PUBLIC DIPLOMACY OF FEDERATE ENTITIES: QUEBEC

SUMMARY

(last updated August, 24, 2008)

Compendium of a study into the public diplomacy of Quebec's Ministry of International Relations (MRIQ) for the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs (DIV)

Detailed analysis of the research (82 p.) will be presented in a forthcoming Clingendael Diplomacy Paper

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About the authors

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DIPLOMATIC MAKEOVERS:

THE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY OF FEDERATE ENTITIES

Public diplomacy continues to be mentioned in one breath with nation states, a ministry of foreign affairs (MFA) and its diplomatic establishments in particular. Although they have a head start over other actors with regard to public diplomacy, **the involvement of public opinion at home and abroad in foreign policy-making is not the exclusive realm of national governments** which are nowadays confronted with what is known as the ''law of the braking lead''[1].

An amalgam of tendencies – such as the increasing democratization of foreign policy, ongoing impact of federalism, decentralization, and the expansion of international activity into spheres heretofore reserved for national units[2] – **have localized and mainstreamed public diplomacy, so that it is now most effectively pursued and accomplished from the bottom–up**.

Broadening public support and bringing local citizens closer to foreign policy thus calls for **collaboration with a wider ambit of actors, both sub-state and non-state, who can go beyond the reach of the old national elites**, where the amount of visible state intervention often inversely affects the efficiency of public diplomacy.

The state of art of public diplomacy is changing, partly as a result of an ongoing diplomatic makeover (such as the 'societization' of diplomacy), which in its turn is because of profound changes in the patterns of societies that national diplomatic establishments represent, as well as in those of receiving states (creating a society of abstract space going beyond the Westphalian idea of an easy-to-imagine nation-state[3]).

National governments have long dedicated themselves to **certain public diplomacy touchstones, which were once at the forefront, but were later outmoded and not adapted to the current diplomatic overhauls, and hence a hindrance to further progress**. MFAs are not yet used to functioning very well in 'the society of abstract space' and have to work their way through the 'letting-go' process, as they are no longer central and able to arrange all of the outcomes.

Yet the **public diplomacy game is open to all**. Agile small nations, newcomers on the international scene or fast-moving third-party actors that did not commit themselves to former public diplomacy standards will not face similar problems in adapting to change and are therefore easily in the same league as the moguls of international politics. Moreover, if they embrace a network relations and dialogue-oriented (normative) model of public diplomacy, they may actually do a better job than national

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[1] "Dialectics of progress" is a translation of the title of an essay by Dutch historian Jan Romein first published in 1935 where he described this phenomenon, although his term for it would literally translate as "the law of the braking lead", which is the Dutch term for it. (see http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com).

[2] See Hocking, B. (1999). Managing Foreign Relations in Federal States: Linking Central and Non-Central Interests. In: Aldecoa, F., Keating, M. Paradiplomacy in Action: The Foreign Relations of Subnational Governments. London: Frank Cass, pp. 68-69; Hooghe, L., Marks, G. (2003). Unraveling the Central Sate, but How? Types of Multi-level Governance. In: American Political Sciennce Review, vol.97, n° 2, 233-244; Kaiser, R. (24-26/10/2002). (Sub)national Governments in International Arenas. Paper presented at the 5th Symposium of the International Political Science Association on Globalization, Nations and Multi-level Governance: Strategies and Challenges. Montreal; Michaud, N. (2002). Federalism and Foreign Policy: Comparative Answers to Globalisation. In: Griffiths, A. (ed.) Handbook of Federal Countries 2002. Montreal & Kingston/ London/Ithaca : McGill-Queen's University Press, 389-415; Vengroff, R. & Rich, J. (2006). Foreign Policy by other Means: Paradiplomacy and the Canadian Provinces. In: James, P., Michaud, N. & M.J. O'Reilly (eds.) Handbook of Canadian Foreign Policy. Oxford: Lexington Books, 105-132.

[3] See Rose, M. (2006).The Medium Term Future of Public Diplomacy, paper presented for the British Council.

governments acting like message-sending machines or playing the ineffective role of guardians of national identity.[4]

Federate entities and regions are among those newcomers for which public diplomacy has quickly become a chief instrument of statecraft. After all, public diplomacy allows them to influence and shape the international agenda in ways that go beyond their (very) limited hard-power resources, their vulnerability and remoteness in political–economic terms while simultaneously permitting them to add value in their quest for internal and external distinctiveness[5].

Because of a lack of hard power, and driven by identity-based and functional imperatives, federate entities and regions such as California (the world's sixth largest economy), Flanders and Quebec – one of the few ministries of international relations of federate entities to have institutionalized public diplomacy in a separate division – **tend to be busy creating a distinct profile for public diplomacy**.

Not as awkward as might at first be conceived, in the long-term the **predominant models of public diplomacy could use the alternative insights and ingenuities** of federate entities and regions to adapt to change in diplomatic practice. However, rhetoric more often than not does not equal reality, especially if federate entities are opting out of the alternative – advantageous but arduous – path to the future of 'societized' diplomatic activity in order to copy prevailing (hierarchical state-centred and policy-driven) pragmatic models of public diplomacy.

What follows is the compendium of a study into the public diplomacy of Quebec's Ministry of International Relations (MRIQ) (conducted over four months in Canada) on behalf of the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs (DIV). The study aimed to amend scientific research into public diplomacy of federate entities, which is often neglected in the broader study of image and diplomacy. On the basis of insights (strengths an weaknesses) on MRIQ's (domestic and international) public diplomacy the study contributed to the further strategic and structural development of DIV's public diplomacy aspirations (cf. policy recommendations)

A more **detailed and sophisticated analysis of the research** (82 pages) will be presented in a forthcoming **Clingendael Diplomacy Paper**. **The authors welcome comments on and reactions to the ensuing summary**, and can be reached at ehuijgh@clingendael.nl.

