

EU COMMUNICATION ON INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS: A GEOPOLITICAL RESPONSE?

Oszkár Roginer-Hofmeister *

December 2025

* Oszkár Roginer-Hofmeister has been working for the Prague based think-tank EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy since September 2022. He first worked as a Project Coordinator and Analyst, and since January 2025 he has been Head of the Global Europe Programme. He holds a PhD in Literary Sciences (University of Pécs), a PhD in Southeastern European History (University of Graz), an MA in Cultural Sociology (University of Zadar), and has a primary education in Hungarian Studies (University of Novi Sad). His main interests lay in media politics, social media, policy and content analysis, structure of media landscapes and press freedoms in Hungary and the Western Balkans.

Note: This publication has been authored by external contributor/s. The contents do not necessarily reflect the opinion or the position of EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy

This policy paper was produced within the Think Visegrad in Brussels Fellowship programme. In the first half of 2016, eight think-tanks from the Visegrad Group that have been cooperating in the Think Visegrad platform, agreed on the idea proposed by the EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy, to create a common representation office in Brussels. The main motivation for it is the need to encourage debate on issues of common interest to the EU and the V4 and explain the positions of the V4 to a wide audience. Think Visegrad in Brussels would like to project an image of constructive partners, to explain the dynamics of the debates within our regions and to highlight our active contributions to EU policy-making. For more information about Think Visegrad and its members visit www.think.visegradfund.org.

Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	2
<i>Description of the problem.</i>	4
<i>The Geopolitical Turn</i>	6
<i>EU Public Diplomacy in the 2020s</i>	8
<i>Conclusion</i>	11
<i>Recommendations</i>	12
<i>About EUROPEUM</i>	14

Introduction

*“We had never had to explain inside the house,
that you are in the house”¹*

This study aims to assess the need for a geopolitical turn in EU public diplomacy with a specific focus on communication connected to EU-supported infrastructure projects, while exploring the possibilities of a more proactive soft power approach in EU image creation driven by geopolitics. The paper analyses the visibility of the EU as a donor through infrastructure projects both within and outside the EU, and provides an overview of the currently dominant public diplomacy approaches revolving around values, storytelling, and human-centred narratives. Although there are some indications of change, this study argues that public diplomacy should more decisively shift towards practical geopolitical narrative framing rather than remaining within the normative sphere.

While we are already observing the beginnings of a geopolitical response to communication as a whole, the paper states that the EU's public visibility in relation to infrastructure projects currently depends largely on the informative, but somewhat obligatory use of logos, flags, promotional boards, and appearances in the news. This non-explicit use is part of the promotion protocol, and is only “implying the EU values the project carries for the community, which will use it,” as it was voiced in one of the interviews conducted for this paper.

EU visibility does not utilise the opportunity of project-related communication to its full potential. As a result, this generates only a limited soft power impact in the highly competitive communication environment of broader Europe. The question the paper aims to address is therefore,

*What are the current motivations in EU public policy regarding infrastructural projects,
and is there potential for moving towards a more geopolitical approach in the realm
of EU communication policies?*

The final aim is to explore the possibilities of whether a geopolitical response to the current EU public policy challenges surrounding infrastructure projects would translate into a more impactful EU image and, ultimately, into a more efficient tool of EU soft power activity both within the EU and in its

¹Anonymous EU official 2025.

neighbourhoods.

To understand this problem, this paper relies on anonymised interviews with experts and EU officials conducted at the European Commission, the European External Action Service, and the European Parliament in Brussels.

Description of the problem.

As there is a shifting trend towards a geopolitical framing of several EU-related policy areas, such as enlargement², agriculture³ and energy⁴, a geopolitical turn in EU public diplomacy is an approach one must also contemplate in the highly competitive communication environment of today. While the EU is currently largely relying on the narrative framing of values, these remain mostly abstract even if they are communicated through relatable examples, where campaigns use people, success stories, and engaging topics. In the case of infrastructure projects, the visibility of the European Union as a donor is even less, and it is little more than an administrative formality. The projects are still not sufficiently contextualised for the local communities, they appear as insular interventions and less as networked approaches to interconnect and facilitate the free movement of goods, services and people.⁵ Parallel, a need to move towards a more geopolitical approach in public diplomacy is already being articulated.⁶ It is worthwhile to examine therefore, this necessity in an environment where purely administrative or benevolent messaging proves less effective than the competitive narratives of other actors.

