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Strategic Plan of the Public Diplomacy Council of Catalonia 2019-2022

International Dialogue
Connect. Project. Empower.



Public Diplomacy Council of Catalonia



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Graphic design: Giny Comunicació
Printing: Gràfiques del Foix

Legal deposit: B 26900-2019

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The 2019-2022 Strategic Plan was approved by the Plenary Session of 26 July 2019. Later, on 23 September 2020, the Constitutional Court of Spain delivered judgment on the Catalan Government Agreement 90/2019, of 25 June. To comply with this judgment, the term “public diplomacy” must be considered as not included in the text of the Strategic Plan.

1. Introduction

“ Public diplomacy is the process by which the institutions and public and private actors of a country communicate with the public abroad to disseminate ideas, culture, assets and values, in a continuous dialogue with the rest of the world aimed at creating opportunities, making connections and strengthening our mutual trust.

The Public Diplomacy Council of Catalonia, Diplocat

This is one of the many possible definitions of public diplomacy, which are all similar but show slight nuances and variations. After much consideration, this is the one that the Public Diplomacy Council of Catalonia (Diplocat) chose to define its work.

This definition expresses the essential function of the present strategic plan, which will guide our actions over the next four years. We have summarised our mission through the motto “International Dialogue - Connect. Project. Empower”.

Neither our work nor our institution is new. The Public Diplomacy Council of Catalonia (Diplocat) was set up in 2012. It is a public-private consortium that aims to build bridges between Catalonia and the rest of the world and to facilitate the transfer of people, ideas and projects in both directions. Diplocat is the successor to the Patronat Catalunya Món and the earlier Patronat Català Pro Europa, an entity created in 1982 that was a pioneer in Catalan relations with the EU.

We thus have a long history, as does the consortial and pluralistic nature of the entity, which has been maintained over the years under the consortium’s different names. Diplocat is not at the service of a government or of individual people: it is at the service of a country, Catalonia, and its citizens and institutions.

The plan, which we present below, covers the period 2019-2022 and was drawn up through an open and participatory process with the members of the consortium. It was approved by Diplocat’s Executive Committee on 5 July 2019 and by the Plenary Session of 26 July 2019, which, as the highest body of the consortium, will also approve the annual work plan and the report on activities associated with the plan.

The plan contains a description of the work areas of Diplocat, the strategic objectives and the actions for carrying them out, in accordance with the priorities established by the members of the consortium. The plan is an ambitious but realistic roadmap for positioning Diplocat as an international benchmark in the field of public diplomacy. It reflects a Catalan public diplomacy strategy as a pluralistic and cross-cutting instrument serving the country.

Laura Foraster i Lloret
Secretary general

Public Diplomacy Council of Catalonia (Diplocat)

2. Public diplomacy and the role of Diplocat

“ Public diplomacy is too important to be left only in the hands of nation states or sub-state governments. Everybody should get involved, we all have a role to play.

Nicholas J. Cull, University of Southern California (2019) ”

As a sub-state actor, Catalonia must play an important role in the global arena, and today this involves carrying out external action that is complementary to classical diplomacy, as governments have ceased to be the sole protagonists of international dialogue.

In the digital era, non-state governments, companies, universities, cities, local entities, social movements and the general public are increasingly playing a role in the global governance of an interconnected world. Everyone has the possibility to connect easily with other citizens around the world. However, this increase in the flow of information and digital communications requires channels and meeting points for establishing relationships of trust with a variety of actors.

Aware of this new reality, Diplocat brings together a wide range of voices in Catalonia and deploys the traditional and most up-to-date tools of public diplomacy to bring together civil society and the institutions of Catalonia abroad. The aim is to listen and be heard with a view to building long-term bridges of dialogue and relationships of trust between Catalan and international actors.

The consortial nature of Diplocat, with a diverse and cross-cutting structure, makes it a suitable instrument for supporting all civil society actors in Catalonia who wish to become involved and participate in major international debates. In fact, these actors are already carrying out public diplomacy and contributing their expertise and knowledge to build a fairer, more peaceful, more democratic and more sustainable society. The image of Catalonia is the sum of the many images that these actors transmit.

One of the tasks of this new stage is undoubtedly to better explain the added value of the consortium in order to bring it closer to its members and reinforce it as a place where institutions and civil society come together. The consortium must be seen as a gateway to the world, the best tool for discovering and exchanging good international practices in all areas in which Catalonia is or wants to be a leader, such as business, science, education, associations, tourism, the social and voluntary sector, sport, culture and the environment. Diplocat must be able to accompany all actors of Catalan society who want to be present in the international arena and help them achieve their goals, whenever possible creating opportunities for collaboration and association between them.

In order to carry this out, Diplocat favours a participatory and transparent model and greater involvement of the members of the consortium and the Advisory Council, with whom a joint reflection process was initiated in February 2019 to gather their interests and expectations, now embodied in this strategic plan. Within this reflection process with the members, it soon emerged that there is a need to explain what public diplomacy is, who can exercise it and the tools that are available for it.

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As a result of the liquidation attempt by the Spanish government in October 2017 and during the first months in which Diplocat became operative again in 2019, some people acknowledged that they had no clear idea of what Diplocat is and what it does, partly because of lack of knowledge of the concept of public diplomacy itself. This concept, which is part of the name and brand of the consortium, often leads to confusion. One of the reasons is that there is no clear consensus on its meaning. Although the definition of public diplomacy is more or less accepted among experts, there is no document with absolute authority that offers such a definition. There is even more confusion regarding which actors can carry it out and what its limits are.

