

The increasing importance and meanwhile omnipotence of the international media, the emergence of more and more pressing transnational problems that cannot be solved on one's own, and the increasing significance of "soft power" as an instrument to achieve foreign policy goals are enhancing the importance of public diplomacy.

At this same time, this also increases the importance of the media communication capacity and work of diplomats (see also Chapter 7.3) and interest groups. The information revolution at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century makes it possible for anyone to receive information on events in other countries just as quickly or even more quickly than Governments. The international media are becoming increasingly assertive, and it is therefore not surprising that the information available to a huge audience has made public opinion an increasingly important factor in international relations. Naturally, diplomats in the past already paid attention to normal citizens in their receiving countries and tried to influence their opinion in a positive way. But the democratization of access to information has made these "normal citizens" not only independent observers, but also active participants in international politics. PD thus has another strong form of leverage in the more or less strongly organized interest groups and especially in the active audience. Globalization and the communication revolution together have strengthened global networks across national borders and given rise to a much more active civil society.

The case "Liechtenstein and the German tax affair", however, intends to use media reporting in the critical time period to show how national and political interests were asserted through issues management and agenda setting via the international and especially German media. While this was a political debate, it was primarily conducted via the media.

## 4 Methodology

This master's thesis is based on an overview and *document analysis* of the reporting in the German media, primarily news agencies and print media, on the case "Liechtenstein and the German tax affairs", which was triggered by the "Zumwinkel case" on 14 February 2008. On the basis of clippings in the time period from 1 January to 31 March 2008, a media resonance analysis was performed. The media resonance analysis is an instrument for assessing PR work in which media reports are evaluated qualitatively and quantitatively.

*Print media* are given priority here, since they have a more sustained effect than television, which may have an intense impact for a short period, but does not have as sustained traction in the minds of media consumers (see Kepplinger 1998).

Since the starting point of the crisis was in Germany and since Germany had in preceding years enjoyed the number 1 priority in the communication work of the Principality of Liechtenstein – both on the part of the Government and also on the part of various business associations and culture – it made sense to focus primarily, albeit not exclusively, on reporting in the German media.