

# Advancing Public Diplomacy from a Global Citizenship Perspective: An Empirical Study on How State and Non-state Actors Address Foreign Citizens in a Globalised World

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**Abstract:** The growing relevance of global citizenship forces governments to rethink the procedures of conducting foreign policy and to acknowledge the plurality of actors in international relations. Besides being a target group of public diplomacy, citizens themselves constitute actors. They form associations or serve as small-scale ambassadors when exchanging thoughts and ideas with people from other countries and cultures. Thus, citizens have to be seen as a crucial factor in public diplomacy that has to be recognised in both the academic analysis of public diplomacy and the practice of the concept.

Based on the first comprehensive and empirically grounded study on this concept in Germany, this paper analyses how public diplomacy actors address foreign citizens and how public diplomacy is conducted today. It points out that theoretical considerations on global citizenship contribute to advancing the concept of public diplomacy and vice versa.

**Keywords:** Public diplomacy, global citizenship, international relations, diplomacy, international public relations, international communication, transnationalisation, citizen diplomacy.

## 1. Introduction: Tendencies in contemporary world politics

Global citizenship dates back to as far as ancient Greece [54, p.1]. In the last decades, political, cultural, economic, technological and social developments have contributed to a world in which the concept of global citizenship appears to be more

relevant than ever. Many problems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century such as climate change or the threat of nuclear weapons demand transnational cooperation. This does not only lead to a growing entanglement of foreign and domestic policies [20, p.3] and national and international public spheres [10, p.14], but also to an increase in the number of actors in foreign affairs.

Moreover, both the democratisation of the world and a rising mobility contribute to a global society [91, p.5] that is applying new information and communication technology to establish and maintain contacts worldwide. The Internet enables people to access and disseminate information more easily. At the same time, however, this could foment distrust and suspicion among citizens [38, p.54; 91, p.5] who become less susceptible to influences by both hard and soft power [75, p.113] and, as a result, become a more self-determined actor.

These developments clearly indicate the steady visibility of global citizenship [54, p.1]. The concept signifies ways of thinking and living within multiple cross-cutting communities and network-based communities [54, p.2]. In recognising their collective desires, the “new” global citizens form associations and social movements opposing and collaborating with traditional governmental actors [44, p.140]. This redefines the procedures of conducting foreign policy and forcing governments to acknowledge the plurality in international relations. As citizens appear both as actors and target groups, the need for dialogue and collaboration-based public diplomacy grows. Exchange programmes like the Fulbright Programme of the United States of America enable thousands of young people to study abroad every year. Multinational companies routinely hire staff from different countries. Non-profit organisations like couchsurfing.com foster the exchange of ideas, experiences as well as language skills among people across the globe. All these individuals contribute to shaping their home country’s image abroad; are simultaneously exposed to public diplomacy, and serve as

ambassadors of their countries. Citizens therefore have to be seen as crucial factors in public diplomacy.

In the context of transnationalisation, mediatisation, informatisation and pluralisation of international relations, research should focus on how national actors address foreign citizens and how public diplomacy is conducted today. The first comprehensive, empirically grounded study on public diplomacy in Germany examines how practitioners understand and apply the concept of public diplomacy. Based on a social-integrative approach to public diplomacy, the research team analysed corporate actors which have a direct or indirect impact on the image of Germany abroad as well as their relationships with foreign citizens and governments.

## **2. Conceptual development: The influence of current affairs on research**

Since Edmund Gullion, Dean of the School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, coined the term public diplomacy in 1965 in an attempt to free it from any propagandist tendencies [11, p.19], the concept continually was adapted to developments in the international arena. Over the course of time, long-term trends as well as specific political events framed the concept of public diplomacy. An analysis of definitions in modern, post-Gullion time shows a shift in communication mode and target structure that resulted from its redefinition (Figure 1). With only few exceptions, the definitions of public diplomacy follow specific political discontinuities on an axis from persuasion to mutual understanding.