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[4] See Melissen, J. (22/01/2008). Options for Public Diplomacy, keynote speech at the British Council conference 'Scotland's Place in the World'. Edinburgh (adapted quote)

[5] See Batora, J. (11-13/02/2005). Multistakeholder Public Diplomacy of Small and Medium-Sized States Paper presented to the International Conference on Multistakeholder Diplomacy,. Mediterranean Diplomatic Academy, Malta; Batora, J. (2006). Public Diplomacy Between Home and Abroad: Norway and Canada. In: The Hague Journal of Diplomacy, n° 1, 53-80; See Bélanger, L. (Summer 2002). The Domestic Politics of Quebec's Quest for External Distinctiveness, American Review of Canadian Studies 32, pp. 195-214; Mohamed, A.N. (2006). The Diplomacy of Micro-States, Discussions Papers in Diplomacy. The Haque: Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael.

CONTENTS

1. RESEARCH (conducted over four months in Canada) (cf. chapter II research report)

1.1. Research question

What can the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs (*Departement Internationaal Vlaanderen*, DIV) learn from Quebec's Ministry of International Relations (MRIQ) when developing a foresighted public diplomacy and domestic outreach?

1.2. Chief aims

Analysis of MRIQ's (domestic and international) public diplomacy, and feedback on insights and conclusions to DIV.

1.3. Research outline

- **Theoretical phase**: definition of key research terms by virtue of an in-depth scientific and policy literature study, assessed through the social scientific methodology of making abstract and complex concepts and their interrelationships operational.
- **Empirical phase**: mapping of MRIQ's public diplomacy with focus on primary information obtained by (more than 35) qualitative in-depth interviews of experts and government representatives.
- **Policy oriented-phase**: evaluation of data on the basis of strengths and weaknesses, and interpretation of research results for DIV.

1.4. Policy and scientific relevance

Scientific research into public diplomacy is often neglected in the broader study of the image and diplomacy of federate entities, which this research aims to amend.

As a specific study into the public diplomacy of federate entities, the research will contribute to the further strategic and structural development of DIV's public diplomacy.

1.5. Delineation

Focus on analyses of MRIQ's public diplomacy.

2. EXPLANATION OF TERMS (cf. chapter III research report)

From **both pragmatic (practice) and normative (theory) points of view**, **-** not interpreted in opposition or in juxtaposition to one another- , **four questions (what, why, who and how?) are succinctly answered in a working definition of public diplomacy.**
Synergy of both models in an explanation of terms provides insight in to what a ministry of foreign affairs (MFA) can realistically aspire.

2.1. What is public diplomacy? Definition (cf. chapter III.1.2.)

The **involvement** of **public opinion** at home and abroad in **foreign-policy making**

1. **Involvement:**
   To inform, sensitize (indirect participation, one-way process) (pragmatic)
   To engage, debate (direct participation, two-way process) (normative)
2. **Public opinion:**
   Foreign opinion leaders (pragmatic)
   Civil society (populace) at home and abroad (normative)
   Involvement of domestic citizens = domestic outreach/inland public diplomacy (normative)
3. **Foreign policy:**
   Existing policy choices (pragmatic)
   Policy formation (normative)

- In a **pragmatic model**, public diplomacy refers to reactive, ad hoc and short-term informing and sensitizing of a clearly defined group of foreign opinion leaders about existing foreign policy choices and documents.

- In a **normative model**, 'modern' public diplomacy, as advocated in theory, ought to be proactive in the medium and long term, routinely engaging both domestic and foreign civil society in foreign policy formation.

2.2. Why develop public diplomacy? Aim (cf. chapter III.1.1.)

- From a **pragmatic viewpoint**, public diplomacy is a borderline activity (peripheral concern/positive spin-off), and an **instrument** of identity-based and functional interests.

  Public diplomacy that is developed out of **identity-based imperatives** benefits 'nation formation' and 'external distinctiveness', namely domestic and international affirmation and reinforcement of a specific 'desired' identity in order to facilitate access to international fora.

  This does not mean that public diplomacy equals 'nation branding', 'image building' and other marketing communication forms.

  By strengthening relations abroad, public diplomacy attempts to raise public attention and improve reputations, while at home it attempts to stimulate foreign policy dialogue by expanding domestic bonds.

Marketing communication, on the other hand, is oriented towards the projection of the 'desired' identity or reputation.

Public diplomacy that develops out of **functional imperatives** serves to strengthen international positions and surmounts political–economic (hard power) limitations.

- From a **normative viewpoint**, public diplomacy is considered a **core activity and a goal in itself**: in particular, broadening public support at home and abroad for a MFA's international policy.

    Nation branding and image building are thus positive side-effects of the public diplomacy activity and not visa versa!

2.3. Who are the public diplomacy actors ? <small>(cf. chapter III.1.3. research report)</small>

- In a **hierarchical state-centred and policy-driven (pragmatic) model** of public diplomacy, the MFA carries out the **role of dominant communicator**.

