

Ivy Le

University of Georgia

2005

**Hungary's PR Efforts in the Period of EU Accession:
A Contemporary Case Study in International Public Diplomacy**

Until the last few decades, the history of international affairs has been punctuated by wars and treaties hammered out by rulers sitting across from each other at prestigious tables such as those at the Hague and Versailles. Now, the world has more democracies than ever before, and every statesmen must consider his counterpart's electorate as much as his own. [Add a word or two about who he is—historian, politician, what?] Robert D. Putnam compares today's international politics to a two-tiered chess game in which politicians can no longer make international decisions without facing consequences from their domestic constituencies (Evans 1993). Diplomacy has left the mahogany tables and secret bargaining rooms and ventured into the many harsh arenas of public opinion.

Public diplomacy is the name given to public relations (PR) with the goal of influencing a country's foreign policy by influencing that country's publics. While many researchers have delved into more short term uses of media such as brokering negotiations and raising awareness of a crisis situation, little has been discovered about the effects of long-term image management via traditional media and non-media public relations tactics such as press kits, special events, and foreign exchange programs (Gilboa 2001).

This study researches the public relations campaign recently undertaken by the Hungarian government to support its diplomatic efforts in joining the European Union (EU). Hungary, the client, accomplished its ultimate goal when it joined the EU this year on May 1 along with nine other countries concluding a ten-year accession process.

Unlike the case of Kuwait hiring an American public relations firm in the late '80s to influence American foreign policy, the Hungarian campaign originated in one country and manifested itself on multiple fronts in multiple languages and domestic contexts. This study will produce some practical ideas about what works or does not work today in national image cultivation, especially in Europe.

Currently, the United States is fighting in an image battle in Europe. President Bush flew to Brussels this February very publicly to ease relations between the United States and EU member states that his Iraq policy strained (Bumiller 2005). This case study, therefore, has immediate applications for Europe, for the United States, and for any country vying for membership in multilateral organizations.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of Hungary's public relations campaign which ultimately led to Hungary's joining the European Union just fourteen years after its transition to democracy. As the money and manpower invested into EU public opinion polling indicate, public opinion matters in European international relations. Since agreeing on the Agenda 2000, the EU has conducted several surveys each year in member states as well as candidate countries to gauge the public opinion situation as well as to evaluate the progress of the EU expansion communication plan. These polls are available online at the EU website at <http://europa.eu.int>. While analysis of these numbers to understand general public opinion has been thorough, they can only estimate the success PR practitioners have had in presenting their client's case to foreign media sources specifically. This existing data could be re-analyzed with a PR view, but the problem does arise with such a secondary analysis of these data that all the reports published by the EU are ultimately PR materials of the EU and therefore are not objective sources with which to evaluate the PR campaign's effectiveness.

This case study evaluates the effectiveness of the campaign from two angles.

Interviews with the PR practitioners of the Hungarian Foreign Ministry represent the point-of-view of the source of the messages. Second, a content analysis of the print media shows the campaign from the message receptor end. Three key countries that demonstrate a spectrum of publics the campaign addressed have been identified for areas of research. These three countries are France, which is traditionally critical of the EU and integration in general; Germany, which tends to support the EU and was supportive of Eastern enlargement; and Austria, which borders Hungary and would be the most directly affected by Hungary's accession (see map, Fig. 1). The qualitative interview component of the study aims to lend insight into Hungary's overarching PR strategy and target audiences while the quantifying news articles component hopes to reveal trends in the plan's successes and shortcomings.

The EU is a multilateral political and economic institution composed of most of the Western European countries. Barriers to trade have been eliminated within the organization, which has gone so far as to institute a single currency, the euro, for all its members. Only Great Britain did not adopt the euro. The current EU is a culmination of multilateral European institutions formed after World War II to prevent future European military conflicts. Austria joined the EU in 1995 for economic reasons. Issues with Austria's tradition of neutrality led to negative Austrian public opinion towards the EU, and by 1999, only Swedes had a lower opinion about the EU than Austria (George and Bache 2001, 209). While expansion has security benefits for Austria, helping to stabilize the Eastern European region, Austrians would also suffer the brunt of the negative consequences such as unwanted immigration.