Therefore, on 3 May 2019 Diplocat organised the conference “El paper de la diplomàcia pública en l’era digital. Models comparatius” (The role of public diplomacy in the digital era. Comparative models). The conference marked the starting point for the resumption of the consortium’s activity after a forced cessation lasting more than one year. It also allowed us to consider what public diplomacy is, as well as the good practices and tools that it uses. The ideas and contributions put forward at the conference have also been incorporated in this strategic plan.

.....
Indeed, public diplomacy is the process by which the institutions and public and private actors of a country communicate with the public abroad to disseminate ideas, culture, assets and values, in a continuous dialogue with the rest of the world aimed at creating opportunities, making connections and strengthening our mutual trust.

One of the first definitions of the concept of public diplomacy was made in the early 1960s by Edmund Gillion, dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, when the Edward R. Murrow Centre of Public Diplomacy was set up. According to Gillion, “Public diplomacy differs from traditional diplomacy in that it involves interaction not only with governments but primarily with non-governmental individuals and organisations. Furthermore, public diplomacy activities often present many differing views represented by private American individuals and organisations in addition to official government views.”

Public diplomacy is related to what is called soft power, a concept created in the late 1980s by Professor Joseph Nye of Harvard University, who defined it as the ability to achieve aims through seduction rather than through coercion or payment. According to Nye (1990), a country’s soft power is based primarily on its culture, its political values and its foreign policy.

Other academics have contributed to the evolution of the concept. Crocker Snow Jr. (2005), acting director of the Edward R. Murrow Centre, says that public diplomacy has gone beyond the field of government to include other actors, such as the media, multinational corporations, NGOs and confessional organisations as active participants in the area of action of public diplomacy.

Bruce Gregory (2011), former director of the Public Diplomacy and Global Communication Institute at George Washington University, stated that “Today, public diplomacy and the analogous term strategic communication describe an instrument used by states, associations of states, and some sub-state and non-state actors to understand cultures, attitudes, and behaviour; build and manage relationships; and influence thoughts and mobilise actions to advance their interests and values”.

In its 2015 Strategy for External Action, the Spanish government also has a section that includes the following reflection: “In the first few years of the 21st century we are facing a phenomenon already seen in previous chapters of this strategy: the new ability to influence individuals that comes from the possibility of transmitting actions and opinions to an audience of hundreds of millions of people who can react by changing the course of the national or international political agenda” (MAEC, 2015, p. 134).

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More recently, in the opening address of the conference “The role of public diplomacy in the digital era”, Nicholas J. Cull, professor of Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California, defined public diplomacy as the “actions that an actor performs to manage the international environment through interaction with the foreign public” (Cull, 3 May 2019). Cull also says that exercising public diplomacy means listening to others and working with them jointly to develop a relationship of mutual understanding.



Indeed, public diplomacy is the process by which the institutions and public and private actors of a country communicate with the public abroad to disseminate ideas, culture, assets and values, in a continuous dialogue with the rest of the world aimed at creating opportunities, making connections and strengthening mutual trust.

Promoting the image of Catalonia and creating a positive public opinion abroad directly affect the attractiveness of investments, knowledge, institutions and people, while helping to establish and consolidate relations of friendship and trust with the rest of the world.

In light of the definitions, the concept of public diplomacy clearly differs from that of traditional diplomacy, which mainly consists of relations between nation states aimed at facilitating communication between them and entering into international treaties for the attainment of common interests. By contrast, public diplomacy involves action taken by an entity—be it the foreign affairs ministry of a state, a non-governmental organisation or a sub-state entity—on an external community in order to influence its positioning, perception or public opinion.

According to a study recently published by the British Council entitled *Wales Soft Power, Barometer 2018* (McClory, 2018), two primary forces are increasingly pushing regional governments and cities towards the practice of international relations. First, international economic relations entail globalisation and increasing interdependence. Regions and cities compete to attract capital, talent, tourists and exports. Therefore, they need to make their voices heard in the formulation of international regulations and laws, and they wish to help find solutions to the major global challenges. Second, power is increasingly being transferred from state governments to non-state actors such as regions and cities. As a result, interaction with international audiences is no longer a privilege but rather a necessity.

Indeed, in recent years the phenomenon of public diplomacy has rooted significantly in other sub-state entities such as Quebec, Flanders, Greenland and Scotland. Therefore, Catalonia is neither the only nor the first non-state actor to carry out public diplomacy. In fact, in Catalonia public diplomacy is exercised by many actors, including academic, sports, cultural and business organisations, cities, sectoral hubs, and even citizens.

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3. Methodology

As stated above, Diplocat's main asset is its pluralistic and cross-cutting nature. Accordingly, all members of the consortium collaborated and shared their opinions in the drafting of this strategic plan. It could not have been done otherwise. This forms part of the founding spirit of Diplocat and the aim is to maintain it in this new stage. It is the only way to ensure that the entity continues to be a transparent, diverse and cross-cutting instrument for the internationalisation of Catalonia.

The plan was drafted in four stages:



Information and communication

Between February and May 2019, bilateral contacts were held with the member entities of Diplocat to explain that a new strategic plan will mark the activity of the entity over the next four years and to ask them to make any contributions that they deemed appropriate. The same was expressed to the members of Diplocat's Advisory Council.



