




Article

# Cross-Border Communication Strategies: An Approach to Spanish Euroregions on Twitter (X)

Rubén Rivas-de-Roca <sup>1,\*</sup>, Ricardo Domínguez-García <sup>2</sup> and Concha Pérez-Curiel <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Communication Sciences, Faculty of Communication Sciences, University of Santiago de Compostela, 15782 Santiago de Compostela, Spain

<sup>2</sup> Department of Journalism II, Faculty of Communication, University of Seville, 41092 Seville, Spain; rdominguez1@us.es (R.D.-G.); cperez1@us.es (C.P.-C.)

\* Correspondence: rubenrafael.rivasderoca@usc.es

**Abstract:** In a political climate of social polarization and distrust in public institutions, which in turn fosters misinformation, the European Union (EU) faces the challenge of becoming closer to its citizens. At the same time, the EU has well-established collaboration mechanisms at the local and regional levels. In this context, this study aims to analyze the Euroregions project, one of the strategies used by the EU to manage the different regions of Europe through cross-border collaboration. Thus, the main objective of this study is to find out, using the social network X (formerly Twitter), the communication strategies deployed by the regional governments that make up each of the five Spanish Euroregions on institutions of cross-border cooperation. The results show that regional governments do not promote effective communication strategies to publicize these Euroregions. Rather, these governments try to communicate their management success, focusing their discourse on the issue of European funds and thus generating a situation of misinformation around the benefits of belonging to the European Union. Our findings contribute to the budding literature on regional European areas, arguing that certain political actions could ameliorate the feeling of disaffection of the population towards European institutions.



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## 1. Introduction

Following the fall of dictatorships and the birth of democracies in Spain and Portugal at the end of the 20th century, a process of the “deactivation of borders” began (Márquez Domínguez et al., 2017). This movement was consolidated with the accession of both countries into the European Union (EU) in 1986, as well as with the approval of the Schengen Agreement in 1985. Specifically, the Schengen Convention supplements the Schengen Agreement to establish an area without internal border controls. It was signed on 19 June 1990 and entered into force in 1995. Both the agreement and the convention, together with related agreements and tools, become EU legislation in 1999.

Despite the removal of physical barriers, the EU is often represented as distant from the interests of its citizens (Yordanova et al., 2024). Support for European integration is determined by factors such as political orientation or media consumption (van den Hoogen et al., 2022), which explains the need to employ a perspective of institutional communication. In addition, there is a proliferation of disinformation targeting European institutions, which, in turn, have developed mechanisms for coping with this challenge (Casero-Ripollés et al., 2023).

In the framework of a consolidated EU, the territories affected by the EU's internal borders have benefited from the arrival of significant European resources within the framework of different cross-border cooperation programs. Among them, resources financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) or more specific ones that have been periodically approved, such as INTERREG I (1990–1993), INTERREG II (1994–1999), INTERREG III (2000–2006), POCTEP (2007–2013), INTERREG VA (2014–2020), and POCTEP (2021–2027), stand out.

However, the long-lasting distance between European citizens and the EU is related to the not-yet-existing European public sphere (Bijmans & Altides, 2007; Walter, 2017). The media alone is not able to solve this problem (Lecheler et al., 2024), which is also shaped by the existence of different political cultures between countries.

Beyond the problem of not sharing a unified discourse and political experience, cross-border cooperation projects also face difficulties because they comprise regions with divergent populations or different levels of gross domestic product (GDP). Despite the problems arising from differences between regions or from the changes in government in Spain, France, and Portugal over more than 40 years of cross-border cooperation, these countries have established several structures, entities, and cooperation projects (e.g., the co-governance of shared projects in neighboring territories).

However, approaches to the communicative dimension of this cross-border cooperation are lacking. We assume that comprehensive information about the communicative dimension of this cooperation would allow for the correct attribution of responsibilities among the political actors involved (Goldberg et al., 2022). Therefore, our work aims to analyze communication aspects of one of the mechanisms with which the EU has managed the shared projects of European regions through cross-border collaboration. In this sense, the so-called Euroregions are cooperation projects between regions of neighboring countries that seek to promote the economic development of an area and generate a feeling of belonging to the supranational European project (Wolf et al., 2006).

These initiatives are defined by the existence of “a cross-border strategy; a common structure at local and regional level, and the participation of private actors and civil society” (Letamendía, 2010). Although the first Euroregion was created in 1958 on the German–Dutch border, most have been established since the 1990s. The economic investment in these entities by European institutions affects citizens' opinion of the EU, although, as stated before, there are other aspects that determine support for European integration. In Spain, five Euroregions have been institutionalized over the last 20 years: the Pyrenees–Mediterranean Euroregion (EPM), made up of the Spanish regions of Catalonia and the Balearic Islands and the French region of Occitania; the Galicia–Northern Portugal Euroregion; the EU-ROACE Euroregion, made up of the Portuguese regions of Alentejo and Centro and the Autonomous Community of Extremadura; the Alentejo–Algarve–Andalusia Euroregion (EuroAAA); and the Spanish–French Euroregion of New Aquitaine–Euskadi–Navarre.

