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Communication and Visibility Strategies – Antidiscrimination Albania

Public Communication Strategy for Albania’s People’s Advocate

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Introduction

The strategy for public communication in the area of human rights protection for People's Advocate (PA) is designed to ensure that people of Albania are

(1) well aware about the issues of human rights protection and antidiscrimination, as well as (2) know where to turn in case they or others are mistreated.

The strategy establishes internal principles for public communication for the PA in order for the organization to be able to use

(1) strategically designed proactive approach to communication, and (2) two-way model of public communication, when reaching out to audiences.

The design of the strategy is practical in order to maximize the effect of public communication efforts with a goal to change awareness, attitudes, opinions and behavioral habits of the people of Albania towards the protection of human rights and antidiscrimination. It strives to achieve a vision of the society that values the principles of equality, equal opportunities and possibilities, and that the PA is a credible champion in the field of equality promotion by further enhancing the understanding of human rights protection and antidiscrimination in the Albanian society.

The strategy has several parts describing the general approach to communication, as well as some specific elements for use of the institution of the PA. The appendixes contain strategic communication planning matrix for overall long-term planning of public communication, a tactic communication planning matrix for specific short-term public communication planning, message development tools, as well as various materials that can come in handy for daily use by the practitioners working with communication issues.

The authors of the strategy hope that this document with accompanying appendixes and training materials will help the PA to easily apply it in planning, implementing and evaluating their daily public communication work. And as a result, Albania will become the champion in equal treatment of all its citizens.

Goals and objectives for communication

The overall goal of public communication in the area of human rights protection and antidiscrimination in Albania is to ensure that the people of Albania are fully aware and support the human rights values, and have zero tolerance for discrimination based on any grounds. Ensuring that every Albanian resident can achieve their full potential in contributing to their own personal goals, as well as to the society in general, can only be done by the people, who respect for universal human rights and every individual's right to choose their way of life. It is important that the people are not only well aware of the issue, but are able to identify problems and injustice, should such occur within their sight, as well as to know how to report it to the respective institutions. And the institutions that deal with these cases discreetly, professionally and in a timely fashion.

The PA has already contributed to this goal of spreading the word and raising awareness significantly with their previous activities, however, public communication is a continuous process that is always evolving and requires constant attention. Strategically targeted approach works best in public communication, therefore, it is essential to establish specific goals and objectives that the organization plans to achieve with public communication activities and campaigns. They serve as the main roadmap for achieving the result. The goals and objectives are used in the planning stage, narrative and message development, activity planning and implementation, as well as in the evaluation stage of results.

A goal in the context of this strategy is a broad primary outcome that is expected from the activities. A strategy is the approach to take to achieve the goal. An objective is a measurable step taken to achieve a strategy, but a tactic is a tool that is used in pursuing an objective associated with a strategy. The goals and objectives are formulated based on the strategy of the PA that was available at the time of drafting this communication strategy.

Defined strategic goal and objectives ¹	Communication goals	Communication objectives
Public institutions to implement human rights standards and operate in accordance with administrative practices. Objective is to ensure that public institutions operate in accordance with national and international standards of human rights protection and best administrative practices.	The PA uses its mandate successfully to ensure that public institutions in Albania operate in accordance with national and international human rights standards.	The PA is a partner to public institutions in Albania and assists with introducing standards.
	The PA uses its mandate successfully to help make Albanian public institutions open and reliable, because they pursue the best administrative practices.	The PA suggests best administrative practices in order to avoid human rights violations.
Building a culture of human rights protection in Albania. Objective is to contribute in fostering a civic culture of human rights protection in Albanian through close cooperation with civil society and the media.	Citizens and civic organizations in Albania are well aware and regularly updated of the human rights issues.	People of Albania feel that their human rights are protected, the PA is a part of this process.
	Media closely follows human	In case there are violations, people know where to turn and

¹ The Strategic Plan of the People's Advocate 2013-2015.

	rights violations and reports about the violations and progress achieved in their treatment in the future.	what are the procedures for complaints.
Best practices for the institution of the People's Advocate. Objective is to qualitatively improve the performance of the administration of the People's Advocate, in order to establish it as a point of reference, not only for the speed and professionalism with which it addresses the complaints and related issues, but also for manifesting the highest moral standing of protection of civic and human values in dealing with complaints and complainants. This improvement will bring an efficient evaluation and management system that will be crucial to the long-term development of the Institution.	The PA reacts quickly and effectively to solve complaints and prevent similar type of violations from repeating.	People can rely on the PA in case of violations.
	Ensuring that people of Albania trust the continuity of the PA for protection of their rights.	The PA is always available be there to help.
International cooperation. Objective is to empower monitoring and reporting capacity building of the People's Advocate through establishing and maintaining constructive relationships with regional and international counterpart institutions.	The PA is internationally recognized and networked organization that uses the latest practices in its work.	The PA uses the work methods and principles that are internationally recognized.
		The PA receives international support.

Table 1: Communication goals and objectives for the People's Advocate.

Values of the Commissioner for the People's Advocate²

The values of the organization are formulated in the overall PA strategy, as they reflect the professional spirit of the institution and assist in establishing the background for public communication.

Professionalism: We serve with integrity, accountability, fairness and apply the highest standards of professionalism in our work. We also appreciate a working environment that promotes personal and professional growth, teamwork as well as innovation and creativity.

Independence and impartiality: We are impartial and objective in our actions, promoting and protecting the rights of the individual and the public, independently of the state institutions.

Transparency: We are aware that we should serve our citizens and partners in a transparent way, and make sure that the information on the activity of the Institution is public and accessible by citizens or interested parties.

Cooperation: We cooperate with our citizens and our partners unanimously in the name of a common purpose, share our knowledge and experience, discuss and assist each other in good faith.

² Ibid.

Accessible: We are open-minded, listening respectfully to citizens and partners, communicating in a clear and simple manner, and trying to see things from different perspectives. We also strive to have an adequate infrastructure in our institution and to expand our activity in different regions of the country, in order to provide access to all citizens indiscriminately, including vulnerable and special needs groups.

Pro-active: We actively engage citizens and partners. We learn from experience and that of the others, and we are proactive in identifying, developing and applying the best practices.

Non-discriminatory: We treat individuals equally and appreciate diversity.

The PA Institution is also committed to implementing sustainable environmental practices wherever possible.

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

The analysis of strengths – weaknesses – opportunities – threats specifically in the field of public communication for the PA is essential guide for the strategy that helps to minimize negative and maximize positive effects. It determines the focus of the communication strategy and lays a strong fundament for other sections of this document.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The PA affirms communication is crucial for the successful implementation of their mission; ▪ Previous relatively better experience of the PA in communication practice; ▪ Valuable experience gained and lessons learned from previous communication projects and outreach activities; ▪ Regional network of representatives for the PA facilitates implementation of communication and day-to-day outreach activities; ▪ Assistance and logistical support by local government administrative units for the organization of outreach activities; ▪ Continuous support and projects funded by the EU/CoE and other international partners; ▪ New approach to communication, including the civil society representatives, ensures synergy of all social stakeholders; ▪ Commitment to a communication strategy for the PA helps to form a more unified public opinion on the topics of human rights protection and anti-discrimination. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only one advisor serving as spokesperson and handling all media relations and setting press policy; ▪ Dominating editorial approach in the mainstream news media continues to be based on the importance of political reporting over any other walk of life; ▪ Social issues are clearly under-represented on the Albanian news media; ▪ Tabloidization, simplification, stigmatization and lack of thorough media reporting based on common stereotypes; ▪ Shortage of journalists specialized in reporting for human rights protection and antidiscrimination; ▪ Public awareness on issues of human rights protection and antidiscrimination is still reportedly low. ▪ Inter-agency (PA – CPD) communication coordination not very active.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cooperation to strengthen the outreach and advocacy activities of the PA with other partner institutions and stakeholders; ▪ Education of journalists and editors; ▪ Good cooperation with the civil society, especially the NGOs; ▪ Direct contact and field-work of regional representatives; ▪ CoE/EU and other international partners/civil society projects and resource availability; ▪ Improving existing and developing new channels, including media relations, direct communication, event outreach, interactive and social media; ▪ The new era of digitalization, which by increasing competitiveness with mainstream media can have a substantial impact on the quality of reporting; ▪ Online presence and social media could help the PA build the image of their offices as accessible, trustworthy and results-driven; ▪ Exposure of the PA representatives to best practices internationally, to enable them to improve and find more effective mechanisms for providing their services and communicating their messages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vulnerable groups and other minorities subject to discrimination are the main targets of hate speech; ▪ Lack of media genuine reporting on human rights and discrimination; ▪ Superficial and commercial portrayal of the society on the media; ▪ Deep-rooted prejudices among the majority of the population and a lack of awareness on the part of state officials impede the effective application of legislation and prevent its further improvement. ▪ Raising awareness, both among specific target groups and generally, will require proactive methods in order to bridge the gap to those that may not know where to seek out information.

