



# BiH Public Diplomacy Policy for Supporting EU Accession

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## Summary

The proposed policy aims to address one of the most significant challenges for BiH in the EU integration process regarding the perception of the country and its image abroad. It focuses on the need for a policy within the EU Integration Strategy of BiH<sup>1</sup> that would build the country's reputation and support its accession to the EU. This Policy Study makes the case for a strategic public diplomacy policy that would support reaching BiH's top foreign policy objective - joining the EU. The policy fits with other government policies and EU related programmes and fills the gap in the EU Integration Strategy of BiH.

When BiH re-starts fulfilling its EU accession related obligations it will, in parallel, need to have in place a sound policy for "selling its Europeanisation progress abroad", in order to create a reputation as a credible EU member candidate and desirable future EU member state.<sup>2</sup>

This Policy Paper offers recommendations related to the justification for and basic elements of a public diplomacy policy for BiH, as well as the institutional structure needed for implementing it and for increasing the capacity of BiH institutions to support the fulfilment of BiH foreign policy goals in the future.

<sup>1</sup> Strategija integrisanja Bosne i Hercegovine u Evropsku uniju (*Strategy of Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the European Union*), Council of Ministers of BiH, Directorate of European Integration of BiH (DEI), 2006

<sup>2</sup> Research and empirical evidence prove reputations are not built on their own. They are a matter of carefully designed state-led projects, which include non-state actors reflecting and projecting the country's internal changes abroad.

## Introduction

### Problem definition

<sup>3</sup> See Priorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina Foreign Policy, BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as formulated by the BiH Presidency.

<sup>4</sup> See Komunikacijska strategija za informiranje javnosti o procesu pristupanja Bosne i Hercegovine Evropskoj uniji (*Communication Strategy for informing the public about BiH accession to the EU*), as adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH, and published by the Directorate for European Integration (DEI), January 2009.

<sup>5</sup> The term "first rank countries" is used here as in European studies literature and implies the three countries whose actions and policies have been determining the development of the EU since its beginning - the United Kingdom, France and Germany. Those countries also demonstrate the most advanced PD strategies and implementation practices.

<sup>6</sup> PD at this stage of accession would be of crucial importance because any image change and reputation-building exercise represents a mid-term or long-term programme; therefore any delay in initiating such a policy could result in a significant setback to BiH accession.

<sup>7</sup> The analysis of the British experience with re-branding is the most persuasive case of public diplomacy. It was recognised that the campaign targeting foreign audiences also reinvigorated the British public at home. See [www.markleonard.net](http://www.markleonard.net).

<sup>8</sup> The policy would be founded on the well-established assumption that how a particular country is seen abroad has significant implications for its international position. International rating, a country's reputation and attractiveness, which are all composed of complex and intertwined elements, may affect the desirability of that country joining the EU family, as well as the attractiveness of the country as a destination for business, vacation or residence. It has to be understood that short-term media campaigns and TV spots on international news networks are no longer sufficient. Countries with far better starting positions in this area came to realise the full complexities of re-branding and reputation-building, and as a consequence have dedicated significant institutional, human and financial resources to developing a multi-layered, comprehensive strategic approach that has the potential to succeed in the world of the 21st century.

EU accession is defined as one of the top foreign policy priorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)<sup>3</sup>. This priority has the broadest public support. It has been recognised across the country and among all ethnic communities as "the most important precondition for the security and prosperity of BiH in the future".<sup>4</sup> However, the governments in BiH and other institutional structures continue to demonstrate a lack of understanding that parallel to fulfilling the requirements of EU accession (the obligations streaming from the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA), European Partnership (EP) priorities and later alignment with the *Acquis Communautaire*) the country needs to build up its reputation and image as a *credible EU candidate and desirable future EU member state*.

Achieving the goal of accession will require a proactive policy approach, which would focus not only on fulfilling the EU requirements, but also on actively promoting BiH's progress in integration reform, thereby building the EU constituency for BiH membership. BiH would need to adopt a policy of promotion of BiH as a future EU member state, targeting EU institutions as well as EU member state governments and their citizens, and thereby providing conditions for a swifter European Commission (EC) recommendation for accession as well as prompt accession ratifications in the national parliaments of the EU member states. A well tailored public diplomacy policy, based on a comparative study of the best practices and institutional structures that are in place in the EU "first rank countries", has the potential to firmly support BiH's EU integration as well as its overall socio-economic development.<sup>5</sup>

The fact that BiH is still in its early stages of accession - the pre-accession phase of *potential candidacy* for membership - should be seen as an advantage, giving BiH decision-makers time to organise and coordinate the country's institutions so that they are capable of supporting the goal of accession.<sup>6</sup>

### Statement of intent

Public diplomacy (PD), as a way of supporting the achievement of foreign policy (FP) goals, is an innovative strategic policy and could contribute to the notion that BiH is not just "ticking off" the requirement boxes but is starting to "live up to the set of European values and standards", rightly deserving a place in the EU Club.<sup>7</sup>

This proposal intends to present a proactive BiH PD policy that would, as a mid- to long-term aim, create a reputation of BiH as a desirable future member state and affect positively how the country is seen among EU institutions, EU member states' governments and their populations. The specific goal of this paper is to propose recommendations that would enable BiH government structures and non-governmental actors to effectively and efficiently promote the country's reform successes, and focus on changing its current negative reputation as a highly unstable, post-conflict country, still poisoned by ethnic divisions, with an unreliable and corrupt political elite and a population incapable of assuming the full responsibilities of citizenship, especially EU citizenship.<sup>8</sup>



The intention is to recommend the most suitable institutional structure for taking responsibility for such a policy and a coordination mechanism that would ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the policy implementation, and to identify who would be best placed to oversee, monitor and evaluate such a complex activity. The recommendations are based on the most valuable “lessons learned” from the practices of the “EU first rank countries” (those with the longest and most successful experience in implementing PD), and are tailored to fit BiH institutional and political circumstances.

The proposed policy also aims to promote a widespread understanding among the most advanced FP practitioners and experts that traditional diplomacy focused on government-to-government relations and intergovernmental international organisations is no longer enough for meeting FP objectives, and that it has become increasingly necessary to develop mechanisms for influencing the opinions and attitudes of citizens abroad.

## Problem description

### Causes of the problem

The lack of a policy within the EU Integration Strategy of BiH<sup>9</sup> that would build the country’s reputation and support its accession to the EU resulted in a situation in which, even when there was a period of significant EU related progress in the country (2002-2005), many EU countries and their populations remained ignorant of Bosnia’s progress. This lack of any significant profile may have a high cost when it comes to the country’s aspirations to join the EU.

Despite huge efforts and sound successes in terms of making necessary reforms and progress in some significant areas since the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) started, the reputation of BiH is largely based on extremely negative reporting regarding cooperation with the ICTY, potential for terrorism, increased political instability and even the possible repetition of a conflict - as was reported at the end of 2008 and throughout 2009. The internal political battles significantly contribute to the highly negative reputation of the country abroad, and the perception of a high level of instability, which is undesirable within the EU.

Of course, the first precondition for changing the perception of the country abroad is for BiH to take a more cooperative and progressive course in the SAP. However, when this change in attitude and practices happens, and when BiH begins again to make EU related progress, the important audiences within the EU member states will not necessarily become aware of this; the change may only be recognised by the circle of EU bureaucrats sitting in Brussels, which is certainly not enough to speed up the membership process.

The problem is compounded by the lack of awareness within the institutional structures of BiH that *perceptions* about countries abroad have become crucially important for the fulfilment of their FP objectives. Shaping those perceptions has become an increasing part of regular government activities abroad.<sup>10</sup> Modern PD is not something that international actors can or should do on BiH’s behalf. While many of them can be asked to help, it should be the task of BiH institutions themselves to adopt a PD policy, and to implement it by securing the most efficient and effective institutional set up.

<sup>9</sup> Strategija integrisanja Bosne i Hercegovine u Evropsku uniju (*Strategy of Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the European Union*), Council of Ministers of BiH, Directorate of European Integration of BiH, 2006.

<sup>10</sup> This work is based on a substantially different role of perceptions in politics than in previous eras. More than four centuries ago, Niccolò Machiavelli, the first spin doctor and the progenitor of strategic political communication between political leaders and the public, advised Italian princes that it is better for people to fear them than to love them. Today, in this century of instant global dissemination of information, high human rights standards and a growing trend towards democratisation around the world, that kind of advice would lead leaders towards political disaster.

<sup>11</sup> The need for such a policy is clear in the context of a globalised and democratised world, with numerous and multiple channels of communication. *Public perceptions, both national and international, have become immensely important, and managing these perceptions has become essential for influencing political developments both domestically and abroad.* An understanding of the development and implementation of public diplomacy by leading EU countries provides valuable knowledge about the formulation and methodology of PD, which could form the basis for the development of a firm strategy for BiH to guide its actions towards the EU institutions, EU member states and their citizens - who, in the end, decide whether the country is to become a member of the EU.

<sup>12</sup> The core principles that should guide this policy are efficiency, effectiveness, and credibility of messages, inter-institutional cooperation and involvement of non-state actors with PD potential.

<sup>13</sup> A Eurobarometer (EB) survey showed that at least half or more of the EU respondents considered that *enlargement has made the EU more difficult to manage* (66%), and *led to an increased feeling of insecurity* (50%) in the EU as a whole. The survey was conducted at the time of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain and collected citizens' views in the 27 Member States on the effect of the integration of ten Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries into the enlarged Union. It assessed citizens' views about factors that could be important when policy-makers consider further enlargements. See Flash EB Series #257, *Views on European Union Enlargement*, Analytical Report, Fieldwork, February 2009, conducted by The Gallup Organization. Retrieved from <http://www.gallup-europe.be/flasheb/>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. In addition, a majority of respondents in EU member states were concerned about issues such as organised crime, terrorism and the promotion and protection of fundamental rights, which were a matter of concern for approximately three-quarters of EU citizens (78%) with no strong variation among different countries. See Flash EB Series #252, *Awareness of key-policies in the area of Freedom, Security and Justice*, Analytical Report, Fieldwork, September 2008, conducted by The Gallup Organization, requested by the DG Freedom, Security and Justice, published in January 2009. Retrieved from [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/flash/fl\\_252\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_252_en.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> These statements have appeared in numerous international media reports in the last ten years, as well as in academic works, think-tank analyses and official documents, and were summarised in a State Department Report, see *Country Reports on Terrorism 2007: Bosnia and Herzegovina*.

Classic one-way communication and traditional diplomacy, which focuses on relations between the political elites of different countries, international organisations and domestic institutions, are not sufficient any more. The most advanced administrations understand this.<sup>11</sup> BiH institutions have to acquire and use this newly developed *body of knowledge*, as well as to develop policies and functional mechanisms to support institutional reforms designed to support the process of image and reputation changing.

