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EUROPA: CHANGING THE WAY EUROPE IS REPORTED

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Introduction

It is a widely-held view that the European Union (EU) has made considerable progress in establishing common institutions and policies, but has failed to create a European public sphere and public opinion[1]. To some extent this is being created by such publications as *The Financial Times, the Economist, the Wall Street Journal Europe* and *The International Herald Tribune*. However, they mainly cover business and economic issues aimed at international elites. In contrast, the political and social agenda for the general public in the EU member states -- as well as their languages -- remain local. For years, this area of news coverage has been supplied by domestic champions, who above all view Europe through the lens of the European institutions[2]. As a result, Poles are well informed about what the European Commission plans to do, but do not necessarily know what the Brits or Spaniards are up to. According to Professor Paolo Mancini from the University of Perugia, "a Europe of people does not exist, only a Europe of institutions".

As Europe faces its biggest crisis in sixty years, newspapers are looking for new ways to report the EU. Constrained by a shrinking readership, dwindling advertising revenues and the high costs of international news, this has started to seriously test the limits of EU-wide news collaboration. Encouraged by the success of the WikiLeaks scoop, European publishers have tried to explore the idea further.

In spring 2011, *The Guardian* came up with a new project called New Europe. On a bright March day five reporters from *The Guardian*, *Der Spiegel*, *Le Monde*, *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *El País* gathered in the office of José Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, prime minister of Spain. They were there to discuss various topics, but the focus was troubled Europe, bailout plans for Greece and Ireland, and the lack of strong leadership in the EU. The interview was run simultaneously in the five publications on April 1, 2011, in the third instalment of New Europe. The previous two had contained pieces from Germany and France. The fourth was from Poland.

This collaborative project with other European newspapers aimed to get a better understanding of what frustrates the Germans and what makes the Poles tick. "Too often Europe is discussed and reported through its common institutions or purely in terms of its relations with Britain. Starting today, *The Guardian*'s Europe season looks in depth at four European countries – with a week exploring every aspect of their cultures, economies and day-to-day lives", reasoned Alan Rusbridger, editor of *The Guardian*. *Der Spiegel*, *Le Monde*, *El País* and *Gazeta Wyborcza* not only provided their British partner with content, but also helped *The Guardian* access top officials in their countries, whom they interviewed together. They then shared the exclusive interviews.

In January 2012, the publishers of *El País* and *Le Monde* came up with the idea of a European supplement created jointly by the six largest European newspapers. This time *Le Monde*, *The Guardian*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *La Stampa*, *El País* and *Gazeta Wyborcza* joined forces and launched Europa to bring the EU and its vision closer to readers. According to *La Stampa*, the new project was supposed "to reflect on the actual state of the EU, which, like never before, is at the centre of a thousand questions regarding its present and, most of all, its future". Like its predecessor, Europa's main goal

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[1] See for example, European Politics at an Impasse: A Plea for a Policy of Graduated Integration, in Europe, The Faltering Project, by Juergen Habermas. Polity Press, Cambridge 2009

[2] Understanding the Logic of EU Reporting from Brussels. Analysis of interviews with EU correspondents and spokespersons. Adequate Information Management in Europe (AIM) - Working Papers, 2007/3. Bochum/Freiburg: Projekt Verlag

was to shift the focus of reporting the EU away from institutions and towards ordinary people, who are considering travel to another country for holidays, work or study. In 2012, three issues of Europa were published. It is an unusual venture. Firstly, its founders used to think of themselves as competitors. Secondly, it has unprecedented complexity, featuring content originally produced in six different languages, and reach. Significantly, it consists mostly of international news, a category that is being marginalised in the age of widespread cost-cutting in newsrooms[3].

At the time of writing this paper, it seems that despite being launched in a climate of cost-cutting, Europa is here to stay. In this paper, I will analyse this project, looking at its origins, operational structure, editorial content and potential. In the first chapter I sketch out the project's roots and show what it took to build up and manage this type of relationship between six different newspapers, each with its own priorities. The second chapter attempts to assess the project's success. For this, I refer to different criteria, editorial as well as entrepreneurial, such as whether the project has attracted new readers and created new streams of revenue. The third chapter examines to what extent the newspapers have come up with a new way of covering Europe and created their own new narrative about the Old Continent. By analysing Polish and British editions of Europa, I will assess whether the newspapers have been successful in shifting their reporting away from institutions and towards people, migration and business ties between EU member states, in an attempt to make Europe more interesting to the general reader.

The conclusion discusses the strengths and weaknesses of Europa as a case of international collaboration between media organisations. Could the project evolve to cover new areas and attract new readers? Or is it just the publishers' political initiative, which lacks a market perspective?

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[3]   Feasibility study for the preparatory action 'ERASMUS for journalists'. Final Report submitted to European Commission Directorate General Information Society and Media Directorate A – Audiovisual, Media, Internet Unit A1 – Audiovisual and Media Policies. By Economisti Associati with The Evaluation Partnership and European Journalism Centre. March 2011

Chapter 1. From secret diplomatic cables to a new media venture

1.1 How Julian Assange brought media together: a brief history of media collaboration

The Eurostar train rushed towards Brussels with Nick Davies, *The Guardian*'s investigative reporter, on board. Davies was going to his first meeting with Julian Assange, the man whose online entity turned the world of politics upside down. It was June 2010 and *The Guardian* was chasing one of the greatest scoops in its history. Davies was about to convince Assange to give *The Guardian* exclusive access to more than 250,000 secret U.S. diplomatic cables and classified files which WikiLeaks had managed to get hold of. He knew that the material he was about to obtain was a bomb that the U.S. government would try to defuse in many ways, including seeking an injunction against the paper in court. British defamation law, considered to be the most hostile in Europe, attracts so-called "libel tourists": people who use UK courts to pursue libel actions and ruin damning publications.

