

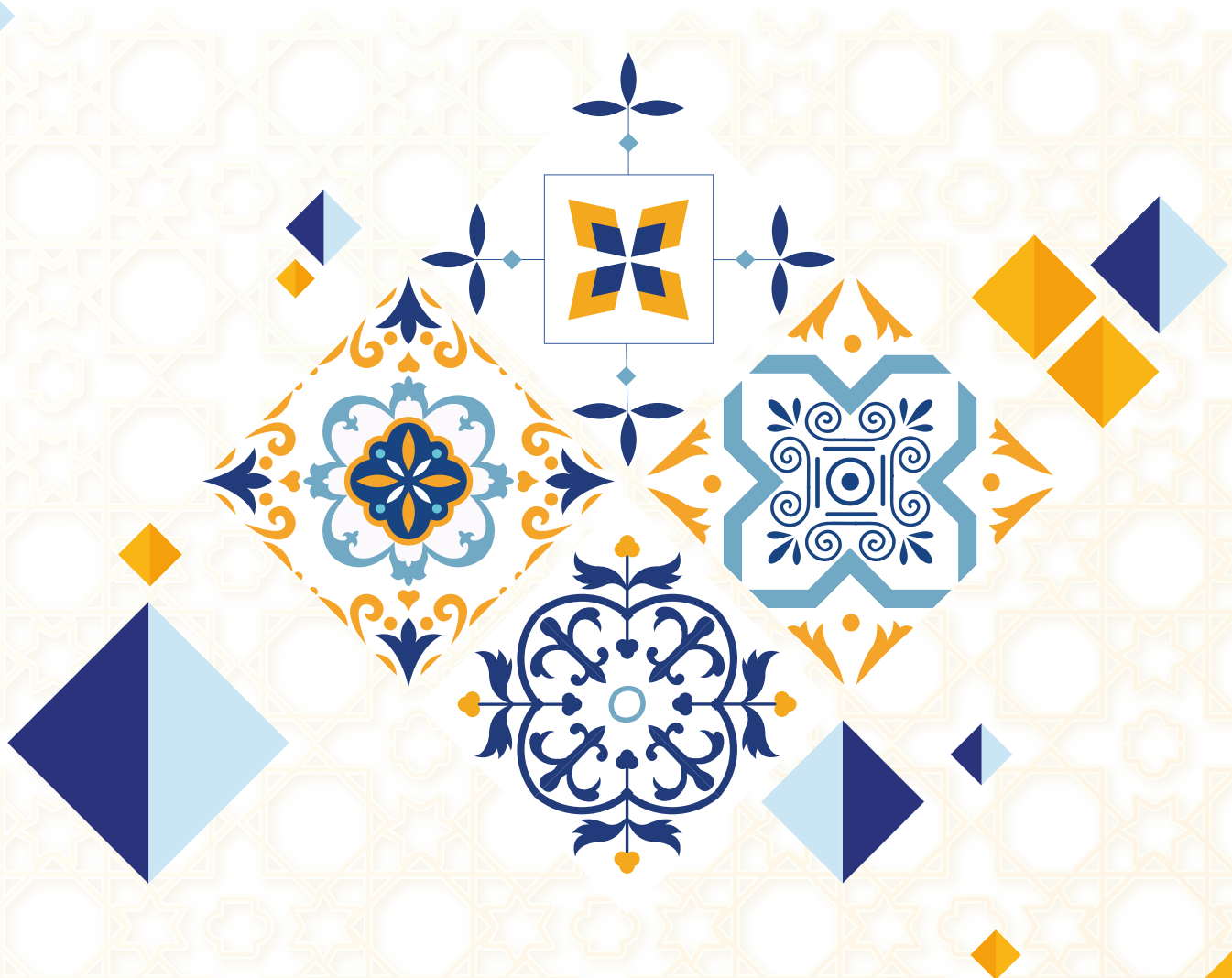
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# Using emotions in migration policy communication

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# Index

Executive Summary.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Conceptualising emotions.....	6
Emotion-based communication.....	11
Recommendations for emotion-based migration communication.....	14
Ten visual examples of emotion-based migration communication.....	17
Discussion.....	28
Appendices.....	29
References.....	30

# Executive Summary

- Emotions are regularly cited as vital components of effective strategic communication in the world of migration and beyond. However, until this report, there was relatively little guidance about how emotions should be used in migration policy communication.
- Emotions are vital to persuasion because attitudes have a cognitive (thinking) component and an emotional (feeling) component. Moreover, eliciting emotions causes involuntary but predictable physiological and behavioural reactions.
- Emotions can be used in communication to make one's messages more resonant and impactful on both attitudes and behaviours, supporting policy objectives via persuasion.
- Communicators should choose the desired emotional reaction according to the desired physiological and behavioural reaction using existing psychological schema, one of which this report analyses with 32 separate emotions and physiological reactions.
- Eliciting unsuitable emotions may have adverse reactions from audiences.
- Communicators can use this report's recommendation and framework to ensure that the emotions, and physiological and desired behaviours of their campaigns are aligned and thus effective.
- Narratives, personal-based messages, facial expressions and body language, and aesthetics can be used to create emotional resonance and reduce psychological distance.
- Frames, ordering ("emotional flow"), intensities, and certain combinations can also be used to elicit different emotions with predictable outcomes.
- Emotions should be used to make one's argument more resonant but the argument should not be simply based on the emotional reaction—the "appeal to emotion" logical fallacy. Indeed, for emotion-based communication to work it should also use facts, values, identities, and efficacy.
- Emotion-based communication in the field of migration, although widely used, is largely untested—communicators should test different approaches but also can take lessons from other fields such as corporate, health, and climate change communications.
- This report critically analyses 10 examples of good emotion-based migration communication, highlighting the different emotions and physiological reactions that they are likely to induce, and to what extent these are in line with the communication campaign's stated objectives.

