

## Working Group on Communication Strategies and Practices

# SUMMARY

18-19 September 2018

Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights

Budapest, Hungary

### Tuesday, 18 September: Training on Strategic Narratives in a Media Society

- *Lilly Korpiola*, Communication Expert

Instagram – 60 sec rule – young people under 30

When you tell your story 10 times, it gets better, more specific & you may get to link it to your passion!

- Narratives

Our mind is lead by narratives :

- Meta narrative 'deep narrative' – liberal values
- Strategic narratives – Battle of ideas – polarisation of competing ideas. Trolls & external influence wants to divide and conquer. Strong polarisation. Make Russia great again, ottoman empire for Turkey
- Media narrative / media representations – visible level projected in media/social media

Manifest destiny – US thought in the 1900s – USA had a great position; Israel – we are the chosen people

Minority complex for many – we've always negotiated our identity against the mega threat

Meta narratives used by strong political figures, and people recognise it as it's part of the country's DNA, hence easy to believe.

Information warfar – key element in military mindset. This influences civil society. War now hybrid – physical events & media

What have we done / What are we doing / What will we do eg. ISIS fighters believe in the return of the Caliphate

Nokia connecting people – gave mobile phones to the poor in India. People felt it was a great narrative and they were part of it.

Narratives too often told from the elite perspective. Should evoke emotion among people from poorer backgrounds.



Unique time of history: never before has one person be able to reach the whole world.

New, Negative or Surprise makes news now !

There are universal narratives that appeal to all eg. #metoo. So consider linking your strategic narratives to global stories. Want to reach to resonators (formerly audiences), so that they take ownership and retell your story.

Traditional narratives project story from above, whereas new narratives come from below and are easily owned by people. So how do we mix those, and create a hybrid media event – it's physical and mediated, they have symbolic power – 9/11

If you want to fight against the current powers, must develop a happy war mentality.

For Europe to win the battle, be more hungry and more humble. Be self-reflective. Be awake.

Interesting reading: [The Atlantic – Sep 2018. A warning from Europe](#) – the worst is yet to come.

Issues management – we need to listen to hear what's on the ground. In order to develop communication strategies, need to understand the issues!

Discussion – Common Themes

- Real problems which we have to deal with in long term are not always dealt with (eg refugees not really the issue, more economic, but politicians don't deal with such internal issues)
- Fear is taken on board easily as an emotion, so media often panders to fear
- Role of traditional church is to influence
- Lilly Kuliaraka – media ties to solidarity ?
- Media & Elite narratives vs ordinary people narrative
- Complicated countries : small countries with few migrants but severe anti-migrant narrative. Governments are introducing laws dividing people eg. Social issues – trans, abortion ; Big industry & money behind big political parties. Sleeping left side taking on policies of right side ; #metoo – very dynamic in elite discussion, but domestic violence continues; anti-semitism & neonazism rising
- « hate speech is murder'' – biblical reference
- Needs to connected to meta-narratives
- Campaign about something needs to be linked to deep narratives of a country

Issue Management

- Bannon : Looks at current issues, then creates enemy, then fear, then solution
- Copy cat effect: things are spreading. Look at Norway and Austria.
- Conspiracy theories – easy solutions, good communicators, occur when there is a lack of information and meaning. People are filling in the gaps. People need a coherent feeling to understand what is happening in the world.

Media system is going through turmoil – we have the power if we take advantage of current media

situation.

Communication strategies – how can we invite opponents into dialogue. Magic of communication is to share ! Communication can get out of control, but you can always attach emotion which gets across to other person.

Key elements of communication strategy -> communication channels -> audiences/resonators (not passive, but pass on message . We only throw a stone in water and then we see ripples if done well) -> content (text, video, face to face, images) – if you want to reach digital natives, you have to speak their language eg video

State – Nation – Ethnicity level (point of identification) . Migrants/refugees coming are more focused on religion/ethnicity/family rather than democracy. Identity markers are different between us, we need dialogue – awareness of self and other. We don't understand other as they have different identity markers.