    If the ministry of foreign affairs decides to cooperate with **non-state actors** in fulfilling its public diplomacy goals, emphasis is placed on the feasibility of coordination, delineation and selection of actors.
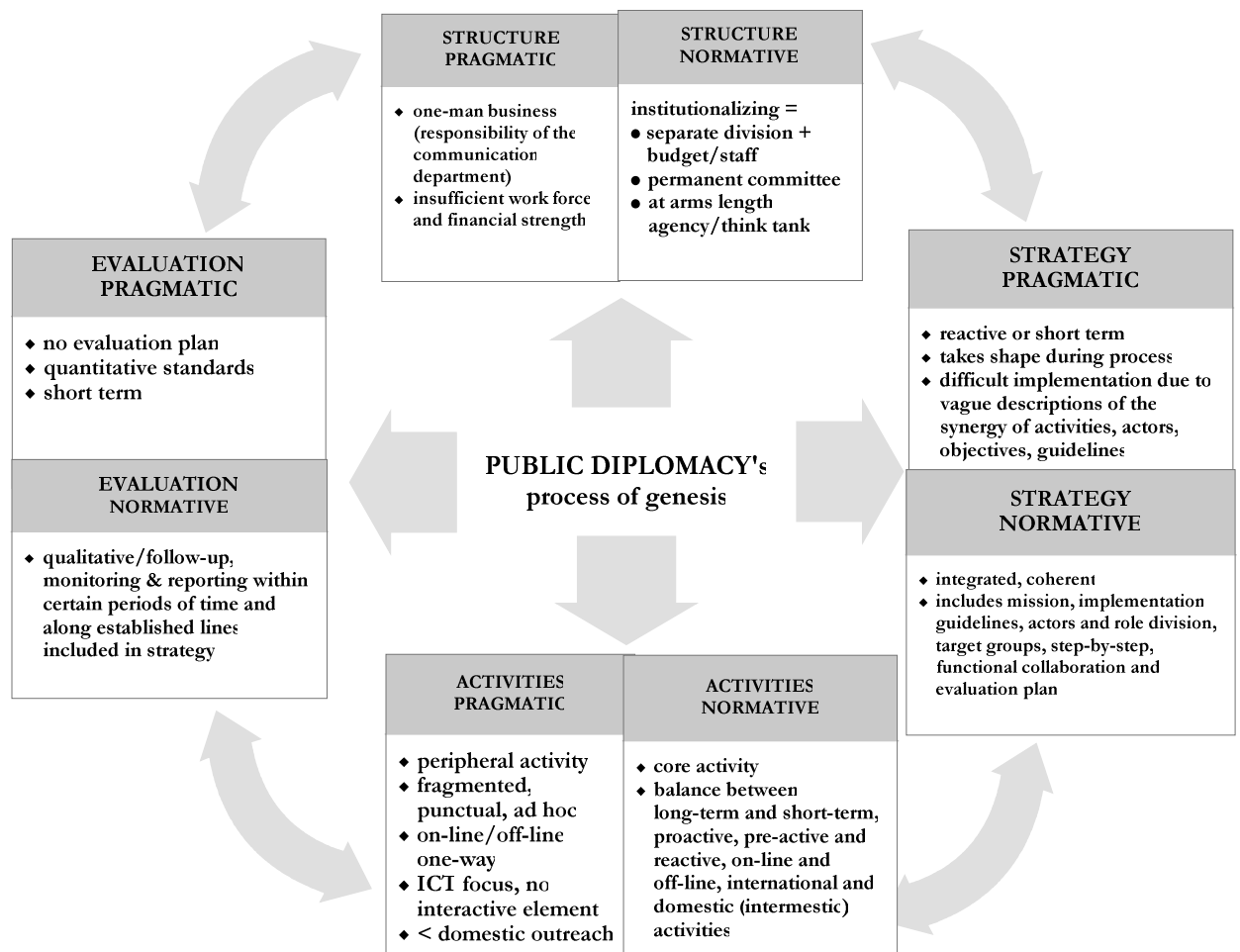
- In a **network relations and dialogue-oriented (normative) model** of public diplomacy, the MFA fulfils the role of coordinator, mediator, supporter and facilitator.

    The role of key sender is contracted out through collaboration with interdepartmental, sub-state and non-state actors.

    In a **public diplomacy 'for' and 'by' civil society**, all potential co-action scenarios are believed to be possible. It is thereby assumed that the amount of visible state intervention inversely affects the efficiency of public diplomacy.

2.4. How to develop public diplomacy? The process of genesis

(cf. chapter III.1.4.)

STRUCTURE PRAGMATIC

- one-man business (responsibility of the communication department)
- insufficient work force and financial strength

STRUCTURE NORMATIVE

institutionalizing =
- separate division + budget/staff
- permanent committee
- at arms length agency/think tank

EVALUATION PRAGMATIC

- no evaluation plan
- quantitative standards
- short term

EVALUATION NORMATIVE

- qualitative/follow-up, monitoring & reporting within certain periods of time and along established lines included in strategy

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY's process of genesis

STRATEGY PRAGMATIC

- reactive or short term
- takes shape during process
- difficult implementation due to vague descriptions of the synergy of activities, actors, objectives, guidelines

STRATEGY NORMATIVE

- integrated, coherent
- includes mission, implementation guidelines, actors and role division, target groups, step-by-step, functional collaboration and evaluation plan

ACTIVITIES PRAGMATIC

- peripheral activity
- fragmented, punctual, ad hoc
- on-line/off-line one-way
- ICT focus, no interactive element
- < domestic outreach

ACTIVITIES NORMATIVE

- core activity
- balance between long-term and short-term, proactive, pre-active and reactive, on-line and off-line, international and domestic (intermestic) activities

3. MRIQ'S PUBLIC DIPLOMACY (cf. chapter IV)

Why the MRIQ?

- Within the context of federate entities or regions, and given Canada's constitutional dualism in international relations, the MRIQ is one of the few ministries of international relations in the world to have institutionalized public diplomacy in a separate division.

- The MRIQ's international policy document *La force de l'action concertée* (2006) suggests an ideal climate for a participatory and more normative-oriented model of public diplomacy, which lays emphasis on interdepartmental, sub-state collaboration and structured ties with civil society.

How can MRIQ's public diplomacy be characterized?

Quebec's public diplomacy follows **three tracks**:

1. An **identity-based public diplomacy**, which has been present for many years in the activities of Quebec's government, sub-state and non-state actors;
2. The recent **institutionalization of public diplomacy** in a dedicated MRIQ division; and
3. A **domestic dimension** that is subordinate to the first two tracks.

3.1. An identity-based, peripheral public diplomacy

3.1.1. Description (cf. chapter IV.1.1.)

- An **identity-based public diplomacy**

  1. Takes its shape from Quebec's **historical domestic political context** and associated themes such as *francophonie* and cultural diversity;
  2. Is **peripheral** in nature, a spin off from 'nation branding' and 'para-diplomatic' initiatives; and
  3. Is present **in a fragmented form**, spread over the activities of other MRIQ divisions, other ministries and sub-state and non-state actors.

- Public diplomacy is an **additional instrument** for the MRIQ **in gaining international recognition for Quebec's distinct identity**.

