

THE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ADMINIS- TRATION IN ROMANIA

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to clarify the notions regarding the Presidential Administration in Romania. We shall try to emphasize the difference between the political communication and the public communication of the Presidential Administration. Along with the two objectives that have already been mentioned, we shall also attempt to make a presentation of the Communication Department of the Presidential Administration, as well as of the means through which the President expresses his/her ideas.

Keywords: Presidential Administration, institution of the President, presidential communication, public communication, political communication.

1. Introduction

The main ideas underlying the study refer to the president and to everything that, from the administrative point of view, is related to this state position. By carrying out the content analysis of numerous press articles, TV and radio shows, live broadcast press conferences, news releases (issued by the President of Romania and by his spokespersons), we have reached the conclusion that, in the collective mentality, there is a severe confusion made between the president's administrative communication and the so-called political communication, which, from some persons' point of view, is used by the president instead of the administrative one. From our point of view, there is a clear distinction between the two notions; there are also huge differences between the presidential communication of administrative type and the political communication of a politician, be him/her a candidate for the position of president in the rule of law. We also consider that the work of a president of a Republic is an administrative one, but, most of the times, it is mistaken for the political one. This work of administrative type, carried out by the president based on his prerogatives, has to be popularized through a form of public communication, namely through the presidential communication. Consequently, it is highly important what the president does during his mandate, but the way in which the population is informed about his work is just as important.

These issues awaken the researcher's interest also because the Romanian language allows certain nonverbal associations and public behaviors that can often induce a too high proximity between public presidential communication and political communication. From our point of view, along with the aforementioned arguments, we consider the presidential communication in Romania to be extremely interesting to study for three main reasons:

1. Based on the constitutional prerogatives, the Romanian President is not allowed to be part of any political party, hence his/her form of communication must be public presidential, not political (Constitution of Romania, title III, chapter II, Article 84, paragraph 1).
2. According to article 80, paragraph 2, from the Constitution of Romania, the President 'shall act as a mediator' (Constitution of Romania, title III, chapter II, Article 80, paragraph 2). Consequently, he/she must mediate between the political parties as well, so he/she is not allowed to be politically biased, and this can be achieved by using public presidential communication, which does not contain political ideological-doctrinal elements.
3. The public perception is not very clear when it comes to the prerogatives of the President of Romania and the type of communication that he/she uses.

Our scientific endeavor is based on the two issues written in the Constitution of Romania, namely that the President is not allowed to be a member of a political party and that he/she should be a mediator. On the basis of these constitutional elements, we assume that the President's form of communication has certain limitations and

that the presidential form of communication should be public and not otherwise. In the practical part of this article, we want to look at this very aspect, whether in Romania the presidential communication is public and whether there are, to a lesser or greater extent, recognizable elements of political communication within the presidential communication.

We are aware that there is a descriptive and operational limit between political communication and the presidential one of administrative type, which is why we will try to define these concepts in the next section. These limits are given, as we have previously stated, by the prerogatives of the president and the way they are exercised, but there are several other factors which may sustain the perception confusion between the two forms of communication. Another factor that needs to be considered is the personality structure of each president, the structure that can give two types of behavior: one strictly within the law and another, wider, within the spirit of the law. The ideological-doctrinal component of the discourse of every president also plays a fundamental role. A president strongly rooted in a party ideology (especially if he/she has been the leader of that party) will use more political anchors in his/her presidential communication or symbolic political patterns in the positions he/she adopts, this mechanism occurring most often unconsciously, all contributing to a more difficult differentiation, by a simple observer, of the two forms of communication. Finally, another parameter that we must take into account and which makes it difficult to differentiate between the aforementioned forms of communication is related to the type of leader the president belongs to. A strong, involved leader, a player-like type of president will tend, more or less consciously, to seize a political component through public appearances, while a mediator-like president will tend to distance himself/herself, as much as possible, from the political component precisely not to be labeled as biased during various negotiations with each of the parliamentary parties. Nevertheless, there are, in our opinion, a number of fundamental characteristics of public administrative presidential communication, such as: the topics brought to discussion, national interests, the negotiation and mediation zone above party interests, organizational culture regarding the institution of the presidency, various symbolic state values, that can make a clear differentiation from the classical political communication.

Returning to presidency, we would like to mention that promoting his/her activity implies first of all a rigorous knowledge of this activity. This mechanism to promote the president's work comprises three types of elements: 1) the president's PR or Communication Department; 2) professionals employed in this department, for instance, the spokesperson; 3) techniques, instruments or means to promote the president's activity.