Analysis and brainstorming

On 3 May 2019, Diplocat convened an international conference in Barcelona on the role of public diplomacy in the digital era. The goal was to clarify the concept of public diplomacy, which is often used incorrectly or distorted, to analyse cases of good practices and to examine sectoral models of public diplomacy. The conference included experts from various fields, and the inaugural address was given by Nicholas J. Cull.

The contributions made by the members of the Plenary Session and the Advisory Council and the content of the conference were used to create the first draft of the strategic plan. It was submitted to the members of the Plenary Session on 6 June. The members were asked to participate in an analysis of Diplocat's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), in order to better assess the feasibility and suitability of the strategic plan. In parallel, the first draft was sent to the members of the Advisory Council in case they wished to make additional contributions.



Development and drafting

When the members of the Plenary Session had endorsed the approach and the general lines of the draft strategic plan, during the month of June it was developed and redrafted especially in the areas of work, strategic objectives and specific actions to be carried out



Review, approval and design

Diplocat's new strategic plan was approved by the Executive Committee at a meeting on 5 July 2019 and by the Plenary Session on 26 July 2019.

4. Criteria for developing the strategic plan and topics to be addressed

In developing the strategic objectives and specifying the actions to be carried out, Diplocat must ensure the following:



To involve the member entities of the consortium in all actions carried out and promote collaboration between them. Whenever possible, Diplocat will also involve other entities and institutions, whose expertise will help carry out the programmed actions.

- The participation will be partly organised through open work groups:
 - On internal sectoral plans such as those of the local sphere, or external ones such as the Catalan government’s plans for Europe and the Mediterranean.
 - On specific activities.



To make an effort towards decentralisation and keep in mind the whole territory. Depending on the topic to be addressed, the work groups will meet outside Barcelona. The actions must also seek a balance, especially since 30% of Diplocat’s members are local entities that represent the entire country. Diplocat will thus have a specific plan aimed at the local level.



To use the classic tools of public diplomacy, such as international visitor programmes (IVPs), exchanging good practices, organising public activities, promoting training, and interaction with the media.



To focus, as far as possible, on the issues that have been considered priorities by the vast majority of the member entities of the consortium because of their cross-cutting nature and their interest for the country. These will include the strategic issues identified as major global debates and those in which Catalonia is, or aspires to be, a benchmark.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The major global debates include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Agenda 2030 for sustainable development. – New economy, training and labour market. – Human movements, demography, social cohesion and interculturality. – Populism and respect for fundamental rights. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The topics in which Catalonia is, or aspires to be, a benchmark include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Scientific, technological and health knowledge. – Entrepreneurship and start-ups. – The social and associative economy. – The ability to attract and organise large events. – Sustainable tourism. |
|---|--|

The strategic topics to be dealt with will indicate the priority countries and geographical areas of action, on the basis that the natural environment of Catalonia is Europe and the Mediterranean.

5. Philosophical elements

“ Power with others can be more effective than power over others.

Joseph Nye, Harvard University (2001)

> Mission

Diplocat connects Catalonia to the world and promotes activities that project the image of the country abroad, creating links and relationships of trust with the citizens and institutions of other countries. In addition, Diplocat encourages civil society and Catalan entities to become involved and contribute to the main global challenges and debates. It fosters their ability to be major players on the international stage in order to establish durable bridges of dialogue over time, with the aim of listening and being heard.

> Vision

To collaborate to position Catalonia as a leading international player, whose public and private institutions help make the country a benchmark in various fields, project their image abroad and help build a fairer, more peaceful, democratic and sustainable international society.

> Values



» Pluralism and cross-cuttingness

Diplocat cannot be understood without all the members that make up the consortium. This diversity enriches the contributions that are made from Catalonia to meet the global challenges. On the other hand, its cross-cuttingness helps optimise resources in actions.



» Commitment and collaboration

Diplocat is an instrument for Catalonia and is clearly committed to Catalan society and its assets and values. This commitment translates into the creation of opportunities for collaboration and association among its members and into the promotion of links between them and their international counterparts. The ability to create synergies and networking is crucial to achieving results in a globalised world.



» Ethics and transparency

All the activities of Diplocat are published on the website and are disseminated and promoted to the public, both locally and abroad, showing full transparency in accordance with current legislation and following the ethical commitment that guides all its actions.

6. Analytical elements

SWOT Analysis

In all projects the elements available for achieving their objectives must be measured. The SWOT analysis of Diplocat identified the strengths and weaknesses of the entity and the opportunities and threats of the environment in which it operates. This analysis helps formulate winning strategies for achieving the mission and the long-term vision.

The following SWOT analysis is the result of a participatory process that started during the working meeting with the members of Diplocat on 6 June.



7. Operational elements

Lines of work, strategic objectives and actions

Line 1

Connect
Listen and be heard

Strategic objectives

- 1.1 Listen to the international audience.
- 1.2 Analyse and exchange good practices and models of excellence.
- 1.3 Promote the participation and contribution of Catalan institutions and civil society in the international arena.

