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## How to strengthen your reputation as University through strategic communication – new trends and new tools

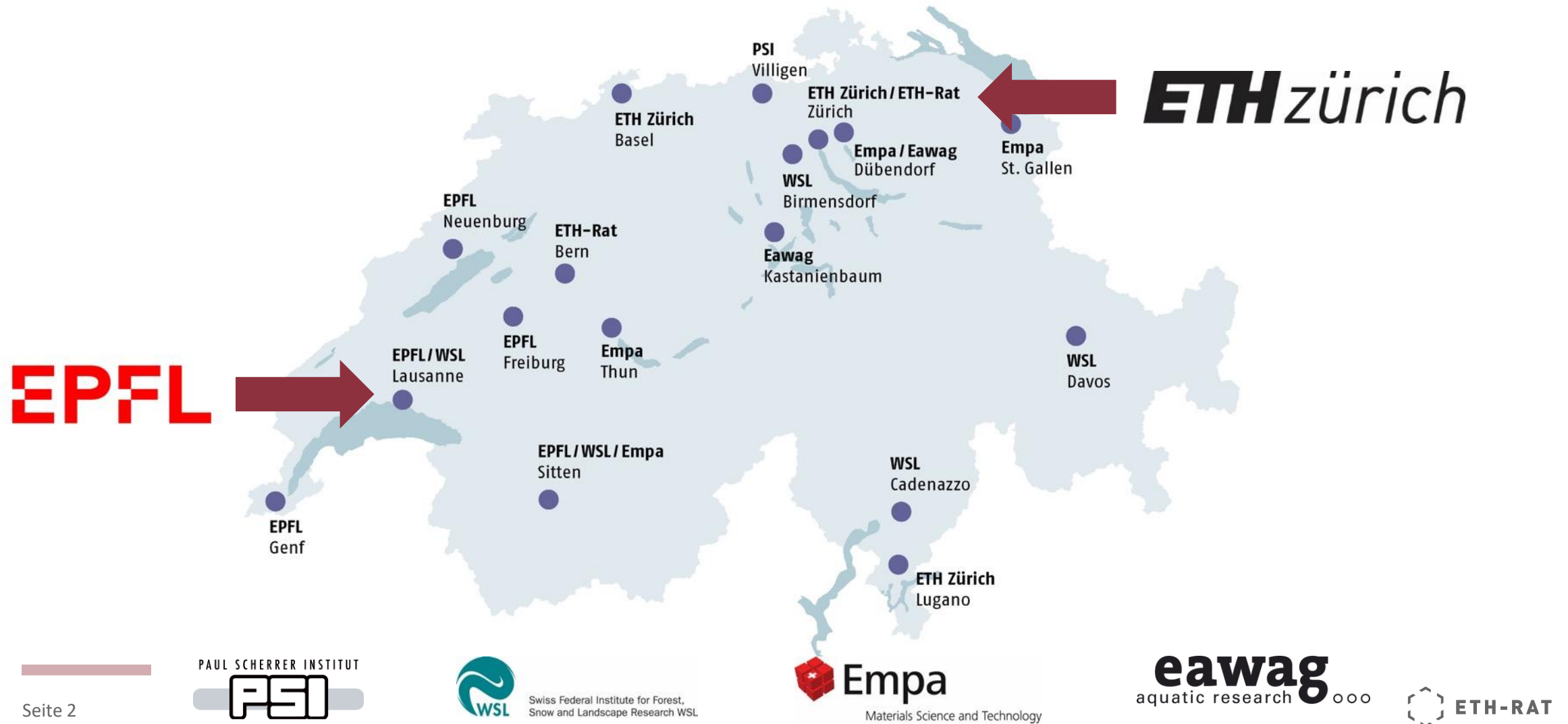
**Gian-Andri Casutt**

Head of Communications ETH Domain

President EUPRIO

*Tartu, Estonia, 11.11.2022*

A “university system” with 2 institutes of technology,  
as well as 4 national laboratories and many places



# Key figures

Students and doctoral students

35,235

ERC Grants received

40

Employees (headcount)

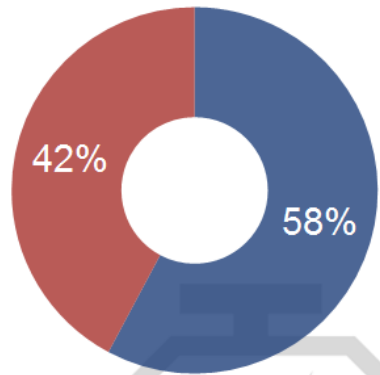
23,472

Spin-offs founded per year

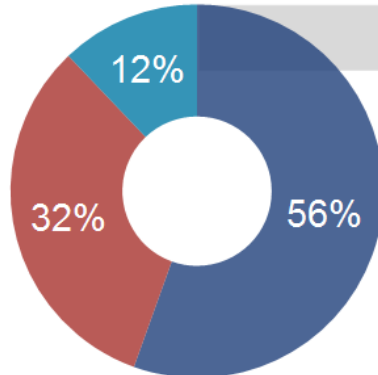
66

# Focussing on STEM !

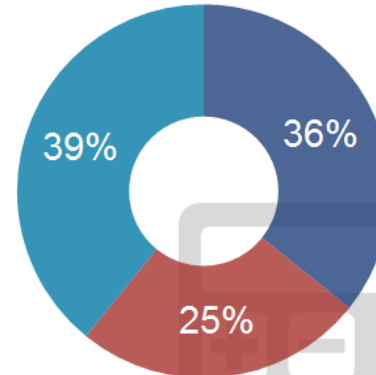
Mechanical engineering  
Electrical engineering



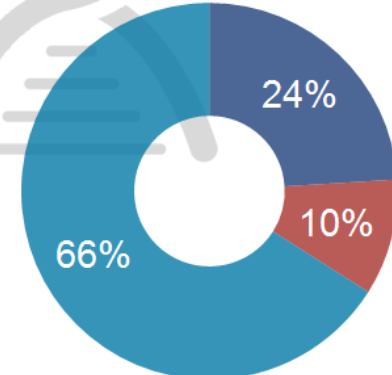
Architecture  
Civil Engineering



Exact sciences  
Computer science



Natural Sciences  
Health Sciences



ETH Zurich



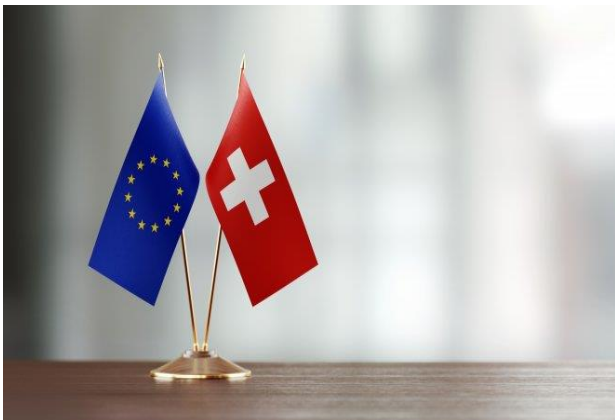
EPFL



Other universities

# Three pillars for the sustainable success of the ETH Domain

## International openness



International agreements  
and research programmes

## Good governance and autonomy



ETH Act

## Stable and reliable financing



ERI Dispatch

# A strong international positioning

Rank	QS World University Rankings 2021
1	MIT
2	Stanford University
3	Harvard University
4	Caltech
5	University of Oxford
6	<b>ETH Zurich</b>
...	
14	<b>EPFL</b>
...	
69	<b>University of Zurich (UZH)</b>
...	
106	<b>University of Geneva</b>
114	<b>University of Bern</b>
149	<b>University of Basel</b>
169	<b>University of Lausanne</b>

In most university rankings, about half of the 12 classical Swiss universities are in the top 200 universities worldwide.

Comparison: approx. 2,500 universities in the USA

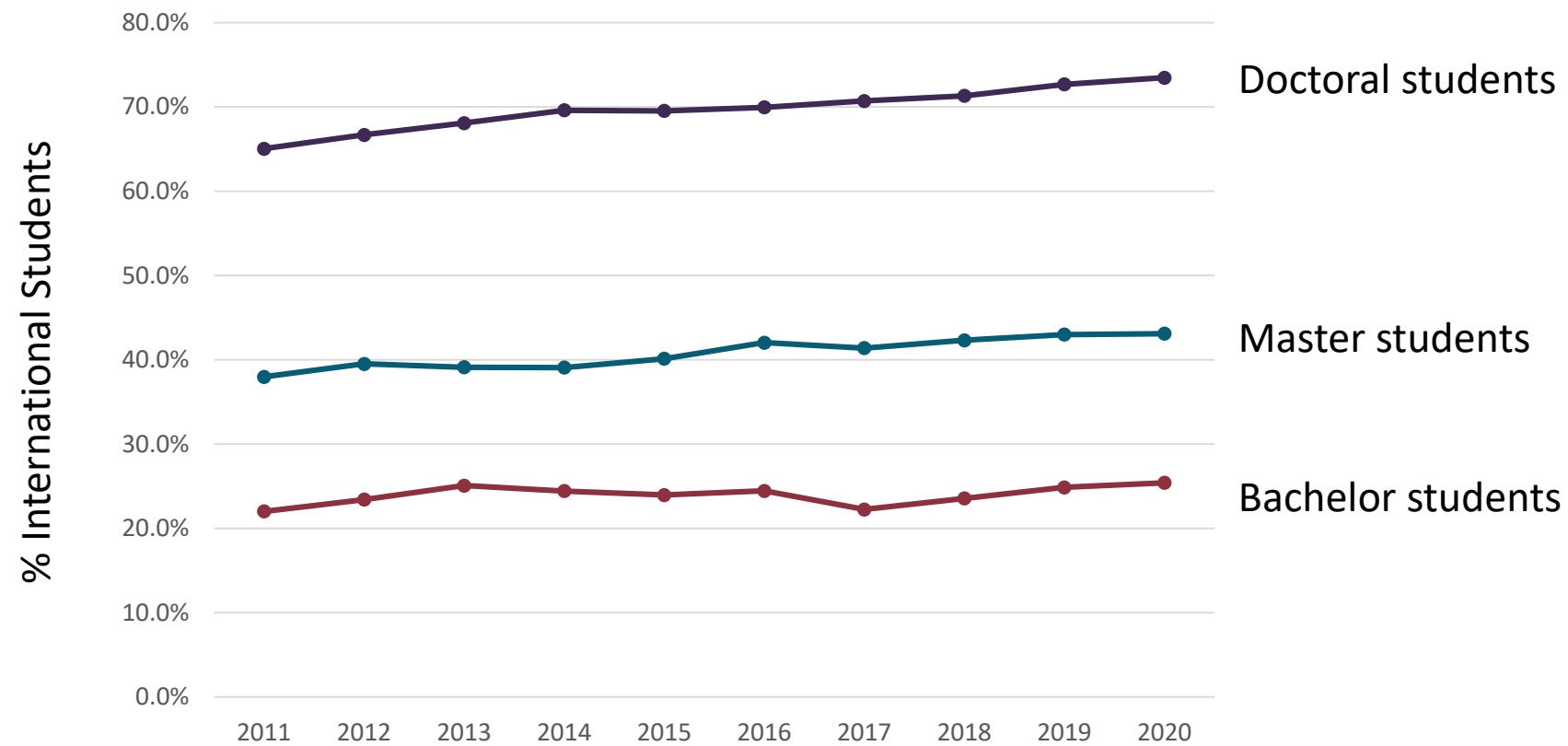


# Openness: ability to recruit the best minds worldwide

Most international rank 2020	Most international rank 2019	World University Rank 2020	University	Country/Region
1	NR	126	City University of Hong Kong	Hong Kong
2	1	35	University of Hong Kong	Hong Kong
=3	4	=38	École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne	Switzerland
=3	=2	=13	ETH Zurich	Switzerland
5	5	=57	Chinese University of Hong Kong	Hong Kong



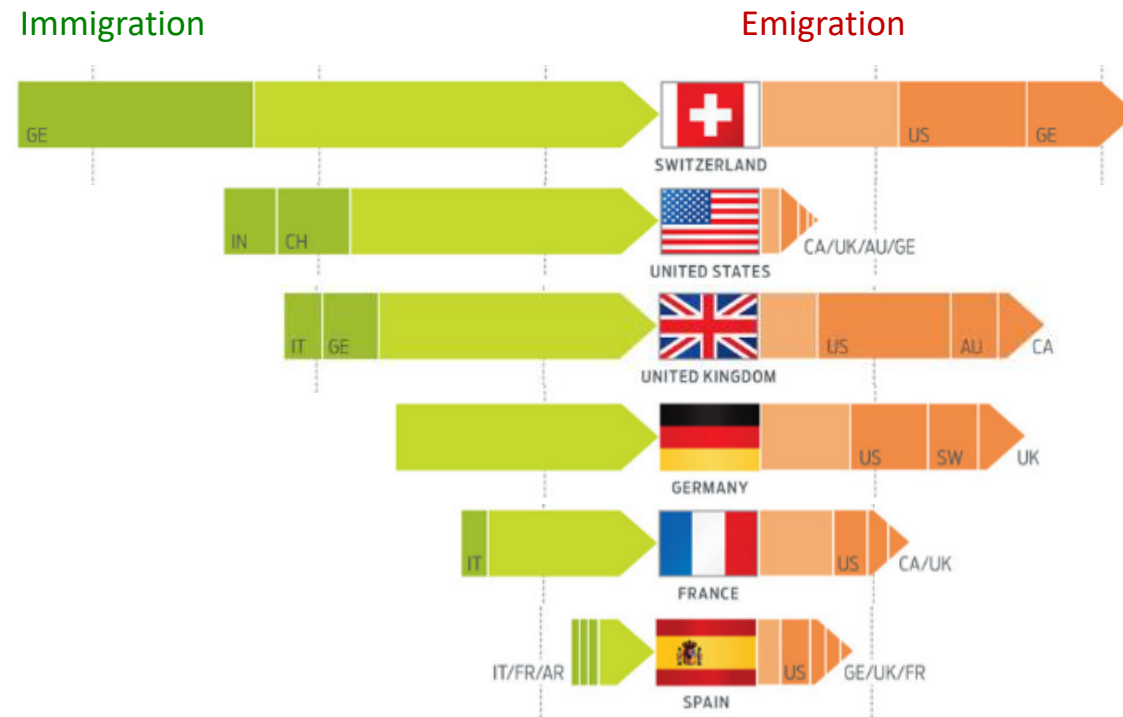
# Internationality as a key success factor: Students and doctoral students