The strength of cross-border economic development in all European policies has been evident since the early establishment of the EU (García Fernández et al., 2017), but the crucial role that social cohesion and a feeling of belonging to a shared transnational project play in the construction of the so-called Europe of the Regions cannot be ignored (Medeiros, 2011).

The previous literature has underlined the role of politicization, understood as the enhancement of the political significance of actions developed within the framework of the EU (Yordanova et al., 2024), which applies to the Euroregions project. The media has a role in generating cross-border connections and cooperation, but some scholars have pointed out how the distant characteristic of the EU is linked to structural dimensions (Seoane Pérez, 2013). According to this author, the public disengagement with the European project

is derived from the way in which the EU was built and governed (i.e., elite-driven) and the kind of cultural community that Europe is, as it is not a nation.

Although the communication problems of the EU are not solely due to mediation, Euroregions represent a quite unique initiative as they mix supranational European and regional approaches. Hence, our research aims to delve into the possibility of implementing communication strategies by these public institutions (Jiménez Alcarria & Tuñón Navarro, 2023; Rodrich Portugal, 2012) on X to promote knowledge sharing between the different territories of a Euroregion and strengthen social solidarity. The main objective of this study is to explore the institutional communication strategies deployed by the governments of the regions that are part of the five Euroregions located on the Iberian Peninsula.

## 2. Institutional Communication and the Building of European Citizenship

In a political climate of social polarization and distrust in institutions, which in turn increases the spread of disinformation, the EU faces major challenges. European institutions are aware of the need to communicate with citizens and gain their support. After the impact of the financial crisis and Brexit (de Vries, 2018) and considering the rise of some Eurosceptic governments such as those of Hungary or Slovakia, the European Commission has set goals to fight against disinformation and promote effective communication with citizens (Tuñón Navarro & Sánchez del Vas, 2022).

Similarly, in recent years, populism has become an internal problem in the EU. Populist movements from the far right (Mudde, 2007) typically find enemies in dominant elites, which, in the European case, usually comprise EU leaders and institutions (Caiani & Guerra, 2017). According to many authors, the wide and rapid impact of these movements cannot be understood without considering the magnifying potential of social media and its ability to spread antiestablishment ideas typical of populism (Gerbaudo, 2018; Pérez-Curiel et al., 2021).

Prior research has confirmed that the negative messages of these political forces tend to focus on criticizing politicians, especially those involved in EU institutions (Alonso-Muñoz & Casero-Ripollés, 2023). This type of discourse tends to portray the EU as an elitist bureaucratic entity that governs the lives of citizens from Brussels and makes decisions on the allocation of huge regional funds from the EU budget. In fact, a large proportion of these European funds are managed at the local and regional levels (Rivas-de-Roca & García-Gordillo, 2022). These criticisms, generally supported by disinformation, have boosted Euroscepticism. This is a movement that criticizes European integration projects (Álvarez, 2012) and has also resulted in a growing force of politicization, which can have ambivalent effects (Hutter et al., 2016). Eurosceptics, in addition to questioning the effectiveness of EU institutions and their tendency towards bureaucracy, are usually opposed to the primacy of the European law, as it is seen as an erosion of national sovereignty.

In contrast to this trend, Europeanism defends greater political integration, arguing that it guarantees democratic principles and the rights and freedoms of EU citizens (Martín de la Guardia, 2016). Europeanism understands that transnational collaboration can enable European nations to effectively face global challenges and improve the economic and social prosperity of the continent. Since the establishment of the European project, one of the main challenges has been the creation of a sense of European identity and citizenship, but this is a difficult task, as the EU comprises different Member States with different languages, traditions, and particularities. Thus, EU institutions need to encourage European citizens to identify with a supranational organization made up of 27 countries, cultivating a feeling of belonging to each Member State.

Faced with this concern about citizen disaffection, which became especially latent at the beginning of the first decade of the 2000s, the EU has carried out a whole range of initiatives and created tools that seek to involve citizens in its daily functioning through greater transparency. However, in the Euro crisis (2008–2012) (Alphandéry, 2012), the difficulties in attributing responsibilities to specific politics at the European level became perceivable again (Nienstedt et al., 2015). Communication is necessary for the survival of public institutions and an essential way to bring their work closer to people, demonstrate how their management affects them on a daily basis, generate trust, and create links with citizens. For this reason, the EU has become aware of the importance of developing communication strategies “so that citizens can more easily access information on Union policies and better understand their impact at European, national and local level” (European Commission, 2007).