German politicians have traditionally taken public opinion for granted in their policy actions concerning the integration of Europe, although there seems to be an impending threshold, beyond which Germans will no longer tolerate interference in the German way of life (George and Bache 2001, 162). Sovereignty is an issue for most multilateral organizations. When it comes to Hungary, however, 57% of Germans

surveyed in 2001 had visited Hungary while 65% said that they did not feel expansion would affect their daily lives negatively or positively (EU Commission 2001).

In the 1992 referendum, the French narrowly voted in favor of ratifying the Treaty on the European Union by 51% to 49%. Thereafter, French representatives were increasingly in conflict with the EU in their defense of French national interests due to pressure from their domestic constituents (George and Bache 2001, 170). Traditionally, the French people do not support the EU.

By investigating three different public opinion situations, this study hopes to answer the following questions: How far, if at all, can politicians count on public relations as political leverage? What can they reasonably expect public diplomacy to accomplish? What are the best tactics with which to conduct a Europe-wide public diplomacy campaign? How receptive are foreign media to messages? The media's reaction to a campaign is crucial in winning foreign constituents to a cause; an EU poll found that citizens of the EU find traditional mass media most useful for information about the EU: 70% use television, 43% newspapers, 30% radio, while only 18% responded that they used the internet (EU Commission 2002, 3).

To establish the context for the answers to these questions, the object of interest, public diplomacy, must be defined. A discussion of the role of public opinion in European integration politics follows. Once that setting has been laid, a situation analysis elucidating the communications background with which Hungary enters the integration fray introduces Hungary, the client.

Public Diplomacy Defined

Gilboa (2000) defines public diplomacy comprehensively as “where state and non-state actors use the media and other channels of communication to influence public opinion in foreign societies.” He contrasts public diplomacy with media diplomacy and media-broker diplomacy, both of which involve mostly journalists and government

officials in particular short-term situations. Public diplomacy is “direct communication with foreign peoples, with the aim of affecting their thinking and, ultimately, that of their governments,” he quotes Gifford Malone. Here, “the mass media channels are used directly to affect the general public, while the other, mostly cultural, channels are oriented toward elite audiences believed to have influence on public opinion.” The other channels include “cultural and scientific exchanges of students, scholars, intellectuals and artists; participation in festivals and exhibitions; building and maintaining cultural centers; teaching a language; and establishing local friendship leagues and trade associations”(Gilboa 2000, 4). A definition that falls more on the international affairs side of this multidisciplinary topic might be “characterized by exchanges such as the Fulbright Program, media development initiatives, and the like, all designed to explain and defend government policies and portray a nation to foreign audiences”(Manheim 1994, 4).

The textbook case that brought the phenomenon of states hiring PR firms or otherwise conducting PR campaigns abroad into public and academic consciousness was that of Kuwait hiring the international public relations firm Hill and Knowlton Public Affairs Worldwide to plead the case of the Kuwaitis to the American people and government, eliciting military help against aggression by Saddam Hussein in the late 1980s (Manheim 1994, 45). (Field interviews revealed that Hill and Knowlton drafted the PR campaign for the referendum in Hungary.)

Powerful nations have been using these tactics for decades before Kuwait. England has long institutionalized its use of “cultural relations,” an older term for public diplomacy, as part of their diplomacy budget since World War II (Alleyne 1995, 100). Yet most international relations and diplomacy textbooks still do not include public relations or the media as an option for statesmen. The traditional tools of diplomacy include economic aid and trade, intelligence or gathering information, covert action to “secretly manipulate events abroad,” negotiation, war and military force, “moral suasion”

or seeking “influence in the world through the embrace of high principle, from a strong human rights agenda overseas to the protection of civil liberties at home,” and soft power (Papp 2005, 31-32).

