

Hasan Saliu

## THE SPECIFICS AND COMPLEXITY OF EU PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

### ABSTRACT

*The European Union (EU) is responsible for important public diplomacy programmes, including Erasmus+. Most European countries engage in activities to enhance their international image parallel to the efforts of the EU itself. By comparing the public diplomacy activities of the USA, as the founder of public diplomacy, and those of the EU, this paper aims to identify the EU's distinctive features in its image-enhancing endeavours. The paper concludes that the EU and the USA often show that they hold different values, ones that make them more attractive to foreign publics. The paper also notes the soft power held by EU member states continues to be much stronger than the effects of the EU's public diplomacy activities in boosting their image.*

**KEY WORDS:** *Public diplomacy, soft power, international image, EU, USA*

## Specifičnosti in kompleksnost javne diplomacije EU

### IZVLEČEK

*Evropska unija (EU) izvaja pomembne programe javne diplomacije, vključno s programom Erasmus+. Večina evropskih držav skuša krepiti svojo mednarodno podobo z določenimi dejavnostmi, vzporedno s tistimi na ravni EU. Namen prispevka je s primerjavo dejavnosti javne diplomacije ZDA in EU prepoznati značilnosti EU pri uporabi teh dejavnosti za večjo privlačnost njene podobe. V prispevku ugotavljamo, da EU in ZDA pogosto izkazujeta različne vrednote, na podlagi katerih skušata vsaka na svoj način vzpodbujati privlačnost za tujo javnost. Prispevek tudi ugotavlja, da je mehka moč držav članic EU še naprej veliko močnejša od učinkov dejavnosti javne diplomacije EU pri krepitvi njene podobe.*

**KLJUČNE BESEDE:** *javna diplomacija, mehka moč, mednarodna podoba, EU, ZDA*

## 1 Introduction

The international image of a country as a perception of foreign publics for a particular country or its policies is of great importance in the realization of foreign policy. When a country is positively comprehended, it can expand cooperation, strengthen political alliances, deepen economic cooperation, and reduce misunderstandings. The image helps increase exports, attract foreign investment, and promote the state as a suitable tourist destination (Hoking 2005: 31). There are scholars who even consider that the image often brings greater benefits than owning any part of the territory. "Favorable image and reputation around the world, achieved through attraction and persuasion, have become more important than territory, access, and raw materials, traditionally acquired through military and economic measures" (Gilboa 2008: 56).

The image of a country represents the sum of a wide range of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that people have about a particular place (Kotler et al. 2002: 141). It connects the trust that one country's population has in another, the love of one people for the people of another, and the desire to interact with that country, which in this way creates appreciation and trust in a product, policy or culture of another country (Laroche et al. 2005: 100). The image and reputation of a country are public goods which can create a positive or negative setting for mutual interests (Leonard 2002). Manuel Castells sees the features of different states more as an imaginary perception and this imagination, according to him, is created through the means of mass communication. He estimates that states and nations today seek to be imagined communities, created in the process of affirmation. These states become products of information work and memory but have value only if recognized through international media and are effective in public opinion but not only in the national public opinion (Castells 2010: 157, 316). This identity is gaining ground in the age of globalization, in society and culture, in the age of the media, in the power of information and in the age of the Internet. This new power lies in the codes of information and in the images of representation, around which societies organize their institutions, people build their lives, and determine their behavior (Castells 2010: 425).