Source: ETH Domain Annual Report 2020



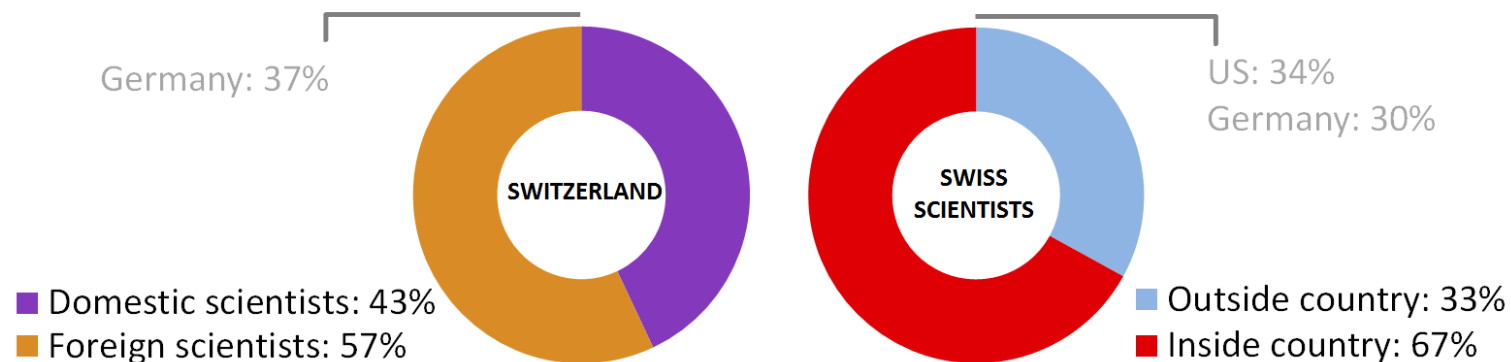
# Researcher mobility of selected nations



Source: SNF, GlobSci survey, Franzoni C. et al., May 2012

# Not “brain drain” nor “brain gain” but “brain circulation”

- According to a *Nature* study from 2012, Switzerland was the only surveyed country to employ more foreign than domestic researchers.
- Switzerland was also the country with the second-highest number of researchers leaving the country (after India).



Source: Van Noorden, R. (2012). *Nature*, 490 (7420), 326–329.

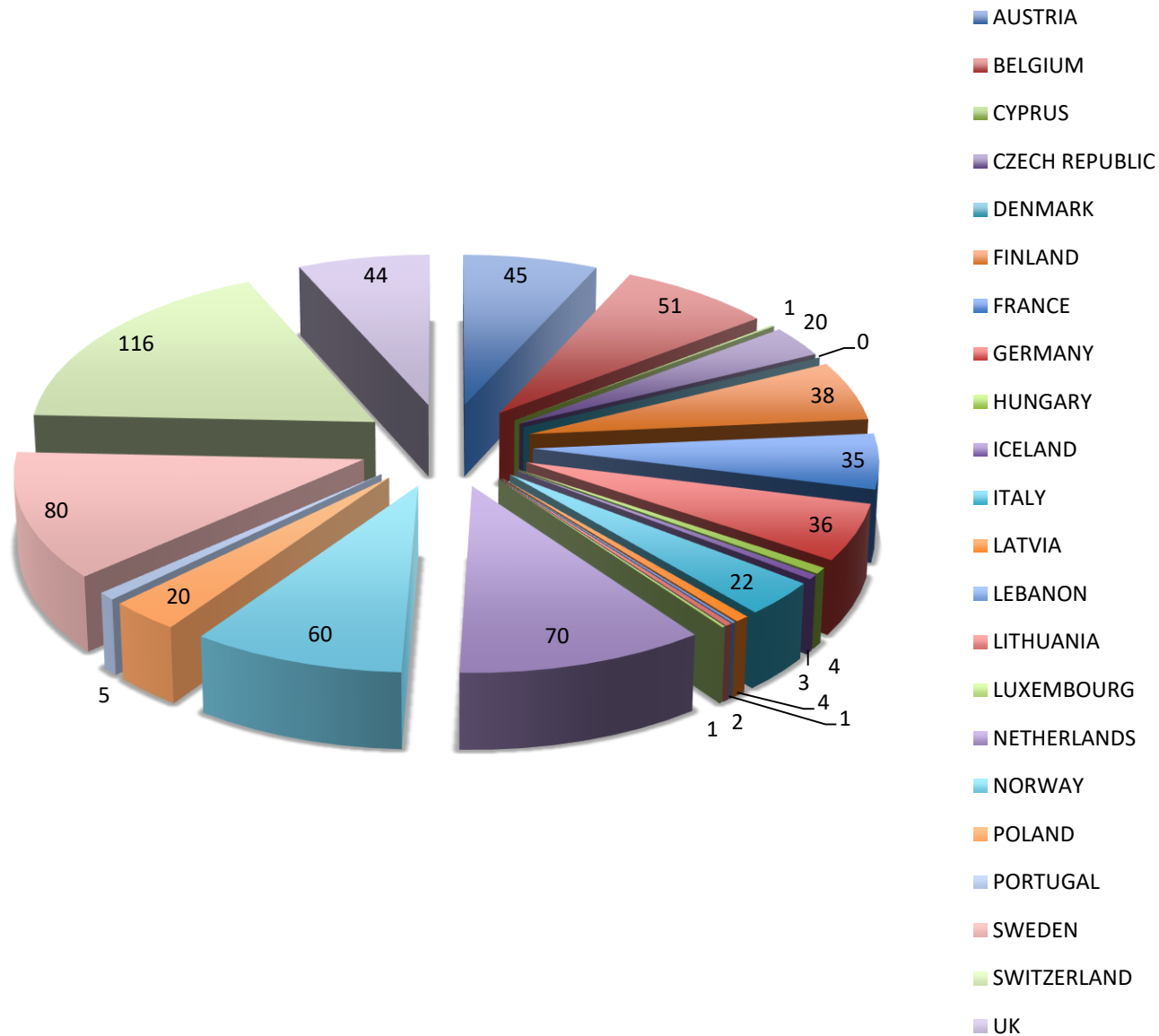
# EUPRIO – European Association of Communication Professionals in Higher Education



In essence:

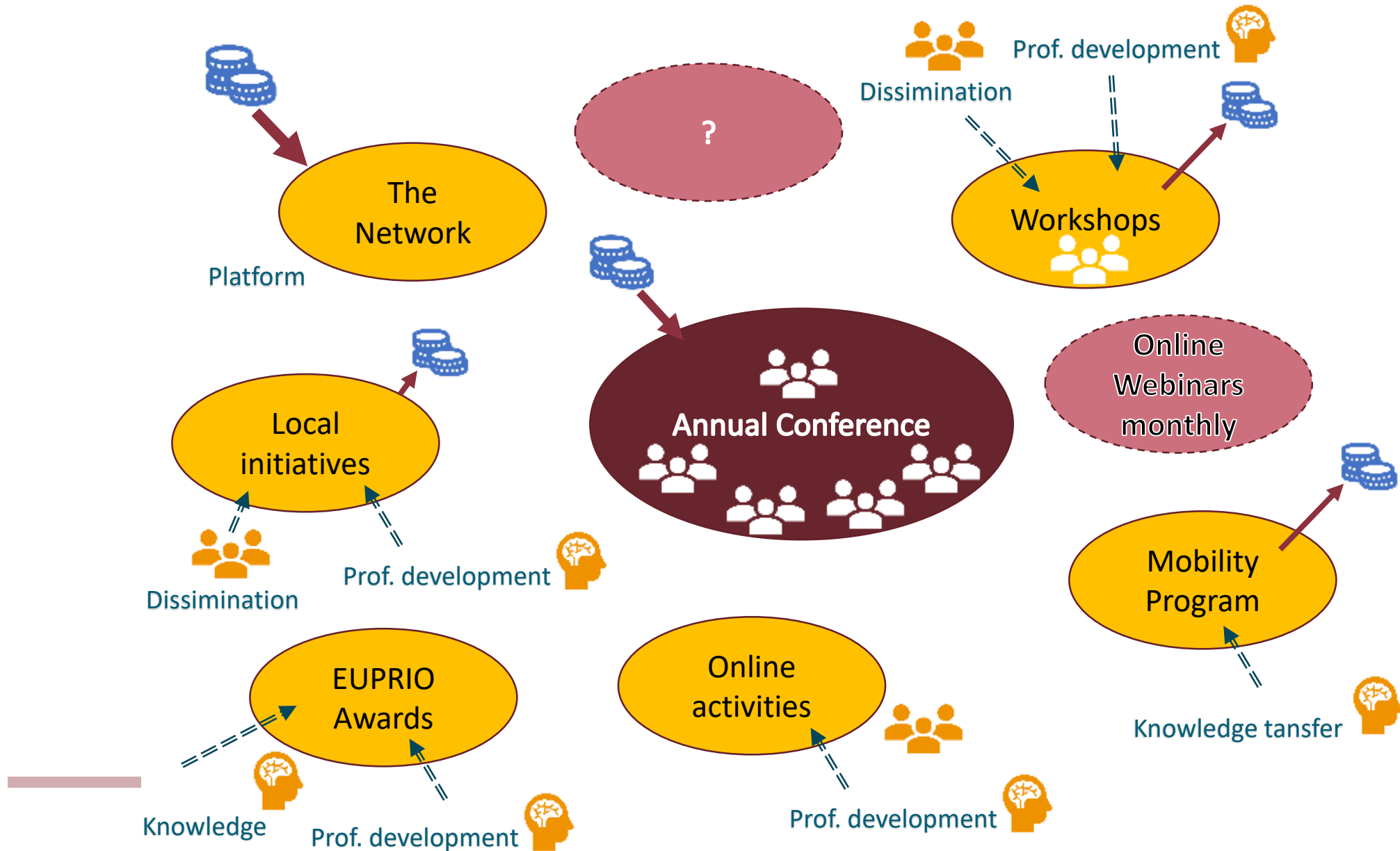
**EUPRIO brings together  
communication professionals  
working in higher education  
all over Europe**

# 25 countries: large & small



# The EUPRIO Portfolio

“formats”





# 25 countries, 230 HE institutions





**UPRIO**  
2022 Zurich

#UZH

August 28-31, 2022  
**Annual Conference**  
Science Communication.  
How to engage nowadays



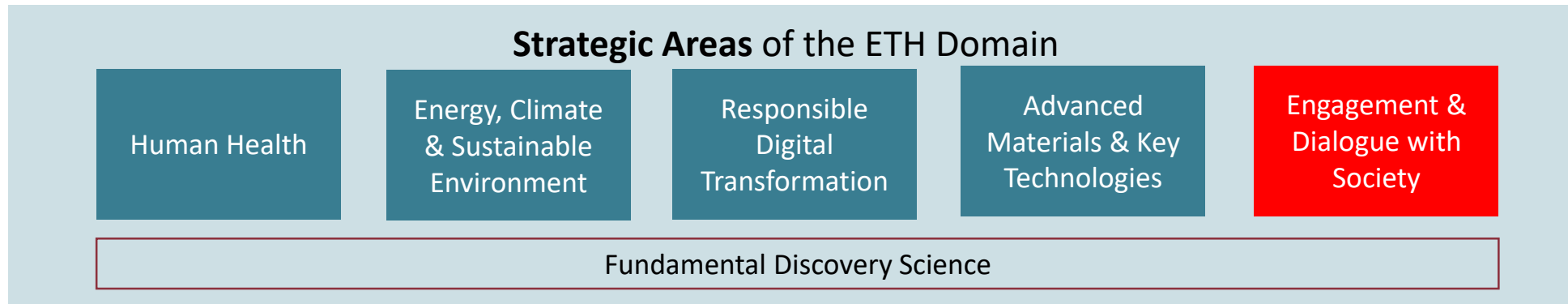
# Trends in science communication

1. Greater importance of science communication after the pandemic. Dialogue between science and society and especially politics should be strengthened.
2. Loss of sovereignty of communication in the university managements and directorates through decentralised communication and social media
3. Successful research through globalization and digitalization causes internationalization and stronger cooperation (inter- and transdisciplinary) in research and education
4. Universities should go back to the core of what universities are and what our values are and how research is done. We need to show that research and higher education means “discussions”