Line 2

Project
Promote Catalonia in the world

Strategic objectives

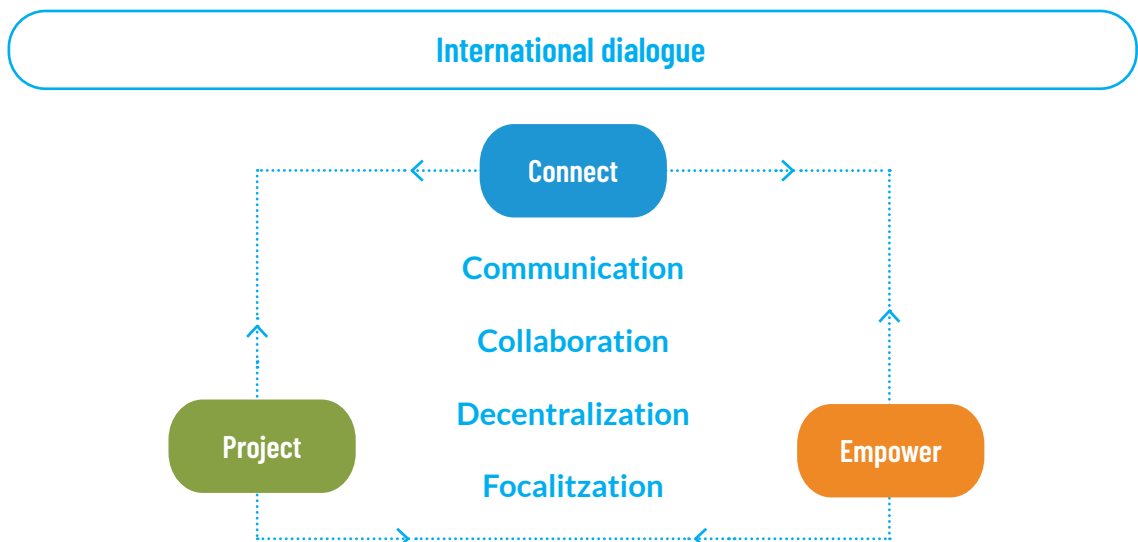
- 2.1 Promote the assets and values of Catalonia through the member entities of Diplocat and civil society.
- 2.2 Promote knowledge of Catalonia among experts, institutions and opinion makers.
- 2.3 Position Catalonia in the international media.

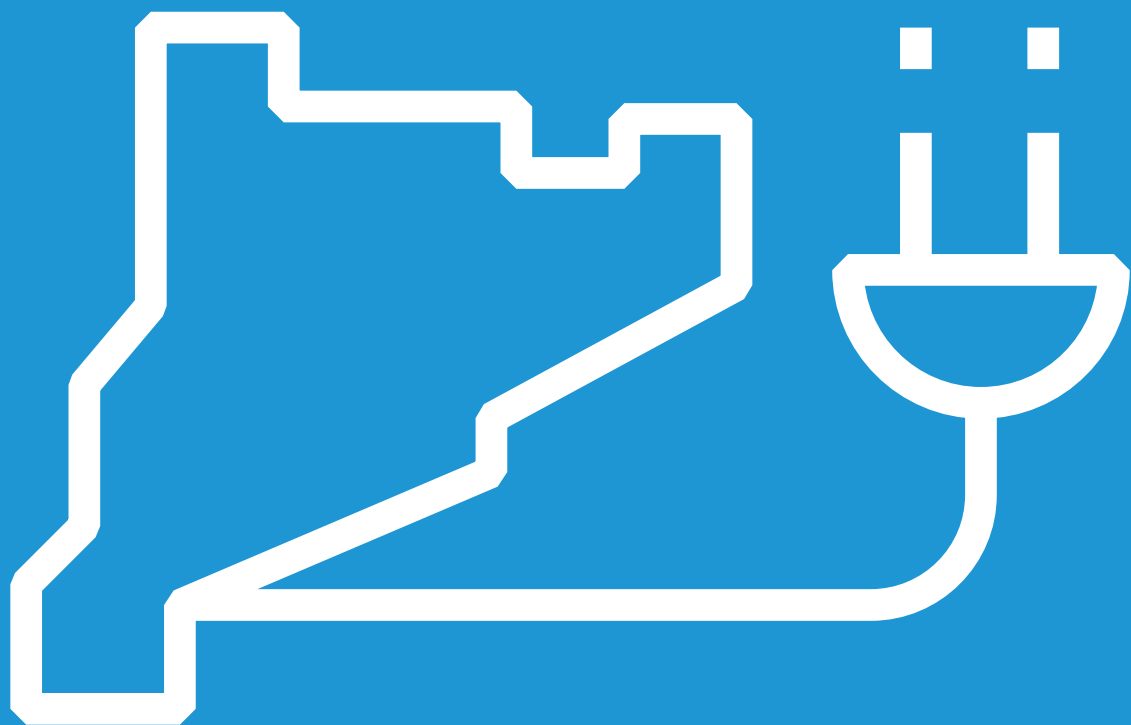
Line 3

Empower
Develop capacity

Strategic objectives

- 3.1 Encourage training and capacity development of civil society in the international sphere.
- 3.2 Encourage training and capacity development of the consortium members in the international sphere.
- 3.3 Promote social networks skills as an instrument of Catalonia's international outreach.





Connect

Listen and be heard

Line 1

CONNECT: LISTEN AND BE HEARD

“ The basis of good public diplomacy must always be to listen. (...) In public diplomacy, listening means interacting with a foreign audience, extracting information and analysing it with the aim of incorporating it into decision making and lines of action. ”

Nicholas J. Cull, University of Southern California (2019)

A key part of public diplomacy, if not the most important of all, is the ability to listen to the audience to whom you wish to contribute a vision of the world. Often, as a result of listening, you have to adapt the way you relate to the world to reach the greatest number of influential actors. In this context, one-directional messages are no use if you wish to be credible.

