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INTRODUCTION: COMMUNICATING EUROPE BEHIND (MIS) UNDERSTANDINGS

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Europe is indeed diversity, a multiplicity of identities with their own memories and desires for belonging. However, this way of understanding Europe as an agora of multiple belongings is challenged by the persistence and (re)apparition of old and new stereotypes and prejudices that reinforce the North-South, East-West and other – often not so obvious – divides. In this context, new views are needed which are capable of incorporating all kinds of irregularities, exceptions and disagreements without dividing or categorising. How can the media contribute to building a critical view of Europeanness as an open and fluid form?

In order to reflect on these issues, a participatory two-day seminar with media and communication students from different EU member states was held in Barcelona in December 2014, organised by CIDOB. A call for participation was launched and applicants were asked to select a written article published in 2013-2014 in the national press of his/her country of residence in which Europeanness was fostered and recognised in its diversity or, on the contrary, in which a common European sense of belonging was hindered. The scientific committee, in charge of selecting the participations, was composed of: Carme Colomina, journalist; Michelangelo Conoscenti, Università di Torino; and Amparo Huertas Bailén, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB).

The first part of this monograph – the result of this seminar – is devoted to a more theoretical reflection on different dimensions or elements playing a role in the way Europe is communicated. Firstly, Yolanda Onghena, senior researcher at CIDOB, explores the images and imageries of Europe, followed by the contributions of the members of the Scientific Committee. Carme Colomina focuses on the role of communication in facing Europe's challenges. Michelangelo Conoscenti, for his part, discusses the understanding and narration of another European Union by communication students and an analyst of media discourse (himself). In the last article of this section, Amparo Huertas Bailén zooms in the issue of mass media and its relation to political engagement in Europe.

The seminar aimed to provide a meeting point to critically reflect on communication as a multidimensional phenomenon within the European sphere.

The second part of this monograph, of a more practical nature, includes the contributions by the students who took part in the seminar. It must be highlighted that, during the event, the chosen articles were presented and debated by the participants providing each student with feedback that was used to rewrite his/her analysis once back home, after the seminar. These second analyses of the originally chosen press articles, fed by the input of the debates, are the ones presented in this monograph.

These short articles have been grouped according to the different debate sessions that took place during the seminar. Thus, a first part in this second section is titled "Diverse, not divided?" and includes the contributions by: Simone Fissolo, "The communication of the EU in the Italian newspapers: an analysis of Marco Zatterin's articles and the metaphor 'EU-as-supervisor'"; Yasmin Wolkow, "Europe is more than just an economic construct"; Dániel Szabó, "The future of the Union: between federalism and reality"; and Francisco Pérez Ureña, "Additional guarantee: European identity – the semantic product". Next, a second group of articles includes the reflections raised during the debate session entitled "Identity Protection". Here we find the texts by: Fatih Göksu, "Identity and foreign policy in the discourses of European commissioners in the contexts of Turkey's membership and European security"; Sofia Lotto Persio, "What we talk about when we talk about migration: the need for a new communication framework"; and Nele Goutier, "The future of Europe looks bright". Focusing on the media and their relationship to Europeanness, a third group of articles is presented: Lotte Kamphuis, "Reporting Europe: from united in diversity towards a collective entity"; Paula Meliá Garcia, "A European culture begins with European politics"; and Magda Skrzypek, "The domestication of European news: the Polish example". Finally, the last three articles correspond to the analyses presented within the last debate session, entitled "New ways?": Irene Dominioni, "What the referendum for independence in Scotland has taught us"; Hanne Bronmo, "Challenges and opportunities to European Integration"; and Ana Escaso Moreno, "Confronting voices on the European project and the role of the media".

In the third and last part of the monograph, we include a short article written jointly by Yolanda Onghena and Isabel Verdet Peris, which attempts to transmit a more optimistic view, drawing on the input of the students who took part in the seminar. Under the title "Communicating Europe: is it really that complicated?", it incorporates the main ideas in the debates and provides some clues to the different dimensions that need to be taken into account when analysing communication from/on Europe. This text was translated by some of the participants into their native languages and published on various websites or online magazines. Here we include the original text along with the translations in Catalan, Dutch, Italian, Polish, Spanish and Turkish.

The debates held during the seminar aimed to provide a meeting point to critically reflect on communication as a multidimensional phenomenon within the European sphere as both an opportunity and a challenge for, as previously mentioned, building a critical view on Europeanness as an open and fluid form. This publication, consequently, aims to disseminate the main ideas raised during the debates, but also to provide some food for thought for future discussion.