"What was needed was a multi-jurisdictional alliance between traditional media outlets and WikiLeaks,)", recalls Davies. Would publishing the material from the cables simultaneously in several countries get round the threat of a British injunction? Davies opened his notebook. He wrote down,"*New York Times/Washington Post/Le Monde*"[4].

Julian Assange's motivation for striking this agreement with a traditional newspaper was not just to minimise the legal risks, but also to maximise the story's global impact. To achieve this, he needed to get on board as many influential media as his partners would tolerate. He and *The Guardian* reporters agreed that *The New York Times* should be engaged across the pond and *Der Spiegel* in Germany. Then the WikiLeaks founder demanded that *El País* and *Le Monde* be included on the list, "to broaden the geopolitical impact". These newspapers joined the alliance late, leaving them with only two weeks to become familiar with the cables. The material was huge: 300 million words on 260,000 pages. Hence the newspapers decided to work in close cooperation. *El País* summoned its foreign correspondents to Madrid to run through the database in search of stories from across Latin America. Meanwhile, Der Spiegel spotted a cable revealing that the U.S. Department of State (on behalf of the CIA) had ordered its diplomats to spy on United Nations officials.

This collaborative project culminated in the simultaneous launch of the scoop in all the newspapers involved on 29 November 2010. This was an unusual move for an industry where all newspapers perceive each other as rivals, whether current or potential. However, similar moves had been made before. In 2009 *The Guardian* -- along with *BBC Newsnight*, *Volkskrant*, a Dutch newspaper, and the Norwegian television channel *NRK* -- broke the story on Trafigura, a Dutch commodity trading company who had dumped toxic waste in the Ivory Coast[5]. In 2007, the British daily had jointly investigated the files of BAE Systems, a multinational defence company with newspapers from Sweden, Romania and Tanzania[6].

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[4]   Wikileaks: Inside Julian Assange's War on Secrecy, by David Leigh and Luke Harding. Guardian Books 2011

[5]   *The Guardian*, 16 Sep, 2009. http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/sep/16/trafigura-african-pollution-disaster

[6]   *The Guardian*, 7 June, 2007. http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/jun/07/bae1

Professor Robert Picard, a specialist in media economics and Director of Research at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, points out that the first major collaborative venture in the traditional media sector occurred in the late 19th and early 20th century, with the creation of news agencies such as Associated Press and UPI. But that was the exception rather than the rule. Media companies wanted to do everything internally, on their own, as they had plenty of resources and the technology at their disposal was relatively limited. "It changed in 20th century, when executives from the industry started moving around the globe meeting each other, establishing international organisations. They met other reputable media outlets representatives, got together, built relationships and trust. At the same time financial pressures grew and made companies close bureaus and scale down workforces. They realized they were losing markets so the idea of collaboration started to look better", says Robert Picard.

In the 1990s, cost rationalisation drove the media to start sharing offices in different cities to make reporting from new areas cheaper. Nevertheless, this collaboration was about economic efficiency and did not include products or services. Then publishers began to license their content to each other. This took the form of wrap-ups and articles from the *Financial Times*, *the International Herald Tribune* or *The Wall Street Journal,* and even co-branding new publications in Central Europe and Asia. Another form of collaboration involved developing technical infrastructures together. This includes online advertising networks or the distribution of digital applications on jointly developed platforms[7].

A new way of producing content emerged in the 2000s when newsrooms began to form teams to work on international stories. This collaboration was an extremely attractive idea, due to the stories' geographic scope and complexity, combined with the newsrooms' shrinking resources. WikiLeaks is undoubtedly a good example of a complex and large-scale project that was empowered by the development of global communication technologies. As two writers from the Guardian expressed it, "If media groups did not learn to work across borders on stories, the stories would leave them behind"[8].

Chasing stories together is one thing. Holding joint editorial meetings, commissioning and exchanging content as well as running it under the same brand in six different publications was another. In fact, it was entirely new.

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[7]   For instance, Next Issue Media, the start-up company behind the Next Issue App, is a joint venture formed by five leading US-based publishers – Condé Nast, Hearst, Meredith, News Corp., and Time Inc.
[8]   Wikileaks: Inside Julian Assange's War on Secrecy, by David Leigh and Luke Harding. Guardian Books 2011

1.2 From New Europe to Europa

On February 17, 2011 -- less than three months after the WikiLeaks scoop -- editors from all over the world met in the Park Inn Hotel at Heathrow airport. For more than six hours they discussed a strategy for dealing with Apple. Apple was about to introduce a subscription service for publishers of newspapers, magazines and other content applications that would enable them to sell multiple issues through a single purchase in the company's online App Store. At the same time, the giant from Cupertino had imposed a 30 per cent cut on in-app purchases and had not given publishers access to subscribers' data. The move caused an outcry in the media and gathered representatives from the International News Media Association, Online Publishers Association and Fédération Internationale de la Presse Périodique.

At the time *The Guardian* was developing its new project, entitled New Europe. The paper needed partners in other EU countries to help with contacting sources and to provide local coverage. In return, it offered to share its own coverage of these countries. *Der Spiegel*, *Le Monde* and *El País*, more familiar with each other after WikiLeaks, were eager to give it a try. The fourth was Poland's *Gazeta Wyborcza* - the largest quality daily in Central Europe, established in 1989 with a liberal, free market-oriented and pro-European editorial stance. More importantly, since Poland had joined the EU in 2004, it was a player from a relatively new EU member state. Its presence made New Europe more diverse.

