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# London under Brexit: #LondonIsOpen communication campaign to protect the city identity

**Rocío Blay-Arráez** [[CV](#)] [] [] Professor of the Department of Communication Sciences - Universitat Jaume I – Spain – [rblay@uji.es](mailto:rblay@uji.es)

**Elvira Antón-Carrillo** [[CV](#)] [] [] Professor of the Media, Culture and Language Department - Roehampton University – United Kingdom – [E.Anton@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:E.Anton@roehampton.ac.uk)

**Lorena López Font** [[CV](#)] [] [] Professor of the Department of Communication Sciences - Universitat Jaume I – Spain – [lfont@uji.es](mailto:lfont@uji.es)

## Abstracts

**[ES] Introducción:** Esta investigación toma como punto de partida un hecho histórico, la mayoría de la población de UK votó salir de la Unión Europea el 23 de junio de 2016. Sin embargo, el resultado del referéndum en Londres fue permanecer con un 75,3% de votos. Esto presenta un escenario contrario a los valores de la ciudad, donde lo multicultural y la diversidad forman parte de su identidad. Este trabajo selecciona como caso de estudio la campaña de comunicación iniciada por el alcalde de Londres, Sadiq Khan, para contrarrestar el Brexit. La campaña #LondonIsOpen como expresión creadora donde los ciudadanos han revolucionado las acciones institucionales. **Metodología:** Se plantea como metodología cualitativa, el análisis de contenido de las piezas audiovisuales, cuyos objetivos son: 1. Detectar metodologías innovadoras, 2. Describir los colectivos involucrados, 3. Analizar la eficacia de las acciones. **Resultados y conclusiones:** Las conclusiones presentan cuáles han sido las claves de la gran participación, la paradoja de que la iniciativa surja de un líder político y la credibilidad que ha obtenido su campaña.

**[EN] Introduction:** The starting point of this study is a historical event, most of UK population voted in favour of exiting the European Union on 23 June 2016. However, the result of the referendum in London was to stay with 75.3% of votes. This shows a scenario contrary to the city's values, where the multicultural aspect and diversity are part of its identity. This research selects as case study, the communication campaign launched by London mayor, Sadiq Khan, to counteract the Brexit. The

campaign #*LondonIsOpen* as creative expression where citizens have revolutionized institutional actions. **Methodology:** the content analysis of the audiovisual pieces is proposed as qualitative methodology, with the following objectives: 1. To identify innovative methodologies, 2. To describe collectives involved, 3. To analyse the efficacy of actions. **Results and conclusions:** Conclusions present what have been the keys of the massive participation, the paradox of the fact that the initiative comes from a political leader and the credibility achieved by his campaign.

### Keywords

[ES] Campaña comunicación; participación ciudadana; identidad ciudad; Londres multicultural; referéndum Brexit.

[EN] Communication campaign; citizen participation; city identity; multicultural London; referendum Brexit.

### Contents

[ES] 1. Introducción. 1.1 Presentación del caso de estudio. 2. Metodología. 2.1. Selección de la muestra. 2.2. Técnicas de investigación. 3. Resultados. 3.1. Análisis del contenido manifiesto de la campaña. 3.2. Análisis interpretativo del mensaje. 4. Discusión y conclusiones. 5. Notas. 6. Bibliografía.

[EN] 1. Introduction. 1.1. Presentation of the case study. 2. Methodology. 2.1 Sample selection. 2.2. Research techniques. 3. Results. 3.1. Manifest content analysis of the campaign. 3.2. Interpretative analysis of the message. 4. Discussion and conclusions. 5. Notes. 6. List of references.

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(Academic translator, Universitat de Barcelona)

## 1. Introduction

This study is based upon the premise that the city of London has been and still is a fundamental centre of attraction for citizens around the world, because it is a city with a multicultural policy and that respects diversity (Livingstone, 2011; Massey, 2008). And because of that complex reality, the city has become a study object of many studies (Sassen, 1999; Perfect, 2014; McIlwaine & Camilo, 2011; Herrero & Chaves, 2015). However, the result of the referendum on 23 June 2016 about the Brexit has been indicative that something is changing in the United Kingdom and of course, this result is contrary to London's identity.

In the past decades, two parallel processes have coexisted worldwide: globalization and the reaffirmation of different cultural identities, both processes are interrelated (Castell, 2010: 254). This debate had a great relevance when it came to suggest the referendum about the permanence in the European Union. In this globalization process emerges the fear of losing the cultural references that define people and from there, the conflicts and revendications about local or regional identities. In fact, the critical voices with the decline of multiculturalism and diversity, are present in recent years, not only in London but also globally (Murphy, 2012; Kymlicka, 2010; Mahamdallie, 2011).

In this context, this work introduces the communication effort carried out by London's City Hall to counteract Brexit effects. The fact that the majority of UK population wanted to exit the European Union, despite the fact that the result of the London's referendum was to stay with 75.3%, shows a scenario contrary to the values of the city, according to the London mayor, Sadiq Khan. In order to do this, this study focused on the analysis of a case, the mobilization and resistance campaign that the mayor initiated after Brexit under the hashtag *#londonisopen*. This campaign involves key collectives of the city of London, allowing the active participation and spontaneous co-creation because of its option for social networks. A topical case, since the campaign is still valid, about how the efficacious management of participatory communication can counteract the effects of a historical event.