  'Cultural identity'-based public diplomacy is a way to promote Quebec among both domestic and foreign public opinion as 'the distinct society': a modern, secularized, open nation with the French cultural model as a reference point instead of the North American cultural model.

- Cultural identity-based public diplomacy is characterized by its peripheral nature.
  Peripheral public diplomacy:

  1. Contributes to the **creation of a particular 'desired' image or reputation and lays the foundations for long-term relations and networks,** but does not necessarily bring citizens closer to MRIQ's foreign policy;
  2. Is not an aim in itself but **develops on the margins of other MRIQ divisions' activities** (cooperation agreements, colloquia, conferences, fora, exhibitions, events, apprenticeship programmes and exchange projects), and of initiatives of foreign representations, other ministries, sub-state and non-state actors;
  3. **Does not explicitly encourage dialogue about international policies**, but does not preclude debate either. Indeed, the above-mentioned activities at home and abroad often serve as points of departure to elucidate various aspects of the MRIQ's international policies and to encourage debate.

3.1.2. Strengths and weaknesses

Distinct identity or euphemism of marketing communication (cf. chapter IV.2.1.)

- In the competition for public attention, MRIQ's public diplomacy enjoys an advantage because it can appeal on a clearly established identity.

  Regardless of government change, this distinct identity is the result of a common guiding principle (the Gérin-Lajoie doctrine) and continuous focus on encouraging cultural identity though foreign policy.

- An identity-based public diplomacy, however, runs the risk of being a euphemism for **propaganda, marketing and PR campaigns[6]**:

  1. When communication techniques are not deployed as instruments to involve public opinion in foreign policy-making but are aims in themselves;
  2. When identity-based activities do not match the content of foreign policy. To be regarded as public diplomacy, nation branding and image-building initiatives should contain a key message about foreign policy;
  3. When public diplomacy activities superimpose visibility, the role of the dominant communicator, one-way communication and info-bullying, such actions might be interpreted by the targeted publics as propaganda rather than as attempts to bring them closer to foreign policy formation;
  4. When the difference between public diplomacy and promotion of (inter)national reputation is predominantly based on ministerial presence; more specifically, when
  5. nation branding and image-building initiatives only connect with the content of foreign policy through ministerial speeches, lectures and explanations. This might in the long term be seen by the target audience as a personal PR campaign rather than public diplomacy.

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[6] MRIQ's public diplomacy division reacted (21/07/2008:1) to this feebleness by emphasizing the fact that '*Les activités d'une campagne de diplomatie publique sont variées et n'impliquent pas nécessairement que des explications et des « lectures »; en outre, les présentations par un ministre ou le premier ministre ne constituent qu'une partie des activités prévues. De plus, lors de la dernière réunion annuelle des conseillers en affaires publiques du réseau, ces derniers ont mentionné que les visites ministérielles offrent une meilleure visibilité à leurs activités publiques*'

Merit of collaboration or a substitute for (informal, track-II) diplomacy (cf. chapter IV.2.2)

- MRIQ's peripheral public diplomacy is a **positive side-effect of interdepartmental, sub-state and non-state fine-tuning** on international policy objectives. However, this does not imply that the actors involved are on the same wavelength when it comes to public diplomacy.

- As a peripheral activity, public diplomacy is mainly fragmented with regard to its **interpretation.** For example, in interpreting the division of roles, no clear distinction is made between various population groups (such as academics, journalists, Diaspora and artists) as either non-state actors or 'publics' of public diplomacy.

- The resulting effect of MRIQ's and other actors' **confusion about the senders and receivers of public diplomacy** is that **public diplomacy has become synonymous with – and not complementary to –** academic, cultural, economic, media relations or (informal, track-II) diplomacy (such as citizens' diplomacy)[7].

  Track-II diplomacy implies that a broad spectrum of activities by divergent population groups can represent a country, region or place. Yet public diplomacy presupposes more than simply 'putting Quebec on the world map' by means of similar activities.

- Public diplomacy 'by' civil society is also restricted by **noise on the message level.**
  In spite of the common points of departure that government and non-state actors share, the non-state actors' activities do not intend primarily to engage public opinion in MRIQ's international policy.

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[7] Within the context of this weakness, MRIQ's public diplomacy division's feedback on this summary (21/07/2008) draws attention to the fact that '*Le grand public n'a jamais été – sauf dans de rares cas – un public visé; ce sont plutôt les élites de divers domaines et des réseaux d'influence qui ont traditionnellement constitué les clientèles de la diplomatie publique québécoise*'. Although open to discussion, such a viewpoint, in the long-term, runs the risk of undermining the organizing principles of public diplomacy as such, and the raw material on which it is rooted, namely 'citizens abroad and at home' and goes against a more normative approach of (the new) public diplomacy.

3.2. Institutionalized public diplomacy

3.2.1. Description (cf. chapter IV.1.2)

- Public diplomacy's institutionalization in an existing information division, and the division's current structure, aims and range of duties, are the result of **structural reforms** within the MRIQ:

    1. A **modernization memorandum** (April 2004) adapted the coordination of international communication and assigned a steering role to the division's headquarters in producing and editing all information and promotion material of foreign representations.
    2. **Administrative simplification** (April 2006) initiated the institutionalization (development of a common strategy) of public diplomacy in the MRIQ.

The information and public diplomacy division's **current description of duties** can be summarized as the **integration of MRIQ's public diplomacy and communication abroad**.
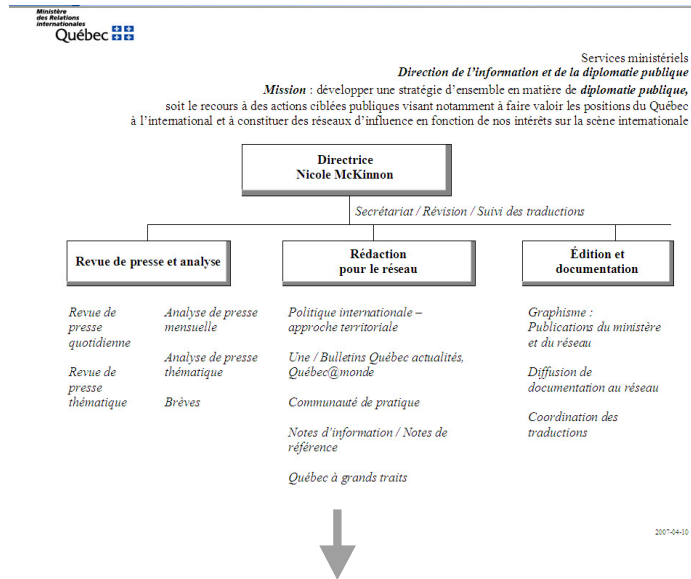
- **The information and public diplomacy division's radius of action** is a symbiosis of:
    1. The information division's former assignments (*édition et documentation*);
    2. Assignments deriving from the above-mentioned structural reforms (*rédaction pour le réseau* and *revue de presse et analyse*).

