



#europcom
cor.europa.eu/europcom.go



Campaigning for Europe

8 & 9/11/2018, Brussels

(18) Ideas Lab: Why should I care about the EU?

9 November, Ledra Street

Lab leaders: Davide Baruzzi, Lucia Baruzzi and Barbara Wieliczko, Horizon 2020 PERCEIVE Project

Facilitators: Ian Andersen and Susanne Nebert, Art of Hosting Team, European Commission

One aspect of PERCEIVE Project's research is relevance-based communication, focused on adjusting communication strategies in the era of communities. We live in a world of big data and extreme market segmentation, where relevance to one's audience is more important than ever. Each theme, keyword and interest group has different reasons to care about content. This is why communication strategies need to take different interest factors into account. This is a challenge for the EU, because it has developed its communication strategy based on targets for broad categories (e.g. the general public or young people). These categories are becoming increasingly obsolete. So what can be done to help EU-funded projects better identify their target audiences and develop their communication actions accordingly? This is what the "Why should I care about Europe?" ideas lab aimed to find out.

The ideas lab was structured as a simulation workshop using a relevance-based approach to developing communication strategies. The group, of approximately 20 participants, was split into five tables, and asked to identify the primary and secondary communication target audiences of a sample project. They then worked on what actions to take to reach out to them, and what message to convey. The first part of the activity was very engaging for the participants, who were quick to identify ways they could identify their target audiences. What proved more challenging was the part of the exercise where groups swapped target audiences and had to devise communication strategies from scratch. Ultimately, all groups were able to do so, and the activity concluded with each group presenting their "pitch".

One of the coordinators for the activity said that they were particularly interested in finding out to what extent the European dimension of the projects was reflected in each group's communication strategy. How and to what extent would the European values the projects were based on be reflected in the participants' pitches? Only one of the groups mentioned European values as part of their presentation, with the rest focusing on the project itself and the beneficiaries. This was something the coordinator raised with the participants at the end of the session, and most of the groups agreed that they had not considered the European dimension of their project in developing their strategy.



Most participants said devising a target-based approach to communicating about the projects was challenging and rewarding, and that they felt the activity had given them a better understanding of the challenges of promoting EU projects on the ground.

<https://www.perceiveproject.eu/>

The recommendation of the Ideas Lab: **EU authorities at local level should include Europe-branding in all their communication. Not just 'projects' but 'EU-projects'.**