Younger generation doesn't identify with traditional politics and belief in nation states. Where is people's sense of place? No longer traditional – in 10 years, the way we look at politics will change! Institutions will change – if institutions do not adapt to media logic, we will lose voice.

Strategically, biggest challenge is that we lose our voice if we don't discover what's going on. How can we interact with audience in a way that they'll listen to us?

2 main publics: average Joe vs politicians. Many can be reached through social media, but also have to do traditional lobbying. We need to learn from other countries so we're not taken by surprise.

How can we penetrate into other bubbles? Eg. Through hashtags, traditional lobbying, media, stakeholders.

Need to prioritise! In Norway, how to choose cases so that right wing parties will be interested in those topics. Portugal – social partners & dialogue, then discussion with ministers.

In your strategic narrative, need to decide best strategy! Make right choices depending on where your country lies. Make choices not based on today but what you need tomorrow.

While there is a rise of nationalism, at the same time, young people are less likely to engage in politics.

Baumann – in society, usually 5 media generations.

1. Lots of people in power who are post-war (after 1945), depend on press, radio, tv, institutions
2. 1960s generation – first generation to go international. Equality, education, equal opportunities
3. 1970s – depression ! Some got a lot of money from big business, others are do not have. It's a divided generation
4. 1980s/90s – X, Y, Z
5. 2000s

Press / TV / Internet / Social Media (esp. Youtube)

You rely on media that's linked to your generation

With 80s/90s generation coming into power, things are going to change! We can't take same message to same channels. Social media generation are hardest to penetrate, as in own bubbles and not interested in traditional politics as such. Greatest political exclusion is for youth – they don't rely on current political system.

Cross generational empathy needs to be employed.

**A good narrative needs:**

- Protagonist (a hero) / antagonist (an opponent)
- Obstacle or trauma to overcome
- Surprise or suspension
- Moving theme that awakens emotions
- The beginning, a midpoint, an end
- It gives us khatarsis
- Point of identification, solidarity, empathy
- 2 videos shown: google india / gillette

Dominance in general is a threat. Powerless people cling to dominant figures. If you victimise your characters no one will identify with them. How a victim can show power -> overcoming issue & forgiveness ; when they get justice ; defending themselves & show confidence (someone is empowering them) ; support & solidarity – show people around them

**Hero : shouldn't stay downtrodden.** They need to grow, they have to be an actor taking hold of their own life (we live in individualistic society). Obstacles/sufferings are only reason to create the narrative. Need to add surprise/suspense – but this can't be made up. So present in narrative form.

Eg new law – how that change will affect typical person. Finland – the law could be the hero story! Or your organisation could be the hero !

Austria: cases included on website (since 2010) so people can analyse cases

Narrative doesn't have to be big and detailed. Can be short eg. Czech Republic

Portugal – don't use heroes, but make it neutral, otherwise it can create stereotypes

'stars' are no longer the focus, but individual people are the focus (see photo with hilary clinton & people with backs to her taking selfies)

Look at images of values & where people are around Europe based on geography/values

Bloom's taxonomy & creating understanding: for media strategy, is there basic understanding in your society? If basic comprehension exists, then bring more comprehensive info, or application. We need to analyse what kind of content is necessary and develop info based on where people are at.

### 3 aspects of empathy:

1. emotional empathy – ability to see others emotions, ‘i see that you are frustrated ‘ ;
2. experienced empathy ‘if i were you, i would feel the same’ – peer empathy ;
3. cognitive empathy ‘understanding of why others feel in a certain way – I understand why you are frustrated’

People need a personal point of reference that it breaks your heart, or it’s a very general narrative that touches everyone.

### Wednesday, 19 September: Working Group Meeting

#### Welcome

- *Commissioner László Székely*, Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights, Hungary

Welcome from Laszlo Szekely: we all work towards same goals, using different tools. Essentially have same objectives. Work for people discriminated. Thanks to our work, some policies & legislation can change. In more than 70% of cases, our recommendations are accepted. We are not mandated to make decisions which are binding.

