

## Chapter 16

# The Role of Social Media in Digitalized Public Diplomacy: An Example of Turkish Image in TRT World's Twitter Account

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Developments experienced in communication technologies have caused digitalization by changing and transforming all areas of life. Especially thanks to the opportunities and possibilities provided by new communication technologies, the authorities of different countries can convey their political and ideological thoughts to the citizens of other countries quickly and effectively. Social media is one of the most important digital communication networks with the power to influence the international agenda. Countries that take their place in digital diplomacy can more easily manage public perceptions with social media environments, which have an important place in international relations. In this study, by emphasizing the importance of social media channels in the digitalization of public diplomacy, the authors have shown the Turkish image displayed based on the posts made on TRT World's Twitter account. For this, the shares and comments selected by the purposeful sampling method will be analyzed with discourse analysis and the reflected Turkish image will be revealed.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

With the rapid development of communication technologies, significant changes and transformations have been experienced on societies. The new generation communication technologies, which make their effects felt from the economy to politics, from the social field to the cultural field, oblige everyone to participate in the world they create. In the 21st century, when everything has become digital and virtual, joining the network has become a necessity. Public diplomacy has also taken its share of the changes and transformations experienced. Countries have started to benefit from the environment offered by new

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communication technologies in order to get an idea about each other. Digitization, interaction, multimedia, hypermedia, simulation, speed and the trivialization of the concept of space are the most important features of new media. These features make this area attractive for users. Now, not only do states communicate with each other, but also citizens of countries can participate in this communication. Prestige, image and prestige are essential in digital public diplomacy, which is carried out on a voluntary basis. Countries use new media effectively to increase their prestige and prestige.

Social media has become an environment that government officials, non-governmental organizations and the country's media actively use together with brands. In this study, firstly, information about public diplomacy is given under the title of *"The Role of Social Media in Digitalized Public Diplomacy: An Example of Turkish Image in TRT World's Twitter Account"*. Then, unlike traditional public diplomacy, digital public diplomacy and new media are emphasized. After giving general information about Twitter, which also constitutes the sample of the research, four different posts selected from TRT World account were analyzed with discourse analysis. The posts selected for analysis from the posts on TRT World's page between 13 June and 31 May are as follows:

@trtworld (10 May 2022) (<https://twitter.com/trtworld/status/1535237909502107649>)

*President Recep Tayyip Erdogan says Turkey is aiming to become a global hub for healthcare services*

@trtworld (31 May 2022) (<https://twitter.com/trtworld/status/1531595091978108928>)

*Turkey's Defense Minister Hulusi Akar reiterates Ankara's determination to continue fighting against terrorism, saying the country does not accept any terror presence along its borders*

@ trtworld (2 June 2022) (<https://twitter.com/trtworld/status/1532217947778781186>)

*UN says it will use the name "Turkey" effective immediately after Ankara sent a letter to the international body asking it to drop using " Turkey " in official documents, languages*

@ trtworld (13 June 2022) (<https://twitter.com/trtworld/status/1536366536986095616>)

*Turkey continues defending the rights of its citizens and the Turkish Cypriots ' within the framework of its "entrepreneurial and humanitarian foreign policy", Turkish FM Cavusoglu says*

As these sharings taking the place were examined in TRT World 's Twitter account, it was seen that most of the news made was linked to trtworld.com. For this reason, the news on the site was included in the analysis by going to trtworld.com in the linked posts. As a result of the analysis, it has been shown that a positive perception of the Turkish image is tried to be created in the shares made by TRT World on its Twitter account, so that there are posts and visuals aimed at increasing Turkey's image and reputation.

## **PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**

Countries need public diplomacy in order to have an idea about each other. Many thinkers have defined public diplomacy based on solid relations by evaluating it from their own perspective. According to

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