By looking behind the soft power tools of various entities, we use Joseph Nye's definition. "Soft power is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments."⁷ Although payments need to be clarified, as investments are a form of financial transaction, we understand soft power as an auxiliary and informal tool of foreign and domestic policy. In terms of infrastructure, audiences should in this sense be attracted not to the "well-intended" act of funding itself, as there is only an impersonal financial link between the local population and the EU as an abstract entity. The

² Mats Braun (et.al): The future of EU enlargement in a geopolitical perspective. <https://www.iir.cz/the-future-of-eu-enlargement-in-a-geopolitical-perspective>

³ Nora Förell, Elisabet Nadeu, Melanie Muro: From sustainability to competitiveness: What shifting narratives means for EU agricultural policy. Institute for European Environmental Policy. September 2025.

⁴ Filippos Proedrou: EU Decarbonization under Geopolitical Pressure: Changing Paradigms and Implications for Energy and Climate Policy. Sustainability 2023, 15(6)

⁵ Marcin Dąbrowski, Dominic Stead, and Barbara Zartler, "Cohesion Policy and the Citizens' Perceptions of the EU: The Role of Communication and Implementation," European Planning Studies 28, no. 10 (2020): 1989–2008.

⁶ Jovan Kurbalija: EU Digital Diplomacy: Geopolitical shift from focus on values to economic security. <https://www.diplomacy.edu/blog/eu-digital-diplomacy-geopolitical-shift-from-focus-on-values-to-economic-security>

⁷ Joseph S. Nye, Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power (New York: Basic Books, 1990), 31.

visibility elements of a project should rather reach the local population (and visitors) and represent the EU as “pars pro toto” element, which connects their community to other, similar communities across the continent. This way, the infrastructure project shall attract the users of these infrastructure projects to the EU through underlying positive messaging via images and narratives incorporated into the project itself. Nye also notes that “[a] country’s soft power rests on its resources of culture, values, and policies – when they are attractive to others.”⁸ Accordingly, the EU makes considerable efforts to generate this attraction through outreach mechanisms named by Nye. Nevertheless, public diplomacy in infrastructure projects is subtle: it does not display values, benefits and connections explicitly. As a result, the soft power impact of public diplomacy lasts far shorter than the lifespan of the object. This reduces the soft power impact practically to the duration of the promotion materials (on-sight promotional and information boards), without utilising the infrastructure object itself as a promotion and messaging opportunity.

A further problem is that there is no agreement at the EU level on how public diplomacy – which would result in effective soft power activity – should be understood. As the authors of the 2021 Update of the 2015 EU perception study state, “we understand that there are two conceptual visions of public diplomacy – as a strategic communication and as a tool for dialogue and relations. Neither practice nor scholarship can agree which of both should guide the approach to public diplomacy.”⁹ As there is no clear understanding in general, infrastructure projects – which ironically inter-connect local citizens through everyday use of various objects (bridge, tunnel, school, etc.) – remain severely underutilised for public diplomacy purposes.

It is also a new reality that member state and EU soft power tools compete in front of local audiences. Until recently, they were complementary and were never used against one another, thus working in practice as two strata of public diplomacy in previous decades. There was also negligible interference from foreign actors. Since the 2010s however, the attraction of the EU has become highly contested through the disinformation activities of both foreign and domestic adversaries, which makes effective EU messaging even more important.¹⁰ While China and Russia employ highly effective narrative framing to assert their involvement, the European Union's subtle public diplomacy efforts are less conspicuous,

⁸ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004), 11.