The image grows through exposure or by seeing the values that a place possesses, values that have active power. Harvard professor Joseph Nye (2004) calls these values soft power, a concept that is dominating international communications studies. According to him, soft power is "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies" (Nye 2004: x; 2019: 1). A country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because

other countries admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness-want to follow it (Nye 2004). In this sense, a country's soft power rests on its resources of culture, values, and policies. Soft power is not synonymous with influence, because influence can also be achieved through hard power (army and economy – coercion or payments); soft power is attractive power, which means being attractive to others (Nye 2004: 6). Nevertheless, a country's soft power or, the attractive and appealing values that the country possesses, may rise over those of other countries through activities for information and acquaintance of the foreign publics with the values that the country possesses (Saliu 2017a). These activities, which are designed to boost a country's image and make it more attractive, are dealt with by the discipline known as *public diplomacy*.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the specifics and complexity of European Union (EU) public diplomacy because the EU is not a nation-state; however, EU member states conduct public diplomacy with foreign publics. To identify these specifics, a comparison will be made between EU public diplomacy and US diplomacy. The reason for this is that the US is the place where public diplomacy was born and developed. The United States is the most active country in public diplomacy and the most influential country in the world in all areas. This comparison has been chosen because both parties represent the most powerful actors of Western civilization, aiming to increase the international image, increase cooperation, and realize foreign policy through public diplomacy. But the two parties have their differences: the EU is a union of nation-states that in foreign policy acts as a whole, but the constituent states of the EU have their own independent foreign policy, too, while the United States of America is a federal state that in foreign policy is practically represented as a nation-state. However, this paper does not intend to deal with the sense of European identity, but with the image and public diplomacy of the EU towards the foreign European public.

To better explain the communication activities undertaken by public diplomacy, we will refer briefly to US activities because public diplomacy first arose in the USA. Secondly, we will see the differences between the values that the US promotes as its soft power and the values that EU exhibits as part of its soft power but not the one that member states expose separately, which makes the latter more complex. An additional reason for this is that on the one hand Europe is easily qualified as the region with the largest diversity of public diplomacy in the world (Melissen 2013); and on the other hand, the EU has become a major global actor, which is facing a constant struggle to maintain a strong, coherent image of its position in international relations (Cross 2013b: 1).

## 2 Understanding public diplomacy

Before explaining the meaning of public diplomacy, let us briefly state what diplomacy means, which we will conventionally call either traditional or state diplomacy. "Diplomacy is concerned with the management of relations between states and between states and other actors" (Barston 2013: 1). "Diplomacy is an important means by which states pursue their foreign policies, and in many states, these are still shaped in significant degree in a ministry of foreign affairs" (Berridge 2015: 3). But lately, at a time when this kind of communication is becoming more and more public, mediated by the media or even through social networks, primarily through Twitter-diplomacy, some authors are even considering diplomacy as communication. Jönsson (2016: 79) emphasizes that without communication, there is no diplomacy. According to Bjola and Kornprobst (2018) who propose the study of diplomacy as communication, diplomacy cannot be understood without taking seriously the role of communication as an ontological anchor of diplomatic interaction. "Diplomacy is the institutionalized communication among internationally recognized representatives of internationally recognized entities through which these representatives produce, manage and distribute public goods" (Bjola and Kornprobst 2018: 6). These authors emphasize that diplomacy is first and foremost a fundamental communication, a strange, highly institutionalized communication, and that there are a number of rules that govern the communication between diplomats (Bjola and Kornprobst 2018: 6). "The leitmotif that connects different views in the literature is that diplomacy is primarily a communication process that has evolved along with the evolution and interpretation of mediating technologies" (Di Martino 2019: 2).

But public diplomacy, unlike (traditional) diplomacy, is completely communication, because it is about the communication of state and non-state actors of a country with foreign publics. There are dozens of definitions of public diplomacy, but the most acceptable can be summarized as the communication of state and non-state actors of a country with foreign audiences for the purposes of informing and influencing them to obtain desired benefits. Similar definitions are given by the most cited authors of public diplomacy such as Nye (2004), Melissen (2005), Gilboa (2008), Cull (2012), Pamment (2013, 2016), etc. These desirable benefits include, above all, the growth of exports, tourism, investment, cultural consumption, the creation of various political and military alliances, and so on. In other words, public diplomacy is typically defined as how a nation's government or society projects itself to external audiences in ways that aim to improve this foreign public's perception of that nation (Cross and Melissen 2013). Public diplomacy is about understanding cultures, attitudes, and behavior; building and

managing relationships; influencing thoughts and mobilizing actions to advance one state's interests and values (Gregory 2011: 353).