### Current extent of the problem - evidences

Given the current reputation of BiH abroad, the lack of a strategic EU integration support policy may result in the country retaining the status of an EU potential or official candidate for decades, without ever reaching its goal of membership.<sup>12</sup>

Numerous public opinion polls have been published within the EU which have clearly indicated negative sentiments towards enlargement.<sup>13</sup> What these surveys also show is that the *values of freedom and democracy* are the most essential values in the EU and the key issues respondents wish to be taken into consideration when deciding future EU enlargement.<sup>14</sup>

The next issue is the image of the Western Balkan countries created during "the Balkan bloody 90's". The reputation that BiH gained during the troubled post-Dayton peace-building, stabilisation and transition process cemented perceptions of BiH as a "highly unstable country, with rampant corruption, and with a lack of rule of law, respect for human rights and democratic values". Since then the international media has frequently reported on BiH as a country burdened with "ethnic polarisation and disputes among its ethnic political leaders", "dominated by political interference in law enforcement", "vulnerable to exploitation as a potential staging ground for terrorist operations in Europe", a "dysfunctional state" with "Republika Srpska officials aiming to undermine state-level institutions" which contributes to "a slowdown, and in some cases, setbacks in efforts to improve operational capabilities to combat terrorism and terrorism finance."<sup>15</sup> BiH is also seen as a country where full literacy has not been achieved<sup>16</sup> and where human rights are still violated on a daily basis, with media reporting in the past couple of years continuing to be largely negative.<sup>17</sup>

Nevertheless, since the Declaration of the EU-Western Balkans Summit in June 2003<sup>18</sup>, when the EU Heads of States or Governments gave their unequivocal support to the European perspective of the Western Balkan countries, the EU has not changed its commitment to the premise that "the future of the Balkans is within the European Union".

<sup>16</sup> Adult literacy rate--male 94.1%, female 78.0%. See [www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2868.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2868.htm) as quoted by the US Department of State, *Background notes: Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Also UNICEF BiH statistics: Total adult literacy rate 2000-2007, 97 %; Primary school net enrolment/attendance 2000-2007, 91%.

<sup>17</sup> See *Balkans: Wahabis seen as growing regional threat*, Militarislam Monitor; *Bosnia police arrest five terrorism suspects*, Reuters, 21 March 2008; *Petty crime and terrorism meet in Bosnia*, International Relations and Security Network, 26 October 2006; *Clashes at Bosnia's gay festival*, BBC News, 25 September 2008; *Bosnia's first gay festival forced underground*, AFP, 25 September, 2008.

<sup>18</sup> See EU-Western Balkans Summit - Declaration, Thessalonica, 21 June 2003 10229/03 (Presse 163) available at [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement\\_process/accession\\_process/how\\_does\\_a\\_country\\_join\\_the\\_eu/sap/thessaloniki\\_summit\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement_process/accession_process/how_does_a_country_join_the_eu/sap/thessaloniki_summit_en.htm). See also *The Thessalonica Agenda for the Western Balkans: Moving towards European Integration*, General Affairs & External Relations Council (GAERC), Extracts from successive General Affairs & External Relations Councils, 16 June 2003: Western Balkans - Council Conclusions available at [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement\\_process/accession\\_process/how\\_does\\_a\\_country\\_join\\_the\\_eu/sap/thessalonica\\_agenda\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement_process/accession_process/how_does_a_country_join_the_eu/sap/thessalonica_agenda_en.htm)



The SAP has served as the framework for the European course for the Western Balkan countries. BiH has made significant progress on the EU integration agenda, becoming a potential candidate for EU membership and signing the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU in June 2008. This *potential candidate* status of BiH was achieved after a decade of difficult and often stalled reforms.<sup>19</sup>

In order to fulfil the EC requirements of the Feasibility Study for opening negotiations on the SAA with the EU, BiH institutions adopted laws giving greater responsibilities to the State in the areas of judiciary, security, customs and tariff policies, statistics, human rights, food security, competition and single markets.<sup>20</sup>

The then High Representative (HR) Lord Paddy Ashdown, who was also appointed as the first EU Special Representative (EUSR) in BiH<sup>21</sup>, supported the European reform process, but as HR he did not use his "Bonn powers" to impose the laws required by the EC Feasibility Study.<sup>22</sup>

After ten years of participating in the EU SAP, BiH governing structures realised the importance of communicating the benefits of enlargement to BiH citizens and in January 2009 adopted the Communication Strategy for Informing the Domestic Public about the process of BiH integration into the EU.<sup>23</sup> However, the government has still not followed up on its own EU Integration Strategy and *has not adopted a strategic policy that would promote the EU accession of BiH abroad*.

It is important to note that the Council of Ministers of BiH adopted the above-mentioned EU Integration Strategy of BiH in 2006, which mentions the *"importance of communication to the EU institutions and EU member states"*. However, *a specific policy that would fit the adopted Integration Strategy has never been developed*.<sup>24</sup>

The Integration Strategy states that it is "also important to present and build a good image of the state abroad". However, only one of the 327 pages of the Strategy was dedicated to the "promotion of BiH abroad". Even there, *the promotion strategy was weakly articulated, and was not in accordance with the most recent knowledge and achievements in this field*.<sup>25</sup>

From the EU side, on the other hand, enlargement has been widely recognised as the most effective EU FP tool. In 2004 EU officials were riding on the wave of enthusiasm caused by the success of the big bang enlargement, and the SAP for the Western Balkans seemed to be on track - until the shock of the refusals of the EU Constitution at the referendums in France and the Netherlands in 2005, followed by the Irish "No" to the Lisbon Treaty in June 2008.<sup>26</sup>

The EU Strategy that followed stated the desire of the EU to promote "consolidation, conditionality and communication". This was the EC's way of communicating to the EU Council the need of the EU as a whole to focus on ensuring that there is "public support for future enlargements". The EC emphasised that "citizens need to be better prepared for future enlargements". It is important to note here that the Commission has advocated that *national governments should communicate the advantages of enlargement to their citizens*.

<sup>19</sup> BiH's progress towards the EU within the SAP has been monitored by the EC and has been evident in the EC annual progress reports, which focus on the issues defined by the EU as the short and medium term reform priorities of BiH. These priorities are defined on the basis of a thorough scanning of the country's institutional structures and legal provisions.

<sup>20</sup> New state ministries and institutions have been established, including: the Ministry of Defence, Intelligence Security Agency (OSA), State Information and Protection Agency (SIPA), Indirect Tax Authority (ITA) and the state level Competition Council among others. In total, more than 40 laws have been adopted and 27 institutions created or reconstructed. (Data gathered for the author's post-graduate thesis on *EU transformative power in BiH*, successfully defended at the University of Oxford in 2006.)

<sup>21</sup> Lord Paddy Ashdown was appointed by the EU Council as the first EU Special Representative (EUSR) in BiH, on 11 March 2002. He took up his duties as the EUSR when he assumed the position of the International Community's High Representative for BiH, on 27 May 2002. See more regarding the EUSR and its mandate at <http://www.eusrbih.org>.

<sup>22</sup> The EC Progress Report of 2005 stated, "the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities have to a certain extent taken ownership of the reform process". This was recorded in the reporting period from March 2004 to September 2005 in which "the High Representative has not imposed laws or decisions directly related to the Feasibility Study priorities". See Bosnia and Herzegovina 2005 Progress Report, European Commission, Brussels, 9 November 2005, SEC (2005) 1422, p.13

<sup>23</sup> See Komunikacijska strategija za informisanje javnosti o procesu pristupanja Bosne i Hercegovine Evropskoj uniji, (*Communication strategy for informing the public about the BiH EU integration process*), Council of Ministers, Directorate for European Integration, Sarajevo, January 2009.

<sup>24</sup> The claim is based on a series of initial fact-finding interviews in the institutions of BiH and the monitoring of developments in this area by the researcher.

<sup>25</sup> The Strategy names the institutions which should be responsible for "promotion abroad", clearly stating that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate for European Integration, BiH Chamber of Commerce, Investment Promotion Agency (FIPA) and non-governmental structures "should be the responsible institutions for the realisation of the strategic goals".

<sup>26</sup> The Lisbon Treaty failure has had several negative consequences for the strengthening of the EU but it is important to note that the European Commission (EC) followed this failure by publishing its new strategy on enlargement for 2006-2007. See *EC Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2006-2007*, adopted on 8 November 2006.



<sup>27</sup> Numerous articles and official documents indicate that the EU is not a very successful communicator. The European Policy Centre recently published a paper dealing with the issue of “communicating Europe” mentioning, “the uphill struggle the Commission faces to improve its public image, given the difficulties involved in embedding communications in its culture”. Waiting for politicians in the EU member states to argue firmly for enlargement does not seem very feasible, not least because pro-EU thinkers are already concerned with how to persuade member state politicians “to stop using the EU as a whipping boy”, blaming it for everything “bad” that happens, and claiming credit themselves for everything “good”. See Jacki Davis, *Communicating Europe in Challenge Europe, The next Commission: doing more and better*, European Policy Centre, Issue no 19, June 2009, pp 80-85.

<sup>28</sup> The *EC Communication Strategy for Enlargement*, adopted in May 2000, emphasised that up until then, the preparations for enlargement were based on two tracks: the pre-accession strategy (the reform process in the candidate countries) and the accession negotiations. The *Communication Strategy for Enlargement* was recommended as the third track in the preparations for enlargement. However, even after five years, opinion polls indicated growing opposition to further enlargement.

<sup>29</sup> European Commission (2006), *White Paper on a European Communication Policy*. COM (2006) 35 final, 1.2.2006, Brussels. Retrieved from [http://europa.eu.int/comm/communication\\_white\\_paper/doc/white\\_paper\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/communication_white_paper/doc/white_paper_en.pdf).

<sup>30</sup> See European Commission (2005), *Action Plan to Improve Communicating Europe by the Commission*, 20.7.2005, Brussels (available at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/communication/pdf/communication\\_com\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/communication/pdf/communication_com_en.pdf)).

<sup>31</sup> The *EC Communication Strategy for Enlargement* of 2000 defined necessary communication activities and results. See *Communication Strategy for Enlargement, 2000*. Retrieved from [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/enlargement\\_process/past\\_enlargements/communication\\_strategy/sec\\_737\\_2000\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/enlargement_process/past_enlargements/communication_strategy/sec_737_2000_en.pdf)

With this approach, the membership prospects of the Western Balkans became more dependent on the success of EU national governments in communicating the benefits of enlargement to their citizens. However, considering the current developments in the EU member states, it is highly unlikely that communicating the benefits of enlargement would be the top priority for any member state politician seeking re-election<sup>27</sup>, which is one of the main reasons why applicant countries, including BiH, must take over the job themselves of promoting the benefits of their joining the EU. It is not advisable for an EU candidate country to wait for member states and EU institutions to create a “charm offensive in Europe” for any applicant country.<sup>28</sup>

In an attempt to address the issue of communication between EU institutions and the citizens of the EU member states, the EC White Paper on the European Communication Policy published in 2006 has promised a “fundamentally new approach” in narrowing the communication gap.<sup>29</sup> In contrast to the Action Plan for improving the Commission’s own communications of July 2005<sup>30</sup>, the White Paper addressed the EU as a whole, including other central institutions, member states, European political parties and even civil society.<sup>31</sup>

EU institutions will be made aware of BiH’s achievements in meeting EU criteria and standards through the annual evaluations of the EC. However, it cannot be taken for granted that wider audiences will be aware of those achievements. It is precisely these wider audiences who are important, as the political dynamic in the EU member states indicates that it would be very tough for any of them to vote for BiH to join the EU as long as their citizens perceive the country to be associated with instability.<sup>32</sup>

## Policy options

In selecting policy options, a review of the integration process and the EU enlargement policy in general was considered. However, the EU integration template is already established, and has been successfully followed by many countries, in particular the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. Furthermore, non-EU countries now have to battle the new circumstances of “enlargement fatigue” as well as the burden of negative perceptions and must therefore undertake additional activities to promote their accession.

The most established qualitative methods in social and political sciences were used to research policy options, as well as comparative study methods to examine the structures and strategic PD policies of the EU “first rank countries”. Through a process tracing analysis of related developments in each country - the UK, France and Germany - the most valuable “lessons learned” and the most efficient models were identified in order to formulate the best options for strategic PD action to support the achievement of BiH accession to the EU.

