

# **PRESENTATION OF THE CZECH, HUNGARIAN AND POLISH EU COUNCIL PRESIDENCIES – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SLOVAKIA**

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## **Abstract**

The aim of the paper is to assess the specific approaches to the presentation of Czech, Hungarian and Polish EU Council Presidencies. The motto, the visual identification and the official websites and social media communication were analysed in order to synthesize recommendations for the upcoming Slovak Presidency in 2016.

## **Key words**

EU, Council, Presidency, presentation, motto, logo, website, communication, Slovakia

## **Introduction**

The rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union used to be an important institutional arrangement for ensuring the internal functioning of the Union and a major point of contact for communication with third countries prior to the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty. The Treaty changed the rotating presidency's role. Politically it is irrelevant, however, it keeps some important functions in the creation of EU legislation, for the inter-institutional dialogue of the Union, it manages various agendas of the Council, its committees (COREPER) and the negotiations within these, and it also has some representative competences in the Union's external representation.

The presidency term allows the presiding Member to leave its footprint in the life of the Union, to increase its influence at the official level as well as to build informal contacts and sources of influence for its further better establishment within the Union.

The rotating Presidency is based on the principle of equality of Member States, i.e. this opportunity is granted to every Member State upon a list of future presiding countries that was prepared in 2007. The semestral periods, starting by 1-st January and 1-st July, are being held since the Rome Treaties entered into force in '50s and they are planned until 2020. The order of the countries on the list considers the past order of rotation and the criteria of size and geographical location in such a way that each Troika group contains one large, one medium-sized and one small country (in the case of Slovakia the Troika is composed of the Netherlands, Slovakia and Malta).

The program of the presidency is coordinated within Troika, three presidencies consult their activities and cooperate to bring more coherence into negotiations on different EU policies and the action of the Union.

The Slovak Republic will assume the Presidency in the second semester of 2016 as a part of Troika with the Netherlands and Malta. This will be a unique opportunity to lead the Union, attract the attention of Member States and its citizens and also to project Slovakia via its culture and people.

Culture remains to be the one of few ways for EU Member State to differ from others. The cultural sector of the EU Member States is free of any communitarian legislation. As

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stipulated in the primary law, the Union shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore. Action of the Union shall encourage cooperation between Members and with third countries and international organizations. Moreover, it shall take into account the cultural aspects and promote the cultural diversity of Member States. After all, any harmonization of the laws and regulations of the Member States shall be excluded.

It is vital for Slovakia, as one of the most open OECD economies and highly dependent on international economic relations, to project the country abroad in a positive light. Success in getting positive associations with the name (or brand) Slovakia can have positive externalities such as inflows of tourists, investors and global businesses. The foreign projection, which in Slovakia is also called unified/global/foreign presentation, has three main dimensions – political, economic and cultural.

The term of the Slovak Presidency of the EU Council in 2016 will be an opportunity to explore the non-harmonized potential of its cultural sector and to present the country in at least two of abovementioned dimensions. The political dimension of building a good reputation of Slovakia on the international scene and the cultural dimension via a comprehensive and attractive presentation of the country. The latter will be done through the top Slovak artists, art works and projects and other renowned personalities. Slovakia has an ambition to project itself as *grounded, diverse, vibrant* and *inventive*<sup>2</sup> country to get the attention of EU Members and also the EU partners.

The formal preparation of the Presidency was launched in the midst of 2012. Earlier in 2011 a coordinated approach to branding and foreign projection of Slovakia was initiated. Both actions are coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic with broad political support and public discourse. Slovakia's ambition is to develop a modern and coordinated presentation of culture by culture which will culminate during the Presidency.

The Visegrad Four<sup>3</sup> partners of Slovakia successfully completed their rotating Presidencies in the past years, the Czech Republic in I/2009, Hungary in I/2011 and Poland in II/2011. Their experience may serve Slovakia as the primary source of inspiration and know-how to prepare responsibly for the Presidency, also for the cultural part of it.

The main aim of this article is, therefore, to analyse the reports, conclusions and lessons learned in the presentation, promotion, information and culture of the Czech, Hungarian and Polish Presidencies.

The first part of this paper analyses the specific approaches of three V4 countries to their Presidencies' mottos and visual identification. Then official websites and social media communication was analysed. Consequently, recommendations for the Slovak EU Council Presidency term in 2016 are given.