Sadiq Khan [ 1], who by the time of the referendum, just had won the elections for mayor, had clearly shown his opposition to the exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union and campaigned for continuity. The fact is that when talking about the identity traits of the city of London, these are made clear in the words of the first London mayor, Ken Livingstone [ 2]: “London is the most international and diverse city in the world. [...] It is a vital process from the economic and creative perspective: to become successful cities, its companies and population must be aware about the most up-to-date ideas and progresses worldwide” (2011: 26-27). Massey states that it is a multicultural global city, and this is a very relevant aspect of its internal identity (2008: 117).

Michael Perfect outstands in a historical journey “London has never been monocultural. [...] When it was the center of a worldwide empire, it was also a center of diversity” (2014: 3). However, Ken Livingstone already showed his concern about how to handle this new reality that characterizes the city of London and that, therefore, conditions its policies: “[...] the matter is how we live with its consequences, what its challenges are, as well as its advantages, and how we manage them” (2011: 29). The fact is that more than 15 years ago the political decisions for the development of multiculturalism in London had a great growth, but currently the pessimism trend cannot be omitted though. Time has changed this tendency, “In the current political context, it is much more common to listen about the moral decline of the multicultural theory or the failure of multicultural policies, and the faint trust feeling is making room for an increasing feeling of discomfort [...] have started to demand the end of the so-called multicultural experiment” (Murphy, 2012: 1).

This whole trend leads to the Brexit and definitely opens the breach between political and social reality and the city's identity. This is the reason why the case study selected is of interest, since it analyses the current resistance of the London mayor before the facts that evidence these contradictions, events that put at stake the fact that this paradigmatic city can keep being a pole of attraction for innovation and culture. There are many experts (Castells, 2005; Florida, 2008; Anholt, 2010) that highlight the issue that the cities are the great demographic magnets and that condense in a unique way the physical, intellectual and creative energy of its citizens. The places that are able to attract the best creative talent are more likely to experience prosperity.

The tourist flows, the presence of large corporations, the investment on urban clusters of scientific innovation, together with holding singular events of international projection, are some of the factors that allow to ensure the richness of the territory, its leading role at a national and international level,

as well as the economic and social wellbeing of its residents (Anholt, 2010). In this context, the inventiveness of urban managers is sharpened, so to present an appealing image of its city, ensuring a favourable perception by all relevant publics and generating positive and long-lasting experiences. As Kolotouchkina and Blay say, even taking over the usual practices in the sector of consumer products, in companies and corporations, the urban managers use marketing, communication and brand image resources to define the value offer of its territory and to position it in a consistent manner in the interurban market (2015: 640).

The campaign object of study is a clear case of planned communication to promote citizen mobilization, emphasize talent and creativity for a same cause. This happens, when there is a great cause to advocate and, in this case, it is about the defence of the city identity. And in addition, this whole rationale, is favoured by the development of digital technologies that, as Castell states in this book *Comunicación y Poder* has transcended “[...] the network society, [...], a social structure built around digital networks of communication. [...] that increases in a decisive manner the autonomy of communicating subjects [...] as users turn into senders and recipients” (2009). With this premise, (Scolari, 2013; Jenkins, 2008) some consumers became prosumers (producers+consumers). And this is one of the characteristics that defines the transmedia storytelling, where users cooperate in an active manner in the expansion process of the message, 21st century prosumers are active supporters of the narratives they love (Jenkins, 2010) and *#londonisopen*, is a clear example. This case study is like Scolari states (2017) a particular sort of story that extends across different media and communication platforms and transcends beyond the simple “adaptation” from one medium to the other, seen as follows.

Due to the aforesaid, the case study presented herein is of great interest, with the following objectives:

1. To detect innovative methodologies in the communication campaign, especially the role of social media.
2. To describe and analyse collectives involved.
3. To analyse and reflect about the efficacy of actions developed.

All that to provide knowledge about innovative methodologies and good practices that can serve as inspiration for communication campaigns which aim is to involve citizens in a conscious, active and participative manner.

### **1.1. Presentation of the case study**

Immediately after Brexit, from the mayor Sadiq Khan’s office, as main institution of the city, London calls for creative proposals explaining literally:

“*#LondonIsOpen* is a proposal of the Sadiq Khan mayor’s office that invites to show that London is united and open to the world, after the referendum about the permanence in the European Union. This shows the world that London keeps entrepreneurial, international and full of creativity and possibilities. This must reassure the more than one million foreign citizens living in London, because they will be always welcomed and, discrimination of any sort will not be tolerated. [...] The city’s key

ingredient of success has been the flow of brilliant ideas and talent beyond the globe. The city is comfortable in its diversity, proud of its history and optimistic about its future. London is open. Sadiq encourages all Londoners to show support to the message *#LondonIsOpen* on social media and other creative platforms.” (Text available at <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/mayor-london/londonisopen>, retrieved on 23 February 2018).