Studies in public diplomacy focus on two main areas: theoretical interpretations and the collection of practical activities. In other words, "public diplomacy is a new field of practice and knowledge" (Gilboa 2008: 55). The first plane, that of theoretical interpretations, seeks to explain the basic notions of what is meant by public or mass diplomacy, what the explanatory theory for this communication with foreign publics is, and the relationship that this field has with other areas of communication. The second plane, that of describing the activities, and also their composition, includes measures taken in this area for the realization of communication with foreign publics. Such dimensions ensure a broad consensus of the majority of public diplomacy scholars (ex.: Leonard 2002; Melissen 2005; Seib 2009; Pamment 2016; Saliu 2017b; Nye 2019):

- Information management, which is an activity that covers hours and days, where the media is used as a communication channel to transmit positive information about that country to foreign audiences;
- Strategic communication, which means sending messages to foreigners focusing on weekly and monthly activities;
- Establishing long-term relationships, which require years of activities to achieve mutual understanding and cooperation, and includes cultural diplomacy, exchanges, and scholarships, the impact of a diaspora of a country in the host country, etc.

Such activities usually focus on sending a positive image or reputation of a country to foreign publics, as a way to place as many things as possible in the political, economic, cultural, and tourist context especially nowadays, in the era of digitalization, when more and more international communications are realized through social networks and are public more than ever before. Public diplomacy today takes on even greater importance on the Internet especially in situations "whether they will prove effective in ensuring that public diplomacy messages would be better *heard, listened to and followed* by the relevant audiences" (Bjola et al. 2019).

## 2.1 The US public diplomacy

As stated earlier, the USA was the first country to develop public diplomacy. American public diplomacy is primarily linked with the name of the United States Information Agency (USIA). Its mission was to understand, inform, and influence foreign publics in the foreign policy sector in promoting American national interest, and broaden the dialogue between Americans and US institutions, and their

counterparts abroad. Its goals were to explain and advocate US policies in terms that were credible and meaningful in foreign cultures; to provide information about the US official policies, about the people, values, and institutions which influence those policies; to bring the benefits of international engagement to American citizens and hired institutions by helping them build strong long-term relationships with their counterparts overseas; to advise the President and US government policy-makers on the ways in which foreign attitudes will have a direct bearing on the effectiveness of US policies, etc. (Schindler 2018; Fisher 2013; Cull 2012).

USIA was established by US President Eisenhower in 1953 as a tool for his Cold War strategy (Cull 2012: 2). Voice of America, Radio and TV Marti dedicated to Cuba, Radio Free Europe dedicated to Europe, and Radio Liberty in the former Soviet Union operated under USIA supervision (Laurano 2006: 29). All of these broadcasting operators aimed at making propaganda against communism, and encouraging peoples to embrace democracy. They were authorized under the so-called Smith-Mundt Act. USIA was also authorized by a special act to conduct activities related to the Fulbright Scholarship Program. Thus Fulbrighters were grant recipients under the USIA cultural and scientific exchange program. In 1999, this Agency was abolished and some of its functions were folded into the Department of State under the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (Laurano 2006). In 2002, George W. Bush Administration undertook a series of public diplomacy activities involving publicity spots directed to the Arab world, a campaign involving radio, television and the press, as well as the Internet with various commercials and publications (Saliu 2015). In 2002, Radio Sawa sought to attract young Arabs through mixed Arabic-American music, while "Hi" living style magazine, through the Web site, targeted young Americans to broaden the dialogue with them (Zaharna 2010: 2). In 2004, the US launched Al Hurra satellite Television to operate side-by-side with popular televisions such as Al Jazeera and Al-Arabiya (Cull 2012; Laurano 2006).