The purpose of this article is to emphasize the above-mentioned elements and, also, to clarify the difference between the president's political and public communication. We want to emphasize the fact that this article does not represent a political analysis of the president's situational behavior or a political analysis of the content

of the presidential messages, but rather a research on the presidential public communication. We also want to mention the fact that the data and materials underlying the research questions we attempted to answer were preponderantly gathered during January-April 2012 (President Băsescu) and January-April 2015 (President Iohannis).

2. Defining the notions related to the Presidential Administration

To better understand the difference between the political communication and the presidential communication it is absolutely necessary to define, as precisely as possible, the notions related to the presidential administration. First of all, we want to define the notion of 'President', as well as his/her roles in the rule of law. The Romanian Constitution, under the role of the president, stipulates as follows:

'(1) The President of Romania shall represent the Romanian State and is the safeguard of the national independence, unity and territorial integrity of the country.

(2) The President of Romania shall guard the observance of the Constitution and the proper functioning of the public authorities. To this effect, he shall act as a mediator between the Powers in the State, as well as between the State and society' (the Constitution of Romania, title III, chapter II, article 80, paragraphs 1 and 2).

In order to differentiate the presidential communication from the political one, the following paragraph from the Constitution, referring to incompatibilities and immunities, is eloquent as well:

'(1) During his/her term in office, the President of Romania may not be a member of any political party, nor may he perform any other public or private office' (the Constitution of Romania, title III, chapter II, article 84, paragraph 1).

The second notion we want to clarify here is the one of *public administration*. As follows, we shall present the perspectives of several specialists in what the definition of this concept is concerned.

- 'Public Administration is the production of goods and services designed to serve the needs of citizens-consumers' (Dimock *et al.*, 1983 *apud* Stillman, 2009, p. 2).
- 'Public administration may be defined as all processes, organizations, and individuals (the latter acting in official positions and roles) associated with carrying out laws and other rules adopted or issued by legislatures, executives, and courts' (Milakovich, 2006 *apud* Stillman, 2009, p. 3).

In Stillman's perspective (which refers to several definitions), public administration may be defined through the following parameters: '(1) the executive branch of government (yet it is related in important ways to the legislative and judicial branches); (2) the formulation and implementation of public policies; (3) the involvement in a considerable range of problems concerning human behavior and cooperative human effort; (4) a field that can be differentiated in several ways from private admin-

istration; (5) the production of public goods and services; and (6) rooted in the law as well as concerned with carrying out laws' (Stillman, 2009, p. 3). Waldo (1988) defines *public administration* as follows: 'Public Administration is the art and science of management as applied to the affairs of the state' (*apud* Mora and Țiclău, 2009, p. 16).

Apart from the above-mentioned notions, we shall continue by defining: communication, political communication and public communication. Another concept we shall use in this paper is that of *communication* and, consequently, we present its definition: 'In current use, the verb 'to communicate' usually refers to the action of transmitting a message about something to someone who is the receiver' (McQuail, 1999, p. 14).

Strongly connected to the concept of 'communication' is also the notion of 'political communication'. As follows, we shall present the definition given to it: 'Political communication represents the planned and sustained action meant to ensure the climate of willingness and understanding between the organization and the public' (Ghilezan, 2000, p. 97).

From our point of view, political communication, capable of determining the understanding between the political party or actor and the target groups, is given by an ideological-doctrinaire informational transfer and counter-transfer underlined by a political program. The most important characteristic of political communication is intentionality.

The last concept, the definition of which we considered necessary, is that of 'public communication'. From our point of view, public communication is a form of information spreading by the state institutions in order to notify the population about the events of public-interest and, also, to accomplish a liaison based on mutual understanding between state institutions and the citizens. Public communication may also be persuasive if state institutions want to persuade the citizens with regard to a certain situation, for instance the implementation of certain projects that faces a certain reluctance, fear, distrust or slowness from the citizens. Rogers and Storey (1987) gave a definition for communication campaigns; they considered that 'the purpose of a communication campaign is to generate specific effects, in a relatively large number of individuals, within a specified period of time, through a set of communication activities' (Rice and Atkin, 2001, p. 343).