From then on, *#LondonIsOpen* starts on 10 July 2016 with a concert of Stevie Wonder in Hyde Park; the beginning initiates with the slogan “*#LondonIsOpen our message to the rest of the world*”.

## 2. Methodology

To achieve the objectives, a qualitative research is proposed using a content analysis technique of the documents selected as informative products (Wimmer and Dominick, 1996) to identify, through a descriptive analysis, what have been the actions developed? What they aimed? What collectives have been involved? And using interpretative analysis, what are the underlying messages?

Therefore, the study is conducted using different levels of analysis, as will be explained below, starting from the story of the objective facts that are part of the process of the communicative action and following with the interpretative process (Gaitán & Piñuel, 1998), to obtain a transversal content analysis of the audiovisual and graphic pieces, selected as communicational products which knowledge is of interest as study object.

### 2.1. Sample selection

For analysis, this research selects a convenience sample considering that currently, June 2018, more than 5,860 videos are posted on YouTube under the hashtag *LondonIsOpen*. Therefore, it was essential to go back to the gestation of the campaign, establishing the four first months, from July to October 2016, as temporal period. It is a type of sectional research (Vilches, 2011), because even though this participatory communication is still sustained over time, this study focuses on a key moment of general approach and first actions.




Only in said period, 42 audiovisual productions were located under the hashtag *LondonIsOpen* (according to the data retrieved from the *London&Partners* website) whereas, the convenience sample selected for analysis included:

1°.- The six most representative audiovisual productions due to the symbolism of the collectives linked to the goal of the action, and because of being widely viralized on social networks

2°.- The graphic campaign made by different artists of the movement “*Art on the Underground*” who present different graphic interpretations during the four months.

The chronological development of the campaign is essential to understand its transcendence since it begins with actions fostered by the mayor’s office and later, in a process of participatory communication and co-creation, the campaign involves different collectives.



N° PIECE	DATE	WHAT HAPPENS	SENDER AND RECIPIENT OF THE MESSAGE	SAMPLE OF PIECES SELECTED AUDIOVISUAL LINKS
1	10 July 2016	Launching of campaign, Stevie Wonder concert in Hyde Park.	Testimonial by Sadiq Khan targeted to youth.	Videos available <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyAriyj1uug;">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyAriyj1uug;</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cf-scNhLVgQ;">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cf-scNhLVgQ;</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hd2HZiI-Ioc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hd2HZiI-Ioc</a> [Retrieved 22-05-17]
				
2	18 July 2016	Video “London opens its doors to the world”. The doors of transport, commerce, art galleries, etc. open to the world.	Londoners and the mayor’s office, to the rest of the world.	Video available <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErLq9nir41E">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErLq9nir41E</a> [Retrieved 23-05-17]
				
3	25 July 2016	Testimonials of authorities and civil servants about their identity.	Advertorial launched from the City Hall to the rest of the world.	Video available <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raj7PDtIYd0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raj7PDtIYd0</a> [Retrieved 5-06-17]
				
4	28 July 2016	The participation of cultural industries starts.	Artists address international citizens.	Video available <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RPM3rIQmw2I">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RPM3rIQmw2I</a> [Retrieved 5-06-17] <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebXs4Wnb2ds">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebXs4Wnb2ds</a> [Retrieved 5-02-18]







				
5	13 September 2016	The transport sector shows its diversity in 20 languages.	The transport sector addresses an international public.	Video available <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V10zGyqoySs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V10zGyqoySs</a> [Retrieved 5-06-17]
				
6	14 October 2016	British actors support the city's diversity and specify it is not about a political movement.	The industry of British cinema shows its pride about values belonging.	Video available <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TAiQtpzsAY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TAiQtpzsAY</a> [Retrieved 5-06-17]
				
7	Since 29 July and continues currently	Graphic interpretations made by the movement <i>Art on the Underground</i> , on different platforms of the transport network.	Movement artists, addressed to London's citizens and tourists.	Video presentation available <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzuTMtVY9qw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzuTMtVY9qw</a> [Retrieved 5-06-17]
				



Table 1. Shows the pieces selected for the case study analysis. Authors' own creation.

## 2.2. Research techniques

The content analysis will lead to formulating inferences about the sender and recipients, as well as the content or latent meaning of the message (Colle, 2011) and to do so, the following analysis units observed are established:

1°.- Regarding what is said, the manifest content of the campaign (Vilches, 2011), this study is based on Joannis (1992) and Ricarte (1998) ideas, since they are currently applicable to creative and communication messages, as well as the most recent contributions of Tur (2018) in his review of the academic and professional literature about the assessment of the creative product. In this case, the analysis units are as follows:

- a. Problem triggering the action.
- b. Goal pursued.
- c. Creative concept.
- d. Media and platforms.
- e. Collectives involved.
- f. Creativity of the campaign.