The **organisational chart of MRIQ's division information and public diplomacy has lately undergone minor change**s in order to crystallize the distinction between the division's traditional information functions (*des services de veille et d'analyse de presse et ainsi que d'édition des documents*) and thoses related to public diplomacy (*l'élaboration de documents décrivant les politiques et les positions gouvernementales ainsi que les grands enjeux qui sont répercutés par les postes à l'étranger*).

This reorganisation boils down to the adding of the term 'public diplomacy' to the existing duty of '*communauté de practique*' (see undermentioned organization charts). Nevertheless, it implies an expansion of public diplomacy tasks through the guidance and follow-up of public diplomacy projects abroad conducted by the foreign representation and the different '*reseaux d'influence des pays*'.

Organization chart MRIQ's division information and public diplomacy

November 2007

September 2008
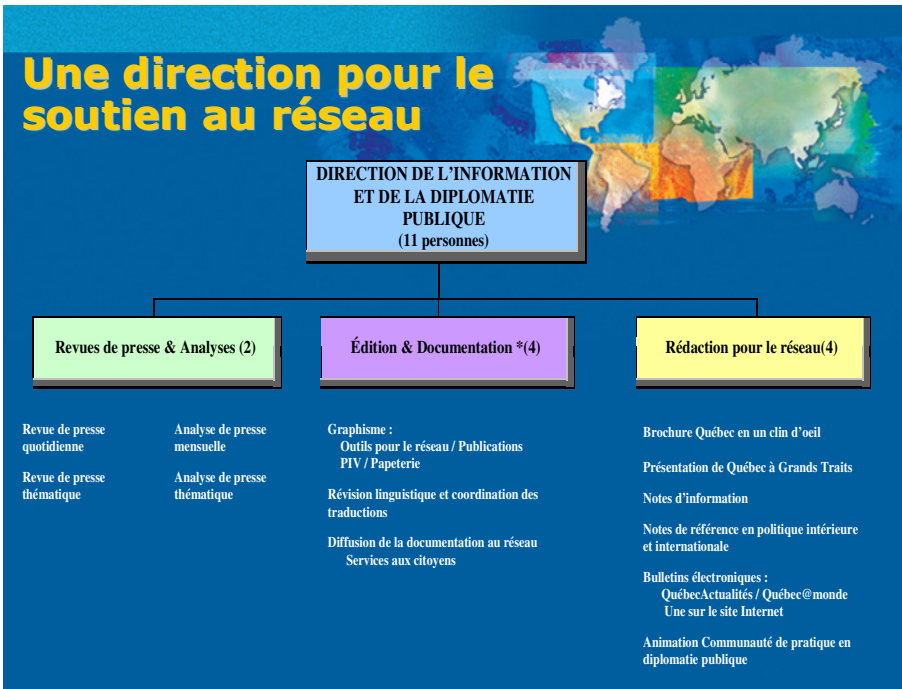
ORGANIZATION CHART MRIQ's
DIVISION INFORMATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Source: Gouvernement du Québec, MRIQ, DIDP (09/10/2007). La diplomatie publique et ses outils (PP presentation) and Gouvernement du Québec, MRIQ, DIDP (19/09/2008). Foreign and External Relations of Federated Entities La pratique de la diplomatie publique au Québec(PP presentation)

The '*édition et documentation*' **section** is qualified for:
1. Follow-up and coordination of MRIQ's translations;
2. Graphic design;
3. Dissemination of information and services to the public.

The '*revue de presse et analyse*' **section** collects and analyses domestic and international newspapers, weekly and monthly magazines and periodicals on Quebec.

The '*rédaction pour le réseau*' **section** is responsible for the content of a range of digital information instruments, such as:
1. Electronic newsletters and magazines;
2. Didactic material for foreign representations.
3. and from earlier this year (April 2008) the guidance and follow-up of public diplomacy projects abroad conducted by the foreign representation

- A **common public diplomacy strategy** was formulated by the division (December 2007).

  The strategy includes:
    1. The division's **mission**: '*la mise en oeuvre de la diplomatie publique au MRI*';
    2. A **definition of public diplomacy,** particularly '*le recours à des actions ciblées visant à mettre de l'avant les priorités du Québec sur les territoires et à constituer des réseaux d'influence en fonction de ses intérêts internationaux*';
    3. The **public diplomacy goals**: to present in the long term, by goal area, and with emphasis on the measurability of results, a balanced view of Quebec (its position and international choices) to a specific target audience (with multiplication effects, not a mass audience) via ICT and e-diplomacy, international networks and partnership;
    4. A **description of public diplomacy activities**:
       *Des actions concertées***:** collaboration between the various MRIQ divisions and foreign representation with the aim of allotting territorial priorities, target audience, partners and budgets and working out programmes based on the above;
       *Des actions coordonnées***:** all ministries and organisms that are active on the international scene and other partners at home and abroad
       Des actions ciblées: directed towards opinion leaders with multiplication effects (*les clientèles stratégiques de la société civile à l'étranger*);
       Des actions mesurées: the efficiency of results is measured for different time periods (a minimum of 18 months);
    5. A **fund** for public diplomacy that supports the actions of foreign representations if these fit with international priorities.