Soft power, a term coined by Joseph Nye, means the ability to get “others to want what you want”: “Like love, it is hard to measure and to handle, and does not touch everyone, but that does not diminish its importance”(Nye 2002, 8-9). Nye quotes Hubert Vedrine, former advisor to French President Mitterand, who laments that “Americans are so powerful because they can ‘inspire the dreams and desires of others, thanks to the mastery of global images through film and television and because, for these same reasons, large numbers of students from other countries come to the United States to finish their studies’”(Nye 2002, 9). Soft power is the inherent attractiveness of institutions like democracy and freedom of speech and free market.

While Nye views soft power as a force statesmen must recognize as much as military or economic muscle, he provides a very important caveat: “Many soft power resources are separate from American government and only partly responsive to its purposes”(Nye 2002, 11). If this gap between effect and intent were closed or at least mapped out, governments such as America’s would be more aggressive in wielding it. PR works within a context of each nation’s mediapolitik, a phrase coined by Tom Shales, a Washington Post media critic, and defined by Lee Edwards as the current “interrelationship between the mass media and world politics”(Edwards 2001, 3). Hungary’s target countries, member states of the EU, were generally characterized by what they and Edwards would call “liberal democratic,” where the government in power does not control the mass media or monopolize the politics (Edwards 2001, 3).

Public Opinion in European Integration Politics

Sinnott (2000) highlights the parallelism between the debates about public opinion in the foreign policy-making process in the United States and in Europe. When

these two more or less contemporaneous debates - the two on either side of the pond - began, public opinion mattered little. “As Jean Monnet put it: ‘I thought it wrong to consult the peoples of Europe about the structure of a community of which they had no practical experience’”(Sinnott 2000, 247).

Accordingly, Hungary’s first major public was the politicians of member countries. The Eastern bloc began their attempts at accession by rhetorically committing Western politicians to the cause of Eastern enlargement in the early ‘90s. The bloc, newly liberated from Communism, felt that it fulfilled every standard of legitimacy of the European international community: “European identity and unity, liberal democracy, and multilateralism” (Schimmelfennig 2003, 267). They first had to communicate that to Western Europe. “The pro-enlargement coalition . . . strategically used arguments based on the identity, ideology, values, norms and past practice of the EU to shame the anti-enlargement coalition of member states, which expected individual net losses from Eastern enlargement and was in a position of superior bargaining power, into acquiescing in accession negotiations with [Central European] aspirants”(Schimmelfennig 2003, 280). This was only possible because the EU fancies itself “liberal.” In other words, it wishes to be seen as acting multilaterally, peacefully, and according to liberal principles and human rights, because “only a state that follows these values and norms in its domestic politics is regarded as fully legitimate by the Western international community”(Schimmelfennig 2003, 78). Identifying the appropriate message that resonates with Western European governments was the foundation for successful eastern expansion of the EU.

In many European countries that have a referendum tradition, however, popular support can legitimize or - more dramatically - kill a new relationship abroad in spite of a diplomat’s best efforts. In 1992, the Maastricht Treaty (otherwise known as the Treaty on the European Union) which established the EU from the looser union of the European Commission (EC), enjoyed enthusiastic support from all governments involved. Its

initial defeat in a referendum in Denmark, ultimate defeat in a Swiss referendum, and narrow passing by the French electorate cautioned politicians to slow down European integration (Goldstein 2001, 187-188).

Furthermore, public opinion within the EU concerning the EU fluctuates significantly over time, so that neither support nor opposition can be taken for granted in international negotiations. Support for integration, for example, dropped in the late 1970s and early 1980s, increased from 1982 to 1991 partly because of publicity efforts surrounding the Single Market Program (a.k.a. "Project 1992") and since 1992 has declined (Sinnott 2000, 252). Sinnott states, "While individual attitudes are not necessarily well structured or stable, they are not necessarily random, either. These crucial features of any set of attitudes must be investigated case by case, not assumed to be either this or that on an a priori basis. Second, knowledge has a substantial effect on the structure and stability of attitudes, an effect that has been neglected in much public-opinion analysis"(Sinnott 2000, 249). These points are relevant to the study of public opinion on everything from foreign policy to fast food.