EU institutions have developed an ambitious communication policy (Martín González, 2005) by expanding their Directorate-General for Communication, increasing their budgets, and adapting their priorities to improve the information they disseminate through the media (European Commission, 2006; Colomina Saló & Pérez-Soler, 2022). With the consolidation of new platforms, the EU has resorted to social networks to be present in the daily lives of their citizens and to expand the impact of communication (Gálvez Caja, 2020; Tuñón & Carral, 2019), using these tools to share news and events to foster greater understanding among European citizens.

However, since 2015, a new challenge related to public opinion has been identified: disinformation campaigns (Domínguez-García & Pérez-Curiel, 2023), especially from Russia, which interfere with the public opinion of the citizens of Member States by promoting the polarization of political debates and electoral contests (Rivas-de-Roca, 2020). This phenomenon involves disinformation and misinformation (Gebel, 2021), as well as malinformation, which is understood as information based on true facts that is spread to cause harm (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017). The main difference between the first two concepts lies in the concept of intentionality, as the first implies the existence of an external actor that tries to intentionally destabilize public opinion, while the latter refers to incorrect or incomplete information (Jerit & Zhao, 2020) due to unintentional errors.

The EU is targeted by disinformation campaigns, but the literature has proven over time that knowing more about the EU does not necessarily mean aligning with it more (Karp et al., 2003; Marquart et al., 2019). Studies on the regional framing of the EU are scant, with one study showing a pattern in Spain of presenting the EU as just being at a higher level of the political system and seeing it as a distant political, economic, or bureaucratic entity (Seoane Pérez, 2013). This framing has prevented citizens from assessing EU issues as significant.

Furthermore, there is a lack of academic contributions on Euroregions, including those in Spain and its neighboring countries. Only some evidence exists on the little public knowledge about the Euroregions between Spain and Portugal, even in higher education contexts (Vázquez Gestal & Fernández Souto, 2017). Meanwhile, while the social network X is used by EU institutions in a coordinated way to reach the public (Ruiz-Incertis & Tuñón-Navarro, 2024), data are not available at the regional level.

Considering that we also aim to analyze whether the communication strategies used to publicize cross-border cooperation policies may be linked to misinformation, the objective of this study is to examine regional governments’ discourse on Euroregions. In this regard, the following research questions are posed:

RQ1. What institutional and political communication strategies are used by the governments of the Spanish Euroregions on X, formerly Twitter?

RQ2. What role does the EU play in the political narrative built by the regional governments on X, formerly Twitter?

RQ3. What is the response of the public to this discourse on X, formerly Twitter?

### 3. Method

To answer these research questions, we conducted an analysis of the communication strategies deployed by the regional governments that make up each of the five Spanish Euroregions. A quantitative–qualitative comparative content analysis was applied (Krippendorff, 2004; Silverman, 2016), which allowed us to examine messages posted on the social network X, formerly Twitter. This platform has had the most relevance in political communication for several countries (Campos-Domínguez, 2017). In addition to its importance in studying the communication strategies of political institutions, the selection of this social network was because it was the only one used by all the institutions that made up the Spanish Euroregions during the period of time studied.

All coded data were subsequently analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics statistical software, version 29, to obtain crosstabs and frequency tables. Our research design delves into the accounts of the regional governments that are part of the five Euroregions in which Spain is involved: the Pyrenees–Mediterranean Euroregion, made up of the Spanish regions of Catalonia (@Gencat) and the Balearic Islands (@Goib) and the French region of Occitania (@Occitanie); the Galicia–Northern Portugal Euroregion (@Xunta and @CCDRN); the EUROACE Euroregion, made up of the Portuguese regions of Alentejo (@CCDRAlentejo) and Centro (@CCDRN) and the Autonomous Community of Extremadura (@Junta\_Ex); the EuroAAA, made up of Alentejo (@CCDRAlentejo), Algarve (@CCDR\_Algarve), and Andalusia (@AndaluciaJunta); and the New Aquitaine–Euskadi–Navarre Euroregion (@NvelleAquitaine, @Gob\_eus, and @Gob\_na). The sample includes all tweets published during the ten years before the end of the survey period (between 1 January 2014 and 1 January 2024) and containing the keyword Euroregion in all official languages (eurorregión, eurorregião, eurorégion, euroregió, eurorrexión, or euroeskualde), as well as mentions of the other regions that collaborate in these cooperative bodies.