As a conclusion that sustains our research, we want to present the opinion of Woodrow Wilson about the politics-administration dichotomy: 'The field of administration is a field of business. It is removed from the hurry and strife of politics; [...] It is a part of political life only as the methods of the counting-house are a part of the life of society; only as machinery is part of the manufactured product [...] administration lies outside the proper sphere of politics. Administrative questions are not political questions. Although politics sets the tasks for administration, it should not be suffered to manipulate its offices' (Wilson, 1887, pp. 209-210).

3. Standard PR instruments through which presidential communication is carried out

Presidential communication may also be analyzed through the means of extra-systemic PR used. Consequently, the purpose of presidential communication is for the President to promote his ideas and visions related to a certain matter, using standard PR means or techniques. As follows, we shall make a presentation of those standard techniques; afterwards, we shall verify whether the president's Department for Public Communication uses those instruments or not.

Public information are 'represented by the accounts on a client, a product or a service that appear during or in the area reserved for editorial content – news, reports or editorials – or for audiovisual programs' (Newsom *et al.*, 2003, p. 454). The same authors have the following vision referring to public information: 'Information gets to the mass media through several means, but there are three main methods: news releases, the presence of the press at an event and the interviews' (Newsom *et al.*, 2003, p. 479). It is also worth mentioning the fact that, from a standard point of view, any news release is sent to both the written press and the audiovisual. As method of transmitting information, the news release is an instrument 'through which a piece of information referring to the organization is sent with the purpose of reaching the public to which it is addressed' (Coman, 2000, p. 84).

According to the above-mentioned author, there are the following types of news releases: '1. Invitation news release; 2. Reminder news release; 3. Announcement news release; 4. Statistical news release; 5. Notification news release; 6. Political news release; 7. Official news release; 8. D'arrière plan news release; 9. News release to take a stand; 10. Errata; 11. Radio and TV news release; 12. Video news release' (Coman, 2000, pp. 86-93).

The press conference is another PR instrument through which the president's ideas may be spread to the collective mentality. It is a method which is carried out in two steps, having a total duration of one hour. Usually, these press conferences are shorter, under the form of briefings, other times they are even shorter, under the form of press statements. A very important aspect of the press conference is emphasized by the following aspect: the discourse delivered by the person speaking during the press conference on behalf of the organizers has to be thoroughly elaborated and he/she has to be prepared to face any questions addressed by the journalists.

The relationship with the mass media is another extremely important instrument, through which presidential communication may be improved. Referring to the press and the media, Sandra Oliver considers them to be an instrument to disseminate information, and, in relation to them, the following characteristics have to be used: 'increased credibility, messages transmitted as news and not as advertisements, press kits, seminars, annual reports, sponsorship, and lobby' (Oliver, 2009, p. 136). Another aspect of the work of the presidential administration refers to the strategies and plans applied. Regarding public communication, we agree with Michèle Jouve, who considers that: 'a communication policy implies differentiation from the competi-

tion' (Jouve, 2005, p. 274). With a communication policy well anchored into reality, through credible messages of general interest, a good public image may be built. The more difficult aspect related to the image of an official is not so much related to its construction, but rather to the maintaining of it, case in which the communication policies are extremely important in the attainment of this goal.

Different events represent instruments through which the population meets the officials. Participations in different events are associated with various types of sent messages and give the possibility to analyze the officials' unexposed behavior. The more important the position in the Romanian state, the greater the demand for a discourse during national interest events. Participation in different events, where the official also delivers a speech, may be followed by 'public appearances', especially if that official has a good public image, being supported by the present groups. The Internet represents another instrument through which a communication relationship may be carried out between a public institution and the citizens. The structure of the political actors' webpages, according to Klemens Joos and Alexander Bilgeri, can be divided into three sections: 'a. the left frame should contain the collection of links; b. the right frame should contain news; c. the central frame should contain editorial aspects (information, photos, structures, etc.)' (Altendorfer *et al.*, 2000, p. 303). Even if, from a constitutional standpoint, the President of the State is not allowed to politicize, he remains a political actor and a power factor that also needs this interactive instrument to create an interpersonal relationship with the citizens. Although the Internet targets mostly the young generation, it may also represent a very good source of information for anyone.

One final idea referring to the carrying out of a good flow of institutional communication refers to the fact that, together with the external PR department, the internal PR department is responsible for optimal systemic informational flow.

4. Methodology of research

First of all we want to present our research questions. The communication sciences consider that the presidential communication is a subdivision of public communication. Starting from this point of view and from the general definitions of political communication the fundamental research question that represents the milestone of our scientific endeavor has the following content: is there a fundamental difference between the political communication and the presidential one?

