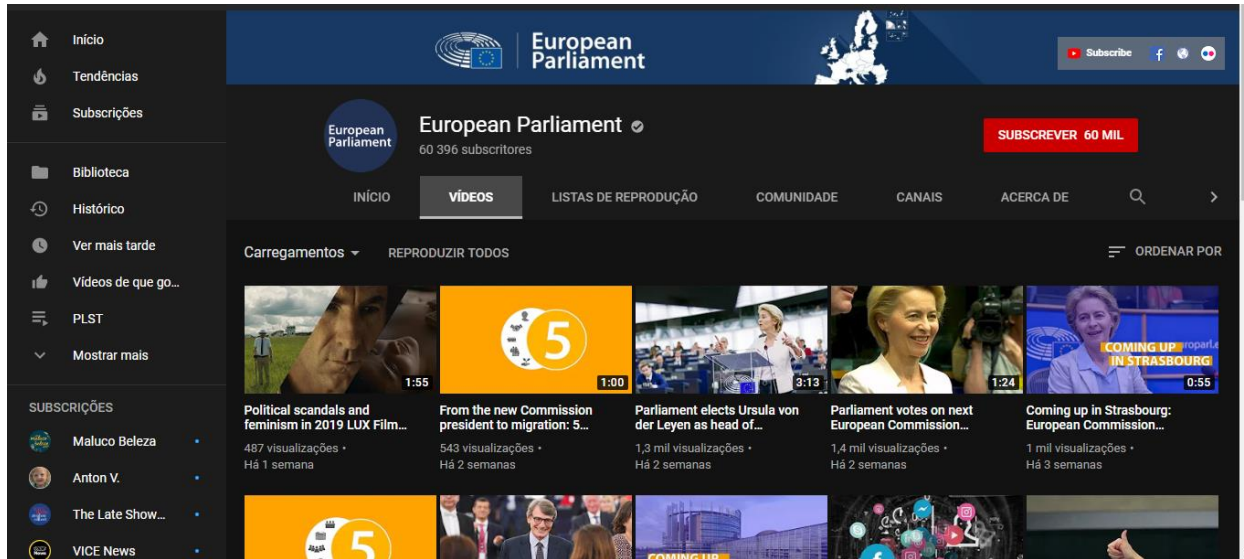
Source: Official Facebook Account of the European Commission Representation in Portugal

3.26. Official Youtube Account of the European Commission



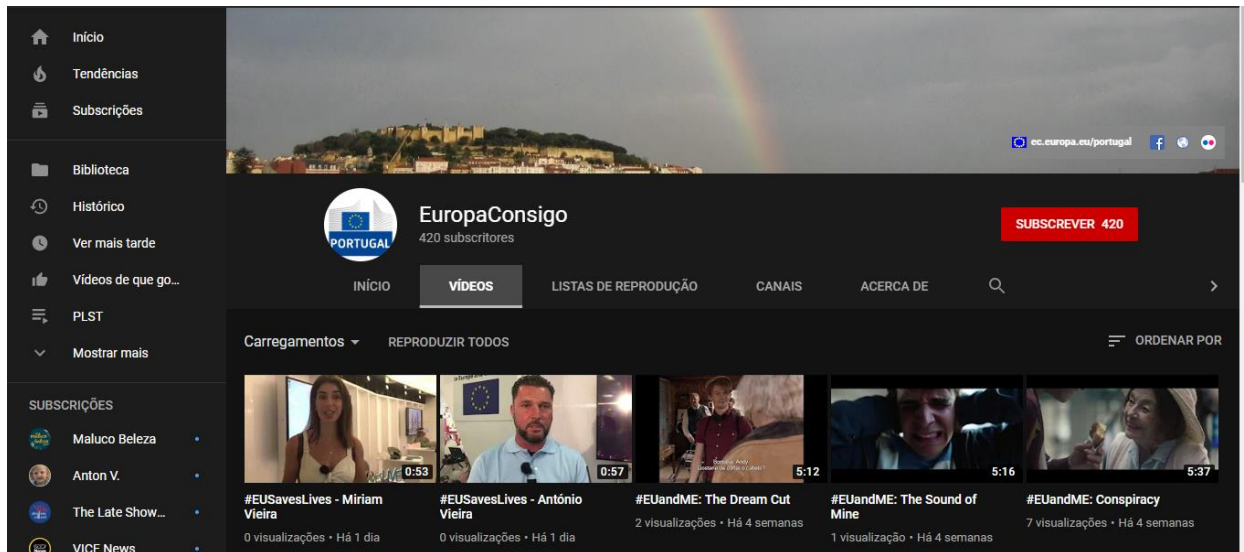
Source: Official Youtube Account of the European Commission

3.27. Official Youtube Account of the European Parliament



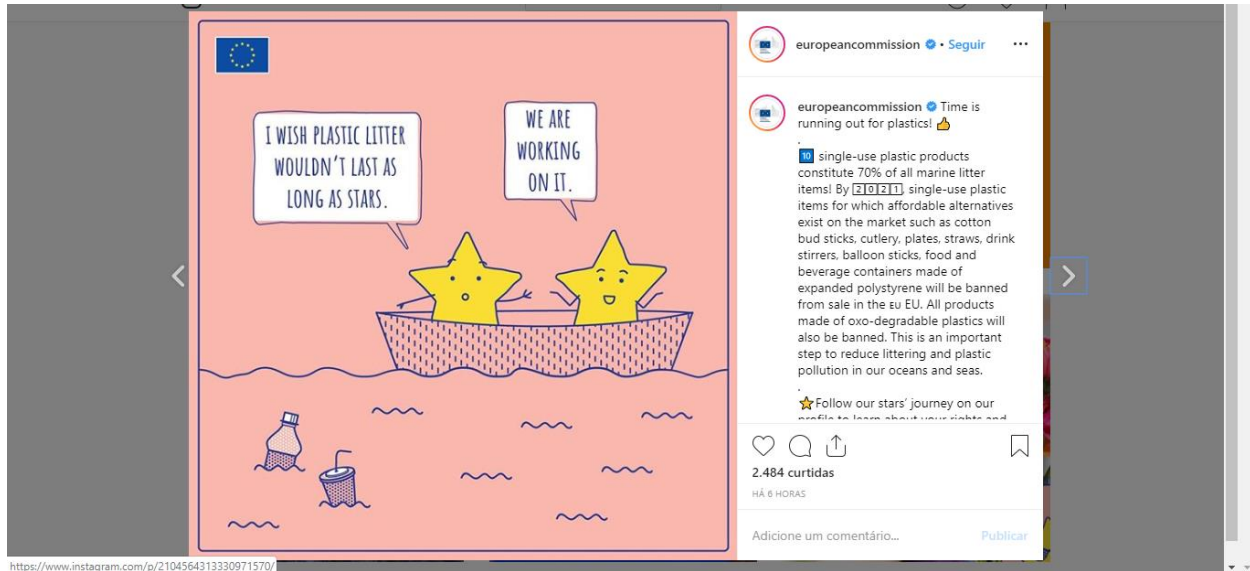
Source: Official Youtube Account of the European Parliament

3.28. Official Youtube Account of the European Commission Representation in Portugal



Source: Official Youtube Account of the European Commission Representation in Portugal

3.29. Official Instagram Account of the European Commission



Source: Official Instagram Account of the European Commission

3.30. Official Instagram Account of the European Parliament



Source: Official Instagram Account of the European Parliament

3.31. Official Instagram Account of the European Commission Representation in Portugal



Source: Official Instagram Account of the European Commission Representation in Portugal

4. TEACHING NOTES

4.1. Case Target

This case study was developed for bachelor and master students in Marketing or Political Communication/Science fields, as a way to consolidate their knowledge on Politics, Political Communication and the European Union, which are all relevant tools to develop solid civic habits.

Additionally, and in terms of academia, this case would also be useful for teachers of Marketing, Communication and Political Science or even Contemporary History. Subject wise, this case could be included on subjects like Political Communication, Digital Marketing, International Politics, Society and European Political Systems or Social Movements and Citizenship.

Finally, this case would also be useful for professionals in the area of political communication, public relations and diplomacy to rethink their views on those issues, assess the importance of a profound modification in the sector and embrace new platforms/technologies as a powerful, advantageous ally to fight abstention and alienation and not just an entertainment or *fait divers* source.

4.2. Pedagogical Objectives

Inside a pedagogical framework, the aim here was essentially to clarify the importance of politics, political communication concepts and practices as well as digital marketing present and future potentialities.

Far from being exclusively academic subjects, those topics assume a prominent position in everyday life. Thus, it becomes necessary to better understand and evaluate them within a comprehensive context. After all, it is EU (and political institutions as we know them)'s future that is at stake. Hence, the objective here would be to make students more aware of those issues and acknowledge their vital role to invert this situation.