Integration of the EU was not an easy sell to the constituents of the member nations, and so the statesmen involved had reason to expect just as much skepticism from the people about Eastern enlargement. This enlargement, the fourth since the EC's inception, from 15 to 28 members has raised questions among citizens in the current and new member states about its impact on their lives and jobs. With increased globalization come concerns about immigration, an influx of cheap labor, and the impact of lower environmental standards. People in the candidate countries, now new members, have worried whether their economies can keep pace with those in the rest of the EU or whether their farmers can compete with those who have benefited from years of EU subsidies. The EU attempted to address these issues in the entry negotiations, which took place with each candidate between 1998 and 2002, and then publicized the effects in their home countries via information centers and websites for each country's relevant

electorate (the voting population in the case of a referendum, otherwise the legislative body). Efforts to deal with these issues usually have taken the form of legislation or transitional measures over a period of years, which spread the impact of sensitive issues like the free movement of workers, which generally concerns older members or the acquisition of property which generally concerns newcomers (EU Commission 2004).

Even the politicians cannot agree about the direction of the EU. Some nations such as France are historically opposed to adding members because they feel it would divide the EU, making it clumsy and ineffective. They traditionally have supported deepening ties among existing EU nations. Others, like Great Britain, support widening the base for economic reasons. The continuing debate between deepening versus widening must be addressed by applicant countries attempting to gain membership (George and Bache 2001, 99-101).

Situation Analysis for Hungary

Hungary is not unfamiliar with the power of mass communication. Communist institutions that had governed Hungarian life since 1945 began suffocating in 1989 and were dead by the time the Berlin Wall fell that November. The aggressiveness with which Hungary defied the Soviets has been accredited to insurgent use of media. Even as the government tried to control broadcasting, contraband VHS tapes of banned foreign news correspondents were smuggled in the country and spread uncontrollably, which helped “sustain the desire for freedom among its people”(Edwards 2001, 281). The government tried to counter Radio Free Europe, broadcasts by America to foster rebellion against Communism, with Radio Moscow, but should have jammed the signal instead (Gilboa 2001, 5). In the ‘80s, the Communist party sensed their impending doom and tried to salvage itself by incorporating the opposition on live television. The anti-Communist groups manipulated these events shown on national television into platforms to communicate their own causes (Edwards 2001, 130-137). This collective memory of

how to use media for a political agenda strengthens Hungary as it navigates the uncharted terrain of public diplomacy with countries from which they had been isolated for over forty years.

In 1989, the European Commission decided against the backdrop of the fall of the Berlin Wall to support the transition of former communist states to capitalist democracies. Accordingly, the EC decided to coordinate aid to Poland and Hungary from the most industrialized countries on the continent and to create a package of assistance since known as the Phare Programme, an acronym for Poland, Hungary: Actions for Economic Reconstruction. The former communist states then sought membership in what was then the EC (George and Bache 2001, 412). In June 1993, the criteria for potential applicants was laid out at the Copenhagen European Council. Hungary applied for membership in the EU in April of 1994, and the European Council agreed to begin negotiations with Hungary in 1997. The accession negotiations actually began in 1998 (George and Bache 2001, 424). According to a Fact Sheet on Hungary issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Budapest (2000), the Hungarian Foreign Ministry adopted their own dynamic communication strategy in 1995 creatively dubbed the “Government Communication Strategy Preparing Accession to the European Union.”

The requirements for accession to the EU hammered out at the Copenhagen summit are threefold, with only one condition out of the candidates’ control: stable institutions “guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities,”; “a functioning market economy, as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union,”; and “the ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic, and monetary union”(EU Commission 1997). These criteria, of course, are contingent upon “the Union’s capacity to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration”(EU Commission 1997).

Since 1994, Phare funds have been allocated to the costs of structural changes

necessary to comply with the *acquis communautaire*, which dictates legal and regulatory requirements that must be met to become a member (George and Bache 2001, 415). The Foreign Ministry involved NGOs, the media, and chambers of commerce in the process. They created information centers at county seats, held regional events known as “Europe Days,” and sponsored conferences and symposia. These intensive efforts were deemed necessary in spite of unanimous support for accession from the Hungarian Parliament. In May 2000, the European Commission, a pillar of the EU, established the “Agenda 2000,” a communication strategy to prepare the EU for enlargement (Ministry 2000).