Table 3: Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the People’s Advocate

Approach to communication

Using **strategic approach to public communication** grants the fastest way to achieving the planned communication goals. The PA is striving to be the leader in setting public agenda in the area of human rights protection and antidiscrimination in Albania, therefore strategic communications approach is chosen in order to achieve this goal. The communication strategy outlines the main directions for communication activities by setting goals for communication, containing narratives and messaging, identifying specific target audiences and measurement instrumentation, as well as providing clear division of tasks between the various internal actors.

The following elements are essential in strategic approach to communication:

Strategizing leads to planning and implementation: Based on strategic goals, specific plans are drafted for carrying out daily communication activities on an annual, quarterly and monthly calendar. This shorter-term planning helps to align activities with more regular re-occurring activities and one-time communication campaigns that are carried out in cooperation with other partners and individual donors. Plans include clear goals, target audiences and message sets, drawn from the communication strategy document, as well as a time schedule. Responsible departments and officers are assigned to each task, so that the goals do not remain on paper but are implemented according to the strategy and plans.

Agenda-setting: Setting public agenda is usually considered the task of the media, but in today's intense media environment, public relations departments are active contributors to this process. It is essential for the PA to become a part of the agenda-setting process in the human rights and antidiscrimination issues in Albania, therefore, the organization speaks first on the issues, or respond quickly, when the questions on its portfolio appear on the public agenda.

Narratives and messaging: Narratives about antidiscrimination and human rights protection are determined by the PA in order to avoid confusion and misconceptions. Narratives are built on three pillars: (1) rethinking the past; (2) reconsidering present concerns; and (3) reimagining future possibilities³. In other words the narrative is a description of a newly defined idealized situation that is based on yesterday's and today's realities. Messages developed under the general narrative are used in daily communication. Adjustments to messages are developed taking into the account how they fit with the overall narrative.

Toolbox of communication instruments: Media relations, direct communication, event outreach, interactive and social media channels are used to maximize the communications effect, and each tool complements the other. Communication is planned using the tools that help to achieve the desired result the quickest. Proactive approach in media relations is practiced intensively and also relationships with the media community, especially reporters covering social and human rights issues are nurtured on a daily basis. In direct communication and events outreach, the activities are regular – there is an annual calendar of activities that is advertised in advance and easily available on the website. Interactive media (website) is well structured (with

³ Kaplan, Sarah, Wanda Orlikowski. "Beyond Forecasting: Creating New Strategic Narratives." MIT Sloan Management Review, Fall 2014. Online accessed at: [Sloanreview.mit.edu/x/56107](https://sloanreview.mit.edu/x/56107).

client-oriented menus), and social media channels are updated with material specifically designed for these channels, not just sharing links and reports.

Measuring and evaluation: Measuring and evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of the strategy is essential, therefore there are tools and practices in place to assess the impact of all communication activities. Measurements are done regularly, and with real impact on target group lives in mind.

Personnel for communication activities and training needs: The success of public communication lies in the hands of the practitioners and teamwork. The more qualified the practitioners, the better the result. Even if the professionals hired are not communication specialists, they can learn the necessary skills through training, therefore a regular training plan for all people working with communication takes place, including training on message development, working with target audiences, event organization, media relations, social media tools, social media content, issue advocacy and others. Several spokespersons are trained and given permission to comment on different issues. The communication professionals attend international network meetings for human rights communicators, if possible. It helps them be in the know of the latest developments for communication in their thematic field.

Various audiences: Target audiences and partners are many and diverse for the PA as they are dealing with issues that contain sensitive information and public opinion on them is not always unified. It is essential that appropriate approach is sought for all audiences, be it social groups that are discriminated against (sensitive target group), public at large, institutional partners or international organizations.

Relationship with stakeholders and partners: Active engagement with different domestic and international partners and stakeholders is ongoing. Exchange of information and joint awareness and outreach campaigns could help to rise the profile of the PA nationally. Cooperation also takes place at the regional level within Albania. Internationally, the PA take active part in human rights protection and anti-discrimination networks.

Commitment to open, two-way communication: In today's complex communications environment, those communicators who are open to communication and differences in views and opinions, are much more successful. Therefore not only speaking out, but listening, responding and reshaping messages, is an integral part of the PA public communication.

Target audiences and partners

Improving communication and ensuring visibility of the action targeting all institutional, governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, and all other actors, is one of the central concerns related to presenting and promoting the work and key aspects of anti-discrimination policy, as well as facilitating cooperation with its stakeholders and the general public.

The new strategic approach will focus on communication with a broad spectre of domestic and international target audiences, by defining a number of target audiences as long-lasting priorities (the strategic target audiences), while a more detailed definition of other target audiences needs to be defined and redefined by annual action plans. The PA communicates at home and internationally, at both institutional and individual level.

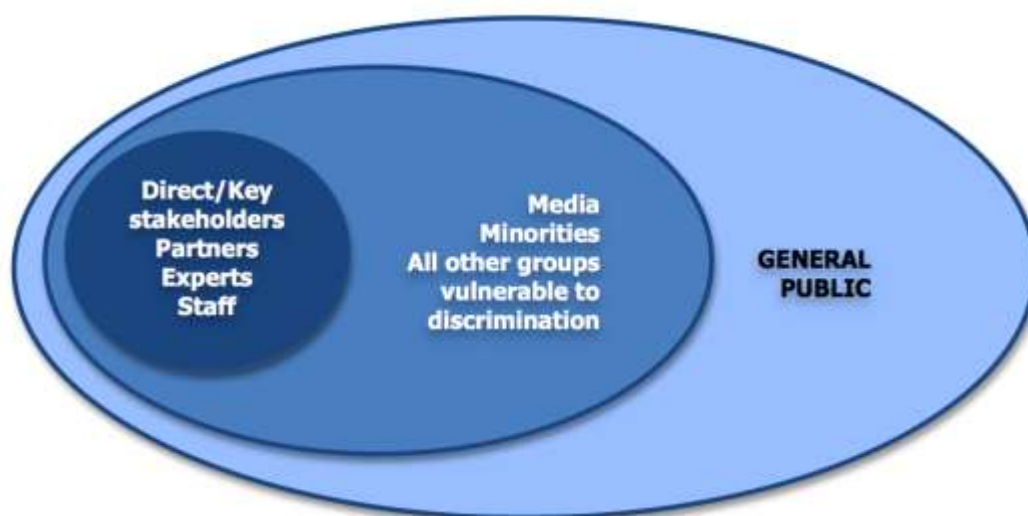


Figure 1. Target audiences on the key aspects of human rights protection and anti-discrimination policy.

Target audiences and partners in domestic communication

Home communication covers target audiences in Albania and it shall be implemented at the national and local level with the support and collaboration of the target institutions and key stakeholders. When introducing new public concepts and issues of human rights advocacy, as it is reportedly the case with the insufficient awareness level of key private and public stakeholders about the anti-discrimination policies and lack of understanding of discrimination by general public, it is crucial that the main audience that will be affected accepts the messages.

Therefore, it is necessary to define who the target audiences are in detail, as well as to define appropriate communication channels and forms that will match their needs, desires and motivations, as well as their perceptions of the proposed changes.