# Introduction

What makes migration communication effective? How can we communicate on migration in a way that allows us to meet contemporary policy objectives, such as the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration's eponymous goals (UN, 2018), "de-polarised" debates (OSCE, 2021), or "re-balanced" narratives, the goal of the [EUROMED Migration V programme](#), to which this report contributes. Moreover, how can migration communication help governments uphold legal- and rights-based migration policy frameworks against forces that would undermine them, and so contribute to maximising the potential benefits and minimising the potential costs of migration to both origin and host country populations? Strategic communication can have multiple functions, to inform, persuade, and to affect behaviour. Perhaps the most common advice given on all three types of communication - in migration and otherwise - is the deceptively complex instruction to "use emotions, not facts."

In the world of migration communication specifically, Sharif (2019: 5) suggests that for migration 'communicators ... to win the debate' they must 'apply value-based and emotive approaches' in addition to factual evidence, because 'emotions play a bigger role than facts in attitudes to migration'. Welcoming America (2018: 7) advises migration communicators to appeal to emotion and states simply that 'Emotion > Logic'. They argue that 'Logic supports our emotions and is used to justify our decisions, but research indicates we usually apply logic only after we've made our emotional decisions. Logic plays a part in decision-making, but emotion is always the main ingredient. Emotions will get people passionate about your cause. Appeal to your audience's emotions first and you'll win them over' (*ibid*). They further argue that 'No press release, newsletter, petition, or anything else should go out without the personal and emotional touch a story generates' (*ibid*: 16). The EU's own Fundamental Rights Agency argues for the use of 'real-life examples to trigger emotions' since 'triggering emotions can have a lasting impact' (FRA, 2022: 15). Finally, a recent report for the European Parliament's INGE committee argues that the power of online misinformation, particularly that directed at minorities, lay in its emotional appeal, both directly and via the prominence given to such messaging on social media newsfeed algorithms, concluding that 'it is not effective to respond to disinformation with facts because people engage with the issues on an emotional level' (Szakács and Bognár, 2021: 27).

Belief in the persuasive role of emotion-based communication is by no means limited to migration communication, however. Forbes Magazine recently described emotion as 'the super weapon of marketing and advertising' (Saitarli, 2019), echoing training and advice given across the corporate world. Studies have shown that the emotion response elicited by a television advertisement has three times greater impact on the consumer's decision of whether to buy or not buy a product than the actual content of the advertisement (Murray, 2013). Overall, it seems to be accepted wisdom that "using emotions" is a highly impactful and perhaps even necessary way to communicate. Despite this, few of the above sources go into detail on several logically resultant questions: Why are emotions so effective for persuasion? How should they be used to persuade? Which emotions should be used and under what circumstances? What about for migration communication in particular? To what extent and how are emotions currently being used in migration communication? Finally, what recommendations can be made to migration communicators about the use of emotions?

Answering these questions is both substantively important, since the use of emotions is so regularly argued to be a vital tool in communicating and thus meeting policy objectives such as those listed above, and scientifically interesting, since understanding how and why emotion-based communication affects attitudes and behaviours will offer support for more broadly applicable theories that seek to explain why humans think and act as they do in general. As such, this article continues as follows. In section 2, we overview how emotions have been conceptualised both in terms of their definition, classification, functions, and determinants. In Section 3, we ask how emotions are used in communication and what lessons have been learned about what constitutes good emotion-based communication. In section 4, we summarise previous findings to offer recommendations for practitioners and a framework of emotion-based migration communication. In section 5, we analyse ten examples of emotion-based migration communication. Finally, in section 6, we overview our findings, as well as the shortcomings of our analysis and next steps for research.

# Conceptualising emotions

## Definition

Despite, or perhaps because of, their absolute centrality to human experience, emotions are notable for their lack of commonly accepted definition (Barrett et al, 2016). Broadly and simply, emotions can be thought of as mental states that our bodies use to govern our reactions to stimuli. These mental states are common across humanity though what particular stimuli induces them may vary from individual to individual. These mental states have partially involuntary physiological components (for example, facial expressions, changes in heart rate, muscular tension, as opposed to their subjective experiential, cognitive, behavioural, and expressive components; Barrett and Russell, 2015; Scherer, 2005). Each emotion in the short-term may be pleasurable or unpleasurable—albeit with significant qualitative differences— and thus give us the immediate motivation to both understand why we feel this way and to change our behaviours to achieve or avoid such feelings in the future. As such, emotions allow us to better understand ourselves within the world around us and—as evidenced by the inter-recognisability of facial expressions—our social world.

Some definitions (American Psychological Association, 2022) differentiate emotions, as mental states, from feelings (such a pain) that are argued to result from certain emotions, as well as from moods, which are argued to be of lower intensity and more often lack obvious stimuli or starting points, instead being somewhat cyclical. Others, however, define emotions as feelings. Furthermore, some theories see emotion as fundamentally linked with cognition, whereas others see emotion as causing cognition. The extent to which one recognises their own and others' emotions, can evaluate their sources and meanings, can link them to previous experiences, and can control and influence them in oneself and others has together been theorised to represent "emotional intelligence" (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). A further concept of "emotional stability"—long recognised in common parlance as "even-temperedness"—reflects the extent to which one's mental state can easily be moved by external stimuli, with very low levels known as neuroticism (Ellis et al, 2018).