2°.- Regarding to how is said, the latent content of the message, its meaning and keys of interpretation (Vilches, 2011), are based on the model of rhetorical analysis suggested by Fernández, Baños and García (2014: 407), on Jung archetypes (1950), on the iconography of González de Zárate (1991: 16) and the transmedia analysis of Scolari (2013). These are the analysis units based on this theoretical corpus:

- a. Archetypes and iconography.
- b. Rhetoric and narrative.
- c. Transmedia narrative.



All this process involves the intervention of the critical reflective thinking, which uses different resources and assessment processes before formulating conclusions (Colle, 2011). With this methodology, the aim is to guarantee reliability and validity using methods triangulation, because different tools and diverse sources are used to study the same problem (Álvarez-Gayou, 2003). All this will help to establish the methodological keys of the communication campaign object of study and in the discussion as prospecting process, so to establish the future challenges of said action.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Manifest content analysis of the campaign

The construction of the message is a concentric process that originates from the visual core (Joannis, 1992), where the primary resides in the image, within the process of creation, because of its capacity to communicate rapidly, to seduce the recipient and fix a message in his memory, thus outstanding the relevance of collectives to be involved on images used. Henceforth, the meaning of communication is concretized. Also, Ricarte (1998) suggests a work scheme that begins with the problem of communication, where the cognitive, affective and connotative components according to the typology of learning by mimesis, the positive or negative assessment and in mental key respectively, end up being processed into a stimulus. Likewise, Tur (2018) in its academic and professional review of the assessment of the creative product, provides keys, despite difficulty, about the assessment of the creative aspect applicable to the study object of this research. Elements like originality, engagement, memorability, persuasiveness and artistic execution, are criteria applied to this case study.

##### a. Problem triggering the action.

The communication problem is conceived as the proposition of the existence of a circumstance that can be solved by communicating a message, through different channels and communication platforms. Namely:

Despite the victory of Brexit in the United Kingdom, 75.3% of Londoners voted against it. From London's City Hall as main institution of the city, London needed to communicate its opposition to the ideas conveyed in the campaign advocating Brexit. In this case, the "communication problem" was completely communicational in nature. The campaign is a performative action of the city of London, communicating its rejection to the result is, by itself, a constructive action towards its interest groups.

##### b. Goal pursued

The translation of the problem into implicit metalanguages that can be decoded by recipients of the campaign independently of the creative result.

- To reassure foreigners living in London. Foreigners will always be welcomed, and discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated.
- The openness of London as one of its differential values despite the United Kingdom.
- To generate empathy towards Europe and the rest of the world, under the idea "London will not break bonds with Europe despite Brexit."

- To root the idea that London will not stop being a financial, cultural and innovation centre.

c. Creative concept

The creative strategy and its correspondent creative axis are conceived as the selection of tangible creative solutions to guarantee the communication of the previous objectives (narratives, storytelling, stories, music, protagonists, geo-temporal spaces, audiovisual production and post-production). This is the axis/ creative concept for #LondonIsOpen:


In London, we celebrate and tolerate diversity. Diversity is London’s fuel, multiculturalism builds London.

The selection of tangible creative solutions under the concept; in London we celebrate and tolerate diversity. It is a “liquid” idea that reaches society and will endure despite Brexit. The campaign would turn into an action of political resistance, a resistance movement that the mayor initiates, so that it is extended towards key collectives of the city and maintains over time.

The initial idea of the campaign is built about London opening its doors to welcome the world. The first viral videos encourage other groups of interest to using this initial idea as a platform for their own contributions. All reinforced by the slogan that surrounds and strengthens the campaign “*London is open*”. Insisting in the openness of London as one of its great differentiating values, thus materializing in appeal for business, innovation and culture.

d. Core and reinforcement media and platforms

It is a planned transmedia campaign, that uses communication resources of different nature to potentiate positive effects, such as the combination of online content with very punctual actions of political lobby and where one of the consequences has been the great international mediatic impact.

<b>Platforms used as reinforcement</b>
Online viralized audiovisual content (study sample)
Out of home actions on public transports. 
Figure 1. Image of creative actions on means of transport.

Supporting messages from key opinion leaders through social networks and videos.

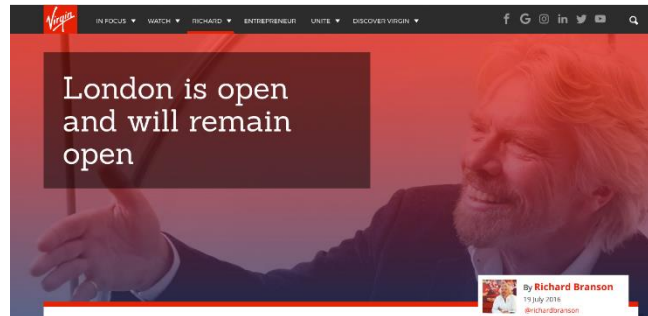


Figure 2. Image from the video filmed by Richard Branson of Virgin.