- **Realization of the public diplomacy strategy has recently (since April 2008) started**. In collaboration with the geographical bureaus, pilot projects and territorial priorities are currently being established, on the basis of which foreign representations are to conduct public diplomacy campaigns. In short, the expansion of public diplomacy actually consists of the following:
  (1) une programmation d'activités déterminée par une direction géographique et UN poste sur UN territoire, engageant principalement des relations avec des acteurs politiques et économiques s'étendant sur une année financière
  (2) une campagne: une programmation complémentaire d'activités, s'appuyant sur les objectifs et les priorités de la politique internationale et du plan stratégique 2008-2011 en fonction des thèmes les plus porteurs sur les territoires d'une ou de plusieurs représentations

The deputy minister of International Relations has authorised, for 2008-2009, the germination of two pilot projects, which are presently in full development in Japan and the United Kingdom, for a minimum of 18 months.

In order to navigate the geographical directions' and the foreign representations' concept and conduct of such public diplomacy projects competently, the MRIQ's public diplomacy division provides at the very least, expertise (technical assistance, advice, and coordination of the approved campaigns). If possible, by virtue of public diplomacy funds, financial assistance may be allocated as well. The standard form and manual provide specific criteria (appui aux objectifs et priorités de la Politique internationale du Québec, publics cibles, partenaires clés, résultats escomptés, ressources engages) on which public diplomacy projects are being evaluated and authorized.

3.2.2. Strengths and weaknesses

MRIQ as a pioneer or public diplomacy's institutionalization in the legitimation and development phase (cf. chapter IV.2.3.)

- Within the context of federate entities and regions, the MRIQ is a **trendsetter with regard to institutionalizing public diplomacy** in a separate division. Public diplomacy is not a one-man business but builds further on an earlier division in charge of information.

  To counter existing fragmentation of public diplomacy, this division is responsible first and foremost for the formulation, implementation and follow-up of a 'collective' public diplomacy strategy.

- In its **positioning, profiling and execution of its role** (the coordination/mediation of public diplomacy activities), the division of information and public diplomacy is still in:

  1. A **legitimating stage**, due to disagree among MRIQ's divisions on the establishment of public diplomacy in an existing information division, because of vaguely explained concepts, description of duties and differentiation criteria, and because of the lack of real surplus value of the information and public diplomacy division's common public diplomacy strategy for the current structure of activities;

  2. A **development stage**, because the formation process of institutionalized public diplomacy became mired in the creation and implementation of a 'sustainable corporate story' (SCS), with respect to both content and design (a SCS is a steering mechanism directed at building rapport between an organization and its stakeholders).

     More specifically, the current functioning reflects the division's emphasis on its information function while its role in public diplomacy is still subsidiary. The division mainly informs public opinion at home and abroad through one-way communication formulae, while relying almost exclusively on ICT. No investment is currently being made in behaviour, which accounts for 90 per cent of credibility and which is vital for public opinion's appreciation of public diplomacy.

- In short, the division's public diplomacy role can roughly be validated in two ways:

    1. From a **pragmatic standpoint** the service fulfils:
    The role of communicator by publishing magazines, websites and newsletters that are open to 'all segments' of the population at home (cf. Québec@monde) – and abroad.

    The role of coordinator (*une fonction de leadership*) **and mediator** (cf. *Québec à grands traits, notes d'informations* and pilot projects within the framework of the implementation of the common public diplomacy strategy) of the foreign representations' public diplomacy activities.

    2. From a **normative standpoint**:
    The division is **not a public diplomacy actor**, but within the context of its usual information function it creates and implements a SCS and projects the 'wished' identity.

    With the SCS, the division indirectly encourages (by providing uniform information), and through **two-step flow communication** (the foreign representation), dialogue abroad on MRIQ's international policy statements.

- The recent expansion of public diplomacy partly remedies the aforementioned stumbling blocks. The concretization of the strategy through projects and activities allows the public diplomacy division to outgrow, in a piecemeal fashion, its legitimating and development phases.

With reference to the legitimating phase, the highest-level approval of the strategy, its implementation and associated funding, provides a map to a more common understanding of the public diplomacy of Quebec. Namely,
- 'des actions ciblées sur des réseaux d'influence (what?)
- visant à faire valoir les priorités du Québec sur les territoires (why?)
- par des campagnes mesurables à court, moyen et long terme' et coordonnées (how?)
- avec des partenaires au Québec et à l'étranger (Financiers, Association avec des réseaux d'influence) et avec le soutien de la direction de la diplomatie publique aux projets (expertise et fonds de diplomatie publique) (who?)

Regarding its development phase, the current expansion of public diplomacy activity, reflected in the miniscule changes in the divisions' organisation chart, is a first step to not get bogged-down in the SCS but instead to wielding it as an effective tool of public diplomacy.

3.3. Domestic public diplomacy

3.3.1. Description (cf. chapter IV.1.3.)

- Domestic outreach – domestic citizen's involvement in foreign policy-making – implies **'dialogue' with voters** and is a sensitive issue because of the (party) political context.

- Even if they do not exclude one another, fluctuations in the acmes of **Canadian and Quebec's domestic outreach are to be understood on the basis of their interrelatedness.** MRIQ's domestic outreach reached a climax around the so-called periods of proto-nationalism, while investments by the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DFAIT) were concentrated around Quebec's 1980 and 1995 referenda.

- MRIQ's domestic outreach peaks occurred with Bernard Landry:
    1. As Minister of International Relations (1984–1985) with a broad public consultation: **'*Sommet du Québec dans le monde*'** for the creation of the foreign policy document
    2. As prime minister (2001–2003) with the international relations' minister's pilot project: **'*L'Observatoire québécois de la mondialisation*'**, an 'at arms length' organization ('*réseau des réseaux*') directed at public debate, not just with opinion leaders but mainly with the broad public.

- Attention to civil society was no doubt paid by **successive and preceding governments**, but the **focus and order of priorities were different**.

    Current policy documents, for example, show that the **present government** attaches particular importance to civil society, but mainly **as a client and a partner rather than as a public of domestic outreach**:

1. On the basis of the **'*déclaration de services aux citoyens*'** (2007), MRIQ wishes to take up various '**commitments with citizens**'.