Tab. 1: Chronological overview of the Presidencies of the EU Council II/2008 – I/2017 (Source: Own processing)

Semester/year	Presiding Member State (trios are colour-	Motto of the Presidency
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<sup>2</sup> "Slovensko, krajina s potenciálom - ideový koncept prezentácie Slovenska" (Ministerstvo zahraničných vecí SR, n.d.), [http://www.mzv.sk/App/wcm/media.nsf/vw\\_ByID/ID\\_BD82C7173CD03576C1257B0B0042923A\\_SK/\\$File/Slovensko\\_krajina\\_s\\_potencialom\\_DEF.pdf](http://www.mzv.sk/App/wcm/media.nsf/vw_ByID/ID_BD82C7173CD03576C1257B0B0042923A_SK/$File/Slovensko_krajina_s_potencialom_DEF.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> informal Central-European consultation and policy coordination platform with gaining attention and importance

	separate)	
II/2008	France	Europe Taking Action to Meet Today's Challenges
<b>I/2009</b>	<b>Czech Republic</b>	<b>Europe without Barriers</b>
II/2009	Sweden	Taking on the Challenge
I/2010	Spain	Innovating Europe
II/2010	Belgium	Europe in Action!
<b>I/2011</b>	<b>Hungary</b>	<b>Strong Europe (with a Human Touch)</b>
<b>II/2011</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>None</b> some alternative unofficial mottos were used
I/2012	Denmark	Europe at Work
II/2012	Cyprus	Towards a Better Europe
I/2013	Ireland	For stability, jobs and growth
II/2013	Lithuania	For a Credible, Growing and Open Europe
I/2014	Greece	
II/2014	Italy	
I/2015	Latvia	
II/2015	Luxembourg	
I/2016	Netherlands	
II/2016	Slovakia	
I/2017	Malta	

## **Presentation and promotion of the Czech, Hungarian and Polish Presidencies of the EU Council**

### **Motto and visual identification**

The European Union as whole has its own motto. Used since 2000 it is one of four official EU symbols. „*United in diversity*“ signifies how Europeans have come together, in the form of the EU, to work for peace and prosperity, while at the same time being enriched by the continent's different cultures, traditions and languages.<sup>4</sup>

Almost all EU Council Presidencies choose mottos to highlight the overall idea and the main aim of their program. Mottos have also certain symbolic value, they serve as simplification of complex ideas bringing abstract topics closer to the citizens, and not least they allow Presidencies to differ from others.

The motto of the Czech Presidency „*Europe without barriers*“ was aimed to express the will to remove the remaining barriers between the Member States. Especially the internal market barriers in the free movement of goods, services, persons and capital, including the complicated communitarian EU legislation and that of Member States. These barriers do not allow to fully exploit the potential of individual countries and the European Union as a whole.<sup>5</sup>

The motto also expressed the openness of the Union to the whole world.

Moreover, in the year 2009 the 20-th anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain and the 5-th anniversary of the biggest enlargement of the Union was celebrated. The Czech motto, therefore, had also a symbolic dimension.

The motto was adopted by the Czech Government in February 2007, almost 2 years ahead the Presidency.

<sup>4</sup> “The EU Motto,” n.d., <http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/symbols/motto/>.

<sup>5</sup> “Motto předsednictví,” August 16, 2011, <http://eu2009.cz/cz/czech-presidency/presidency-motto/motto-predsednictvi-481/index.html>.

The Hungarian motto “*Strong Europe with a Human Touch*” implied on one hand a strong common currency, strong common policies and strong institutions that cooperate with each other. On the other side the Hungarian aim was to promote the EU citizenship, where the measures (not only) of the Presidency should always take into account the human factor and the interests of the citizens – that is to explain the second part of the motto „*with a Human Touch*,” however, this supplement was in some cases omitted.<sup>6</sup>

The Presidency also wanted to stress its conviction that after the crisis only further deepening and widening of the integration can make Europe and the EU successful-economically, socially, politically and institutionally stronger and more attractive.<sup>7</sup>

Poland did not choose any official motto for its term of Presidency. During the Presidency’s logo kick-off press conference in May 2011 the foreign minister Dowgielewicz stated that there is no obligation nor tradition of giving mottos to individual Presidencies. At the same conference the prime minister Tusk added that a call of “*Alleluja i do przodu*” (translated as “*Hallelujah and forward*”)<sup>8</sup> would suitably complement the logo of the Polish presidency.<sup>9, 10</sup> His commentary was rather spontaneous and with a hint of humour and such motto was never used by the Presidency, neither unofficially.