4.3. Literature Review

4.3.1. The Genesis of Political Marketing

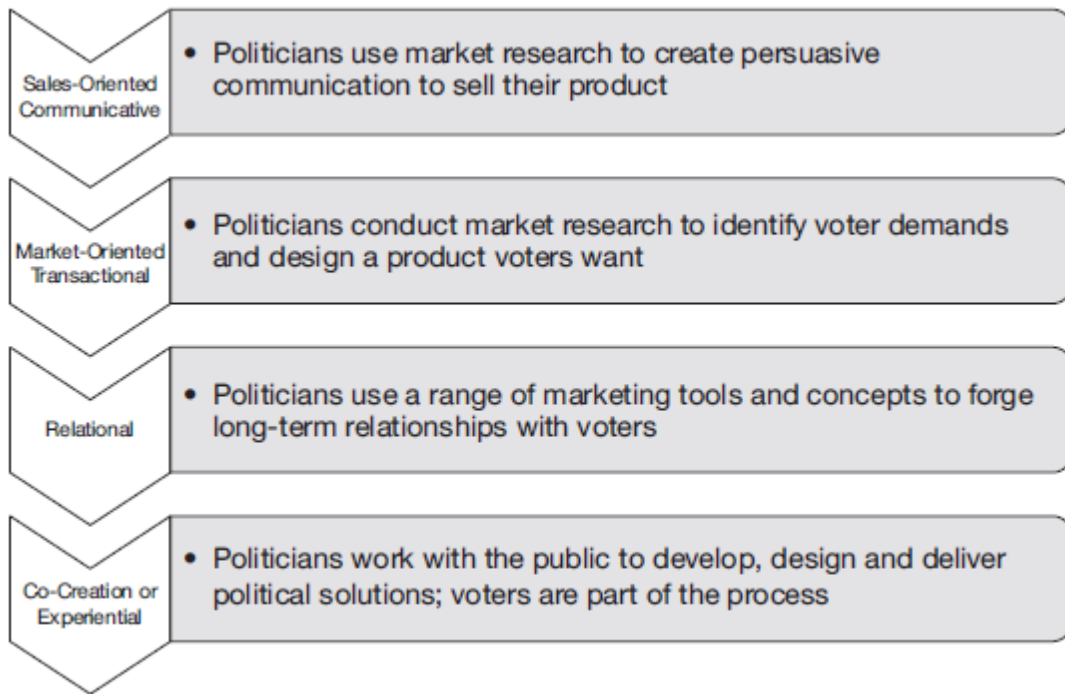
Marketing has always been about exchange. About responding to the needs and wants of a population and provide products or solutions to answer them. In politics, the process is no different and leaders need to deliver a specific set of benefits to their electors in order to guarantee their term in office.

Based upon the findings of Wring (1997), the first reference to politics applied to the Marketing field are from the 1950's, when the political scientist Stanley Kelley highlighted the importance of a professional campaign industry to arise in the United States. However, it was only in the late 60's, early 70 's, that political marketing started to emerge as a proper research area inside the academia, amidst some controversy among the marketing purists. Some pioneer authors in this area include Philip Kotler (1975) and Avraham Shama (1974, 1976) in the United States and O' Leary and Iredale (1976) in Europe.

In the following decade, both the American Marketing Association (AMA) and the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) (the British equivalent of AMA) revised their core Marketing concept, by adding social and political matters into mainstream marketing's scope of study. Thus, they emphasized the importance that Marketing has to satisfy profitably both companies and customers, in contrast with the then prevailing academic belief that marketing simply contributed to sell people the products or services they wanted.

As marketing and political marketing *per se* have been evolving throughout the years, the same has happened inside the academic framework. And naturally, broader trends inside the marketing field have also reflected into its' political subsection as well. Lees-Marshment (2014) analyzed these transformations and synthesized those on the following table:

Figure 1: The development of political marketing approaches



Source: Lees-Marshment, 2014

Depending on the applied perspective, political marketing was firstly analyzed with an exclusively Sales-oriented communicative function, in which politicians simply resorted to market research to produce persuasive messages and sell their product. Afterwards, it evolved into a Market-oriented transactional task, stating that politicians used market research to identify voter demands and tailor an adequate product that suited them. Then, researchers adopted a relational perspective towards this subject, defending that politicians leaned on marketing tools to develop long-term relationships with their clients, in this case, voters. More recently, it has acquired a more Co-Creation/Experiential type of approach, that defends that politicians do effectively work together with the public, in order to develop, design and deliver political solutions, thus making voters part of the process.

Nevertheless, all the perspectives complement themselves and each one has its' relevance when addressing a political product or case.

4.3.2. Political Marketing Concepts

Inside the academia, and after decades of discussion, there is still some tension between authors when proposing broad concepts to define political marketing and its' features.

For Lees-Marshment, "Political marketing is about how political elites use marketing tools and concepts to understand, respond to, involve and communicate with their political market in order to achieve their goals" (Lees-Marshment, 2009: 2).

According to O'Shaughnessy, a political marketing orientation can be regarded as a "management activity within a political party's marketing function" (O'Shaughnessy, 2012: 355). Yet, the environment in which this function is fulfilled encompasses a quite singular, inherent complexity when compared to traditional commercial markets, since a political party strives to convince voters to support them in an ideological way, while capitalizing on marketing techniques rather than on ideological strategies.

As it was previously mentioned, the complexity of political marketing brings some controversy to discussion. In this regard, Ormrod (2006) alerted to the risk of simply applying a commercial marketing orientation into political marketing would not consider the multiple idiosyncrasies of the political sphere. Newman (1994) compared both marketing systems by highlighting the stability of the commercial one and the several entropic factors that seldom threaten its' political counterpart (such as scandals, accusations or fabrications).

Beyond those distinctions, Savigny and Temple (2010) considered the information transmission process in both cases and noted other relevant aspects. While the communication of a traditionally commercial company follows a more straightforward flow, in which the message remains unaffected when replicated by media outlets, the same does not necessarily occur within the political spectrum.

In fact, and despite using some paid media forms (party political broadcasts, for instance), political communication mostly resorts to "free" media forms like photo opportunities, pseudo events, press releases and the deliberated news agenda manipulation by spin doctors. However, and still following the same authors, the process of communicating the political 'product' to voters "is perhaps the most important stage for political actors". (Savigny & Temple, 2010: 1053). A concept which will be further developed on the following pages.

Nevertheless, there is a common ground between commercial and political marketing that should never be discarded. A good example was recovered by Wring (1997), who highlighted Niffenegger's (1989) framework, which applied McCarthy's (1960) 4 P's model to the peculiar and complex environment of political marketing.

In the light of this model, the political marketing process encompasses four parts. In this case, the party or candidate (organization), the environment around it, the strategic mix it applies and the market in which operates. The internal dynamic here is based on a basic trading concept, that is the exchange between a buyer and a seller. Thus, citizens vote on politicians based on the promise that, when in office, they will govern in representation of the public interest.

The external environment includes all the economic, media or social variables that shape electors' decisions. The product, in this case, comprises three main aspects: The party's image, leader's image and the policy commitments. Not all have the same importance to voters, and each one produces a specific influence in different voter segments. However, in the last decade, there has been an increasing impact of the leader's image in voting decisions, fueled by an intensive media coverage that helps to attribute a certain "celebrity" status to political candidates. In this regard, Kotler (1982) pointed out that voters simply base their decisions on mediated images of the candidates, as they do not know or rarely meet politicians.

Lees-Marshment (2014) noted the high complexity of this concept, seeing the political product as the whole behavior of the candidate, volunteers and the party/ organization, as well as some intangible factors like the emotional symbolism conveyed by a party's established brand. Beyond the candidates and the parties, the author also emphasized more specific elements that form this intricate puzzle that is the political product, like the official supporters, staff (such as researchers or advisors), symbols (name, logo or the anthem), constitution/rules, activities (meetings, rallies or conferences) or policies.

On top of that, Lloyd (2005) introduced broader aspects like the Service Offering, Representation, Accommodation, Investment and Outcome. Respectively, this encompasses the process of identification, delivery and management of services the electorate really needs, the way in which all the party's elements are represented to the public, how parties can successfully adapt to the needs of the electorate, the "stakeholder oriented" dynamic a party has with its' representatives, thus implying a specific type of investment and the ability to accomplish election promises.

Back to Wring (1997) and to the 4 P's model, Promotion can be divided into "Paid" and "Free" Media. The first includes all the advertising efforts placed on a campaign (physical or digital), while the second one refers to publicity that parties receive but they did not buy. Being less controllable, this kind of media exposure is seen as more valuable both by the public and by political strategists. Last but not least, Public Relations are absolutely vital for candidates to promote a favorable media depiction and more successfully reach voters, while simultaneously enhancing their status and public persona.

Finally, when it comes to Price, Wangen (1983) emphasized the way a party is able to raise funds and enhance membership. For Nieffenegger (1989), it included voter feelings around national, economic and psychological hope or insecurity, which reflects Reid's (1988) conception of vote as a "psychological purchase" (*as cited in Wring, 1997: 658*).