The Hungarian PR campaign’s budget consisted of hundreds of millions of Hungarian forints supplemented by \$3.4 million euros made available for the same communications purpose from Phare for 1997 to 2000. The Foreign Ministry is proud that, according to opinion polls, Hungarian society’s awareness of the European Union and the integration process has improved considerably. After informing the public that the EU and integration process exists, the communication strategy aimed to influence voters in the upcoming referendum (Ministry 2000). The Hungarian government divided the PR task into two teams by relevant public: one for the Hungarian electorate to approve the referendum, the other for member countries of the EU.

Methods: Interviews and Content Analysis

Using the snowball technique to identify the appropriate experts, I interviewed Zsuzsa Meszaros and her two staff, Katalin Rapp and Zsuzanna Czibok, of the Press and Information Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Irina Pinter Gyorgy, who works with the Office of the Prime Minister in the Department of EU Communication. These interviews with key public communications officers revealed specific tactics and lent insight into the client’s perspective and strategy. Since Budapest implemented everything in-house, the practitioner is essentially also the client. The greatest advantage to this seemed to be the passion that comes from internalizing your client’s interests. The

interviews serve to flesh out the perceived objectives to accomplish the goal of accession.

Once the field interviews established the context within which the practitioners felt they were working, I collected every article that mentioned Hungary published in Austria, France, and Germany from 1997 to May 2004 that was available through the World News Connection database and online searches through archives of publication websites. Weighing the percent of positive and negative news coverage is a measure of effectiveness of public diplomacy from Budapest in accomplishing their objectives. In all, the 201 units of analysis included 52 Austrian articles mostly from two major newspapers, 113 articles from Paris Agence France Presse and *Le Monde* in France, and 36 articles from Germany. I then analyzed the content of each entire article and categorized them as positive or negative to Hungary and enlargement, the client, according to the following criteria:

Negative

- presents more negative than positive effects on the readership's daily life
- uses information from press kits (obtained in the interviews) to argue against expansion
- identifies Hungary as a source of a problem (i.e. crime, immigrants, etc.)
- shows conflict between the client and the government of the readership

Positive

- corrects stereotypes, draws commonalities between Hungarians and the readership
- present more positive than negative implications of Hungarian accession
- mocks or debases arguments against expansion or argues for expansion
- consistent with press kits distributed by the Hungarian government
- puts pressure on the foreign government in keeping with Hungarian goals (the speed of negotiations, changes to the EU constitution)

Findings

The interviews yielded objectives consistent with the knowledge, attitude, and behavior framework: to raise awareness and information about expansion of the EU (knowledge), to position Hungary as a great power rather than a burden on the EU (attitude), and to have the publics pressure their governments or at least give politicians the impression that they are being pressured to keep up the pace of accession negotiations with Hungary (behavior).

The press department of the Foreign Ministry attempted to answer directly each fear or reservation EU citizens had with traditional PR tactics. For example, they created brochures and factsheets to respond to fears of immigration and food safety and distributed them through their embassies. The language of the materials depended on the particular embassy's need.

The theme of limited resources with which to work came up time and time again in interviews as the press department's biggest challenge. With a very limited budget since the client is the government and all expenditures are taxpayers' dollars, as much as possible had to be done through public initiatives (in other words, through non-profits). Rather than hiring a director to make the DVD sent out with all the press kits, a contest was announced in Hungarian newspapers that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was accepting ideas for a video promoting Hungary. The DVD Hungary in 3D was distributed with Foreign Ministry press kits on EU accession. Of course, there have been big budget EU events that Hungary has also participated in. Ireland had a nationwide festival where different Irish cities were assigned to host countries. Sligo, on the coast, held a festival centered on Hungary. When I interviewed the three together in the Foreign ministry, the two younger staffers had just come back from Norway where young people were invited to lecture on visions and hopes of the EU to celebrate enlargement.