⁹ European External Action Service (EEAS), *Update of the 2015 Perception Study: Final Report* (Brussels: EEAS, 2021). 28. <https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Update%20of%20the%202015%20Perception%20Study%2C%20Executive%20Summary%20and%20Main%20Report%20%28Volume%201%20and%202%29.pdf>

¹⁰ Domenico Valenza: *The Trap of Geopolitics: Rethinking EU Strategic Communication*. College of Europe Policy Brief. March 2021. https://www.coleurope.eu/sites/default/files/research-paper/valenza_cepob_3_2021_final.pdf_0.pdf

even though it is the largest source of infrastructure funding in numerous countries, both within and beyond its borders.¹¹ This difference is especially true in more hostile or volatile communication environments such as Hungary,¹² Serbia,¹³ or Georgia.¹⁴

Choosing “not to appear aggressive” or “as a colonising power” – as mentioned by EU officials in the interviews – EU public diplomacy remains within the confines of the discrete by employing non-invasive interventions to achieve its goal. In the case of infrastructural projects, this results in putting up the EU flag on the respective object and an informative board displaying project-related information. Unlike other donors, it refrains from monumental branding, mutually reinforcing and mediated speeches, incorporated statues, or disproportionately festive opening ceremonies. The goal of its communication is “dignity” and “elegant professionalism” as it was mentioned by an EU official, and that the infrastructure project itself “is recognised as beneficial for the local community”, as it was mentioned by a further EU official.

Guided by the Communication and Visibility Rules for EU funding programmes 2021-2027,¹⁵ these publicity approaches respect all the outlines the European Commission envisions for this period. However, in a highly competitive communication environment these subtle approaches are often insufficient as others play by other rules. This often results in the perception of China or Russia as a strong and more efficient partner, rather than the EU which is seen fragmented and less potent than its competitors.¹⁶

The Geopolitical Turn

To tackle the challenges from Russia, China, and more recently the US, the EU is making an effort to rebrand itself as a geopolitical actor. Replying to the question of Joseph Weiler in an interview in 2020, “[w]hen you speak of not only relying on ‘Soft Power’ but turning to the ‘language of power’ I imagine that, in the context of the EU, what you have in mind is to ‘weaponize’, so to speak, Europe’s economic might?” Josep Borrell answered “Not only the economic might. It is about combining the variety of the

¹¹ Ties Dams, Xiaoxue Martin and Vera Kranenburg (eds.): China’s Soft Power in Europe Falling on Hard Times. ETNC 2021. <https://ceias.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/ETNC-2021-Chinas-Soft-Power-in-Europe-Falling-on-Hard-Times-1.pdf>

¹² Eastern Opening Meets Belt and Road: State-Backed Narratives of Global Order in China-Hungary Relations, CEIAS Commentary, April 12, 2024.

¹³ Benedetto, Antonella. The Chinese Influence in Serbia and the Implications for its EU Accession Process. Blue Europe, Sept 20, 2024.

¹⁴ Gondauri, Davit, and M. Moistsrapishvili. Development of Railway Silk Road as a Platform for Promoting Georgia’s Economic Growth. arXiv, May 20, 2025.

¹⁵ Communication and visibility rules for EU funding programmes 2021-2027 https://european-social-fund-plus.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-07/communication%20and%20visibility%20rules_2022.pdf

¹⁶ Andreea Budeanu: Understanding Chinese influence in Europe: an institutional asymmetry approach. Journal of European Integration, Volume 47, 2025, 905-923.

European Union's resources in a way that maximizes their geopolitical impact.”¹⁷ The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy implied in this sense, that it is not only economic power what needs to be perceived as a geopolitical tool, but a combination of all resources in a much more creative and goal-oriented way. Similarly, Ursula von der Leyen returned to geopolitics as a key factor in her 2023 State of the Union address: “[w]hen I stood in front of you in 2019 with my programme for a green, digital and geopolitical Europe I know that some had doubts. That was before the world turned upside down with a global pandemic and a brutal war on European soil. But look at where Europe is today. We have seen the birth of a geopolitical Union – supporting Ukraine, standing up to Russia's aggression, responding to an assertive China and investing in partnerships.”¹⁸

Although the EU has clearly shifted towards geopolitical ambitions since the late 2010s, its public diplomacy still largely avoids such rhetoric and lags behind. This is evident even when infrastructure projects, which are among the most tangible ways to connect local communities to a more integrated and geopolitically significant EU, are involved. These projects include bridges, roads, schools, and a wide range of other public structures. Appearing fragmented and not as a significant geopolitical actor, the geopolitical turn is in many aspects rather wishful thinking than realpolitik.¹⁹ In addition, this geopolitical role is even contested quite often in some member states, such as Hungary or Slovakia.