Following these criteria, a total of 672 tweets were selected and analyzed using a coding manual on 16 variables, which were grouped into three large blocks in order to answer each of the research questions. In addition, our research also studied the digital discourse of these institutions from an issue/game perspective. According to the theory of Aalberg et al. (2011), the establishment of a thematic agenda (issue frame) and the implementation of communication strategies (game frame) are key elements to understanding current public communication. The issues of the thematic agenda and the game frames are defined deductively through exclusive and exhaustive categories based on the most relevant issues and strategies during the time frame studied. The tone (positive, neutral, or negative), the origin of the message, and the audiovisual content are also considered. Likewise, the relevance of the Euroregion is coded into the messages of each regional government, together with any mention of that political body, other regions, and Europe, as well as the main characteristics of the message.

The audience response to these communications is relevant as a way of observing public interest in the communications of the Euroregions. This response is measured through the level of virality that the messages reach on X (i.e., number of retweets, likes, and responses). To analyze virality, a formula applied in previous studies was used (Pérez-Curiel et al., 2021), which assigns a double value to retweets compared to likes and responses. This formula is based on the sum of likes, replies, and retweets multiplied by 2, divided by the number of tweets (viral capacity = (SUM retweets\*2 + SUM likes)/SUM tweets published).

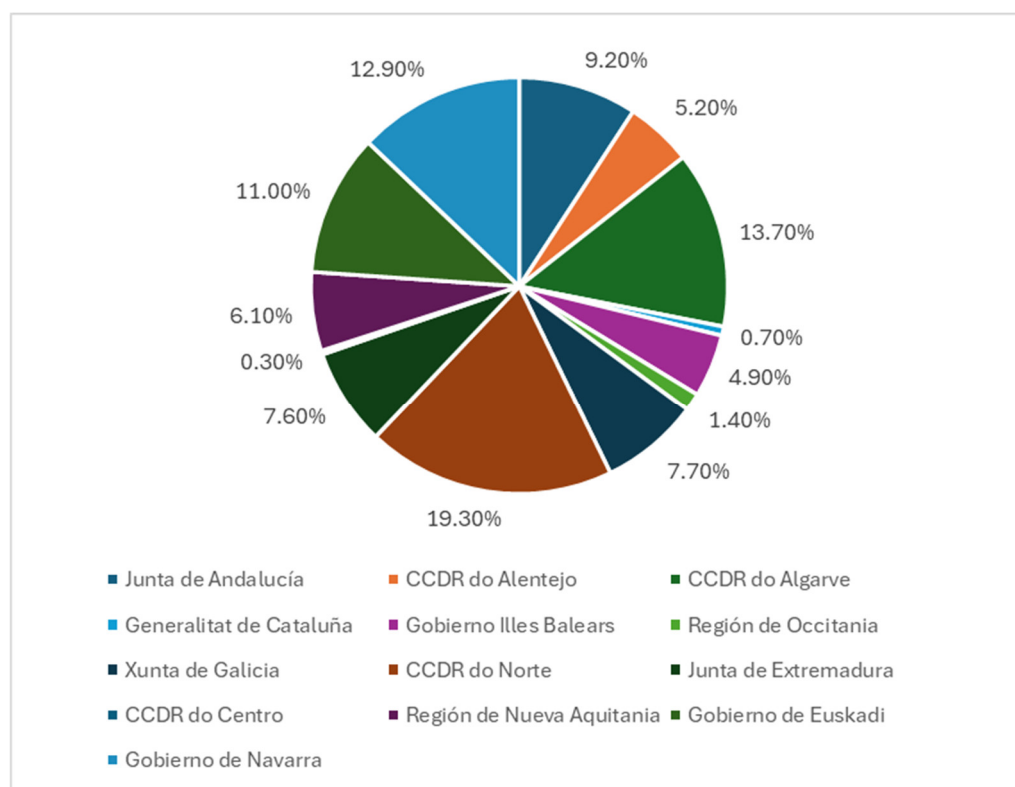


## 4. Results

### 4.1. The Discourse of the Governments of the Spanish Euroregions

The messages posted on X by the regional governments about the Euroregions illustrate that it is a topic of little importance in the political narrative of these institutions, since they only published a total of 672 tweets over ten years. This number is small, with an average of just over five tweets per year for each institution, but clear divergences are found between the different Euroregions. The Euroregions of New Aquitaine–Euskadi–Navarre (29.9% of the total), Galicia–Northern Portugal (27.1%), and EUROAAA (24.3%) have a much greater presence than EUROACE (11.8%) or the Pyrenees–Mediterranean (7%) Euroregions.

If we look at these data from regional governments (Figure 1), the accounts of the CCDR do Norte (19.3%), the CCDR do Algarve (13.7%), the Region of Occitania (13%), the Government of Navarre (12.8%), and the Basque Country (11%) are the ones that publish the most about the Euroregions. On the other hand, it is striking that the Generalitat of Catalonia (0.7%) and the CCDR do Centro (0.3%) produce hardly any messages about cross-border cooperation.