The four publications agreed to:
- jointly organise interviews with top officials in their countries;
- create a common pool of stories from different countries covering the same topics, including health service, employment and social policy;
- contribute content seen to be locally important (an interview with an artist, an essay written by an intellectual or academic, etc.).

New Europe was launched on March 13, 2011 and ran for four weeks, with every week dedicated to another country: Germany, France, Spain and then Poland. "It was an attempt to design and present information in a new way: take a week, take a country and just 'monster' it, as we say. In other words, go as deep as you possibly can, try to find new partners, new expertise that can generate much more 'magazine-like' content for us, that works both in paper and online. Our partners from Germany, France, Spain and Poland helped us a great deal with New Europe. It was an experiment, in which we built and checked what works and what doesn't", says Mark Rice-Oxley, international planning editor at *The Guardian*[9].

Six months later, in October 2011, a group of editors and publishers was sitting in a restaurant in Paris. Among them were Eric Izraelevich[10], the editorial director of *Le Monde*; Juan Luis Cebrián, the founder and chairman of *El País* as well as a member of *Le Monde*'s board (Grupo Prisa - the publisher of the Spanish daily holds a minority stake in *Le Monde*); and Sylvie Kauffmann, the editor of *Le Monde*. The discussion wandered from the state of the media industry to the state of European affairs. It got to the point where everybody was lamenting the fact that there is still no pan-European newspaper. As usual, the discussion closed with the declaration: 'let's do something together'.

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[9]   Mark Rice-Oxley, international planning editor, *The Guardian*, interview, 28 Jan 2013

[10]   Eric Izraelevich died in his office from a heart attack on November 27, 2012

"*Conversation du Café du Commerce*", summarises Kauffmann. This popular expression is the French equivalent to the English term 'bar room politics', where laypeople discuss high profile subjects. But Juan Luis Cebrián was entirely serious. When he got back to Madrid, he asked the editor of *El País* to get in touch with Sylvie Kauffmann and start a new venture. "Then things began to develop quickly. I don't remember too many details, but it was Cebrián who got in touch with *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *La Stampa*, while Eric Izraelevich contacted *The Guardian*. But it was still quite a vague concept of "doing something together", says Kauffmann[11].

The alliance fostered by the editors of the Spanish and French dailies was pretty similar to the one that had worked in the WikiLeaks scoop. The vision of Europa started to crystallise at the first editorial meeting, held at the office of *Le Monde* in early November 2011. It was attended by Stefan Kornelius, the international editor of *Süddeutsche Zeitung*; Marco Bardazzi, digital editor of *La Stampa*, Mark Rice-Oxley, international planning editor of *The Guardian*, and Bernadette Gonzalez Harbour, deputy managing editor of *El País*. They agreed that Europa should be a supplement run in different countries and languages, but under the same brand and on the same day. "We got on very well. The funny thing was that we were all a bit like our EU stereotypes. The Brits and Germans were like: 'We need structure, we need order, we need to have a programme, and if the programme is not good we're not going to be in it'. The Italians and Spanish were like: "Let's commission as many stories as possible, we can produce a hundred pages if we want, advertisements will come, no worry". We were less laid-back and much more rigorous about it", says Rice-Oxley.

Another problem was that all the participants were from Old Europe. "I felt that we can't do such a supplement without a partner from Central Europe, a vibrant region that joined the EU not so long ago. Everybody agreed and *Gazeta Wyborcza* was invited", says Kauffmann. Ariadna Machowska, features editor at *Gazeta Wyborcza* did not make it to the first meeting, but was immediately included in the loop.

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[11]   Sylvie Kauffmann, editor at *Le Monde*, interview, 07 Feb 2013

Chapter 2. One project, different editions

2.1 European editorial structure and reach

In similar fashion to the earlier cases, Europa is a non-entity collaborative structure – in other words, it has not been legally registered as a company or joint venture, it does not have employees or a management board and it does not create a tax burden. This time however, the publishers went one step further, creating an umbrella brand that would help them to manage the project. This also helped them avoid the uncomfortable situation that usually occurs when one newspaper shares its content with another (e.g. through licensing) and thereby indirectly supports the competitor. Moreover, Europa built on its partners' existing readership base, which significantly reduced the risks typical for the launch of a new brand. The supplement is distributed with the newspapers' main editions, sold at their regular cover price.

As an editorial alliance, Europa has a light organisational structure. A six-person team manages it. Each partner -- *El País*, *The Guardian*, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *La Stampa*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Le Monde* -- assigns one person to the team, who represents their newspaper during the regular editorial meetings in the run-up to every issue. Europa does not have its own office; instead, editorial meetings are hosted by the publications involved. So far three issues have been published, with three meetings held at the offices of *Le Monde*, *El País* and *La Stampa* respectively. The fourth meeting took place at *Süddeutsche Zeitung*'s office in Munich on March 6, 2013, with the fourth issue scheduled for April 25, 2013.

The project's decision-making process is simple and very much like the EU's. None of the partners presides over Europa and has the final say. The team reaches a consensus on the framework of the next issue: the main topic and areas to be covered, officials or experts to be interviewed, the leading stories, the number of articles to be commissioned, etc. This collegiality is limited to editorial decisions; technical and business matters such as paper orders or sales policy are left to the individual publishers.