A party's offer is developed based on the its' strategic placement and perception of voter wants and needs. Although enhanced by sophisticated market research techniques, this does not guarantee a certain perception of voter's minds and parties should never neglect their function as "inclusion vehicles" in the political process. In other words, real, effective proximity should never be discarded.

In line with O'Shaughnessy (2012), there are four basic strategic political postures (SPP's) regarding a party's market leadership. A convinced ideologist (which focuses on internal wants and needs), a tactical populist (with base on external needs and wants), a relationship builder (which tries to balance between leading and following) or a political lightweight (which does not lead neither follows the market). According with the same author, there are four crucial limitations both in political market and respective marketing orientation. The ones concerned with symbolization aspects of politics, the issues regarding the public self-presentation/personal features, value related matters and the supposition of knowing the public mind.

Constantly scrutinized in the media circus, political messages have a content and a tone in which they are delivered. The first one is controllable while the second is uncontrollable Their integration into a single entity is crucial for the success or failure of the message itself. As rational animals, there is a consequent visceral reaction to this input, either of approval or distrust. Moreover, a politician's persona and respective past is not erasable, and despite eventual embellishment, this will always influence the citizens perception prior voting. O'Shaughnessy (2012) points out an interesting example of how the tone has severely undermined the success of

a whole campaign. In this case, it was writer Mario Vargas Llosa's defeat in the Peruvian presidential bid, probably attributable to the posh, detached from reality tone of his campaign.

Thus, one can infer that a solid, profitable political marketing orientation must take into account how difficult it is to control value and symbolization processes, personality, as well as the impossibility to command the public mind and the damaging power of negative campaigning. Messages should be carefully tailored, and the target meticulously addressed.

4.3.3. From the dawn of the public sphere to the digital revolution

The public sphere can be seen as a black box, due to a certain inherent complexity and opacity linked to its' internal dynamics. It had its' genesis within the nation state context, in a clear stance against the ruling power of Church and the State. Hence, private, literate citizens, (mostly bourgeois) started to meet on a regular basis to discuss several topics on those days' agenda, thus forming a "public opinion" around those same subjects.

This particular concept is closely linked with the network one, leaning on a multiplicity of nodes and the resulting connections between them. From a broader perspective, this can be extended to society as a whole, since there are very few strictly hermetic groups with absolutely no influence from exterior agents or organizations. Therefore, what actually exists is a multiplicity of fragmented "mini-spheres" that comprise their own set of features and that, through one way or another, interconnect themselves.

Social capital acts as a lubricant oil for this engine to work, fostering interpersonal exchanges and communication processes between different elements of a society. Moderately flexible, communities are highly dependent from the way in which their members react in response to the events on the respective agenda.

Nowadays, the more traditional (bourgeoise) public sphere is somehow outdated. Mobility and Connectivity are key, since digital technology has fostered the creation of a "multimodal communication space" that has successfully revitalized the former local and spatially anchored public sphere to a more updated one. In line with Crozier (2007), this is the space where the information flows take place. Additionally, a example of this multimodality lies on e-participation, defined as "the use of technology for inclusion of citizens in the public discourse" (Johannessen, 2012: 1)

The benefits are notorious, as digital communication has also expanded the range of people who can play an active part in the refinement of our collective political intelligence, feeding creativity, enhancing political education and giving rise to new kinds of dynamic and adaptive political alliance. Moreover, it contributes with a frantic, viral energy, which “(...) constitutes a new flow of incessantly circulating publicity in which reputations are enhanced and destroyed, messages debated and discarded, rumors floated and tested” (Gurevitch, Coleman & Blumler, 2010: 170). Concomitantly, newspapers are losing readers as readers are generally shifting towards online news outlets.

In line with Johannessen (2012), those multimodal interactions are a stimulus to community forming, and, in this regard, there are two relevant concepts to consider. Bonding and Bridging. Bonding social capital is closely linked with the formation and testing of opinions within a community while Bridging social capital allows for ideas and arguments to be disseminated from one community to another. In recent times, a new type of social capital was presented: The “maintained social capital”. In close liaison with social media, it alludes to the “ability to keep one’s connections even when physical proximity is removed”. Therefore, a multimodal community dynamic is crucial for social capital to spread and reach the highest number of nodes in a network. Social Media as a medium, provides new paths for citizens to take part in the political process, through a more conventional type of participation, protests or political consumerism.

Hereby, and according to Bennett (2008), young people can be grouped in two distinct sections. Reasonably active and engaged or relatively passive and disengaged. Each of them deeply anchored in a specific set of core values and principles.

The present alienation from politics is a clear outcome from decades of governmental ineffectiveness and corruption. Ideally catering for the public good, political parties have turned instead into a vehicle for individual or restricted vested interests. The consequent estrangement has led numerous democracies onto the verge of the abyss and many basic rights are currently at stake. Countries like the United States, Venezuela, Brazil, China or Hungary are, at different extents, good examples of those antidemocratic trends that have been engulfing the world.

Another problem focus lies in the incipient civic education presented at schools, which generally translates into a rather dull, unengaging conception of politics and the government for young students. Moreover, pupils are not taught about the importance of their civic roles in

society and how instrumental they could be when it comes to decide their country's faith. Additionally, general media depictions around politics have stealthily assumed the contours of a cacophonous, pointless fair show, in line with Alan Finlayson's thought (2019) when he says that contemporary political communication presents a problem of inflation, with too many people, saying too much, too loudly. In this sense, Donald Trump's presidency might be one of the most paradigmatic examples of that same situation.

In former times, there was a certain sense of duty for people to exercise their citizenship, essentially through voting. Nowadays, that sense of group/class obligation has disappeared as present generations are more focused on assembling their own identities, influenced by the outcomes of social networks and digital communication media.

Bennett (2008) summarized this as "a broad, cross-national generational shift in the post industrial democracies from a dutiful citizen model (still adhered to by older generations and many young people who are positioned in more traditional social settings) to an actualizing citizen model favoring loosely networked activism to address issues that reflect personal values". (Bennett, 2008: 4).

Nowadays, Social Networking Sites are also acting as a news source, with a continuously increasing relevance, as opposed to the one exercised by traditional media outlets. Its' main asset lies on flexibility, since it can deliver a whole set of information sources from network friends to news organizations or individual journalists (Weeks & Hobert, 2013). Based on a twofold relationship, they allow internauts to develop a proactive role in the process by disseminating or sharing news. As Singer (2014) purposed, this experience becomes social, as the members inside a network have a mutual influence on each one's assessment of the news value. Despite the fact that those interactions (with news material) are quite incidental, users can actually develop regular news consumption patterns, specifically oriented to a certain journalist or outlet. Weeks and Hobert (2013) called this activity "news friending".

Nevertheless, this type of news does not offer a complete, solid piece of information to readers, as it is mostly based on brief headlines and hyperlinks. Hence, if compelled, readers might resort to a more traditional news outlet to grasp more about a certain topic or event.

But even here, when it comes to traditional media outlets, there are pressing issues that need to be tackled. According with a Pew Research Center study from 2013, 65% of respondents who use internet as main information source, when considering traditional media

outlets, say that those organs are politically biased. Moreover, 73% state they lose too much time on irrelevant issues while 81% point out they are often influenced by power and produce unfair reports.

Savigny and Temple (2010) stressed this bias by recalling the fact that all media, including state-owned networks, are political actors on their own right. More than just being a vehicle for the fourth state to act and ensure the solidity of democracy, they operate according to their own personal agenda and interests. Thus, there is an inherent tension between those functions. In other words, politicians can always tell they accomplished what they promised. But the key role media has here is to develop a meticulous scrutiny to those claims and always seek for the truth, while simultaneously delivering what their shareholders and advertisers expect from them.

As such, this partiality led people to distrust those organs and search for alternatives in other media outlets, mostly online.

Notwithstanding, one should keep in mind that the influence of new media outlets in civic life hinges on the users' personal features as well as on the medium's ability to increase the information availability. In other words, it's not just the medium *per se* that will foster citizens to act, but instead a whole set of variables. Mobilizing information can effectively be a call to action, but it is not enough on its own. A previous predisposition has to necessarily exist for an actual participation to occur.

Previous research by Scheufele (2002) and Nisbet & Scheufele (2004) has highlighted that the actual influence of news of political participation is closely linked to how often people talk about politics on their daily interactions. If the subject is purely absent from regular conversations, there is no previous tendency to act.

But, apart from all the sector's flaws and criticisms, the media has contributed to deconstruct the political process, while empowering citizens with practical notions to apply in their daily life. At the same time, it has formed a more "media literate" (Savigny & Temple, 2010: 1060) and "semiologically aware" (Kuhn, 2007: 264, *as cited in* Savigny & Temple, 2010: 1060) audience, when compared with previous generations.

4.3.4. Political Marketing and Digital Platforms evolution

Political communication has experienced a tremendous shift in the last decades, motivated by a very complex set of social, economical and technological transformations.