The first subordinate research question is: Are the Romanian citizens notified with regard to the president's activity by a department formed of professionals in the field of public communication or not?

The second subordinate research question is the following: Is the presidential communication in Romania more public or more political?

In order to answer the working research questions we analyzed mainly the current website of the Presidency (2012 and 2015), as well as many of the public appearances of the Romanian Presidents, Mr. Traian Băsescu and Mr. Klaus Iohannis, at different

radio and TV stations. As to the president's website, we used content analysis, both quantitative and qualitative. In what concerns the quantitative analysis, we used it to illustrate how the website of the Presidency is organized. We used the following parameters: the structure of the website with the number of components, the amount of information provided, the components of the Presidential Administration presented on the website, the name of each department, as well as the structure of the public communication department of the Presidential Administration with the name of each office. The qualitative analysis of the website tried to highlight the essential elements of finesse and the parameters taken into account were: the product placement of the items on the website, the colors that have been used, the website title, the banners, but also the description of the activities taking place in each office within the public communication department of the Presidential Administration.

With regard to the public positions adopted and the public appearances of the two Presidents (radio and TV shows), we used the observation method (especially in case of participation in different events) in addition to content analysis, in order to emphasize the extent to which there were ideological-doctrinaire or political elements when taking a stand or delivering speeches. The quantitative content analysis focused on the number of public appearances, whereas the qualitative one focused on the most powerful ideas and on the symbolic communication vectors used by the two presidents in the public appearances. We used the following parameters of the observational scale: the number of monthly public outputs of the President; the presence of public communication elements within each public appearance of the President throughout the analyzed period; the presence of political communication elements within each public appearance of the president throughout the analyzed period; the percentage ratio of political communication/public communication throughout the analyzed period.

Furthermore, we also paid attention to the answers the Presidents gave to the journalists' questions, either during press conferences or talk shows they participated in (Băsescu was more present), for clarifying if in those situations there were ideological, doctrinaire or political elements in the answers given by the two presidents or if those elements were not clearly expressed.

For a better understanding of the elements of public and political communication that have been analyzed, we would like to make the following clarifications:

1. By elements of public communication we refer to the following: a) a purely informative (politically neutral) language regarding the activity of the President (the President's personal language and releases about his activity); b) presentation of results, data or facts of administrative nature; c) expressions of positions regarding an external or internal event or situation; d) focus on an accurate information of citizens, equidistance in speech from any political elements (party, actor, political action).
2. By elements of political communication we understand the following: a) ideological-doctrinal elements; b) verbal or nonverbal expressions of a too high proxim-

ity to a political actor to the detriment of others such as: I have a primary partnership with..., I collaborate better with ..., I congratulate the government ... of a certain political affiliation; c) verbal attacks against certain parties or political actors other than the President's party of origin; d) lack of equidistance between praises/gratifications addressed to politicians or parties and reproaches to others political actors.

For the relevance of the data, we consider it is beneficial to compare President Traian Băsescu's public communication with that of President Klaus Iohannis. We thus chose an equal time span from the mandate of President Iohannis, namely 4 months (January-April 2015) and we used the same methods to analyze the data.

5. The Presidential Administration – structure and departments – 2012

Before presenting the structure of the Presidential Administration, we shall analyze the layout of the Romanian Presidency website. From the point of view of its construction, the Presidency's website home page complies with the three directions that have already been mentioned. The left frame – this sector includes the website's links, as follows: President, Romania, Romania's National Security Strategy, Presidential Administration, News Room (Press), the 'Cotroceni' Church – 330 years of history, Photo gallery, Links, Interactive. The middle frame – this sector contains links to: home page, search, archive, contact and site map. Furthermore, a press release of national interest is presented, plus a photo of the president. At the bottom of the page, there is a photo gallery of the president, as well as a 'Useful Information' section. The right frame – this section includes the president's latest news releases and is updated every day, while at the bottom of the frame there is a series of important links to the President's activity.

The banner of the website contains Romania's coat of arms, the title of the website – President of Romania, and on the left – the Romanian flag. The website can be accessed only in Romanian, even though there are two buttons to display the site in English and French, but the translated versions are not available. The predominant colors of the Presidency's website are white and blue, and a little bit of yellow.