However, there were various mottos used for partial agendas or for the purpose of the cultural programs of the Polish Presidency such as “*Secure Europe*” (*Bezpieczna Europa*) or “*European integration as a source of growth*” (*Integracja europejska jako źródło wzrostu*).<sup>11</sup>

**Img. 1:** Logo of the Czech Presidency of EU Council 2009

(Source:

<http://eu2009.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=2394&newsid=484&listid=11>.



The visual communication plays important role in the contemporary world. Traditionally, every Presidency introduces its logo to visually identify the Presidency, show its uniqueness and to render the vision and basic premises of the program. They are designed to bring positive associations with the presiding country, to show it as modern, creative and devoted EU Member.

<sup>6</sup> “Six Months in the Service of a Stronger Europe - Overview of the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union,” n.d., 4, <http://www.eu2011.hu/document/six-months-service-stronger-europe-overview-hungarian-presidency-council-european-union>.

<sup>7</sup> Krisztina Vida, “Evaluation of the First Hungarian EU Council Presidency,” *ARI - Real Instituto Elcano* no. 134 (September 27, 2011), [http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano\\_eng/Content?WCM\\_GLOBAL\\_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano\\_in/zonas\\_in/ari134-2011](http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_eng/Content?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_in/zonas_in/ari134-2011).

<sup>8</sup> “*Alleluja i do przodu*” is a citation of Tadeusz Rydzyk - Polish Roman Catholic Redemptorist and founder and director of Radio Maryja and Television Trwam

<sup>9</sup> “Logo prezydencji: kolorowe strzałki. ‘Alleluja i do przodu,’” accessed December 14, 2013, <http://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/logo-prezydencji-kolorowe-strzalki-alleluja-i-do-przodu,170600.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Paweł Bielawiec, “W poszukiwaniu hasła polskiej prezydencji w UE,” *Polemika studencka - salon24*, February 17, 2012, <http://polemikastudencka.salon24.pl/391813,w-poszukiwaniu-hasla-polskiej-prezydencji-w-ue>.

<sup>11</sup> “Polska objęła przewodnictwo w Radzie Unii Europejskiej,” *PolskieRadio.pl*, accessed December 14, 2013, <http://www.polskieradio.pl/5/3/Artykul/394646,Polska-objela-przewodnictwo-w-Radzie-Unii-Europejskiej>.

The logo of the Czech Presidency (see Img. 1) was selected by a committee of experts from the Czech art, graphic design and creative industry sector from proposals registered into two round public competition. From more than 400 proposals in the first round five were selected into the second round and in November 2008 a complete visual manual was inaugurated and introduced to the public.

The logo visualizes the Czech motto “*Europe without Barriers*” and at the same time the EU’s „*United in Diversity*.“ The scale of used colours supports both abovementioned ideas, the fonts that were used and the composition of the logo gives logic to the final product.

Selected fonts were designed by renowned Czech typographer.

The logo was developed in many creative forms, it was used for all printed and electronic materials, presents and gifts and the official venues and buildings were decorated with unified modifications of the logo.

**Img. 2:** Hungarian version of the joint logo for Spanish, Belgian and Hungarian Troika Presidency 2010-2011 (Source: [http://www.eu2011.hu/files/bveu/eu2011hu\\_logo\\_0.png](http://www.eu2011.hu/files/bveu/eu2011hu_logo_0.png))



Adhering to the idea of deeper integration and cooperation with the Union as summarized in the motto „*Strong Europe with a Human Face*“ the Hungarian Presidency together with Spain and Belgium decided to come up with a joint visual. The Troika members held regular

consultations as early as during the preparation period, prior to the start of the presidency. They used a common logo to emphasize the continuity of the three Presidency semesters (see Img. 2).<sup>12</sup>

The logo consisted of a conjoined handwritten “e” and “u” used with different national colours by Spain, Belgium and Hungary. The emblem is a symbol of the unity, solidarity and harmonic relationships of EU citizens.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the logo forms the web domain of the Hungarian presidency, traditionally the format of the domain of all the Presidencies follows the structure [www.eu\[year\].\[national suffix\]](http://www.eu[year].[national suffix]).