Strategic target audiences in Albania are:

1. Multipliers (*opinion-makers and/or shapers of public opinion*)

2. Youth (ages 15-29⁴)
3. Groups sensitive to changes

1. Multipliers

Multipliers are a target audience of key importance for mobilising other target audiences and for shaping their opinions. Therefore, they should be included in the communication process as partners.

All these partners operating at community level are the instruments to support the PA to reach out to these communities with the understanding that human rights are not a privilege, but a state obligation to create the necessary conditions for the citizens to exercise their rights and freedoms.

The following subjects are considered multipliers:

- Media (editors and journalists)
- Parliament (MPs, Regulatory and Legal Procedures Committee, etc.)
- Political parties
- Justice system officials (judges, prosecutors, lawyers and others)
- Police officers
- Business and other professional associations
- Science and research institutions, businesses that deal with research and development, education institutions and teachers
- Civil society and NGOs
- Religious and charity communities
- State institutions (employees and officials)
- Local self-government/local associations
- EU/CoE and other international info-centres

2. Youth (or other)

This target group includes:

- Elementary school students
- High school students
- University students
- Employed youth and activists

3. Groups sensitive to changes

This target group includes:

- Vulnerable groups (women, children, persons with disabilities, members of the LGBTQ community, Roma and Egyptians, persons in rehabilitation centres, Roma, mentally-ill people, detained in penitentiaries, etc.)⁵

⁴ EU Strategy for Youth: https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy_en

⁵ This target audience has been identified in accordance with the PA strategic documents and related reports by international organizations.

- Unemployed
- Minority communities
- Retired and elderly people
- Rural population

Target audiences and partners in international communication

This target group includes international organisations and partners in Albania, foreign research institutions, international NGOs, think-tanks, media and international business community representatives. It is necessary to inform these groups continuously about PA's progress in advocating human rights protection, build the contacts network, and perform other promotional activities.

The stated goal of this project is to establish a new standard of human right monitoring and improvement of the reporting process of the human rights situation in Albania. The target groups are the international monitoring and reporting organizations in Albania:

- OSCE Presence in Albania
- Council of Europe Office in Albania
- Delegation of the European Union to Albania
- UNDP
- UN Women
- UNICEF
- USAID
- EURALIUS
- TAIEX
- The Open Society Foundations in Albania
- The Danish Institute for Human Rights
- The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
- The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
- SNV - Netherlands Development Organization
- European Ombudsman
- Sister Ombudsman institutions on regional and international level.

Narratives and messaging

Narrative is the perspective – type of personal or non-personal “lens” through which a story is communicated. In other words it is defined as a story – a spoken or written account of connected events and trends. Message is the central theme or idea of communication. Messages are building blocks for the narratives.

Narratives are stories for broad audiences that the citizens can associate themselves with, and they are an essential part of human communication as well as public communication. They help forming shared meaning and interpreting the situation, priorities, decisions and actions by interpreting history, presenting situation and the role individuals play in achieving joint goals. The fact that narratives have direct impact on people’s opinions, attitudes and behaviors is the reason why they play a crucial role in all communications.

Rethinking the past, reconsidering present concerns and reimagining the future are three stages in narrative formation. Each organization forms current narratives based on joint Albanian history (and also separate past experience as an organization), today’s challenges, as well as joint future vision. Three types of narratives can be distinguished: (1) **identity narratives** – dealing with the past and identity; (2) **system narratives** – explaining the current state of play; and (3) **thematic narratives** – connected current issues on daily agenda.

Messages are an element of day-to-day communication on the issues on public agenda. Effective messages should be **clear and concise**: messages should not try to convey too many things. Messages should be presented in simple, direct language. This ensures that your messages will not only be heard, but understood; **consistent**: make sure that the same messages are used consistently and repeatedly. Ensure that messages “stick” with the target audience; **persuasive**: a persuasive message delivers the relevant rational and emotional arguments that will motivate the target audience to action; **credible**: The information contained in the messages must be believable by the target audiences for them to accept them as personally relevant.

Narratives for human rights protection and anti-discrimination

The main narratives that the PA is pursuing through their communication is inseparably grounded in the vision and mission of both organizations.

For the PA it is “living in the society where the principles of equality, equal opportunities and possibilities are promoted”. The “Law on Protection from Discrimination” states that equality before the law and equal protection by law, equality of opportunities and possibilities to exercise rights, enjoy freedoms and take part in public life, as well as effective protection from discrimination and from every form of conduct that encourages discrimination should be granted by the PA.

Overall narrative that dominates public communication PA is: “**Albanian society, as part of Europe, highly values the principles of freedom, democracy and human rights, as well as it is unceasingly making efforts to ensure equal treatment of all individuals. The PA is a very important instrument of the society for further**

development of internal democracy (institutional democracy), serving as the guarantor of protection, promotion of the freedoms and constitutional rights of citizens”.

Messages for human rights protection and anti-discrimination

An appropriate tone will contribute to easier and quicker reception of the message by the audience, which at the same time means the content needs to be readily available and understandable to the broader public. The dominant tone in communicating the PA needs to be serious, moderate, and appropriate, but at the same time also positive and dynamic, emanating an air of reliability and trust. Openness, timeliness, and two-way communication (dialogue) are the guiding principles of the strategy implementation. The language of the message needs to be simple and clear, devoid of technical expressions that are not understandable to the target audiences.

The messages will be adjusted accordingly to the institutional and local needs and they need to be targeted to the appropriate audiences and must not be uniform for all audiences. They also need to be focused on concrete results, in a way that would enable all citizens to recognise their personal interest in protecting human rights and advocating anti-discrimination values.

This approach will be based on realistic foundations, as overly optimistic and unfounded expectations among target groups vulnerable to discrimination and might have a boomerang effect when those expectations are largely not fulfilled. The same methodology needs to be applied to unrealistic fears and prejudice.

The message base, from which umbrella and core messages are derived for each target audience, is available in the following table.

Strategic Groups	TARGET GROUPS		
	Multipliers (initiators of public opinion)	Youth (or other)	Sensitive Groups
Group’s Needs	Transparency, dialogue, information provision, education	Attracting interest, transparency, dialogue, information	Transparency, dialogue, information provision, education, facts
Tone of the group message	Educational and motivational	Motivational and informative	Motivational and emotional

Table 4: Tone of communication/message related to the mode of communication with strategic target audiences.

Message development based on strategic communication goals and within the main narrative is a process that the PA carries out continuously. Messages are influenced by various outside factors; they serve as a tactical tool to respond quickly and meaningfully. The example below demonstrates how the messages for different strategic audiences are devised from the main message.

Messages for human rights protection and antidiscrimination

We (the PA) are the guardians of your rights.

Multiplier audience	Youth audience	Sensitive group audience
1. All Albanian citizens can find an open door with the PA.	1. Denounce things you are against or one might believe that you support things you really do not.	1. Never be afraid to raise your voice for honesty, truth and compassion against injustice and discrimination.
2. CPD is your partner and will always stand by your side.	2. Always take sides and defend human rights. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.	2. Be an advocate for the people and causes important to you, using the most powerful tool only you have—your personal stories.
3. Advocacy not only means endorsing a cause or idea, but recommending, promoting, defending, or arguing for it.	3. It can be difficult to speak truth to power. Circumstances, however, have made doing so increasingly necessary.	3. Things are never as complicated as they seem: Act and do something to make life better for other people.

Table 5: Messages for communicating human rights protection issues.

Messages for day-to day use are to be developed according to this principle as needed. The following are examples of the messages, as formulated by the PA staff participating in the training sessions on Communication Strategy:

In a democratic society, every individual is entitled to rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution.

The People’s Advocate - an open door for anyone and anywhere.

The PA in protection of the rights guaranteed by law.

Have your interests been violated by the public administration? The PA is here to help you.

The PA is the possibility for your solutions to violations from public administration.

Free movement and independent for disabled people, a fundamental right.

We are being paid by your taxes, we are here for you.

Instruments of communication

The “tool box” of communications professional is quite sizeable, and in today’s world of digital media opportunities, it is expanding faster than ever. Public organizations such as the PA are using a mix of instruments to achieve communications goals. Following is the list of most widely used instruments that are handy in the daily work of public relations office.