During the Cold War, Gullion defines public diplomacy as “the means by which governments, private groups and individuals influence the attitudes and opinions of other peoples and governments in such a way as to exercise influence on their foreign policy decisions” [86]. After the Cold War and its dichotomy perceptions of international politics ended, definitions of public diplomacy focused on generating understanding for the communicator. At that time, Hans Tuch (1990) for instance described public diplomacy as “a government’s process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding its nation’s ideas and ideals, its institutions and cultures, as well as its national goals and current policies” [70, pp.3-4]. After the 9/11 attacks in the

US, academic orientations shifted towards mutual understanding, reflecting terms like “engagement” or “relationship-building”. Leonard et al. (2002) for example state that “public diplomacy is about building relationships: understanding the needs of other countries, cultures and peoples; communicating our points of view; correcting misperceptions; [and] looking for areas where we can find common cause” [38, p.8]. These definitions synchronously reflect the different roles of global citizenship in the evolution of the concept. During the Cold War it has been seen as an actor to persuade and a target to be persuaded. At the end of the Cold War it has mainly been a target group whose understanding is sought. Since 9/11 it has been - either way - an actor to be understood.

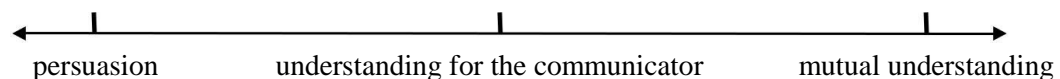


Figure 1. Definitions Influenced by World Policy Events

*Source: Illustration by authors.*

### 3. Constitution of the research field: Fragmentation by interdisciplinarity and internationality

The body of research on public diplomacy may be described as interdisciplinary and international. Researchers from diverse areas such as international relations (e.g. soft power, diplomacy) and communication research (e.g. public relations, marketing, nation-branding) analyse public diplomacy against their different backgrounds and perspectives. Historically, the researchers’ attempts have shifted from demarcations to

other concepts (especially diplomacy and propaganda) to efforts of convergence (especially soft power, public relations, marketing and nation-branding). When public diplomacy was initially understood as a state’s external communication aiming at openness, authors compared it to the traditional diplomacy surrounded by secrecy (e.g. [41, 22]). Current efforts to make propaganda research usable for a clarification of public diplomacy are rooted in the time of the end of the Second World War until the mid-1960s when public diplomacy stood for international information and propaganda [11, p.21] (e.g. [69, 61, 78, 48, 63]). Recently,

public diplomacy research mainly benefited from theories, models and methods of public relations (e.g. [60, 57, 58, 59, 35, 76, 77, 37, 47]). In the United States, however, public diplomacy is analysed more from a marketing perspective (e.g. [34, 79, 33, 66]). Lately, researchers of nation-branding also paid attention to the concept (e.g. [46, 3, 85, 67]). Meta-theoretical studies mostly agree that public diplomacy overlaps with these concepts, but still should be seen as wider in defining the goals, actors and instruments than each of them (e.g. [38, 19]).

Our analysis of the state of research further reveals that the theoretical and empirical knowledge on public diplomacy is internationally gained, but geographically disproportionally distributed. While the majority of the institutions and authors dealing with public diplomacy is situated in the United States [93] and studies the US as the main object of analysis (e.g. [2, 36, 39, 4, 28, 52, 7, 61, 18, 11, 15, 40, 42, 51, 73]), the concept has not been applied at all or since a few years only in most nation-states in Eastern Europe. Similarly most Asian, African and South American countries are at the very beginning of exploring the relevance of addressing foreign citizenship through public diplomacy (e.g. [5, 17, 26, 43, 45, 65, 67]). In Western Europe researchers started not before the beginning of the 1990s to analyse the concept (e.g. [57, 58, 21, 71, 72, 38, 41, 90]). Therefore, research is still quite biased – most analyses are conducted from US perspectives neglecting Asian, African, European or Latin American interests.

In sum, research on public diplomacy is increasingly wide-ranging but also intensively fragmented. Still, a definition of public diplomacy that is both empirically grounded and internationally acceptable is missing.