Almost two years prior to the Polish Presidency a closed competition for the logo was announced inviting recognized visual artists and young designers of visual communication and brand development. The expert jury assessed proposals in five rounds of the competition

**Img. 3:** Polish logo of the Presidency of the EU Council II/2011 (Source: [http://www.cpi.gov.pl/files/photo/20121217151343\\_logotyp1.jpg](http://www.cpi.gov.pl/files/photo/20121217151343_logotyp1.jpg))



but no logo was selected. Finally, a recognized Polish graphic artist, the designer of the Solidarity logo, Jerzy Janiszewski was invited to design the logo. It remained secret and was officially disclosed in May 2011 by the Prime Minister Tusk.

The main messages carried by the logo were dynamism, positive energy, and solidarity. It showed Poland as a

<sup>12</sup> “*Más Europa, plus d’Europe, Több Európa - More Europe*,” accessed December 14, 2013, <http://www.eu2011.hu/news/mas-europa-plus-d%E2%80%99europe-tobb-europa-more-europe>.

<sup>13</sup> “*Stamp in Honour of the Presidency*,” accessed December 14, 2013, <http://www.eu2011.hu/news/stamp-honour-presidency>.

modern, creative state strongly devoted to the idea of European integration (see Img. 3).

As it was rated very highly by the public home and abroad, and studies proved it to be the most recognizable symbol of the Presidency, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs decided that it remained in use as the logo of the Polish Foundation for International Co-operation and Development “*Fundacja Wiedzieć Jak*”<sup>14</sup> based in Warsaw.<sup>15</sup>

## Website and social media communication

The official website of the Presidency has crucial importance for its successful course. It serves as first-hand information source for broad public, it allows journalists, media and delegations to get accreditation and support for official events. The presiding country accompanies the content of the website with country presentation activities and seeks for feedback from internet users via the social media.

The function of the website should be, therefore, to provide quick, professional and credible information through transparent and simple, user-friendly, interface. The target group of the website is usually rather wide starting with the media, expert public, government officials of other Member States and third countries and the broad public. Official websites are usually accompanied by social media channels focused on the generation of 18-34 years old, seeking interaction and feedback for the organizers of the Presidency.

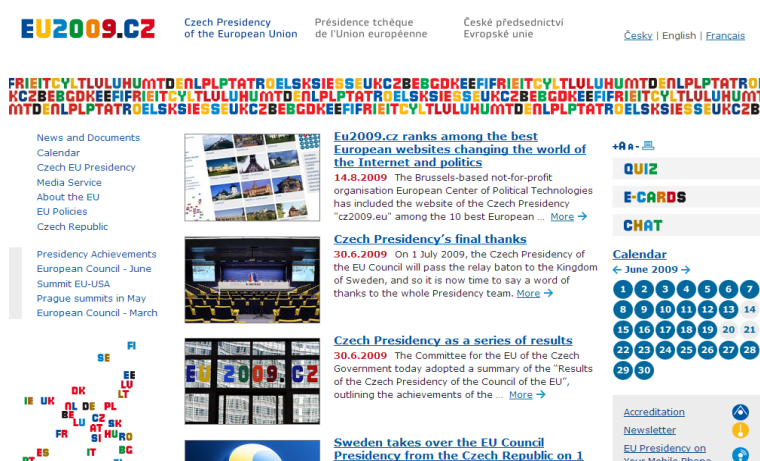
Analysis of the websites and social media communication of the three V4 countries was focused on the categorization of the information on the website, on the innovative approaches and unique features available, the language mutations of the website, statistics of the traffic (where available) and the use of social media by the Presidency.

The content of the official website of the Czech Presidency [www.eu2009.cz](http://www.eu2009.cz) (see Img. 4) was divided into 8 categories in order to quickly and accurately inform on the current events of the Presidency. The website served also as a technical tool for the accreditation of journalists and as a service for media. It offered information service on European policies and Czech positions towards these. It also presented the Czech Republic as a country.