We consider that the structure of the Presidency website is one from which one may easily obtain information referring to President's activities, and one that supports the presidential communication. As follows, we shall present the structure of the Presidential Administration as it results from this website. From the data obtained from the content analysis of the Romanian Presidency's website, one may see that, between January and April 2012, the Presidential Administration comprised the following departments: 'Department for National Security; Constitutional Legislative Department; Department for the Relation with Public Authorities and the Civil Society; Department for Political Planning and Analysis; Department for International Relations; Department for European Affairs; Department for Economic and Social Policies; Department for the Domestic and Foreign Business Environment; Depart-

ment for Public Health; Department for Education and Research; Department for National Minorities; Public Communication Department; Department for the Management of Resources; President's Chancery; Office for Protocol; Office for the Chancery of the Orders' (Presidential Administration website, 2012; Internet Archive of the Presidential Administration website).

As one may easily notice, the organizational structure of the Presidential Administration is made up of thirteen departments plus the president's Chancery, the Office for Protocol and the Office for the Chancery of the Orders. Helped by this structure, the entire activity of the president is made public by the Public Communication Department. The first subordinate research question previously formulated is testified by the name of this department, which is one of public communication not of political communication. It is just as important what this department does, not only its name. Consequently, we shall analyze the functioning of this department. Furthermore, the cases when the President took a stand can be seen by accessing the link for 'Press' from the left frame of the website. From our point of view, the content analysis of Press webpage contains only elements of presentation of the President, referring to his position of public official, and not distinct elements characteristic to political communication. As such, we shall analyze the Public Communication Department, as well as the 'Press' link.

6. Structure of the Public Communication Department of the Presidential Administration and its techniques to promote information – 2012

According to the website of the Presidential Administration, we want to make an analysis of the structure of its Public Communication Department, including its attributions, valid for January-April 2012 time span. We should mention that this information was also included in the Regulation for the organization and functioning of the Presidential Administration. 'The Public Communication Department is the structure within the Presidential Administration authorized to promote the standpoints of the President of Romania, to propose messages and to edit news releases, to evaluate the impact and the media-related context of the President's actions. Furthermore, the Public Communication Department takes the mass-media requests, issues press accreditations and manages the webpage of the institution. The Public Communication Department Coordinator is also the Romanian President's spokesperson. The PR Department comprises: The Office for the Evaluation of Communication; The Office for the Relationship with the Press, Events and Accreditations; The Office for Website Administration / Documentation / Library. The duties and tasks of each employee are established in the job description, approved by the head of the Public Communication Department' (Presidential Administration website, 2012; Internet Archive of the Presidential Administration website). The analysis of the Public Communication Department structure of the Presidential Administration shows that it comprises three offices, the activities of which focus on communication and PR. The analysis of this departmental structure within the Presidential Administration emphasizes that the

President can make use of a real communication mechanism through which he can address to the citizens. The actions carried out through the employees of the offices within the Public Communication Department of the Presidential Administration underline the fact that all these gears have to be served by professionals in the field of communication and PR. The targets aimed through these actions, as well as the effects at internal systemic level and at extra-systemic level developed by these sorts of actions have to be supported by professionals in this field.

As such, by analyzing the structure and the actions of the Public Communication Department of the Presidential Administration, we consider that PR is carried out by a department of professionals, who ensure the transfer of information from the President to the citizens and vice-versa. As to the optimization of the presidential communication, we believe that the improvement of the structure of the above-mentioned department would be welcomed, although, as the results show, the department is functional.

With regard to the instruments of the presidential public communication, there is a difference between the practical (January-April 2012 work) part and the presentation of these instruments on the website. From the instruments of the presidential public communication, we were able to notice that the following ones are used: speeches, allocutions, statements and press releases, and from the events the briefing ones or the press conferences are mostly preferred. The analysis of the website, however, offers us a slightly different image, i.e. the instruments through which the presidential public communication is carried out are the following: the agenda (of the president), news releases, press statements, speeches and interviews.

Our conclusions will rely on the analysis of the materials existing on the Presidential Administration website in the 'Press' section. We have noticed that most of the information is in the press releases section, as there are also releases referring to the President's press statements, speeches or interviews. Although the press releases are the most comprehensive, we have also analyzed the other instruments in order to be able to form opinions based on a rigorous approach.

7. Data analysis

The analysis of the instruments for presidential public communication was carried out, from January until April 2012 and from January until April 2015. As follows, we shall present several tables referring to a quantitative index of the instruments for presidential public communication in each of the four months for each President. Regarding the communication area, the presented activities of the two Presidents (Băsescu and Iohannis) are more or less the same, and we shall make their quantitative presentation as can be seen in Table 1.