**Figure 1.** Distribution of tweets by regional government.

Moreover, the data show that the year of highest interest in Euroregions was 2020, confirming the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for different regions to strengthen ties between them to deal with its health-related, economic, and social consequences.

Regarding the characteristics of the messages published by regional governments, the metrics show a clear majority of tweets being accompanied by images (44%), generally photographs of events or infographics, or links (33.5%), usually to the institutional website. On the contrary, messages that are supported by other tweets (13.1%), videos (7.3%), or just text (2.1%) are scant. The absence of edited videos about the Euroregions may be related to the very low importance that the regional governments give to this issue. In fact,

most of the tweets that are supported by audiovisual material were from the autonomous communities of Andalusia and the Basque Country.

In terms of topics, the data obtained from our study point to the idea that regional governments tend to focus their discourse on cross-border cooperation in the fields of economy and employment (23.1%), as well as education, culture, and sport (18.6%). Other relevant issues are the environment and the agri-food sector (7.3%), infrastructure (5.7%) and tourism (5.2%). This contrasts with messages that focus on health (2.1%) or security (2.8%), which are few. In addition, most tweets (35.3%) do not correspond to a specific thematic axis since they deal with the Euroregion in a general way or address topics of lesser importance.

In the detailed figures for the regional governments (Figure 2), it is worth highlighting the preference of the Generalitat of Catalonia (80% of its messages) and the Government of the Balearic Islands (42.4%) for culture. This is due to the strong cooperation between both institutions to strengthen ties in linguistic matters. Another particularity lies in the interest of the CCDR do Centro (50%) and the CCDR do Alentejo (22.9%), both Portuguese, in tourism.

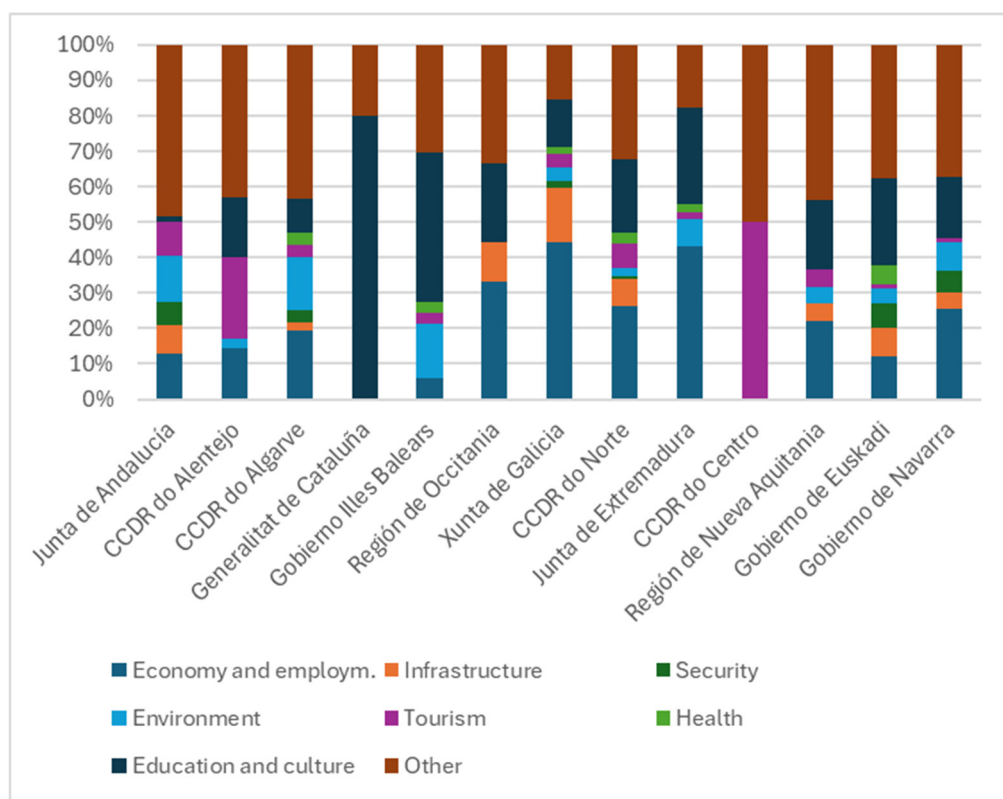


Figure 2. Thematic distribution of each regional government.

Regarding game frames, the results confirm a strong interest of the regional governments in disseminating information on the management (77.2%) of cross-border cooperation, although there are few messages that seek to promote events related to the Euroregions (12.2%) or that seek to encourage confrontation (6.1%). In this sense, cooperation between cross-border regions is an issue that rarely leads to conflicts between administrations. When a conflictual strategy appears, it refers to demands from central governments for greater investments, especially in the area of infrastructure.