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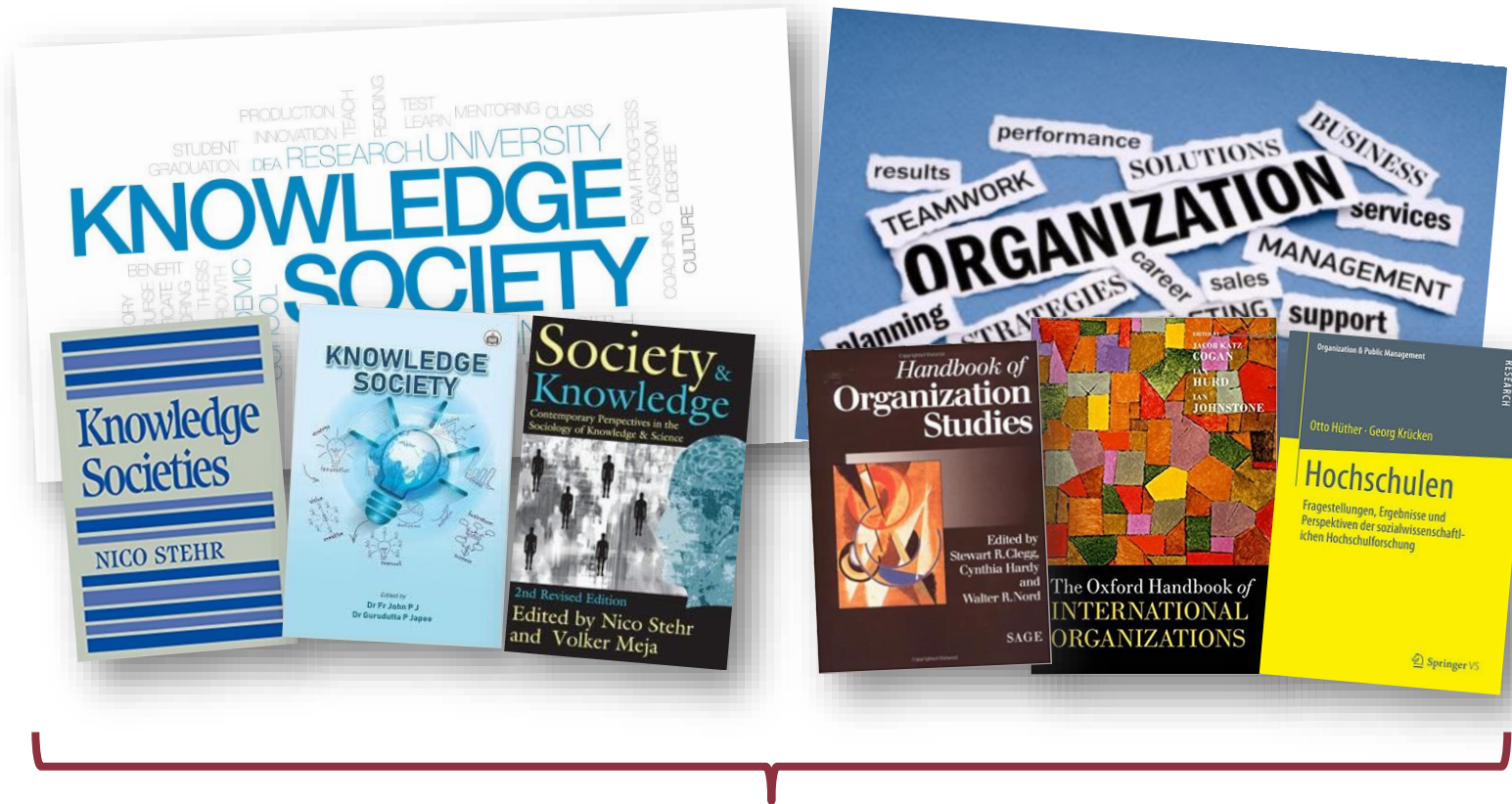
# Greater importance for communication in the field of Higher Education after the pandemic

# Dialogue as main strategic goal



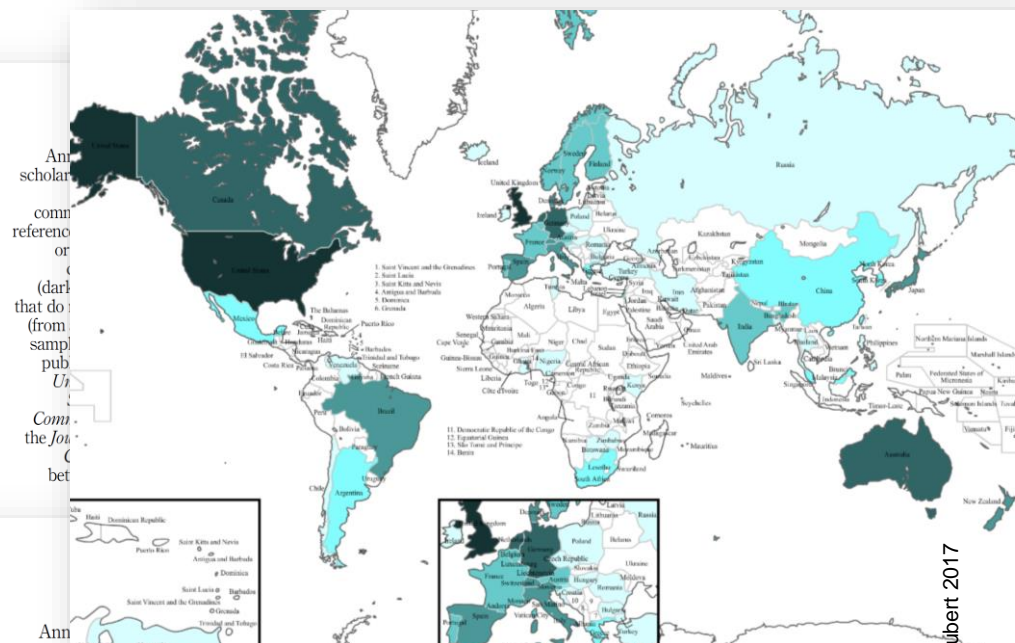
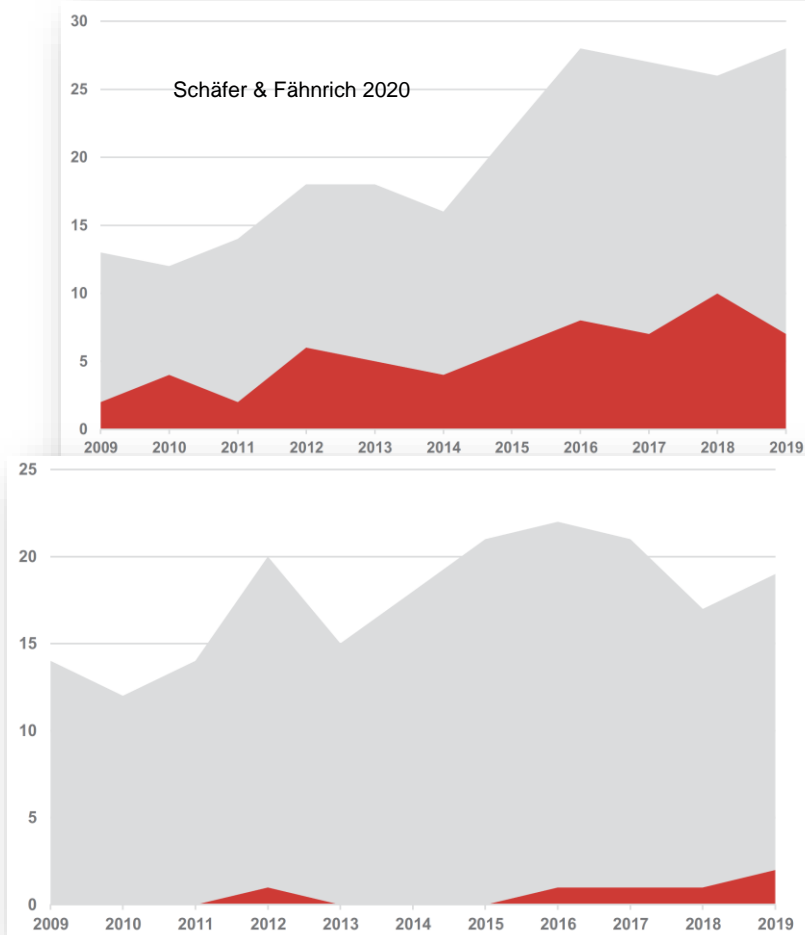
**New or Existing Activities of the Institutions  
& Joint Initiatives of the ETH Domain**

# The relevance of higher education communication



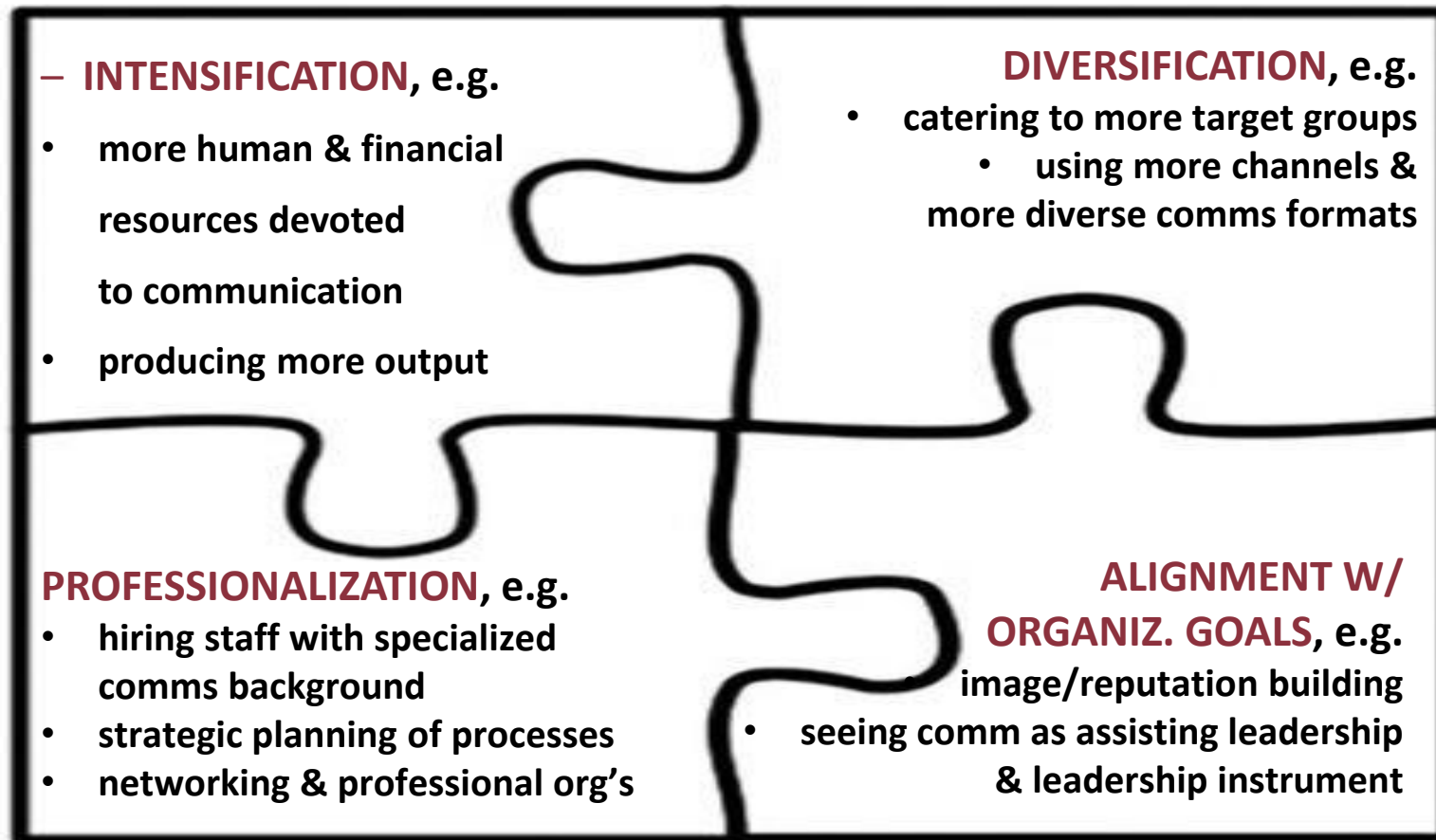
- organizational science communication – including communication *in, from* and *about* higher education institutions – is increasingly important

# Studies of HEI comm are scarce & have blind spots



- mostly focus on US/UK/GER
- hardly any comparative work
- focus mostly on research universities