The website offered innovative features to enhance the interactivity with the users: online chats with the Czech Presidency representatives; newsalerts, RSS, podcasts, MMS newsletters and SMS service to inform immediately; and a questionnaire to get feedback from the public. Despite these features no official social media channel was used by the presidency to promote the interaction of the communication.

There were three official photographers responsible for uploading photo reports to the website and the photos were

**Img. 4:** Printscreen of the official website of the Czech Presidency (Source: <http://eu2009.cz>)



<sup>14</sup> Foundation for International Solidarity

<sup>15</sup> “Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Final Report - Preparations, Achievements, Conclusions” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, April 2012), 85–86, [http://www.mf.gov.pl/en/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=bd7c8f63-bcc4-4353-bd27-65389fe95357&groupId=764034](http://www.mf.gov.pl/en/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=bd7c8f63-bcc4-4353-bd27-65389fe95357&groupId=764034).



accessible and downloadable for free.

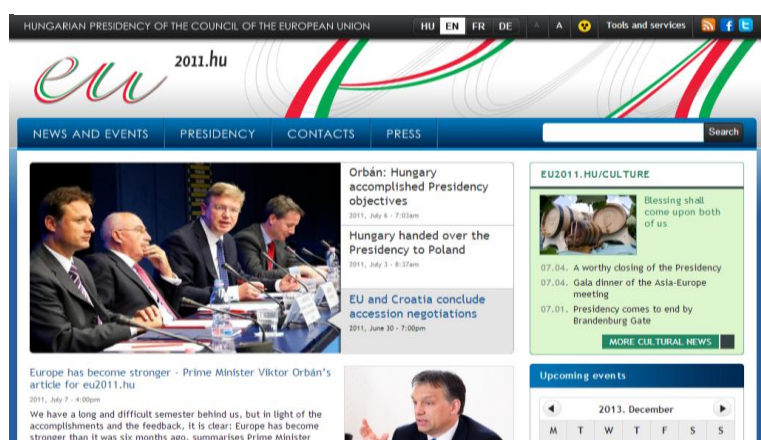
There were three language mutations available for the content of the website: Czech, English and French.

The statistics showed unprecedented numbers of unique visitors visits compared to former Presidencies, and accounted a total of 2 249 706 visitors during the Presidency term (the most in January).

The website of the presidency is currently available including important reports and Presidency evaluation documents.

The official website of the Hungarian Presidency [www.eu2011.hu](http://www.eu2011.hu) was divided into four main sections/categories – news and events, presidency, contacts and press. The aim of the Hungarians was to host up-to-date, current affairs articles, background documents within simply-structured site, having less content that is accessible elsewhere on the Internet.

**Img. 5:** Printscreen of the official website of the Hungarian Presidency (Source: <http://www.eu2011.hu/>)



Accreditation for journalists was available from the website. There was a toolbar at the top of every page that could be used to set the language, to access search options for news services, to access and subscribe to weekly newsletter in four languages, the customer service, media databases, email and SMS-notification.

The website also hosted pages introducing Hungary and its culture, they appeared in the

same layout but in distinctive green colour.

The content of the website was available in four languages – Hungarian, English, French and German.

The creation of the webpage was, same as the logo, the result of Belgian-Hungarian cooperation. Belgium handed over a content management system for the Hungarian Presidency website which was another symbolic gesture and the product of a real trio cooperation.<sup>16</sup>

No information evaluating the traffic at the website is available. The webpage was online until the last days of December 2013, articles were accessible however more detailed reports on the organizational dimension of the Presidency were missing.

The Hungarian Presidency used social media. Facebook fan page “Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union” was available at [www.facebook.com/eu2011](http://www.facebook.com/eu2011). This channel was spreading information on the outcomes of the Presidency and presenting Hungary. The posts in majority of cases included pictures and photos, displayed texts were mostly in English, some in Hungarian. However, the fanpage did not get high attention with just 2916 likes and almost no social interaction (comments and likes). The twitter account Hungarian Presidency @HU\_Presidency performed even poorer than Facebook with just 1123 followers and total of 36 tweets.

The website of the Polish Presidency [www.pl2011.eu](http://www.pl2011.eu) was divided into five sections: Meetings and Events, Presidency, Poland, Media, After Hours and Cultural Programme.