    Two-thirds of the declaration concerns support for activities abroad by Quebec's non-state actors. The information and public diplomacy division (magazines and website content) and the communication division (press announcements) are thought to be responsible for some domestic engagements.

    The information and public diplomacy division does not assign itself a role with regard to domestic public diplomacy. In its feedback on this document (21/07/2008) the division in charge emphasizes public diplomacy in terms of '*diplomatie publique à l'étranger*' by stressing that '*le modèle québécois distingue les affaires publiques (destinées à un auditoire domestique) et la diplomatie publique (destinée à dialoguer avec de nouveaux partenaires influents sur la scène internationale)*'. It passes this responsibility to the communication service. The communication service can only spend for about 40,000 Canadian dollars on the support of domestic-outreach activities by Quebec's non-state actors.

2. **Neither the strategic plan nor the present policy document – the associated action plan and sensitivity actions – mention public diplomacy**, but this does not exclude the possibility that it is undertaken indirectly.

According to MRIQ's public diplomacy division (21/07/2008), the last part of the second objective of the **2008-2011 strategic plan** (l'action du Québec auprès des gouvernements étrangers et des reseaux d'influence) refers directly to public diplomacy activities as '*ce rapprochement aux relations bilatérales permet de dissocier la diplomatie publique des opérations plus courantes des communications destinées aux médias et à la population québécoise'*. However by emphasizing straight lines between the new strategic plan and public diplomacy it simultaneously unveils a lack of domestic public diplomacy by decoupling domestic publics and public diplomacy.

The **2005–2007 strategic plan**, for instance, contains an objective (*mettre au point des stratégies de communication pour informer les milieux étrangers par le Québec et informer la population québécoise de l'action du Québec sur la scène internationale')* that is closely linked to the pragmatic model of domestic public diplomacy but in essence boils down to optimizing internet facilities.

To quote another example, **the international policy** is prefaced for the first time in 15 years with a prolonged (3.5-year) **consultation process** with about 400 actors (opinion leaders)!

Under the **2006–2009 action plan,** the MRIQ continues to involve umbrella organizations as partners in foreign aid actions (see MRIQ's funding of AQOCI's (Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale) sensitivity actions and international fora such as cultural diversity and *la francophonie*.

Sensitivity actions with regard to cultural diversity and *la francophonie* illustrate that MRIQ's inland public diplomacy emphasizes specific co-actions with Quebec's opinion leaders, but so far, and despite the exceptionally beneficial circumstances, have not led to broad domestic public consultation.

3.3.2. Strengths and weaknesses

Civil society as a client and a partner but also as a public? (cf. chapter IV.2.4)

- In spite of investments in partnerships with domestic non-state actors of public diplomacy abroad and optimizing services to citizens, **domestic public diplomacy is subordinate to the international dimension, both at MRIQ level and the level of the division of information and public diplomacy.**

- **For the time being, the MRIQ's current domestic public diplomacy does not go beyond large-scale sensitivity actions with regard to themes such as cultural diversity and 'francophonie'.**

  Autumn 2008 will make clear whether the common efforts concerning the 'XII° *Sommet de la Francophonie*' will eventually also instigate broad public consultation similar to that of 1985.

- **Despite the preceding consultation process, MRIQ's current international policy does not seem to constitute the ideal policy framework** for developing domestic outreach. 'Working in concert' is not so much directed at debate with the broad domestic public opinion about pursued international policies, but rather at developing partnerships with 'the elites of civil society' as a non-state actor of functional and identity-based activities abroad.

In the words of MRIQ's public diplomacy division (21/07/2008) : *'Les sondages d'opinion pour le grand public sont inutiles puisqu'on ne vise pas cette clientèle; comme l'a illustré Riverpath, on peut quand même « sonder » l'appréciation des participants et des réseaux présents à une activité en les contactant et en faisant le suivi avec eux'*

4. OVERVIEW POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS (DIV)

1. **Develop public diplomacy by preference with the aim: 'to bring citizens closer to foreign policy' as starting-point** instead of 'putting Flanders on the world map'. It allows public diplomacy to take form as objective and as key activity rather than as instrument and peripheral activity of identity-based and functional imperatives.
(cf. I.2. federal states, II.1.1.1. aim, IV.3. introduction feedback)

2. **Distinguish public diplomacy (dialogue about foreign policy) from nation branding or image building (projection of desired identity).**
(cf. I.1. a real image/picture, III.1.1.1. aim, IV.1.1.1. Identity-based factors, IV.2.1. euphemism, IV.3.4. identity and image)

3. **Do not regard public diplomacy as equal to other (marketing) communication forms** but rather use these communication techniques to put public diplomacy into practice. Thus the creation of a sustainable corporate story (SCS) can be deployed to bring citizens closer to foreign policy and not vice-versa.
(cf. IV.2.1. euphemism, IV.2.3. development stage, IV.3.3. identity and image)

4. **Make sure that public diplomacy is not synonymous with but complementary to academic, cultural, economic, media relations or informal/ track II diplomacy** (such as citizens diplomacy), or that the latter are used as tools to fulfil public diplomacy objectives.
(cf. IV.2.2. substitute, IV.3.4. non-state activities)

5. **No budget, no public diplomacy**. Adding the word 'public diplomacy' to the communication department should go hand in hand with an increasing range of duties, accompanying staff and additional financial budget.
(cf. IV.2.3. legitimacy stage, IV.3.4. structure)

6. **Preface the institutionalization of public diplomacy with consultancy** of the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs divisions, cabinet and agencies, foreign representatives and potential non-state partners.
(cf. IV.2.3. legitimacy stage, IV.3.4. structure)

7. **Work in concert with the above-mentioned actors** about (1) the position of public diplomacy in the organization chart of Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs (2) the definition of public diplomacy and the potential task of the 'service' in charge (3) differentiation criteria (such as punctuality) (4) strategy, implementation and follow-up.
(cf. IV.2.3. legitimacy stage, IV.3.4. structure)

8. **Confer with actors on how to contribute to public diplomacy through existing activities** and elucidate their role in public diplomacy.
(cf. III.1. Lord Carter review, III.1.3. actors, IV.2.2. confusion sender/receiver)

9. **Formulate a strategy before proceeding to institutionalize public diplomacy.** Leave enough elbowroom in the strategy so that the public diplomacy process can gradually take shape and can adapt to changes.