## Classification

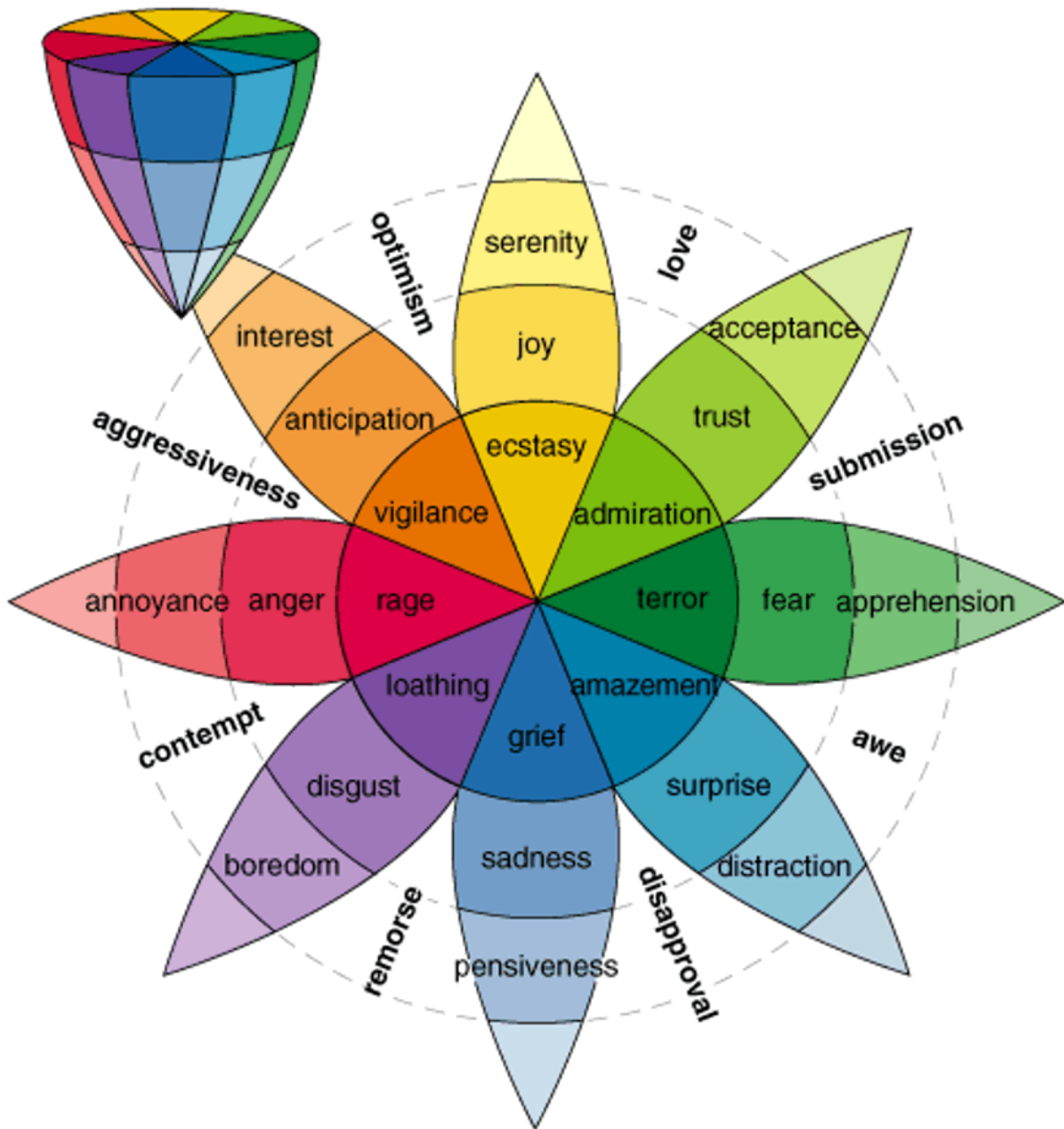
Much like values (see "What policy communication works for migration? Using values to depolarise", Dennison, 2020), academics have sought to understand emotions by classifying, categorising, and relating them to each other in order to predict what causes distinct emotions and, in turn, what are their effects. If a discrete set of emotions relate to each other in predictable ways across broader dimensions, they can be arranged along visual schema that represents each emotion's relationship to the others in terms of dimensions such as intensity (high or low), arousal (activity or passivity), affect (positive or negative), or motivation (approach or avoid), with some emotions constituting basic or primary emotions while more complex ones being secondary and formed by combinations of the primary ones.

Interestingly, distinct schema of emotions, arrived at using diverse methods have arrived at similar conclusions for what constitute "basic human emotions". Such theories include Ekman's (1972) "Neuro-cultural theory of emotions" derived from studies of adult facial expressions; Izard's (1977) 'Differential Emotions Theory' from adult and infant behaviours; Pankseep's (1988) 'Affective Neuroscientific' approaches from animal behavioral responses to direct brain stimulation, and Shaver et al's (1987) 'Prototype approach' (see also Gu et al's more recent and constrained, 2019, "Three Primary Color Model of Basic Emotions"). See the appendix of this report (Table A1) for a full list of emotions and their schema.

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<sup>1</sup> Leading to the online 'Atlas of Emotions' promoted with the Dalai Lama: <http://atlasofemotions.org/>