Catalonia must seek recognition by providing added value to shared problems and generating a common story and strategy with other international actors in order to face supranational challenges. This will allow the country to position itself at the forefront and be more competitive in a global world.

To do this, Catalonia must listen to the world to identify where it can export knowledge and experience in the fields in which it is or wants to be a leader, and to learn from other models of success to become more competitive in those in which it is not yet a leader. Only by looking at the world as a whole and promoting its own assets and values can Catalonia compete on equal terms. The expertise of the members of Diplocat's Advisory Council can be very helpful in this.



Strategic objective

1.1 Listen to the international audience

Diplocat listens to what international public opinion says about Catalonia and the issues of greatest concern in the world in order to subsequently generate a constructive dialogue.

Actions

- 1.1.1 Monitor how the international media perceive the various aspects of Catalonia.
- 1.1.2 Learn how foreign public opinion perceives Catalonia to know how it is valued. Also analyse what is valued about the country in specific areas (economy, tourism, culture, sports, research, governance, etc.) as a tool for designing specific policies and external communication and as a future strategy for strengthening the country's brand.
- 1.1.3 Implement a social listening strategy in order to detect future trends, identify opportunities for communication and monitor conversations about Catalonia in real time and in different languages.
- 1.1.4 Draw up files on international soft power activity by other sub-state agencies and on topics, people and entities currently in the international news to find other models and study possible alliances.

Strategic objective

1.2 Analyse and exchange good practices and models of excellence

Diplocat encourages the study and analysis of good practice models abroad, while promoting knowledge abroad of the most pioneering sectors in the Catalonia.

Actions

- 1.2.1 Organise programmes of visits outside Catalonia to obtain first-hand knowledge of good practices and experiences of interest.
- 1.2.2 Promote seminars and meetings in Catalonia to exchange good practices with international experts.
- 1.2.3 Promote the organisation of a Mediterranean democratic festival.
- 1.2.4 Promote alliances of Diplocat and member entities with international counterparts.

Strategic objective

1.3 Promote the participation and contribution of the institutions and civil society in the international arena

Diplocat positions Catalonia in global debates and helps the entities and civil society of the country to take part and make contributions.

Actions

- 1.3.1 Promote and organise debates of global relevance in Catalonia by contributing to them through Catalan expertise in the subject in question.
- 1.3.2 Encourage and organise IVPs abroad.
- 1.3.3 Promote the use of social networks in the exchange of information.
- 1.3.4 Facilitate the participation of civil society organisations in European and global forums through the Diplocat grants.
- 1.3.5 Create a line of subsidies to support outreach actions.

Annual indicators

<input type="checkbox"/> Media monitoring 1 report	<input type="checkbox"/> Perception of Catalonia 1 initial survey in 2019 and 1 survey at the end of the validity of the plan in 2022
<input type="checkbox"/> Image of Catalonia based on survey data from several sources 1 report	<input type="checkbox"/> Social listening 1 report
<input type="checkbox"/> Drafting of soft power files 3 files	<input type="checkbox"/> Study visits outside Catalonia 2 visits
<input type="checkbox"/> Meetings on good practices in Catalonia 2 meetings	<input type="checkbox"/> Global debates in Catalonia 1 activity
<input type="checkbox"/> IVPs abroad 1 programme as of 2020	<input type="checkbox"/> Digital dissemination 1 report
<input type="checkbox"/> Lines of grants and subsidies 1 Call as of 2020	



Project

Promote Catalonia to the world

Line 2

PROJECT AND PROMOTE CATALONIA TO THE WORLD

“ Soft power rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others.

”

Joseph S. Nye, University of Harvard (1990)

The great difference between Joseph Nye’s famous hard and soft power is that while one seeks to convince by force and repression, the other does so by seduction and persuasion. Public diplomacy is one of the main instruments of seduction and persuasion to further the international outreach of Catalonia.

It should be taken into account that a positive public image and opinion abroad has a direct impact on many levels, including attracting companies and investments, university student exchanges, tourism, and major cultural and sports events.

One of the objectives of Diplocat is to present to the world the values, people and institutions of Catalonia and to help establish and consolidate relationships of friendship and trust. Until not long ago, this had to be done in person, but the digital revolution has opened a wide range of new possibilities. Without losing sight of the great and often irreplaceable value of personal contact, in today’s globalised world the combination of technological changes and the emergence of social networks is an added opportunity for communication between citizens and social and political agents. Information now travels everywhere with virtually no limits or borders.

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Strategic objective

2.1 Promote the assets and values of Catalonia through the member entities of Diplocat and civil society

Diplocat accompanies the entities that want to be present on the international stage and helps them find opportunities for collaboration with each other by organising joint activities in different fields.

Actions

- 2.1.1 Municipal diplomacy: establish a specific plan to promote the internationalisation of the local world.
- 2.1.2 Academic, scientific and technological diplomacy: take advantage of the transformative capacity of universities to promote reflection and analysis on the reality of Catalonia in academia through research projects, conferences and seminars outside Catalonia.
- 2.1.3 Economic and business diplomacy: help the economic and business world to promote the Catalan economy and its values abroad.
- 2.1.4 Sports diplomacy: help sports entities promote the values of Catalan sport in the world as a tool of cohesion and international outreach.
- 2.1.5 Social and associative diplomacy: further the international outreach of Catalonia through its social economy and its rich and diverse associative fabric, the result of a society that is highly committed to social justice.
- 2.1.6 Cultural diplomacy: present the specificity and cultural diversity of Catalonia.