Communication to protect Human Rights: in past 20 years, it has become very clear that legal expertise and communication, if connected in reasoned manner, are very strong together. We can solve all situations based on legal argumentation, and good communication. Before we go public, we need to try to solve issues for victims. Publicity provided by media can help us raise awareness about discrimination issues.

Communication is not equivalent of only media appearances. Solutions may be arrived at through broad media pressure.

Our communication also includes, in ombudsman act, awareness raising and sensitivisation to change the views of society. Wide society reach to change situation of all. 3 years ago, response to OPCAT report was surprising. Very strong & wide reaction to this report. 4000 places of detention in Hungary (including psychiatric homes, old age homes, orphanages etc), and reason for success was because we could reach out to all these places and report on what we saw.

Citizens or representative org can express their views on rights – we give space to them to complain via website, FB, in person complaints, and media office

All these tasks render work of Equinet relevant, great to have diverse discussions through the network, and great to rely on this knowledge through colleagues.

- *Ana Tretinjak*, Office of the Ombudswoman, Croatia & Working Group Moderator

If you want to deal with a topic, or have an expert to propose, just let us know ! We are happy to hear



what challenges you have and what you want to talk about. Feel free to join [FB group](#). Looking for co-moderator to replace Ana for the year !

- Quick Round of Updates

Germany : will do campaign focusing on youth this year

Norway : handshake cases. Muslim teacher in Norway was fired as he wouldn't shake hands with female colleagues. Ombud was turned against for raising discrimination grounds for religion & belief. Raised issue for a number of weeks and journalists finally picked up on their message properly. Have been called the Sharia Ombud because of that. They were asked to comment by the media. Jon had to yell at editors to change their editorials to be more positive

Maria/Finland: public discussion around paraathletes. If they don't come home with a medal, they have to pay part of trip themselves. Raised good public discussion. Finns love sports. They realised what equality means & have big sports orgs rethinking their policies. Creating a new culture around sports linked to equality which is great.

Bulgaria: Campaign accessible environment for people with disabilities. Over 500 cases. Report to come out soon. Managed to get spot with state department in US state department.

### **UDHR 70th Anniversary Campaign**

- *Kamila Černáková*, National Centre for Human Rights, Slovakia

Following presentation of campaign, we broke up into 4 groups to discuss the proposal and find the best version of the campaign possible.

#### **Feedback from Group Discussions:**

1. What will people get from it? Who are true equality heroes? Share their stories! Find stories through networks, and get people to tell others' stories. No need for super hero image
2. Hero theme would not really motivate people. Maybe acts of kindness better? Should be about people. Needs to be fun, not abstract. Having FB frames ? What can activate people? Socks with specific colours? Should be about humanity, rather than rights as this is a difficult concept. This makes us human. Unity ! Fun & easy, action you do is sth you can do at home. You shouldn't have to show your face in the picture. Meta narratives in different countries, so this needs to be something everyone in Europe can relate to
3. Language linked to 'Heroes'. Look at history and describe stories from the past, 2-3 stories per country from around Europe. Would highlight heroes from each country. Young people can be confident if they hear stories of past. Heroes might be misunderstood – positive action? Hero not the right name but Equality Heroism better. Translating Hero to another language means that often it will be come masculine (to be avoided)! #HumanRights. Equinet Calendar personas could be used.
4. Very difficult to find heroes. Easier to find every day stories from every day people which promotes basic equality eg. Teachers, NGOs, make actions that promote equality; collect stories from members, make same frame, same style. But how many posts will we share ? One from each country? Do we share only our own or from different countries. Stories from calendar are



not all very sexy. Even if we post stories, how do we get users to engage in this? Create slogan that is attractive. Attractive, emotional, free. Human of New York style.