Resorting to frameworks from other scientific fields, Michael Crozier (2007), tries to synthesize this transformations, by analyzing them through a recursive governance lens.

Departing from Edgar Morin's (1996) concepts, recursive governance can be seen as a form of management that stems from a generating loop, capable of producing the effects that cause them, in a continuous feedback cycle. As an example, Morin points out the human being condition, in which the individual, through his interactions with others, produces society. But, as a final product, society produces the humanity of individuals by means of language and culture, for instance.

Until the 1980's, political communication evolved around a more linear mode of communication, involving a sender, a message and a receiver. A vehicle through which information and persuasion were exchanged. "Meaning" was seen as a relatively stable element that did not change while the whole process occurred.

Since this shift goes beyond the generalized proliferation of marketing and public relations services throughout established institutions and organizations, Crozier (2007) purposes a complementary perspective.

According to his view, the changes are deeper, including several alterations inside organizational practices, institutional patterns, and types of knowledge production that transcend the proliferation of strategic public relations.

Hence, contemporary political communication is now based on information flows, rather than on the amount of data transmitted or the simple exchange as a process. Crozier (2007) argues that message interpretation comprises intricate reasons based on personal, self-referential ways that can easily diverge from the original purpose of the sender. Information overloads are now the norm, and our processing capacity is simply not able to cope with such a data avalanche.

Moreover, the author alerts to the fact that inside an information flow context, messages might not stay in the same form and change throughout the process, thusly transforming things and identities. Sender and receiver interactions become multilateral, more complex, ambiguous

and the message itself becomes a product of that specific interaction, and not just a separate, stanch element.

For all the aforementioned reasons, contemporary communication management strives to successfully supervise generation of meaning and affect. In this regard, the author states that “Rather than a linear logic with discrete categories, this is more of a recursive informational logic that attempts to deal with the transformative effects of flows.” (Crozier, 2007: 7).

As one of the main agents of this whole set of transformations, the internet has come a long way since its’ inception. Launched for commercial use in the late 1980’s/early 1990’s, its’ astonishing evolution has irreversibly changed worldwide societies. In his 1992 presidential campaign, Bill Clinton was the first politician to use this new technology as an asset, uploading information for journalists on his brand new website. Then, in the beginning of 2000’s, blogs gained a prominent role, and, from 2004 to 2008, American political marketing registered an impressive evolution.

Afterwards, Barack Obama’s election in 2008 marked a decisive turning point in this regard, since many of his supporters spread his message through social media, proving that this was a more effective mean than the so called traditional platforms. In fact, his campaign shed light on public interest topics such as political alienation, extremism, low turnout rates, among others, promoting a more consistent type of involvement in politics. Moreover, Lees-Marshment (2009) emphasized the importance of the interaction social media brings, combined with the possibility of reconnecting with voters as well and the resulting communitarian (and egalitarian) discussion it brings. Regarding social media audiences, Maireder, et al (2017:127) stated that “These “networked publics” are defined by connections and social interactions between interested individuals and often arise around political issues in which network members have a vested interest, including social movements” (Maireder, Weeks, De Zúñiga & Schlogl., 2017: 127), thus forming several clusters of individuals around a common interest.

Moreover, online “virtual” success can in fact translate into actual campaign success, since image is nowadays more important than ever. Thus, if the candidate’s profile has a triumphant, auspicious tone, this will more likely translate into favorable voting intentions. But, since the concept of image comprises some complexity, it would be important to shed some light on it.

Margaret Scammell (2015) reminded that modern politics is in fact a battling competition of images, thus confronting a certain conceptual negative vision of images, regarded as a threat to democracies and representing “artifice, illusion, and manipulation designed to appeal to our ‘lower (aesthetic) faculties whereas reasonable political communication should foster or rely on the ‘higher’ faculties” (Simons, 2006, *as cited in* Scammell, 2015: 8). Moreover, in order to refute those conceptions of suspicion and dubiousness and place image as one of the main components of political marketing, Scammell purposed an alternative approach that started by redefining its’ concept. Hence, it became associated with reputation, anchored on reality, and on track record and credibility of promises. And subsequently able to be evaluated on more objective criteria like competence or strength of leadership. Furthermore, reputation will have a relevant influence in terms of party identification or choice of candidate, even helping to explain “why people can vote for one party or candidate while apparently preferring the policies of another” (Scammell, 2015: 9).

Nevertheless, this concept has some limitations, as it discards many aspects about image creation and perception, such as “moments of connection”, symbolic/iconic imagery and events that become instantly mediatic or even the ordinary daily discussion about politics. In this regard, Scammell pointed out to Street’s (2003) question, in which he suggested that politics is not a purely economic/market type relationship, but also a cultural one. As such, this implies a tight bond with popular culture, in which politicians are immersed and based on which their actions are scrutinized by the public. The ultimate goal here is to be cool, as “being in charge *and* in touch” (Scammell, 2015: 10), cultivating authenticity.

Considering all these aspects is vital for political strategists (and, consequently, politicians) to captivate younger voters, an extremely suspicious, alienated and spread out target who needs to be regained in order to guarantee the sustainability of political parties. Considerably worn out, this universe is too often attached to an older, corrupt, careerist group who deliberately places obstacles for younger minds to step into the scene. If successful, this internal rejuvenation would allow the system to reform its image, translating it into captivating professional opportunities. Eventually, if younger voters felt represented in the political system, abstention will decrease, and turnout levels will rise.

Vladimir (2018) summarized the benefits of social media in the following: “Bringing the candidates and the voters closer, facilitating the exchange of ideas between all kinds of people,

getting young generations to vote, and re-engaging those who have not voted for long, the possibility for less-known candidates or projects to surface and the breaking of the major parties' bias, are all good for the society" (Vladimir, 2018: 329).

Likewise, as Alan Finlayson (2019) posited, digital communication provided a fundamental contribute to enlarge the group of citizens able to actively participate in political debates, helping to improve collective political intelligence, maximizing creative inputs, political education, all this while shaping new kinds of dynamics in terms of political alliances and association types. (Finlayson, 2019).

The key here is to try to find the best way to capitalize on those tools, in order to "develop new rhetorical styles and strategies, and to plug these into structures and processes of political organisation and struggle in ways which can enhance democratic freedom and the capacity to exercise it" (Finlayson, 2019: 78).

4.3.5. Digital Risks and respective consequences

Notwithstanding all the benefits they bring, those platforms are also responsible for spreading disinformation in the form of distorted facts and fake news who can act as "magic bullets" and affect uncritical masses whose only news reading habits rely on social media. Time is scarce and fact checking is not a self-evident option. Thus, this will translate into a snowball effect, spreading disinformation on a massive scale.

In line with this, Rebolledo *et al* (2018), based on data from a 2018 Digital News Report from Reuters Institute, highlighted that "(...) trust in media remains worryingly low in most countries, often linked to high levels of media polarization, and the perception of undue political influence but also that social media platforms like Viber or Whatsapp are becoming most used platforms for informing". (Rebolledo *et al*, 2018:3). This, combined with episodes like the one with Facebook and Cambridge Analytica provides a clear alert that digital regulation is mandatory and absolutely essential to combat the so called "post truth" on a global scale.

Extremely dangerous, this "trend" was partly accountable for Donald Trump's election in 2016. In fact, Vladimir (2018) pointed out that tens of thousands of false accounts were responsible for spreading fake information at a massive scale, and, in most cases, when their objective was fulfilled, it was already too late to stop or mitigate the damage it has produced

(Vladimir, 2018). Furthermore, those platforms also help to disseminate the agendas of extremist movements, helping them to collect supporters and future voters. Another example happened in the United Kingdom referendum. In this case, the Eurosceptic party UKIP deliberately spread false information regarding the country's departure from the European Union, presenting deceiving facts for voters to support their cause.

4.4. Analytical framework presentation

The present case study addresses a peculiar subject in the Marketing field. Different from a more conventional brand and a more standard approach in terms of data collection, it leaned towards a more conceptual orientation inside Political Marketing.

Hence, and despite having been developed from quantitative and qualitative data, the majority of the collected information leans to a more qualitative profile. This included the first four sections of the context, the section dedicated to social media as well as the literature review. The final content is both a product from scientific articles and practitioner's books.

Besides the qualitative investigation *per se*, this case was also enriched by the sessions/interviews with one professional and one researcher related to the European Union's institutions. Aside from the researcher, who gave his permission to be identified (Javier Ruiz Soler, Ph.D in Political Communication from the European University Institute), the professional kindly asked for his anonymity to be guaranteed.

The quantitative part was mostly present in the sections dedicated to the Portuguese case and to the psychographic profile of Millennials. Sources here include different statistical/analytical reports.

The final purpose was to provide students with a solid, diversified approach that could help them to have a broad perception of the subject.

Nevertheless, students are challenged to perform some additional investigation when solving the present case.