Today, publishers operate under growing financial pressures -- their circulation and advertising revenues are in double-digit decline[12]. "During the 2008-2010 period there was a generalised downsizing in newsrooms staffing. Reduction in forces were especially frequent in the print media sector – with some seven in ten journalists reporting lay-offs in his/her newsroom – as well as among big organisations (i.e. those with 100 or more staff in the newsroom)'[13]. Many news organisations closed down their foreign bureaus and reduced the number of their foreign correspondents. This has lowered both the quality and quantity of foreign news coverage. In this context, Europa is a way to produce expensive international news content at much lower costs, including cheap airline tickets for editors and translation expenses. "The editorial costs of Europa are close to nil, since we do translations in-house. Our editors speak all of the six languages", says Stefan Kornelius, who heads the international section at *Süddeutsche Zeitung*[14].

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[12]   World Press Trends Report 2012, WAN-IFRA Research
[13]   Feasibility study for the preparatory action 'ERASMUS for journalists'. Final Report submitted to European Commission Directorate General Information Society and Media Directorate A – Audiovisual, Media, Internet Unit A1 – Audiovisual and Media Policies. By Economisti Associati with The Evaluation Partnership and European Journalism Centre. March 2011
[14]   Stefan Kornelius, international section head at *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, interview, 21 Feb 2013

The Guardian estimates its annual cost of running Europa at about £10,000[15]. This is a tiny amount compared to the cost of sending a major team of reporters to six European countries three times a year. It is not even close to the average costs of £173,000 required to establish a bureau in a foreign capital.[16]

Instead of creating special teams to work on Europa, the six newspapers commissioned their existing staff to produce the content. These were reporters already working in their newsrooms, covering business, culture, foreign news and current affairs on a daily basis. Typically, the six newsrooms produce 40-60 individual news items for each issue, including features, interviews and opinion pieces. For each issue, the production cycle usually lasts four weeks.

Moreover, Europa's editorial team members come from different departments and professional backgrounds – they include feature editors, international news editors, digital editors as well as managing editors. This shows that different publishers have placed the project in different parts of their organisational structures, as well as the lack of particular beat of Europa itself. The supplement changes its main topic with every issue.

It should be stressed that Europa was fostered by leading quality newspapers from the six largest EU countries. This fact, its founders say, is a pure coincidence. Yet media studies show a strong correlation between the size of a country and its coverage in the media, as well as the strength of its media market. Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy and Spain are the most covered EU member states. In the same ranking, Poland came ninth, surpassed only by Greece, Sweden and the Netherlands[17]. With a combined circulation of over 1.8 million copies and a reach extending to six languages and six countries with combined population of about 355 million people[18], Europa threw itself into the international market.

It is an unprecedented effort. The international market is dominated by a handful of well-established players like the *Financial Times*, *The Economist*, *The Wall Street Journal Europe* and *The International Herald Tribune* (recently renamed *The International New York Times*). These are available in all EU countries, not just the six largest ones. However, they are limited to an English-speaking audience. This means that their circulation figures look pale in comparison to Europa's. For instance, *The Economist* sold about 235,058 copies in continental Europe last year, compared to 210,386 copies in the UK[19]. For the *Financial Times*, the figures were 99,282 copies and 83,784 copies respectively[20]. The circulation of *The Wall Street Journal Europe* last year was 66,522 copies[21].

[15]   Mark Rice-Oxley, international planning editor, *The Guardian*, interview, 28 Jan 2013
[16]   Feasibility study for the preparatory action 'ERASMUS for journalists'. Final Report submitted to European Commission Directorate General Information Society and Media Directorate A – Audiovisual, Media, Internet Unit A1 – Audiovisual and Media Policies. By Economisti Associati with The Evaluation Partnership and European Journalism Centre. March 2011
[17]   Ibid
[18]   CIA Factbook; https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/
[19]   http://www.economistgroupmedia.com/products/the-economist/circulation/
[20]   Audit Bureau of Circulations; http://www.abc.org.uk/Certificates/18480285.pdf
[21]   Audit Bureau of Circulations; http://www.abc.org.uk/Certificates/18170382.pdf

Table 1. Paid circulation of Europa participants

	2010	2011	2012
The Guardian	302,285	279,308	215,988
Le Monde	407,407	386,177	366,356
El País	391,816	365,117	343,156*
La Stampa	279,921	273,806	240,000
Süddeutsche Zeitung	434,038	425,326	423,302**
Gazeta Wyborcza	335,000	306,000	257,000
Total	2,150,467	2,035,734	1,845,802

Sources: ABC, ZKDP, IVW, OJD, companies

*1H 2012
** e-copies included

The scope and reach of Europa impressed politicians on the Old Continent. Angela Merkel, François Hollande and Mario Monti agreed to be interviewed by the newspaper alliance. "Doing things together gives us power. When we come to a politician's office and ask for interview for six European newspapers, it works well', says Mark Rice-Oxley. In the first quarter of 2013, the paper was engaged in talks with the office of David Cameron, arranging to interview him for the next issue of Europa. According to Sylvie Kauffmann, having six reporters at the same table with a politician enriches the conversation. "We have different sensitivities, different questions and issues. We challenge politicians on different subjects and it really leads to interesting material", she says.

2.2 Local economic realities and reporting cultures

None of six newspapers has conducted a formal evaluation of the project, but from interviews with the editors a mixed picture emerges. As things stand, it seems that Europa has attracted an insignificant number of new readers and – in most cases – has failed to attract advertisers. The latter is paradoxical since the project has a wide reach and targets a general audience. Unlike international newspapers and magazines targeting business and political elites, Europa was created with a more general and even mass-market reader in mind; one who already reads *El País*, *The Guardian*, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *La Stampa*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* or *Le Monde*.