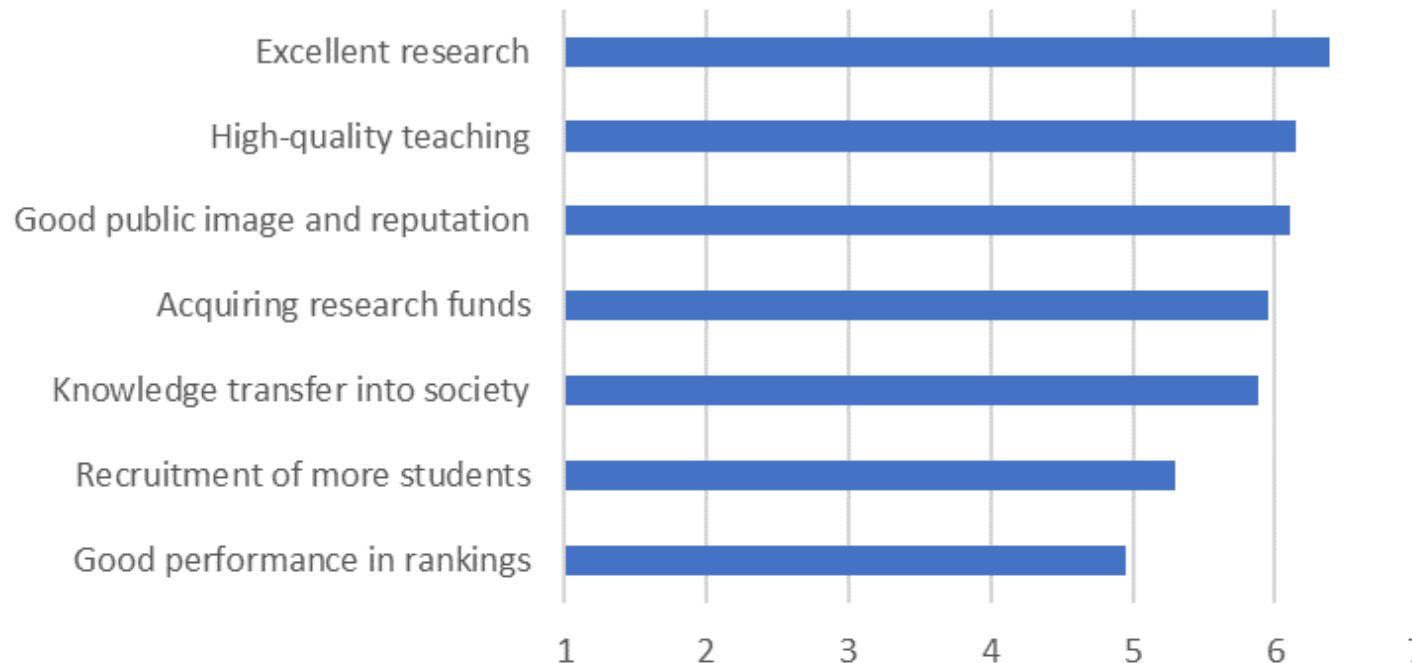
# Four trends in HEI communication?





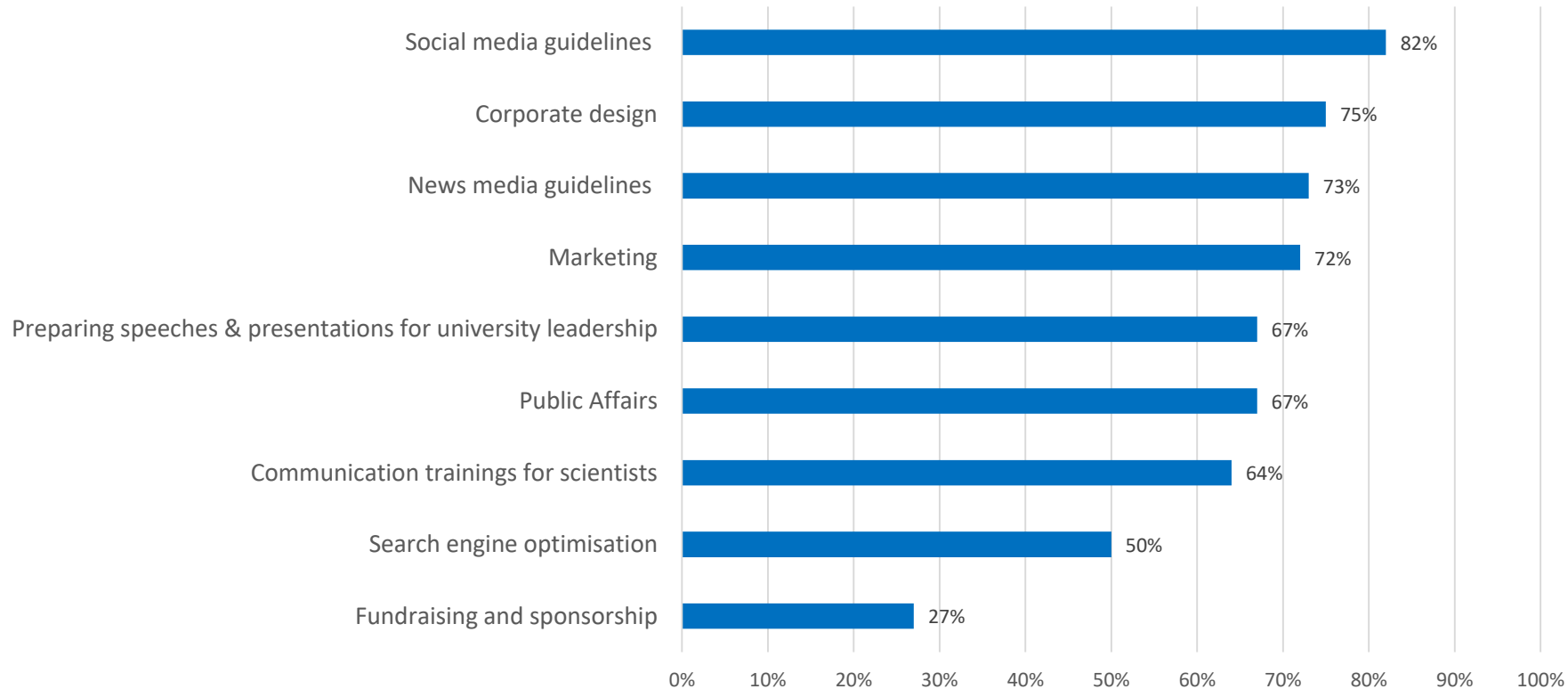
# 1. What do respondents see as goals of their HEI

- Respondents (again: coming mostly from research universities) see their HEIs as primarily aiming for excellent research, followed by high-quality teaching and a good institutional reputation in public.



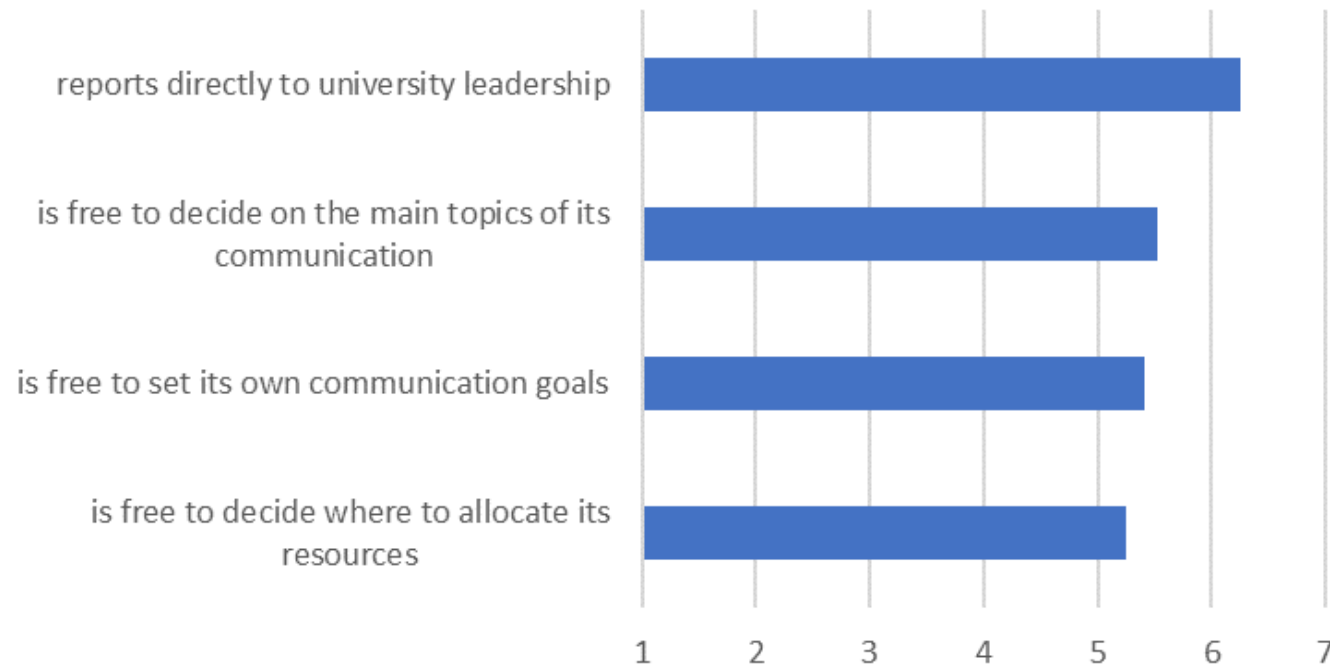
## 2. How they describe their “comms” departments

- Quite large by now: avg size > 25 people. Most have a broad portfolio of tasks.



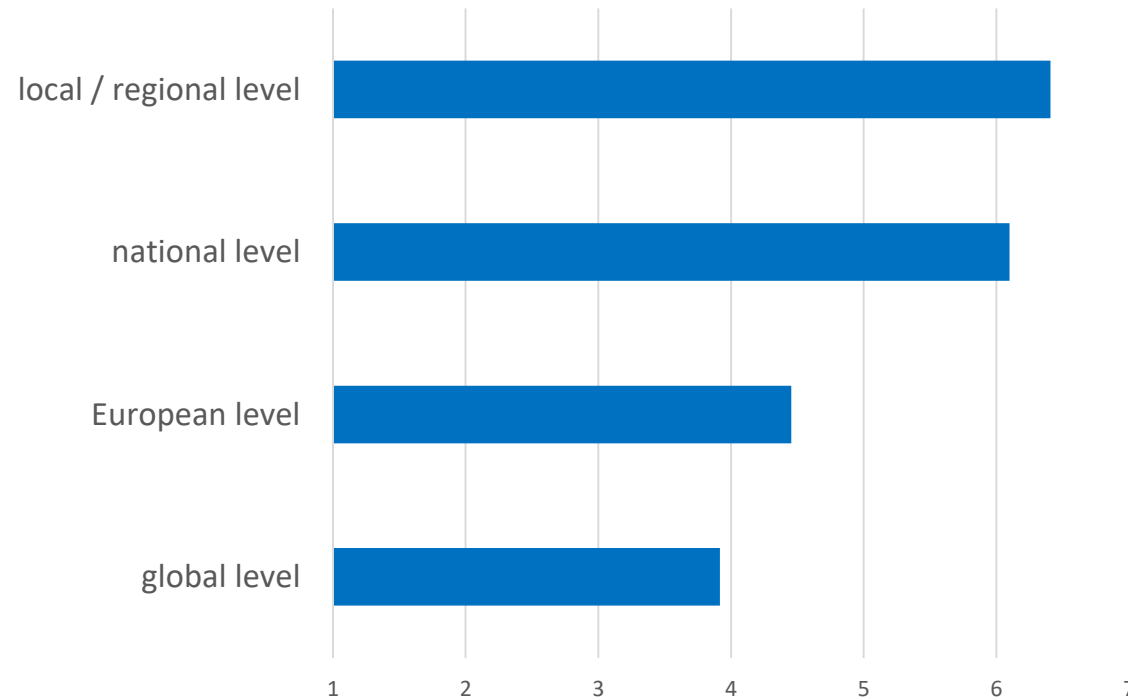
## 2. How they describe their “comms” departments

- Quite large by now: avg size > 25 people. Most have a broad portfolio of tasks. Relative autonomy of work. Report directly to HEI leadership.



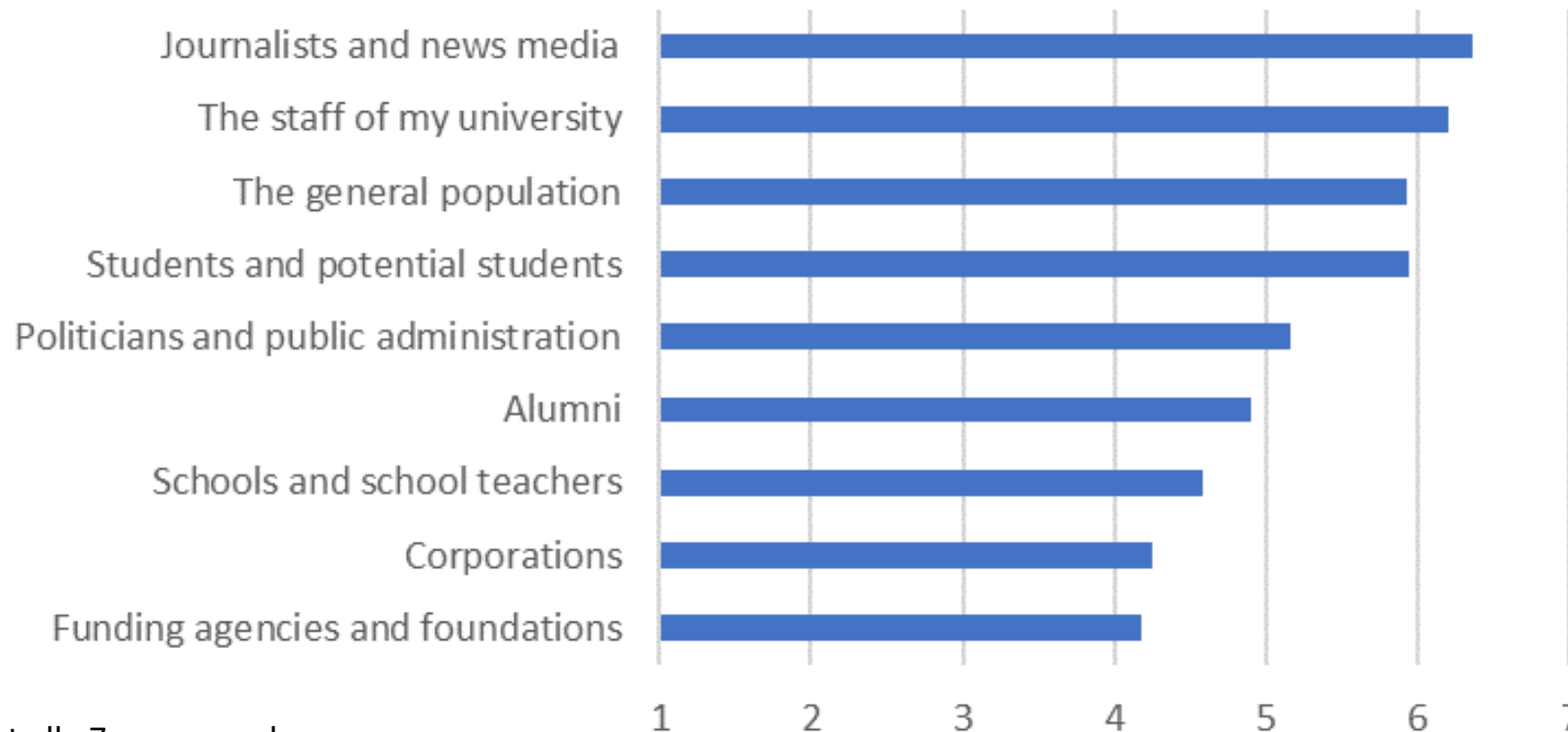
## 4. What are their target groups?