Press release: The most basic instrument of public relations that is used to announce the news. Written in the inverted pyramid style, where the key information is presented at the top and the pyramid declines to a point at the bottom with the information of lesser importance. While answering the 5 “W”-s questions (who, what, where, when and why), the press release is the account of the event, trend, or issue. The press release is an important source of information for the news media, therefore it should be timely and accurate in order to maximize the effect and increase the chance of use by the journalists.

Media advisory: It is also called a pre-release or media invitation, and it is similar to a press release but instead of announcing the news, it announces an upcoming event or a press conference, where the organization is inviting members of the media to participate. It is shorter than the press release, and it leaves room for questions, i.e., it does not tell the whole story in print, because it is to be announced at the event.

Backgrounder: A fact-sheet providing detailed information on a particular issue. Facts, statistics, charts, bullet points, visuals, quotes from experts are used in a backgrounder. It is useful to create fact sheets to be handed out or e-mailed to the media, because it helps ensure the accurate use of information provided by the organization. When a new state official is appointed, the backgrounder can contain new official’s biography and a professional photo.

Transcript: For more significant speeches or testimonies (for instance, in the parliament), transcripts of speeches can be distributed to the members of the media. It ensures that even if the journalists were not present, they can accurately report what was said.

Press conference: When there is newsworthy information to be announced, or in the situation of crisis on a major issue, the organization can invite members of the media to a questions and answers session. The press conference usually features from one to five officials, who give opening statements and explain the issue. It must contain an open questions and answers session. It is a chance to the journalists to ask any questions on the topic. The press conference time can be limited.

Doorstep media op: It is a brief chance to interview the official, as he/she enters or leaves the event, for example, a parliament hearing. Doorstep media opportunity is usually very limited in time, but it helps the organization to deliver news in a timely and accurate fashion.

Photo op: Photo opportunity is a pre-arranged chance for the media photographers to access a certain location and take a picture of the official performing their duties, for instance, giving a speech, issuing certificates, cutting the ribbon for the opening a new

office, etc. It is a good publicity tool to be used to make the work of the agency more visible and visual.

Photo/video release: Preparing photos and videos (clips) for release to the media and general audience (through the website and social networks) is an effective way of reaching out and ensuring that the story is as accurate, as the organization prepares it.

Media kit: Distributed to journalists at press conferences or e-mailed to them. Media packages contain all the relevant information on the topic (all materials that have been discussed above and other relevant information). Media kits also ensure that the information is accurately used in the news reports.

Media interview: Usually one-on-one talk between the official and the journalist. It is a chance to explain the issue in greater detail. Interviews can be afterwards published in a question and answer format, or they can be used as a news gathering instrument, in which case only parts of the interview get used. Interviews can be offered to media outlets/stations by the organization, or they can be granted per media's request. Interviews can be organized "on the record" (information shared is intended for publication in full), "off the record" (information shared is not intended for publication but for increasing media's knowledge on the issue), "on background" (information can be published, using a general reference, for instance, "a PA official said...", without quoting the official by name) or "on deep background" (information can be used with a general reference for instance, "a representative working in the area of human rights protection said...").

Media roundtable: A chance to bring together several journalists representing different media to discuss an issue that is high on public agenda. This is a proactive instrument that is used in cases where there is elevated interest on a sensitive issue. It helps the organization to set the record straight on an issue. Media roundtables, just like interviews, can be "on the record", "off the record", "on background" or "on deep background".

Op-ed: Op-ed means "opposite editorial", it is an opinion article, stating the position of the official on a certain issue. Op-eds are proposed by organizations to the media, when there is an issue that is receiving much attention from the public. It is a good chance to explain the issue without interpretation from the media. Most media outlets would be receptive towards publishing op-eds from public officials, if they are well reasoned and substantially-argued.

Media tour: It is an instrument that can be used, if there are locations to show to the media, for instance, a regional office is opened, a big conference is organized on the issues of antidiscrimination. Journalists can be invited to join – it can help generate additional media publicity.

Media seminar: To educate the representatives of the media, or bring them "closer" to some issue, media seminars are organized. It provides the members of the media with better understanding of the issue. "Media breakfast" format for media seminars is very popular.

Pool reporting: In case of crisis or visits of high-ranking officials, when all reporters cannot be invited to visit the site of the event, reporters can be invited to participate in a “media pool”, where only some members of the media get to be present at the event. It happens with a condition that they are willing to share the exclusive material with all other reporters afterwards.

Public outreach event: Events that are open to limited or unlimited public and that help to explain the narratives. They can be presentations of reports, open door events, open days events and others. The goal of outreach events is to spread the word about the achievements and challenges of the organization.

Print materials: Various print materials – posters, brochures, leaflets and reports are published for handing out to target audiences. It is essential to determine the exact audience for each material and make them as appropriate as possible to the needs of the recipients.

Newsletter: Regular newsletter is a communications instrument that is most appropriate for informing stakeholders and partners about the activities of the organization. The newsletter can be in an electronic or printed format, and it contains information about the latest activities, news, updates and also some practical information, for instance, announcements about the planned campaigns, procurements, job vacancies and similar types of information. The optimal regularity for the newsletter for PA would be once a quarter.

Branding: It provides a unique, distinct identity to the organization or service provided by the organization. Branding includes establishing visual identity, colors, typeface and other elements that are consistently used for making associations with the organization among the public.

Website: Communication in the age of information and knowledge societies cannot be imagined without organizational websites. However, an effective website is designed from the perspective of “what our audience would be looking for” instead of “what is our organizational structure”. Responsive design, appropriate for website use on mobile devices, is another must for newly designed websites. And so is regular updating. It is essential that the website is accessible to people with disabilities and has a section in “easy language” with basic information about the organization, explained simply. Given the nature of the PA work, it would be advisable that the websites would feature sections in minority languages of Albania.

Thematic website: Sometimes institutional website is not enough to convey information that the organization has, therefore thematic websites are used. They can be websites for different audiences that for some reasons the organization wants to separate from the main website, just to make it look more appealing for the audience, for instance, young people. Special websites (or main website “inserts”) are set up for specific campaigns.

Social media post: In the age of social media dominance for some demographic audiences, public organizations are establishing their presence on social networks, for instance, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram and others. Posts for social media can be often adapted from the information that is prepared for media releases or

publishing on the official website, but they need to be re-drafted to suit the needs of each particular channel.

Communication campaign: A planned combination of communications activities with the same goal, narrative and message constitutes a communications campaign. Campaigns are used to emphasize a certain issue over others by providing concentrated amount of information in a short period of time, usually over one or two months.

Internal newsletter: Regular news bulletin that is shared internally among the staff of the organization. It helps to share the information among all employees.

Internal event: Motivational event that is designed to bring closer the employees of the organization with a goal to have better cooperation during the office hours.

Channels for communication

All available channels for communication can be divided into unmediated and mediated channels. **Unmediated channels** are all opportunities to exchange information face-to-face with the members of the target audience, while **mediated channels** involve the medium – be it traditional media, social media, printed material or broadcast. PA balances the use of both channels, as one complements the other.

Unmediated channels

Among the most often used unmediated opportunities are individual or group meetings, discussions, seminars, conferences, forums, summits. When these channels are used for delivering the message, officials use appropriate techniques. For smaller meetings, messages are packaged in a more personal manner and also giveaways such as leaflets and other print materials can be used. For larger events messages are adopted for mass audiences, and the chosen presentation technique is adjusted to public presentation. The following elements are taken into account, when using unmediated channels:

Personalization: make the message personalized to the audience. The smaller the audience, the greater personalization.

Listening: use the opportunity not only for delivering the message, but hearing out feedback from the members of the audience. Unmediated communication offers the best chance to collect it.

Giveaway: If possible bring something to give away, like leaflet or business card. Something physical helps to extend the contact.

Prolong the contact: unmediated communication offers a great opportunity to prolong the cooperation – agree with the audience on concrete next steps in your cooperation.