As to the other PR instruments that can be found on the website of the Presidential Administration of the two presidents (Băsescu and Iohannis), the situation – from a quantitative perspective – during the above-mentioned four months is the following:

Table 1: Number of press releases per month

Month	President Bănescu – No. of press releases / month	President Iohannis – No. of press releases / month
January	29	29
February	26	23
March	31	44
April	23	35

Table 2: Number of other instruments per month

Month	Agenda / No. of events displayed on the website / month		Press statements – No. / month		Speeches – No. / month		Interviews – No. / month	
	Bănescu	Iohannis	Bănescu	Iohannis	Bănescu	Iohannis	Bănescu	Iohannis
January	3 announcements	20 announcements	7	6	5	9	0	0
February	7 announcements	16 announcements	3	9	2	7	0	0
March	4 announcements	19 announcements	3	5	5	7	0	0
April	7 announcements	8 announcements	0	5	1	2	0	0

As follows, we shall carry out a qualitative analysis of the news releases, referring to all events carried out during this four-month period. We shall try to emphasize to what extent – through these PR instruments – the presidential public communication is purely public or it also contains elements of political communication.

President Bănescu

• January

From the quantitative point of view, as Table 1 shows, on the website of the Presidential Administration there are 29 news releases. As we have previously mentioned, these releases also refer to the other instruments for public communication. Out of the 29 news releases, 26 contain only elements of public communication, while the other 3 contain other elements as well. In percentages, in January we have 89.6% standard (pure) public communication. Referring to the three above-mentioned press releases that, from our point of view, also contain elements of public communication, we want to make several specifications. The three press releases are:

1. The speech delivered by the President of Romania, Mr. Traian Bănescu, at the annual meeting of the Heads of Diplomatic Missions accredited in Romania, held on 01/19/2012 – where the President stated: ‘I shall continue to be an active partner of the Government’ (Press release, 01/19/2012). From our point of view, apart from public information, the President’s words also contain an implicit support of a political government.
2. During the ceremony where Mr. Cristian Diaconescu took the oath of office for the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs, on 01/24/2012 – the President declared: ‘One may notice a ‘cheerfulness’ regarding the destruction of political opponents; probably, the internationally-acknowledged success bothers many people, and I cannot ignore that Mr. Ion Iliescu’s message – who, neither more nor less, almost on the surgery table, transmitted that the acting President has

to be held responsible, given the fact that he has not yet been held responsible neither for the miners' movements nor for the victims of the Revolution. (...) Do you know what shocks me the most? The fact that the messages transmitted by Ion Iliescu, Victor Ponta, Crin Antonescu, the so-called leader of the 'civil society' – the former colonel Dogaru, are similar to those of the former President of the Republic of Moldova, the acting chief of the Communist Party in Moldova – Vladimir Voronin' (Press release, 01/24/2012). The President's words represent a verbal attack to certain politicians, which, from our point of view, surpasses the neutral information matrix of public communication, entering the area of political communication.

3. Press statement of the President of Romania, Mr. Traian Băsescu, on 01/25/2012 – the President states: 'The greatest problem of the population is what continues to happen; and I want to tell the Romanian people that I know what has to be done. Consequently, in partnership with the Government, we will have to open this horizon of a new country for the Romanians, and I believe that, among the most important things that have to be carried out, are the revision of the Constitution as pillar for making the State more flexible and as answer to the Romanian people's vote in the November 2009 referendum' (Press release, 01/25/2012).

Once again, the President's speech included the syntagm of 'partnership with the Government', which implies the Government's support, an aspect that – as we have previously mentioned – goes beyond the public communication area, inducing a mutual support between the President and the Government. From our point of view, through the manifestation of the partnership with the Government, the President exceeded his role of mediator, approaching too much to the Government.

- **February**

In what regards the month of February 2012, from a quantitative point of view, 26 press releases were issued. Out of these 26, three of them exceed, from our point of view, the public communication sphere. Regarding the presidential communication, in February we have a percentage of 88.46% standard (pure) public communication.