The partnership developed a joint advertising offer for international companies such as banks, hotels and airlines. But it has proved to be unsuccessful. More than 90 per cent of multinational companies' advertising budgets are distributed by international networks of advertising or media agencies. Agencies or their clients split budgets into different accounts and handle them locally. At the local level, agencies allocate their clients' money to different news outlets and pay less attention to whether their adverts are run in the newspaper's main edition or in the Europa supplement (sold along with the main edition under the same cover price and targeting the same reader). In other words, trying to build Europa on the newspapers' existing readership turned against the project in terms of advertising. In the end, the joint advertising offer was dropped after the first two issues.

Meanwhile, the Italian edition has managed to attract advertisers: ENI, Prada and Jeep (indirectly owned by Fiat). According to Marco Bardazzi from *La Stampa*, the Italian edition of Europa remains unprofitable, despite the 30,000 euro in advertising revenue generated per issue. "For us it is more important to tell companies about what we do on a European level. It elevates our brand in the advertising community in Italy and proves that quality journalism is still something we can do", says Bardazzi. He adds that the first and second issues of Europa helped the newspaper to increase its news-stand sales by 2.2 and 1.1 per cent respectively. The third issue failed to repeat the success of the previous two, with sales falling by 1.2 per cent.

The Spanish edition also featured advertising paid for by major local companies like Endesa, Iberdrola, Santander, Telefonica and Real Casa de la Moneda. On average, advertisers booked about three pages per issue. Yet even this barely covered the costs of producing the supplement. Note that *El País* produced the largest edition of Europa with 24 pages in its first issue and 16 pages in the third issue.

Europa did not increase news-stand sales of *El País*. Bernadette Gonzalez Harbour, deputy managing editor of *El País*, was unwilling to disclose the financial details, but she stresses that the concept of Europa came from Spain and was not designed only to be profitable. "Europa provides a new platform for public debate across Europe and increases our influence and prestige", she says[22].

Economic pressures have forced publishers to accommodate Europa in different ways. It is run as a separate supplement in Spain, France, Italy and Germany. In the UK, it appears as a part of *The Guardian*'s international section, while in Poland it takes over Duży Format - the weekly supplement to *Gazeta Wyborcza* featuring long-form pieces. This allows both dailies to avoid buying paper for Europa, saving tens of thousands of

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[22]   Bernadette Gonzalez Harbour, deputy managing editor of *El País*, interview, 19 Mar 2013

pounds a year. They admit that collaboration with other European publishers has not helped them to increase their circulation or advertising revenue.

”We of course keep an eye on how popular this project is online -- the traffic is growing nicely -- and what kind of noises it makes inside the European media echo chamber. Financially, it's impossible to break down editorial costs into individual projects and assess what is profitable. It just doesn't work like that”, says Mark Rice-Oxley. He is unwilling to disclose figures on traffic. He adds that the online version of Europa is as interesting; perhaps more interesting for *The Guardian* than the print edition. The British daily targets international, English-speaking readers all over the world, while the other partners are restricted to their local readers. Europa's online presence on *The Guardian*'s website features not only stories but also many interactive features like quizzes[23] or graphics.

”We did several advertising-focused projects with *The Daily Telegraph, The Wall Street Journal* or *Irish Independent*; we belonged to consortiums selling international ads. For us this project isn't about ads from the very beginning. The important thing is expensive international content that in many cases could have been unavailable without collaboration with other dailies”, says Grzegorz Piechota, news editor at *Gazeta Wyborcza*.

Le Monde would not disclose any figures, but says that the first and the third issue sold well, whereas the second did not. The French edition of Europa also failed to attract advertisers. In the case of *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, each issue of the supplement helped to increase the daily's news-stand sales by 6,000 to 8,000 copies. It has been the most successful edition of Europa so far, in terms of circulation. Unfortunately, the German daily lacks information about the readers who were attracted by the supplement, making it difficult to draw conclusions. ”Europa is well received. We get a tremendous response from our readers, about 100 emails per issue, which is quite high by our standards. The project contributes positively to our brand”, stresses Stefan Kornelius from *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. He does not disclose whether the project is profitable. ”It is the only supplement that went through our internal budgeting in 2012 without being challenged”, he adds.

Placing Europa in different sections of the newspapers leads to diverse editorial conceptions of the supplement. *Gazeta Wyborcza* prefers more long-form, narrative pieces, whereas *The Guardian* can hardly accommodate stories longer than 1,500-1,800 words in its international section. When the content from the common pool fails to fit their expectations, editors commission additional stories from local reporters. ”We've reached the point at which the differences between the editions are too big. Maybe it doesn't matter at all, because there's practically no reader who gets Europa in six different editions?” says Sylvie Kauffmann.

In addition, the partners have to deal with different approaches to editing and reporting. The majority of the editors involved admit that the commissioned stories are much too long and require a lot of time to edit, even in cases where their length was agreed beforehand. ”British reporters like quotes; they want them in every story. Real people saying real things. Some of our partner papers have a totally different approach, they're not so fussed about getting someone to say something”, says Mark Rice-Oxley.

”We're very different in the way we get down to the facts, write and build up stories. I think Süddeutsche is much more in line with *The Guardian* than with *La Stampa* or *El País*. Our Spanish and French colleagues like to have far more opinion in what they do, they like

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[23]   e.g. 'Would your finances get you kicked out of the Eurozone?'
http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/interactive/2012/oct/17/europe-news-financial-crisis

famous writers, artists and politicians to do op-eds. We don't see much value in that, but why shouldn't they have it? We have six editorial traditions to deal with", says Stefan Kornelius.