Intensifying in the 2020s, but having its roots in the 2010s, the moves towards a more integrated EU and the conservative responses,²⁰ ultimately catalysing radicals like the Europe of Sovereign Nations and the Patriots for Europe groups, expose EU corporate messaging to a process where the EU image appears torn from within without a consensus on what kind of EU the messaging should convey. An EU official went as far as stating that “There is no coherent vision.” Despite all shortcomings, China and Russia do not lack this common denominator, which was most prominently visible during the pandemic and their vaccine diplomacy efforts. If we perceive this from an infrastructure investment standpoint, the tensions between the Commission and member states, where infrastructure investments are among the issues, messaging often results in conflicting communication exercises on a daily basis. Moreover, this divergent understanding of the EU results in a chaotic image for both outsiders and the wider population

¹⁷ Several Outlets - Europe Must Learn Quickly to Speak the Language of Power https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/several-outlets-europe-must-learn-quickly-speak-language-power_und_en

¹⁸ 2023 State of the Union Address by President von der Leyen https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/2023-state-union-address-president-von-der-leyen-2023-09-13_en

¹⁹ Luke Johnson: What Europe Thinks ... About Geostrategy. <https://ip-quarterly.com/en/what-europe-thinks-about-geostrategy>

²⁰ European Commission. 2024. The EU in 2023 – General Report on the Activities of the European Union: Chapter 9. Institutional Developments and Strengthening Democracy. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/com/general-report-2023/en/chapter9.html>

within the EU, burdened by narratives of a power weakened by internal conflict.²¹

EU Public Diplomacy in the 2020s

Until the mid-2010s, EU visibility relied on the one hand on press statements, which were mainly devised to be easily adaptable to the formats of legacy media, such as the evening news. On the other hand, it relied on out-of-home campaigns (billboards, posters, ambient and street furniture advertising) presenting facts and statistics. However, with the Covid-19 pandemic and later with Russia's full scale invasion of Ukraine, this methodology became insufficient, pushing the EU to contemplate other approaches²²

Building on central institutions, such as DG COMM, DG NEAR and EEAS, and EU-wide networks of European centres, EU representations and EU delegations it has also become more data-driven and decentralized.²³ Recognising that one size does not fit all and that national audiences respond differently to European messaging, public diplomacy has progressed significantly towards interactivity. Expanding into social media content, focusing on relatable human stories and emotions, as well as relying on partnerships with local multipliers, such as influencers, SMEs and CSOs, EU public diplomacy changed significantly.

The two terms of the von der Leyen Commission also marked a definite departure from legacy media and public statements, introducing a new era where another kind of tempo and creativity is in demand. This shift in needs is also recorded in the annual Reuters Digital News Report, where social platforms combined constitute the primary source for around 52–60% of news consumers in the EU, while television and radio broadcasters continue to decline yearly, with social media overtaking traditional outlets as the main source of news for adults under 35.²⁴ In Central and Eastern Europe, this trend is especially steep. In addition, trust in traditional outlets is consistently low, with news consumers often choosing the algorithms of social media over curated interpretation of events.²⁵

With a decline in linear, appointment-based media schedules and printed press losing routine audiences,

²¹ René Cuperus – Saskia Hollander: Beyond the EU enlargement paradox Optimising opportunities and minimising risks. Clingendael Report. March 2024.

²² 30 years of public communication challenges. https://www.politicheeuropee.gov.it/media/2650/30th_anniversary.pdf

²³ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2021. OECD Report on Public Communication. Paris: OECD Publishing. https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2021/12/oecd-report-on-public-communication_b74311bc/22f8031c-en.pdf

²⁴ Newman, Nic, Richard Fletcher, Craig T. Robertson, Amy Ross Arguedas, and Rasmus Kleis Nielsen. 2024. Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2024. Oxford: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, June 17, 2024. https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2024-06/RISJ_DNR_2024_Digital_v10%20lr.pdf

²⁵ Ibid.

it is the algorithms, not editors, who deliver content through feeds. Reflecting this, the European Commission expanded its communication strategy by including social media channels even more to reach younger and digitally connected audiences, stating that effective communication requires “a mix of channels and media (traditional and new)” to reach citizens directly and counter misinformation in an increasingly digital environment.²⁶

The credibility of images, including infrastructure projects, is increasingly determined by visibility and virality, not editorial authority. Therefore, what we are witnessing is, in several aspects, a structural inversion, where traditional media still sets the agenda on topics. However, social media decisively shapes the perception of that agenda not only through the input and circulation of images and narratives, but also through the manipulation of the algorithm.²⁷ Nevertheless, all these changes have impacted communication around infrastructure projects in a limited manner. Unlike competing actors in the field, very little content is being produced, and instead of using the infrastructure (object) as a permanent vehicle of EU messaging, the projects are still largely visible only in news media outlets as they are started or finished.