Lobby actions by the mayor: Open letter to international press media and meeting with all European Ambassadors. The letter is available at, <https://campaigndossier.wordpress.com/tag/stobritannien/> [Document retrieved on 22.05.2017]

Impact on national and international media that still exist with less intensity. In May 2017, almost a year later, there is still the news published by *The Guardian* on 17 May 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/may/17/show-international-students-welcome-uk-teaching-quality> [Document retrieved on 19.06.2017]

The mayor encourages all Londoners, organizations and companies to show their support to the message *#LondonIsOpen* through social networks and other creative platforms.



Table 2. Complementary actions carried out to reinforce the campaign. Authors' own creation.

e. Collectives involved.

	<b>Represented collective</b>	<b>On behalf of</b>
1	High-ranking civil servants	Movement led by Sadiq Khan and followed by high-ranking civil servants.

2	Key opinion leaders linked to the city	Richard Branson (Virgin), Mark Boleat (City of London Policy Chairman), Xavier Rolet (Chief Executive of London Stock Exchange)
3	Companies	Google, Hilton, Merlin Entertainments, Freuds, Chief Executive of Patisserie Valerie Paul May, Pavegen, Central Working, Swiftkey, Seedrs and Unruly, etc.
4	Civil servants of different ranking	Employees of the public transport, museums, hospitals, etc.
5	Representatives of the world of art.	Jude Law, actor, Jarvis Cocker, alternative composer, Corrine Bailey, singer, Olly Murs, singer, Konnie Huk, actress, Chris Moyles, journalist, Niall Horan, singer, Baaba Maal, musician, Ella Eyre, singer and composer, Lianne La Havas, singer and composer, The Mystery Jets, alternative rock band, etc.
6	Intellectuals and scholars	Nigel Carrington (University of the Arts), Professor Julia Black (Pro Director for Research, London School of Economics) Professor Edward Byrne AC (President and Director of London King's College), Professor Pat Bailey, (Deputy vice-chancellor of the London South Bank University), etc.
7	Entrepreneurs and business men	
8	International tourists	
9	International students	
10	International and British journalists	
11	Public showing their support spontaneously.	

Table 3. List of collectives involved in the campaign. Authors' own creation.

The sample analysed focuses on the five first groups, the City Hall is humanized by the leading role of the mayor's videos that do not symbolize authority in solitude, since also civil servants are protagonists.

f. Creativity of the campaign

This campaign, analysed from a global perspective, makes clear the promise made to citizens and that clarity facilitates the idea is easily communicated, "Despite Brexit, the city of London will keep open to the world." It is initially a simple concept but entails many readings and interpretations as will be seen in the interpretative analysis of the message. It is about a flexible idea and with possibility to be adapted not only to diverse media but to diverse collectives, with different levels of reach, which causes greater impact from uniqueness. It distances from what is usually the institutional communication of a mayor's office and therefore, generates greater awareness and recall.



The personal involvement of the mayor is outstanding as well as how the campaign is supported without scissions by different relevant collectives of the city, which grant greater credibility. It also entails high levels of engagement since several collectives make the campaign their own and interpret it in a personal way, the mayor's office is able to accept, up to an extent, the loss of control over the message in favour of facilitating the expansive wave of digital media. Hence, it complies with two key requirements of the creative product, on the one hand, it is original, divergent due to its unusual nature within the institutional communication, because at some points it even takes the form of citizen activism using methods that correspond more to participatory strategies. On the other hand, it is pertinent due to the relevance of meaning, promoting involvement and interest on the publics it is targeted to. The option for the emotional aspect from a positive, optimistic perspective and confident about the promise made, confers high doses of creativity to this campaign.

### **3.2. Interpretative analysis of the message**

The aim is to identify the rhetorical, narrative, iconographic and transmedia elements to measure efficacy. This campaign is based on archetypes because it creates symbolic, iconographic and evocative images where mankind understands its nature using analogous images, Jung (1950) calls them universal symbols that acquire social meaning. Also, the iconography is relevant, such as the study of images description according to González de Zárate (1991). The interpretation of meanings derives therefrom.

#### **a. Archetypes and iconography.**

“The open door”

The image involves the access to a new place, it is probably one of the most universal and timeless archetypes of semiotics. The door concept, as invitation to enter a new place becomes the headline of great universal spaces and gets its iconographic meaning since said door opens and represents transparency and invitation to go through.

In the case that concerns us, even though the selection of the door as icon for the campaign is a simple and even conservative option, the door also means, represents and clarifies the goals of #londonIsOpen. To open the doors of any place of London, a modest Camden store, the underground or even London's City Hall; it seems to be the perfect metaphor to comprehend objectives.

Sadiq Khan, the Muslim mayor

The member of the Labour Party, Sadiq Khan, is the first Muslim mayor of the Western world. The mayor, son of a bus driver from Pakistan, is the maximum representation of multiculturalism in London; a city that opted for his ultra-European figure by 57%, against 43% of Zac Goldsmith, multimillionaire and Brexit advocate.