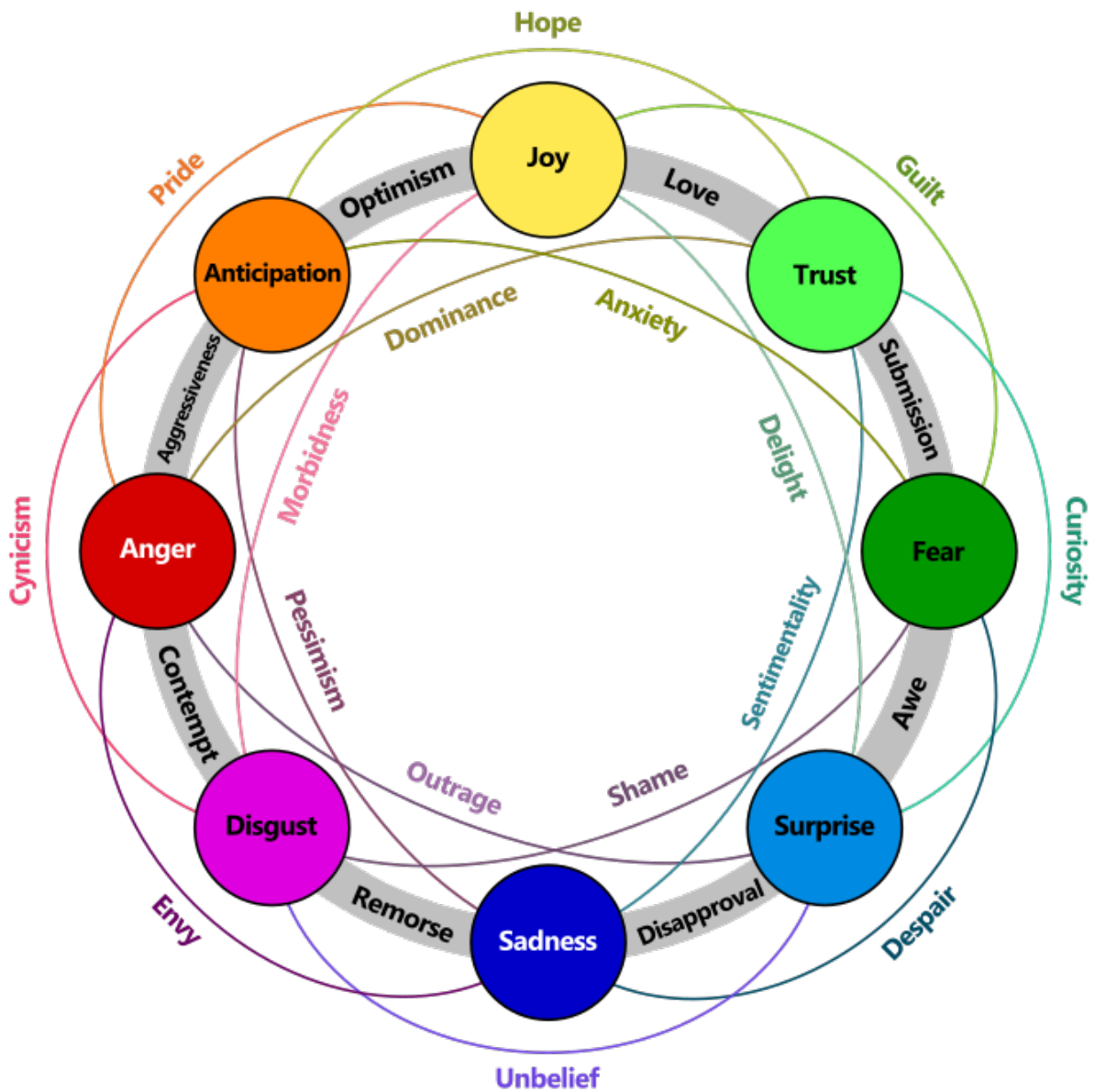
Table 1. Plutchik's "Wheel of emotions"



For example, we can see in Figure 1 Plutchik's (1980) "wheel of emotions", as derived from his 'General Psychoevolutionary Theory of Basic Emotions', that a discrete number of emotions are arranged according to their intensity (by their verticality in the cone) and their similarity to each other (by their position in the circle) and the basic emotion from which they derive (by their colour with the primary emotion in the middle) giving eight basic emotions with four pairs of opposites. We also see primary "dyads" between each of the eight sectors—these are theorised to be combinations of two primary emotions. As such, for example, disapproval is a combination of—at its most intense—grief and amazement.

In Figure 2, we see additional secondary and tertiary "dyads" formed by primary emotions that are two sectors apart (so that "hope" is a combination of "anticipation" and "trust") or three sectors apart (so that "outrage" is a combination of "anger" and "surprise"), respectively.

Figure 2. "Dyad" Emotions



Moreover, just as each of the eight primary emotions above have their opposites, so too do the physiological reactions to each of the emotional states, as shown in Table 1 below:

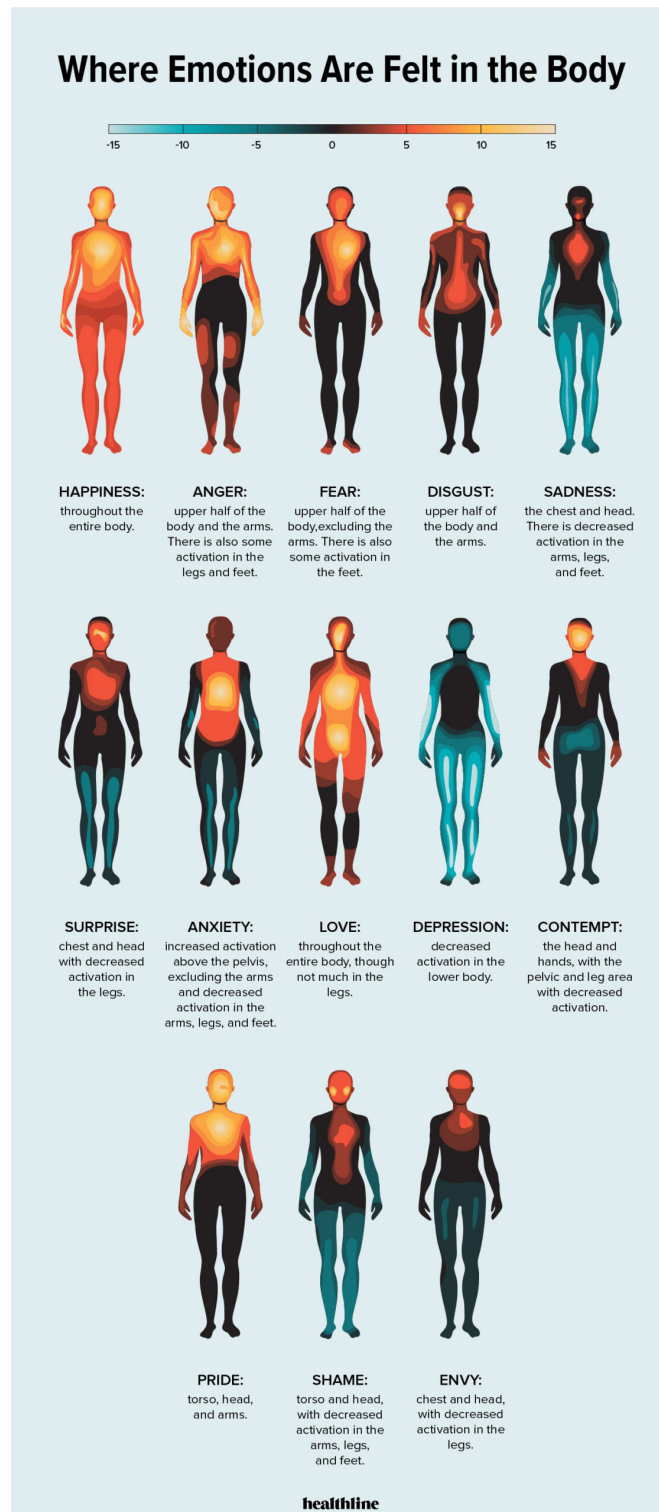
Table 1. Eight opposing primary emotions and their respective physiological reactions