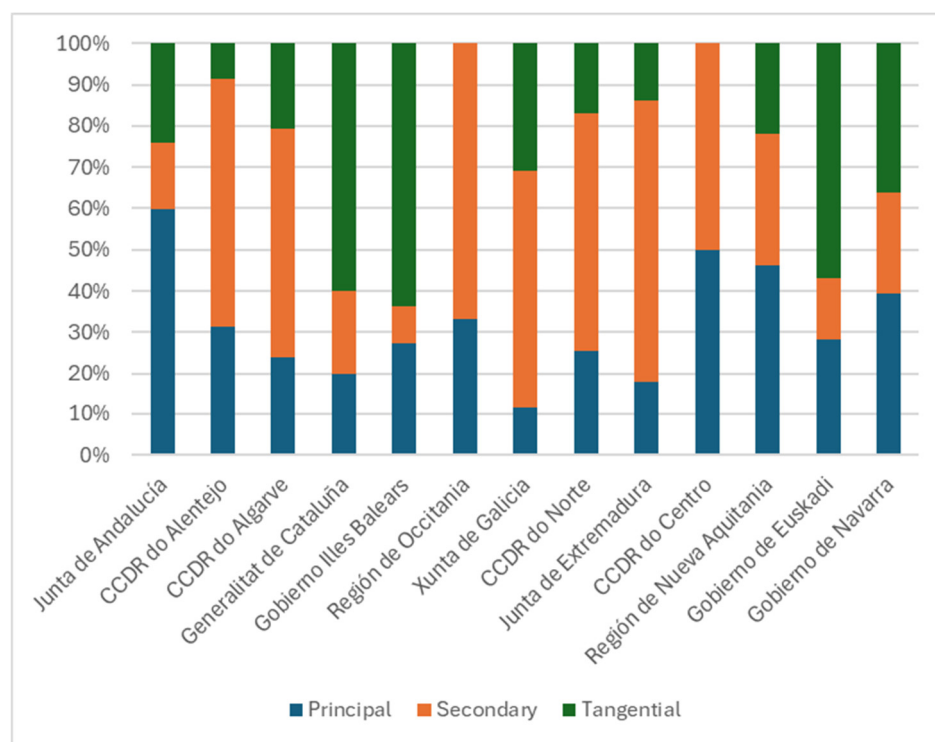
In line with this commitment to spreading regional management, the data also show that regional governments use a mostly neutral (67%) or positive (31.8%) tone, so negative messages are minimal (1.2%). Considering the particularities of each region studied, it is

noteworthy that the regions of Occitania (77.8%), Andalusia (58.1%), and Algarve (55.4%) are more likely to post positive messages, generally related to their management.

#### 4.2. The Communicative Role of Europe and the Euroregions

Regarding the importance that the EU and its institutions have in the messages studied, most of the messages deal with the Euroregion project in a secondary way (41.4%), since they focus on reporting on projects and programs derived from this cross-border cooperation. However, there are a significant number of tweets (30.7%) that focus on the functioning of the Euroregions themselves or on bilateral cooperation outside of these organizations (28%).

The data from each regional government (Figure 3) allow us to identify different patterns. Beyond the tendency for regional governments to address Euroregions in a secondary way, there are also governments that choose to focus on the functioning of these organizations themselves, such as the Junta de Andalucía (59.7%), the CCDR do Centro (50%), or the Region of New Aquitaine (46.3%).



**Figure 3.** Relevance of Euroregions in the communications of each regional government.

Furthermore, other regional governments prefer to address bilateral cooperation, limiting the focus on Euroregions in their discourse. This is the case for the governments of the Balearic Islands (63.6%) and the Generalitat of Catalonia (60%), as well as the governments of the Basque Country (56.8%) and Navarre (39.5%). These are regions with strong ties between them and which mainly advocate for direct cooperation, without considering Euroregions. Following this, the results show that the majority of messages include a direct mention to Euroregions (63.4%), with the exception of the four governments mentioned above.

However, one of the most striking patterns emerging from this study is that tweets that mention EU institutions are outlined as a clear minority. In fact, they make up only 57 of the 672 messages analyzed, which represents 8.5% of the total. The only significant cases are the governments of Occitania (33.3%), Algarve (25%), and Andalusia (19.4%), which occasionally mention Europe and its institutions. These data illustrate that regional



governments tend to appropriate the management of the Euroregions without recognizing the origin of the European economic funds that support them or the commitment of EU institutions to cross-border cooperation.

This theory is reinforced by the fact that most messages come from speeches or public events run by politicians from regional governments (69.3%). However, there are a minority of tweets specifically prepared for social networks (23.4%) or from the media (5.7%).

