



Introduction: the European refugee crisis: organisational responses and communication strategies

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4 James Pamment, Alina Dolea & Diana Ingenhoff

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41 In 2015, Europe faced the unprecedented challenge of hundreds of thousands of refugees seeking
42 safety after being forced to leave their homes because of war and/or persecution. This resulted in a
43 political crisis for the European Union and its members, with conflicts arising within and between
44 countries over their willingness and capabilities for humanitarian assistance. The communications
45 aimed at these refugees, migrant groups and other European countries reflected those political
46 conflicts, typically asserting negative images, abrupt policy changes or mixed messages in a bid to
47 make countries less attractive as safe-havens for migrants in need. Yet, this contradicts the
48 burgeoning debates into public diplomacy, nation brands and place brands, which over the past 20
49 years have shaped how territories seek to manage their overseas image in order to attract potential
50 tourists, investors, businesses and students.
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54 This special issue of the *Journal of Communication Management* explores the contradictions
55 emerging from an international actor's urge to attract and the urge to repulse in conjunction with the
56 refugee crisis. This collection of seven articles examine the relationship between communication
57 management, public diplomacy and nation brands in the context of the refugee crisis. How do these
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3 different parts of a country's image and messaging fit together? What institutional and
4 organizational factors shaped these activities? In what ways did different actors attempt to use
5 communication strategies and tactics to manage the situation via the media, public opinion, political
6 systems, etc? In what ways do these activities strengthen or tarnish a place's reputation?
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8 9 *Public Diplomacy as Communication Management*

10 The term *public diplomacy* as we know it today was used for the first time in 1965 by Edmund Gullion
11 with reference to the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies.
12 According to Cull (2008), there is a general agreement within the academic area of public diplomacy
13 that Gullion, the dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University and a former
14 diplomat, was the first to coin the term in its modern usage at the opening of an Edward R. Murrow
15 Center of Public Diplomacy. In Gullion's definition, "public diplomacy . . . deals with the influence of
16 public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of
17 international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public
18 opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with
19 another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those
20 whose job is communication, as diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the process of
21 intercultural communications" (Cull, 2008, p. 19).
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25 While most definitions of public diplomacy have been about promoting positive aspects of a country
26 to foreign publics, Melissen (2005), Fitzpatrick (2010), Pamment (2013) and others have argued that
27 the field has moved away from overtly promotional methods and towards *engaging* with foreign
28 audiences, under the concept of *new public diplomacy*. Melissen argues that the new public
29 diplomacy is much more than a mere technique, and is rather part of "the fabric of mainstream
30 diplomatic activity" and "will be an increasingly standard component of overall diplomatic practice
31 and is more than a form of propaganda conducted by diplomats" (p. 11). It is no longer a one way
32 communication to promote positive aspects of a country to foreign publics, but a two-way
33 communication process drawing upon public relations, strategic communications and branding
34 techniques in support of foreign policy agendas.
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38 It is in this context that scholars have shifted their focus towards conceptual development and theory
39 building in public diplomacy. The work of Gregory (2008) and Gilboa (2008), for example, have
40 explored the need for multidisciplinary approaches to public diplomacy. Scholars from fields as
41 diverse as political communication (e.g. Entman, 2008), public relations and communication
42 management (Signitzer & Coombs, 1992; Wang, 2008; Buhmann & Inghoff, 2015) and place
43 branding (Van Ham 2008) have started to show interest in public diplomacy, exploring the potential
44 of different theoretical approaches. In response to overtly functionalist and normative research,
45 there has been an emergence of critical thinking in public diplomacy from global media studies
46 perspectives (Hayden, 2012; Pamment, 2013, 2016; Comor & Bean, 2013), public relations (L'Etang,
47 2009; Dolea, 2015; Inghoff & Buhmann, 2017) and nation branding (Kaneva, 2011; Aronczyk, 2008;
48 Volcic & Andrejevic, 2011). Taken together, these developing interdisciplinary discussions suggest
49 that the field of public diplomacy is ripe for analysis from the perspective of communications
50 management.
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53 54 55 *Overview of the Special Issue*

56 This special issue is grouped into three main themes that express significant overlaps between the
57 communication management and public diplomacy fields. The first area is in the management of
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3 public diplomacy activities from the perspective of governments, their objectives, and the teams who
4 conduct public diplomacy. In the first article, *The response of Swedish and Norwegian public*
5 *diplomacy & nation branding actors to the refugee crisis*, James Pamment, Alexandra Olofsson and
6 Rachel Hjorth-Jenssen compare the communication management of the Norwegian and Swedish
7 governments during the 2015-16 refugee crisis. Placing these negative campaigns in the context of
8 long-term public diplomacy and nation branding strategies aimed at attracting global capital, the
9 article explores the similarities and contradictions between new public diplomacy approaches aimed
10 at engagement, and those designed to inform on the closing of the countries' borders.

