Event Report

Good Storytelling as a Tool for Political Communication

KAS Summer School imparts new campaign tools to communication experts from parties and governments from SEE

Darija Fabijanic

For the third time the KAS Media Programme South East Europe invited young PR experts from South East Europe to the Summer School of Political Communication. It took place from 28th June to 2nd July in the Villa La Collina, the international meeting centre of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Cadenabbia. The participants deepened their knowledge in strategic communication planning, digital campaigning, and learned about the newest trends in the areas of video and political framing.

The Summer School was opened by **Hendrik Sittig**, Head of the KAS Media Programme South East Europe: "Spokespeople play an important role in the democratic society. They are the point of contact for journalists and the media". The democratic game can only function, when there is a certain level of mutual trust between politics and media. Sittig emphasised that communication experts and advisers need to work professionally and mustn't see the journalists as enemies.

In order to inform citizens and media well about reforms, good planning is essential. **Claire Pimm**, Director for the GREAT-Campaign at the British Government, introduced different models of strategic communication planning. She defines: "A campaign is storytelling with a purpose. It must be authentic, insightful, truthful and personal."

Social Media have Changed the Narrative Style in Campaigns

Marian Bracht presents successful digital campaigns

Marian Bracht, Head of Office of MP Peter Tauber (CDU) and Campaign Adviser for the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU) at the parliamentary elections 2017, talked as well about storytelling but in digital campaigns: „It is

essential that the climax and the most important information is immediately visible." Due to the changed media consumption habits the audience need to be convinced in the first seconds. This is especially important for video content as the first eight seconds are pivotal.

Participants shooting their own videos

How can such a video be shot? This was subsequently explained by **Günther Schuhmacher**, Adviser Media and Communications at CDU NRW. He showed the participants the technical prerequisites and how short and high-quality videos can be shot with mobile technology. After a short presentation the participants learned through practical exercises how interviews and events can be filmed and edited. With the aid of the participants' self-made videos common mistakes and important aspects of video campaigning were discussed.

Political Framing as a Mean of Persuasion

After quality frames in videos, on the last day participants dealt with linguistic frames. **Hans de Bruijn**, Professor at the Dutch Delft University, explained the concept of "political framing". This concept discusses how opposing approaches can be framed in political debates and how to reframe them again. Framing means to simplify complex political issues and to make them understandable. "Frames require an answer, but it shall be formulated outside the given frame", elaborates de Bruijn. Thereby, entering the opposing frame and losing credibility can be avoided. Through video examples and role plays the

different models of frames were explained as well how to dissolve them.

The selection of topics as well as the practical advice of trainers and lecturers received a highly positive response by the participants. They ex-pressed interest in participating in further work-shops to make their communication more effec-tive and to better consult their superiors. The KAS Media Programme South East Europe will offer similar trainings in the future.