Mediated channels

The number of mediated channels is growing in today's world. Besides print and broadcast media outlets now there are also interactive media channels, social networks and self-published media (such as webpage and organization's profiles on social networks). There is no one correct formula for presenting for media channels, as each one of them requires an individual approach, but the following elements are essential for all channels:

Generalize: generalize the message to reach wide audience, but also make it personal. You are speaking to many at the same time, but each person listens individually.

Visual: Visual appearance is essential, especially for social networks and interactive media. Visual elements help attract and sustain the attention.

Style: Each organization develops a distinct presentation style so that the audience is familiar with it and with every next contact it takes less time to absorb the message.

Volume: In today's fast information circulation situation, it is important, that messages are kept short and to the point, especially on mediated channels.

Impact measurement instrumentation

Monitoring, evaluation and measurement of implementation and results is an important aspect of this communication strategy. It aims at measuring the effectiveness and success of its implementation against the defined objectives, ensuring better management of budgetary resources and harmonising the methods with the fieldwork results. Integrating such feedback ensures the communication plan is responsive and adaptive.

Evaluation

Evaluation means assessing dynamics, quality, and quantity of activities, as well as harmonisation of activities with the Strategic plan, i.e., annual action plans. Evaluation needs to be regular, and the communication department is in charge for its implementation and for drafting the mandatory evaluation report. Evaluation shall be carried out periodically in accordance with action plans, and at least each six months. An integral part of the evaluation process, i.e. the report, is the assessment of results based on result indicators derived largely from the monitoring results.

Methodological Approach of Evaluation

The last step in the implementation process of the communication strategy is evaluation, which relates back directly to the situation analysis, goal(s) and objectives of the program. The measures of performance must relate directly to the objectives of the campaign and use valid and reliable methods. Distinction must be made between output (communication products) and outcome (results and impact of actions taken).

There are many more relevant outcomes for public communication evaluation than just the usual categories of knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. Process evaluation can assess communication message distribution, placement and exposure. Outcome evaluation can assess knowledge/awareness, saliency, attitudes, norms, self-efficacy, behavioural intentions, behaviour, skills and environmental constraints. Outcomes particularly relevant to public will campaigns include media frames and policy change. Impact evaluation can capture the long-term outcomes of behaviour change and systems-level outcomes.

Some evaluation methods are uniquely suited for communications evaluation. Process evaluation uses newspaper, television and radio tracking, website monitoring, ad assessments, and case studies. Outcome evaluation uses direct response tracking, framing analysis, and rolling sample surveys. Impact evaluation uses experimental or quasi-experimental research designs⁶.

Before a campaign is launched, communication planners need to show their plans for evaluating the success of their campaign. Usually, research evaluating the campaign is done throughout the course of the campaign to catch any problems as early as possible. All messages must be copy-tested to ensure that they are understood and that they resonate with the audience. Copy-testing involves presenting audience members with the messages and creative executions before the campaign launches. This can be done by means of focus group discussions (qualitative research) and surveys (quantitative research).

⁶ Coffman, J. (2002, April). Public communication campaign evaluation: An environmental scan of challenges, criticisms, practice, and opportunities. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.

Then, communication staff need to survey the audience during the campaign to make sure that they are learning the message and that the message is having the desired outcome. Finally, when a campaign ends, it can be evaluated to see if it had the desired result and if it should be continued or if major changes should be made to the communication approach.

Process research assesses the communication process as it unfolds to ensure that the messages and the media connect with the target audience⁷. If there is a problem with a message or a medium during the course of a campaign, certain aspects can be tweaked to ensure that there is a good fit between the audience and the message.

Campaigns can be evaluated in a variety of ways that may include memory tests, persuasion or motivation tests, and inquiry tests that measure the number of responses to a campaign. In addition to testing the messages, campaign evaluation can assess media effectiveness and return on investment or ROI⁸.

In accordance with the Strategy's general approach, evaluation process will be transparent and available to the public in the annual communication action plan and implementation reports.

Monitoring

The process of monitoring is a multi-layered and on-going process based on a series of methodological approaches. This process will be carried out by the PA's communication department with the required know-how, infrastructure, and equipment. During the implementation of the strategy it is necessary to ensure same methodology in order to be able to compare data and make reliable evaluation.

Monitoring will follow a three-level dynamic:

1. Permanent,
2. Systematic, and,
3. Ad-hoc basis/as-needed monitoring level.

1. Permanent monitoring level: This level includes media monitoring. Media monitoring is performed daily and is based on a qualitative and quantitative approach. Daily monitoring reports contain basic analyses and the staff must be able (by keeping a data-base) to provide on-request data (qualitative, quantitative, periodic, success indicators, etc.).

Media to be monitored are:

- a) Print media (dailies and periodicals)
- b) Electronic media (relevant national and local TV and radio broadcasters)
- c) Online media (relevant information news sites)
- d) Social media

The communication departments will identify media coverage of PA's activities, initiatives and events will all identified clippings and recordings, as well as it will track the evolution of these topics' coverage at regular intervals.

⁷ Atkin, C. K. (Eds.) (2012). Public communication campaigns (4th ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

⁸ Okigbo, Charles (Ed.). (2014). Strategic urban health communication. Springer-Verlag New York.

On the basis of media monitoring activity, the communication department will analyse media coverage both quantitatively and qualitatively:

The **quantitative analysis** will assess the following facts:

- Number of clippings/recordings in a specific time period or on a specific topic
- Date of publication/broadcasting
- Source
- Media type
- Audience reach and geographical outreach
- Overall visibility of the institution
- Persons covered and their visibility
- Take-up, use of quotes and extracts from press releases and speeches

The **qualitative analysis** will assess the following aspects:

- Content of the coverage
- Journalistic style (news, commentary, feature, etc.)
- Tone of analysis (positive, neutral, negative coverage)
- Penetration of messages within the report
- What makes the news (the PA, other stakeholders, etc.)
- Mentioning of opinion leaders
- Trends over time and key changes
- Prognosis of the coverage tendency

Social media monitoring is analysing, understanding and responding to conversations about the PA's services, reputation and end-user opinions in the Social Web. Monitoring the social media landscape before, during and after any social media activity is a vital for the implementation of the communication strategy.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be elaborated to measure the communication strategy's awareness-raising achievements and impact, so that its activities can be improved, dependent on how well they work and however effective they are in reaching out to target audiences. The operating basis of the KPIs shall be a combination of "practical" and "impact" indicators, as follows:

Practical indicators of achievement, could include criteria such as:

- **Target audience satisfaction:** was the delivery of all awareness-raising activities deemed satisfactory by the intended target audience?
- **Stakeholder/participant satisfaction:** were stakeholders/participants satisfied with the activities? If evaluation is carried out at an event, it is important to build it into the timetable and explain the importance of providing feedback. This can also be used as a means of finding new and alternative activities that event participants/stakeholders want/need.

Impact indicators of achievement, could include criteria such as:

- Evidence of higher levels of awareness and interest among opinion-makers
- Improvement of PA's image amongst key target audiences
- Indication of greater interest and knowledge generated amongst key opinion-makers regarding the concepts, benefits and consequences of the PA's services
- There is greater and more positive activity on social media platforms
- Key target audiences and stakeholders are more positively engaged

- More media coverage and positive reporting
- Public debate around antidiscrimination is more developed, dynamic and better informed.

2. Systematic level: Monitoring at the systematic level (defined in annual action plans) must take place in previously determined time periods (milestones) and must include a multi-level methodology. This approach should ideally be based on:

- a. Survey on a relevant population sample (quantitative research);
- b. Semi-structured interviews of representatives of institutions/stakeholders relevant to anti-discrimination; ideally the establishment of one or more “panel” samples – representatives of most important target audiences.
- c. Focus Groups discussions with relevant target audiences (with a special emphasis on strategic target audiences and those defined in the action plans).

Measurement

It is of utmost importance that the effectiveness of new and existing communication activities is empirically measured. Going forward, any communication activity should be accompanied by a sound methodological design for measuring their effectiveness. More specifically, they should include control groups, sound research design, randomly selected samples, and other features of scientific quantitative and qualitative research.

It is also important that the measurement of the success rate is continuously measured and shared widely. This will lead to improvements in designing and implementing communication activities over time. Finally, it is also important that staff dealing with communication is exposed to best practices globally, to enable them to improve and find more effective communication mechanisms.