- Target groups mostly at regional/local level and at national level. Much less often at the European or Global level.



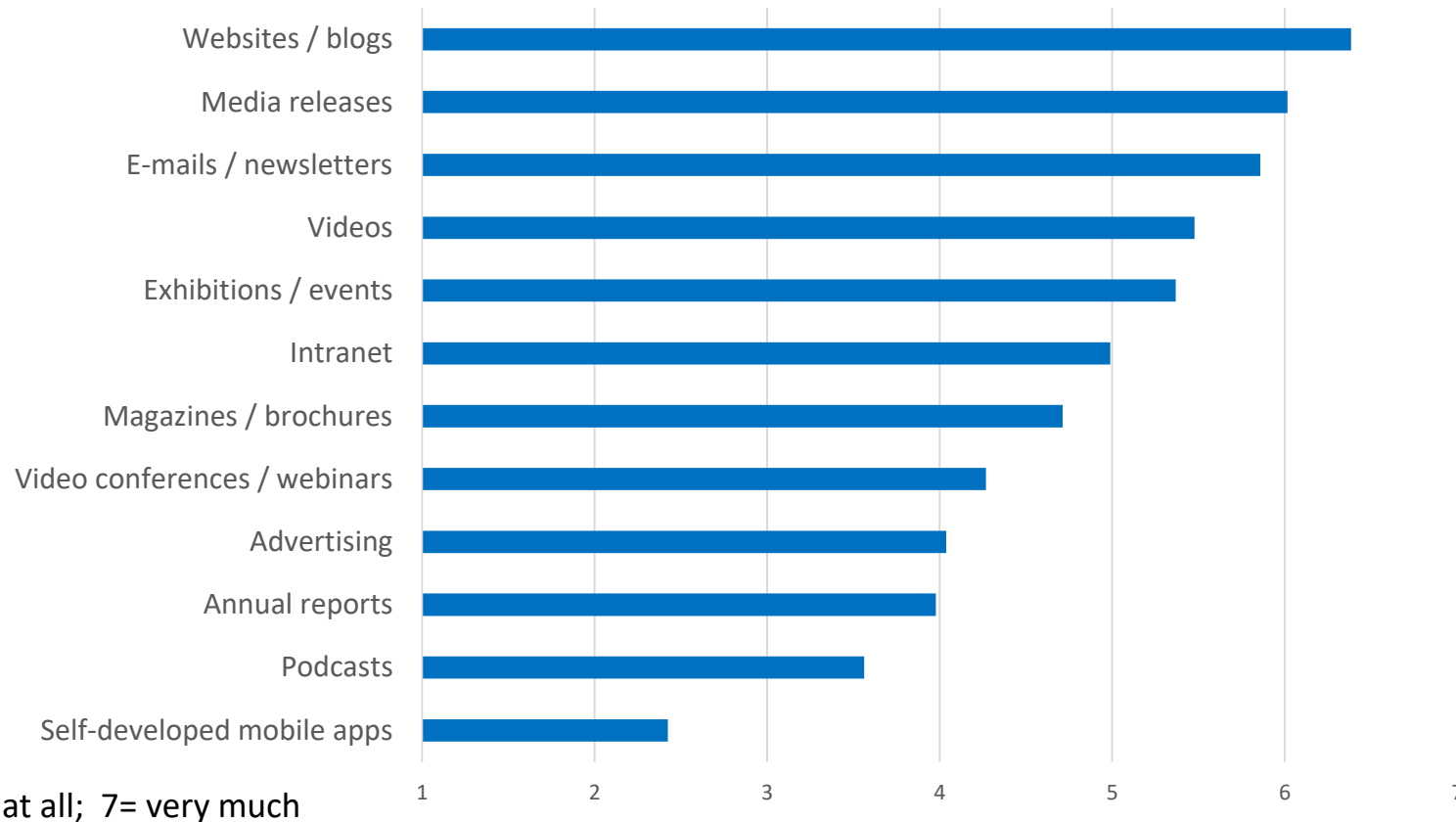
## 4. What are their target groups?

- Target groups mostly at regional/local level and at national level. Much less often at the European or Global level. Specific target groups are journalists > HEI staff/students > general population.



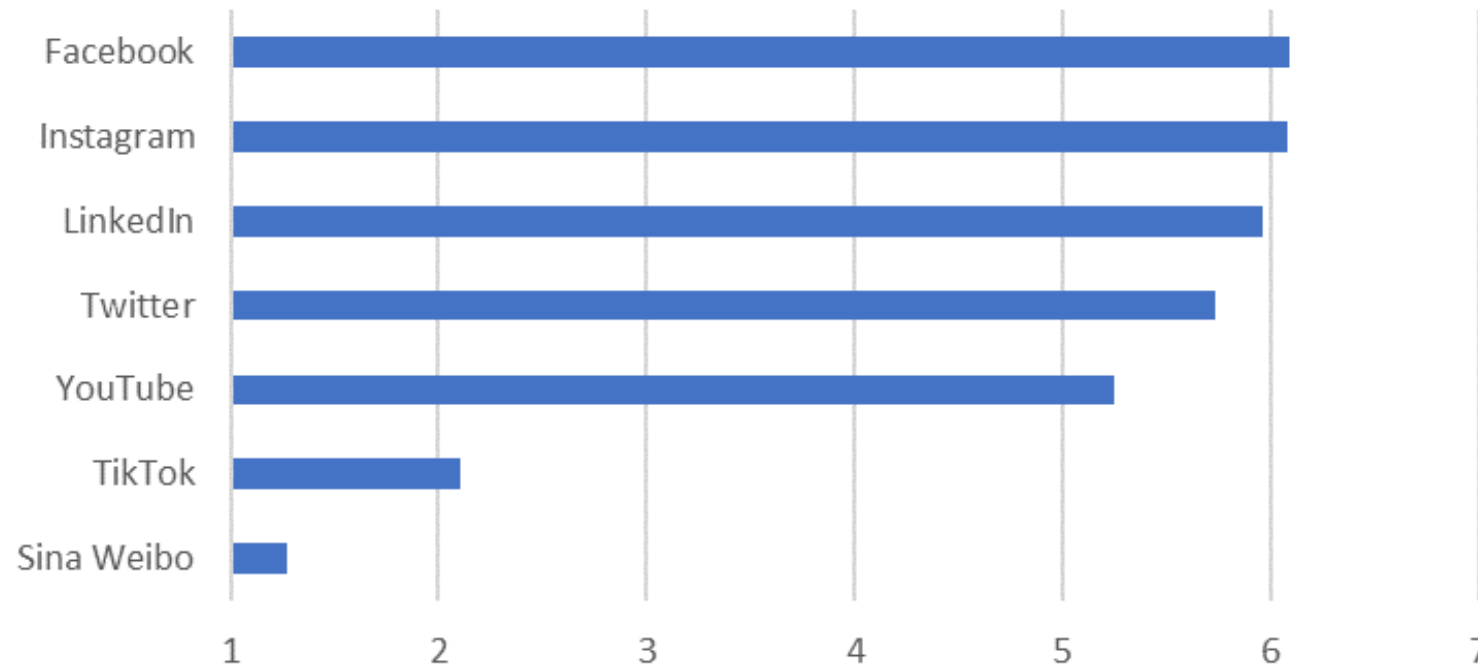
## 5. What are the main channels?

- Target groups are addressed primarily via websites, media releases & newsletter (& social media).



## 5. What are the main channels?

- Target groups are addressed primarily via websites, media releases & newsletter (& social media). Most widely used social media are Facebook, Insta and LinkedIn. Twitter & YT also common. Few are active on TikTok.





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# Loss of control of the communication in the communication department of an institution in Higher Education

# “The times they are a changin’...”



# So we communicate to the public...

## Schweizer Corona-App-Code erobert die Welt

Carmela Troncoso arbeitete jüngst bis 16 Stunden täglich in ihrer Lausanner Wohnung. Das Resultat zusammen mit einem ETH ist überwältigend. Eine Erfolgsgeschichte in fünf Akten.



+ Das Magazin, NZZ, Le Matin, 24h, Le Temps, SRF, RTS, etc.

A collage of news articles and images. At the top right is a CNBC banner for Samsung S20 series phones with a JBL Flip 5 ECO speaker. Below it is a BBC News article titled 'Coronavirus: First Google/Apple-based contact-tracing app launched' with a sub-header 'Technology'. To the right of the BBC article is a snippet of a Reuters article titled 'A handful of Apple and Google employees came together to help officials trace coronavirus'. Below the BBC article is a photo of a hand holding a smartphone displaying the Corona app interface, with a large red 'EPFL' sign in the background. At the bottom right is the ETH-RAT logo.

+ Reuters, Economist, NYTimes, Tech Crunch, El Pais, etc.

## ... but mainly via the classic media!

- News on websites
- Press releases
- Press Conferences







# There's thus a lot of work to do!

- News on websites
  - Press releases
  - Press Conferences
  - Social media
  - Newsletters
  - Events for public
  - Media events
  - Conferences
  - Political communication
- 

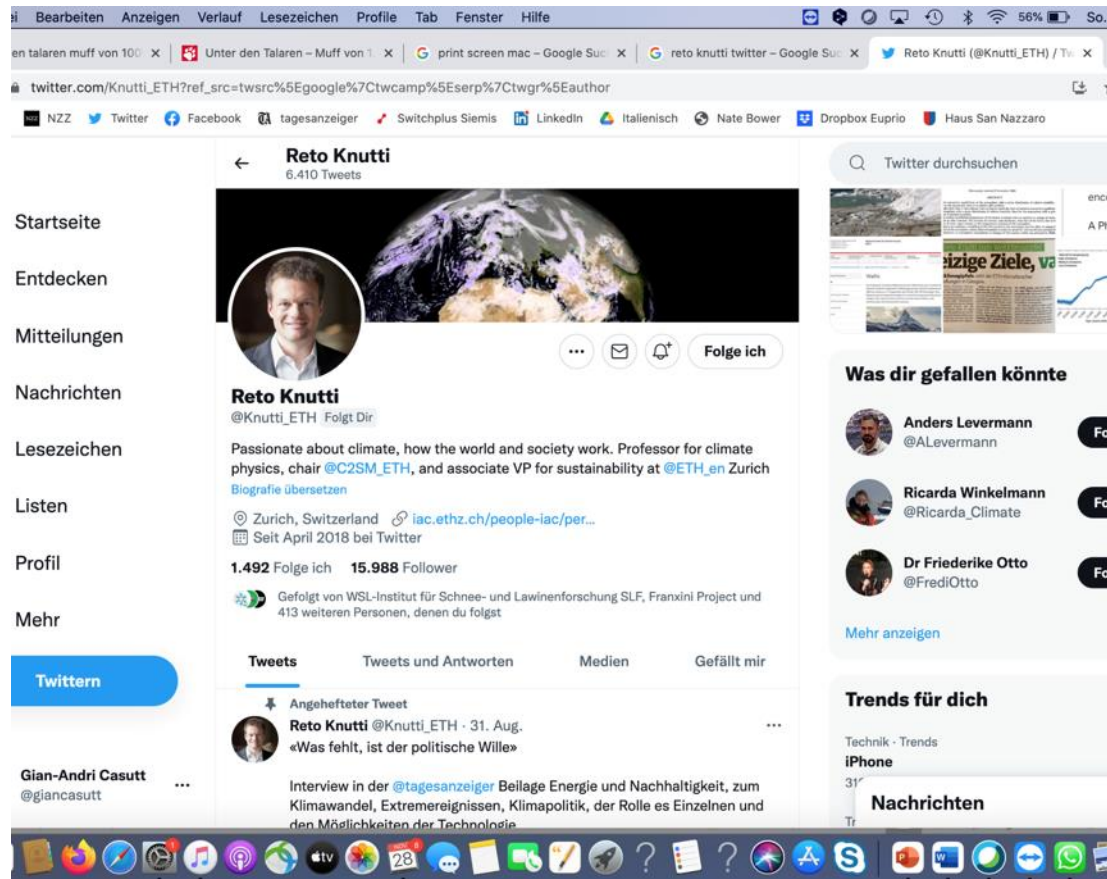


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**The loss of control means educate your researchers and make them ambassadors**