While the body of literature mainly offers definitional, historical, institutional and instrumental insights into public diplomacy, only little attention has been paid to findings of intercultural communication research (e.g. [77, 16]), social-integrative approaches or the role of non-institutional actors such as the citizenship and the so-called “citizen diplomacy” (e.g. [42]). Although public diplomacy and global citizenship are based on interrelated ideas and have developed in a coherent arena [8, p.81], scholarship on the relationship of the two concepts can also be characterised as hesitant. Interestingly though, researchers have analysed global citizenship with regard to the same or similar social subsystems that public diplomacy operates in: the political dimension (e.g. [44, 13]); the cultural and social dimensions (e.g. [13]); and the educational dimension (e.g. [1]).

#### **4. Theoretical approaches to public diplomacy: Contributions from sociology and communication science**

This paper answers the question “What is public diplomacy?” through a deeper analysis of the constitutive elements of public diplomacy: Who (actors) communicates with which purposes (aims), how (instruments), and to whom (target groups)?

To date, research on public diplomacy-actors focuses on their social level (micro: individuals; meso: organisations), organisational type (e.g. state actor, NGO, corporation) or their fields of activity (political/military, economic, social/cultural and education/research). By applying the social-integrative approach of German sociologist Uwe Schimank, these findings can be expanded and deepened. Combined with

the theory of actor-centred institutionalism (e.g. [53]) and organisational theory (e.g. [68, 14]), it displays a heuristic tool to analyse different types of actors (individual, collective, corporate) at all social levels (micro, meso, macro) that fully acknowledge the diversity of contributions made by various actors to public diplomacy.

The term “actor” generally describes an acting entity that either consists of an individual (individual actor) or a collective (complex actor) [14, p.52]. Each collective is formed by a fusion of individual actors that are characterised by their collective capacity to act. All individual acting is based on coordination in order to intentionally reach a common aim or the organisational intent [68, pp.310-311; 14, p.52]<sup>5</sup>.

The social-integrative approach by Schimank assumes that individual acting is guided by three dimensions of social structure: (1) The sub-systemic orientation horizon (*macro level*) is rooted in the social subsystem an organisation belongs to (e.g. politics, economy). This sets boundaries to other social sub-systems by indicating that political deeds are all about gaining voters rather than monetary success [55, p.430]. (2) Institutional structures (*meso level*) provide a frame of reference for the individual through informal regulations (e.g. rites or ways of behaving) or formal rules of procedure (e.g. diplomatic protocols) [56, p.245]. (3) Emerging from the idea that some aims can only be reached by cooperation with others, and constellations of actors in which individuals observe, influence and negotiate with others, define what an actor is actually able to do in a specific constellation (*micro level*) [56, p.245].

Transferring these assumptions to this study helps to clarify who conducts public diplomacy. Actors are individuals that communicate and act within an organisational role as an entrepreneur, politician or artist or in the role as a citizen of a country (*micro level*). The role of the citizens is intensified and supported by exchange programmes and transnational cooperation as well as by new information and communication technologies. These technologies that facilitate global friendships and mobility make private networks a constituent part of political reality. The slogan “Public diplomacy is everyone’s job” [10, p.17] becomes a reality<sup>6</sup>. In the form of public opinion the global citizenship exerts another decisive power. As it is by their agreement that state actors receive legitimacy, citizenship is not to be ignored by other actors. It is citizenship that defines the borders for acceptable acting as well as the political scope of action within which political actors can be successful [29, p.34]<sup>7</sup>. The new media have even strengthened the scope of influence of global citizenship by functioning as a source of information, an instrument of self-organisation and a discussion forum at the same time.

By their organisational actions, communicative self-presentation and exterior appearance, organisations are actors of public diplomacy (*meso level*) as well. This might be the German TV channel Deutsche Welle or the Technisches Hilfswerk providing technical aid in disaster situations being perceived as diplomats of Germany (IP 30: 311-312). Taking into consideration the importance of individuals as described above, institutions are faced with the challenge of how to functionally integrate a public diplomacy activity. “It is tempting to

compartmentalise public diplomacy as the exclusive preserve of those who draw salary cheques for working in the field; but this is to ignore both the contribution of “citizen diplomats” and the “people-to-people” public diplomacy carried out through work like town twinning” [8, p.24].