4.5. Animation Plan

Session	Objectives	Action Plan	Time
1 st	Develop the students' interest on the case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case distribution to the class • Teacher introduces EU's history and importance • Suggestion: Exhibit in class a 23 minutes documentary about the European Union history (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xRwZyDTdCAc) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workgroup formation 	60 min.
Out of session	Get to know the case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group reading and analysis • Brief research about the current political situation • Diagnosis development 	30 min.
2 nd	Understand the case study Presentation of the first group of questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a first part, and departing from some of the Animation questions, teacher assesses what students retained from their previous analysis • Suggestion: Present in class the 2019 movie "Brexit" (https://www.imdb.com/title/tt8425058/?ref=nm_flmg_act_15). Based on real facts, it depicts the backstage maneuvers that preceded the Brexit referendum. • Then, challenge groups to develop questions 1 and 2 	90 min.
Out of session	Initial case resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address questions 1 and 2 • Group analysis and discussion 	120 min.
3 rd	Case study development Presentation of the second set of questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups present questions 1 and 2 in class • Teacher addresses the importance of digital and social media for political communication • Then, challenge groups to develop questions 3 and 4 in class 	90 min.
Out of session	Case study resolution and presentation preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In their groups, students develop question 5 	120 min.
4 th	Case resolution presentation and discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral presentation of each group's question 5 (approx. 15 minutes for each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main conclusions 	90 min.
Out of session	Score work groups	Case resolution (50%) + Presentation (30%) + Discussion (20%)	

4.6. Animation Questions

1. Based on your personal knowledge, what do you know about the European Project?
2. Historically speaking, how important was the EU as a role model for international cooperation?
3. In your opinion, which are the main reasons for the current situation of alienation / disinterest regarding politics in general?
 - a. Are there any specificities associated with the Portuguese case?
4. From a communicational point of view, do you think the current strategies should be rethought?
 - a. Should offline be more interconnected with online campaigns?
5. In the end, which was for you the biggest challenge to solve this case ? What complementary information should have been provided to facilitate it ?

4.7. Resolution Proposal

1. Develop a SWOT Analysis of the European Union.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Union (The facilities it brings to trade and exchange in general) • Diplomatic Mediator (Acting as a “single” block, it can more easily avoid internal conflicts through dialogue and mediation) • Free circulation of goods and people (Facilitating citizens to travel, study, work and live in any of the 28 members) • Communitarian Funds to stimulate internal economies (Acting in multiple levels, from infrastructure, to culture, education or science) 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Euro (A single currency can be an obstacle in a crisis scenario, as governments can not resort to a devaluation policy to stimulate their country’s economy) • Excessive bureaucracy (Internal processes take too long to be reach a conclusion) • Different agendas (Inherent conflict between national agendas and global interests. Tendency to discard a holistic view) • Careerism and corruption associated with the political system (A symptom that transposes national boundaries into international politics)
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reform internal structures (Whenever reasonable, invert excessive bureaucratic procedures) • Redesign communication strategy (Listen and actively strive to create proximity with citizens) • Create new internal or external 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Threats</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global conflicts and instability (Increasing social cleavage episodes based on race or wealth) • Brexit (The political, economic and social consequences it brings both to the UK and to the EU)

<p>partnerships (Aside from the Erasmus + and similar programs, act on the curricular level with Middle or High Schools, in order to motivate students to be politically active)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen alienation and disinterest (Fueled by the growing annoyance with the political system’s <i>status quo</i>) • Resurgence of right- wing trends in state members like Hungary or Poland (Based on similar reasons of the above point)
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2- Mention the current communication constraints EU needs to address in the near future. Afterwards, propose adequate resolution methods.

As a global institution, the EU has the enormous responsibility to represent the European continent around the world. Despite the internal contrasts from 28 different nations, whose culture and economic interests are naturally distinct, in some extent, the EU should seek for a unique voice, able to transmit its’ main objectives and concerns about the turbulent present and future times. This becomes especially necessary in the era of misinformation and abundant distorted media depictions (the so called “fake news”), which foster distrust and alienation and condition opinions and attitudes at a massive scale.

Such a demanding task requires a meticulous approach from the communication teams. Messages should be carefully tailored to the specific audience and platform one is dealing with. Whenever is possible, communication should lose its’ rigid, institutional weight, break the political “bubble” group of politicians, journalists and spin doctors and reach the average citizen.

By communicating on each national language (which is something that already occurs) and acting at a local level, this will positively increase proximity between institutions and citizens, as it conveys a more insightful, dedicated approach to the community’s issues.

In 2013, the European Commission and the European Parliament launched a pilot project called **Share Europe Online** (SEO), whose main objective was to assess in which new

ways could both institutions promote an active, consistent dialogue with citizens through public online social media.

SEO's main outcomes translate the incoherent internal pattern that punctuates the social media strategy of the different European Institutions. Despite a good underlying objective, the efforts were insufficient to promote a solid, updated image of the institutions.

While the European Parliament presents a more spontaneous, straightforward language in social media, the European Commission still conveys a strict, bureaucratic posture that does not cater for a wider audience to get interested and involved. Social Media communication is quite scattered through various languages, as posts are published in all the state-member idioms.

Occasionally, there are some good initiatives to mitigate that physical and psychological distance, but those are not powerful enough to produce an impactful shift on attitudes and minds.

Additionally, this report also emphasized the evident need for Representation Offices to have adequate media equipment as well as social media training to better understand and develop their communication strategy.

Despite providing some improvements to the communications of those institutions, a solid strategy was not applied, and those positive outcomes rapidly faded away.

A complementary approach came from the **Horizon 2020 CATCH-EyoU project**, (standing for Constructing Active Citizenship with European Youth: Policies, Practices, Challenges and Solutions). A solid concrete example of how researchers can effectively assess the role of communication to bridge the gap between young voters and European institutions. Here, researchers tried to assess how European youth relates and identifies itself with the EU as well as which type of societal and individual background promotes or obstructs an active citizenship role in this context.

The project's first outputs, combined with the perspectives of Motti-Stefandi and Cicognani (2018) accentuated several relevant aspects to build a youth active citizenship:

- **Implement a more inclusionary approach to understand how young people engage with the European Union, incorporating critique and dissonant views into the discussion.**

- **Grasp the peculiar link between national and EU identity**
- **Combat apathy and especially alienation (which can translate into unconventional ways of political participation).**
- **Create favorable socio-economical backgrounds (and respective resources) to promote solid participation habits.**
- **Reinforce mobility programs as a way to strengthen students' bonds with the EU.**
- **Analyze carefully the current media context, and in which ways it would be possible to use alternative media outlets as allies, thus countering their actual tendency to oppose institutions *per se*.**

Another interesting input came from Javier Ruíz Soler, Ph.D in Political Communication from the European University Institute and an expert on online communication and European matters. In this regard, he emphasized the following:

- **Communication should switch from a top-down perspective to a more horizontal one, in which dialogue is based on a more egalitarian premise.**
- **Teams need to go where the conversations are effectively happening.**
- **Diversify initiatives, instead of only producing embellished campaigns with hashtags that not many will be aware or promote (Like “This time I vote”, the campaign for the last European Elections in May 2019)**
- **Diversify platforms by focusing on Twitter on Reddit.**
- **Listen and promote dialogue among different demographic sectors.**
- **Allocate adequate resources in order to develop solid strategies**
- **Upgrade the existing Eurobarometers, by social media data to more “traditional” information collection methods.**

Social media can definitely help public organizations to upgrade its' respective dialogue with citizens and thereby creating bonds shaped by trust and commitment. Thus, the gap between them and the people they serve can be significantly reduced.

Severely discredited after the 2008 global crisis, institutions need to regain people's trust in order to guarantee their own survival. By communicating on each national language and acting at a local level, this will positively increase proximity between institutions and citizens, as it conveys

a more insightful, dedicated approach to the community's issues. Misinformation and distorted media depictions are abundant (the so called "fake news"), fostering distrust and alienation on a significant scale. Hence, this whole panorama presents complex communication challenges that are crucial to be solved both in short and medium term.

3- Characterize Millennials and assess their relevancy as the main target for the present case study.

According to the definition from the Pew Research Center, Millennial citizens were born between 1981 and 1996. A period where many changes occurred, while consumerism and the capitalist system as we know them nowadays arose and started to consolidate at a global scale. In the western world, this prosperity meant comfort and access to new products and commodities that were once interdict for them. New technologies became available (like, for instance, the personal computer or video games). As a result, Millennials are considered to be the first digital natives, as they have been familiar with technology from a very young age.

In line with the previous assumption, the following conclusions were extracted from data collected by Goldman Sachs, the Pew Research Center in 2019 and more specifically by the Prosper Insights & Analytics for the Media Behavior and Influence Study. The sample comes from the US population and compares three different generations in terms of digital leisure habits.