Up to this point, we deal with the first two dimensions of public diplomacy: information management and strategic communication, which play a role in foreign policy strategies, or, as Nye (2008: 91) points out, "Governments now have to share the stage with actors who can use the information to enhance their soft power and press governments directly, or indirectly by mobilizing their publics".

Meanwhile, the third dimension of public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, has to do with the tendency of establishing long-term relationships. Hollywood movies, jazz music, cultural exchanges, etc., play a very important role in creating

long-term relationships. Hollywood has often been in line with American foreign policy, and this has happened even in recent years in the American clash with the Arab world (Szondi 2008: 153–154). The United States ranks first in the world as a movie exporter worldwide, though Indian Bollywood produces more movies a year (Nye 2004: 33). Exchanges of students and foreign scholars constitute the most powerful branch of American cultural diplomacy. According to the statistics quoted by Nye (2004), out of 1.6 million foreign students in 2002, 28 per cent of them were in the US, compared to 14 per cent in Britain; the United States publish many times more books than any other country in the world; it sells the largest number of music discs in the world; it ranks first in the number of Nobel prizes for physics, chemistry, and economics awarded, and second – after France – for literature (Nye 2004: 33).

In 2018, we see the further erosion of American soft power under the “America First” banner, Europe consolidating its soft power since 2017, and the continued rise of soft Asian power (The Soft Power 30, 2018). In the measurements made by Portland’s team for Global Ranking of Soft Power (The Soft Power 30) with 11,000 respondents in 25 countries around the world, five largest soft power countries are: the UK, followed by France, Germany, USA, Canada (The Soft Power 30 2018) and then other countries, both EU countries and countries around the world; however, EU is not included as an independent entity.

American public diplomacy can, in terms of its nature and intensity of engagement, be divided into three periods. The first stage involves times during the Cold War when America was more focused on leading the distribution of values and ideals in the divided and disturbed Europe. The collapse of the Berlin Wall marks the start of another stage when USIA was abolished. The third stage marks the revival of US public diplomacy. This stage was triggered by the September 11 terrorist attacks, which was followed by an increase of its activities (Szondi 2008: 3).

The measures taken by American diplomacy are best indicated in a report presented to the Senate by the US Secretary of State Charlotte Beers (2002), in charge of public diplomacy in the post-September 11, who states, among others, that:

*... We must improve considerably our communication with the mainstream of young adults, especially in the Middle East and South and Southeast Asia- even those young adults outside of cities. We must encourage our foreign exchange visitors to talk about our common values and to demonstrate the aspects of democracy that lead to personal progress... We have one proven program - international exchanges - that can generate nothing*

*less than a total transformation. ...We can also work with the leading satellite TV stations such as the Middle East Broadcasting Company (MBC), Lebanese LBC, Al Jazeera, and Future Television, which are keen for new programming and assure us they are open to new material. Hollywood, PBS, and Discovery have offered to help us acquire such programs. We can create completely new programs like an Arabic magazine for young adults as well as Internet programs that include training and equipment. They are in the USAID programs you've supported steadfastly over the years. Our three strategic goals, detailed in my remarks for the record, are:*

- *Re-presenting American values and beliefs - to create an exchange of common values;*
- *Demonstrating the opportunities that result from democratization, good governance, and open markets; and*
- *Supporting the education of the young (Beers 2002).*