Plutchik's opposing primary emotions	Opposing physiological reactions
Joy versus sadness	Connect versus withdraw
Fear versus anger	Feel small versus feel big
Anticipation versus surprise	Examine versus jump back
Disgust versus trust	Reject versus embrace



The physiological reality and behavioural importance of emotions is highlighted by studies that show how differing emotional states are felt in differing places in the body, making them recognisable and encouraging certain behavioural reactions.

Figure 3. Where emotions are felt across the body<sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> Source: Healthline, <https://www.healthline.com/health/mind-body/how-to-release-emotional-baggage-and-the-tension-that-goes-with-it#Where-are-trapped-emotions-stored-in-the-body?>



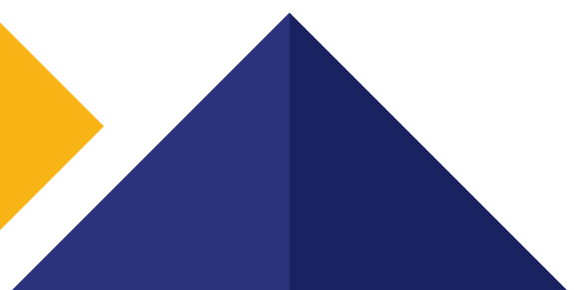
## Functions and determinants

Emotions offer humans a rich source of information to better understand the relationship between themselves and their world. In doing so, they play a key adaptive role in helping us survive issues posed by our natural and social environments. As such, however, we are left partially subject to our emotions. Whereas happiness rewards us, sadness punishes us, and fear and anger elicit stress (Gu et al, 2019). More complex governing abilities of emotions include the discomfort we feel when undergoing cognitive dissonance—when we come to believe two contrary things—forcing us to reconcile our attitudes, beliefs and so on, often in a painful process of “facing up to the facts”; however, our emotions will not let us rest until we do. (Harmon-Jones, 2000). In fact, this discomfort has been argued to be one of the major sources of persuasion and attitudinal change—our emotional system forcing us to realise that our old beliefs were wrong so that we better survive and thrive in an ever-changing world. The rich variety of emotions we feel guides our attention and give us qualitative information (Glore and Gasper, 2000); the more emotionally intelligent we are, the better we are able to interpret, articulate, and manage such information. Repeated emotional experiences can crystallise into longer term sentiments and attitudes (Frijda and Mesquita, 2000) and even personalities so that understanding one’s emotions is a key part of individualisation and mental health (Izard, 2013). Indeed, Damasio (1994) showed that individuals who had suffered brain damage that disconnected the cognitive and emotional parts of the brain were no longer able to make decisions, despite being able to rationally process information, since they had no idea about how they felt about each option.

Many social psychologists (Zajonc, 1980) have argued that attitudes to social and political issues result from emotional processes to a greater extent than cognitive processes, so that when in conflict, attitudes reflect emotion over evaluation (Lavine et al, 1998) albeit to varying extents depending on the individual (Haddock and Zanna, 1999) and the type of attitude (Kempf, 1999). Indeed, attitudes have been argued to include a cognitive component (beliefs), an affecting component (feelings), and a behaviour component (intentions) (Breckler, 1984), meaning that attitudes entirely free of cognition could be possible. The emotive approach (see Brader and Marcus, 2013) is also supported by evidence on the effect of motivated reasoning and biases (Ajzen, 2001), so that, for example, Burdein et al (2006) find evidence of motivated scepticism of dissonant information. Despite all this, Gilens (2001) shows that facts do matter, having a large effect on stated policy preferences.

The determinants of which emotion one feels are a complex combination of one’s current circumstances and feelings, the nature of the stimuli, and one’s deep-seated values, narratives, and worldviews (Schacter and Singer, 1962). However, we do know that an individual’s emotions can be changed via contagion (Hatfield et al, 1993); explanation of the causes and implications of stimuli (Ross, 1977) particularly as it relates to personal need-fulfilment (Izard, 2013); self-management, often dictated by social norms (Hochschild, 1979); and narratives and sense-making (Weick et al, 2005) and beyond. Moreover, the determinants of emotions depend greatly on the theoretical approaches one takes regarding whether cognition precedes emotion or vis versa, or whether both are functions of some broader self-concept (Izard, 2013: 30-39).

Overall, we know that the emotional system is a fundamental component of how we gain, make sense of, and retain information about our world (Bless et al, 1996; Bower, 1981; Clore et al, 1994; Forgas et al, 2001; Forgas & Ciarrochi, 2001; Kuvaas & Kaufmann, 2004) and acts as a vital source of information affecting our judgements and choices (Bower, 1981; Schwarz, 1990) so much so that when emotions and cognition clash, it is often emotions that prevail (Loewenstein et al, 2001).