Subgroup (Doros, Paivi, Irida, Kamila) to discuss how to take it forward. Develop frame, timeline, story suggestions.

### **Recommendations during election campaigns: Equality Checklist**

- *Sarah Cooke O'Dowd*, Equinet

Participants were asked to consider if they like the idea of an equality checklist. If not, what else? If so, what messages? And then to see how they'd reach out to politicians (and others?). They divided into 4 groups and here are the outcomes.

1. If use it, adapt to national and institutional context, but some are not independent and will not use it, could be seen as bias ; but we need to promote equality anyway, that is part of our mandate ; but Bulgaria, for example, works in a sense that they impose sanctions, which makes it harder for them to be watchdogs of equality, so if they use it, they would have to be very diplomatic and careful, so they would not be seen as taking part of the elections : austria sees it as good for general situations, but not for elections, for the same reason, remaining neutral ; checklist for disability accessible elections (ennhri, FRA, ombud for people with disabilities from Croatia, Slovakia), but those statements are general so some would like to make them more detailed, adjusted to slovakian context, accompanied to with the explanations on who is included in the recommendations.
2. A good idea, but formulate it more concrete ; Charter of European Political Parties for a Non-Racist Society could be used for this project ; Maria from Finland proposes that, for situations when there is a risk of being accused for political activities, we can use a factsheet on equality (european and national versions) ; Portugal's observatory for migration publishes a report with short leaflets of about 10 lines, explaining the right of migrants, showing them as contributors to society, to raise awareness in schools, among journalists, political parties ; Paivi thinks other actors can use the checklist (NGOs, Ministry of justice etc.)
3. Lots of question – who will verify the checklist, do politicians use it to promote themselves and can misuse it; maybe better to use as promises, to prevent misuse ; the institutions that do not feel independent can use it in terms of recommendations ; better for individual politicians to use it than parties ; need to specify the goal – do we use it for elections or for politicians behaviour after elections
4. Good idea, some felt they could not engage on a national level because they could be accused of political activism ;greece has 3 elections next year, so they could make three types ; maximum of 5 points ; should we have an official letter to go along with it ?; promoting this through the media and getting journalists to ask politicians about it ;are the famous people the right people to promote it ?; we should have the timeline, a deadline, to make it easier to follow the

developments

Closing conclusions: Maybe we need to engage with other working groups on this. Sarah can present ideas to other working groups. Really need engagement for members to make this work!

### Collecting Victims Stories

- *Ana Tretinjak*, Office of the Ombudswoman, Croatia
- *Mintautė Jurkutė*, Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson, Lithuania

NB to have a face to sell our stories and have an impact on society.

Why? Our societies are built on stories. A powerful tool for connecting with people and motivating them to take action. Gives a human face to a problem. Stories evoke feelings and values, and support beliefs (NB for decision making). Stories win memory over facts (5% remember statistics vs. 63% remembering stories).

Journalist bought 100 items, spent 129 dollars. He went online, invented stories, saying it was fictional, but they sold at 3613 dollars.

Different challenges:

- Privacy
- Dignity
- Vulnerability in hands of media
- Trust of potential complainants
- Logistical difficulties/obstacles

More formal from beginning? Ask your contact 'can we call you if media is interested in your case'? What are your experiences?

Lithuania: for many years, used facts but without real people. Old campaign about discrimination is harmful for everyone.

- Would rather have bankruptcy than have old person working for me
- Would rather a flood in house rather than Roma plumber
- Would rather man with small brain rather than woman with small children

Maybe inventing stories is not the right way as maybe stories that can't be related to.

Superheroes: all survivors of domestic violence – superhero with female ending. All left perpetrator husbands. Was it nice to expose them. Some weren't happy to be superheroes. Good media coverage, and other victims started to feel like yes, they are superheroes.

Example of transgender person at conference in parliament. How he felt, how it was to get docs changed, what it's like to live as transgender in Lithuania. Person was identified through NGO working to represent transgender people.