The case of the Western Balkan country most advanced in the EU integration process, Croatia, was also examined in order to secure a “closer example”. The research showed that despite the fact that such a policy has been considered for years, Croatia has not adopted a PD policy

<sup>32</sup> Further enlargement in general is not regarded very favorably, mainly due to concerns related to the “the import of instability into the EU”. The TV reportage aired immediately after BiH signed the SAA with the EU on 16 June 2008, “spoke a million words”. Asked about his views on BiH signing the SAA and getting closer to accession, a Belgian interviewed in the Schuman area was taken aback, stating that it is highly unlikely. He added that as far as he knows “war is still going on there or has just finished”, and walked away with a very worried expression on his face. Daily News, BHT1, 18 June 2008.



or a strategic action of external promotion. All activities related to external communications are based on *ad hoc* initiatives without systemic coordination and planning.<sup>33</sup>

The process tracing analysis focused on cases from which lessons can be learned and through which the major features could be identified. In order to complete the necessary research, a series of interviews and archive research sessions were held in the foreign ministries in London, Paris and Berlin, as well as in the EU institutions in Brussels.<sup>34</sup>

The EU “first rank countries” were selected for the case study because their policies and actions have had the most effect on developments within the EU since its beginning. Preliminary research revealed that the UK, France and Germany have the longest tradition and most developed institutional mechanisms and techniques for defining and implementing PD. Their differences in defining and implementing PD allowed for a well-qualified comparison and identification of best models and practices which, when adapted to the BiH context, would give the country a chance to develop this pillar of modern diplomacy.<sup>35</sup>

### Possible approaches - best practice

The next section will present how the three selected countries approach PD policy formulation and implementation. In the case of the UK, PD has an extremely important role for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (“the FCO” or “the Foreign Office” for short). It is set as a pillar of UK diplomacy, with the aim to support UK FP goals. Its importance is clear from the extent of material and human resources that the UK government dedicates to PD and the prominent place it has in its institutional structure. Its PD strategy and approach are under constant evaluation in order to improve the impact and efficiency of PD activities and to ensure that the FCO adjusts to each new development in this continuously changing field.

The French Foreign and European Ministry (Quay d’Orsay) has also implemented several reforms in order to follow current developments and use PD more effectively. However, their process of adaptation has been slower than in the UK. Only recently, after the publication of the White Book on French Foreign and European Policy in 2008, has the Ministry started to make attempts to use PD in a manner more suitable to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in order to “revive the French policy of influence”.

Since 2004 the German Federal Office (FFO) has approached PD more systematically, entering the field (which it was previously reluctant to enter) and giving it greater prominence, by adopting two-way communications and engaging civil society abroad, in addition to its well-developed traditional cultural diplomacy.

In all three examined cases historical developments have affected how PD is understood, developed and implemented. Regarding the UK, as a post-imperial country, with a traditionally outward-oriented institutional and political memory, having a presence outside its borders is natural to British political thinking. Nonetheless, in the post-imperial period the country has learned how to modernise its diplomatic practice and use additional tools in order to keep its influence abroad, and “punch above its weight” on the international scene.<sup>36</sup>

The research further showed that that most evident break with traditional diplomacy came with the beginning of Tony Blair’s mandate. Blair was concerned about the discrepancy be-

<sup>33</sup> Interview with a Croatian diplomat. In addition, there is no PD or strategic communications department within the MFA, nor has PD been established within specialised units in the missions abroad. Diplomats responsible for culture and public relations are expected to use their own creative capabilities to develop suitable promotional and cultural activities with the support of specific departments of the MFA. (The MFA makes some cultural substance available in the form of exhibitions, concerts and the like, and offers them to diplomatic missions; these are added to the cultural activities in the receiving country, according to its needs and capabilities. The Croatian mission to the EU, for example, organises exhibitions inside EU institutions in order to raise the visibility of Croatia in Brussels.) The majority of the missions have their own web pages, which they edit independently, publicising information as they see useful. In addition to the web portal, the mission in Brussels also publishes a monthly newsletter. Croatian diplomats also try to focus on the foreign media “whenever there is an opportunity” (through interviews, thematic articles about current affairs, support for the production of reportage on Croatia, provision of necessary contacts, placement of opinion pieces of Croatian politicians in the foreign media and other activities). Despite the fact that Croatia does not have an extremely negative reputation, a significant level of frustration due to the lack of strategic approach was noticed during the interviews.

<sup>34</sup> The majority of necessary interviews and archive work sessions were done in the period April-October 2009.

<sup>35</sup> The data were collected from official government documents, opinion poll surveys and think-tank resources. A significant portion of the data was also collected through personal interviews with officials with relevant experience in PD, as well as with experienced practitioners working for the most prominent PD partners such as the British Council, Goethe Institute and French Cultural Centres.

<sup>36</sup> Political scientists, historians and international relations specialists define power differently. Traditional indicators of power in International Relations (IR) theory are usually seen in terms of a country’s military capacity, GDP, size of economy, population and territory. It is generally acknowledged among IR specialists that the UK has higher influence in international affairs than her traditional sources of power could secure, thanks to the careful consideration and implementation of UK diplomacy.

tween Britain's ambitions to be a major influence on the global scene and the perceptions of Britain in the early 90s.

### A short history of the British case

<sup>37</sup> The FPC is one of the leading European think-tanks for foreign policy issues. Its activities are developed under the slogan "Progressive Thinking for a Global Age", and its major task is to offer innovative ideas for defining UK foreign policies. See more at <http://fpc.org.uk>

In the mid 1990s, a think-tank, the British Foreign Policy Centre (FPC)<sup>37</sup> was given the task "to develop a vision of a fair and rule-based world order" with the objective of creating a legitimate moral *raison d'être* for a British return to the global political scene. The aim was to develop "progressive policy through effective public diplomacy" as a tool for supporting UK interests, indicating the role which the PD pillar of diplomacy would play in British foreign affairs in the future.

<sup>38</sup> See Mark Leonard and Andrew Small with Martin Rose, *British Public Diplomacy in the "Age of Schisms"*, the Foreign Policy Centre and Counterpoint, London, February 2005. It is important to note that the Foreign Policy Centre has cooperated with several state governments and the EC since its establishment.

This approach acknowledged the significance of the growth of global democratisation and the development of mass communications. It was understood that it was becoming more and more important to equip the government to go beyond official communication with other governments in order to meet its objectives.<sup>38</sup> The ministries in France and Germany also adopted this view, but a bit later; the FFO in the first half of the 2000s, and Quay d'Orsay only in 2008 with its newest strategy, where it defined the main aspects of what it terms *policy of influence*.

By the second half of the 2000s, communicating FP messages not only to foreign governments but also to a wider audience abroad, and the importance of reputation in establishing foreign influence had risen to the top of the agenda in all three ministries. These three different countries had different goals, and at different times during the last two decades defined their approach differently and named it differently (*PD and strategic communication* is the British terminology; *policy of influence* the French; and *policy of positioning* the German), but by 2009, PD and strategic communication had become the third pillar of diplomacy in all three EU "first rank countries". This indicates a high level of convergence in the practices of these foreign ministries. Although the speed at which they developed and adopted these concepts varied (for various reasons), they all eventually arrived at the same place in terms of awareness raising and addressing the need for PD support in the fulfilment of FP goals.

In the 1990s The British Foreign Policy Centre argued that governments must make greater effort to communicate with a mass audience, and attempt to make the most of the country's reputation. This view has been adopted in the last 20 years in all three studied cases.

The first step was always to *recognise the need* - why such a policy is necessary - and then *what it entails*. The Blair Government recognised the need to recreate its post-colonial national identity to reflect the new British reality of the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and this was realised with the *aim to change the image* of Britain abroad.<sup>39</sup> The French implemented image change action in the 90's that aimed to secure investment and promote France as a business friendly country. Germany reduced its PD to cultural diplomacy only, remaining cautious in the sphere of foreign activity until reunification; and only after 2002 did it begin to think about developing its image as an international political actor.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* p.2.

Before its re-branding campaign started, the UK was largely seen as a retrograde, old fashioned, traditional, white, racist and imperialist country. Blair's government strongly believed that a change in perception and the re-branding of the UK was necessary if the UK was going to survive as an influential foreign policy player. The FCO established Panel 2000 in 1998, and





the first sentence of its consultation paper indicated the direction of UK PD: *"Everyone has a stake in the way that Britain is seen overseas. Our ability to influence other countries, to sell them our goods and services, and to win job-creating investment depends in part on how we are perceived."*<sup>40</sup>

This government document indicated that the *goal was to promote Britain and its economic interests*. Justifying such an approach before the British public the FCO stated, "That is why we spend millions of pounds of public money every year promoting Britain abroad through our Embassies, the British Council, the British Tourist Authority and the BBC World Service."<sup>41</sup>

Having prepared the way at home, only a year later the UK started to focus on *questions of perception abroad*. As the FCO openly stated: *"There are some home truths that we need to face. The world does not always think us quite as wonderful as we think we are. We may have to recognise real faults, not just dismiss criticisms as misunderstandings. The picture we put across must be honest. Our concern is not a matter of "image" but of substance. We need to recognise frankly that there are things we could do better, while also ensuring the outside world has an accurate picture of the things we do well - based on a view of Britain as we really are."*<sup>42</sup>

A major point raised in this document is one that remained a strong feature of all the activities that followed: *credibility of action must be preserved*. It would be fruitless if PD turned into propaganda. Study of the German case confirmed that credibility of PD action must be the principal value, and the FFO demonstrated extreme sensitivity regarding this characteristic of PD.<sup>43</sup>

Improving government coordination in PD formulation and implementation within the foreign ministry itself as well as in its cooperation with the private sector and non-state organisations also became major features of modern PD. This, again, began in the UK, followed by the FFO from 2004. Quay d'Orsay, which was in the initial stages of implementing such a comprehensive approach in 2009, is currently attempting the same.

In all three cases the PD activity began in a narrow sphere, starting with image creation and the country's re-branding, and later developed into a much more comprehensive strategy of supporting the FP goals adopted by the respective governments.

The UK action started with image change and a re-branding campaign in the second half of the 90s. Not everybody understood Blair's shift and what came to be known as *"Cool Britannia"*<sup>44</sup>. However, surveys proved that the change of approach and the re-branding campaign had started to make an impact. State engineering of a country's identity and image abroad may have results, however, only if it reflects a substantial change in society.

The *Cool Britannia* re-branding campaign became globally recognised in 2004 when the *Canadian National Post* reflected international reviews of the campaign by calling it the "re-branding of all re-brandings", saying that the campaign was a "case study that every politician under the age of 40 must know. *The... image of a nation with bad food, stultified class-ridden society, stodgy pasty people wasting away in council housing, and strikes was firmly entrenched all over the world. Within a year, the new story of Britain was crafted and told: The New Britain was creative, multicultural, and achingly hip, with a well-trained and highly motivated work force.*"<sup>45</sup>

<sup>40</sup> See FCO Panel 2000 Consultation Document, September 1998. Retrieved from [http://www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/pdf5/fco\\_pdf\\_panel2000](http://www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/pdf5/fco_pdf_panel2000)

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> This is clearly seen as one of the strengths of contemporary Germany. Numerous opinion polls indicate that trustfulness and credibility are the terms most attributed to Germany and the German people.

<sup>44</sup> Cool Britannia was a popular phrase used at the end of the 20th century that referred to contemporary British culture. The term was closely related to "New Labour". It was coined from the title of the British patriot song *Rule, Britannia!* In 1998 The Economist commented that "People were sick of the phrase".