### **3 The activities of EU public diplomacy**

European Union (EU) easily qualifies as the world's region with the greatest variety of public diplomacy practices, a rich field of activity that is begging for more theoretical reflection as well as historical inquiry (Melissen 2013: 204). Historically the EU institutions have been reluctant to employ the term *public diplomacy* and any specific image enhancement activities have been undertaken by Union member states (De Gouveia and Plumridge 2005: vi). However, the EU has made huge efforts in an attempt to improve their image and to implement a new one based on an understanding of diversity, tolerance, and cultural openness (Henze and Wolfram 2014: 7). The European Parliament advocates defining European culture as broadly as possible, but with specific and coherent strategies of promoting it to foreign publics while the European Commission finds that given the growth in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, communication tools have the potential to truly augment Europe's soft power (Cross 2014). The EU's influence, both internally and externally: internally, mutual exchange of culture within Europe promotes increased creativity, which enhances economic growth, jobs, innovation, enrichment, and lifelong learning; externally, it promotes peace, intercultural dialogue, and conflict prevention - all major goals of EU foreign policy (Cross 2014: 14). Even the EU as a unique market with joint institutions as a normative power (Manners 2002; Whitman 2011; Birchfield 2013) also has an economic, political, security, cultural interest, etc., to improve its image to the foreign public, by often seeking to empower the common sense of the union towards the internal public.



The EU as a whole has very efficient instruments to conduct a very active public diplomacy. Unless we take Brexit into account, BBC World represents a strategic tool in the international broadcasting field, same as Deutsche Welle, Radio France International, Euronews, and organizations such as British Council, Alliance Française, Goethe Institute, Dante of Italy, etc. With regard to the media that fall into the first dimension of public diplomacy, the EU does not have its own developed media network to expose the values of the Union, but it is the national media of member states that have been consolidated for decades, except Euronews, which does not have any wider scope compared to the different national televisions. While, European Broadcasting Union (EBU) has no formal connection to the EU or its predecessors and includes many non-EU members, its spirit of integration and exchange has been germane to the wider European project and contributed to the task of transforming Europe into an imagined community (Cull 2013: x). In light of the recent Eurozone crisis and a rapidly changing geopolitical landscape, a better understanding of it as a key process of soft power and diplomacy is particularly indispensable and goes beyond the impact of current developments on Europe's scale of soft power (Cross 2013a: xviii). With the so-called Bologna Process, the European system and the ranking of universities from European countries in the top 500 best-ranking universities in the world constitute a mighty soft power for the Continent.

EU operates with several programs designed to effect the application of public diplomacy. Numerous communication actors and communication channels have been set up for purposes of establishing long-term relationships, and they are mainly targeting two broad public groups: the internal public of both member and aspiring states, and the public outside of the EU. However, the EU has never talked about public diplomacy. The concept of public diplomacy is neither used nor accepted by EU officials, nor is it contained in political documents or any type of communication by the Commission or Council (Michalski 2005: 124). The EU extends public diplomacy based on values, norms, and principles. It makes efforts to first convince the internal public to strengthen a European identity, in addition to the national identity of the peoples that make up this organization of states. This is intended to be achieved in the absence of clearly defined EU political interests, and its foreign policy is based on the values and principles that this unity of states cultivates even in the integration process, pointing out the EU norms and policy regime (Michalski 2005: 126). These EU values concern first of all basic principles and values such as peace, democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights, the market economy, good neighbourliness, good institutional governance, etc. (Manners 2002). This normative component is very important for the EU's soft power because Brussels is one of the world's largest capitals

by the number of journalists, with about 1000 (Manners 2002: 127). With their reporting on EU developments, this large number of journalists from around the world undoubtedly plays an important role in mass diplomacy towards the public of the countries they report to. Another impressive element is that the values and principles mentioned in the preceding are required to be achieved not only by the member states but also by those that aim membership voluntarily. Voluntary partnership is the basis of Brussels' requirements for achieving EU principles and norms. This makes the EU's soft power more appealing. In the broader information network, EU promotion is based on three main pillars: the EU promotes greater freedom, prosperity, and security for Europeans. About 17 per cent of all European Commission legislative proposals concern freedom, security and justice (Lodge 2006: 1). The EU promotes a governance model inspired by solidarity and respect for diversity; the EU enables member states to play a world role with their values and expansion of power (Commission of the European Communities 2002).