Risk and crisis communication

Crisis is an event that occurs suddenly, often unexpectedly, and demands a quick response both in the area of dealing with the unwanted circumstances, and also in communication. Crisis interferes with regular routines and creates uncertainty and stress. Organizations prepare for crisis by identifying possible risks in advance, preventing them from happening in real life, but in case if the crisis happens, be ready to deal with it, as well as organize appropriate, timely and accurate communication about it.

There are natural crisis, such as natural disasters that interfere with the work, but most crisis situations in public organizations are man-made – they are a result of mistakes made by people. Reputation of the organization is affected by any crisis, therefore organizations are ready to manage crisis situations, and it includes preparing to provide information to the public. The organizations have plans for dealing with crisis situations, where risk factors are identified, as well as there is a crisis communications plan that can be implemented, should the emergency happens.

Types of risks that the PA prepares for are: risks connected to complaints, human rights violations, discrimination cases, failure of the organization to handle the case, public opposition, criticism, court procedures towards the PA's work and others.

Before crisis: risk communication

Organizations maintain trustworthy relationships with the media and audiences at all times by providing credible information and involving them into daily activities. It helps building regular working relationship as well as helps in case should the problems occur. Crisis manager (if needed, also separate crisis communication manager) is selected. The main tasks of the crisis manager are to form crisis management team and collect information on the risks and potentially troublesome issues. Afterwards this information is evaluated and communication plan developed for (1) preventing the situation from happening, and (2) dealing with the circumstances, if the situation is unavoidable.

For risk and crisis communication, a spokesperson (or several) are selected and trained. The spokesperson is trained and equipped with the narratives and messages prepared exclusively for the crisis situation. All the crisis team members are involved in working out communication plan, and all are aware of its contents. Regular meetings are held to refresh the information on the crisis plan.

During crisis: public communication

The organization is prepared and ready to be the first to announce the crisis to the media and other relevant audiences by issuing a statement, or making oral statement. If needed, telephone line is allocated for people / media to call. At first, the factual information is released, no blame is assumed or sought in others. It is important to demonstrate that the organization is dealing with the situation by stating the confirmed

facts without commenting speculations or rumors. “The investigation is ongoing” is often the best standard response in the early stage of crisis.

In the meantime, information should be gathered constantly, so that regular updates to the media can be provided with substantial new facts and evidence. If needed, the head of the organization is involved in making public statements – it increases credibility and shows that the organization is treating the situation with utmost seriousness. Any official’s appearance in front of the media or target audience should be calm, avoiding extra emotions.

Internal audience is also informed about the developments during crisis, as employees can also serve as a source of information to the media (especially if the information is not provided by the management). Employee testimonies can lead to information leaks and rumors.

If the crisis involves the scene on the location, arrange media access to the site. Use press pool, if the space is small, and to control the access. Always keep up the contact with the press and return the calls from all callers, especially the media. Openness and responsiveness during crisis enhances your respect and credibility with the media, which helps the organization in the long term.

After crisis: evaluation and upgrading plans

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the plan and implementation takes place, during which the problems are identified. The plan is adjusted according to the lessons learned to avoid the problems in the future. The opportunity is used for identifying new possible risk situations.

Internal communication

Internal communication within the organization has a direct impact on public communication. Coordination internally among officers in the departments within the organization is vital for communication with the audiences outside the organization. The deadlines for public communication work are usually tight and there is too little time for everything, therefore ensuring that the “microclimate” is positive within the organization not only makes it a friendlier place for employees, but also helps speeding up communication among employees and getting better results.

The task of the internal communication is to encourage trust among employees by informing them about the unique role of their contributions towards achieving the common goals. Creating a loyal and responsible team as well as teamwork spirit helps the organization to sustain employees for longer period, therefore investments into employee continuous education and professional development is supported. Well-established internal communication can contribute to merit-based career growth of employees, thus minimizing employee change.

Internal communication should ensure that employees are regularly informed about the goals, results of the management, as well as any anticipated changes in the plans or personnel. Good practice is to involve employees into decision making as well as expressing feedback about the overall operations of the organization. Employees should be aware about the connection between their own wellbeing (for instance, their remuneration) and the results of the organization.

Regular meetings and timely information sharing, internal newsletter or intranet for employees, joint motivational events, and employee involvement in key public communication events are ways to contribute to successful internal communication. Internal communication is a joint effort by human resources and public relations departments. Regular internal communication audit is performed.

Conclusion

Communication strategy is a good starting point for responsible practice in public communication by an organization. It is the guiding document that serves as an impetus, an inspiration for day-to-day communication activities at the PA. It is up to the communicators and employees of both institutions to bring this strategy to life. The strategy provides wide variety of ideas, tools and mechanisms for ensuring good practice in public communication, but it is no good without the active every day activity in implementing it. It requires good will, human resources, some skill and motivation to do it.

The strategy is drafted in order to make sure that the people of Albania are well aware about the issues of human rights protection and antidiscrimination, as well as know where to turn in case they or people around them are mistreated by public or private institutions. It is intended as a guiding document primarily for people working with public communication in the PA, but also for other employees of the both institutions so that they can maximize their contribution to public communication work.

Hopefully this strategy will give many good ideas as well as practical tools for making communications work easier, more enjoyable and more impactful and as a result the awareness about human rights protection and antidiscrimination will increase, people's attitudes and opinions will become more understanding and supportive towards the victims of discrimination, and less tolerant towards those, who are using the position of power to discriminate.

Overall vision of this strategy is to achieve the society that values the principles of equality, equal opportunities and possibilities, and that the PA is the champion in the field of equality promotion by further enhancing the understanding of human rights protection and antidiscrimination in the society.

Ensuring that every Albanian resident can achieve their full potential in contributing to their own personal goals, as well as to the society can be done only in the society that has respect for universal human rights and every individual's right to choose their way of life. The authors of the strategy sincerely hope that this communication strategy is one step closer to this dream.

###

Appendixes:

Strategic communication planning matrix

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION PLANNING MATRIX			
Strategic goal:	<i>Goal from the organizational strategy.</i>	Communication goal:	<i>Goal from Communication strategy.</i>
Target audience:	<i>Target audience from Communications strategy.</i>	Partners:	<i>Partners from Communications strategy.</i>
Problematic behavior:	<i>Define, what the target audience is not doing right.</i>	Ideal behavior:	<i>Define, what would be the ideal behavior of the target audience</i>
Narrative:	<i>Narrative from Communication strategy that applies.</i>	Message/s:	<i>Messages from the Communication strategy, and newly formulated messages.</i>
Channels:	<i>Which channels will be used for communication?</i>	Activities:	<i>What activities are planned?</i>
Spokespersons:	<i>Who will serve as main spokespersons?</i>	Instruments:	<i>What communications instruments from the Communication strategy will be used?</i>
Time frame:	<i>When the activities will take place?</i>	Evaluation:	<i>How the success will be measured?</i>

Tactic communication planning matrix

TACTIC COMMUNICATION PLANNING MATRIX (COMMUNICATION PLAN)						
Communication goal	Activity	Time period	Target group	Instruments	Channels	Metrics

Message crafting matrix

MESSAGE CRAFTING MATRIX			
Main message			
Audience one	Audience two	Audience three	
Messages	Messages	Messages	

Do's and Don'ts in dealing with the media⁹

Do's	Don'ts
<p>Do tell the truth – ALWAYS.</p> <p>Do be honest and accurate. Your credibility and reputation depend on it.</p> <p>Do admit it if you don't know the answer to a question. Offer to get the answer, and do so as quickly as you can.</p> <p>Do correct mistakes immediately. State that you didn't give an adequate answer, and you would like to clear up the confusion.</p> <p>Do avoid using jargon. Speak in plain language.</p> <p>Do assume that everything you say is on the record.</p> <p>Do be as open with the media as possible.</p> <p>Do call reporters if a story appears that is inaccurate. Politely point out what was wrong and substantiate it.</p> <p>Do keep a list of accomplishments. Update it frequently.</p> <p>Do always return phone calls, or have someone return the calls, in time for reporters to meet deadlines.</p> <p>Do try to get the information reporters want even if it means an extra effort.</p> <p>Do have a sense of humor.</p>	<p>Don't lie – EVER.</p> <p>Don't say " No Comment" – EVER.</p> <p>Don't improvise, don't speculate, and don't guess. Good reporters check facts, if you are wrong, your credibility will be destroyed.</p> <p>Don't try to put a comment "off the record" after you have said it.</p> <p>Don't be unresponsive.</p> <p>Don't make news until you have in hand the information to go with it.</p> <p>Don't make an announcement and then later prepare a press release and fact sheets. If you have the material prepared for a press conference, you can spend your time after an announcement explaining it to the press.</p> <p>Don't cover up. If you lie or cover up, you lose your credibility.</p> <p>Don't avoid reporters' phone calls.</p>

⁹ Adapted from: Marguerite Sullivan, *A Responsible Press Office: An Insider's Guide*.