<sup>45</sup> Cited in Mark Leonard and Andrew Small with Martin Rose, *British Public Diplomacy in the "Age of Schisms"*, the Foreign Policy Centre and Counterpoint, London, February 2005.

The article went on to describe the new image in more detail, "The marketing team reconfigured Britain as a hub, importing and exporting ideas, goods, services, people and cultures. It was non-conformist. Britons were silent revolutionaries who had created new forms of organisation. The country had a long-established ethos of fair play and voluntary commitment. The 800-million pounds a year spent by the Foreign Office helped successfully sell the story abroad. And at home, Britain was re-energised."

The British experience also shows *that the country has to keep up with the image it promotes*, and constantly perform in accordance with the reputation it wants to build. The tracing of developments indicated how everything achieved in terms of creating the modern image of Britain as a reliable international partner was put into question with its participation in the invasion of Iraq. In 2005 Britain was called to face the fact that the Iraqi crisis left the pillars of British foreign policy in a state in which its repair was questionable, as the Iraqi crisis had a corrosive effect on general trust in Britain.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. p. 1

<sup>47</sup> In 2002, on the basis of the Wilton Park recommendations, the Public Diplomacy Strategy Board was recommended to co-ordinate government communication in establishing relations with the public abroad - attempting to tie together the FCO, British Council, British Tourist Authority and UK Trade and Investment. See Wilton Review, March 2002. In 2004 Lord Carter examined "the effectiveness of current public diplomacy activities... to consider progress since [the recommendations of] the Wilton Review." See Lord Carter of Coles, *Public Diplomacy Review*, December 2005.

<sup>48</sup> With the new foreign secretary David Miliband, British foreign priorities have been reformulated and reduced in 2007 from ten to four: Fight against terrorism, arms proliferation and its causes; Promotion of a low carbon, high developing global economy; Prevention and help in conflict resolution; Development of effective international institutions, especially the UN and EU.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with Quay d'Orsay official, December 2008.

<sup>50</sup> Source: Quay d'Orsay, January 2009.

<sup>51</sup> One of the products was the movie *France: Old perceptions, new realities*, targeting foreign decision makers. France was trying to shift perceptions and show that it is not just about high fashion, superb food and wine and a country with 400 kinds of cheese. The campaign emphasised that its economy is based on high technology, high productivity and innovation. The movie was aired at business fairs, international airports, and in airplanes. The campaign was initiated by AFII (Invest in France Agency). For more details see <http://www.invest-in-france.org/international/en/France-s-Expertise-in-Video.html>

<sup>52</sup> More on specific examples from this campaign in *Le Livre sur l'attractivité* [www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/france\\_159/label-france\\_2554/label.../campaign-for-change-of-image\\_4422.html](http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/france_159/label-france_2554/label.../campaign-for-change-of-image_4422.html) - 49k

At this stage even greater emphasis was given to PD. Several high profile reviews of the PD strategies were conducted, all of which came up with recommendations for improvements. The FCO implemented these by forming different PD boards, consulting internal and external specialists and evaluating best practices in order to come up with the most effective model for the current approach in which the UK, after improving its image and reputation, has become strongly focused on supporting the fulfilment of the UK FP priorities and objectives.<sup>47</sup>

The new Public Diplomacy Board (PDB) was established in 2006, composed of six members: the foreign secretary (the Chair), the director general of the British Council, the FCO communications director and three independent members, with the director of the BBC World Service as an observer.<sup>48</sup>

### The French approach to policy of influence

The French PD, or "policy of influence" as it is commonly called, had traditionally been limited to extensive cultural cooperation, development cooperation via its *solidarity policy* (aimed at maintaining influence in its former colonies), and a strong linguistic component related to the francophone world.<sup>49</sup> However, with globalisation and its growing influence on world development, the French understanding of PD expanded, first by formulating an *attractiveness policy* in mid 2000. The aim of this policy was to improve the economy by bringing investment and talent to France, focusing on "the establishment of economic, cultural and scientific activities abroad".<sup>50</sup>

This policy was formulated *to address a concrete need*, as in the UK case. The government believed that France suffered from erroneous perceptions and clichés, and that its economic reputation was inferior to its reality. This led it to initiate a broad campaign to fight these perceptions abroad.<sup>51</sup>

Comparative analysis demonstrated that what *Cool Britannia* was for UK in 1996, was equivalent to what the *New France* campaign was for France in 2005/2006 - a typical re-branding, image creating campaign. It was not a worldwide campaign, however. Target audiences were defined in accordance with its goal; the campaign began in Japan in 2004, and continued in Germany, the UK, China and the US in 2006.<sup>52</sup>



An analysis of the *attractiveness policy* indicated that, ten years after the UK, France realised that no matter how successful classic cultural, cooperative and linguistic action is, it could not correct the false perceptions foreign and domestic investors had about the French economy.<sup>53</sup> It understood that such negative perceptions could lead to the country being dismissed as a destination for investment without any investigation of actual facts or expert analysis.<sup>54</sup> The campaign that was launched to fight the old clichés was implemented under the slogan “*New France: where smart money goes*”, and aimed to persuade economic decision makers of the advantages of investing in France.<sup>55</sup>

Stronger government coordination of PD in France began in 2003 with government seminars that gathered relevant ministries together, under the guidance of the prime minister, in order to determine the direction and activities of the new French attractiveness policy. Results of these PD activities were monitored and evaluated at inter-ministerial meetings.<sup>56</sup>

These state led activities were also followed by non-state organisational activity. An informal club was established, called “Win in France”, which gathered together the leaders of the 20 top French companies, research laboratories and universities, to focus on “French attractiveness”.<sup>57</sup>

During that time traditional PD continued, with its reliance on cultural and development cooperation, as well as linguistic action. This relied on the French legacy of human rights protection and democratisation in the postcolonial period as the major cornerstone on which the *reputation* of France was built, and served as a justification for its international interventionism.<sup>58</sup>

## The German understanding of public diplomacy

In Germany, as in the UK and France, historical perspective and heritage also shaped the development and practice of a particular PD policy. Research and expert interviews indicated that the Second and Third Reich still affect what German PD can do, what it must not do, and where the limits are.<sup>59</sup> The term “propaganda” is never used in Germany to describe PD, as German society as a whole has a very negative understanding of the term - mainly because of the historical experience of the Third Reich. One of the major lessons from WWII and the Third Reich that was emphasised in the expert interviews in the FFO, was *that state actors should not be first in line to carry out PD; this should be done by non-state actors*.

Because the German need for PD was enormous after WWII, it became essential to promote Germany through cultural relations - implemented by non-state actors. The Goethe Institute, focused on cultural diplomacy, became the leading PD actor of post-war Germany. Only later did the embassies engage in PD. Even now, 70% of German PD activities are communication and cultural activities. In recent years the FFO has been trying to promote the message within government structures that in modern times PD is more than culture and communications.

It is often said that “Germans are as reliable as their cars”. That image and reputation could not have arisen on its own, especially considering the reputation of Germany during and after WWII. The building of this reputation was the result of a dedicated, well thought through action which reflected *real policy shifts*.

<sup>53</sup> France was predominantly seen as a country with a huge number of non-working days, generous vacations and frequent workers strikes (on non-holiday days), a country that insisted on “*joie de vivre*” without high standards of professional ethics, all of which started to hurt inward investments.

<sup>54</sup> See Emmanuel Thévenon, *Settling in France, a winning choice*, Campaign for a change of image, AFII, 2004.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> In addition, the Attractiveness Strategy Council was formed, composed of 25 French and foreign business leaders, and serving as an advisory body in identifying potential actions. These ideas were later discussed at the government seminars.

<sup>57</sup> See France’s attractiveness policy, *Steering and supporting France’s attractiveness policy*. Source: Quay d’Orsay.

<sup>58</sup> France insists on continuing its active role in the UNSC and the UN Council for Human Rights. Source: *France 2008, La Documentation française*

<sup>59</sup> American experts and practitioners, in contrast, are quick to use the term “propaganda” to mean PD. For many of them it is not a problematic term, as it does not carry “historical luggage”.

<sup>60</sup> One of the best examples is the relationship which has been developed with France on the basis of the Elysée Treaty, the aim of which was to reconnect the civil societies in the two countries, bringing young people together and creating educational exchange programmes. Most people do not realise that these exchange programmes are PD. Fifty years ago Germany started a researchers programme that enabled message multipliers to come to Germany and get in touch with German people, enabling them to see how Germany had changed. The research visitors programme reached 1000 researchers per year, which increases the number of German alumni in the world. People come, gain their own impressions, make their own conclusions about and connections with Germany. They get to know it better, and speak positively about Germany when they return to their countries: *"They see for themselves what kind of people we are, what do we do and want, which is way more credible than the any government attempt to promote this abroad"*. Interview with the FFO diplomat, Berlin, May 2009.

In addition, and because of its position after WWII, every action Germany made abroad was carefully examined. Culture was considered the most suitable foreign activity. Germany saw this as an opportunity and gained strength through cultural diplomacy, emphasising relationship building as the long-term goal.<sup>60</sup>

The process tracing analysis indicated that a couple of years after its unification, following lessons learned predominantly from the British PD experience, Germany entered a more comprehensive PD field. Although it cannot be asserted that there is a single definition or understanding of PD within German government structures and within the German Federal Foreign Office (FFO), in the FFO DG for Communications and Culture, it is understood as the sum of all activities, including any kind of communication (in the broad sense of the word) that is directed, organised or supported by the Government for foreign audiences (including the general public, message multipliers and leaders in specific fields) in order to reach short-term, medium-term and long-term German foreign policy goals.

While doing this complex work, the DG for Communications and Culture cooperates with private, semi-private, half-governmental institutions and organisations, often supporting activities that are handed over to other institutions either initially or later on.

The issue of coordination is very important for the German government because of Germany's federal system. Different ministries also have different competencies when it comes to PD. What has been established in the last three years (2007 to 2009) within the German government structures is the coordination process among ministries. In the more narrow understanding of PD - when it comes to the issues of the branding and positioning of Germany and its image abroad - the FFO is in the lead.

### Connecting foreign policy priorities and public diplomacy strategies

In France, beyond its declared traditional FP priorities, the research indicated that specific FP priorities could change frequently because of the institutional possibility for each foreign minister or president to put forward their priorities.

For instance, in 2007 the foreign minister, Philippe Douste-Blazy, set the following goal: "France has to take its place in world affairs and help better regulation of globalisation"<sup>61</sup>. The 2008 budget, however, reflected the priorities of the new minister, Kouchner. His first priority was a traditional one, defending the diplomatic interests of France through "increased French contribution to international organisations and UN peace operations".<sup>62</sup> The traditional priority of support to French schools abroad remained, but, in addition, Kouchner's interventionist policy in the health sector appeared on the list of priorities.<sup>63</sup> As a consequence, France stood more strongly for the millennium development goals dealing with health issues.<sup>64</sup>

The traditional approach to PD, with a later focus on the promotion of France as a place for investment, was not enough for the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and especially not for the new president, Nicolas Sarkozy, who wanted to position France among the top FP actors shaping the global debate. In 2007 he requested a new strategy from his foreign minister, which would offer a "vision of French diplomacy, its mission and priorities", to be based on an "analysis of the international environment and developments", and which would adjust the model of French

<sup>61</sup> This priority increased the financing of international organisations by 60 mil. EUR (50 mil. for peace operations). The Solidarity Program for developing countries was increased by 71mil. and came to 1.81 bil. EUR. These funds mainly went to the European Development Fund (692 mil. EUR) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (300 mil. EUR).

<sup>62</sup> An additional 100 mil. EUR from the state budget was allocated to Quai d'Orsay for this purpose.