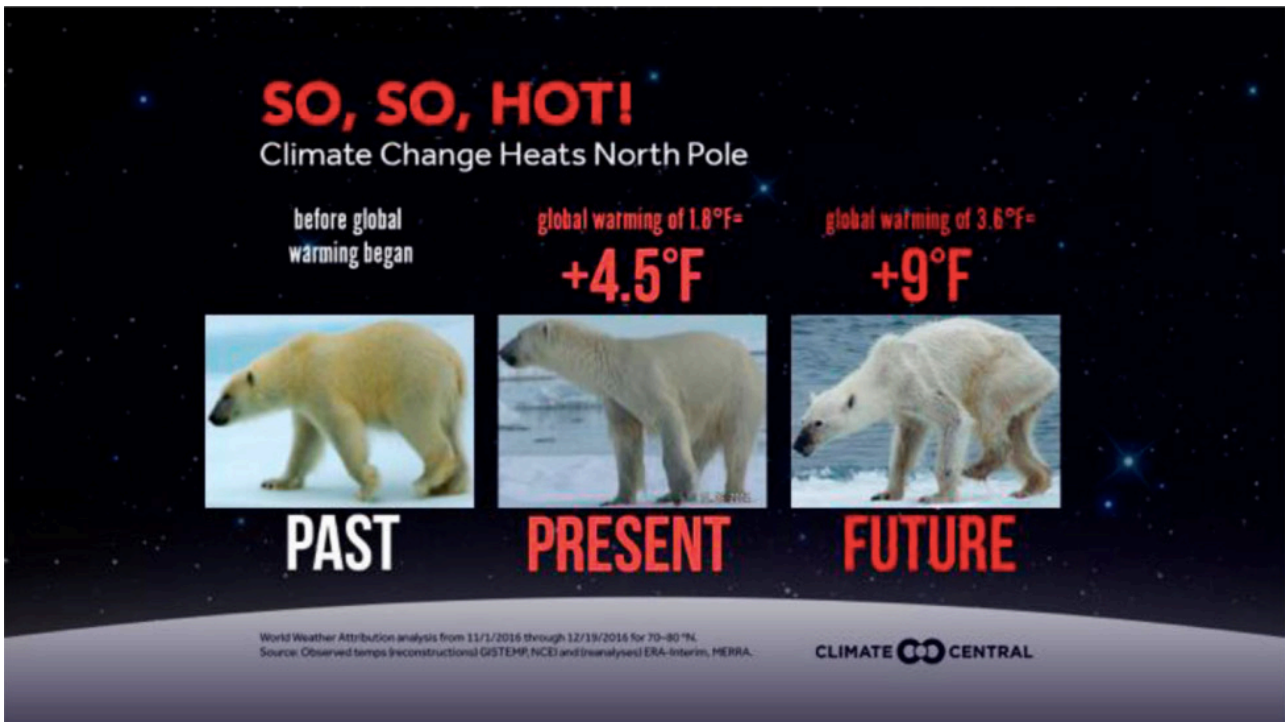
# Emotion-based communication

In this section, we consider how emotions are used in communication and what lessons have been learned about what constitutes impactful emotion-based communication, including differentiating such communication from the *appeal to emotion* logical fallacy. Empirical studies have shown that communicators that use emotions are more likely to motivate audiences and persuade them (Salama and Aboukoura, 2018, for review). Researchers have also sought to measure and test how commercial advertisements evoke emotion (Allen et al, 1988) building on classifications outlined above. Hasford et al (2015) show how consumers use emotions as information to help make purchasing decisions and may also spill over to other decisions. Emotions are particularly vital to persuasive strategic communication because activating them has been shown to over-ride identity-based concerns, lead to deeper consideration of information, and lead people to engage personal rather than political or ideological reasoning (Schwarz, 2010; Bolsen et al., 2019; Feldman and Hart, 2018).

Aside from migration communication itself, perhaps the most relevant form of strategic emotion-based communication for our purposes is climate change communication, which is considerably more developed with its effects more verified. Smith and Leiserowitz (2014) show that people's emotions when prompted to think about climate change (e.g., hope, worry, interest) explain half of the variance in support for climate policies—more even than socio-demographics (see also Ojala, 2012, on hope and engagement; and Meijnders et al, 2001a, on fear and consideration of solutions. Indeed, Wong-Parodi and Feygina (2021) found that strong negative emotional reactions to learning about climate impacts—via emotive stories about arctic warming and polar animals—made conservative respondents as accepting of climate change and willing to engage in climate action as liberals. Furthermore, Arkan et al (2022) show that presenting climate change related threats as diffuse and uncertain elicits greater levels of anxiety, while stories that provide a specific target to blame induce anger, and those that underlined the potential of technology and human efforts to solve (i.e. our efficacy) climate change related issues elicit greater levels of hope. However, on the topic of climate change research, Van der Linden et al (2017) argue that 'culture [including emotion] versus cognition is a false dilemma' and that the two must be used together.



Figure 4. Emotion-based climate change communication



Source: Wong-Parodi and Feygina (2021)

One of the most used emotions in communication is fear, usually elicited via the presentation of threats, which indeed has been shown to have strong persuasive effects (Tannenbaum et al., 2015, for review), though can have unintended effects including reactions against the message, the source, and the scale of the problem. Because of these adverse (“boomerang”) reactions to fear-based campaigns, researchers have experimented with efficacy-only, hope-centred campaigns that focus on individual or collective potential to solve problems (Roser-Renouf et al, 2014). Regarding climate change, these have, however, been shown to be more effective on liberal or moderates than conservatives (Chadwick, 2015; Feldman and Hart, 2016), highlighting that though hope may be useful in encouraging action amongst those already in agreement, it may be less useful in changing minds. Though Feldman and Hart (2018) show that news and text images that elicited fear increased support for climate change policies especially amongst conservatives.

The debate over whether fear-based messages lead to positive action or avoidance, denial, and helplessness is supported by findings from the health communication literature that show that provoking fear without offering solutions produces maladaptive coping mechanisms (Brosch, 2021) shown to be comparable to populist political attitudes, threats posed by global transformations and global governance solutions (Dennison and Turnbull-Dugarte, 2022). On the other hand, offering overly hopeful messages has been argued to lead to complacency (Brosch, 2021). Messages offering positive stories still must emphasise goal-congruence (and so also value-congruence), importance, and feasibility. In response to this, Nabi et al (2018; Nabi, 2015) show that the use of “emotional flow” whereby a fear-based message is used to change minds, which is immediately followed by a hope-based message to encourage action is more powerful than just one of the emotions, for topics as diverse as climate change and the use of sunscreen to avoid skin cancer (Nabi and Myrick, 2018).