Khan is the person that best represents the opposite of Brexit (“I am a person with multiple identities” manifested to BBC on 6 May 2016), at the same time he defends to the end, London's potential as

financial centre of the world (“no European city can compete with London as financial capital” he stated on 9 February 2017 to the Spanish newspaper ABC). Aware that London concentrates 22% of the GDP of United Kingdom; Khan seems to feel comfortable manifesting radically against the Brexit despite the current policies of Theresa May. From an advertisement perspective, Sadiq Khan is an archetype, an icon, a perfect metaphor for this campaign that conveys in a straightforward and clear manner the objectives proposed.

#### The leading role stereotypes

Describing who appears, there are young Londoner enthusiastic about music located in a concert, belonging to any race and any sexual orientation, City Hall employees, professors, artists, actors, writers talking about London. All those are archetypes joined by a meaning, the sensitivity before universal matters: Art, Knowledge, Globality and Tolerance.

#### The City camera shots

Despite the romantic convey of objectives exposed until now, there is a perfect combination between openness, tolerance and multiculturalism in #londonIsOpen with the iconic potency of “The City” as financial centre of the world, mainly through the mediatic impact achieved as well as the statements and declarations of the mayor on different international media. This is the part of the city that is exposed the most on the campaign and the most visible in the reports about the campaign on TV, emphasizing the message of the mayor that London will continue being one of the best places in the world for entrepreneurs and investors despite Brexit.

#### The bus and the underground as Londoner icons

The leading role of classical means of transport in London for the middle class, bus and underground, together with the testimonial of employees from municipal transport companies, generate and represent a great empathy towards the average global citizen of the first world. Namely, besides the mayor, postmodern and intellectual youth; the campaign empathises with the average worker of any part of the world. Moreover, the bus and the underground as icon are perfectly aligned with the door of the previous video, in fact, the audiovisual pieces with the leading role of doors and the means of transport are the first viralized videos of the campaign and the most seen according to London&Partners playlist.

#### The visual identity

The Corporate Visual Identity (Logo and symbol) are designed as if they were a commercial brand. Twitter’s hashtag maintains in the naming and the claim of the campaign altogether as #londonisopen, with a black font on a yellow rectangle as symbol. Evidently, it constitutes a visual identity for young publics typical of the viral world, easily reproducible in any kind of merchandising and quite present in the last frames of the videos. With a format that can reach the maximum simplicity: protagonists of videos (mainly Anonymous employees from the City Hall) holding a sheet of paper with the hashtag #londonIsOpen written with a pen. The Corporate Visual Identity of the campaign exponentially helps the birth and conversion of #londonIsOpen towards an intangible brand that will endure over time.

#### b. Rhetoric and narrative

Regarding the structured system of conceptual and linguistic forms that can be useful to achieve the intended effect, its analysis will be done using Lausberg (1975), Durand (1972) and Moliné (2003) as a reference, considering that the purpose of the narrative is not the story itself but the story at the service of the objective it was conceived for (Moreno, 2003).

##### Repetition of the claim

There is a rhetorical, classical, willingly impulsive resource, it is about the constant repetition of “London is open”. It is said by different profiles, different voices, with different attitudes (singing, laughing, working, writing, etc.) and even on different languages, which is introduced in a natural manner.

##### First person testimonials

Sending the message from the “self” loads, fills, invades of “truth” the intention of every protagonist of each video. There are no off voices, there is no printed text besides the claim which constitutes the visual identity of the campaign. The first-person testimonial is the only script there is, which as Gestalt intention, testimonial 1 plus testimonial 2 plus testimonial 3 and so on, achieve a potent message; London is open in all its facets and from all individuals composing it.

##### The rhetoric of the closeness, the naturalness and optimism

There is not an ounce of sense of “defeat” in *#londonIsOpen* despite the global result of the referendum, the rhetoric is joyful and calmed, which favours empathy. The characters laugh and smile while issuing their statements, which confers naturalness and confidence to what is stated.

##### The hypertext of “resistance”

Combined with the aforesaid naturalness that works in an outstanding manner in favour of the empathy that needs to be generated, in the protagonists of all videos there is a politically strong intention of resistance, namely, despite the polarized situation in the city of London, the protagonists want to resist to the general result. *#LondonIsOpen* triggers a post-Brexit Londoner movement.

Earlier it was said that the archetypical and iconographic choice of the door as symbol for the openness and tolerance was a simple option and even creatively conservative, however the creative resolution is what is really interesting of being analysed; and it could be summarized into one word: naturalness. These are humble doors and humble attitudes, on these videos the protagonists literally open the doors of their workplaces to tell us that London welcomes us with joy and tolerance in any place of the city, and the involvement of great leaders is submerged in this meaning, from the mayor to professors and musicians, without their presence being underlined narratively. The “naturalness” of the mayor is also noteworthy, from his attitude towards the camera, his gesture opening the door, the simplicity of his statements and his way of blending into the other protagonists.

c. Transmedia narrative

In this discourse, the expansion of the story through different media is key, Scolari talks about how the story unfolds across many communication platforms and a part of citizens assumes the active role in that expansion process (2013). To this, Jenkins (2010) adds that every piece composing the transmedia network must have a life of its own, it is about a clear narrative where the story is told in a different way, making the most of the potential of every medium, from the videos launched by social networks to the conceptual interpretations of the collective “*Art on the underground*” everything is woven around a same concept. The user ends up being a collaborator of the narrative expansion, like the example of theatrical artists, the actions of the hotel industries and sportsmen, everyone have their role and the sum of all impacts makes citizen to reinterpret the message over and over again.