- When asking the three generations about "Which online activities do you regularly do for fun and entertainment ?" and giving as first option "Play Video Games", 50% of affirmative answers came from Millennials, against 27% from Generation X and 16% from Baby Boomers. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.1
- When answering the same question with the option "Instant Messaging/Chat", 45% of affirmative answers came from Millennials, 31% from Generation X and 10% from Baby Boomers. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.2

- Regarding “Download Music/Video”, 44% of affirmative answers came from Millennials, 33% from Generation X and 17% from Baby Boomers. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.3
- In terms of “Use social media”, results were slightly more even, 37% of affirmative answers coming from Millennials, 35% from Generation X and 23% from Baby Boomers. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.4
- The final option was “Watch TV online”. 38% of affirmative answers came from Millennials, 26% from Generation X and 18% from Baby Boomers. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.5

Unsurprisingly, Millennials achieved the highest scores in terms of digital habits, when compared with members of the Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980) and Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964), who both acquired proximity with technology later in life, or did not acquire at all.

This stability, prosperity and early acquaintance with technology fueled Millennials to become the most well educated and well prepared generation in history. A landscape that would become radically different when they entered the labor market, during or in the immediate aftermath of the Global Crisis of 2008.

Therefore, after a solid, top notch education, Millennials came across turbulent, disruptive times while entering adulthood.

Aside from the crisis per se, another obstacles encompass:

- Sheer rise of economic inequality,
- Scattering of social security nets,
- Incompetent and dysfunctional governments,
- Increased tribalism fueled by social media,
- Disruption 4.0 technologies have brought to daily habits.

This led Millennials to have a lower buying power, to be more overloaded with debt and naturally to postpone big life decisions such as buying a house, a car or getting married.

In fact, and according to data from the Federal Reserve, the Mean Student Loan Balance for 25 year olds (In US Dollars) has been increasing from \$10,649 in 2003 to \$17, 284 in 2008 and to \$20,926 in 2013. The corresponding graphic can be seen in Annex number 3.10. In fact, Millennials want to achieve most of the same goals previous generations did, but all the aforementioned constraints force them to adapt to a harsher present. Thus, this results on a pessimistic zeitgeist for this generation, whose future life perspectives do not augur big accomplishments in the short, medium run .

In some extent, their aspirations tend to be focused on more achievable objectives, such as:

- Travel the World (57% of answers from both cohorts)
- Be wealthy (52% of answers from Millennials and 56% from Generation Z)
- Buy own home (49% of answers from Millennials and 52% from Generation Z)
- Make a positive impact on society (46% of answers from Millennials and 47% from Generation Z)
- Start a family (39% of answers from Millennials and 45% from Generation Z)

From those numbers, extracted from The Deloitte Global Millennial Survey from 2019, two of them (Travel the World and Make a positive impact on society) highlight this Generation's trademark when compared with previous ones.

As consumers, Millennials rely more on a “sharing economy” approach than on the simple ownership of a specific asset. Savvy and extremely demanding, they base their buying choices according with the brand's value and impact in society. One simple negative remark can make them change their mind and cease their relationship with that brand. Conversely, a positive remark or attitude can grab Millennials' attention and trigger a future relationship to appear.

As political agents, government, politicians and traditional media as corrupt elements of the status quo are extremely disregarded by Millennials, gathering almost no trust from this generation. From their perspective, traditional media outlets are biased and do not fulfill their primary role as trustworthy information sources. Mapping the world and explaining what happens became subject to big corporative interests and not for the sake

of pure, objective knowledge per se. As such, this generation looks for its' role models around non governmental organizations (NGO's) and its' respective leaders, seen as contrasting, trustworthy agents for a positive impact in the world.

To sum up, Millennials (together with Generation Z) will definitely produce a decisive impact in the economy in the following decades. As a "product" of a different, more technologically enabled education, they acquired a distinct, intrinsic familiarity with platforms and devices that previous generations did not obtain during their formative years. Likewise, their values, behaviors and expectations are different from their parents, as they don't valorize the same things older generations did exactly in the same way. For instance, they do not see marriage or moving out as a pressing priority, favoring instead a life approach based on a "sharing economy" as an alternative to exclusive ownership of a specific asset. They are, instead, more focused on the environment and the consequences of climate change, as the growing support to young activist Greta Thunberg validate.

In terms of lifestyle, Millennials actively pursue wellness as ultimate life goal, spending time and money to have a healthy diet and do a lot of exercise. Trend followers and trend setters, their choices produce a decisive impact on multiple industries, from media, leisure, food & drinking, music or fashion. As technologically empowered citizens, this generation expects instant access to price comparisons, product specific information and peer reviews, the latter being highly influential to make or not a purchase.

From big corporations to small companies, Communication and Marketing teams are vigorously searching for the ultimate formula to please multiple customer segments at the minimum cost as possible. However, as the main consumers of the future, Millennials currently symbolize the ultimate goal companies try to cater for, striving to adapt their former broad strategies to micro-targeting ones. Brand Ambassadors or Influencers are one of the latest examples of that shift.

In the end, all sources (Deloitte, Goldman Sachs and Pew Research Center) mirror coincident trends in multiple aspects. Thus, despite all country/region specificities, Millennials (and Generation Z as well) present consistent, similar behaviors around the world.

4- Which are the main steps to develop a solid social media strategy?

First and foremost, any type of communication strategy should be built upon a solid basis of transparency, mutual trust and respect between the different involved parts. As it has been stated, Social Media should be used as an empowering vehicle for knowledge and inclusion. It should make the bridge between citizens and organizations, facilitating interaction and exchange.

Applying an adequate time frame and budget are paramount, as there are no shortcuts or miraculous ways to obtain results without an attentive, careful preparation and monitorization process.

Moreover, marketers and spin doctors should build their plans with the firm belief that citizens are not simple communication targets, but instead strategic partners with whom they should interact and co-create. As in any other campaign, promote meaningful, relevant content is paramount. Relevancy here is synonym with daily, pressing issues that affect people's life, matters that they actively discuss in their inner circle and naturally constitute their main concerns. Ideally, if politicians address those issues in depth, (discarding vain promises delivered in a demagogical tone) chances for a bond to arise are much higher, as citizens will perceive the leader's true preoccupation with their problems.

In addition, when entering the volatile "public square" dynamic of social media platforms, communication teams should take into account that interactions there are often instilled with extreme positions and radicalism. As such, users who feel very strongly about a certain topic are usually the ones who get into the spotlight and dominate discussions. However, the key for a more profitable approach lies in the more moderate section of that spectrum. On more cool-headed internauts that, despite their eventual interest on a certain topic, tend to refrain themselves from participating because they do not seek neither radical positions nor conflict in their interactions.

In terms of contents, a meticulous balance between local and global topics can be quite profitable to reach a broader audience. One's (both individual or organizations) account should mirror a comprehensive scope of subjects but avoiding a shallow, superficial image. The key here is to, while addressing a global audience, use a local approach, based on specific, measurable themes, thus stimulating proximity with citizens.

In terms of platforms, and in line with the previous focus on proximity, it becomes important to promote different engagement levels through the different accounts. For instance, the official facebook or instagram account of an embassy or a party should look for a more polished, institutional tone. Conversely, the ambassador's or leader's profile could instead opt for a more natural, straightforward approach, revealing certain aspects of their personality or daily life as an identification vehicle for people to engage and feel more connected.

The subsequent seven steps to develop a solid Social Media strategy complement the previously mentioned topics. Those were purposed by Antonio Deruda, a Digital Communication Consultant and Senior Trainer at Facebook Community Boost EU program, in his book Digital Diplomacy Handbook (2015):

- Identify Goals (Seen here as general, broader intentions)
- Set Objectives (Objectives are more specific, measurable targets)
- Identify the target audience (Develop brand personas to better reach them and develop adequate messages)
- Allocate Budget (Adequate to the intended strategy)
- Develop a Content Plan (The presented content should be adapted to each channel's features, For instance: A detailed document on LinkedIn, A straightforward infographic on Twitter, A story presented with pictures on Facebook, A video interview for Youtube). Moreover, organizations should develop platform-based personas in order to better engage with their target audience. Optimizing for mobile is also crucial, as more than 70% of web activity is made through mobile devices.

- Focus on Trans-creation, instead of in translation (Simply translating publishing content is not enough, as cultural nuances should be taken into account. Trans-creation consists on creating content adapted for the local culture. More than using the right words/expressions, it requires a broad knowledge of the place and respective culture. This could only be achieved if local employees are granted some creative freedom.

In the end, and following up the implementation process, the situation should be diagnosed according to:

- The Audience (By assessing its' composition, tastes, interaction patterns...)
- The Sentiments it awakens (Are they positive or negative feelings ?)
- The resulting Feedback (Is it good or bad ? Is it possible to improve it through users' replies? How ?)
- Existing Questions (Are there frequent questions about the institution's actions ? If so, is it possible to answer them while creating specific content about that topic ?)
- The transmitted Content (Is it meaningful, valuable content ?)
- Connection with Public Opinion (Do the contents reflect broader trends in the public opinion ?)
- Advocates (Use SM to find advocates who actively address and discuss relevant topics to the organization. Afterwards, create and nurture an advocate community)
- Press Opportunities (Use SM as a bridge to reach media outlets, while assessing their preferences and agenda)
- Influencers (Similar to advocates, but act more like a "role-model")

Nevertheless, the whole monitoring process should be extended to all the departments, Pertinent, useful information should be shared and exchanged, promoting cooperation between different areas, thus promoting an holistic view.