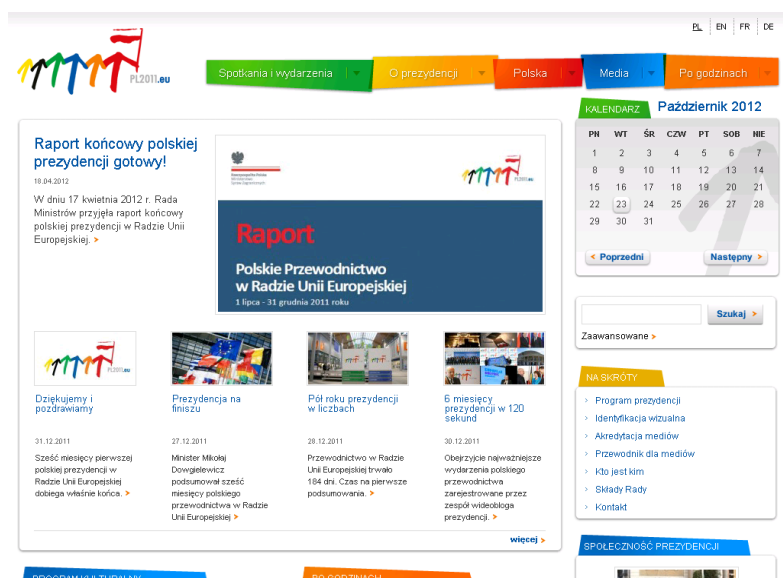
<sup>16</sup> “Website of the Hungarian Presidency Officially Presented,” accessed December 15, 2013, <http://www.eu2011.hu/news/website-hungarian-presidency-was-launched>.

The functionality and utility followed the tradition of previous presidencies of being on one hand the source of information and on the other hand service tool for journalists, media and delegations.

A videoblog of the Presidency formed integral part of the site. Short 2-3 min. films were published from political meetings, cultural and social events with some interviews.

The site was available in four languages – Polish, English, French and German. Moreover, as the only from the analysed Presidency websites was adjusted to the needs of the

**Img. 6:** Printscreen of the official website of the Polish Presidency (Source: <http://archive.is/OTDk/image>)



visually impaired, as it featured a special application allowing the articles to be read aloud.

The largest number of visits to the portal was recorded in July 2011, with the launching of the Presidency. In August and in December, during holiday months, the traffic dropped in the numbers of visitors and page views. Total of 729 348 unique users accessed the website.<sup>17</sup>

Poland as the first presiding country launched a website documenting the process of preparation of the Presidency as early as in

February 2009. This was possible also thanks to the collaboration with non-governmental organisations and various academic institutions. The website [www.prezjdencjaue.gov.pl](http://www.prezjdencjaue.gov.pl) published invitations to conferences and meetings in order to increase the public interest at the beginning of the Polish Presidency. In addition, official website of the Polish and foreign cultural programme of the Presidency was launched at [www.culture.pl](http://www.culture.pl)

The official website of the Polish Presidency is no longer active, however, detailed documents and reports concerning the presidency are available online at the websites of ministries and other authorities.

Polish did well in the communication via social media; not only spreading information but also monitoring the positive and negative assessment of the activity of the Polish Presidency among internet users. The Facebook profile of the Presidency was launched in December 2009 and by the end of 2011 gained 30 500 likes.<sup>18</sup> Besides day-to-day communication, the front page featured a number of applications that provided surfers some knowledge of the Polish Presidency in an amusing manner (planning of the EU budget, quiz or possibility to design the poster of the Presidency). The crucial focus group for the presidency was aged 18-34, almost 3/4 of all the users. There were also videos published on YouTube, tweets on Twitter and the Presidency was also present at the national nk.pl portal.

## Recommendations for the presentation of the Slovak Presidency in 2016

<sup>17</sup> "Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Final Report - Preparations, Achievements, Conclusions," 91–93.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 93.



The Slovak Presidency of the EU Council in the second semester of 2016 will be a unique opportunity to show the diplomatic and expert potential in carrying negotiations on different European agendas. However, the success of the Presidency is measured not only by the content of political and legislative achievements but also through the ability to present the country and its achievements in attractive, comprehensive and cost-effective way.

The Visegrad Four countries coordinate substantial parts of their EU activities and initiatives. The lessons learned of the former Czech, Hungarian and Polish Presidencies could also serve Slovakia as guidelines for its communication and presentation during the second semester of 2016.