The previous data were expanded on by analyzing the protagonist of the messages, i.e., the subject of the communication, showing that most tweets focus on members of the regional governments (56.4%). Moreover, most of the tweets were posted by regional presidents (31.8%), councilors (17.7%), or other lower-ranking members (6.8%). In addition to this, there is a very significant number of posts that do not show any protagonist (43%), but the most surprising finding is that only 0.6% of all the posts focus on the participation of members of EU institutions.

#### 4.3. Citizen Response

Through the metrics of retweets, likes, and responses, different nuances related to the interest of the digital public were identified. According to the data, users of the social network X show very low interest in this matter. In fact, each post reaches an average of only 3.2 retweets, 5 likes, and 0.4 responses, which means a virality figure of 11.8 based on the chosen formula.

If these metrics are explored for each account studied (Figure 4), notable differences are observed. The regions of Occitania (55.6), Galicia (35.1), Andalusia (33.5), and Catalonia (22.8) have more virality. This contrasts to the accounts of the CCDRs of Algarve (2.5), North (3), or Alentejo (3.1), which obtain minimal percentages of virality. This finding could be related to the limited role these Portuguese initiatives play at an institutional level.

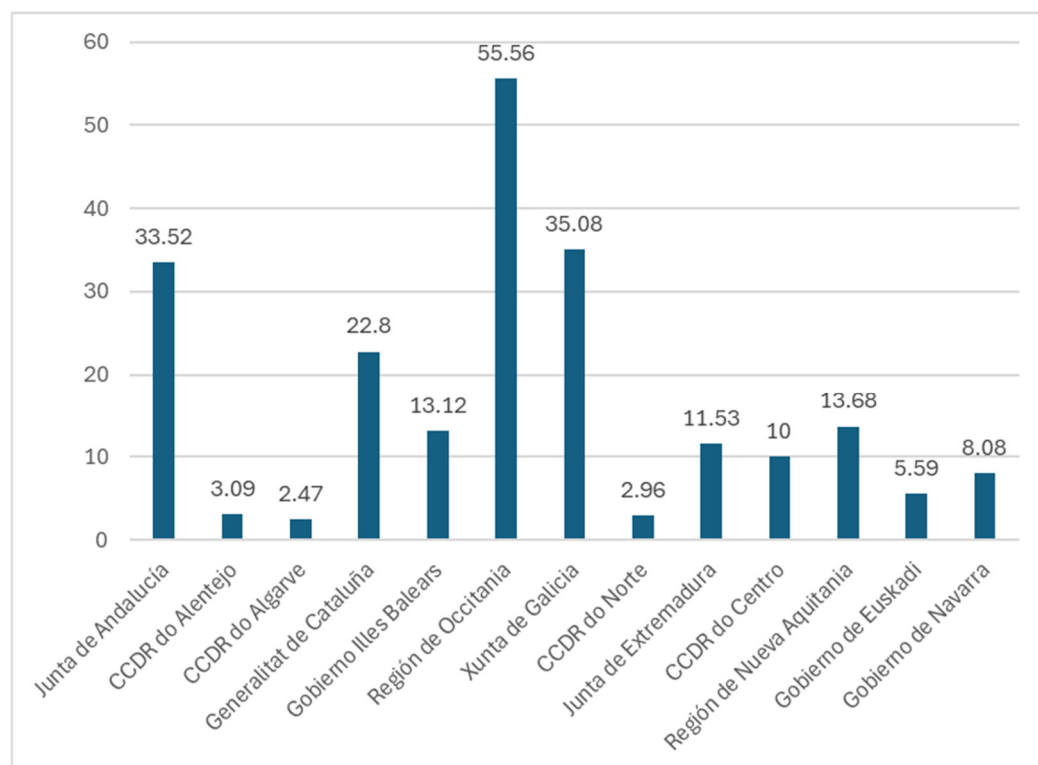


Figure 4. Virality of communications by regional government.

At the thematic level, the study of virality shows that some of the issues that attract the least attention from regional governments are those that arouse the greatest interest from

citizens. Health (18.1), tourism (14.1), and infrastructure (16.2) reached the highest metrics, while security (5.6) caught the least interest. Regarding strategies, it was confirmed that messages based on conflict achieved the highest virality (17.8), ahead of those that sought to disseminate management information (12) and far ahead those promoting events (7). Moreover, positive messages (14) aroused the greatest interest, ahead of neutral messages (10.9) or negative ones (5.5).