Digitalisation, generational consumption habits, calls for a more integrated EU and the conservative backlash show that massaging needs to occur via other technologies, to other types of audiences, about another kind of EU. In order to (partly) address this – in the aftermath of Russia’s annexation of Crimea – the EEAS devised an Action Plan on Strategic Communication in 2015.²⁸ Focusing on the eastern flank of the EU and aside from other objectives, this document also highlights the “effective communication and promotion of EU policies and values towards the Eastern neighbourhood” elaborating further “on the development of positive and effective messages regarding EU policies towards the region”²⁹ This initiative also resulted in the establishment of the East StratCom Task Force, as well as the South StratCom Task Force and the Western Balkans StratCom Task Force in the upcoming years. While this reveals a communication response and the establishment of an institutional framework to address geopolitical challenges, the content of the communication itself did not shift towards geopolitical arguments but remained focused on values.

As a further step, two handbooks were devised, including the Communication and visibility Rules

²⁶ Strategic Plan 2020-2024. DG COMMUNICATION. https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/a5fd3b18-1373-4724-bd6e-23a6e13c0b17_en?filename=comm_sp_2020_2024_en.pdf

²⁷ Mareš, M., & Havlík, V. (2022). Misinformation and perception of the EU in Central Europe. *Communications: European Journal of Communication Research*, 47(3), 345–365.

²⁸ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/action_plan_on_strategic_communication.docx_eeas_web.pdf

²⁹ Ibid.

European Union funding programmes 2021-27 Guidance for Member States³⁰ and the Communicating and Raising EU Visibility Guidance for External Actions.³¹ Nevertheless, despite geopolitical challenges, the narrative focus remains on values. “The narrative should focus not only on what the action is, but why it is needed, including by emphasising shared values, interests, and impact.”³² Several interviews confirmed that EU public diplomacy practitioners made an implicit decision that narrative framing should not include geopolitical messaging. One EU official even stated that “[t]here was a decision not to interfere in Brexit, which as we can see now was a mistake.”

Parallel to this, competitors, especially Russia, are heavily involved in malign messaging on every possible occasion.³³ Although this does not necessarily include communication interference or hybrid warfare against EU-supported infrastructure projects, it sheds light on the significant imbalance in the approach to public diplomacy and the harnessing of its full potential through geopolitical framing.

It was also mentioned in the interviews that, unlike Chinese infrastructure investments, the narrative framing in EU-supported projects does not present these objects as part of a larger whole, such as the symbolic Belt and Road initiative. They often appear insular and disconnected from one another, which prevents it for the users of this infrastructure to see the object as part of a bigger whole. However, if all these infrastructure projects were to be presented as interconnected and as part of a network, while framing it as part of larger infrastructure, which increases security and competitiveness and provides access to goods and services, this could return to the EU in soft power value. While value-oriented communication has its benefits, and – as an EU official pointed out – the goal is not “aggressive visibility”, communicating concrete geopolitical benefits instead of individual success stories and abstract values would reinforce the geopolitical agenda from the public diplomacy angle as well.

Conclusion

The EU’s communication on infrastructure projects remains largely rooted in a normative, value-driven narrative that no longer matches today’s competitive geopolitical environment. While the EU has made notable progress in modernising its public diplomacy since the 2010s, its visibility in infrastructure investment continues to rely on minimal protocol-based tools such as logos and informative boards. In

³⁰https://european-social-fund-plus.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-07/communication%20and%20visibility%20rules_2022.pdf

³¹https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/91327909-4660-4a5e-80fb-440adb189a5_en?filename=communicating_and_raising_eu_visibility_-_guidance_for_external_actions_-_july_2022.pdf

³² https://commission.europa.eu/priorities-2024-2029/democracy-and-our-values_en

³³ European External Action Service. 2025. 3rd EEAS Report on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference Threats. European Union. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/3rd-eeas-report-foreign-information-manipulation-and-interference-threats-0_en

contrast, geopolitical competitors such as China and Russia pair their infrastructure engagement with assertive, coherent narratives that frame their actions as expressions of strength, unity, and strategic purpose.