5- Departing from the provided concepts, present the critical aspects to include in a future integrated communication strategy for a political/diplomatic organization like the EU.

In order to create a successful, well integrated communication strategy, the organization has to clearly define several aspects.

By applying an Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) approach, the goal here is to achieve a single, coherent corporate message stemming from a multitude of channels, thus conveying a strong brand message to the public.

Before developing the content itself, the one has to carefully analyze the market to operate in, assessing its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (a SWOT analysis). Then, following an STP strategy, the main objective should be analyzed, in order to perceive the audience's main features and in which ways would be more profitable to address it.

In this specific case, and despite not assuming the form of a traditional brand, there are several concepts that are always relevant to market or communicate a specific message. So, the target here would be as broad as possible, in order to reach the maximum number of citizens, and definitely leave the confined spectrum of the so called political "bubble". In terms of specific goals, messages should be tailored in order to increase credibility and recognition for the institutions, also striving to establish long term relationships through solid brand loyalty and positive Word Of Mouth (WOM).

After those steps, the message has already a specific, established framework to sustain it and its "ready" to be created and scheduled according to a strict plan.

When developing a multi-channel tactic to spread the message, each online platform requires a specific approach in order to fully seize its respective potential. This stems from the fact that each one has a specific strength that marketers should capitalize on in order for their campaigns to succeed.

The following suggested measures will complement the already existent programs. First, the online approach will be addressed. And, for each platform, teams should focus on:

- Website
 - Increase visitor numbers
 - Stimulate interaction with people
- Facebook
 - Increase the amount of followers
 - Stimulate page participation
 - Increase the number of page views
 - Generate Positive WOM
 - Generate long-term relationships with people
- Instagram
 - Increase the amount of followers
 - Stimulate page participation
 - Increase the number of page views
 - Find relevant brand ambassadors/ micro influencers and develop specific initiatives
- Youtube
 - Increase the number of video views
 - Increase the number of subscribers
 - Stimulate Positive WOM
 - Increase brand awareness
- Online Newsletter
 - Present pertinent news, for a broader audience
 - Focus on important milestones, dates and events

Those aims could be achieved through some specific actions:

- Website
 - Redesign the page, adapting it to a more contemporary, less rigid language. The key here is to achieve a balance between a respectable, but at the same time, open institution.
 - Communicate a larger number of specific events and initiatives
 - Actively promote related SM pages with buttons and icons directly on the landing page
- Facebook
 - Post photos and videos from events, as a way to generate more organic views and higher engagement levels
 - Develop a strategy for paid posts
- Instagram
 - Better interconnect more buzzworthy posts with other social media platforms
 - Develop punctual initiatives with local brand ambassadors, in a similar approach to the “This time I vote” campaign for the 2019 Elections
 - Promote photo competitions, based on a specific subject and hashtag or set of hashtags

Then, when it comes to offline initiatives, some good examples could encompass :

I. Create partnerships with relevant institutions or brands (Universities or High Schools, for example) that would help to boost visibility for the European Project. In the case of education, some of those lectures should be included in the students’ curriculum. If successful, this should produce a positive contribute to form a basic political socialization for young voters and future

II. Develop more sporadic local initiatives, like “Bolas de Bruxelas”, a street initiative that took the Portuguese team to a central square of Lisbon and Oporto to talk directly to people and help to deconstruct some myths associated with the European institutions. In the end, they would offer a free Berliner to the participants. Besides the initiative’s logo, the following images depict some of debunked myths:

a) “Bolas de Bruxelas” Initiative Logo



b) “Bolas de Bruxelas” Foodtruck



c) Example of a debunked myth

Portugal é um país sem peso na União Europeia

Mito: Portugal é um país sem peso na União Europeia

No que diz respeito ao peso (ou influência) nas votações e decisões tomadas na UE, Portugal não é um país pequeno. De acordo com os Tratados, estabeleceu-se aquilo que se designou por "progressividade degressiva": os países mais pequenos são sobre-representados face aos maiores ou, dito de outra forma, cada deputado dos

d) Example of a debunked myth

A UE obrigou a destruição da frota de pesca nacional

Mito: A UE obrigou à destruição da frota de pesca nacional

Portugal é o quarto país da UE no tocante ao número de embarcações de pesca e o sexto com capacidade e potência propulsora. A preocupação com a sustentabilidade dos recursos piscatórios levou a Comissão Europeia a promover a sua redução mediante a atribuição de apoios para demolição e substituição por embarcações mais modernas e eficientes. Não se tratou de forçar quem quer que fosse a abater embarcações contra a sua vontade, mas de reconhecer que há muitos barcos a pescar muito pouco peixe e que são necessárias medidas para inverter esta situação. A UE não obrigou assim à redução da frota nacional de pesca mas contribuiu para a

III. Export the annual Summer CEmp to other countries, by making international teams familiar with the concept and its' internal dynamics. This is a pioneer initiative organized by the European Commission Representation Office in Portugal. Includes four days of active, meaningful debates about the future of the European Project between forty selected university students and seventy invited speakers, in a historical village in the interior of Portugal. Those speakers include several national and international policy makers, including ministers, commissaires, regional managers, university teachers but

also journalists or artists. This program is on its' third edition and will be held at Monsaraz, from the 27th to the 30th of August 2019. The following images show some aspects from previous editions:

a) Summer CEMP logo



b) Summer CEMP 2018 edition



Finally, and following up the implementation process, marketing teams will then need to monitor the campaign's outcomes, assessing its execution throughout the time. In addition, they will also verify if the allocated resources are adequate for the project, making, if possible, the necessary adjustments to improve performance.

4.8. Resolution Slides



1. Develop a SWOT Analysis of the European Union.

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic Union (The facilities it brings to trade and exchange in general)• Diplomatic Mediator (Acting as a “single” block, it can more easily avoid internal conflicts through dialogue and mediation)• Free circulation of goods and people (Facilitating citizens to travel, study, work and live in any of the 28 members)• Communitarian Funds to stimulate internal economies (Acting in multiple levels, from infrastructure, to culture, education or science)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Euro (A single currency can be an obstacle in a crisis scenario, as governments can not resort to a devaluation policy to stimulate their country’s economy)• Excessive bureaucracy (Internal processes take too long to be reach a conclusion)• Different agendas (Inherent conflict between national agendas and global interests. Tendency to discard a holistic view)• Careerism and corruption associated with the political system (A symptom that transposes national boundaries into international politics)

Case Resolution Proposal

1. Develop a SWOT Analysis of the European Union.

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reform internal structures (Whenever reasonable, invert excessive bureaucratic procedures) • Redesign communication strategy (Listen and actively strive to create proximity with citizens) • Create new internal or external partnerships (Aside from the Erasmus + and similar programs, act on the curricular level with Middle or High Schools, in order to motivate students to be politically active) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global conflicts and instability (Increasing social cleavage episodes based on race or wealth) • Brexit (The political, economic and social consequences it brings both to the UK and to the EU) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen alienation and disinterest (Fueled by the growing annoyance with the political system's status quo) • Resurgence of right- wing trends in state members like Hungary or Poland (Based on similar reasons as the above point)

Case Resolution Proposal

2- Mention the current communication constraints EU needs to address in the near future. Afterwards, purpose adequate resolution methods.

Constraints	Resolution Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigid tone • Subject complexity • Unappealing graphic image (online) • Audience confined to a restricted "bubble" • Incoherent SM pattern among different European Institutions • Inadequate budget and equipment for national Representation Offices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frail internal SM training • Short-term strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Switch communication from a top-down perspective to a more horizontal one, in which dialogue is based on a more egalitarian premise. • Diversify initiatives, instead of only producing embellished campaigns • Diversify platforms by focusing on Twitter on Reddit. • Listen and promote dialogue among different demographic sectors. • Allocate adequate resources in order to develop solid, long term strategies • Upgrade the existing Eurobarometers, by adding social media data to more "traditional" information collection methods.

Case Resolution Proposal

3. Characterize Millennials and assess their relevancy as the main target for the present case study.

Millennials Psychographic Profile- I

- Citizens born between 1981 and 1996 (Pew Research Center definition)
 - Largest age cohort in the US
 - First digital natives
 - Most well-educated and well prepared generation
 - Have a lower buying power
 - More encumbered with debt (Student Loans, for instance)
 - Savvy and conscious consumers
- Tend to consider a brand's moral/ethical posture before becoming loyal
- Supporters of a sharing economy, instead of the exclusive asset ownership
- Tend to value more experiences (Travelling, for instance) than specific assets
 - Strongly distrustful of politicians and the political *status quo*
 - Highly suspicious of traditional media
 - Tend to rely more on NGO's and respective leaders

Case Resolution Proposal

3. Characterize Millennials and assess their relevancy as the main target for the present case study.

Millennials Psychographic Profile- II

This generation's traits are a product of a solid education and preparation but also from the serious effects from the Global Crisis, as well as from several other factors:

- Sheer rise of economic inequality,
- Scattering of social security nets,
- Incompetent and dysfunctional governments,
 - Increased tribalism fueled by social media,
- Disruption 4.0 technologies have brought to daily habits.