<sup>63</sup> The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria got 900 mil. EUR immediately after Kouchner's arrival.

<sup>64</sup> The Millennium Development Goals have been adopted by 189 countries.



diplomacy to be effective in the era of globalisation.<sup>65</sup> A year later, in the summer of 2008, the Commission formed for this task came up with the document *La France et l'Europe Dans le Monde: Livre blanc sur la politique étrangère et européenne de la France 2008 - 2020*, a White Book on French Foreign and European Policy.

The White Book aimed to address the challenges of foreign action related to the new balances of power, globalisation, changes in Europe, the new dimensions and understanding of peace and security, interdependent economies, a fragmented world and the *global competition of ideas*.

It clearly indicated France's major concern that "a global debate is going on and its stakes are about to escape from us" and what France should mean in terms of *influence*. This does not only mean influencing world events or having answers to major questions, but also being able to anticipate them. It also stated that the "ability of countries to influence the global debate of ideas is a new dimension of the power game"<sup>66</sup>, and that France has to be able to suggest ideas and an alternative way of thinking. The White Book emphasised that French diplomacy "must acquire the power of persuasion".

The White Book also recognised that influencing the world elite of the future is essential, that action in this field has become a matter of global market competition and that a presence in this market is not a matter of choice but of necessity.<sup>67</sup> It further noted the phenomena of the 21<sup>st</sup> century related to the formation and importance of the opinion of states and of the global public, whose influence "determines the topics of and expectations from foreign policy", and which are also under the influence of interest groups". The White Book also recommended that in order to secure the presence of its ideas, language and culture, French diplomacy needs to "meet and understand the world", which implies adopting modern models of diplomatic practice, using new tools, and not limiting diplomatic work to the government-to-government level only.

The White Book also redefined FP priorities. Of particular importance to this policy proposal is the priority of "securing the presence of French ideas, language and culture abroad". It was recognised that global international institutions are English speaking, and that "France needs to have influence within these institutions, not to create parallel forums". It also had to be accepted that "French ideas will not be heard and understood in the global debate if not told in other languages, especially English".<sup>68</sup>

One of the top tasks recognised was to stop the Quay d'Orsay from being detached from expertise outside the Ministry, and to be more adaptable to the new circumstances of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The new Strategy indicated the need to end the separation between the academic and government policy making processes. By the end of 2009, Quay d'Orsay was trying to develop plans to engage the academic, think-tank, NGO sector in its PD efforts and to use the Internet more creatively and effectively.<sup>69</sup>

The final stage of this policy research covered the period when Quay d'Orsay was reorganising and trying to implement the recommendations of the White Book. The findings indicate that the administration was adopting this new approach, but slowly. Not all diplomats were able to respond to the demands of the new strategy immediately. This was due not only to generational reasons and institutional culture but also to fundamental attitudes towards some of the phenomena dealt with in the White Book.

<sup>65</sup> See *White Paper on France's Foreign and European Policy*, 4 October, 2007, Quay d'Orsay.

<sup>66</sup> This strategic paper refers to this through the examples of how the Washington Consensus idea influenced the development direction of international financial institutions (IFIs), and how the US sold the idea of the "transformation of the Middle East". "All these ideas came from the US. They might come from Asia tomorrow. It is too late to be against them or for them. The frame of debate was established by others, not us." See more in *La France et l'Europe Dans le Monde: Livre blanc sur la politique étrangère et européenne de la France 2008 - 2020*.

<sup>67</sup> "If we do not attract the best foreign students, France risks losing the best researchers and lecturers in the future. Out of the eight most quoted French economists in 2006, five of them work in the US. France is handicapped in global university competition as the French system of high schools is not understood by the rest of the world, and competition is not accommodated in French universities either in France or abroad." Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Interview with specialist from the Strategy Unit of Quay d'Orsay dealing with strategic planning, Paris, October 2009.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with Quay d'Orsay staff member responsible for policy planning and policy of influence strategy implementation.



<sup>70</sup> The Internet is not seen as a totally positive thing in France. As expressed in the expert interviews, the French tend to think that Internet represents “fake journalism, destroys people’s privacy and is destroying real culture.” However, French specialists were making study trips abroad and were asking for advice and experience from their colleagues in ministries where Internet use for PD is well advanced.

<sup>71</sup> The emphasis was on discussing the evolution of foreign policy implementation, the importance of contacts within non-diplomatic circles, the need to participate at round tables and public discussions and to be more open to the media.

<sup>72</sup> Expert interviews in the FCO in London strongly indicated the significance of flexibility in using PD tools, openness to new ideas and sharing good practices. One example is the Sarajevo Embassy initiative for the ambassador’s blog and radio show, which was the first example of this sort of engagement and which later appeared on the list of useful methods of PD activity of the FCO diplomatic Intranet network.

<sup>73</sup> The training company was selected on the basis of the FCO staff needs. The FCO contracted the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR), a leading professional body in the PR field established in 1948, to provide training for its staff. The FCO staff observation was that there is far more desire for new trainings within the directorate than there was 3 years ago.

<sup>74</sup> Interview with FCO specialist for digital communication in the Digital Diplomacy Group (DDG), London, April 2009.

<sup>75</sup> DDG has 25 employees, out of which nine work from abroad, making the FCO digital diplomacy constantly “awake”. Its major work is focused on developing a web platform and the digital engagement of specific audiences. The group is composed of digital specialists and professional diplomats who understand the political substance of the FCO policies. The group is different from the other parts of the FCO as the larger part of the group employs digital specialists, not only diplomats.

<sup>76</sup> A concrete example is the engagement to support the adoption of the UN Arms Treaty.

<sup>77</sup> DDG carefully considers technical aspects of Internet use in specific countries and adjusts its digital platforms accordingly.

For instance, the Internet and globalisation phenomena are “not favoured in France”. As expressed during the research interviews and in writings on the topic, the reason for this is that “the agenda promoted by globalisation is not the French one”, it is “designed by others” and the French mostly think of it as “something that is imposed on them, and that they cannot control”.<sup>70</sup>

Nevertheless, this strategic policy shift was undertaken, and Quay d’Orsay organised its presentation to the diplomatic corps - all of the French ambassadors - in August and September 2009.<sup>71</sup>

In general, the comparative analysis showed that Quay d’Orsay was less adaptable than its British and German counterparts to the required strategic and institutional changes, which affected its capacity to act in this field.

### Reforming institutional structures - adopting new practice and tools

The British FCO has been constantly trying to adapt to changes and advancements related to communications and PD.<sup>72</sup> The latest institutional mechanism for implementing UK PD is within the Directorate for Strategic Communication. It has around 100 employees at its HQ in London and 400 outside the country. There are five units within the Directorate: the Press Group, Public Diplomacy Group, Strategic Campaigns Group, Digital Diplomacy Group and Corporate Communications Group.

To make the new communications model function, the FCO changed its training programmes related to communications skills.<sup>73</sup> The Directorate for Strategic Communications at the time of the research had three specialists responsible for evaluating the activities. Significant FCO resources are dedicated to the development and understanding of new models of communication that would help the FCO network communicate with the public more directly: via media, websites, cultural programmes and academic exchange.

An analysis of the literature and other material, as well as personal interviews with FCO specialists, also indicated a constant attempt to use more new communication technologies. Awareness raising about the importance of PD and the training of FCO staff became one of the top priorities in the reform activities of the FCO.

The FCO has been doing a sort of *outreach on the web*, through “the first generation of the web” in one-way communication since 2006.<sup>74</sup> From 2007 the FCO started improving its digital methods, becoming more ambitious in its use of the web and in the development of its digital diplomacy tool.<sup>75</sup> The task of “digital diplomacy”, as introduced by the end of 2008, is not to change people’s perceptions abroad about the UK, but to influence thinking about the specific FP goal and priority the Government is working on.<sup>76</sup> British ambassadors write blogs, participating in the global debate, and in that way influence thinking about the issues. They are not “waving the flag and do not try to persuade people that Britain is wonderful. The reputation of a country is built indirectly, and represents the aggregation of good work in different fields of government policy.”<sup>77</sup> Even email became too slow, so the FCO entered the world of instant messages, sms, twitter, blog and social pages, all of which opened new possibilities for targeting influence, and in the process created true “lap-top diplomats”. Furthermore, as



the FCO introduced the concept of *presumed competence* a long time ago, which means that UK diplomats do not have to consult with headquarters in London before they communicate publicly, and this speeds up the media response tremendously.<sup>78</sup>

In order to ensure the adoption of the new practice of digital diplomacy, additional training had to be secured.<sup>79</sup> However, the need for such training in digital diplomacy, as well as in PD in general, is a “generational question”, which it is believed will disappear in time, as this kind of engagement is absolutely natural for the new generations of diplomats.

Taking a step further, the FCO started hiring *specialist non-diplomats* for the top communication/PD posts in order to improve its wider communication activities. This has still not happened in the Quay d’Orsay or FFO case. FFO sources indicated during the research that despite the improvements, FFO needs more communications/professional guidance in its day-to-day working practice, while Quay d’Orsay was still in the process of awareness raising related to the opening of the Ministry to outside expertise and forming *policy of influence* advisory boards.

All three ministries have adopted the understanding that one-way communication, which is the classic audience informing exercise, does not work and that two-way communication, engagement and partnerships have to be established. However, one thing to overcome in the FFO and Quay d’Orsay is, as stated during the expert interviews, the “fear of the media”, which has often been an obstacle to two-way communication and direct engagement.

## The French institutional public diplomacy structure

The organisation of the French Foreign Ministry generally reflects the French bureaucratic structure, with its characteristic ties between political and administrative elites, as well as the particular social pattern of the administration class, which is a result of similar education background and a specific recruitment policy.<sup>80</sup>

Structurally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has influence on forming foreign policy, but this does not guarantee consistent influence on concrete policy decisions. This depends on the balance of power between the Government and the President, especially in the period of cohabitation, when diplomats might lose direct contact with colleagues in the Élysée Palace. Despite coordinating mechanisms, the role of the MFA in concrete decision-making on FP remains very limited. According to the Constitution of the Fifth Republic, the President of the Republic has the power to lead FP, while the role of the MFA is subsidiary.<sup>81</sup>

Since the 1950s and the end of colonialism, France has been trying to redefine the role of its diplomacy. Reform in 1976 attempted to better reflect the new international demands of growing economic interdependence in foreign affairs. This resulted in the geographic structure of the MFA, rather than functional determination.

A new wave of reform began in 1993 after the fall of the Berlin wall, and this returned importance to functional departments. Since 2002/3 the MFA has tried to better understand the growing importance of economic diplomacy and multilateralism. In its attempts to respond to the global challenges and to use more non-state actors in FP, in 2008/9 *new reforms* were advanced. This resulted in the restructuring of its cooperation department and the establishment

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<sup>78</sup> Training for the new practices and methods needs to be offered.

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<sup>79</sup> Interview with a specialist of the Strategic Campaigns Group London, April 2009. During the research the focus of this group was on the campaign for promoting the EU within the UK for the then European minister Caroline Flint. It was a one-year campaign led by marketing and communication specialists and included visits, public gatherings, different sources of PD activities so that British citizens could make informed decisions on European issues.

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<sup>80</sup> See Brian Hocking and David Spence (eds) *Foreign Ministries in the European Union: Integrating Diplomats*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, p. 111.

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<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.112 and 113.

of the General Directorate for Global Affairs, Development and Partnerships with the following directorates: for global economy and development strategies; for global public goods; for French cultural policy; for mobility and attractiveness policy; designated chief of action in the territories; for relations with civil society and the mission of piloting assistance to the French Agency for Development.