Discussion about domestic violence – ombud, police, psychologist, 2 victims, shelter house rep, journalist – they did conference in shelter. Streamed on FB, everyone who registered came. Show how it is to live in their shoes. Make the victims big (don't make them small!). Here, journalist took topic to prime time, discussed istanbul convention on tv, brought victims stories. Minister of social security & foreign affairs there, CEDAW committee rep. Moment when women had to tell story in front of camera makes them feel small. IT was a lot of asking at the time, and probably they wouldn't do it again as journalist didn't ensure their dignity afterwards.

Some negative reactions to the victims. Domestic violence women kept low profile. Transgender guy is good speaker and he can manage pretty well, but our skin is only so thick.

#### *Discussion*

We need to support them. Victims support directive – there is institutional support. Croatia brought women out of institution to talk about stigma. We contacted institution who had good contact with people. They talked about it within the org, got a lot of support in institution, came as a group, very well prepared, looked good. But in the end, media didn't pick it up! Most people when rang, are happy to share their story as they want stories to be known. (But depends on topic! Sexual harassment, domestic violence not easy!) Victims are all NB.

Finland : more NB to protect privacy of victim – don't use name, won't use contact details to journalists. Previous campaign was linked to people who went to court. Worked with employers

Malta : Case on gender pay gap. We issued statement and didn't announce victims identity.

Austria : FB & data protection period ! We've done a lot of work on this. We once had a victim on sexual harassment. In data base, we ask a question to see if they would be prepared to talk to media (Media interest yes/no). NGO made film and media talked about that. We have mobile phones, so persons can take videos of themselves.

Croatia: they don't give contact to media. They call people and ask

Germany : can be empowering for people. Eg stories of homosexual men – overturned. One of them is on tv all the time, he had been a journalist before, very nice, very selfconfident, very likeable. But could have turned out very different. He hasn't had any negative feedback, but maybe he was just luck. A transgender person we had talk before, is now regularly shared by right wing people and very negative feedback. If you have time, talk to people, walk them through hwo it could be.

Finland (Non-Discrim Ombud) – we say no to journalists requests, but case to case basis, so if someone is capable, why not. We go through with victims – your story in the media, we'll tell it this way, look at risks together. When we do reconciliation agreements we give publicity. But victims are generally anonimised and hardly ever get interviews. We usually know victims well enough to know whether or not we could ask them.

Portugal – couple of refugees who arrived, named their son cristiano ronaldo.

Finland : some issues are more personal (trans etc) not as easy to talk about as just being pregnant for example. Really need to consider how important it is to put face & name, and whether it's worth the risks.

Q: how do media find out about victims ? Well, in report we might have sentence that we have 20 people who've made case. Journalists read that line and ring to talk to one person. Maybe they are talking about disability more generally, so they contact disability body

No one has policy established to contact victims. Lithuania has rules about topics, but not directly about victims.

## Lunch

### Upcoming plans

- **Working Group Work Plan for 2019**

Proposal on positive narratives training very welcome. Offers us opportunity to do something different from what we usually do. It's usually our job to criticize, and what needs to be fixed, not what is working well and what is positive. NGOs in countries might be a good source of names for experts for that. Within training, also positive stories of disability. How can we make our message simple? How to build narrative we want in a simple way. Ideally linked to assignment one month before and that could be shared in advance, so would get real professional feedback from trainer. Focus on national issue, then focus on spirit of what you've achieved in your national language. Engagement before training. Needs assessment to see what people want, but ideally, gather main issues for each person, and they bring each those narratives for each issue to the table (for collection).

WG to discuss specific topic like domestic violence to put on political agenda. Link to WG gender equality & sexual harassment happening.

- **Equinet Strategic Plan 2019-2022**

Portugal HCM – may lack focus on migration/refugees in the future

Austria – WGs, not clusters mentioned. Why not ? Strategic decision, so why not describe them. They are part of the methods. Outline methods better.

Portugal CITE – Values NB but decent work is missing.