Having absolutely no budget for polling necessitated creating an in-house

newspaper and media analyzing group that received published articles abroad from the Hungarian embassies, “so we can react and gauge” (Rapp 2004). The interview subjects also talked at length about image problems abroad that were not reflected in EU opinion poll research. People often misperceive Hungary as practically third world or even Balkan. As one [who is this quote from—woman, man, scholar, politician, what?] put it:

It angers me sometimes that people don't think of us as European. We have these thousand years of history, but because of these 40 years of separation - which even East Germany was in - people think Central and Eastern Europe is different. We think yeah it's obvious we have shopping malls, but a lot of people don't think that. They ask us so many silly questions like do you ride horses” (Rapp 2004).

Accordingly, the informative DVD they included in the press kits includes shopping malls in the montage. “It’s very difficult to change someone’s mind about a certain country. Sometimes hundreds of years”(Rapp 2004).

According to Irina Piuter, who was on the small team charged with promoting enlargement to voters before the referendum, communication is currently not seen as important enough in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to hire communications professionals. Instead, communications is given to diplomats shuffled down on the hierarchy of jobs. The consequence is that now, Hungarian communication is less creative and active than, say, Estonia, which is very proactive in the projection of their international image. Incidentally, BBC and other networks’ footage of Hungary during the accession ceremony on May 1st was unfavorable in that Hungary was treated “worse than any other country”(Gyorgy 2004). These practitioners were very conscious of what the other enlargement countries were doing in the way of PR. After all, “Controversy is the best learning exercise”: controversy creates active interest in information and is useful if it occurs enough time before a referendum to be discussed thoroughly but close enough to raise participation levels (Gyorgy 2004). This timing seemed a delicate issue to which

the practitioners were attentive. However, the foreign media analysis did not show significant trends over time.

French media actively reported on Hungary from 2002 to 2004 more so than the other two countries combined (Fig. 3). In 2003, the EU states began discussing changes to the constitution to keep EU meetings and policy-making relatively efficient once the enlargement came to pass. Disagreements arose between bigger and smaller states over how to restructure, if at all. In this period, many articles were written that showed diplomatic conflict between smaller countries such as Hungary and Austria and larger countries such as France and Germany. An article that showed disagreement between the governments of France and Hungary would be categorized as negative, which explains the higher proportion of negative articles - 69% - in 2003. While this may be negative in that the image of Hungary does not improve in French minds, it is actually positive from the Hungarian Foreign Ministry's strategic point of view that the disagreement occurs in the open, in newspapers key French political figures read for the purpose of learning about public opinion such as *Le Monde* (La Balme 2000, 269). In fact, aside from 2003, French press reported from 63 to 83% positive articles mentioning Hungary if they reported at all. One article with the headline "Visiting French Senate Speaker favours early admittance of Hungary to EU" stands out from 2001 as a very public display of diplomatic affinities. This article and a handful of others reiterate the diplomacy function of press (Gilboa 2001, 3). It is extremely odd, however, that France produced more articles than Austria or Germany since the other two border Hungary while France does not. It seems that proximity, the journalistic news value that practitioners often count on to get a story published, is not as salient in Europe as in the United States.

The data from Austria lacked any discernible pattern (Fig. 4). Austrian neutrality ran up against NATO interests. Hungary had just joined NATO at the time, which may explain the why more articles appeared in 1997 than any other year. The ratio of positive to negative articles started low but increased somewhat steadily over time, except in

2003, when the number of articles hit a high of 10 mentions, half of which were positive and half were negative. Austria was identified in the interviews as a priority public since they are “more afraid because they are closer” of the perceived threat of the “mass coming”(Rapp 2004). Considering this obstacle with the Austrian public, the Hungarians excelled in distinguishing their cause from all the other countries preparing for accession. An article reporting an opinion poll that was generally against expansion stated “a clear majority [of Austrians] rejects the admission of new members to the EU. Only Hungary’s admission is positively assessed”(WB 1998). If, however, the question should be asked how to better deal with skeptical publics abroad, so that the number of negative articles may increase without the proportion increasing as well.