In the cultural and educational sphere, the EU focuses on intercultural communication. This has been facilitated in the first place by the removal of border barriers and the free movement of people. Through various educational programs, freedom of student movement from one institution to another through the Bologna Process, and assistance in scientific research advancement through various funding tools, the EU intends to achieve the dimension of cultural diplomacy for purposes of establishing long-term relationships within the EU itself. In this sense, student exchanges as one of the most powerful dimensions of cultural diplomacy represent a distinct segment of European public diplomacy. Erasmus+ is the EU's program to support education, training, youth, and sport in Europe. Its budget of €14.7 billion will provide opportunities for over 4 million Europeans to study, to train and be trained, and gain experience abroad (Erasmus+ 2019). Another Programme is "Creative Europe". This program is an important tool with which the EU encourages a sense of common or shared European identity. In order to enhance the visibility of Europe's cultural and audio-visual sectors, the European Commission cooperates with national authorities, culture sector organisations, and other EU institutions to support a variety of actions, initiatives, and awards (Dimitriadi 2018). The aid, which comes from several powerful donors from the North and is directed to various regions of the world such as Kosovo, Korea, Mexico, Turkey, Afghanistan, Somalia, etc., also seeks to focus on the image (Pamment and Wilkins 2018: 2.). In other words, image is very important for EU, too. This image needs to be improved with more accurate, important, and distinct qualities (Anholt 2007a: 67-68). The image helps export growth, attracting foreign investment, and promoting the country as a suitable tourist destination (Hoking 2005: 31). The focus for this improvement should happen to countries

that are more important to our interests, and not in those countries where the influence is easily reached (Leonard 2002).

But, what do these countries mean to the EU? China turns out to be an impressive investor in EU countries in several sectors, particularly in the energy field (Curran and Spigarelli 2017). The EU does not have a Riviera, but it can be French, Italian, Greek, Spanish, or any other Riviera. These activities are conducted to companies where the interest is greater. When we analyse society as a form of communication, it should be seen as a process where reality is created, preserved, but also modified and divided. When we think about society, we are almost always constrained by the traditions that revolve around us as a powerful influence form. Even as Edward Said (1978) explains, scientific approaches to different societies or cultures often have perverted objectivity because of this prior concoction and influence on our minds. Moreover, cultural diplomacy seeks to smooth these preliminary concoctions through communication. It happens when diplomats, i.e. governments try to shape the course of cultural relations between two or more countries in the interest of everyone. In this sense, today there are universities that have courses in politics and international relations that use popular films as primary texts to facilitate active reading on foreign policy (Totman 2009). However, there are also film industries that in different cases pursue the country's political course towards another country. Hollywood has often followed this course, while during the last decade it has portrayed some Arab countries according to the State Department's assessment (Totman 2009: 153–154). Namely, we have the exposure of the national cinematography of European countries instead of the cinematography we call the EU. Also, co-productions are known as co-operation e.g. Italian-Franco-German rather than as an EU production. Music is also an important component of cultural diplomacy, a kind of communication with the culture and tradition of foreign countries (Totman 2009: 2–6). This cultural dimension of music means both broadcastings through audio-visual media and direct communication with the organization of concerts in foreign countries. A Russian listener describes the listening of American music as a neglected element of freedom, while jazz has played the role of cultural ambassador (Schneider 2004). For treating music as a force of social life, Adorno, one of the main exponents of this kind of treatment says, music "trains the subconscious to condition the reflexes" (DeNora 2003: 1). But the EU does not have music that is identified with it but with the national cultures of member states. Hungarian music groups, who sing avant-garde folk songs, demonstrate what life is like in Hungary, the importance of musical expression and diversity in Hungarian culture and make connections with others which conveys the openness of Hungarian society (Cross 2013b: 7). This Hungarian public diplomacy activity

enhances Hungarian image and culture within the EU itself. Even if these groups do these tours to the public outside of Europe, they again present Hungarian values and culture in the first place, and not the ones of the EU. Hence, cultural and language diversity is important and should be protected (Cross 2013b: 7). Eurosong, the annual song festival, presents the countries of the European continent, and also countries beyond as in the case of Israel; so the festival includes non-EU countries, too. This song festival is hard to say to represent a pure EU value, but more a European value in the continental sense.