Croatia – Inclusion ! Difference between integration, inclusion and we need inclusion

- **Fundamental Rights Forum: Communicating Equality** - identify common messages to our members attending & raising awareness amongst your colleagues of the Forum (consider Live Stream)
- #MyRightsAreYourRights – integrates everybody.
- Don't need to cover all tracks. Clear messages are needed – we're not well known. Have to re/build trust. Clear message as to what equality bodies do - > we are watchdog for equality. One protecting the balance, others more promotional. All working to save the balance in society. No person's rights should be above anyone else's. Most NB: Us being watchdogs of equality, watchdogs of balance. Will always get underfunded as no one in Europe is aiming for balance, so

we don't get public attention. Underreporting is clearly an issue, but it's tough to fight the ocean. Share idea that NEBs are needed, but don't shove equality down their throats. Promote equality to other broader circles. EU elite must understand that equality is NB>

- HR are not working without anti-discrimination -> so mention these as buzzwords. Mention H.Directive !
- AD and equality work is not only our work. Everyone should work on this and promote it. Just telling people what we are and what we do is NB. Can we do both?
- Lithuania – lacking authority. Our recommendations are doubted, especially with cases such as sexual harassment. So go for trust & authority building. MyRightsareYourRights. Maybe your rights are my rights is more personal. Change it ?
- RightsCulture – Equal Culture. Society is moving away from equality & HR. NB to promote the culture of respect
- Building Trust – we need to get our institution known. This is basic. Based on right decisions, right recommendations, awareness raising campaigns. Prioritising 'best' problems but on different grounds, ex-officio. Don't work only on complaints.
- Rebuild Trust – show that NEBs are a tool for Europe & each country has one and should gain the trust of each citizen
- Talk with other EU institutions. We expect support from them generally (eg. EC, Art 7 on polish/hungarian questions), we shouldn't be the last frontier. Make a strong stand against violators.
- Human Rights and Equality. Both have right to exist and we need both. Need more connections to learn from each other. Human Rights Defenders exist – need to make links with what's already out there. What does it mean by Rebuilding Trust. NEEd to take care of words. Building Trust
- Jon Norway – usually very optimistic. But now more pessimistic. When we talk about rebuilding trust. Limited space to do work. Struggling across EU. People say things are fairly ok, could have been worse. Let's not accept premise that we should rebuild. Need to do crisis communication & counter attacks. WE NEED MORE SPACE AND RAMP UP CRISIS COMMUNICATION
- Czech Republic – crisis communication for 3 years, only could speak about children, seniors, people with disabilities. Now want to be more progressive. My goal as brand manager is to rebuild trust. 8 departments (family, justice, social, finance, migration...) so trying to put together team, lawyer of each department meets every 2 weeks, human centred design, want to encourage people within org to think about topics differently. CHanging everything so is a big job
- Not yet in crisis! Very difficult situation ok, but not yet crisis.
- Malta – building trust. Have to show people we are there for them. Come to us for complaints.
- Portugal – Migration: org of Forum, very odd that they don't provide budget. Need to give money for at least one person form each MS to hear what equality body, NGO, have to say. Avoid echo chambre
- Belgium – not sticking together is sad. We all need to work together and our missions are complementary. We focus on rights of groups vs NHRIs focus on individual rights. Need to work together to cover all.
- What's main objective of Forum ? Use, adapt & improve. Everyone knows what's best for their country
- Will be opportunity so show NEBs as useful partners. We collaborate with many institutions and it's worth it to come to us for our knowledge. We need them to get on board of our messages



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and build on that.

- Croatia disability - Differentiate NEB, NHRI, Ombud – we have neglected equality mandate and need to increase focus on this. Build a case for equality. Emphasize our unique selling point. What sets us apart. What's our comparative advantage ? Outline & lack of NEB rep shows need for this. What can we do for others.
- Horizontal Directive!
- What tools & success stories are out there ? Campaigns/information need to make people aware of what we're doing. How are we preventing



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# LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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