And six different economic realities. For example, Poland was the only EU country that avoided slipping into recession. But GDP was not the only economic indicator that differed. During the second editorial meeting Europa partners wanted to tackle youth unemployment and started to exchange statistics. At the time, in Spain over 40 per cent of people less than 25 years old were unable to find a job, while in Italy the rate was close to 30 per cent. Stefan Kornelius kept silent. Then he said, "It's probably 8 per cent. It's not an issue in Germany". The rest of the group was puzzled but finally decided to include the German case as a counterexample that can be learnt from.

Table 2. Youth unemployment in Europa countries[24]

	2009	2010	2011
UK	19.1	19.6	21.1
France	23.9	23.6	22.9
Spain	37.8	41.6	46.4
Italy	25.4	27.8	29.1
Germany	11.2	9.9	8.6
Poland	20.6	23.7	25.8

Source: Eurostat

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[24]   In January 2013, 5.732 million young people (under 25) were unemployed in the EU-27, of whom 3.642 million were in the euro area. Compared with January 2012, youth unemployment increased by 264 000 in the EU-27 and by 295 000 in the euro area.
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php?title=File:Youth_unemployment,_2011Q4_(%25).png&filetimestamp=20120502094632#file

Chapter 3. Making Europe attractive

3.1 Why is reporting the EU all about institutions?

Gathering at *Le Monde*'s office in December 2011, the project's participants had a strong feeling that Europe was on the brink. Greek debt the deep recession in Spain and in Ireland led to the crisis of the Euro zone and raised questions about the future not only of the common currency, but of the bloc itself. The exit of Greece and Portugal looked like a real option. They also felt that readers might find a substantial part of their current EU coverage boring and overly official. Mark Rice-Oxley puts it bluntly: "People are sick of institutional Europe with its elections, voting, parties, European Commission and policies". This point was made clear, leaving the team in search of ways to reinvigorate reporting on Europe and make it attractive to a broader audience.

It was not an easy thing to do. News communication in Brussels is extremely "institution-centred" in terms of media interests and "institution-driven" in terms of the agenda offered to journalists. For EU correspondents in Brussels, their daily bread involves getting through an endless stream of press releases from the European institutions and running from one media briefing to another, including the most famous '*rendezvous de midi*' -- the European Commission's Midday Briefing. Other major sources of information include: the European Parliament, the European Central Bank, the Court of Justice of the European Union and the EU Council. The latter consists of 27 sources, since every national representation there has its own spokesperson who briefs reporters. "As a consequence, correspondents view EU news in a heavily institutional way, in the sense that their 'reading glasses', their analytical grids of European political processes, are very much those of the institutions"[25].

This technical view of Europe -- primarily as an agglomeration of policies -- has a historical basis: between 1957 and 1967, the European Economic Community and Euratom had separate communication services and strategies. Even after they merged, the three press teams continued to work separately. Each of the three was responsible for different policy sectors and none of them spoke in the name of Europe as a whole.

The EU is thoroughly covered in the media. The Brussels press corps may be shrinking, from around 1,300 accredited journalists in 2005 to 800 in 2010[26], yet the city has retained the largest concentration of reporters in the world. They all have very diverse interests, depending on the country they come from. But -- interestingly -- they often share the feeling that their reporting is becoming less attractive to readers. According to an online survey conducted by Economisti Associati among 472 journalists from all the EU member states between July 16 and October 15, 2010 more than half the respondents feel that the attention the media pays to European affairs is limited by the audience's perceived lack of interest. Part of them are convinced that foreign news "simply doesn't sell", while others think that journalists rarely report European news in an appealing way.

The European political process is complex, long and extremely hard for outsiders to understand, but professional reporters know how to make a story attractive. Part of their

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[25] Understanding EU News Production Logic: Norms, Channels and Structures of reporting Europe. Adequate Information Management in Europe (AIM) - Working Papers, 2007/3. Bochum/Freiburg: Projekt Verlag

[26] Brussels press corps 'shrinking', journalists say; EurActiv.com, 19 Mar 2010. http://www.euractiv.com/pa/brussels-based-eu-media-shrinking-journalists-say-news-358212. Figures from International Press Association (Association de la Presse Internationale)

training is seeking and bringing out problems, conflicts and contrasts to elicit emotions and engage the audience. As the old journalistic saying goes "good news is dull news". In the article "Practical Guidelines for Journalists Reporting Europe", Professor Gerd G. Kopper from the University of Dortmund listed 13 ways EU correspondents usually make their pitches to editors. Here are two of them:"2. A European news item will increase its chances to enter into a day's presentation when an element of conflict regarding authorities, institutions, and/or events of EU institutions with relevance to a national context or with direct relation to authorities, institutions, and/or events in the national context exists. (...) 6. News item concerning conflicts within EU organisations, among those organisations and among leading personnel of EU institutions rank considerably high within a number of European news organisations. These items are considered of prime interest also among non-member countries of the EU"[27].

The European Commission always seeks consensus, and once its press officers reach out to reporters, it usually means that a conflict has been resolved. At this point, national delegations come in handy, with their stories of how tough negotiations were and how hard it was to resolve or avoid conflict. Their perspective is useful not only because it brings out conflicts, but because it allows different national audiences to relate to the European news. "A news item concerning activities and decisions of one of the European institutions will rank high in terms of the media news management if it relates directly to authorities, institutions, and/or events that have an actual high ranking within the national context of a European country. (...) The clearest indicator of such an effect is its impact on an on-going national political debate"[28].