Cities, historic and cultural heritage are also a strong EU soft power (La Porte 2013), while not only countries but also cities are now built on brands (Anholt 2007b). Cities have played a major role in the development of society since antiquity, with the development of democracy, economic development, the logic of self-defence, but also the public sphere. Today cities are concerned not only with their role as tourist destinations of their cultural and historical heritage but also by the governing model they often give. Thus, for example, Copenhagen has recently given an example by choosing to reduce energy consumption through smart grids, and Sofia with the integration of urban transport projects (La Porte 2013: 85). They present models and values for providing services and facilitation to citizens, often exceeding the national average levels; even global problems are often overcome or even solved at local levels with activities in the pursuit of peace, protection of human rights, cultural diversity and democratic principles, and empowerment of multiculturalism (La Porte 2013: 102).

But again, these cities often appear as entities in themselves, often even exceeding the soft national power so that we sometimes even get confused about where a city is located. Anholt (2007) states that they emerge as a brand in themselves within their own state, while the EU as a whole has less to do with the image of the Union, the perceptions of the non-European public. For example, Vienna surpasses the image of the state, and much less can it be thought of as a soft power in the EU.

There is a common assumption that the EU's image is inherently weak because Europeans have little in common or that they do not identify with Europe (Cross 2013b: 9).

#### **4 Specifications of EU-USA public diplomacy**

But the behavior of states, in addition to interest, may depend on the attitude, friendship, or closeness that a leader of one country has with the leader of another. Here we deal with the great importance that the individual has in communicating with foreign publics, that is, on the impact that the individual can

play on the image of the country. This is important, for instance, if the president of the United States and the leader of Russia get along well with each other on a personal level (Kunczick 1997: ix). Officials' statements to other countries affect domestic opinion about the image of other countries. One of the most basic elements for good political communication is the careful use of words (Waller 2007: 20). If a politician or a state official issues critical statements towards another country, as Italian politician Salvini has recently done to France, his supporters are implied to also create a not-so-positive judgment of the country being criticized. This proves that a country can fail in its efforts to increase influence through public diplomacy if the leaders of that country, who have broad popular support, are not very friendly to the country that conducts public diplomacy or tries to create a positive image. But these mostly damage the unification of the EU's image with foreign publics.

Being quite heterogeneous in terms of internal composition, the EU promotes mottos such as "EU as a zone of peace, prosperity, and democracy", "United in Diversity", "EU as a Model" and presents its institutions as values on the historically hostile continent, such as Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), Common Defense and Security Policy (CDSP), European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), Enlargement, Strategic Partnerships, etc. (Sandrin and Hoffmann 2018). These mottos aim at the external effect, i.e. how various nations are historically known as highly hostile, today speak with one voice; but they also aim at the internal effect on European citizens on issues of identity empowerment. These values also represent a model which, despite occasional crises, remains a source of inspiration to others for the peace, cooperation, and well-being of citizens. But the reference to the hostile past of European countries seems like an exaggerated setback in today's rapidly changing world. Perhaps the narrative of the EU has to be re-written at the same time (Duke 2013).

It is evident that intra-European cultural diversity with many countries, with different cultures and identities, is challenging to design a unified and original image in front of an external audience (Henze and Wolfram 2014: 8). Unlike the EU, the US, although having a different cultural mosaic due to centuries of emigration and diverse geography, manages to project, without any difficulty, the coherent image based on some values already consolidated over the centuries. But American hard power (the military in the first place) has often undermined the core values of American soft power, especially during interventionist policies or criticisms of human rights abuses such as Guantanamo, CIA kidnappings across Europe, and so on (Nye 2004). Europe is not known for its arrogant foreign policy, much less for its interventionist policy, while hard power in the American sense does not even exist, although Europe is an extraordinary economic power.