Furthermore, negative and positive emotional communication has been linked with loss- and gain-based frames, respectively; for example, “Stopping immigration threatens our prosperity” versus “Immigration upholds our prosperity”, with gain-based frames having been argued to be more effective in the field of climate change (Davis, 1995; de Vries et al, 2015). Loss-based frames have been argued to have the disadvantage of being more likely to have reactive, “boomerang” effects (Cho and Sands, 2011; Quick et al, 2015) and be more likely to contradict deeply held world

beliefs and values (Feinberg and Willer, 2011). Moreover, rather than there being right or wrong frames, emotions mediate the relationship between frames and attitudinal or behavioural effects in controversial social issues (Kühne and Schemer, 2013; Lecheler et al., 2015, 2013).

Narrative has been shown to be a vital component of eliciting emotion (Damasio, 1994; Cooper and Nisbet, 2016) by moving away from abstract concepts to immediate, personal effects and so removing “psychological distance” and heightening character identification and “transportation” while reducing counterarguing in abstract terms (Dennison, 2021; Van der Linden et al., 2015; Van Laer et al., 2014). Storytelling done by down-to-earth and relatable characters have been shown to be especially effective (Baldwin and Lammers, 2016). When Gustafson et al (2021) compared the effects of a North Carolina sportsman’s personal account of how climate change has already affected the places he loves, it was shown to affect the climate change beliefs and risk perceptions of political moderates and conservatives, with the effect resulting from feelings of worry and compassion.

However, the desired aims of climate change communicators are not the same as those of migration communicators. Whereas the former may wish to highlight risks and threats to induce support for collective action, the latter are more likely to be interested in correcting misperceptions, reducing xenophobia, encouraging integration, and dissuading individuals from doing emigrating irregularly. Theorin (2021) randomly exposed individuals in six EU countries to one of four fictional articles focusing on: a single citizen’s negative experiences of immigration; a single citizen’s positive experiences of immigration; official information from a researcher about negative implications of immigration for society as a whole; or official information from a researcher about positive implications of immigration for society as a whole. The emotional and positive frames were shown to be most impactful.

These findings build on several studies showing that emotions mediate the effects of media frames on immigration attitudes (Brader et al., 2008; Esses et al., 2013; Lecheler et al., 2015; Matthes and Scmuck, 2017) via enthusiasm positively and anger negatively in the case of Lecheler et al (2015). Conversely, Theorin et al (2021) expose participants to a variety of fictional tweets—some with a negative message on immigration, some with a positive one, and some in ‘episodic’ (or narrative) format and some in thematic (or informative) format—showing that none of the four types have a statistically significant effect on attitudes to free movement. Chkhaidze et al (2021) exposed participants to one of four versions of a passage about an increase in immigrants in one town. Each version included all identical facts and figures and differed in only a single word at the beginning of the passage, describing the increase in immigrant labor as either an “increase,” a “boost,” an “invasion,” or a “flood.” This change had a large effect on participants’ attitudes to the increase in immigration and the predictions about its effects on the economy (see also Dennison, 2022).

Finally, whereas emotion-based communication can be thought of as a tactic to make a logical argument more resonant by showing its importance and relevance, it should not be confused with the appeal to emotion fallacy—arguing that something *is* true because of its emotional content. This highlights the limits of the idea that communicators should use “emotions, not facts” and instead should use both.

# Recommendations for emotion-based migration communication

The above discussion leads to ten recommendations for policy-makers:

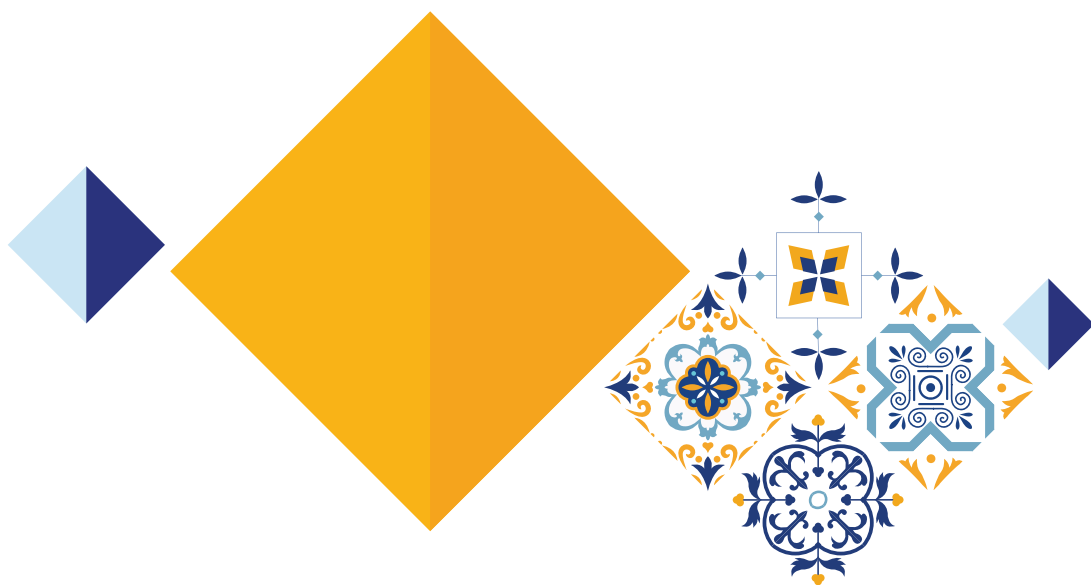
1. Use emotions in communication to make one's messages more resonant and impactful on both attitudes and behaviours, supporting broader policy objectives via persuasion.
2. Choose the desired emotional reaction according to the desired physiological and behavioural reaction using existing psychological schema, one of which this report analyses with 32 separate emotions and physiological reactions.
3. Narratives, personal-based messages, and aesthetics can all be used to create emotional resonance and reduce psychological distance.
4. Different frames have different emotional reactions: eg. diffuse versus specific; gain-based versus loss-based; threat versus no-threat; need for action versus need for no action.
5. Emotion-based messaging using negative emotions (doom, fear, pity, sadness, shame, guilt, anger) should be combined with solutions to avoid reactive, maladaptive, or "boomerang" effects.
6. The impact of emotions can be further enhanced (or diminished) by the order in which different emotions are evoked: this is known as "emotional flow".
7. The intensity of emotions can also matter: for example, intense surprise is amazement whereas low intense surprise is distraction.
8. Avoid thinking in terms of false dichotomies such as "culture versus cognition" – the two must be used in unison. Use emotions as a tactic to enhance one's message, which should be simultaneously based on facts, values, identities, and efficacy.
9. Do not confuse emotion-based communication—a tactic to make a logical argument more resonant by showing its importance and relevance—with the appeal-to-emotion logical fallacy, which argues that something is true because of its emotional basis.
10. Emotion-based communication in the field of migration remains relatively novel and untested—communicators can take lessons from other fields such as corporate communications, health communications, and climate change communications in particular.