Strategic objective

2.2 Promote knowledge of Catalonia among experts, institutions and opinion makers

Diplocat provides direct and first-hand knowledge of Catalonia's values and assets to anyone who shows interest or is likely to be transmit it to their circle of influence.

Actions

- 2.2.1 International Visitor Programme (IVP) to allow prestigious foreign leaders in their field to visit Catalonia, obtain first-hand knowledge of it and foster ties with their countries.
- 2.2.2 Collaborate with other entities that have their own IVPs.
- 2.2.3 Offer talks to groups of students and international visitors who are already in Catalonia.
- 2.2.4 Study how to make the most of the potential offered by the large community of Catalans residing abroad and that of foreign students who are studying or have studied at Catalan universities or are students of Catalan lecturerships abroad (Xarxa Barcelona/Catalonia Alumni).

Strategic objective

2.3 Position Catalonia in the international media

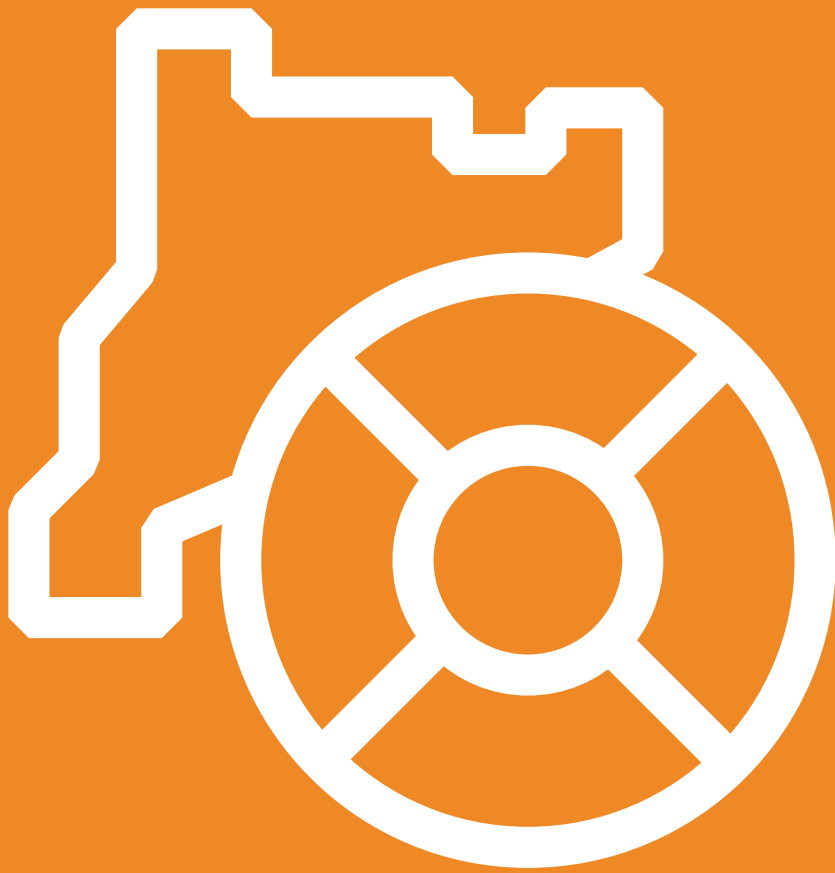
Diplocat ensures that the image of Catalonia transmitted by foreign media is as accurate as possible and is in permanent contact with international correspondents and journalists.

Actions

- 2.3.1 Organise IVPs for journalists.
- 2.3.2 Hold meetings with international correspondents and journalists.
- 2.3.3 Publish articles in the international press.
- 2.3.4 Collaborate with associations of journalists and media working to publicise Catalonia in the world.

Annual indicators

<input type="checkbox"/> Conferences and seminars outside Catalonia in a variety of fields 2 activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Diplocat Award for Business Diplomacy 1 edition
<input type="checkbox"/> Books & Roses website 1 campaign	<input type="checkbox"/> Diplocat IVPs or ones organised in collaboration with other entities 2 IVPs as of 2020
<input type="checkbox"/> Talks to groups 4 talks	<input type="checkbox"/> IVPs for journalists 2 IVPs
<input type="checkbox"/> Survey of IVP participants 1 for each PVI	<input type="checkbox"/> Articles in the international press 2 articles
<input type="checkbox"/> Collaborations with associations of journalists and the media 2 collaborations	



Empower

Develop capacity

Line 3
EMPOWER AND DEVELOP CAPACITY

“ Today, digital technology allows us to listen to civil society directly. Governments are no longer the only voice in the international arena, so it is better to conceptualise public diplomacy as an act of capacity development. What voice in my community will be most convincing for the audience with which I want to connect? ”

Nicholas J. Cull, University of Southern California (2019)

Public diplomacy is a task for everyone. If it is to be done properly, training and capacity development must be provided for both the Catalan public administration staff and civil society as a whole.

Many players have emerged on the international stage: outside the political sphere, organisations such as sub-state governments, sports clubs, universities, trade unions, city councils, cultural entities and companies are the real protagonists of a country’s international outreach. Training in public diplomacy must be encouraged in order to raise awareness and improve Catalan society’s capacity for internationalisation. This will provide the tools for collaborating in Catalonia’s international outreach and public diplomacy. Social networks are a highly effective tool for promoting the country and giving a new dimension to communication and public diplomacy strategies.