Considering the relevance of the Euroregions, the messages that directly addressed the functioning of these organizations had the highest impact on the social platform (14.4), ahead of those that did so in a secondary (12.2) or tangential manner (9.7). However, the greatest differences are observed in the protagonist of the messages, given that citizens are far more interested in tweets featuring regional presidents (18.7) than those that focus on European authorities (11.5) or regional councilors (9.9) or those that do not feature any specific figure (8.7). Another finding on the response of the audiences is that users interact more if the messages are accompanied by videos (37.4) or photographs (13.7) than if they contain links (6.9) or other tweets (3.9).

## 5. Discussion and Conclusions

As presented throughout this study, cohesive policies at the level of Euroregions can be seen as a key tool for the economic development of border territories in Europe. However, the commitment of EU institutions to these entities does not translate into an effective communication policy on X (formerly Twitter) that raises awareness of these Euroregions to the public. The content analysis revealed findings that answer the research questions. First, the discourse of the regional governments addressed the Euroregions in a secondary way in most of their messages (RQ1), focusing on programs created to disseminate information on the management of each regional government. A strong presence of regional presidents or councilors was observed. In addition, the EU and its institutions were scarcely mentioned.

Our second conclusion offers evidence regarding the digital action of the regional governments of the five Euroregions (RQ2), which only published a collective 672 tweets on this subject over the 10 years analyzed. This is even more significant in the case of the accounts of the Commission for the Coordination and Regional Development of the Centre and the Generalitat of Catalonia. According [Márquez Domínguez et al. \(2017\)](#), this could be assessed as a communicative attempt to reduce European initiatives and investments in favor of a greater role for Spanish or French regional power, or for the state in the case of Portugal. The appropriation of EU accomplishments by regional governments is not only related to communication but also to the EU as a political institution in terms of subsidiarity ([Seoane Pérez, 2013](#)).

The third contribution furthers our understanding of the lack of interest from digital audiences (RQ3). The fact that the messages examined had an average of 3.2 retweets, 5 likes, and 0.4 responses makes it clear that Euroregions are a minor issue for the citizens of these regions, although X is not a social network with high volumes of interaction ([Campos-Domínguez, 2017](#)).

Based on our results, it is clear that regional governments are not developing communication policies to foster a strong interregional cultural identity ([Medeiros, 2011](#)) on X and are limited to taking advantage of the economic potential of European funds to gain prominence and, in a certain way, appropriate the beneficial impact they have on society. Taking previous research into account ([Jerit & Zhao, 2020](#); [Manfredi, 2024](#)), it can be stated that these governments fuel a situation of incomplete information or misinformation, which favors the building of an image of Europe as a distant bureaucratic entity that is inefficient in the management of public funds.

In recent years, European issues have had increased visibility, triggering a politicization of the EU (Hutter et al., 2016). This political element seems essential to combat the traditional communication deficit of the European project, something that could be solved by correct information visibility around investments at the local level (Rivas-de-Roca & García-Gordillo, 2022), for which the Euroregions stand out. The communication strategies of Euroregions could be seen as tools to enhance the legitimacy of the EU at the closest level to citizenship, but the construction of interregional identities between the territories involved was found to be incomplete through the digital action analyzed, as neutral messages and low virality revealed scant citizen engagement.

It should be noted that our work has several limitations. The sampling was restricted to the Euroregions linked to Spain. In addition, it was based on the social media platform X, which may have undergone changes in its usage patterns throughout the decade considered. X (formerly Twitter) is populated by bots, especially since its acquisition by Elon Musk and its renaming to X. Therefore, our study of virality acknowledges this limitation, as many of the likes and retweets could have been performed by bots and not human users.

Following the above, the selection of tweets could have been significantly influenced by biases that may affect the reliability and generalizability of our findings. For instance, the presence of bots—automated accounts designed to mimic human behavior—can distort sentiment analysis, topic modeling, and other data-driven research, leading to inflated or skewed representations of public opinion. Additionally, changes in the platform’s user demographics, which very much differ from those of the general population (i.e., younger, more progressive, more male, and urban/city residents), can introduce temporal biases, making older datasets less reflective of current trends.

Future research should check whether the narrative constructed on social networks by territorial institutions corresponds to the discourse of the political leaders themselves or to their relevance in the media agenda. This could be implemented together with studies in broader contexts. Moreover, X is not the only place where people look for information about these Euroregions. Studying regional media in these locations would likely give us additional information on how the work executed by Euroregion bodies is covered, which is a potential avenue for future studies. Regional media has greater potential and scope for informing citizens. Therefore, generalizations on the role of X as a source of political information on Euroregions must be avoided.

In conclusion, the European Euroregions in Spain currently represent a wasted opportunity in terms of digital communication. Their political action on X is displaced by particular issues. Although the intentional manipulative logic behind disinformation is not present, misinformation also has very negative effects, which here refers to unintentionally framing the EU as a distant political entity. This situation affects not only the democratic quality of the European project but also the legitimacy of the Euroregions as political actors that manage public funds.

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