The three above-mentioned press releases, which, from our standpoint, exceed the public communication sphere, are the following:

1. The participation of the President of Romania, Mr. Traian Băsescu, in the anniversary conference 'Romania in the European Union. Five Years since its Entry' on 02/02/2012, when he stated: 'I would like to make some remarks: Prime-Minister Boc was, is and is going to be my partner in attempting to do what has to be done. We were both in the position to realize very well that the essence for Romania's modernization since 1990 until two or three years ago was the keeping of the institutions before 1989, on which we laid the European legislation' (Press release, 02/02/2012). This press release includes too the word 'partner', which induced an approach of the President to the Prime-Minister.
2. The oath of office ceremony of the members of the Romanian Government on 02/09/2012. In the press release, one may find the following statements made by

the President: 'And, if in a couple of days we probably find that Romania registered, in 2011, an economic growth of about 2.5% during a period of economic crisis, this is owed, mainly, to the Prime-Minister Emil Boc and his team, who, once again, I would like to thank. (...) I would like to point out the fact that Emil Boc's Government and his ministers undertook reforms that no government had the courage to assume during an economic growth. (...) I hereby conclude by thanking once again to Emil Boc's Government, by congratulating Ungureanu's Government and it is time I say it public now: the name of the future prime-minister has been long debated and known by me and by the former Prime-Minister of the Romanian Government, Mr. Emil Boc' (Press release, 02/09/2012). The President's speech also shows a much too big approach to the government led by Emil Boc, an aspect that exceeds the neutral pattern that the presidential public communication should follow.

3. The press statement delivered by the President of Romania, Mr. Traian Băsescu, on 02/13/2012, where the following statements have been noticed: 'I would like, first of all, to thank the militaries of the Gendarmerie, within the Ministry of National Defense and the Inspectorate for Emergency Situations, for their devotion and efficiency of their interventions. (...) I would also like to make a final remark. I have received a written request today and I received also a public request from President Ponta, and also the public written request of the President of Buzău County Council to establish the state of emergency. Furthermore, President Ponta has also mentioned they are willing to come in the Parliament to validate the issue of the decree to establish the state of emergency. I would like to make some remarks related to this aspect. I am aware of the fact that some are desperately trying to attract the President in political disputes. Unfortunately, I am neither available nor willing to enter disputes in a time when people are suffering. That is why I insist on mentioning what would mean if I answered to the request of President Ponta and of the President of Buzău County Council' (Press release, 02/13/2012). From our point of view, there is an antithesis between the gratifications brought by the President to public institutions and his positioning as to Mr. Ponta, an aspect that induces an approach of the President to the Ministry of Defense and a distance from the request of a politician from the opposition. This type of approach exceeds, from our point of view, the neutrality of public communication.

- **March**

As to the month of March, we would like to emphasize the fact that, from a quantitative point of view, there were 31 press releases drafted. Out of these, from our point of view, only one of them exceeds the public communication sphere, that is: the message of the Romanian President, Mr. Traian Băsescu, before the reunited Chambers of the Parliament, on 03/07/2012, where he supported the Government. The following paragraph stands as example: 'We all know, and I want to thank you for having accepted, at the cost of your votes, at the cost of the popularity of the parties in the

Government, to adopt extremely severe measures, which have affected each one of the citizens of Romania. And, mention should be made, no politician ever affords to easily think about the fact that, among the measures adopted, there is the 25% salary cut for those who work in the budgetary system, the VAT increase from 9% to 24%, or the introduction of the contribution to the Health Fund for the retired with pensions between 750 and 1,000 RON' (Press release, 03/07/2012). This statement exceeds the norms of public communication and approaches the President too much to the Government.

In March, we have a percentage of 96.77% standard (pure) public communication. Another remark related to this month that we want to make is represented by the fact that, in certain press conferences, the President was also asked about other topics than those that represented the object of the press conference. Therefore, an example would be the press statement given by the Romanian President before leaving for the Summit on Nuclear Security (Seoul, 26-27 March) when he was asked about the Bold-ea situation – 'Mr. President, this is a question that, if we may, has nothing to do with your press statement. We are interested in the Boldea case. What else do you know about it, what else has happened?' (Press release, 03/25/2012).

- **April**

In April, from a quantitative point of view, a number of 23 press releases were drafted. Out of these, there is only one that, from our point of view, exceeds the public communication sphere. The press release mentioned is: the ceremony where Mr. Attila Korodi took the oath of office as Minister of Environment and Forests, on 10/04/2012. This press release contains a subtle message referring to press magnates: 'I believe these are fundamental things and, no matter how much the *press trusts* struggle to show there isn't anything necessary, I want you to know that the responsibility for the leadership of Romania is not in the hands of Voiculescu or of Vântu or of any other press magnate or of any other uninformed individual' (Press release, 04/10/2012). We considered this press release to exceed the public communication matrix as the President should be more temperate when expressing his opinion about any citizen. Although the message is very subtle, it still contains shade of classification. As one may see, the President does not say the three would be uninformed, but he places them in a context that contains the syntagm *uninformed individual*.