Hungary received the lowest coverage in Germany (Fig. 5). The sample size of 36 is only about a fourth of what appeared in France. That coverage was consistently and overwhelmingly positive, 32 out of 36 total, except for 2002 when only two articles appeared, one negative and one positive. The explanation for this could be that Germany is not a priority public, because it is not a problem public. Germany supported eastern expansion from the beginning. This conflicts with the impressions gained from the interviews where Germany was identified as “always a priority because of close relations”(Rapp 2004). However, this is consistent with a PR strategy framework of analysis. If most Germans do not feel that expansion will affect them and are not actively opposed to it, is there a need to raise debate? With limited resources, Germany would obviously become less of a priority than more skeptical constituents.

In general, the campaign was consistent and strong in spite of a lack of formal PR education or even literature available in Central Europe. In dealing with different publics, they adjusted their strategy accordingly from arranging interviews with relevant figures to factsheets to cultural information. The press kits did not seem to be referenced so much as the easily digestible reports from the EU website. The English version of this press kit is laborious to say the least. While it is difficult to boil down inherently

complicated issues such as agricultural subsidies, it seems unnecessary to communicate the relevant facts in nine point font. Ultimately, however, erratic numbers underscore the human element of public relations. That is to say that public relations is not a science. It carries no guarantees.

Conclusions

The Hungarian government succeeded in accomplishing the knowledge objective except from 1998 to 2000 in France and 1999 in Germany when either zero or only one article was printed. In those years, I went directly to publication archives online to make sure nothing was missing from World News Connection. Agenda 2000 kicked off a successful communications partnership with the EU that resulted in mentions every year after that. Other countries can learn from the success of international cooperation in communications to secure support for multilateral actions.

Attitude objectives in relation to international affairs are fraught with the weight of history, sometimes going hundreds of years back while most corporate or non-profit PR clients only go back a few decades, if that; yet in this, they succeeded. While the percentage of positive articles fell to a relative low in the year 2003, the percent of positive mentions in Austrian media showed an overall increasing trend. Germany and France otherwise consistently published over 50% of positive mentions. The cultural events were key, since not many articles directly addressed a cultural chasm with Hungary. Perhaps in comparison with Turkey, who has been clamoring to negotiate for EU membership in tandem, they do not have many cultural differences. This was an external opportunity that they were wise not to overuse. The greater advantage here was actually the Hungarian people. They were the ones who wrote those Nobel prize-winning novels and innovated in graphic mathematics and rejected Communism on their own terms. PR cannot fiat a positive image from nothing - just communicate what is already there to people who should know. Hungary has so many real strengths, however, that a

more aggressive campaign should have smoothed out the numbers.

The qualitative, and therefore somewhat subjective, nature of the criteria at times required native knowledge of the readerships of the countries examined. For example, without native insight, quotes from politicians could only be assumed to be credible sources. Some articles that related closely to Hungary such as the passing of the status law granting certain benefits to Hungarians abroad were very difficult to categorize without understanding the sympathies and prejudices of the French. Also, the weighing system had no mechanism for gradation. A glowing persuasive editorial on expansion would ultimately count the same as a negative mention buried in a tangentially related article. In analyzing the attitude objective, this study could have benefited from more descriptive categories.

Behavior objectives can save a business but in international affairs, accomplishing a behavior objective can mean the difference between war and peace. Rather than selling to a public one knows intimately, public diplomacy is in the business of pitching policies that may or may not be in a foreign public's best interests. In any case of globalization, including the expansion of the EU, some will gain while others will lose. The execution of behavior objectives actually includes two central publics: the local media and the local electorate. This study obviously draws more conclusions about the behavior objective as it was carried out with media. (The EU has conducted extensive survey research on the citizens.) For practical purposes, statesmen often look to the media as representative of the local electorate. Hungary did well in accomplishing its behavior objective with foreign media sources. For the most part, Hungary's candidacy received a decent level of coverage and suffered little distortion of the facts. They benefited from disseminating simple facts about the state of economic, political, and cultural affairs, never denying - even celebrating- differences between Hungary and the rest of Europe.

Other countries can come away from this case study with the lesson that persistence pays off even in allegedly hostile terrain. Hungary succeeded because they

knew what similar countries were doing. Even with limited resources, they sought out the concerns of their publics and took them seriously, though these concerns at times seemed ludicrous. In political communication, the lesson of the utility of controversy to increase awareness cannot be stressed enough. Future research would do diplomacy a service to question the sensitivity of the effectiveness of a PR campaign to the dynamics in the embassy charged with implementing it.