# Social media: Twitter as an important example



- Scientists, politicians and journalists meet on Twitter
- Many scientists are on Twitter (and more are coming)
- You can reach journalists directly (no Press Release needed)
- Courses for self-marketing

# Influencer Ranking of the whole domain

1		<b>Marcel Salathe</b> @marcelsalathe	Prof @ EPFL, Academic Director Extension School. YC alumnus. Always working on a new book :) Opinions are yours, hopefully soon - I mean, why else tweet?	57.72
		Tags	ETH / EPFL Mann Person	
2		<b>Kevin Schawinski</b> @kevinschawinski	Asst Prof @ETH_en   black holes   galaxies   #citizenscience   @galaxyzoo   deep learning   speaker   <a href="https://t.co/8uw4s2uo4Q">https://t.co/8uw4s2uo4Q</a>	55.04
		Tags	ETH / EPFL Mann Person	
3		<b>Martin Vetterli</b> @MartinVetterli	President and Professor of Engineering at EPFL (École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne) @EPFL_en	54.46
		Tags	ETH / EPFL Mann Person WEF 2017	
4		<b>Frederic Kaplan</b> @frederickaplan	Prof. in Digital Humanities at EPFL ( <a href="https://t.co/JSi3Uw80RL">https://t.co/JSi3Uw80RL</a> ), Venice Time Machine ( <a href="https://t.co/HTglHp25z0">https://t.co/HTglHp25z0</a> ) + Time Machine FET flagship ( <a href="https://t.co/Kblf5DMWLL">https://t.co/Kblf5DMWLL</a> )	51.63
		Tags	ETH / EPFL Mann Person	

- A ranking on Twitter
- Find the most influential professors
- Coordinate and inform them regularly
- Use as snowball effect
- All influential researchers retweet and comment
- Effect: Politicians and journalists have it in their timeline all day long.



# Enable people as (digital) messengers

**Example:**  
**Communication Academy**

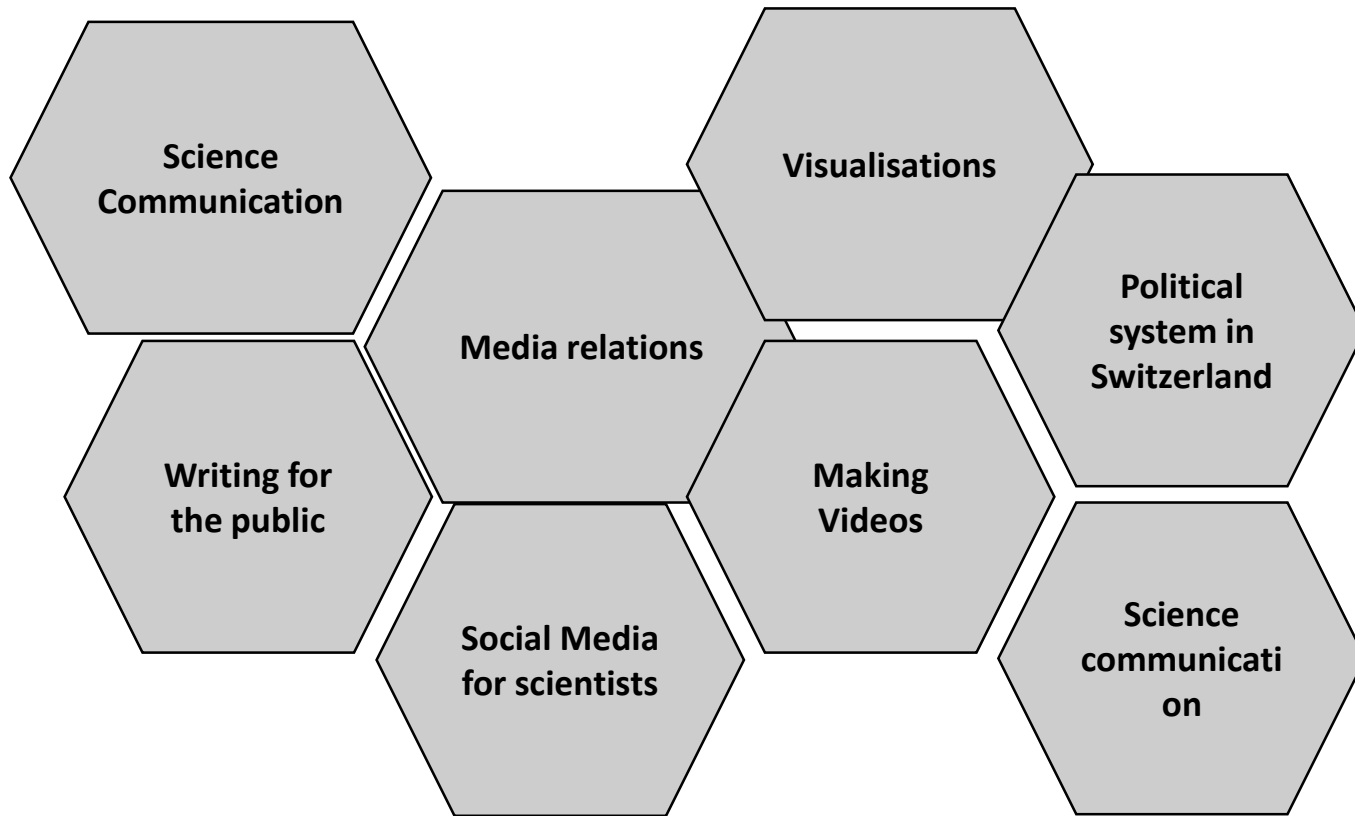
For

- PhD students
- Scientists
- Professors

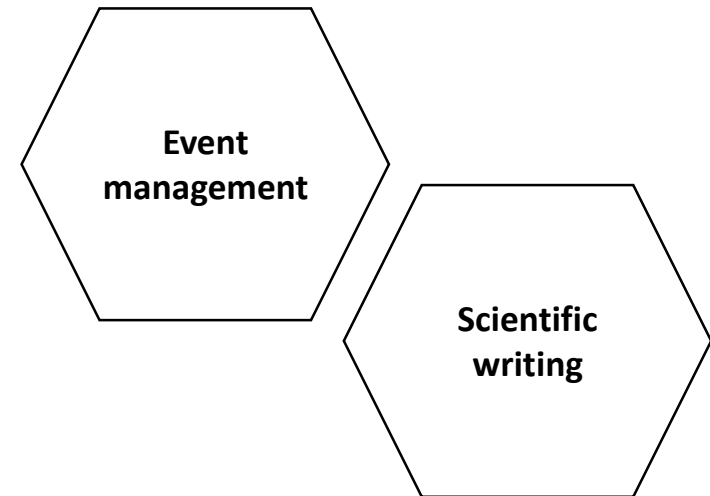


# Content „Communication Academy“

## New



## Courses until 2021





# Physical dialogue will also be key again: example of «Scientifica»



# Talking to science deniers and sceptics is not hopeless



**Fears of backfire effects are overblown, and advice to listen and interact still stands.**

[Lee McIntyre](#) 



I was at the March for Science in Boston, Massachusetts, on 22 April 2017, as were many scientists. About 70,000 of us descended on the Boston Common, a famous park in the city. We were there to stand up for facts and truth.

Where are the crowds of scientists now? Since then, harms from science denial have only increased: global suffering has grown owing to inaction on climate change, and COVID-19 infections have risen along with the scourge of vaccine scepticism.

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# **International collaboration as success factor of an institution in Higher Education - communication departments as enabler**

# Internationality: key to success in research and innovation?





# Why does ETH need international visibility?

## Overarching goals:

- Attract the best and brightest people for teaching and research
- Attract the best students in the world (focus: Master's level)
- Partner with universities to collaborate with the leading researchers in their respective fields.
- Attract international companies for cooperation / funding
- Bring benefits to society beyond the "national borders" and also demonstrate these benefits (communicatively).

# But the world is big..... focus

For international communication this means:

- Where do we want to be visible? In which world regions / countries?
- Who do we want to address?
- Define clear (few) communication goals: What do we want to achieve?
- How do we use the already existing "internationality" of the university in communication?

# Our target groups:

## Primary target group:

Stakeholders who are top in the field of engineering, architecture and natural sciences, namely:

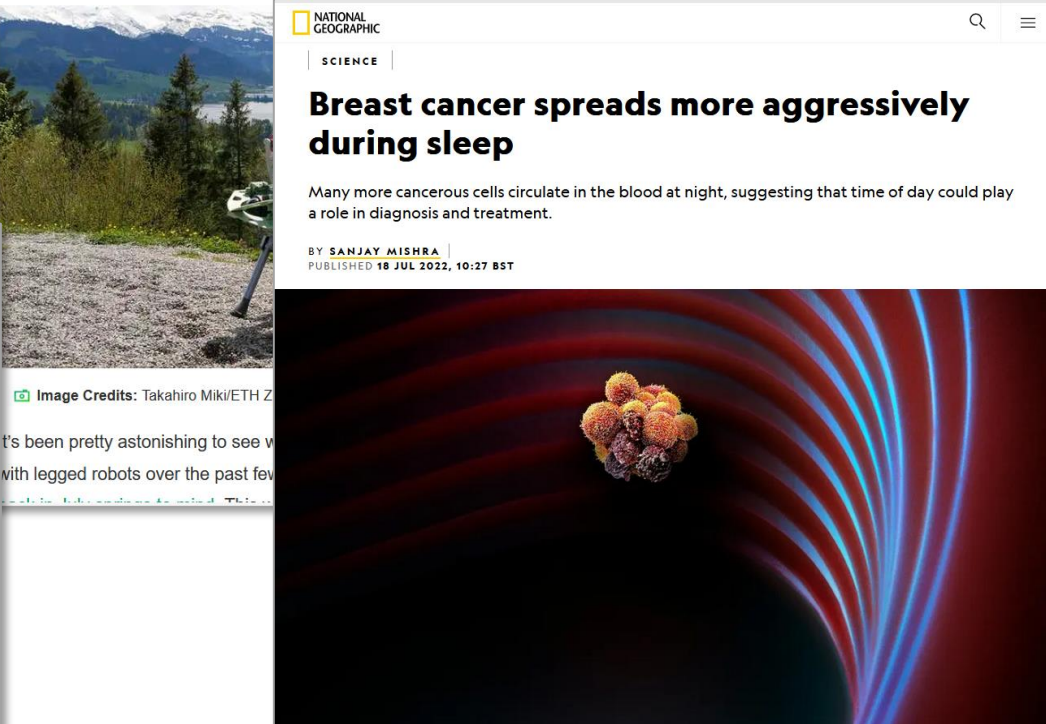
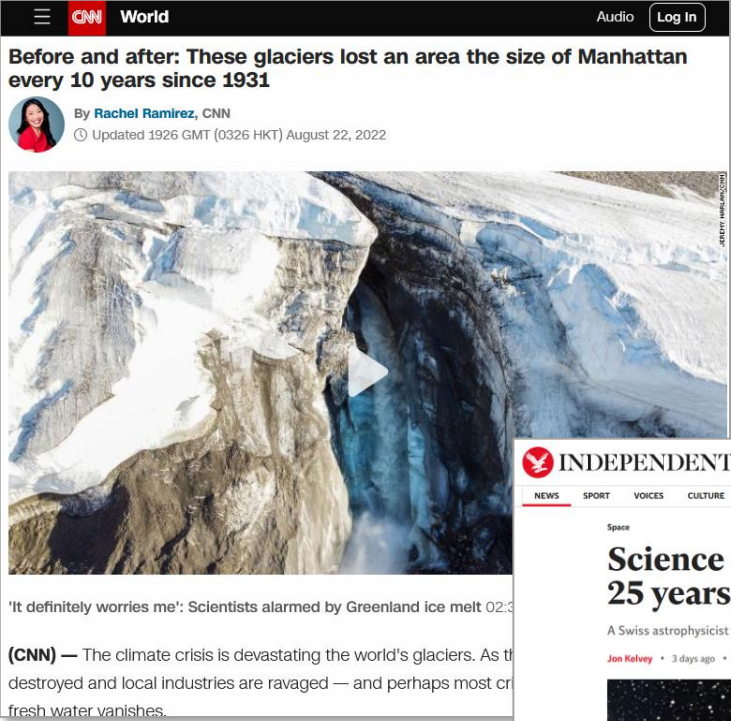
- Potential employees (researchers)
- Potential students
- Alumni (as ambassadors)
- Media representatives

# Implementation of international communication

## Operative goals

- Bring ETH Zurich to the attention of journalists in the leading international media - with cutting-edge research.
- Support and promote professors in their role as ambassadors
- Enforce consistent bilingualism (DE and EN) in print and online media channels
- Use the entire international ETH community as targeted ambassadors on digital and analogue channels (students, alumni, researchers)

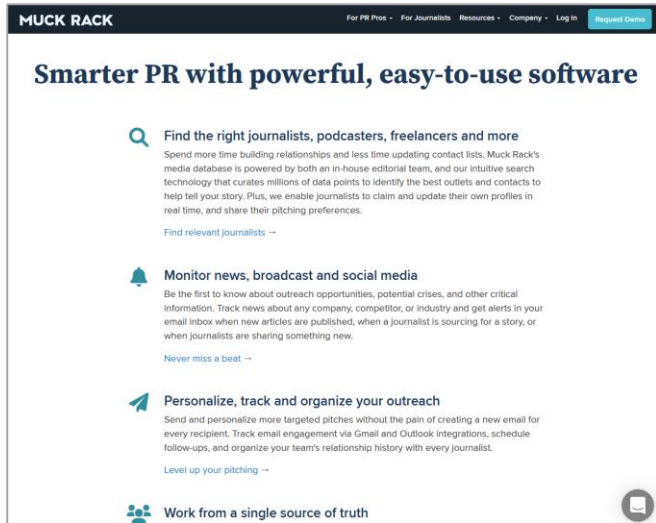
# Focus: International media relations research, research, research...