The country itself can be perceived and consequently behave as an actor of public diplomacy when, for example, a “German position”, “German-American” relationships or simply a “German” public diplomacy is described [27, p.136] (*macro level*). This is a widespread assumption but reality is much more complex. Public diplomacy is not the activity of a single actor but a cumulative performance of various individuals and complex actors. Guided by their social subsystem and institutional structures - their specific interests contribute to public diplomacy. From an institutional perspective, public diplomacy is characterised by a decentralised organisation.




For a holistic understanding of public diplomacy, the goals, communication processes and target groups have to be analysed too. As stated, definitions of public diplomacy range from persuasion to mutual understanding. Signitzer (1993) allocates “two basic functions of public diplomacy” [57, p.201] which are political information and cultural communication followed at the same time. The chosen strategy orients towards the situation, actor, programme and, most notably, the target group.

For a systematic analysis of target groups, public diplomacy can draw on public relations research. Such a research should already have created worthwhile means of identification and segmentation (e.g. [23, p.145; 24]). Besides specific differences between individuals (e.g. old and young

people), addressing global citizenship has to take into account and adapt to the contextual conditions in the target country. The conditions include infrastructure (e.g. political system, degree of activism), media system (e.g. diffusion of media, illiteracy) [64] and culture<sup>8</sup> (e.g. negotiation style, etiquette, language).

Finally, the instruments to be used to reach the goals should be analysed. A systematised list of public diplomacy instruments is still missing in research. There are single attempts trying to categorise them (e.g. [38, 6, 9]). They integrate very few, selected instruments and create different models with little interrelationships among them. The role of global citizenship is neglected so far. This study suggests integrating these models into one holistic public diplomacy instrument model acknowledging the role of global citizens. This could be achieved by clarifying the thrust of the existing models: Leonard et al. (2002) introduce an instrumental orientation towards time-frame and “actor-centred” instruments; Cowan and Arsenault (2008), the relationship; and Cull (2008b), the manipulation of environmental conditions. The integration of these taxonomies is based on the application of the public relations media model by Hallahan (2001) that allocates instruments to five big groups: public media, controlled media, interactive media, events and group communication and dyadic communication [25, p.463]. This paper suggests understanding also some non-state actors as direct or indirect instruments of state organisations. An application to public diplomacy is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Holistic Model of Public Diplomacy Instruments<sup>9</sup>

	<b>Public Media</b>	<b>Controlled Media</b>	<b>Interactive Media</b>	<b>Events/ Group-communication</b>	<b>One-to-one Communication</b>	<b>‘actor-centred instruments’</b>
<b>Main use in public diplomacy</b>	information; mobilisation; advertisement	information; advocacy; advertisement	exchange of information; establishing and cultivating contact; mutual understanding	exchange of information; establishing and cultivating contact; mutual understanding	exchange of information; establishing and cultivating contact; mutual Understanding	Individual achievements for PD; utilisation of resources (e.g. human capital: personnel, expertise; immaterial capital: credibility, networks)
<b>Main function</b>						
<b>Orientation towards timeframe</b>						
<b>Orientation towards relationship</b>						
<b>Examples</b>	mass media, media cultural assets	International broadcasting, websites, PR-material	internet; web 2.0	Exchange programmes, cultural events, language courses	Personal meetings, Virtual Communication	NGO Diplomacy, Diaspora Diplomacy, global citizens

Source: Illustration by authors.

## **Methodology**

### ***Research Questions***

Within this theoretical background, we pose five research questions to know which way public diplomacy is understood and conducted in Germany.

RQ 1: How is public diplomacy defined by German actors in the field?

We analysed how the concept is understood in Germany and thus contributed to establishing a public diplomacy definition that is internationally consented.

RQ 2: Which public diplomacy strategy do relevant organisations pursue with regard to their aims, instruments, target groups and the image of Germany abroad?