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13 Following a similar approach, Falk Hartig's article, *Deterrence by public diplomacy: the negative*
14 *dimension of international political communication*, explores public diplomacy techniques that seek
15 to make countries less attractive to select target groups, in this case potential refugees. Using
16 examples from Germany and Australia, the analysis compares positive and negative public diplomacy
17 and branding initiatives. Together, these two articles explore the tensions and contradictions
18 between public diplomacy, propaganda and the national interest, including how values and
19 credibility built up over several years of public diplomacy and nation branding activities can be
20 caught in sudden policy shifts that reorient the same communications apparatus to alternative ends.

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24 The second main theme of this special issue follows on from the question of credibility raised in
25 Hartig's work. In *Exploring citizens' judgments about the legitimacy of public policies on refugees: In*
26 *search of clues for governments' communication strategies*, Maria Jose Canel, Evandro Oliveira and
27 Vilma Luoma-aho develop a theoretical framework for assessing public sector legitimacy as an
28 intangible asset for use in public diplomacy initiatives. By comparing the views of young adults in
29 Finland and Spain regarding the legitimacy of governmental and EU policy toward Syrian refugees,
30 the authors make recommendations about how to deploy legitimacy as a support for strengthening
31 engagement between governments and publics.

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34 For the fourth article, *Corporate social responsibility accounting for arising issues*, Florian Weber and
35 Ulf Larsson Olaison analyse German and Swedish corporate reporting of their CSR during the
36 migration crisis. In doing so, the article develops a comparative approach to CSR, by identifying a
37 typology of indifferent, cynical, altruistic and realist responses. The results are discussed in relation
38 to corporate diplomacy and government-led public diplomacy, suggesting greater potential for
39 coordinated collaboration between public and private sectors when approaching major societal
40 challenges. Together, these two articles develop a normative, ethical dimension to communication
41 management and public diplomacy approaches, and suggest fruitful avenues for further research in
42 these areas.

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45 The third theme of this special issue builds upon an area of research known as mediated public
46 diplomacy, which focuses specifically on how public diplomacy messaging becomes integrated into
47 media content. In the fifth article, *Between sealed borders and welcome culture: Analyzing mediated*
48 *public diplomacy during the European migrant crisis*, Marc Jungblut compares the news frames
49 promoted by Hungarian and German public diplomacy actors. It assesses how their messages and
50 preferred frames are reproduced by two major transnational outlets, Al-Jazeera and CNN, via an
51 analysis of government-produced information subsidies and their reproduction in news discourse.
52 The article finds that although Hungarian actors packaged their informational subsidies in a desirable
53 manner, the news outlets were likely to reject their framing. German framing was more likely to be
54 reproduced, suggesting that these messages resonated better with the expectations of the news
55 outlets.

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3 In *A quest for soft power: Turkey and the Syrian refugee crisis*, Efe Sevin and Senem Cevik discuss the
4 frames used in Turkey's public diplomacy used to promote its humanitarian response to the Syrian
5 civil war. Positioning these approaches within the country's long-term image politics, the authors
6 identify efforts to brand Turkey as a moral superpower deserving of greater international influence.
7 However, limits to the communication approach – particularly in terms of a lack of interaction with
8 audiences, frequent criticisms of the West, and a lack of measurements and evaluation – suggest that
9 a positive impact outside of the domestic and regional spheres is unlikely to have been achieved.

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12 In the final article, *#Migrantcrisis: "Tagging" the European Migration Crisis on Twitter*, Ioanna Ferra
13 and Dennis Nguyen analyse over 4,200 tweets in order to examine the formation of transnational
14 discourses of the migration crisis during the closing of the Balkan Route in February 2016. This data is
15 used to explore the most influential actors conducting digital diplomacy on the issue, as well as the
16 frames they used to try to shape perceptions. The study finds that the most central online actors
17 were in fact those with strong offline networks such as news media agencies, and that the emphasis
18 of the tweets was less on humanitarian concerns than on social and political issues. At the same
19 time, links to racist and xenophobic hashtags was prevalent, suggesting that marginalised actors used
20 the crisis, and digital diplomacy techniques, as an opportunity to mobilise support.

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23 Together, these seven articles serve to demonstrate some of the many ways in which communication
24 management and public diplomacy can be studied together in order to better understand advocacy
25 and branding in relation to major crises. Rather than representing the final word on the topic,
26 hopefully this special issue can demonstrate the areas of mutual interest and open the fields for
27 greater interdisciplinary dialogue.
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