Public diplomacy has never been so essential or unpredictable a facet of international relations. With more democratic governments than ever in international affairs, public support figures into every statesman's calculations. Effective public diplomacy can be wielded as pressure on reluctant negotiators or much-appreciated support deployed for the sake of allies. As with corporate PR, the effects of active public communication are difficult to measure, but not communicating with the relevant publics almost certainly condemns the involved parties to failure. Political globalization and liberalism clearly cannot survive without understanding communication and public relations.

Works Cited

- Alleyne, Mark D. 1995. *International Power and International Communication*. Oxford: Macmillan Press Ltd.
- Bumiller, Elisabeth. 2005. "Bush Seeks to Begin a Thaw in a Europe Still Cool to Him." *New York Times*, 20 February.
- DG Enlargement Information Unit. March 2002. *Explaining Enlargement: A Progress Report on the Communication Strategy for Enlargement*. Brussels.
- Edwards, Lee. 2001. *Mediapolitik: How the Mass Media Have Transformed World Politics*. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press.
- EU Commission. 1997. *Commission Opinion on Hungary's Application for Membership of the European Union*. Brussels.
- EU Commission. 2001. *Eurobarometer 56.3 - Winter 2001*. Brussels.
- EU Commission. 2002. "Executive Summary: Getting Information on Europe, the Enlargement of the E.U. & Support for European Integration: European Public Opinion Takes the Floor."
- EU Commission. 2004. "Public Opinion." <<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/opinion>> (4 May 2004).
- Evans, Peter B., Harold Jacobson, and Robert D. putnam, eds. 1993. *Double-Edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.
- George, Stephen and Ian Bache. 2001. *Politics of the European Union*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gilboa, Eytan. 2001. "Diplomacy in the Media Age: Three Models of Uses and Effects." *Diplomacy and Statecraft*. 12(3): 1-28.
- Goldstein, Joshua. 2001. *International Relations*. New York: Longman.
- Gyorgy, Irina Pinter. 2004. Interview by author. Notes. Budapest, Hungary, 10 June.
- La Balme, Natalie. 2000. "Constraint, Catalyst, or Political tool?: The French Public and Foreign Policy." in *Decisionmaking in a Glass House*, ed. Brigitte L. Nacos, Robert Y. Shapiro, and Pierangelo Isernia. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

- Manheim, Jarol B. 1994. *Strategic Public Diplomacy and American Foreign Policy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs Budapest. "Fact Sheets on Hungary: Relations between Hungary and the European Union". 2000.
- Nye, Joseph S. 2002. *The Paradox of American Power: Why the world's only superpower can't go it alone*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Papp, Daniel S., Loch K. Johnson, and John E. Endicott. 2005. *American Foreign Policy: History, Politics, and Policy*. New York: Pearson Longman.
- Rapp, Katalin, Zsuzsanna Czibok, and Zsuzsa Meszaros. 2004. Interview by author. Notes. Budapest, Hungary, 8 June.
- Schimmelfennig, Frank. 2003. *The EU, NATO and the Integration of Europe: Rules and Rhetoric*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sinnott, Robert. 2000. "Public Opinion and European Integration: Permissive Consensus or Premature Politicization?" in *Decisionmaking in a Glass House*, ed. Brigitte L. Nacos, Robert Y. Shapiro, and Pierangelo Isernia. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- WB. 1998. "Austria: Poll Shows Austrians Want Stronger EU Without East." *Vienna Die Presse*. 17 Mar.

Public diplomacy was also a central theme of the professional debate in the Slovenian Association for International Relations (2004), where joint conclusions and recommendations about the future activities of Slovenia in this area were presented. Furthermore, the new Slovene government, formed in December 2004, stated in its Coalition agreement under special title on public diplomacy (Chapter 9, Paragraph 16) that "informing of publics on international questions and Slovene foreign policy tasks would improve" and that "the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would strengthen its "public diplomacy".