Framing news in terms of conflict is one of the dominant narratives about Europe, and about politics in general. Studies of the media by PIREDEU[29] and the AIM Project[30] show that a substantial portion of European news is parochial. To put it simply, media reports often portray Europe as 'something else' in opposition to 'us' or 'our country'. This strengthens during periods of crisis, when the media are full of reports that blame the state of economy on other member states or on the European institutions. Sometimes this parochialism neglects not only other EU member states, but foreign countries in general. "There is always 'my country and Europe'', 'I and all the rest'. A European public sphere exists only in the economic realm. The only real Europeans are Erasmus students and business people, because they are constantly moving", says Professor Paolo Mancini from the University of Perugia.

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[27] Practical Guidelines for Journalists Reporting Europe – Rules and Context Guidelines, By Gerd G. Kopper, based on the interview series of the AIM Project and Further Expert Interviews, 2004-2007

[28] ibid.

[29] "Providing an Infrastructure for Research on Electoral Democracy in the European Union", co-ordinated by the European University Institute and its Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies.

[30] Adequate Information Management in Europe (AIM) project's goal is to assess the media's impact on the development of a European public sphere (http://www.aim-project.net)

3.2 How Europa tried to create a new narrative

To break this code of reporting the EU, Europa's editorial team decided to leave aside Brussels and its institutions and to focus instead on the EU's human dimension. It would stick to stories of the people, ordinary European citizens rather than directives and policies. "Just imagine a little screw manufactured somewhere in southern Poland, which travels to Germany to be used in a Volkswagen factory. Then it becomes part of a vehicle and travels to Spain. I think that we are looking for stories like that", said Ariadna Machowska, features editor at *Gazeta Wyborcza*, when briefing reporters for the first issue of Europa. All six newspapers have correspondents in Brussels who report EU news for their international desks on a daily basis. In most cases, they only contribute to Europa sporadically. The joint editorial team relies on local reporters based in their home countries. Interviews with prime ministers are also arranged locally.

Here are the underlying themes of three issues that have been published so far:
• Issue 1. January 26, 2012 - The State of Europe. Reporters were asked to find examples of how the EU has improved the everyday lives and opportunities of its people.
• Issue 2. May 31, 2012 - Young Europeans and their education. Students from six different countries tell their stories of learning and job hunting afterwards.
• Issue 3. October 18, 2012 - How to make it in Europe? Europeans and their home budgets during the crisis. How are they saving and spending?[31]

To what extent has Europa succeeded in creating its own narrative about Europe? How successful has it been in talking less about institutions and more about people, business links and migration? Has it managed to avoid parochialism in its coverage? I analysed the content of the first three issues of the Polish and British editions of Europa. The articles were published in the print editions, and online editions or graphics and photographs were not included. The analysis involved counting references to the major European institutions including the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Central Bank, as well as to EU agencies or think tanks. These references included journalists citing these institutions as sources or quoting their representatives, and interviews that mentioned these institutions. Instances where ordinary people, not affiliated or connected to any of the institutions or agencies, referred to the institutions were also counted. This was in order to check which of these two groups dominated in Europa's coverage.

In parallel, I counted occurrences of home countries in the Polish and British editions of Europa, comparing them with occurrences of other countries. This count included derivatives of the countries' names, such as 'UK', 'Great Britain', 'English', 'British', 'Poland', 'Polish'. The hypothesis was that, by featuring different perspectives, Europa would avoid parochialism.

It should be noted that both *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *The Guardian* are the only two dailies that run Europa as part of their regular editions, rather than as separate supplements. As a result, they are significantly different from each other and from the other editions of Europa in terms of the number and content of their stories. For example, it was far more common for *Gazeta Wyborcza* to publish articles written by its own reporters in Europa than for *The Guardian* to do so. The latter, in turn, tended to engage its own Brussels correspondent, Ian Traynor, in the project more often.

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[31]   The fourth issue scheduled on April 25, 2013 is expected to be dedicated to stories of people unsitisfied with Europe.

The following tables show the results of my content analysis.

Table 3. Content analysis of UK edition of Europa (*The Guardian*)

	EU institutions, experts and officials	Laypeople	UK	Other countries
Issue 1. January 26, 2012	13	48	46	193
Issue 2. May 31, 2012	8	29	24	121
Issue 3. October 18, 2012	26	6	22	181
TOTAL	46	77	92	495

Table 4. Content analysis of Polish edition of Europa (*Gazeta Wyborcza*)

	EU institutions, experts and officials	Laypeople	Poland	Other countries
Issue 1. January 26, 2012	9	46	21	158
Issue 2. May 31, 2012	2	93	55	169
Issue 3. October 18, 2012	10	52	79	125
TOTAL	21	191	155	452

These numbers suggest that both *The Guardian* and *Gazeta Wyborcza* stuck to a "no institutions" approach. The Polish edition built all three issues primarily on the stories of ordinary people, while the British one did so in the two first issues. The third was dominated by a lengthy interview with François Hollande and articles that in one way or another analysed what the French president said about Greece and Franco-German relations. The issue also featured an interview with the Mexican entrepreneur and one of the world's richest men, Carlos Slim Helú, which *Gazeta Wyborcza* left out.

"In my opinion, the enthusiasm for coverage of ordinary people wears off. Little by little, Europa moves towards more traditional 'European news'. The pool of content created for the second issue was less focused on people than the first, and the third was all about experts and numbers. I tried to deal with that by putting more local coverage in Europa. It seems that the biggest treat for us, Europa editors, is still interviewing an important politician or intellectual", says Ariadna Machowska from *Gazeta Wyborcza*.