As to the percentage, in April, from our point of view, in what regards the standard (pure) public communication, we have a percent of 95.65 %.

President Iohannis

In what concerns the layout of the current Presidential Administration's website, there are differences, but there is no significant difference from the one of the former administration. There is, however, a difference in layout, in color (the prominent color of the current website is blue) as well as in the position of the website's buttons, but basically, in terms of content, the current website is not significantly different from the one of Bănescu's Presidential Administration. In comparison to President Bănescu, President Iohannis chooses to keep distance from the political spectrum and there-

fore, in all his public appearances during the period under review, we have not identified elements of political communication, only elements of public and administrative communication. If there is no significant difference between the two Presidents from a quantitative point of view, there is a difference in what concerns the manner of communication regarding press releases. President Iohannis has a stricter public communication of administrative type (with data and facts), while the positions taken by President Băsescu interfered in the area of political communication, making sometimes use of phrases or epithets that drew the attention. In conclusion, we can say that there is a clear distinction between the two analyzed presidents. Traian Băsescu fits the prototype of the player president (as he has publicly declared), while Klaus Iohannis belongs to the type of the mediator president. Strictly, from the point of view of public communication, one may notice an evolution in the case of Iohannis as compared to Băsescu, as the elements of political communication have been removed from the public statements and appearances of President Iohannis.

8. Conclusions

In what regards the first research question, we have tried to present different definitions given to political communication and to presidential communication. Although all Romanian Presidents had been members of a political party and were helped by certain political bodies to obtain this position in the State, in what concerns the presidential communication, as results from our approach, there is a fundamental difference between the way of addressing to the people of a political actor (Deputy, Senator, etc.) and of a President. Even though, voluntarily or not, during the office of a President, there may be some deviations, through which he promotes political messages, still the fundamental difference between the two types of communication is obvious. Therefore, we consider this research question was clarified.

As to the first subordinate research question, we have analyzed the website of the Presidential Administration (for both Presidents – Băsescu and Iohannis) and came to the conclusion that there is a department with personnel specialized in public communication. Furthermore, based on the information found on the website, we have underlined all the tasks and duties of the department responsible for presidential communication. As a result of the presentation of the arguments, the results have clearly shown that the answer to this research question is yes.

In what concerns the second subordinate research question, we have clearly presented an analysis of the main instruments through which presidential communication is carried out. The analysis also took into account the monitoring of the presidential communication during four months (both Presidents – Băsescu and Iohannis). Although in each of the four months there was at least one press release of the President Băsescu in which we were able to notice certain deviations in the public communication sphere, to an overwhelming extent, as statistics have shown, we consider that the way in which the President of Romania addressed to the people may be classified more as a type of public communication and not as political communi-

cation. This conclusion was validated in spite of the fact that, from our point of view, the President is the main political vector in the country. We believe that this study is important also for several reasons. First of all, we wanted to bring clarification in what concerns the difference between public and political communication. This clarification is beneficial for both the citizen and for the person temporarily occupying the presidential chair. Clarifying these two terms implies also a clarification of how to conduct any type of communication in a democratic system, as well as to respect certain norms and values. Secondly, we managed to prove that even in emerging democracies rules can be respected, which leads to a better functioning of the system. This article can also be considered as an alarm system for any possible shortfalls shown by certain public figures who may have their own vision of the democratic system or of what public versus political means. Thirdly, in spite of the temporal limit, (we have only analyzed four months of a mandate), we wanted to demonstrate that there is a difference between myth and reality and that not always the image that is created around a political figure reflects the reality. Finally, we would like to make a last statement regarding the practices of public communication of the Presidential Administration in case of both Presidents that we have analyzed: any system can be improved (for example, by showing more transparency), but in this case (both Presidents) we consider the presidential communication to be governed by clear rules and by a quite powerful mechanism.

As a conclusion of the entire study, we consider that, at the level of the ways of expressing oneself, in Romania there is a fundamental difference between political and public communication, an aspect which actually strengthens the current democratic system. As we have previously stated, although the president is the main political actor in the country, from our point of view, presidential communication in Romania is preponderantly of public type and not of political type.

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