Our empirical analysis shed light on the objectives behind public diplomacy strategies and, based on our holistic model of public diplomacy instruments, the instruments that are applied in order to reach them. Furthermore, we examined the target groups of German public diplomacy actors and the relevance of both foreign as well as German citizens in their strategies.

RQ3: How is public diplomacy structured within the organisations?

Corporate public diplomacy actors comprise individuals pursuing an organisational intent [68, pp.310-311]. They act within the boundaries of an organisation's structure that influences the way public diplomacy is conducted and the significance that is attributed to the concept within an organisation.

RQ 4: How do public diplomacy actors cooperate with each other?

Just like individuals, corporate actors work within a framework of different

organisations dealing with public diplomacy. The study analyses in how far these organisations observe, influence and negotiate with each other [56, p.245] and in how far a network can be identified nationally and internationally.

RQ 5: How can the different types of public diplomacy organisations be differentiated from each other?

As discussed above, we distinguished between individual and corporate actors, public and private actors, state and non-state actors as well as four social subsystems of public diplomacy actors (political/military, societal/cultural, economic and education/research) and sought to find out in how far these different types of actors understand and conduct public diplomacy similarly or differently.

### ***Research Design***

Previous researches on public diplomacy in Germany were primarily case studies [80, 81, 32] focusing mainly on the work of single public diplomacy actors. However, this study is the first comprehensive research effort in understanding the concept, aims, strategies, instruments and structures of the most important German public diplomacy actors. Guided expert interviews serve as the main research method for this study. Additional insights are gained by a content analysis of publicly available documents on the work and self-understanding of German public diplomacy actors, such as annual reports and websites. The guided interviews use a half-standardised questionnaire which includes the following: individual and organisational understanding of public diplomacy;



integration in organisational structures; relevance of the American way of conducting public diplomacy in understanding the concept in Germany; human resources; goals of public diplomacy activities; time frame; key messages; target groups and their prioritisation; instruments; relevance of Internet-based media; partnering abroad and within the own country; and future challenges. Additionally, a written questionnaire preceded every guided interview. It contains questions on the translation of public diplomacy, the structural integration within organisations, the educational/professional background of public diplomacy practitioners as well as the organisations' target groups and cooperation partners.

### *Sample*

The sample of this study comprises 31 organisational actors with headquarters in Germany. They address issues and concerns of citizens and governments abroad which, according to the working definition stated above, contribute to public diplomacy in Germany. These actors represent various fields: politics, defence, media, culture, science and education, development cooperation and economy<sup>10</sup>. The selection of the organisations is based on three criteria: (1) the organisation's institutionalisation abroad which is defined by the number of countries it covers, the amount of activities abroad and the number of employees working abroad; (2) the strategic alignment survey of organisations that (a) strategically focus on public diplomacy or (b) do not pursue an explicit public diplomacy strategy, but whose communication

activities abroad implicitly contribute to public diplomacy; and (3) the intentional practice of public diplomacy which identifies organisations that consciously apply the concept and classify their actions as public diplomacy and those that contribute to public diplomacy, but negate the application of the concept. In a second step, the research group selected one representative of each organisation that has specific knowledge on communication and international relations.

### *Limitations*

Even though the study gives an overview over the most important public diplomacy actors in Germany, it cannot provide a survey of all relevant actors in this field. Not all dimensions of public diplomacy are represented equally in this study. Organisations in the political field dominate whereas organisations from the economic dimension are underrepresented.<sup>11</sup>

The 60-minute interview was not enough, prompting researchers to skip some of the questions. Furthermore, the questionnaire was modified during the field interview. The biggest impact occurred in the comparative analysis when the interview was translated from English to German<sup>12</sup>.

### *Findings and Discussion*

"We are not public diplomacy actors", is the consensus of majority of organisations at the beginning of the interviews. The term and concept of public diplomacy is unknown among organisations in Germany. Aside from the Federal Foreign Office, only few organisations are familiar with the

term, but none of them is using it. However, during the course of the interviews, most of them agreed in saying: “We somehow do public diplomacy without knowing it”. This is most especially true for non-profit organisations. They strongly deny that they are doing it to keep their non-state actor category. Therefore, it may be concluded that public diplomacy is not yet an organisational function such as public relations and its activities are not yet an explicit part of the organisational strategies but are handled as a side-effect.