Interview preparation guide: before, during and after¹⁰

Before the interview:

- What is the topic or news angle of the interview?
- What was the impetus for the story?
- Which publication—or TV or radio station—wants to do the interview?
- Who will the interviewer be?
- When and where do they want the interview?
- What is the story deadline?
- When will the interview be published or broadcast on air?
- What kind of a story is it? A news story? A profile story? A feature? A question-and-answer-format?
- Is anyone else being interviewed for the story?
- What are the characteristics of the media outlet and the reporter?
- Has the outlet an apparent point of view on the subject?
- Has the reporter done anything on the topic in the past?
- How friendly or antagonistic the reporter is?
- What the audience of the news outlet is?
- Will it be live broadcast?
- Will the interview be conducted in a studio, by phone, in the office, other location?
- Is the interview being taped for uncut editing or is it being taped for excerpting?
- Will the broadcast include call-ins or e-mails from viewers, listeners or an on-line audience?
- How long will the interview last? What is the show's format? A Panel? One guest? Two guests? More guests?
- If there are other guests, what will be the speaking order?
- Will it be before an audience? How the audience will be selected?
- Is there an opportunity to preview the material?
- In which section it will appear?
- Will a photographer accompany the reporter and take pictures?
- Will photos be taken before, during or after the interview? Can I provide visual materials?

Preparation stage

- What three points for the interview I would like to make?
- For each point, write down supporting information – examples, stories, anecdotes.
- Write down the questions you think will be asked during the interview and the responses you think should be given.
- Review latest news, it will help you prepare.
- What is the most controversial issue that could be raised and the most delicate topic that could be addressed?
- What would be the hardest question and why?
- Think of “sound bite” – a short, pithy, statement regarding a larger issue that appears to be spontaneous but in most cases is pre-prepared. Repeat it in the story several times.
- Decide whether you will tape the interview in addition to the reporter.
- Practice answering possible questions.
- Arrange a quick update on hot issues just before the interview.
- Provide the reporter in advance with information that might be helpful in covering the issue.
- Suggest questions/topics to the journalist.

During the interview:

- Make the interview yours. Control it.
- Establish ground rules (contract).
- Be concise. Do not bury important points in long answers with too many details.
- Speak in short, clear, declarative sentences.
- Speak in sound bites.

¹⁰ Adapted from: Marguerite Sullivan, *A Responsible Press Office: An Insider's Guide*

- Stay on message and return to the three key points frequently during the interview. Relate q's back to them.
- State your conclusions and most quotable lines first to get your main points across, then back them up with facts.
- Use positive, descriptive word images that people can understand.
- Give proof. Use facts, statistics, examples, anecdotes, quotes, and stories. "Big as a pick-up truck".
- Never say "no comment". Avoid in other ways.
- Don't use jargon or professional jargon.
- Be clear, don't leave room for interpretation.
- Always tell the truth. If you do not know the answer, say so. Get back with the answer later.
- Avoid using too many numbers, they bypass the audience. Round them up.

After the interview:

- If you promised additional information to the reporter, follow up immediately.
- Debrief the PAO or your boss.
- Evaluate the interview.
- Update your media list with new contacts.
- File the news clipping or tape from the interview.

Guide on writing press releases¹¹

Inverted Pyramid

In the inverted-pyramid structure, information following the lead expands or develops the point that is made in the lead.



Hourglass

It begins, in a similar fashion, with the most important information – but after a few paragraphs it takes a turn and becomes a narrative, usually told in chronological order.

Diamond

Begins with an anecdote, introducing a character whose experience illustrates what the story is all about. This small story would then broaden out to show its wider significance. Toward the end, the reporter would return to the individual character's story as a way of concluding the narrative.

¹¹ Adapted from: Deborah Potter, *Handbook of Independent Journalism*

Social media landscape in Albania

Recent data from January 2017 indicates that there are 1.5 million (penetration 52%) active social media users, while out of 4.75 million mobile subscriptions (penetration vs. pop 163%) there are 1.3 million (penetration 45%) active mobile social users.¹²

While the rate of mobile subscriptions has reportedly fell at a rate of -5% since January 2016, the number of active social media users is growing up to the tune of +15% and the active mobile social users +18% for the same period of time (Ibid).

Share of web traffic by device¹³:

Device	Share of web traffic	Year-on-Year change
Laptops and desktops	48%	- 13%
Mobile phones	49%	+ 19%
Tablet devices	3%	- 21%
Other devices	0.03%	+ 200%

Social Media Landscape in Albania

As of June 30th, 2017, according to data published by the International Telecommunication Union as quoted by Internet World Stats, 66.4% of Albanians have access to the Internet, making up for a total of 1,932,024 Internet users¹⁴ out of 2.91 million inhabitants living currently in the country.

A. Social Networks

Facebook is currently the most popular social network in Albania with a total of 1,500,000 monthly active users as of June 30th, 2017 and 48.1% penetration rate.¹⁵

Social Media Stats in Albania November 2017 ¹⁶	
Facebook	86.34%
Instagram	4.21%
YouTube	3.33%
Pinterest	2.63%
Twitter	1.64%
reddit	0.9%

The percentage of Facebook profiles declaring as female is 36%, while those declaring as male is 64%¹⁷. Facebook male users are almost two times more than females, a gender divide already confirmed by other studies (Londo, 2015), documenting the masculine nature of the Albanian society.¹⁸

Albanian Facebook-mania is a distinguished trait for most of the young population with 87% of users accessing it via mobile, and 53% of them using the famous social network each day (Simon, 2017).

¹² Kemp, Simon. (March 2017). "Digital in 2017: Albania. A snapshot of the country's key digital statistical indicators." We are social and Hootsuite. Available at: < <http://bit.ly/GD2017GR>>, accessed on 16/12/2017.

¹³ StatCounter at <<http://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/albania>>, accessed on 16/12/2017

¹⁴ Internet World Stats at <<http://www.internetworldstats.com/europa2.htm>>, accessed on 16/12/2017

¹⁵ Ibid. (1).

¹⁶ Ibid. (3).

¹⁷ Extrapolation of Facebook data, January 2007. Available at: facebook.com

¹⁸ Londo, Ilda. (2015). "Internet development and social media in Albania." Albanian Media Institute. Available at: <<http://bit.ly/2Bvnhou>>, accessed on 16/12/2017, pg. 17.

Approximately, 980,000 users, or, almost 73% of the total number of Albanian Facebook users, fall within 18-34-years-old age group, indicating the sheer digital divide between the young generation and older population (Londo, 2015, pg. 18).

The most popular Facebook pages are those of movie actors, politicians, media, fashion, entertainment pages and also some pages of IT companies (Ibid.).

B. Content-sharing Platforms

The most outstanding platforms of exchanging content generated by the users or professional media are those of photo-sharing and video-sharing, more specifically Instagram and YouTube.

The next most popular social network after Facebook, the photo-sharing platform of Instagram is used most frequently by younger age-groups and well-known artists or showbiz personalities.