Strategic objective

3.1 Encourage the training and capacity development of civil society in the international sphere

Diplocat offers grants and scholarships aimed at civil society with the aim of improving its training and increasing its ability to contribute to the country's internationalisation.

Actions

- 3.1.1 Train international relations specialists who can collaborate in Catalonia's international outreach.
 - Scholarships for international studies at foreign universities.
 - Scholarships for studies on Euro-Mediterranean affairs at the College of Europe in Natolin, Poland.
- 3.1.2 Study the viability of offering scholarships for foreign students to take postgraduate studies at Catalan universities.
- 3.1.3 Act as a selection committee of the College of Europe (Bruges and Natolin campuses).
- 3.1.4 Receive students who want to take part in academic placements at Diplocat.

Strategic objective

3.2 Encourage training and capacity development in the international sphere for members of the consortium

Diplocat organises training courses on public diplomacy and subjects of special interest with the aim of developing the capacity of the member entities of the consortium as actors of Catalonia's outreach.

Actions

- 3.2.1 Organise an Executive Programme in Diplomacy and External Action aimed at personnel from the public administrations of Catalonia with international experience in order to reinforce the capabilities of the Catalan administrations to promote internationalisation and international promotion projects.
- 3.2.2 Create the Master's Degree in Diplomacy and External Action (MDAE) alumni network.
- 3.2.3 Promote ad hoc training courses: promote training in public diplomacy and other topics of global interest, collaborating with other entities and institutions.

Strategic objective

3.3 Promote social network skills as an instrument of Catalonia's international outreach

Diplocat fosters training in and knowledge of social networks as a key tool for internationalisation in order to increase its use by member entities of the consortium and civil society.

Actions

- 3.3.1 Facilitate knowledge and best practices of civil society in the use of social networks.

Annual indicators

<input type="checkbox"/> Scholarships for international studies 1 call	<input type="checkbox"/> Scholarships for Mediterranean studies 1 call
<input type="checkbox"/> Scholarships for foreign students 1 call as of 2020	<input type="checkbox"/> Selection committee, College of Europe 1 call
<input type="checkbox"/> Internship at Diplocat 3 internships	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey of internships 1 per internship
<input type="checkbox"/> Executive Programme in Diplomacy and External Action 1 evaluation at the end of the 5th edition 1 new edition every 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey of MDAE participants 1 per student
<input type="checkbox"/> Creation of the MDAE alumni network 1 activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Ad hoc training 2 courses
<input type="checkbox"/> Survey of course participants 1 per course	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of social networks 1 activity

8. Evaluation and indicators of achievement of goals

In addition to the traditional annual reports, organisations and companies (first private and then public ones) have incorporated indicators to evaluate the degree of achievement of goals. For entities such as Diplocat that receive mainly public funding, reporting and accountability is almost a moral obligation, so that citizens can see how their money has been spent. Furthermore, measuring these indicators over time is a great help in making decisions and developing future strategies.

For the first time, Diplocat has included a series of quantitative indicators in this strategic plan, which should allow the evaluation of the work done in the internationalisation of civil society, training and capacity development, and will provide an additional element to mark the path to follow in the future. Qualitative indicators are also included in areas in which it is possible, such as surveys of participants of IVPs, the MDAE and other courses, and internships.

Evaluating or examining the actions set out in this strategic plan using indicators is a complex but feasible task. However, the complexity increases if the objective is expanded and we analyse the degree of awareness of Catalonia abroad and the positive or negative values that are associated with it.

Since this objective also seems to be of great interest, this strategic plan includes in the actions of the first line the implementation of two very ambitious instruments for progress in this area. The first is monitoring the coverage of Catalonia in the international media. The second is a survey of Catalonia's perception among the foreign public, which allows us to know which of the country's assets are most and least valued abroad. This survey will be done at least at the beginning and end of the period of validity of the strategic plan (in 2019 and 2022, respectively).

Of course, the external perception of Catalonia depends on many variables over which Diplocat has no margin of influence. As in the case of the most direct indicators, however, the results provided by the monitoring and the survey of perception should allow Diplocat, and probably also some of the members of the consortium, to develop more suitable internationalisation and communication strategies and policies.



9. Corporate communication and information

As stated above, a very important part of public diplomacy consists in listening and doing one's best to be heard. That is why communication is a key element of Diplocat. Apart from explaining the values, mission and vision of the entity, communication is also used continuously and cross-cuttingly in all the entity's areas and lines of work.

All the activities of Diplocat are disseminated to the press, social networks and other digital media at least in Catalan and in one foreign language. Activities that may be of interest to the member entities are communicated to them so that they can participate and disseminate them. Furthermore, any entity that collaborates in the activities of Diplocat or is a recipient of a grant or subsidy is obliged to make it public. This is also part of the commitment to transparency.

In the coming years, Diplocat wants to focus part of its efforts on emphasising that it is a consortium independent from the Catalan government and explaining what it is dedicated to. The perception of the consortium's activity among the Catalan population in general, and opinion makers in particular, is often distorted, and to some extent they are unaware of its public diplomacy initiatives. From the approval of the strategic plan, Diplocat has incorporated a motto to associate it with its brand that identifies the three main lines of work: "International Dialogue - Connect. Project. Empower".