# Our tool for international media relations

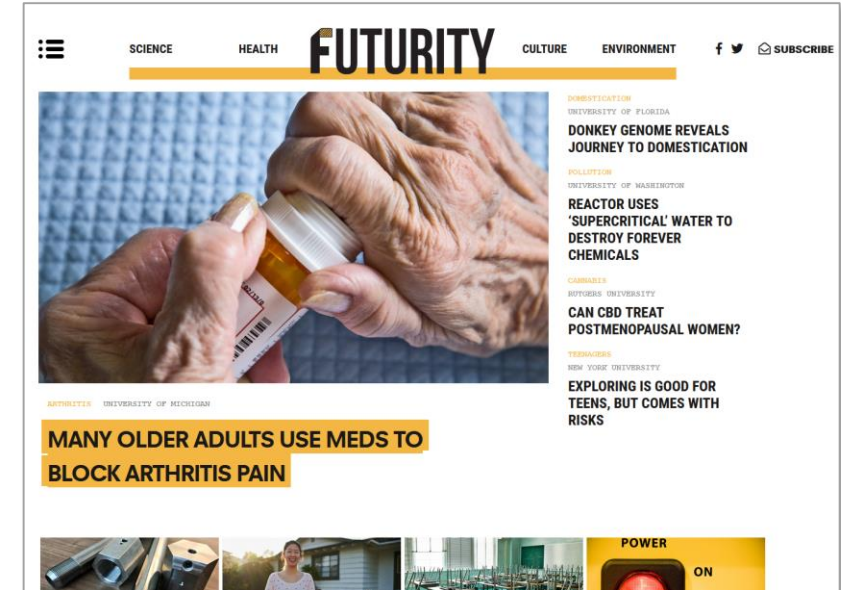
www.muckrack.com



www.eurekalert.org



www.futurity.org



Social Media:

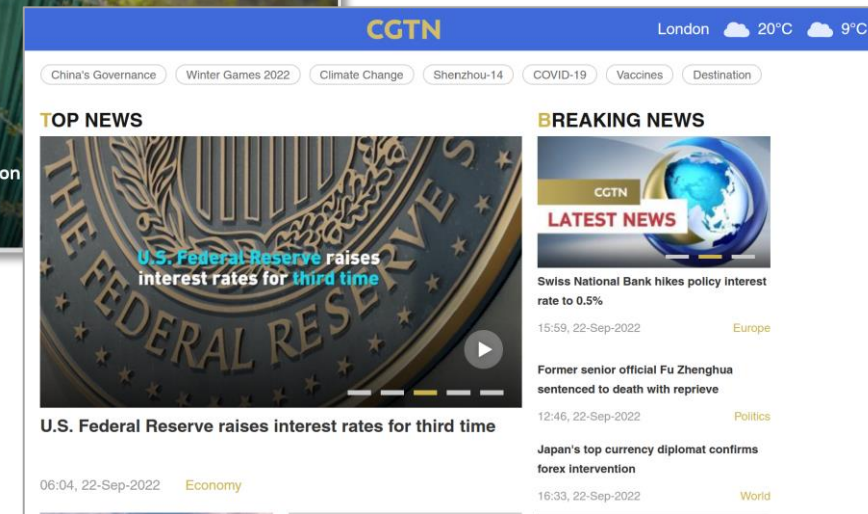
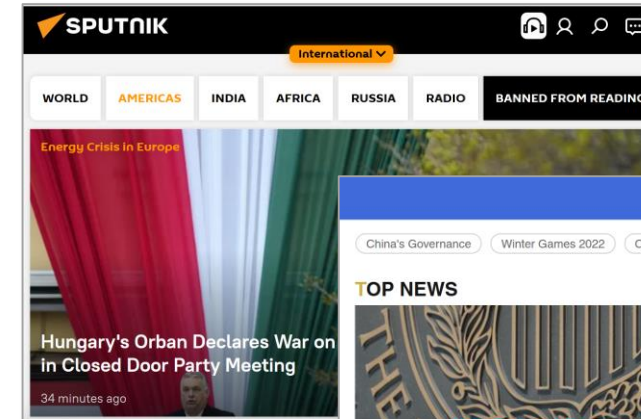


# International media relations

## New challenges

Even more «hypes, scandalisation»

«strange» understanding of media



Even less control





# Focus: ETH-Researcher as ambassadors create platforms

## ETH Meets You at the House of Switzerland Milano 2022

26 April-12 June 2022: ETH Zurich will be represented at the Casa degli Artisti in Milano, as part of the Pop-up House of Switzerland event platform connecting Italy and Switzerland.

15.04.2022 by Community & Outreach



Auftritte an internationalen  
Anlässen / Konferenzen

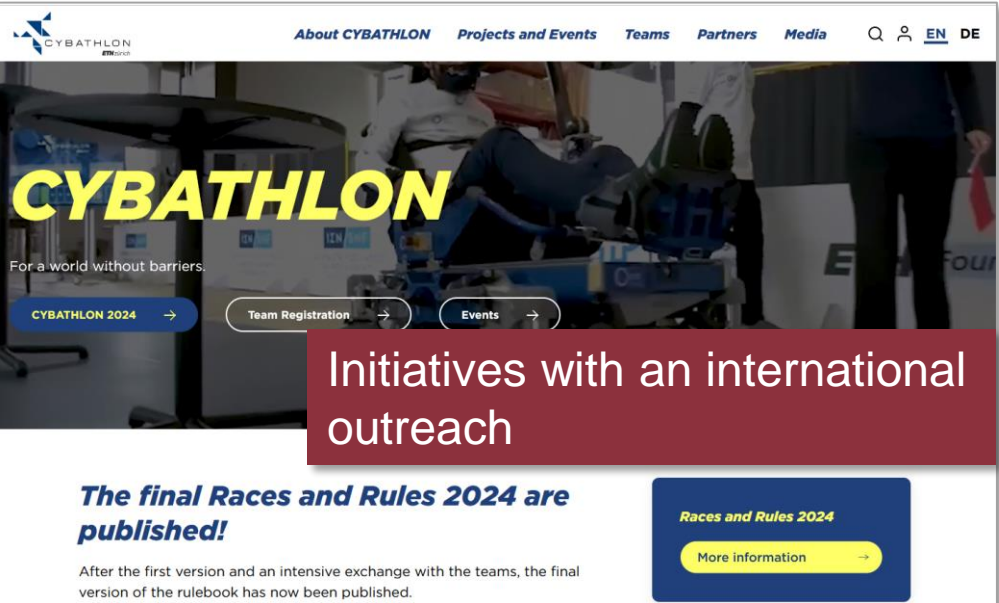
## ETH Meets You at the AAAS 2020 in Seattle

ETH Zurich hosts a symposium at the American Association for the Advancement of Science's Annual Meeting (AAAS 2020) on Synthetic Biology: Digital Design of Living Systems. ETH professors also contribute to sessions on deforestation / afforestation monitoring and biodiverse soil ecosystems.

ETH Global

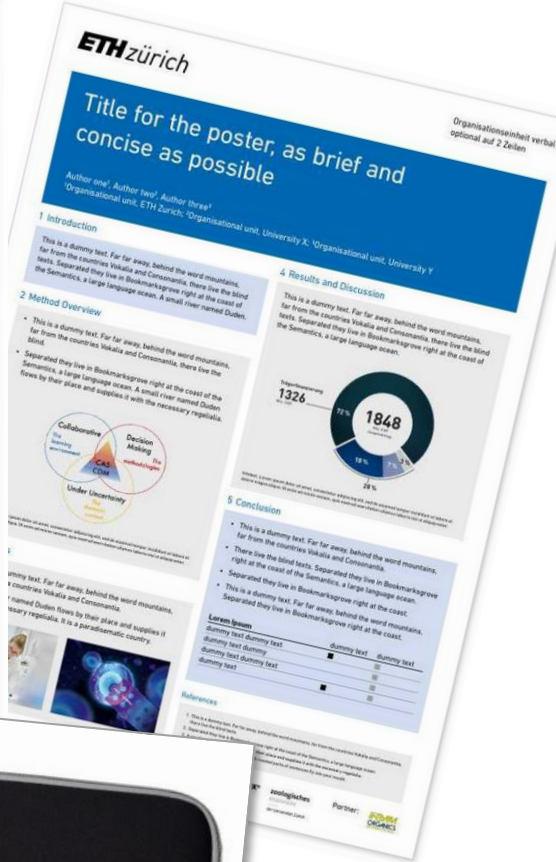
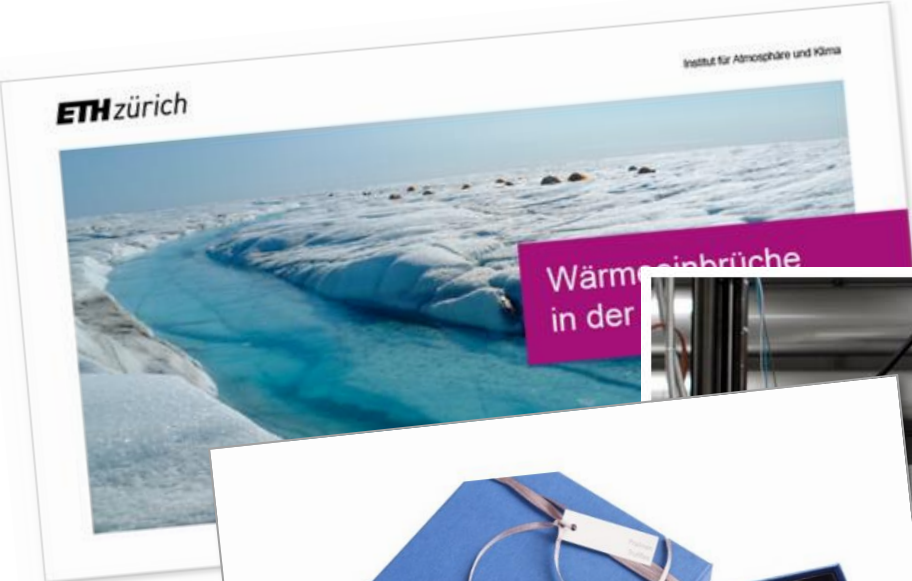


AAAS  
ANNUAL MEETING  
Seattle, WA | February 13-16, 2020  
ENVISIONING  
TOMORROW'S  
EARTH  
WEF  
#AAASmtg