The Directorate for Communication and its spokesperson remained separate from the PD structure. However, the institutional restructuring was significant; one pillar of the new French MFA structure is now dedicated to communication and PD, approximately one quarter of the Ministry capacity. In addition, the Director for Strategic Planning has a higher status, reporting directly to the Minister. There is also a State Secretary in charge of cooperation and franco-phone countries.

The 2008 Strategy recommended the same tools but updated their use, with an analysis of why some tools in the previous period did not have the desired effect.<sup>82</sup> Recommendations included: intensified programmes for visitors (including parliamentarians, politicians, high officials, university professors, and NGO personalities); continuation of the external audio-visual sector (subventions to TV5, RFI, CFI, France 24), teaching French abroad and cultural policy (subventions to the Teaching Language Agency, Alliance Française and cultural centres); strengthened scientific, technical and university exchange.<sup>83</sup>

Increased use of the Internet was also recommended, as well as a change to the unsustainable practice of offering universal cultural substance in cultural centres and institutes. Cultural distribution programmes were to include specialists in specific fields, and this led to the idea of making Culture France the leading organisation in implementing French cultural policy abroad.<sup>84</sup> The recommendation of strengthening university exchange led to the initiative to reform the universities and visa policy. In addition, another major shift was advised: *France should not be afraid of the use of foreign languages in order to ensure the circulation of its ideas.*<sup>85</sup>

As the research confirmed, reforming foreign ministries, like any bureaucracy, is not easy. There is an almost in-built resistance to change and a tendency to remain in the “comfort zone”. Quay d’Orsay is one of the oldest foreign ministries in existence; and even when its structures are changed, its institutional practice is hard to change. Despite this, the research showed that there is a real attempt to raise awareness, adopt new understandings, and catch up with new developments.

Due to the lead from the top of the government structures, the awareness of the need to open up to public work and of the importance of communications and PD has begun to grow, especially among the younger generation of diplomats.

### The German institutional public diplomacy structure

German PD implementation has a clear structure. FFO directors discuss the priorities in the short, mid and long term, and determine the themes and topics of PD. This forum also discusses how other ministries could support the efforts of the FFO to *position* Germany. Desk officers prepare materials for the directors’ meetings; priorities are agreed in a consensual process and the FFO leads the implementation. This process was established in 2005/2006 using

<sup>82</sup> These include lesser success in bringing the best and brightest to study in France, as the “system of higher education is difficult for outsiders to understand”, the immigration policy complicates the process of bringing in the “leaders of the future”, and because of insistence on the French language even in cases where that would affect the impact of a message.

<sup>83</sup> As recommended, the audio-visual sector and French language teaching takes ¼ of the Budget for external cultural action.

<sup>84</sup> Since its establishment in 1958 the Ministry of Culture has been responsible for cultural activities within the country, while all cultural activities abroad have been the responsibility of the MFA; the most recent changes in 2009 moved the management of cultural policy abroad to Culture France. French embassies have cultural/cooperation departments implanting the cultural/cooperation/language action, in addition to cultural centres. The latest initiative is to have cultural centres as a part of embassies, and the MFA aimed to pilot this set up by the end of 2009. However, many interlocutors in Quay d’Orsay were not convinced of its effectiveness since embassies’ activities are never seen to be as credible as the activities of the centres, which have operational independence. It is also important to mention that the cultural departments of the French embassies do not necessarily employ only diplomats but also specialists from academic and other non-state sectors.

<sup>85</sup> “Do not fight unnecessary battles. French is not fighting to become the global language, as English is”, was one of the instructions; “We have to accept the idea that we can and have to work in other languages (especially in English, German, Arabic and Spanish) when defending the originality and interest of our country.” See *La France et l’Europe Dans le Monde: Livre blanc sur la politique étrangère et européenne de la France 2008 - 2020*.



a step-by-step reform approach. Before then there was no institutional body to coordinate and adopt FFO PD activities abroad on a regular basis and in a systematic manner. The FFO cannot force other ministries to adopt and follow the PD priorities adopted within the FFO, but it can try to convince them.<sup>86</sup>

The strategic planning of PD activities began to resemble the British model. There are three cycles of PD:

- Short-term PD: daily activities, mainly media relations and news management;
- Medium-term PD: activities planned for 1 to 3 year cycles; and
- Long-term PD: major goals and themes defined in 5 to 10 year time frames.

The topics and themes can be re-adjusted in accordance with new developments, but there are usually seven to eight major topics and themes.<sup>87</sup> Long-term themes include the positioning of Germany abroad, strengthening the EU, fostering joint efforts against climate change and tackling global challenges such as terrorism by, for example, opening a dialogue with the Islamic world. Overall goals are defined, but continually adjusted to some degree, in a constant process of fine-tuning.<sup>88</sup>

As a result, PD has been more coordinated since 2004. The agreed priorities are sent to all German embassies, which design their activities for the following year in accordance with them, and set their budgets.<sup>89</sup> This is the practice in all three researched ministries.

When it comes to German PD tools, the Goethe institute<sup>90</sup> has played a crucial role in implementing German PD for 50 years, with its network of institutes, cultural centres, cultural societies, libraries and language learning centres. In 1970, on behalf of the FFO, Ralf Dahrendorf developed "the principles for the implementation of cultural diplomacy abroad"<sup>91</sup> which are composed of dialogue and partner relationships. As such it became "the third pillar of the German foreign policy." During the time of Willy Brandt the concept of "extended culture" ("*ausgedehnte kultur*") was established and became the basis for the activities of the Goethe Institute, which in 1976 became an independent cultural organisation funded by the FFO. It remains a flagship PD institution.

Dialogue and partnerships between non-state structures of countries still play an important role in German PD as defined in Dahrendorf's principles.<sup>92</sup> Russia is a very important country for Germany, from many points of view, and Germany is continuously working at its goal to strengthen Russian civil society by bringing together civil society members from the two countries.

The FFO also frequently supports media dialogue, providing a forum for journalists from Germany and other countries or regions; the FFO suggests the topic but does not interfere.<sup>93</sup> Political parties and private stiftungs have a significant PD role in Germany; there is no equivalent active tool in the UK or France. Political foundations belong to the civil society of Germany; the German FFO coordinates activities with them, but they are completely independent in what they do and are not obliged to follow the direction of the FFO (although they usually do).

Private foundations are also significant partners of the FFO. They financed more German language teachers abroad than DaaD in 2006 and 2007, and in the last 2-3 years useful cooperation with them has been established.

<sup>86</sup> Interview with a high-ranking FFO diplomat responsible for German PD, Berlin, May 2009.

<sup>87</sup> These now include climate change, the fight against terrorism, securing resources (energy, water), promotion and positioning of the EU, promotion and positioning of Germany as a credible and trustworthy foreign policy player, promotion and strengthening of the German economy through inward and outward investment and tourism as well as German competitiveness in science and research. Interview with FFO official responsible for PD, Berlin, May 2009.

<sup>88</sup> For example, as the EU is constantly developing, the strengthening of the EU, in terms of practical PD activities, requires a readjustment of actions in a 5 to 10 year period.

<sup>89</sup> For example, the theme for the year 2009 was two anniversaries - 60 years of the foundation of Germany and 20 years after the fall of the Wall - but there are those that will be repeated in years to come like climate, energy, EU. There always has to be room for yearly readjustments.

<sup>90</sup> The Goethe Institute was established in 1951 as the successor of Deutsche Akademie, DA. Its first task was to secure training for German teachers in Germany. Interview with the Goethe Institute staff, Berlin, May 2009.

<sup>91</sup> Lord Ralf Dahrendorf was a German born sociologist, philosopher, political scientists and liberal politician, first as a member of the German parliament (SDP), and then as a member of the British House of Lords after Queen Elizabeth II made him a knight, later granting him a life peerage for his service to Britain. At the time when he developed the principles of the German cultural policy he was the state secretary in the FFO. He was also Director of the London School of Economics and Warden of St. Anthony's College at Oxford University.

<sup>92</sup> One of these programmes is "Germany meets Turkey", a project under the patronage of the ministers of foreign affairs of Germany and Turkey respectively, Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Abdullah Gül. More details at [www.germanymeetsturkey.org](http://www.germanymeetsturkey.org). Similar projects exist with Russia, with the establishment of cooperation between German and Russian civil society organisations as the goal. For example, see Totschka-Treff - German Russian your web de-cn.net - Sino-German cultural network. The same model is used for establishing a dialogue with the Arab world.

<sup>93</sup> The FFO's PD budget in 2009 was 300 mil. EUR, and it was significantly increased in the field of cultural diplomacy, thanks to the minister who understood and supported these activities. Interview with FFO official, May 2009.

<sup>94</sup> "We had to become active to be visible on the international stage and stop taking for granted any more that Germany is leading, for example, in China or Korea. Germany also entered the global market for leaders of the future, aiming to pick the best brains in other countries and bring them to study in Germany. That required a proactive approach, but not an aggressive one". Interview with FFO official, Berlin, May 2009.

<sup>95</sup> German federal units (*Länder*) also have significant PD funds; some activities are coordinated with them.

The German FFO recognised a couple of years ago that there is worldwide competition in the field of PD, and began to deal with issues of the attractiveness of Germany.<sup>94</sup> The FFO believed that their PD efforts were less focused and their institutional structures less flexible than in the British case. Having indicated their observations on FCO practices, they managed to adjust to a more effective PD model. The FFO also demonstrated more advanced coordination, cooperation and mind-mapping with its PD partners (civil society, cultural partners, science research, politics) than Quay d'Orsay.<sup>95</sup>

### **Best practice and preferable policy options**

On the basis of insights gathered during the research, an assessment is made of what PD set up would be most suitable for the historical, institutional and financial circumstances specific to BiH. The primary goal of the proposed policy is to raise awareness of the importance of taking PD action in order to reach the strategic goal of accession and to secure institutional support. The second goal is to guide the raising of institutional capacity and capability for developing and implementing PD. The third goal is related to the funding of such a policy, while the fourth and fifth goals are related to political and public support for such a policy.

On the basis of the defined criteria, **three policy options are considered:**

*Option 1: Government endorsed, MFA led PD policy, implemented in coordination and cooperation with other state and non-state actors.*

*Option 2: Government endorsed, Directorate for European Integration (DEI)/non-state actor led PD policy, implemented in close cooperation and coordination with MFA and other state and non-state actors.*

*Option 3: The current state of affairs, where there is no PD policy nor institutional structure dealing with strategic PD support for the FP goal of accession (the "do nothing" option).*





## Framework analysis

Goals	Criteria	Option 1 Government endorsed, <b>MFA led policy</b> , in coordination/ coop- eration with state and non-state actors.	Option 2 Government endorsed, <b>DEI/non- state actor led</b> , in close coordina- tion/ cooperation with MFA and other state and non-state actors	Option 3 Current state, <b>do nothing</b>
Raising institutional support/awareness of PD in service of accession	Effectiveness Coherence Coordination Credibility Awareness Sustainability  Feasibility	Moderate Moderate Low Low Low Low/ prone to political turmoil  Low	High Moderate to high High High High Moderate to high  Moderate to high	Current action preserved - no comprehensive PD policy and action
Institutional capability & capacity for PD	Effectiveness Coherence Coordination Credibility HR capacity Adaptability Flexibility	Low Low Moderate Low Low Low Low	High Moderate to high Moderate to high High High High High	Weak awareness, human & financial capacities for lead- ing PD, no experience in engaging non-state actors. Weak on all 6 criteria
Funding	Fund raising capacity Sustainability	Low  Low	High  Moderate	N/A
Political support	Awareness and support	Moderate	Moderate to high	N/A
Public support	Acceptability	Moderate	High	N/A

### Options not preferred and why

*Option 1: Government endorsed, MFA led PD policy, implemented in coordination and cooperation with other state and non-state actors*

This option is not proffered due to the current capacities of the MFA. Such an option would require extensive and comprehensive reform of the Ministry. As this does not seem politically, financially and institutionally feasible in the foreseeable future, it would therefore cause an unaffordable delay in the implementation of a BiH PD policy. The world has changed enormously since 1992, as have BiH FP priorities. However, no one has given serious consideration to the important issue of the organisation and reconstruction of BiH foreign affairs.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Interview with high ranking BiH MFA official, September 25, 2009

BiH also lacks a Law on Foreign Affairs, which would regulate many currently unregulated areas (such as fluctuation of cadre within the MFA, education/training of staff, professional advancements, HR management). The structure of the MFA has not significantly changed

since 1992, nor has it adapted to the spirit of the new era. While the MFA must indeed begin to reform and adjust its diplomatic service to the tasks of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it would be too ambitious to expect a comprehensive reform in the near future that would increase the MFA's capacities to lead PD policy.