After Instagram, the most used social media in Albania is YouTube. The prevailing content in Albania in YouTube includes content created and delivered by professional media, such as the TV channels of Klan TV and Top Channel TV. TV Top Channel in YouTube has the highest number of subscribers reaching 337,310 and 495,836,129 total uploaded video views, followed by Klan TV channel, with 255298 subscribers and 389,984,287 video views.¹⁹

Twitter usage, the platform for micro-blogging, remains yet limited. The most popular institutional Twitter accounts are those of the Prime Minister Edi Rama with 321,973 followers and the Mayor of Tirana Erion Veliaj with 149,603 followers.²⁰

C. Albanian Blogosphere

The majority of Albanian blogs are most commonly created and hosted by “Wordpress” and “Blogspot” platforms. According to Alexa at the beginning of 2015 the Blogspot web site was ranked 41st among the most visited web sites by Albanians, which shows that this platform is being widely used by Albanian bloggers. Wordpress on the other hand is ranked 54th but is growing rapidly, especially after launching its platform in Albanian language (Londo, 2015). Some of the most well known blogs in Albania have been set up by journalists and media analysts, who are using their blogs as a meeting point with their fans and the rest of the audience. Most of the readers’ comments go for the media analysis, opinions and articles of op-ed style.

D. Wiki platforms

The category of websites with user generated content also includes the collaboration projects, which apply file sharing method and enable the users not only to share the content with the others, but also provide everyone with the possibility to assist in editing or complementing the published material. Albanians’ mostly-used Wiki platform is Wikipedia. For nearly a decade in Wikipedia there is a space in Albanian language. Until December 17th, 2017 a total of 70,835 articles in Albanian were published in this space.

In relation to the contributors in Albanian language Wikipedia notes:

“The Wikipedia community in Albanian language consists of 98,607 registered users, and 292 of them have contributed at least with one editing during the last month, while

¹⁹ Social Bakers at < <https://www.socialbakers.com/statistics/youtube/channels/albania/>>, accessed on 16/12/2017

²⁰ Ibid.

10 of them enjoy the privilege of the administrator. The users are part of an association where all the members coordinate their actions to improve the articles often by consulting in the convention, discussing with one another but also by cooperating in various projects."²¹

²¹ Available at: <http://sq.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faqja_kryesore>, accessed on 17/12/2017

Albanian media lists

Television Broadcasting

Nr.	Television Channel	Format/Coverage
1.	RTSH 1 (Albanian Public Service Broadcaster)	Generalist/National
2.	RTSH 2	Generalist/National
3.	RTSH 3	Generalist/National
4.	Top Channel	Generalist/National
5.	TV Klan	Generalist/National
6.	Vizion Plus	Generalist/National
7.	News 24	All-News/Regional
8.	Ora News	All-News/Regional
9.	ABC News	All-News/Local
10.	Report TV	All-News/Local
11.	UTV News	All-News/Local
12.	Fax News	All-News/Local
13.	Scan TV	Economy/Local
14.	Klan+	All-News/Local
15.	INtv	Generalist/Local
16.	TV Koha	Generalist/Local
17.	Channel One	Generalist/Local

Nr.	DVB-T2/S2 Multi-channel providers
1.	RTSH Digital
2.	DigitAlb
3.	Tring
4.	SuperSport Albania
5.	ADTN

Radio Broadcasting

Nr.	Radio Station
1.	88.00 – City Radio
2.	89.00 – New Planet Radio
3.	89.30 – Radio Kontakt
4.	92.90 – Radio Klan
5.	93.60 – Radio Nacional
6.	95.80 – Radio Tirana 2
7.	96.10 – Radio DJ
8.	96.40 – Radio Spektrum
9.	96.70 – Radio Ora News
10.	97.00 – Radio RASH
11.	99.50 – Radio Tirana 1
12.	100.00 – Top Albania Radio
13.	100.40 – Club FM
14.	101.60 – Radio +2
15.	103.10 – MCN Radio
16.	104.60 – Radio Travel
17.	105.00 – ABC News Radio
18.	105.70 – IN Radio
19.	106.60 – Radio NRG
20.	108.00 – Radio Scan

Print Dailies

Nr.	Title
1.	Panorama
2.	Gazeta Shqiptare
3.	Tema
4.	Shqiptarja.com
5.	Shekulli
6.	Telegraf
7.	Ballkan
8.	Koha Jonë
9.	AFP – Albanian Free Press
10.	Sot
11.	Tirana Observer
12.	Standard
13.	Gazeta “55”
14.	Albanian Daily News (in English)
15.	Tirana Times (in English)

Print Weeklies

Nr.	Title
1.	Monitor
2.	Psikologjia

News Sites

Nr.	Title	URL
1.	27.al	http://27.al/
2.	360 Grade.al	http://www.360grade.al/
3.	Albeu.com	http://www.albeu.com/
4.	Arbëria News	http://www.arberianews.com/
5.	ATSH	http://www.ata.gov.al/
6.	BalkanWeb	http://www.balkanweb.com/
7.	BIRN Albania	http://birn.eu.com/en/network/birn-albania-home
8.	Boldnews.al	http://www.boldnews.al/
9.	Citynews	http://www.citynews.al/
10.	Civitas Online	http://www.civitas.al/
11.	Dita	http://www.gazetadita.al/
12.	Dritare.net	http://www.dritare.net/
13.	Droni.al	http://www.droni.al/
14.	Durrës Lajm	http://durrelajm.com/
15.	Ekspres	http://www.ekspres.al/
16.	ElbasaniPlus.com	http://www.elbasaniplus.com/
17.	Gazeta Express	http://www.gazetaexpress.com/
18.	Gazeta Idea	http://www.gazetaidea.com/
19.	Gazeta Start	http://www.gazetastart.com
20.	Hashtag Albania	http://www.hashtagalbania.com/
21.	Historia Ime	http://historia-ime.com/
22.	Ikub.al	http://www.ikub.al/Default.aspx
23.	Illyria Newspaper	http://illyriapress.com/
24.	InfoAlbania	http://infoalbania.al/

25.	InfoPasqyra	http://www.infopasqyra.com/
26.	Java News	http://www.javanews.al/
27.	Koha Jonë	http://www.kohajone.com/
28.	Lajmi i Fundit	http://lajmifundit.al/
29.	Lapsi.al	http://www.lapsi.al/
30.	Lexo.al	http://lexo.al/
31.	Mapo	http://www.mapo.al/
32.	Monitor	http://www.monitor.al/
33.	Newsbomb.al	http://www.newsbomb.al/
34.	NOA	http://www.noa.al/
35.	Opozita.com	http://opozita.com/
36.	Pamfleti	http://pamfleti.com/
37.	Panorama	http://www.panorama.com.al/
38.	Pasqyrë.al	http://pasqyre.al/
39.	Reporter.al	http://www.reporter.al/
40.	Reporteri.net	http://www.reporteri.net/
41.	Revista Saras	http://revistasaras.al/
42.	Rilindja Demokratike	http://www.rilindjademokratike.com/
43.	Shekulli	http://www.shekulli.com.al/
44.	ShkodraOnline.com	http://www.shkodraonline.com/
45.	Shqip	http://www.gazeta-shqip.com/
46.	Shqipëria Ime	http://shqiperiaime.al/
47.	Shqipëria.com	https://www.shqiperia.com/
48.	Shqiptarja.Com	http://shqiptarja.com/
49.	Shtypi.net	http://shtypi.net/
50.	Sot.com.al	http://www.sot.com.al/
51.	Spektrum	http://www.spektrum.al/
52.	Standard	http://www.standard.al/
53.	Syri.net	http://www.syri.net/
54.	Te Sheshi	http://tesheshi.com/
55.	Telegraf	http://telegraf.al/
56.	Tema	http://www.gazetatema.net/web/
57.	Tirana Observer	http://www.tiranaobserver.al/
58.	Zëri i Popullit	http://www.zeri-popullit.com/
59.	Skandal.al	http://skandal.al/
60.	Korça News	http://korcanews.al/
61.	Zathur	http://zathur.net/
62.	Alb-Info	https://alb-info.com/
63.	Politiko.al	http://politiko.al/web/
64.	Tirananeews.al	http://tirananeews.al/
65.	Tirana Post	http://tiranapost.al/
66.	Konica.al	http://konica.al/