The other editors agree, pointing out that interviews with top officials, experts and intellectuals are crucial to getting Europa on the front page of their own newspapers, as well as to gaining publicity. "When you've got a pack of 40-50 features and you don't have anything that can sit on the top it will be hard for Europa to make it on the front page of the paper. It's really hard in *The Guardian* to make a front-page about migrant workers from Poland. But the interview with Merkel is another story, whatever she says. Projections? Good, let's put them on the front page along with the brand Europa and other papers' brands", says Mark Rice-Oxley. Sylvie Kauffmann from *Le Monde* adds that every issue should have something "big and flashy". "We all know that an interview with an important person is important, because this is what news agencies usually pick up. They're not going to report that six European newspapers are putting out a supplement about the life of

ordinary Europeans, but when Angela Merkel says in an interview that she believes in a strong political union, it's going to be quoted everywhere and gain a great deal of exposure", she says.

It seems that both *Gazeta Wyborcza* and *the Guardian* successfully avoided parochialism in their editions of Europa. A substantial part of their content has a comparative perspective, such as people from the six countries talking about how they manage their home budgets, or parents from the six countries sharing their views about sending their children to school abroad. This content does not place the European Union or its institutions in opposition to any particular member state. Moreover, this comparative approach remains a unique feature of the project. Stories on the same topic from different countries are put together to highlight differences and similarities not only between their economies, but also in people's attitudes. "For the second issue of Europa we interviewed students and I remember a young girl from the UK saying that she finished her college, got a degree, but had not yet found a job. She was quite confident that she would eventually find one, because she believed in her training. A French guy, on the contrary, was completely desperate. This asymmetry was intriguing, I hadn't read anything like that in French newspapers before", says Sylvie Kauffmann from *Le Monde*.

"We have our correspondents in Italy and Spain, but having a story from a Spanish reporter about what's going on in his or her country is something different. It's great, because it defies clichés. The simplest way to do that is to give a voice to the other side", adds Stefan Kornelius[32].

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[32]   Stefan Kornelius, international section head at *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, interview, 21 Feb 2013

Conclusions

←   Europa is unique in many ways. It has created its own way of reporting the European Union by presenting the daily life and problems of people within the member states, rather than by focusing on the EU of institutions. Previously, this kind of coverage was extremely rare and reserved for special occasions, like the taking over of the EU presidency by a particular country, notes Professor Gerd G. Kopper[33]. The originality of this narrative, in the case of Europa, derives from presenting the coverage in a comparative manner, in which the experiences of one country correspond directly with the parallel experiences of another.

←   This could be seen as a step towards helping to create a European public sphere, but it should be seen as just a beginning. Six leading dailies form the six largest EU countries do not amount to the whole of Europe – something that their editors are aware of. However, expanding Europa to new markets has proved to be difficult. Paradoxically, for an international project designed to make the EU more alluring to a general reader who is bored of institutional coverage, it has attracted an insignificant number of new readers and advertising revenue, partly because it has received no marketing support from the publishers. In addition, the editorial team finds the project difficult to manage in its present form due to differences in reporting cultures, economic realities and languages. At least one Nordic daily approached Europa, but was refused[34].

←   So far, Europa is one of the most significant examples of collaboration in news media -- a response both to the deep crisis that the newspaper industry is grappling with, and to a modern world where information and its sources have become more international than ever. Europa's participants have established a relationship that has already led to collaboration in other areas: when Angela Merkel went to Athens, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* made its reporting available to *La Stampa*. In return, the Italian daily supported its German partner with its coverage of the Pope's resignation, while *Le Monde* allowed *Süddeutsche Zeitung* to use some of its coverage of the Mali conflict. With the help of its Europa partners, *The Guardian* drew up a cultural map of Europe[35]. All six dailies used the crowd-sourcing technique to ask their readers to report the closure of cinemas, galleries, museums and other cultural institutions due to budgets cuts. "Europa opened a lot of avenues", say the editors.

←   Nevertheless, after its first year the project has yet to make a profit. It wins its publishers' budgetary approval because the participants define their costs as "close to nil" and because Europa is not a business-oriented venture. It is an editorial initiative that adds a lot of value to the newspapers' brands. At the same time, economic pressures on the publishers continue to grow, so the withdrawal of partners cannot be ruled out entirely. In fact, it is not clear what would happen to Europa if one of its partners left the alliance. In the future, collaboration between the remaining partners could be loosened or limited to *ad hoc* projects like the ones already in place or being planned. Another possible scenario is that Europa would be reduced to a couple of pages and placed in the newspapers' main editions, similar to the way *The Guardian* runs it today. As it stands, the countries' different editions of Europa are increasingly diverging, not least due to their publishers' dwindling resources. Another reason for this growing divergence is language: as an English-speaking daily, *The Guardian* uses Europa to target not only local, but

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[33]   Practical Guidelines for Journalists Reporting Europe – Rules and Context Guidelines, By Gerd G. Kopper, based on the interview series of the AIM Project and Further Expert Interviews, 2004-2007

[34]   Sylvie Kauffmann, editor at *Le Monde*, interview, 07 Feb 2013

[35]   http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/interactive/2012/aug/03/europe-arts-cuts-culture-austerity

international readers in the U.S., India, Australia or New Zealand and includes much more content in its online edition than it does on in print.

←   The main question remains unanswered: is there a pan-European reader for such a project? Although Europa largely failed to give its partners' sales a boost and left advertisers unimpressed, Sylvie Kauffmann believes that there is. "People engaged in public activities want and need a pan-European view - it's crazy that we don't have a pan-European newspaper. In a way the *Financial Times*, *The International Herald Tribune*, *The Wall Street Journal* or *The Economist* fill this vacuum, but it's not right. They're excellent publications, but they're not European newspapers, they're really Anglo-Saxon newspapers and represent a particular view. What's published in London is not enough; what people in Madrid, Rome or Warsaw read and talk about is really important", says Kauffmann.

Acknowledgments

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