The analysis reveals that the organisations have problems in defining the concept. They trace this to the fact that public diplomacy research in Germany is behind compared to other countries, especially the United States (IP 2: 30-33). Interestingly, their understanding of the concept is very much guided by their social subsystem: Organisations from the field of development cooperation translate it as development cooperation whereas political actors define it as diplomacy. Nevertheless, the organisations agreed that public diplomacy comprises communication activities to shape the image (IP 11: 74-76; IP 23: 143-149; IP 25: 89-91), to influence (IP 2: 81ff; IP 11: 72-73; IP 18: 75-76), to build relationships (IP 24: 1; IP 1: 57) and to raise understanding (IP 14: 226-233; IP 20: 208-209). Furthermore, consensus is found in terms of the most important principles of public diplomacy: honesty, credibility and mutuality (IP 2: 117; IP 12: 201ff; IP 15: 683; IP 24: 37). If these basic conditions exist, long-range goals can be achieved (see below) (IP 6, 236ff; IP 14: 263-265; IP 24: 202).

The organisations follow goals that mostly serve the public diplomacy of a country: relationship-building (IP 1: 222-223; IP 2: 81ff; IP 11: 74-76; IP 18: 68-76),

network-building achieved by scholarships and following alumni programmes, by exchanges or internships (IP 12: 102 ff; IP 15: 192 ff; IP 24: 109 ff) as well as image building and influencing the target groups (IP 12: 72-73; IP 16: 57; IP 18: 75-76; IP 24: 81ff;). Other goals are to establish a dialogue, internationalisation of the German research landscape, democracy promotion, information, development work and mutual understanding (IP 1: 222-223; IP 2: 81ff; IP 3: 44-67; IP 11: 42-43; IP 12: 74-76; IP 15: 159; IP 18: 35ff, 61ff, 68-76). The goals of the organisations are distinguished by their communication, action and economic goals. Communication goals relate to situational and strategic communication while action goals cover helping and assisting activities such as building a bridge or a school. As all organisations are driven by economic means, they also follow economic goals.

The German public diplomacy actors are assigned to the subsystems Leonard et al. (2002) worked out: political/military, societal/cultural and economic. This study could even identify a fourth relevant subsystem Germany focuses on: education/research. An overall German public diplomacy network does not exist, even if some organisations identify the Federal Foreign Office to be the Centre of a rather loose overall German network providing a public diplomacy framework for the acting organisations (IP 1: 290-291; IP 15: 562-564; IP 24: 166-167), having the role as a coordinator of several campaigns and as a financial provider for several organisations such as the Goethe Institute or the Deutsche Welle (IP 14: 3.2; IP 24: 3.2). The interviewees reject an overall network due to lack of overall-strategies and the will to present Germany as a pluralistic state (IP

12: 169-171). Instead, two close networks and one loose network could be detected within these social subsystems. One of the closer networks can be labelled as “German development cooperation” and aligns organisations working in the field of support diplomacy and development cooperation. This includes the German Development Service, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, the KfW Development Bank and InWent<sup>13</sup>. In January 2011, the German Development Service, InWent and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit have merged into the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The second close network covers the field of education and research. In this field, the German Academic Exchange Service and the German Rector’s Conference established a consortium called GATE Germany which works towards internationalisation of German universities (GATE Germany 2008). A third loose network may also be identified in the area of education and research. This is characterised by cooperation on a project-by-project basis. Its aim is to represent the German education system during fairs or conferences to attract foreign youth to study in Germany (IP 1: 563-567; IP 11: 214ff). The organisations thus contribute to form global citizens.

Organisations from the societal/cultural and the education/research subsystem give value to exchange programmes even if they have little control over them. German citizens can get experience from other regions and countries on their own and become public diplomacy actors themselves. Also people from target countries can directly experience German

culture, attitudes and habits. (IP 15: 124ff) The exchange programmes therefore foster both primary and secondary concepts of global citizenship. Primary concepts consist of increasing self-awareness and outward awareness. An example of secondary concept of global citizenship is the experience of being “the outsider” that strengthens cross-cultural empathy [54, pp.28-49].