**The motto** should highlight the main idea of the Presidency. It should address the current challenges of the Union and at the same time be inspirational, visionary and unique. The mottos usually express the commitment to the idea of cooperation within unified and open Europe. At the same time, the mottos give Presidencies space for, to certain level, poetic ideas and symbolism. Or an ambition for concrete value added of the presiding country can be expressed. The mottos, due to their simplicity, bring complex ideas and the communitarian level closer to the citizens. Presidencies use mottos also to differ from other Presidencies.

When presented in advance, the motto can attract the attention of the public and give a unifying element to the complicated and broad process of preparation of the Presidency.

Hand in hand with motto, the **visual communication** of the Presidency plays important role in the preparation process. The logo serves to visually identify the Presidency, to show its uniqueness and to render the vision and basic premises of the program. They are designed to bring positive associations with the presiding country, to show it as modern, creative and devoted EU Member.

Various approaches to the creation of the visual identity were taken. The logos were selected either in public or in closed competition, but also a direct order resulted to be successful solution. The process of the finding of the most accurate solution may take up to two years, and a close cooperation with expert jury or committee is required. Artists, designers, visual communication and brand development experts mixed with respected public intellectuals should constitute the group designing/selecting the logo.

The logo should match and visualize the motto or the core idea of the Presidency. As shown by all the analysed Presidencies it should be symbolic (Solidarity movement, troika joint design, EU cultural diversity) and express the unity, solidarity and harmonic relationships of EU citizens. National origin of the designer(s) of the logo, its fonts, colours or the whole story of creation should be the matter of the national pride and the commitment to the European idea at the same time.

The broad use of the logo for the purposes of virtual presentation, printed materials, decoration and furnishing of the venues requires a sophisticated design manual which would serve as guidance for all the governmental and non-governmental actors involved in the Presidency. The manual would ensure the uniformity of the visual identity of the Presidency.

The inauguration of the logo is a special occasion with the potential to attract the attention of the public at home but also the foreign and international media.

The Polish case is the witness that the logo can have a continuity and may not be useful just for the purpose of the Presidency.

The **virtual seat** of the Presidency has important practical implications and purpose. The official website of the Presidency serves as first-hand information source for broad public, it allows journalists, media and delegations to get accreditation and support for official events. At the same time it is a great opportunity to present the country to foreign audiences.

The presence of the Presidency at the social media can bring instant feedback opportunities from the focus groups.

The function of the website should be, therefore, to provide quick, professional and credible information through transparent and simple user-friendly interface. The target group of the website is usually rather wide starting with the media, expert public, government officials of other Member States and third countries and the broad public. Official websites are usually accompanied by social media channels focused on the generation of 18-34 years old. These are a valuable feedback group for the organizers of the Presidency.

A separate website monitoring the preparations of the Presidency can influence positively the inter and intra governmental communication, networking with the third sector and the broad public.

The first month of the Presidency is when the crucial attention is paid to the official website and when the highest number of visitors were recorded. Therefore, enough information should be available already with the kick-off of the Presidency.

Usually the following sections (menu) categorize the information of the website: News and documents; Calendar of events; Information about the Presidency; Section for media services, press, accreditation; Basic information on the Union and its policies; Presentation of the presiding country; and Contact information.

Functionally, the website should provide current, immediate information service and visual content for the journalists. The webpage and all its content should be available in four languages – the language of the Presidency plus English, French and German version. Utilities for visually impaired are a plus.

After the conclusion of the Presidency reports and evaluation information should be provided.

A sophisticated use of social media can broaden audiences of the Presidency on one hand and on the other hand it can provide immediate feedback for the organizers of the Presidency.

## **Conclusion**

We can conclude that the motto, the visual identification of the presidency and its virtual presence are compulsory but crucial factors of the success of every Presidency of the EU Council. This paper was aimed to assess the approaches of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to this very narrow part of complex communication and presentation activities of EU Council Presidencies. The lessons learned should assist the Slovak preparatory committee to meet the basic requirements for the presentation in 2016.

As food for thought for even deeper analysis in the field the key cultural events and the exposition at the Atrium of Justus Lipsius Building; and presents and gifts of the presidency could be analysed. We will assess these in our further research.

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