EU cultural diplomacy related to student exchanges, tourism, culture, also distinguishes it from the US. People who have been part of the exchange program or have had an organized visit to another country, mostly have good impressions of that place. Alexander Yakovlev, for example, was heavily influenced during his studies by political science expert David Truman at Columbia University in 1958 (Nye 2004: 46). Upon his return to his homeland, he became the director of an important institute and a member of the Soviet Politburo, a figure with a significant liberal influence on Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Yakovlev's colleague Oleg Kalugin, who became a senior official in the Soviet KGB in 1997, a few years after the fall of communism, comments that the exchanges were like the Trojan Horse for the Soviet Union. Both men, Nye (2004: 46) points out, have played an important role in the collapse of the Soviet system. This is not the case with the EU. When students return to their home country, they talk about the culture of the countries that are part of the EU rather than the EU; tourists talk about French, Italian, Greek Riviera, etc. The media is another very important dimension, included in two out of the three dimensions of public diplomacy. Since public diplomacy is communication, and as noted above, even traditional diplomacy cannot be treated entirely without the communication component, let us conclude this article by emphasizing the importance of message mediation channels in international communications.

## 5 Conclusion

Due to the heterogeneity of national cultures and the actions of nation-states within the EU, it is difficult to identify and form a proper soft power of the Union. The values that the EU often aims to promote to foreign audiences outside Europe, such as democracy, prosperity, the rule of law, humanity, etc., are, above all, part of the values of nation-states. The EU has also failed to strengthen its soft power because educational values are part of the national states, and its immigration and humanitarian policy has often been a failure. Co-operation on continental stability, ending historical intolerance and hostility on the continent, the single European market and currency, all represent the values of the EU's *smart power*.

The US case shows a model for the plurality of public diplomacy, but it requires numerous and powerful resources that cannot be easily implemented by other countries aspiring to practice public diplomacy. Britain, which aims more in the national brand, i.e. economic diplomacy, has its own media features. While for CNN we can say that with its program, mainly political, it addresses more of a political-making audience in the world, that of the BBC addresses not only the policy-makers, but a wider audience of people, and not only political or eco-

conomic elites. Meanwhile, British and the US newspapers stand in competition with each other in global communication. In addition to the fact that the EU does not accept public diplomacy in its documents during its development, there are other distinctive specifications between the EU and the US in this area. We can say that these specifics are more related to the effect of distinctive activities. For the first dimension of public diplomacy, i.e. media management practice, the US has media that promote American values and politics, starting with popular television stations such as CNN, CBC, ABC, and newspapers such as New York Times, Washington Post, and other newspapers. Even for Europe (but as a continent), we can say that the BBC is better known, without analysing this data after BREXIT. But, the BBC is perceived as a British media, not as a Union media; the same situation is with the popular daily newspapers, such as The Guardian, The Daily Telegraph, Financial Times, The Daily Mail, The Times, El Mundo, El Pais, Le Figaro, Le Monde, Corriere della Sera, with Italian, French, Spanish TV channels, German, etc., which are perceived based on the language of communication as national resources rather than EU resources. EU does not have a Hollywood; however, member countries have national cinematography featuring national soft power. So, the EU's public diplomacy is more complex than that of particular states or that of the United States. Often the soft power of the Union is quite difficult to distinguish from that of member states, while its member states have long consolidated their image in the world and continue to empower it daily. However, the EU soft power is widely recognized for its peaceful, cooperative, and humanitarian role.

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## Podatki o avtorju:

Asst. Prof. Dr. **Hasan Saliu**  
AAB College  
Pristina, Kosovo  
E-mail: [hasan.saliu@aab-edu.net](mailto:hasan.saliu@aab-edu.net)