Further instruments to deepen dialogue, build relationships and shape positive images (IP 2: 526ff) are events, group communication such as roundtable discussions, language courses or exhibitions, academic and artistic exchanges and interactive media. Many interviewees recognise the value of Web 2.0 application for establishing dialogues and follow-up contacts (IP 2: 474-488; IP 4: 507-511; IP 14: 345-354; IP 19: 342-347; IP 20: 213-216, 406-408, 435-436; IP 25: 279-287; IP 28: 457-481). Interestingly, however, only a small number of organisations use Web 2.0 media on their websites (e.g. German Academic Exchange Service, Goethe-Institut, Deutsche Welle, InWent, Heinrich-Böll-Foundation or German Rectors Conference) while most organisations implement the respective tools rather hesitantly (IP 1: 375-380; IP 2: 460-466; IP 18: 290-297). Most interviewees state that they are planning to implement Web 2.0 applications, but are still not sure how to do it due to lack of personnel (IP 2: 466; IP 18: 290ff; IP 2: 466), or not seeing the advantage of applying them (IP 24: 365ff).

Following our holistic model of public diplomacy instruments, the study also shows that organisations are using

instruments to serve both functions: political information and cultural communication. For political information, the organisations use mainly mass media communicating in a “one-to-many” mode, as well as controlled media like advertisements, websites and printed materials (IP 1: 366-367; IP 16: 276-277; IP 19: 258-267). The public media as instruments and as target groups are mainly addressed by giving press conferences and off-the-record conversations (IP 2: 384; IP 9: 321-326; IP 10: 190-199). Furthermore, the Deutsche Welle as a non-state actor is used by the Federal Foreign Office as an “actor-centred” instrument to reach its target groups (IP 2: 3.3; IP 25: 3.4). The organisations are aware that truth and veracity are highly important when using all of the instruments mentioned (IP 2: 117; IP 12: 201ff; ; IP 15: 683; IP 24: 37).

According to the theoretical differentiation, the target groups of German public diplomacy actors comprise internal and external audiences, as well as individuals and groups. Some interviewees mention the publics “abroad” (IP 2: 53; IP 11: 79), whereas others explicitly name domestic target groups. Target groups of German public diplomacy actors in foreign countries may be classified into three groups: (1) states and organisations; (2) multipliers; and (3) citizens. Citizens have become more important as a target group in the last decades. Many German organisations describe “the broad population” as one of their main target groups (IP 2: 3.1; IP 10: 23-24; IP 11: 3.1; IP 15: 3.1). Generally, the organisations’ main target groups are those expected to bring the biggest advantage, i.e., a country

that has certain location factors (IP 6: 327-328). Some actors operate along the recommendations of the Federal Foreign Office (IP 6: 574-577; IP 18: 413-419). Due to 9/11 and the resulting developments, Muslim countries belong to the preferred targets (IP 2: 3.2). Nonetheless, also other countries are still in a major focus of the organisations (e.g. countries of the European Union) [82, p.12]. The organisations follow this guideline since most public diplomacy actors are financially supported by the German government.

### ***Conclusions and Outlook***

This study is the first comprehensive, empirically grounded research project on public diplomacy in Germany. It contributes to a small yet growing German body of research and provides a framework in which results of previous case studies can be included. Moreover, the theoretical discussion shows that German public diplomacy is not adapted by the American understanding of the concept, but draws on its own tradition based on the country’s history and structural characteristics.

The analysis of the expert interviews shows that the term “public diplomacy” is rarely used to describe organisational strategies and activities. It is not yet embedded as an organisational function as compared to public relations. In fact, many actors are still unconscious about their role in shaping and maintaining a positive image of Germany abroad, raising awareness and understanding or building relationships. To date, public diplomacy often remains a side-effect or by-product of organisational actions that are aimed at the attainment of

different objectives. Both the roles as global citizens and public diplomacy actors are not recognised. As a result, a big part of the concepts' potentials remains unused. Major impacts on their definition of the concept and the goals they connect to conducting public diplomacy, is given by the social subsystem they are operating in (political/military, societal/cultural, economic, education/research).