#### 4. Discussion and conclusions

This study demonstrates the power of communication and the keys to involve the society into a city as global and diverse as London, when it comes to stop the effects of Brexit with direct consequences on citizens and on the perception about the city. Suddenly, that aspirational city where you are able to coexist with all kinds of cultures, of finding open doors to all kinds of representation of diverse, suffers a setback as it never had before, because underlying Brexit, there is fear for the different and the closure of frontiers to what comes from abroad, mainly from Europe.

The campaign #LondonIsOpen demonstrates that the participatory and creative communication, conceived strategically modifies or reinforces beliefs and that with the potency of the transmedia concept, this axiom multiplies. It starts from a political institution but soon it starts to expand and sum collaborations of relevant collectives of the city due to the innovative use of several methodological resources:

- Firstly, the leading role of a potent key opinion leader, Sadiq Khan leading and empathizing with citizens.
- The campaign is not concentrated into a short and intense period of time, but instead it endures in time, which is an efficacious, coherent and ethical decision; when presenting as a polarized resistance in such an emblematic city.
- The Action and the Communication of this action occur at the same time, in such a way there isn't any digression between being, acting and communicating (Costa, 1995), which makes it credible and grants it legitimacy.
- There is a central point of information <http://londonisopen.com/> where the complete online content is available, where it is confirmed that the campaign has been successful in creating a community that comfortably interacts through creative axes.
- There has been option for networks and the video format, references of access to audiovisual content. At global level, almost three fourths of users that consume videos on the network access these through social platforms (Ramos & Ortega, 2017).
- An online content generating support of media to achieve an expansive effect of the message has been potentiated.



- Contributions of the citizens activism have been incorporated to the institutional communication campaign. And this interdisciplinarity has potentiated its positive effects.

As a response of the second research objective, collectives involved, up to eleven different groups with a sender and recipient role have been identified in the analysed period according to pieces. In this sense, the mix of different protagonists, relevant characters together with anonymous people; and of specific interest groups (filmmakers, scholars, cultural managers, civil servants, etc.) has been key. In the same way the engagement of youth in the beginning, aware they would grant virality to the action rapidly. And even more if we talk about the “millennial generation” (Howe & Strauss, 2000) which has grown connected to Internet, mobile phones and who have a new way of communicating, thinking and acting (Gutiérrez-Rubí, 2015). And generation Z all the more so, with greater digital aptitude (Ramos & Ortega, 2017). This change indicates a movement towards a more participatory model of culture, that conceives the citizen not as a simple consumer of premanufactured messages, but as individuals educating, sharing, reformulating and remixing content (Jenkins & Ford & Green, 2013).

And this is how we get to the review of the third objective, the efficacy of the campaign in terms of impact and engagement of collectives involved and citizen mobilization. Where what Jenkins states (2008) is observed, that the institutions are taking their models from popular fan communities and reinventing themselves for an era of mediatic convergence and collective intelligence. The fact is that it uses an image that has been able to be appropriated by citizens for their expression or recreation (De Andrea & Nos-Aldás & García-Matilla, 2016) where the new processes that are allowing the digital media of recreation and rebroadcasting make possible the fact of stating that the power today resides in their possibilities of citizen appropriation as communication instrument. This is what #LondonIsOpen generates, which clearly has turned into a movement of Londoner post-Brexit resistance.

The image of Khan wins a lot with the campaign, besides favouring the understanding of objectives, it generates empathy and proactivity in the spectator. #londonIsOpen achieves what Joannis (1992) calls “sympathetic hyperbolization”, taking the message beyond its normal relevance, turning it into a mythification and an original symbolism, being successful in creatively stimulating the need to love London among the participant groups.

Although like Manuel Castell notes, multimedia networks, by themselves, as communication structures do not have the power for networking, nor power in the network nor power to create networks, but instead they depend on the decisions and instructions of their programmers. [...] the networking power is the capacity to let a medium or a language to enter the network through access filter procedures (gatekeeping). The representatives responsible for the functioning of every communication network are the gatekeepers, who restrict or allow the access to media platforms and/or messages that are conveyed to the network. It is called node filter and messages filter (Castell, 2010, p. 538).

And to perform this task the coordination of the campaign by London&Partners has been essential, which through its web it provided instructions for “How you can get involved, if you would like to support the London is Open campaign and get involved to show your commitment to London, here are some ideas: <http://www.londonandpartners.com/what-we-do/case-study-london-is-open> [Retrieved on

15.06.2017]. Undoubtedly, this coordination has been key to dynamize and maintain the interest for the communicational action over time.

For quantitative purposes, there are 408,000 results on Google and 65,800 videos from the official campaign. If the interest for the campaign is transferred into a Google trends graphic, it is observed that said interest remains over time.