The actions in the communication field will be set out in an annual communication plan associated with the work plan. The communication plan will in particular reinforce communication with the member entities and dissemination of their international activities.

> Contact with the media

Diplocat is proactive in contacting the media and places special emphasis on foreign correspondents and journalists. All public activities are announced and disseminated in the media and social networks through calls and press releases. Specific requests for information, contacts and interviews with the Catalan and foreign media are addressed. When considered appropriate, IVPs aimed especially at journalists and opinion makers are organised. Whenever possible, interaction with foreign journalists takes place in their own language.

> Digital communication plan

The digital communication plan is a document that includes the lines of action in this field, particularly in social networks, taking as a reference the master lines of Diplocat's strategic plan. These lines mark the minimum content, the interactions that can be carried out, the type of actions with each instrument and the goals to be achieved. The plan is reviewed and updated in line with the changing environment in the digital field. The most important parts of the digital communication plan are those that refer to the website, Twitter profiles, digital communication with former students and scholarship holders, and the Catalonia Data programme.



» Website

The corporate website www.diplocat.cat is one of the main digital tools used by Diplocat. It is available in six languages (Catalan, Spanish, Aranese, English, French and German) and is used to disseminate the reality of Catalonia internationally and to inform and be accountable to Catalan citizens about the initiatives and actions undertaken by the consortium. The website is the central element of support of Diplocat's social networks and will be renewed in accordance with the new strategic plan, incorporating a section with international news of the members of the consortium.



» Twitter

@Diplocat is the corporate Twitter account in the three official languages of Catalonia (Catalan, Spanish and Aranese). @Diplocat is used to communicate the information, news and activities of Diplocat, as well as any international news of the members of the consortium. @CataloniaPD is the account used for other languages, particularly English.



» LinkedIn

This tool will be used as a digital meeting place with former students and scholarship holders of the consortium. In recent years LinkedIn has positioned itself as the largest professional social network in the world. Unlike other social networks, it is associated with prestige and professionalism. That is why Diplocat, a successor to the Patronat Català Pro Europa and the Patronat Catalunya Món with many former scholarship holders, interns and MDAE students, will use it to generate, exchange and disseminate knowledge linked to public diplomacy, training and job opportunities. The three types of users will be students who have received a scholarship to study abroad, students who have done internships at Diplocat and former MDAE students.



» Catalonia Data

In order to better publicise the attributes and potential of the member entities of Diplocat and connect Catalonia more satisfactorily with international agents, the data and goals achieved by the entities will be gathered, presented and disseminated. These data will be presented in the form of tables and charts showing the evolution over time and a comparison with other entities abroad. Where appropriate, the members of Diplocat will be asked to provide data that show their leadership in a specific area.

> Publications and dissemination materials

Documents presenting the entity and Catalonia will be updated and disseminated, and a brief corporate video will be published. Monolingual publications will also be published in specific cases for activities that may be of interest to a wider audience. The aim is to have visually attractive corporate communication materials that can effectively communicate the nature, objectives and results of Diplocat's actions to the various audiences.

The dissemination materials will have a very visual approach, including highlighted texts and infographics. They are aimed at two priority audiences: the members of the consortium and representatives of institutions and civil society that participate in the international outreach of Catalonia; and international contacts and collaborators of Diplocat and foreign audiences.

10. Governing bodies and member entities of Diplocat

> Governing bodies

The pluralistic nature of Diplocat is reflected in the participation of representatives of the member entities in its governing bodies.

» The Plenary Session

Highest governing body.

» The Executive Committee

Permanent governing body.

» The General Secretary

Person responsible for carrying out the decisions of both bodies and for initiating and managing the activity of the institution.

In line with its cross-cuttingness, Diplocat also has an **Advisory Council** made up of people of recognised international prestige in different fields.



> The member entities of the consortium

» Public institutions

- Government of Catalonia
- Barcelona City Council
- Tarragona City Council
- Girona City Council
- Lleida City Council
- Vielha e Mijaran Council
- Barcelona Provincial Council
- Tarragona Provincial Council
- Girona Provincial Council
- Lleida Provincial Council
- Conselh Generau d'Aran
- Catalan Association of Municipalities and Counties
- Federation of Municipalities of Catalonia

» Entities of the business sector

- General Council of the Official Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Navigation of Catalonia
- Entrepreneurs association Foment del Treball Nacional
- Association of Micro-, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises of Catalonia (PIMEC)
- Confederation of Cooperatives of Catalonia
- Multi-Sector Business Association (AMEC)
- Private Foundation of Entrepreneurs (FemCAT)

» Entities of the social, trade union and sports sector

- The Group of Entities of the Voluntary Sector of Catalonia
- Trade union Unió General de Treballadors (UGT)
- Trade union Comissions Obreres (CCOO)
- Football Club Barcelona

» Universities, business schools and educational establishments

- University of Barcelona (UB)
- Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB)
- Technical University of Catalonia (UPC)
- Pompeu Fabra University (UPF)
- University of Lleida (UdL)
- University of Girona (UdG)
- Rovira i Virgili University (URV)
- Ramon Llull University (URL)
- Open University of Catalonia (UOC)
- University of Vic - Central University of Catalonia (UVic-UCC)
- International University of Catalonia (UIC)
- Abat Oliba CEU University (UAO CEU)
- Barcelona Institute of International Studies (IBEI)
- EADA Business School
- Barcelona Graduate School of Economics (Barcelona GSE)

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