The organisations follow a wide range of aims that contribute to the country's public diplomacy. These can be subdivided into image goals (e.g. shaping a country's image, evoking understanding for a country's politics and actions), and action goals (e.g. development cooperation), as well as both image and action goals (e.g. democracy promotion, exchange). On the other hand, economic objectives such as gaining publicity and increasing revenues play a decisive role in most public diplomacy strategies.

To reach these aims, the relevance of the new media is recognised by most organisations. However, lack of financial resources and personnel prove to be obstacles to implement Web 2.0 applications in the organisations' public diplomacy strategies. In order to use resources as efficient as possible, organisations align with other corporate actors in networks that range from loose to close cooperation, as well as develop social subsystems.

The analysis of the German public diplomacy actors also shows that governments do not serve as the primary target group, equal amount of attention is drawn towards citizens and multipliers. The rising tide of people with more than one passport and the growing mobility

between countries is particularly visible in the European Union. This shows a very strong tendency towards post-national citizenship [13, p.106]. Adapting the concept of diaspora diplomacy [38, p.59], research on public diplomacy in Germany does not only have to take into consideration German citizens living abroad but also immigrants and the German public. These people act as both communicators and target groups. In this context, people-to-people diplomacy, also an integral part of China's public diplomacy strategy, plays a decisive role [12, p.6; 74, p.259].

Aims, the strategic alignment and instruments of EU public diplomacy have already been discussed in some papers (Fiske de Gouveia and Plumridge, 2005; Rasmussen, 2009, 2010). Still there is a lot of room for future research, especially with regard to the growing importance of public diplomacy networks at the regional (European) level (IP 27: 691-702; IP 30: 652-634) and the participatory role of citizens. Theoretical considerations and practical implications regarding global citizenship do not only benefit to advancing the concept of public diplomacy. In equal measure "[t]he global citizenship agenda can certainly learn from the discourse that surrounds new public diplomacy and must address the issues it has in common if it is to contribute successfully to peace and global harmony" [83, p.81]. This paper has identified a close connection between global citizenship and public diplomacy that needs to be researched more thoroughly in follow-up studies: The ascertainment "that there is a growing body of global citizens and their influence is increasingly felt on the

world's political stage indicates the need to observe and study these individuals in earnest" [89].

## Notes

<sup>5</sup> It is this individual acting that these corporate actors are mainly perceived [68, p.317]. Organisational theory names as well the communicative self-portrayal and exterior appearance (e.g. design) [68, p.317].

<sup>6</sup> This is also more and more recognised by political actors [42, p.106] symbolised by the foundation of the Coalition for Citizen Diplomacy (CCD) in 2004 in the U.S. [84]. Here, various organisations strive for strengthening the influence and appreciation of so-called citizen diplomacy – also among the citizen diplomats themselves who are often not aware of their role [62].

<sup>7</sup> However, it is still insufficiently studied under which conditions, via which channels, with which instruments and intensity the citizenship can influence policy [29, p.19].

<sup>8</sup> In order to succeed in intercultural dialogues, public diplomacy actors especially have to be aware of the different roles culture takes in international communication and the resulting barriers [30, p.51; 31].

<sup>9</sup> Arrows indicate tendencies, so for example which instruments more likely serve news management or which instruments more likely serve a dialogue.

<sup>10</sup> The study focuses on corporate actors – while acknowledging individual contributions to public diplomacy that are not embedded in an institutional context – as they accumulate individual efforts and have the biggest impact on citizens abroad.

<sup>11</sup> Most interview rejections go back to actors from the economic dimension. This might be explained by the fact that enterprises do not disclose their actions to the same extent as non-government organisations that often rely on public funding.

<sup>12</sup> The questionnaire was composed in English by an international team of researchers. However, some organisations showed a preference for conducting the interview in German.

<sup>13</sup> The field period of this study ended in October 2009.

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## Appendix: Guided Interviews