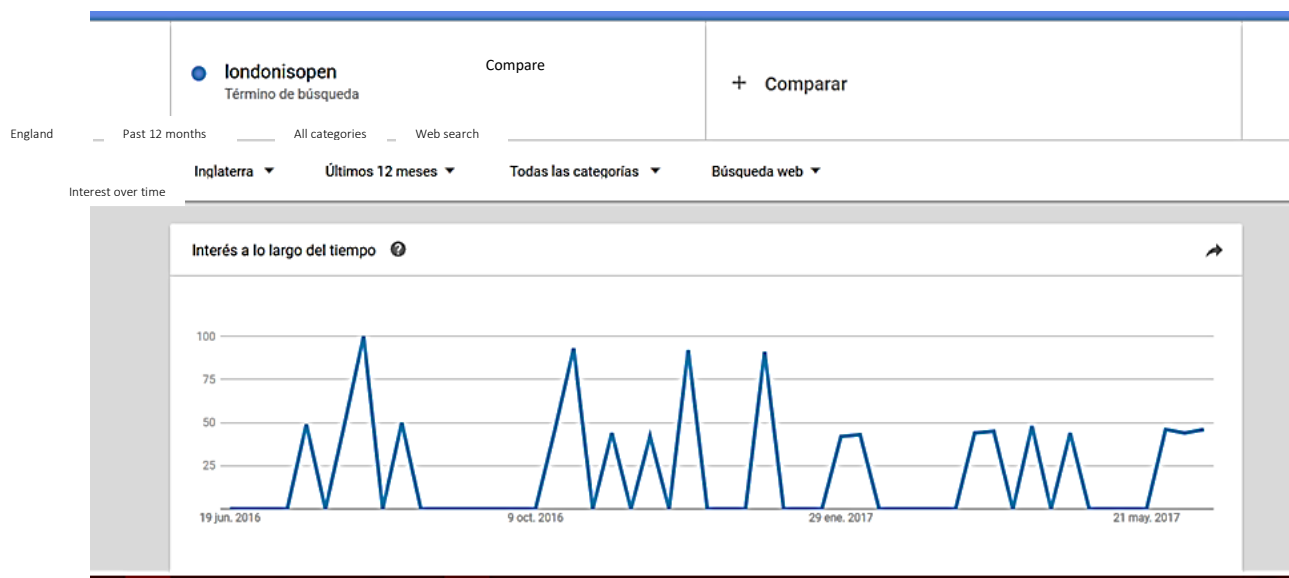


Figure 1. Interest in the campaign from the start until one year later.

<https://trends.google.es/trends/explore?date=today%2012-m&geo=GB-ENG&q=londonisopen>

The discussion establishes that it is a great cause where the fast response was necessary and in this case the initiative comes from the mayor's office, which surely has mitigated other reactions of the London society before the circumstances. However, it is noteworthy that a resistance movement like that had so much adhesion despite the mistrust and the lack of credibility of the society in the political institutions and their leaders, however, Sadiq Khan reveals against the result and becomes the spokesman of the movement in the defence of the city's identity. In any case, it is an advanced democracy where contravening the results of a referendum is allowed and where it is appreciated with naturalness that even, within the same political party, there might be different sensitivities towards the same subject. These are the symptoms of the essential bonds that Camilli-Trujillo & Römer-Pieretti (2017) detect between the alphabetization, democracy, empowerment and social participation in politics and the daily life.

Still, the fact is that in the long-term, the coherence between what is said and what is done is essential and, in this sense, currently the United Kingdom is in the middle of negotiations with the European Union for its exit. In addition, this negotiation is led by the political and governing class of the country and is taking place in the city of London. The question is, can a city keep isolated from what is happening in its country, considering it is the capital and the place where all events resulting in the exit from Europe will happen. Therefore, it is interesting to follow the evolution of the campaign to

know what steps will be followed when the Brexit becomes a reality. Despite the communicative resistance, the controversy for Brexit's victory is powerful and puts at stake London's years of effort to be perceived as multicultural and diverse. There were already opposing voices or denouncing how the neoliberal city in which London has turned to, was outside the multicultural and diverse logic, but the Brexit would perhaps trigger the disintegration of these values definitely. The fact is that we mustn't forget that London (Massey, 2008, 118), is also a capitalist city and, as such, it is located in a key and powerful position in the organization and spreading of globalization. However, it is also true that underneath those values there is a multicultural historic reality in London, so we would need to wait and keep observing and analysing the evolution of this complete process, to know whether it is true that while the opposition to the result of Brexit is communicated, there is resistance.

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<http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2015/11/30/pdfs/BOE-A-2015-12976.pdf>

**Dates:**

Start of study: July 2016

End of study: May 2017

## 5. Notes

1. Sadiq Khan is the current mayor of London, he won the elections in May 2016 as Labour Party member.
2. Ken Livingstone was the first mayor of London, as independent representative from 2000 to 2004 and with the Labour Party from 2004 to 2008.

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