Case Resolution Proposal

4- Which are the main steps to develop a solid social media strategy?

Steps – I – Proposed by Anthony Deruda (2018)

- Address audiences respectfully
- Promote trust and proximity through a transparent speech
 - Foster interaction and exchange
 - Apply an adequate time frame and budget
 - Listen carefully and co-create with citizens
 - Include pertinent, relevant content
 - Discard extremism and stimulate healthy debates
 - Capitalize on the moderate section
 - Balance between local and global content
 - Develop messages using concrete, measurable terms
- Promote different engagement levels through different platforms
 - Monitor progress and results

Case Resolution Proposal

4- Which are the main steps to develop a solid social media strategy?

Steps – II – Proposed by Anthony Deruda (2018)

- **Identify Goals** (general, broader intentions)
- **Set Objectives** (specific, measurable targets)
- **Identify the target audience** (Develop brand personas to better reach them)
- **Allocate Budget** (Adequate to the intended strategy)
- **Develop a Content Plan** (Content should be adapted to each channel's features). For instance:
 - ✓ A detailed document on LinkedIn,
 - ✓ A straightforward infographic on Twitter,
 - ✓ A story presented with pictures on Facebook,
 - ✓ A video interview for Youtube)
- ✓ Optimizing for mobile, as more than 70% of web activity is made through mobile devices.

4- Which are the main steps to develop a solid social media strategy?

Steps – III – Proposed by Anthony Deruda (2018)

- **Focus on Trans-creation**, instead of in translation.

Simply translating publishing content is not enough, as cultural nuances should be taken into account.

Trans-creation consists on creating content adapted for the local culture. More than using the right words/expressions, it requires a broad knowledge of the place and respective culture.

This could only be achieved if local employees are granted some creative freedom.

Case Resolution Proposal

5 - Departing from the provided concepts, present the critical aspects to include in a future integrated communication strategy for a political/diplomatic organization like the EU.

Preparation

- Depart from an Integrated Marketing Communication (**IMC**) strategy
 - Develop a **SWOT** analysis
 - Apply an **STP** approach
- Tailor messages to specific audiences and channels

Case Resolution Proposal

5 - Departing from the provided concepts, present the critical aspects to include in a future integrated communication strategy for a political/diplomatic organization like the EU

Objectives - I

The following suggested measures will complement the already existent programs. First, the online approach will be addressed. And, for each platform, teams should focus on:

Website

- ✓ Increase visitor numbers
- ✓ Stimulate interaction with people

Facebook

- ✓ Increase the amount of followers
- ✓ Stimulate page participation
- ✓ Increase the number of page views
 - ✓ Generate Positive WOM
- ✓ Generate long-term relationships with people

Case Resolution Proposal

5 - Departing from the provided concepts, present the critical aspects to include in a future integrated communication strategy for a political/diplomatic organization like the EU

Objectives - II

The following suggested measures will complement the already existent programs. First, the online approach will be addressed. And, for each platform, teams should focus on:

Instagram

- ✓ Increase the amount of followers
- ✓ Stimulate page participation
- ✓ Increase the number of page views
- ✓ Find relevant brand ambassadors/ micro influencers and develop specific initiatives

Youtube

- ✓ Increase the number of video views
- ✓ Increase the number of subscribers
 - ✓ Stimulate Positive WOM
- ✓ Increase brand awareness

5 - Departing from the provided concepts, present the critical aspects to include in a future integrated communication strategy for a political/diplomatic organization like the EU

Objectives - III

The following suggested measures will complement the already existent programs. First, the online approach will be addressed. And, for each platform, teams should focus on:

Online Newsletter

- ✓ Present pertinent news, for a broader audience
- ✓ Focus on important milestones, dates and events

Case Resolution Proposal

5 - Departing from the provided concepts, present the critical aspects to include in a future integrated communication strategy for a political/diplomatic organization like the EU

Online Actions - I

Those aims could be achieved through some specific actions:

Website

- ✓ Redesign the page, adapting it to a more contemporary, less rigid language. The key here is to achieve a balance between a respectable, but at the same time, open institution.
- ✓ Communicate a larger number of specific events and initiatives
- ✓ Actively promote related SM pages with buttons and icons directly on the landing page

Facebook

- ✓ Post photos and videos from events, as a way to generate more organic views and higher engagement levels
- ✓ Develop a strategy for paid posts

Case Resolution Proposal

5 - Departing from the provided concepts, present the critical aspects to include in a future integrated communication strategy for a political/diplomatic organization like the EU.

Online Actions - II

Those aims could be achieved through some specific actions:

Instagram

- ✓ Better interconnect more buzzworthy posts with other social media platforms
- ✓ Develop punctual initiatives with local brand ambassadors, in a similar approach to the "This time I vote" campaign for the 2019 Elections
- ✓ Promote photo competitions, based on a specific subject and hashtag or set of hashtags

Case Resolution Proposal

5 - Departing from the provided concepts, present the critical aspects to include in a future integrated communication strategy for a political/diplomatic organization like the EU.

Offline Actions - I

- ✓ Create **partnerships** with relevant **institutions** or **brands (Universities or High Schools, for example)** that would help to boost visibility for the European Project. In the case of education, some of those lectures should be included in the students' curriculum.
- ✓ Develop more sporadic local initiatives, like "**Bolas de Bruxelas**", a street initiative that took the Portuguese team to a central square of Lisbon and Oporto to talk directly to people and help to deconstruct some myths associated with the European institutions.

In the end, they would offer a free Berliner to the participants.

Case Resolution Proposal

5 - Departing from the provided concepts, present the critical aspects to include in a future integrated communication strategy for a political/diplomatic organization like the EU

Offline Actions - II

- ✓ Export the annual **Summer CEmp** to other countries, by making international teams familiar with the concept and its' internal dynamics. This is a pioneer initiative organized by the European Commission Representation Office in Portugal.

Includes four days of active, meaningful debates about the future of the European Project between forty selected university students and seventy invited speakers, in a historical village in the interior of Portugal.

Those speakers include several national and international policy makers, including ministers, commissaires, regional managers, university teachers but also journalists or artists.

This program is on its' third edition and will be held at Monsaraz, from the 27th to the 30th of August 2019.

Case Resolution Proposal

5. MANAGEMENT LESSONS

Paraphrasing one famous Portuguese poet, the world is all about change. Transformation is all around, and information is now spread out at massive doses, pervading our daily routines like never has occurred in previous times. Technological achievements bring new, enticing, possibilities that can take imagination to new paths. At the same time, stability and safety are at stake, as new threats arise and older reemerge.

In such a turbulent picture, citizens feel, on one hand, fearing for their future, but on the other, compelled to change their habits and work together towards a brighter, safer future. In this framework of transformation, it is crucial that politics and political actors succeed to reform themselves profoundly, putting an end to a cycle of corruption and carelessness that caused profound wounds all around the globe. Naturally, this applies not only to Europe and the EU but to the majority of nations in this planet.

As it has been posited in the present case, one of the triggers of that transformation process lies in communication. As the decision makers of the future, Millennials (together with Generation Z) need to be rescued from their apathy and indifference. And this also include the ones actively engaged in traditional politics or alternative social movements (like the Environmental strike of 2019), who already have the necessary conscience and spirit to act. Starting with adequate resources (both time and money), this goal can be achieved through a more horizontal type of communication, in which the sender and the receiver co-create, interchange their roles and leave hierarchical assumptions behind. Dialogue should occur where the actual conversations are being held, like on Twitter or Reddit, for example. Not necessarily with a very interventive approach, but with an attempt, thoughtful one.

Another key point lies in the civic and mediatic education. By introducing civic and political related themes in education programs, this will contribute to form more informed and well prepared generations, ready to participate and make informed decisions in the future. On the other hand, the mediatic component here can be achieved through an awareness action regarding the dangers of social media and the disinformation they are able to disseminate. Knowing how to filter the accurate information is getting increasingly harder and citizens should know how to accomplish it. In parallel, regulations should be created to press big social media and traditional media groups to be vigilant and apply high quality standards to contents they are accountable to

disseminate. Vested corporate interests should be refrained and media should act again as a 4th state and a watchdog for democracy.

Developing this thesis and all the research it required, helped to shed some light on the previously mentioned issues. Nevertheless, the preceding illations should be considered as possible guidelines for future best practices in terms of political communication, and not as systematic, rigid rules to be followed. As such, future investigation is recommended and necessary to complement and enrich those.

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