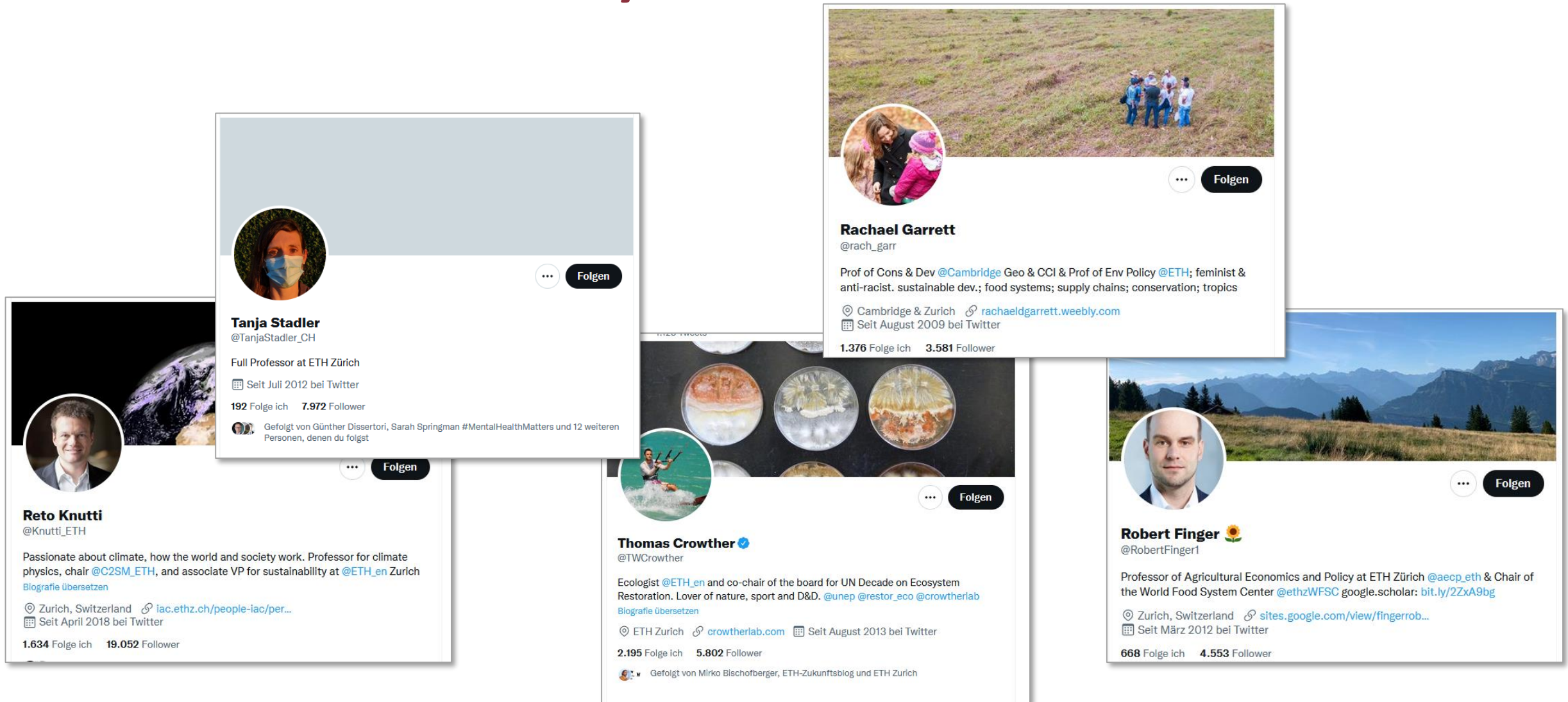
ETH-RAT

# Researchers as ambassadors: make tools available



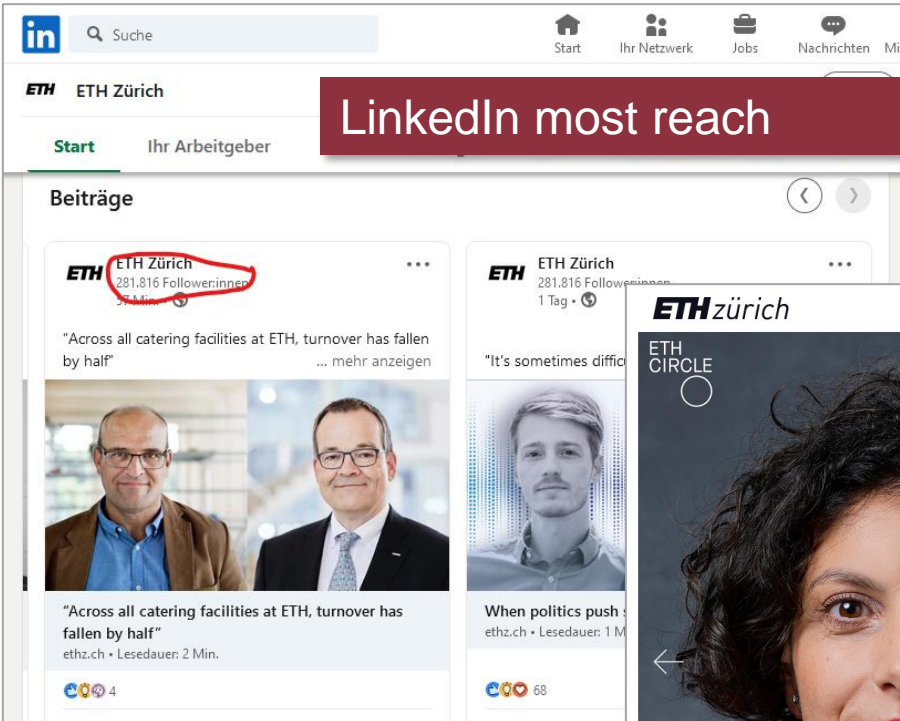


# Focus: ETH-Community as ETH-Influencer

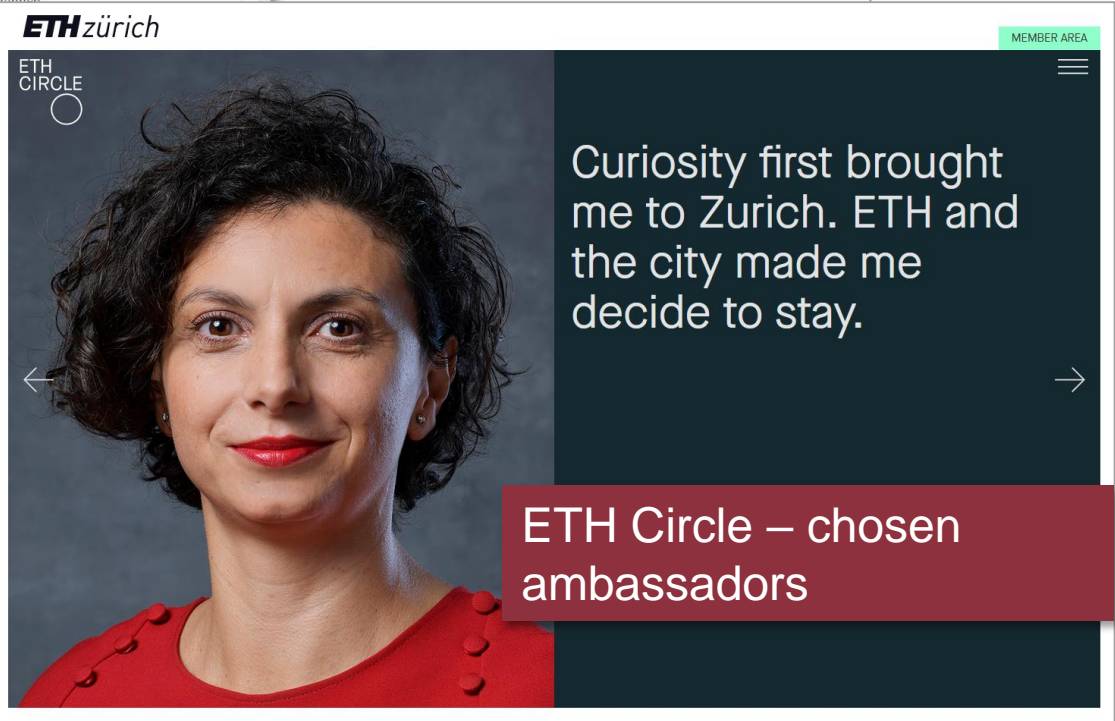
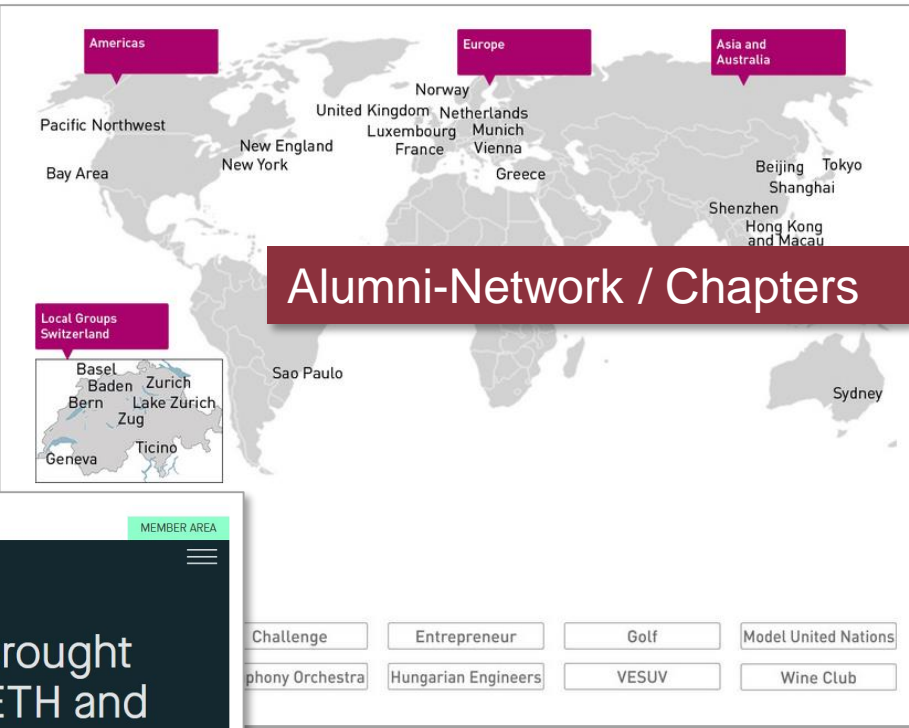




# Alumni – digital and analog



LinkedIn most reach



ETH Circle – chosen ambassadors

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**Purpose and values of universities:  
we must explain what research means and  
how it works**

# Our original values: what universities represent

- The culture of discussion is the great resource of universities!
- Going back to or initiating this change in universities
- Using social media and the physical to seek a dialogue (no top-down communication)



# Industrie: Purpose

- Unboss, our story
- Novartis Vas Narashimvan
- Define the purpose and culture of the company
- Collaborators als ambassadors and influencers



# Encourage transparency

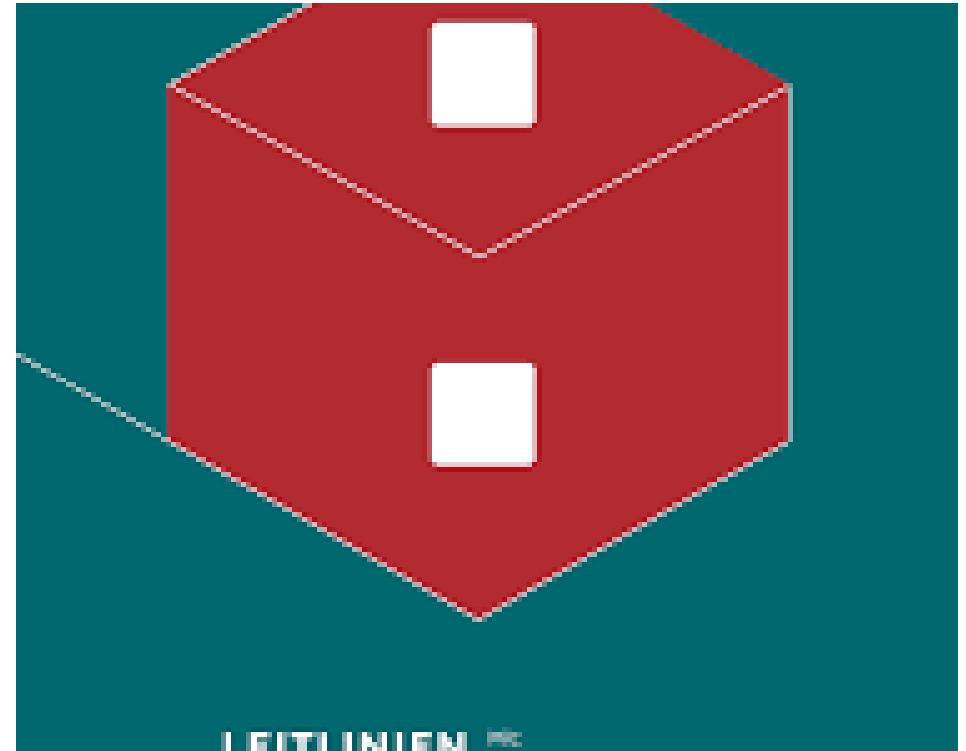
- The basis is openness in communication
- Internal and external communication
- Internal hub with information
- Internal = external





# Guidelines in Science Communication

- Germany made guidelines for good science communication and public relations
- Switzerland is starting a process to develop guidelines in science communication



# Report about science communication: From Status Quo Report to Recommendations

## 1. Status Quo Report



## 2. Recommendations

**... based on report, workshops, expert interviews and specialized working groups within broader expert group**

**... address science communication broadly as well: including the role of individual scientists and institutional science communication, science journalism, institutional training and support, science-policy interfaces etc.**

**... represent consensus in EG**

# Recommendations

**1 Science communication & public engagement should become an accepted part of scientific culture & practice.**

**2 Training in science communication and public engagement should be part of curricula, especially for young scientists.**

**3 Communicating scientists should be offered professional, social, psychological and, if necessary, legal support.**

**4 Improve scientists' understanding of public perceptions of science and the role of science in society.**

**5 Scientists & scientific organizations should understand and employ evidence-based scicomm.**

**6 A dialogue about aims and norms of science communication and public engagement is necessary.**

**7 Scientists and scientific org's should show how science works, including uncertainties, different perspectives, and relevance to society.**

**8 Encourage science communication and public engagement with underserved audiences.**

# Recommendations

**9 Support participatory research initiatives.**

**11 Institutional science communication should be carried out and coordinated in-house.**

**13 Science communication needs to counteract mis- and disinformation.**

**14 Science communication and public engagement with science should consider and reflect the diversity of science.**

**10 Institutional and individual science communication should express the specific values of science, such as organized skepticism, methodological thinking and intellectual openness.**

**12 Research on scicomm in digital environments should be fostered through funding opportunities, data access and capacity building.**

**15 Communication between science and politics needs to be strengthened and institutionalized.**

# Recommendations

**16 A new funding infrastructure for science journalism is needed, which should include a broad range of financial sources and fund innovative projects and core infrastructures.**

**17 Science journalism in public service broadcasting and established media houses should be strengthened, and networked across desks.**

**18 A national science news provider is needed to serve Swiss media houses.**

**19 Financially support and foster the independence of freelancers.**

**20 Innovation in science journalism in Switzerland should be furthered.**



# Swiss Federal Institutes of Science and Technology

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**ETH** zürich

**EPFL**

PAUL SCHERRER INSTITUT  
**PSI**



Eidg. Forschungsanstalt für Wald,  
Schnee und Landschaft WSL



**Empa**

Materials Science and Technology

**eawag**  
aquatic research **000**