(cf. IV.3.4. strategy)

10. **Link up the public diplomacy strategy** with the international communication strategy and **simultaneously specify the particularity of the public diplomacy strategy**.

(cf. IV.3.4. strategy)

11. **Define the mission in the public diplomacy strategy** (with regard to the domestic component, e.g. bringing citizens closer to foreign policy and coordination of public diplomacy activities).

(cf. IV.1.2.2. P-dip action plan, cf. IV.3.4. strategy)

12. **Elucidate the notion of public diplomacy in the strategy by providing an answer to the question: 'What is public diplomacy?'**

(cf. III.1.2. definition, IV.3.4. strategy)

13. **When clarifying the notion of public diplomacy, avoid terms such as 'influencing', 'promotion' or 'selling'**. These might conjure up unnecessary associations with propaganda and public diplomacy 'old style' that takes a passive target audience for granted.

(cf. III.1. universal definition, pragmatic model)

14. **Specify clearly in the strategy the role of the 'division' in charge of public diplomacy** (communicator, coordinator, mediator) and how to fulfil the role in question.

(cf. III.1.3. actor, IV.2.3. normative and pragmatic interpretation, IV.3.4. strategy)

15**. In the case of limited financial and time-consuming budget opt, if possibly, for giving precedence to the role of coordinator and mediator** rather than communicator. The role of key sender can be contracted out to other actors.

(cf. III.1.3. actor)

16**. Formulate the aim of public diplomacy in the strategy** as well by answering following question :' 'why develop public diplomacy?'.

(cf. III.1.1. aim, IV.1.2.2. action plan, IV.3.4. strategy)

17. **Define what can be counted as public diplomacy activities** (useful also in a later stage when subsidizing and contracting out).

(cf. IV.1.2.2. action plan, IV.3.4. strategy)

18. **Strive as much as possible towards complementarity of strategy and existing activities**.

(cf. IV.3.1. central control from head office)

19. In the start-up stage of an institutionalized public diplomacy, the additional work force (2008) of DIV's communication service presumably in charge of more content-oriented tasks can further provide a number of subject matter tools (such as 'Québec à grands traits' or the 'notes de references') (cf. IV.1.2.2. action radius)

20. **Make these tools available to the foreign representation, other divisions, agencies and non-state actors** (such as Flemish contact points and Fleming in the worlds representatives).
(cf. IV.1.2.2. action radius)

21. **Pursue in the long run to build in interactive elements** (policy e-discussions, forum, chat rooms, blogs) in current (digital one-way) information tools. Do not just take into account the potential of new media; do bear in mind that they have their shortcomings too.
(cf. IV.2.3. development stage, IV.3.4. activities)

22. **When implementing public diplomacy opt for coactions with a varied but specific group of opinion leaders and umbrella organizations**. Select beforehand the civil society you wish to engage as a 'public diplomat' and take into account the limits that go with it.
(cf. III.1.3. actors, IV.1.1.2. B, IV. 1.2.2. strategy, IV.2.4, domestic public diplomacy, IV.3.4. activities)

23. **Build further on existing and more network relation-oriented formulae** of public diplomacy (such as the Association Internationale des Études Québécoises).
(cf. III.1.3. actors, IV.1.1.2. B)

24. **Do not develop domestic outreach as an afterthought', subordinate to public diplomacy's international dimension or on a separate track** but rather go by the idea of an 'intermestic public diplomacy 'on takeoff rather than on landing'.
(cf. III.1.2. domestic outreach, IV.2.4.)

25. **Work out variations on existing activities** such as EU sensitizing actions **in order to develop domestic public diplomacy.**
(cf. IV.3.2.)

26. **Preface the establishment of foreign policy with a broad consultation process.**
(cf. IV.1.3.1. Sommet, IV.1.3.2. B)

27. **Avoid confusion about the 'civil society' as target audience and non-state actor of public diplomacy**. Domestic public diplomacy cannot be equated with citizens diplomacy nor with public diplomacy activities abroad of domestic non-state partners.
(cf. IV.1.3.2., IV.2.4.)

28. **Try in the long run to open up domestic debate about foreign policy with opinion leaders and elite consultation to various population segments** and the broader populace. Do take beforehand into account voters' criticism and discord concerning foreign policy.
(cf. IV.1.3.2., IV.2.4.)

29. **Make clear beforehand in how far reactions obtained through broad public consultation** will be taken into account. (cf. IV.2.4, IV.3.2.)

30. **Ministerial support of domestic public diplomacy has to be translated into an allotment of means in terms of budgets, work force and time, and above all in encouragement of a debate culture.**
(cf. IV.2.4, IV.3.2.)

31. **Domestic outreach is the responsibility of the public diplomacy direction service** and can only be transferred artificially to other department services.
(cf. IV.1.3.2. A, IV.3.2)

32. Try **to pursue continuity in domestic public diplomacy** by providing as much as possible back-up scenarios for government change.

33. **Pursue (especially in the start-up stage) modest ambitions, that are practical and implemental**. Broad public consultation preceding foreign policy formation, the founding of an 'at arms length' organization are commendable initiatives, but should be carried out as such in order not to discredit the credibility of the foreign affairs department among the target audience.
(cf. IV.1.3.1. Sommet and Observatoire)

34. **In the start-up stage of domestic public diplomacy, interactive digital tools** (such as policy e-discussions) **might be worth considering**. Due to their shortcomings, these tools should at all times be complemented with the necessary 'face-to-face' public consultation through e.g. conferences, colloquia and lectures.
(cf. IV.3.2.)

35. **Strive in the long run for a normative-oriented model of public diplomacy.**
(cf. III)