The MFA currently has no PD sector or department. The Department for International Scientific, Educational, Technical, Cultural and Sports Cooperation deals with many issues that fall into the PD portfolio, but it is understaffed and underfinanced. It does not have the capacity to develop and implement either PD in general or the aspect of cultural diplomacy. Moreover, the Office of the Spokesperson is neither adequately staffed nor financially supported.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Same source.

In addition to this, BiH has no separate cultural centre in any of the countries where it has diplomatic/consular representation, except Croatia. None of the BiH Embassies abroad has a budget, nor specialised staff, for communications, cultural relations or PD.<sup>98</sup> The MFA, Presidency and the Council of Ministers do not have budgetary allocations which would cover these activities, and as state institutions they do not have the flexibility with fund-raising that a non-state actor would have. For all these reasons, if led by the MFA, the effectiveness, coherence and coordination of these activities would suffer, and, as state managed PD activities bear the risk of low credibility and can easily be seen as propaganda, the most critical aspect of PD would remain unfulfilled.

<sup>98</sup> As stated during the interviews in the MFA, BiH lacks a Law on State Holidays so the embassies and general consulates cannot even organise National Day receptions in the host countries, let alone more complex PD events.

Due to the political complexities, the sustainability of MFA led PD could be questionable. The MFA should begin work on increasing its capacity to effectively define and implement PD, but such a huge task could not be done in time to help BiH during the accession process.

*Option 3: The current state of affairs, where there is no PD policy nor institutional structures dealing with strategic PD support to the FP goal of accession (the "do nothing" option).*

As explained in the policy justification (Part I of the policy proposal), BiH has an extremely negative image and reputation abroad, far from that desired of a future EU member state. It is also recognised within the MFA structure that "the image of BiH diplomacy is a reflection of the situation in BiH and the very structure of BiH diplomacy. In the current circumstances, it would be difficult to expect rapid improvements." There is an institutional understanding, expressed during the research interviews, that the "general image of BiH is bad - burdened by war, perceptions of a potential terrorist threat, continued instability related to the division of the country."

At the same time, "we live in a world of global communications in which a diplomat cannot lie in the interest of his/her country without being caught immediately".<sup>99</sup> There are professionals within the MFA who are aware that a positive image and reputation is created by a proactive approach; not by following, but by generating positive events. They are also aware of the MFA's bad reputation within the country, the lack of adequate skills within the MFA and the disaster it would be if no action were taken. They recognise that there is no domestic public understanding that diplomacy is a specific activity and "an expensive game", that improvisation is inappropriate and does not work, and that there is continuous pressure to lower the expenditure of the MFA. On the other hand, there is a real need to strengthen activities related to the image improvement of BiH and its diplomacy capacity in order to work towards the fulfilment of the top FP goal. The instruction to "do nothing" would have extremely negative consequences for FP goals and interests in general.

<sup>99</sup> Interview with high-ranking MFA official, Sarajevo, September 25, 2009.



## Preferred policy option and why

*Option 2: Government endorsed, DEI/non-state actor led PD, implemented in close cooperation and coordination with the MFA and other state and non-state actors*

Option 2 is recommended as the most suitable for the BiH context. It would entail a government-endorsed policy, as indicated in the EU Integration Strategy of BiH. Such a policy requires cooperation and coordination with the state institutions responsible for foreign affairs and EU integration as well as with other state institutions responsible for specific aspects of such a policy (culture, education, EU integration, university exchange, investment and tourism, media). As the major coordinator of the EU integration activities of the BiH government, the DEI is the best placed institution to coordinate the governmental side of this policy. Such cooperation should be secured via a newly established PD Board composed of representatives of the respective government institutions, specialised think-tanks and independent experts, and chaired by a high ranking DEI official responsible for PD. The Board would be responsible for offering general guidance in terms of themes, strategic direction and messages of PD.

Option 2 would require the establishment of a foreign policy think-tank or Advisory Group, specialised in foreign affairs, EU integration issues, strategic communication and PD. It would be operationally independent, and would provide substance to the PD action, serve as a non-state partner to the Government and act in accordance with the directive of the PD Board. The Advisory Group would be responsible for coordinating policy implementation with the state and non-state partners. It would also be responsible for awareness raising within society and serve as a hub for providing information to domestic and foreign journalists. It would provide additional training to MFA and DEI staff to ensure that the HQ and the diplomatic and consular network (DCN) understand the essence of the new policy and adopt it. This would make them familiar with the endorsed PD policy and later capable of working on its implementation in their daily work in the Ministry and in the DCN in countries which are strategically important for the BiH FP goal of EU accession (in EU capitals, and in EU institutions in Brussels). The DEI, in cooperation with the MFA would be responsible for improving its internet communications to support such a policy, establishing a direct link to the leading Advisory Group and through it to other non-state partners working on specific PD aspects.

The task of the Advisory Group (in the form of a foreign policy centre, foreign policy academy, EU Integration Council or similar) would not only be to feed PD policy but also, over time, to increase the DEI and MFA capacity to establish a functioning third pillar of its diplomacy. The Advisory Group/EU Integration Council should work in strategic partnership with the Government, DEI and MFA and, particularly at the beginning, would need the capacity to raise funds for strategy development and policy implementation in addition to the funds allocated to the DEI for promoting EU integration. It would need to seek functional synergy with the entity and cantonal ministries for culture/art, tourism and education (as well as related organisations and associations), as these are areas on the basis of which BiH can begin to rebuild and recover its reputation. The Advisory Group would also make synergies with the existing educational/training activities of the MFA and DEI.<sup>100</sup>

Challenges to the implementation of such a policy are to be expected.<sup>101</sup> However, all of them could be met if there is adequate political will for approaching the EU reform agenda with seriousness and responsibility.

<sup>100</sup> The MFA has continuous cooperation with the diplomatic academies of Serbian and Croatian MFAs; it signed the Protocol of Cooperation with the Republic of Slovenia (in the area of diplomatic training, especially in the area of EU integration, and recently in the area of biometric passports; it has cooperation with the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna and the Centre of Public Administration in Paris and Berlin. Detailed mapping of the edu/training activities of the MFA would be needed before the FPC would create a complementary programme for edu/training of the MFA staff.

<sup>101</sup> These may come in the form of lack of institutional cooperation, lack of harmonisation of practices and necessary messages, lack of adequate expertise and general awareness of the importance of such a policy within the institutions.

If selected, this option would ensure expertise, institutional flexibility and adaptability, fund raising capability (which the MFA does not have), as well as impartiality, a greater level of effectiveness and, of principal importance, *credibility of action*. Activities coordinated via an independently operational Advisory Group, no matter how close to the DEI, the MFA and other BiH institutions it is, would be seen as more credible.

Option 2 implies lesser ownership of the policy by the MFA, but is the only politically, institutionally and financially feasible option. However, future MFA ownership of this policy must be one of the goals. Raising the institutional capacity of the Ministry to lead such a policy would be one of the two major long term tasks of the Advisory Group through its work on education/training/awareness raising activities in the MFA, thereby increasing its capacity to take over additional responsibilities related to the implementation of the policy in the future.

This option does not pose the risk of lesser political acceptability than the other two. The DEI has a respectable reputation in the country as a professional body dedicated to EU integration, and the political elite is fully aware of the lack of human and financial resources and expertise for such a policy within the MFA and the other government structures.

In terms of public acceptability, it would be more acceptable than the other two options, considering the low reputation of the Ministry among the public. Hence any actor demonstrating expertise, impartiality and quality work would have the potential to gain public support. The DEI and a respectable Advisory Group satisfy this criteria.

### **Main findings and conclusions**

The research and analysis of the evolution of PD in all three studied cases proves that traditional government-to-government relations in foreign affairs are no longer enough for the achievement of FP goals. PD has become one of the pillars of modern diplomacy and an important part of pursuing FP goals abroad. What this study showed is that PD policies are designed to address a *clear need* for intervening in the areas of image, reputation, branding and international positioning, in order to allow the country to pursue its FP goals, regardless of what they are.

Countries have been implementing some sort of PD, or policy of influence or positioning abroad since the end of WWI. The US was most active during the Cold War; it is now trying to recover its "soft power" and use it in the war against terrorism. Re-branding and a new positioning was essential for Germany after WWII, while France and the UK were more motivated to find a way to be influential in international affairs in the post colonial period.

What is new in the last 10-20 years is the increasing importance of global and national opinion polls in international politics. This has come with the information age and technological advancement, which facilitate the instant spread of information via numerous channels. It is the beginning of an era in which governments cannot hide what they do domestically and diplomats can no longer "lie in the interest of their country" - as Bosnian born writer and Nobel Prize winner Ivo Andric bluntly defined diplomatic work.

In all three studied cases, this new activity started with image creation and re-branding, along with the more focused aim of increasing exported goods and services or attracting inward



investment. The policy, the strategies that followed, and the tools used to implement them, developed into a more multifaceted policy in order to address more complex FP goals, which took into account the new democratised environment and the new role of instant global communication in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The promotion of the country moved from a form of marketing similar to the commercial sector to strategic communication and PD, affirming that “honest and genuine engagement” abroad, using two-way communication with foreign audiences, is necessary to ensure the fulfilment of FP priorities. All three countries continue to promote business, trade and investment (economic diplomacy), but this has become just one of the activities within a multifaceted policy in which cultural diplomacy, strategic communication and engagement with non-state actors abroad are essential, interdependent parts, sharing the aim of achieving a wide range of short-, mid- and long-term FP goals, apart from, and in addition to, economic goals.

There is a general acknowledgement that *bureaucracies are not skilled at communicating with the public*. Not only are they slow, but, even more critically, their promotional activities can easily slip into propaganda. The findings clearly indicate that for the new policy to be successfully implemented, *governments must improve their communication capacities and capabilities*. They should engage specialists, change recruitment practices, provide constant training, define the frame and direction of PD and fund it. However, they should not fully implement PD activities. Foreign ministries should instruct their staff to contribute to the overall PD strategy implementation, but *ensure credibility* by engaging *credible independent partners* for the biggest chunk of PD implementation.

The research proved that it was not easy for diplomats to leave their “comfort zone” behind the closed doors of meetings, diplomatic dinners and receptions, in which diplomats traditionally establish relations between two governments or act multilaterally. Communication with the foreign public is especially difficult if the local environment is not friendly towards the sending country. However, those diplomats who learned how to act outside the comfort zone and who entered into contact with CSOs, the media, opinion-makers, universities and various web users, and engaged them on issues relevant to the sending country, were successful. This approach required a change in the traditional models and methods of diplomatic work, and involved new strategies, tools, knowledge and skills.