The EU's reluctance to adopt comparable geopolitical framing limits the soft power potential of its substantial investments. Interviews with practitioners reveal that an over-cautious communication culture, fear of counter-narratives about overreaching and neo-colonialism, internal fragmentation, and the absence of an EU-wide baseline consensus on what to communicate, hinder the development of a strategic, narrative frame that would guide the EU's image within and beyond its borders. However, infrastructure projects offer one of the EU's most tangible links to local communities and one of its clearest claims to geopolitical relevance. A shift towards more integrated, strategically framed communication – highlighting connectivity, resilience, competitiveness and security – would not undermine European values, it would reinforce them. Embracing a geopolitical approach could ultimately strengthen the EU's image, enhance its soft power potential, and align communication with the ambitions of the Commission to make the EU a global actor.

Recommendations

1. From values to existential reassurance

Values, although important, are too abstract to be represented in an infrastructure project, even if they are implied. Instead, infrastructure projects should be communicated as a contribution to security, resilience, connectivity, competitiveness, and communication for the local community.

2. Do not change the topic, change the rules of the conversation

A decisive part of human and financial capacity is directed towards debunking, prebunking, and countering disinformation threats. Although this is relevant, adversaries have unlimited capacity to produce new content which, pending virality, will reach audiences despite all efforts to block it. Instead, personal appearances of EU representatives at infrastructure localities, content creation on-site, and larger public opening ceremonies should prevail.

3. Infrastructure is networked, not insular

Infrastructure projects should not be perceived as isolated donations. Rather, they must be

presented as integral components of a broader network. This network ensures that local citizens have reliable, safe, and predictable access to goods and services available in any other part of the system. Instead of an isolated project visibility, this will result in network-based storytelling, tying into the geopolitical agenda.

4. Infrastructure brings us closer as equals

Infrastructure projects must be communicated as integration or enlargement dividends, which makes local citizens equal to their counterparts elsewhere in the EU. Presenting them as top-down donations instead, creates subordination between the donor and the recipient. Therefore, regardless of where they are, these projects must expose a people-to-people motivation, where access to one another is an interchange between equals.

5. Introduce a tiered visibility in competitive environments

In areas where EU communication is exposed to the influence of strategic rivals (both within and beyond EU borders), communication should be more assertive, visible, and driven by geopolitical narratives. This should include high-profile opening ceremonies, demonstrations of how the respective project fits into a larger picture, and clearer messaging on Europe's strategic interests.

6. EU infrastructure as integral part of long-term soft power strategies

Infrastructure should be presented as an integral part of a shared or prospective EU landscape. In this sense, instead of treating visibility merely as an administrative requirement, it should be embedded into broader public diplomacy planning, where these projects create an integral whole with other projects as parts of the lives of all EU citizens. Project twinning and joint presentation of localities, which are distant from each other, but related through their function would also increase geopolitical visibility. As a result, every individual would be able to contextualise and position other infrastructure projects in place and time in relation to the EU funded project in case. If integrated and interconnected via communication and function, the public diplomacy net sum would be larger than its individual parts. Communication should be therefore, linking objects with continuous engagement, thus turning infrastructure into a sustained, revisited, and cross-referenced soft power asset.

7. Infrastructure is the message

Infrastructure should be utilised as a vehicle for messaging. Instead of merely creating news content about the project, the structure itself must appear as a carrier of messages and as a centre of events. Instead of merely having EU symbols on themselves, these structures must become symbols in their own right within the landscape, which are associated with other symbolic objects elsewhere, thus mediating the object itself.

About EUROPEUM

EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy is a non-profit, non-partisan, and independent think-tank focusing on European integration and cohesion. EUROPEUM contributes to democracy, security, stability, freedom, and solidarity across Europe as well as to active engagement of the Czech Republic in the European Union. EUROPEUM undertakes original research, organizes public events and educational activities, and formulates new ideas and recommendations to improve European and Czech policy making. We are the recipient of institutional funding from the European Commission under the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme.



Co-funded by
the European Union

