

Foreign Policy Strategies in a Networked World: Governance After Brexit

Workshop Convened by the Centre for Politics and Media Research

21 September 2018, Bournemouth University

Venue: Talbot Campus, BH12 5BB, Poole, Fusion Building, Room: FG 04

Conveners: Dr Paweł Surowiec and Dr Alina Dolea (Bournemouth University)

Outline of the Workshop

Is Networks Building the Answer to Britain's Foreign Policy Issues in European Politics in the Post-Brexit Governance Era?

Background

The aim of this workshop, targeting scholars of foreign policy, media and communication studies as well as practitioners working in the field of diplomacy, is to explore strategies required for building, managing and maintaining diplomatic networks for the conduct of foreign policy in European politics. The central premise and rationale for the discussion about networked approaches to foreign policy stems from the scale of changes brought about and facilitated by a new emerging logic in the field of foreign policy and a political event such as Brexit, which will have long lasting effects on the practice of diplomacy and the conduct of foreign policy. In the field of diplomacy and statecraft, particularly in its sub-field of public diplomacy, the logic of networks, underpinned by the adaption of, and practices associated with social media platforms and hybridisation of soft power statecraft, has been gaining prominence for quite some time. It is only in the recent years when the logic of networks has been gaining prominence in the foreign policy and diplomatic circles beyond the realm of public diplomacy, and it has been developed into a measure for a real alternative to institutional governance solutions.

Practical Considerations: From EU Multi-Governmentality to Strategic Networks

For example, since the Brexit referendum, the United Kingdom's diplomacy and soft power statecraft have been focusing on building closer bilateral and trilateral diplomatic relations with European states. At the same time, in this turbulent period for British foreign policy, the UK Government attempts to lay ground for governance after 'Brexit', and to develop and advance capabilities to meet the requirement for building sustainable networks outside of the frameworks of the European Union. Therefore, this workshop takes the United Kingdom and its European allies (e.g. Poland) as proponents of networked approaches to foreign policy, and explores how the digitalisation of diplomacy extends to the advancement of governance solutions through: leadership issues, institutional practices and resilience strategies, allocation of resources, media strategies, policy making and how it can and should aid the development of diplomatic networks, particularly in the settings of a 'strategic bilateral rapprochement' emerging between the United Kingdom's and its European allies such as Poland. This workshop will focus on the challenges to the participatory foreign policy making, the orderly execution of Brexit as a foreign policy orientation, and the requirement for empirical examination of ways in which: 1) conditions and resources which are required for the formation of sustained networks serving the foreign policy interests; 2) diplomats and public diplomats approach building and maintaining networks; 3) political and business leaders and citizens are being engaged with foreign policy issues; 4) digital media technologies aid the formation of networks; 5) finally, diasporic communities and their role in networks serving foreign policy interests.

Theoretical Considerations: Power of Networks and Power in Networks

Defining and measuring the power of a network is another way of investigating what networks are good for as foreign policy tools. What attributes do networks have that make them particularly sustainable and effective in particular circumstances, relative to institutional hierarchies or markets? When, for instance, would we strive to create a network of states or web actors rather than a more formal organisation or simply an informal coalition or club?

Making sense of power *in* networks, by contrast, means theorising where and how the United Kingdom's, strategic European partners, and web allies should position themselves within the existing or new networks to be able to advance their own interests. These two types of power are interlinked and as participants understand that the network's structure can enhance its

power, it is likely to influence the overall structure as well as improve its position within it. This workshop aims to problematise both types of power as drivers of foreign policy.

Themes For Presentations/Themes We Are Interested In

- a) In what ways does British foreign policy set the priorities for the governance after Brexit?
- b) What are the characteristics of diplomacy and statecraft in the networked environments?
- c) How does, if at all, the logic of digital networks apply to the conduct of foreign policy?
- d) What architectures are needed for sustainable human and institutional networks for the conduct of foreign policy?
- e) Can digital media technologies be used as sustainable platforms for the conduct of foreign policy making and, if so, in what capacities can digital media organisations facilitate it?
- f) Issues-based or actors-based networks – what might work best for the United Kingdom in the post-Brexit European politics?
- g) What are the challenges and solutions to statecraft in the networked environments?
- h) What are challenges and solutions to diplomacy in the networked environment?

Expression of Interest and Submission of Abstracts:

Abstracts of 250 words outlining presentation title, spelling out key points, methods - if relevant -, and the line of argumentation are to be submitted to psurowiec@bouremouth.ac.uk by 14 September, 2018, 5.00 pm. Please add all relevant names, affiliation and email address(es).

Targeted Participants: scholars of foreign policy; diplomatic studies; media and communication studies; public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy; practitioners of public diplomacy and digital diplomacy; public relations and nation brand consultancies; public relations for diplomatic institutions; representative from digital media organisations; foreign correspondents; diplomatic correspondents; leaders of diasporic organisations; leaders of academic institutions and courses; think-tanks; and research organisations.

Targeted Audience(s): See above. In addition, the event is likely to be attended by a group of students taking journalism and politics courses.

We anticipate 15 presentations (15 min. each); informal participation is encouraged.

Please note that limited spaces are available.

Programme details to follow.

Informal inquiries: psurowiec@bournemouth.ac.uk

Preliminary timeline:

Session 1 (9:30 -11:00)

Coffee break 11:15 -11:30

Session 2 (11:30 -13:00)

Session 3 (14:00 -15:30)

Coffee break 15:30 -15:45

Session 4 (16:00 -17:30) Grant proposal