All three cases proved that *PD has to reflect a real change* of internal policies. If there is no real policy shift, the effort is wasted. It was also proved that the image projected abroad begins to reinforce the same image within the domestic society to a certain degree. This was most obvious in the case of UK, and to some extent in the French and German cases.

*Raising institutional awareness of the importance of PD* as a pillar of modern diplomacy within government structures is essential for success. As well as *changing recruitment policy and opening the Ministry’s door to specialists*, staff awareness of policy and their ongoing training proved to be essential for success. Institutional flexibility and adaptability to the swiftly changing circumstances of the contemporary world also proved to be of critical importance. Strengthening communication departments, engaging in two-way communication (beyond simply sending press releases) and exiting the comfort zone of dealing solely with diplomatic circles has become essential, as has overcoming the fear of the media, acquiring technological literacy, being open to expertise outside of the ministry and establishing partnerships with non-state actors in fulfilling the FP goals.



PD strategies are always built on the basis of the *PD policy endorsed at the government level*, whose ministries have to cooperate on PD. The strategy must be tied to specific short-, mid- and long-term FP goals. The Strategy Action Plan must specify the methods and tools that will be developed in implementing each goal defined in the Strategy. All three cases proved that the evaluation of PD is a very complex task due to its numerous activities and actors; however, some form of evaluation must be established and the Strategy and Action Plan reviewed at least annually.

<sup>102</sup> Different government ministries may have responsibility for different aspects of PD. (In the case of BiH: Ministry of Foreign Trade, Foreign Affairs, Presidency, DEI, Investment Promotion Agency FIPA, Chamber of Commerce.) Their good coordination is essential for effective strategic communication and PD.

<sup>103</sup> For example, during the work on the UN Arms Trade Treaty, PD was activated by establishing cooperation with a Cambridge University scientist developing the Control Arms Project, which started a campaign on this issue. Since its beginning in October 2003, the Control Arms Project had gathered the support of more than one million people around the world. As a consequence, in December 2006, 153 governments started to work within the UN on the development of this Agreement and in 2007 around 100 governments submitted their responses to the draft Agreement sent by the UN Secretary general. The FCO was firmly behind this initiative, but it was never too obvious. The Agreement was adopted. At the time of the research, the campaign was continuing by focusing on its ratification in the state parliaments.

The research indicated the crucial importance of PD policy coordination on the governmental level. The government provides an institutional framework for improving the cohesion, effectiveness and influence of PD efforts, as well as coordination and cooperation with PD partners, which is essential. Also essential are common understanding of the purpose of PD and *clearly defined responsibilities* for each actor.<sup>102</sup>

Coordination and cooperation must start with the government body responsible for a specific policy or goal. For example, the UK foreign policy goal of "support for the establishment of stronger and more efficient international organisations like the UN and EU", is one in which the FCO takes the lead. The FCO has to cooperate with other *government departments, think-tanks and other non-governmental structures*; however, it remains responsible for this goal before the UK Government.<sup>103</sup> This goal was achieved through PD by cooperating with NGOs around the world, who started putting pressure on their governments to work more efficiently on this issue.

Different models of engaging state and non-state partners are deployed in designing and implementing PD, depending on the particular country's circumstances. This important finding was taken into account when suggesting a feasible model for BiH PD. Considering the specific circumstances of BiH, and its current institutional capacity and realities - with a possibility for improvements which require neither major institutional changes nor additional budgetary allocations - the BiH government would be able to endorse the framework and instruct its staff regarding implementation. What is required is additional awareness raising and training, which is necessary for implementing any PD policy, considering the knowledge and skills needed for doing 21<sup>st</sup> century diplomatic work.

What is necessary in the short run is for the DEI to be able to coordinate the policy within the government structures, and to use the MFA network for dissemination, with inputs from the non-state actor in charge of coordinating other non-state actors (like the British Council and BBC World Service in the UK case, the Goethe Institute and Deutsche Welle in the German case, and Culture France and RFI in the case of France), while having operational independence. The MFA, in coordination with other government departments and diplomatic networks, must do its part mainly via a strengthened communications department as well as the Office for Diplomatic Training and the Department for International Scientific, Educational, Technical, Cultural and Sports Cooperation. It should aim to give direction to and feed the DEI and PD partners, but should not manage their activities.

Some sort of *PD Board is needed for the direction and overseeing* of such a complex policy. This sort of body is usually composed of high profile government figures responsible for PD within the relevant ministries, as well as specialists and experts. Its task should be to endorse the key interests and goals abroad as defined by the government, key PD messages, and



thematic and geographic priorities in the short and mid term (five years) and long term (ten years). This would provide overall guidance for specific programmes to be implemented by the government institutions and PD partners. The PD Board would also need to establish some sort of monitoring mechanism, which would indicate the progress and possible points of improvement in yearly reviews of the policy implementation.

The research also proved that the role of *selecting the government's PD partners*, and good coordination with them, is immensely important. The government should provide financial support (if possible) and never interfere with their operational independence or the securing of synergies between the public and private sector activities in the field.

While quick changes in priorities, as in the French case, may seem to indicate flexibility, which is always desirable when it comes to bureaucracies, frequent priority shifts are not advisable when it comes to PD, as it is designed to deliver results in mid- to long-term time frames, whereas quickly changed priorities can be promoted only by using models of short-term campaigns.

Another important lesson learned is that the personality of leaders matters. All three case studies indicated that *the position, institutional dedication and prominence of PD depend on how much the people leading the foreign policy of a country understand the new concept and its impact*. Prime Minister Blair had more awareness of and capability for PD than Prime Minister Major, President Sarkozy more than President Chirac. With the German foreign minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier,<sup>104</sup> German PD became more comprehensive and more prominent within the FFO structure, factors which were responsible for the beginnings of a multifaceted PD approach in Germany.

The creative use of new communication tools such as the Internet also proved to be tremendously important. However, at the same time, the wider society within a country must understand and buy-in what the Government is selling abroad through PD, and continuously live up to the image projected abroad.<sup>105</sup>

The policy framework proposed on the basis of the policy study should serve as a guide for BiH institutions towards an understanding of PD: what it is, what it does, what its role can be in achieving the BiH strategic priority of EU accession, and how the responsible institutions can contribute to it. It suggests the most suitable institutional structure, model and mechanism for effectively implementing PD policy, as well as making the government structures more aware of a modern policy-making model and strategic thinking in relation to FP priorities.

The author's academic research in the field of diplomacy indicated that PD is generally an under-researched area, often not understood, or indeed misunderstood, within government structures, as well as being widely unrecognised and almost non-existent in BiH.<sup>106</sup> This policy study adds new knowledge and insights that would serve as a basis not only for raising awareness and knowledge among the institutions, but also for gathering crucial public support for such a policy.

Besides offering a proposal for such a policy, the presentation of the concept of PD itself introduces a new approach to strategy implementation, persuasively demonstrating that *modern foreign policy-making and implementation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has to include strategic commu-*

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<sup>104</sup> Served as German Foreign Minister from 2005 to 2009.

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<sup>105</sup> A good example of wider society buy-in of German PD was the Football World Cup in 2006 when all the media, without being instructed, reinforced the perception that the German Government wanted to promote during that event. The goal was to dispel the cliché of a too serious Germany with the simple line "let's celebrate", as the perception was that "the Germans never do that". The media readily picked up on the idea without institutional orchestration.

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<sup>106</sup> Even the most developed countries, with far greater awareness of the importance of PD, often have a hard time implementing it. Relevant literature points to the efficiency and influence of the "communications from and engagement with a man from a cave" who became more influential and powerful than the army of government officials dealing with communications. The comparison is made between Osama bin Laden and the (in)effectiveness of communications of the George W. Bush administration, which first showed absolute disregard for public diplomacy, and later made numerous unsuccessful attempts to improve it.

*nication and public diplomacy tools* if results are to be expected. This new approach heralds a new culture in which strategic communication and public diplomacy are an integral part of the policy-making process and not a fringe, *ad hoc* activity.

**In order to affect and maintain institutional change in the interests of effective PD, the responsible institution needs to:**

- Raise awareness about the new policy among staff and the wider public;
- Adjust institutional practice to the new policy approach;
- Hire specialists for the top communications/PD posts;
- Open the door to external expertise and adjust its recruitment policies;
- Continuously train staff to be capable of implementing change and to work in accordance with the new policy and institutional practice.

## Recommendations

**It is recommended that the DEI, in cooperation with the MFA and the Presidency:**

1. Appoint the members of the **PD Board** and chair the meetings (composed of representatives of the state and non-state actors with PD responsibilities) at least 2 times per year;
2. Propose the basic elements of the **PD policy** to be endorsed by the Government;
3. Endorse the **PD Strategy** defined by the expert Advisory Group;
4. Endorse the **PD Action Plan**, which would focus on institutional responsibilities in relation to PD Strategy, taking into consideration the Advisory Group recommendations;
5. Create a **PD Team within the DEI**, which would serve as an institutional hub and expert advisory team to the Government, providing recommendations for improvements in implementing PD policy within the MFA, its diplomatic network and other government bodies. The PD Team should create a **Country Plan of Activities (CPA)** chart for each country in which PD action is needed, and could state what concrete results are expected and what could be the outputs of specific activities, and suggest ways to improve communication via the internet as well as ways of leaving the "comfort zone" and getting engaged with the non-state actors and wider audience.<sup>107</sup>
6. Instruct the PD Board to *evaluate the Country Plan of Activities (CPA) each year* and correct or adjust the model of influence or tools as necessary;
7. Instruct the PD Board to recommend ways to engage in systematic and strategic lobbying in target countries and institutions, not just within political circles but also targeting a wider audience;
8. Ensure that *strategic communication becomes a part of internal and foreign policy making and implementation*;
9. Continuously *coordinate and cooperate on PD within the Government*, the foreign ministry and the diplomatic network, using input from the network to ensure coherence of policy and messages;
10. Make sure that embassies and missions abroad understand and adapt the FP priorities and the essence of the PD Strategy and Action Plan;
11. Ensure staff specialisation, life-long learning, reform of the recruitment policy, professional mobility and improved human resource management and IT communication systems;
12. Advise on correcting internal government policies and practices which harm or diminish PD policy.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>107</sup> The recommendation was based on the analysis of the British model of the Country Business Plan for BiH, prepared for its annual evaluation period 2009 - 2010. It contains detailed activities and is strongly focused on foreign policy goals. The FCO initiated this model in 2008 and developed it as a three-year business plan which matches the three year cycle of the UK Treasury. The plan is revised each year and its structure is closer to a corporate company plan than to a government work plan.

<sup>108</sup> This happened in France, for instance, in the case of its immigration policy, providing for better university exchange as well as initiating the reform of higher education, in order to attract the best foreign students.



**The establishment of a principal PD independent actor, an Advisory Group, is recommended to:**

1. Serve as the leading PD expert centre, capable of strategy development, project application and management, led by the PD Board recommendations only in matters of strategy, while remaining operationally independent;
2. Form a network of domestic and foreign PD experts and be capable of seconding scientific advisors to the relevant ministries;
3. Cooperate and coordinate with state and non-state actors on PD implementation;
4. Take PD policy awareness raising activities around the country (via media, conferences, round tables and public lectures), as well as ensuring BiH diplomats' participation at international conferences;
5. Engage other non-state actors with significant PD potential, thus becoming the coordinating hub for PD implementation;
6. Design and implement PD training curricula for the relevant ministries and diplomatic network.

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