Given the relative scarcity of migration-related studies of emotion-based communication, and the relatively limited number of emotions studied in general, as well as the lack of a general theory of how emotions link to physiological reactions, it is worth expanding on the logic of Plutchik's eight basic emotions and their physiological reactions to each of the 24 "emotional dyads". In the table below, we do this, combined with examples of resultant behaviours that are likely to result from each physiological reaction and are likely form part of migration policy objectives.

32 emotions and the physiological and behavioural reactions caused by evoking them

Emotion	Physiological reactions (with examples of behavioural reactions to basic emotions)
<i>Basic emotions</i>	
Joy	Connect (eg. join, contact, meet, converse)
Sadness	Withdraw (eg. turn inwards, avoid, be passive)
Fear	Feel small (eg. retreat, submit, plead)
Anger	Feel big (eg. confront, assert, impose, dismiss)
Anticipation	Examine (eg. observe, consider, compare)
Surprise	Jump back (eg. hurry, defend, react)
Disgust	Reject (eg. remove, distance, separate)
Trust	Embrace (eg. accept, support, celebrate)
<i>Primary dyad</i>	
Love (joy + trust)	Connect and embrace
Submission (trust + fear)	Embrace and feel small
Awe (fear + surprise)	Feel small and jump back
Disapproval (surprise + sadness)	Jump back and withdraw
Remorse (sadness + disgust)	Withdraw and reject
Contempt (disgust + anger)	Reject and feel big
Aggressiveness (anger + anticipation)	Feel big and examine
Optimism (anticipation + joy)	Examine and connect
<i>Secondary dyad</i>	
Guilt (joy + fear)	Connect and feel small
Curiosity (trust + surprise)	Embrace and jump back
Despair (fear + sadness)	Feel small and withdraw
Unbelief (surprise + disgust)	Jump back and reject
Envy (sadness + anger)	Withdraw and feel big
Cynicism (disgust + anticipation)	Reject and examine
Pride (anger + joy)	Feel big and connect
Hope (anticipation + trust)	Examine and embrace
<i>Tertiary dyad</i>	
Delight (joy + surprise)	Connect and jump back
Sentimentality (trust + sadness)	Embrace and withdraw
Shame (fear + disgust)	Feel small and reject
Outrage (surprise + anger)	Jump back and feel big
Pessimism (sadness + anticipation)	Withdraw and examine
Morbidity (disgust + joy)	Reject and connect
Dominance (anger + trust)	Feel big and embrace
Anxiety (anticipation + fear)	Examine and feel small

The above table therefore acts as a guide of which emotions to use when desiring differing behavioural impacts. For example, pro-migration campaigns are likely to want individuals to embrace rather than reject migration in attitudinal terms—both accepting it as a policy, accepting immigrants as individuals—meaning that they should inspire the feeling of trust. More complex objectives could be a desire to encourage individuals to examine (alone, derived from the feeling of anticipation) *and* embrace immigration, in terms of simultaneously fighting misinformation, in this case they should inspire hope. Other campaigns may want to do both of these things and also encourage individuals to connect with migrants (alone, derived from joy) to encourage integration in addition to examining some aspect of migration to learn more—such an action would most likely derive from the feeling of optimism. Both more and less intense versions of these feelings can be found in Table 1.





# Ten visual examples of emotion-based migration communication

We now move to applying the logic of the 32 emotions and their physiological and behavioural reactions to ten examples of emotion-based migration communication, allowing us to also see to what extent the stated objectives of these campaigns align with the emotions being elicited.

## 1. "Protect" project campaign

Country, organisation, and year: Hungary, IOM, 2021

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KslE6Q7hXe8&t=8s>

Objective: "The PROTECT project campaign aims to get the world involved in the conversation, generating awareness, sharing important information, and highlighting ways we can all help tackle the global epidemic of sexual and gender-based violence."

Emotions: Fear + Sadness (Despair) -> Anger + Trust (Dominance)

Physiological reaction: Feel small and withdraw -> Feel big and embrace

Emotional flow: Yes

Emotive medium: Music; facial expression; animation; script

Comments: Aim is partially to encourage migrants to connect so some use of joy when displaying support; music does not adhere to flow

Figure 5. Stills from "Protect" project campaign



## 2. "It takes a community"

Country, organisation, and year: Global, UN, 2021

Link: <https://www.ittakesacomunity.org/>

Objective: "It Takes a Community is a global movement to celebrate how all people, regardless of where they are born, can contribute to making our communities better places for us to live and call home."

Emotions: Joy, Joy + Trust (Love), Joy + Anticipation (Optimism)

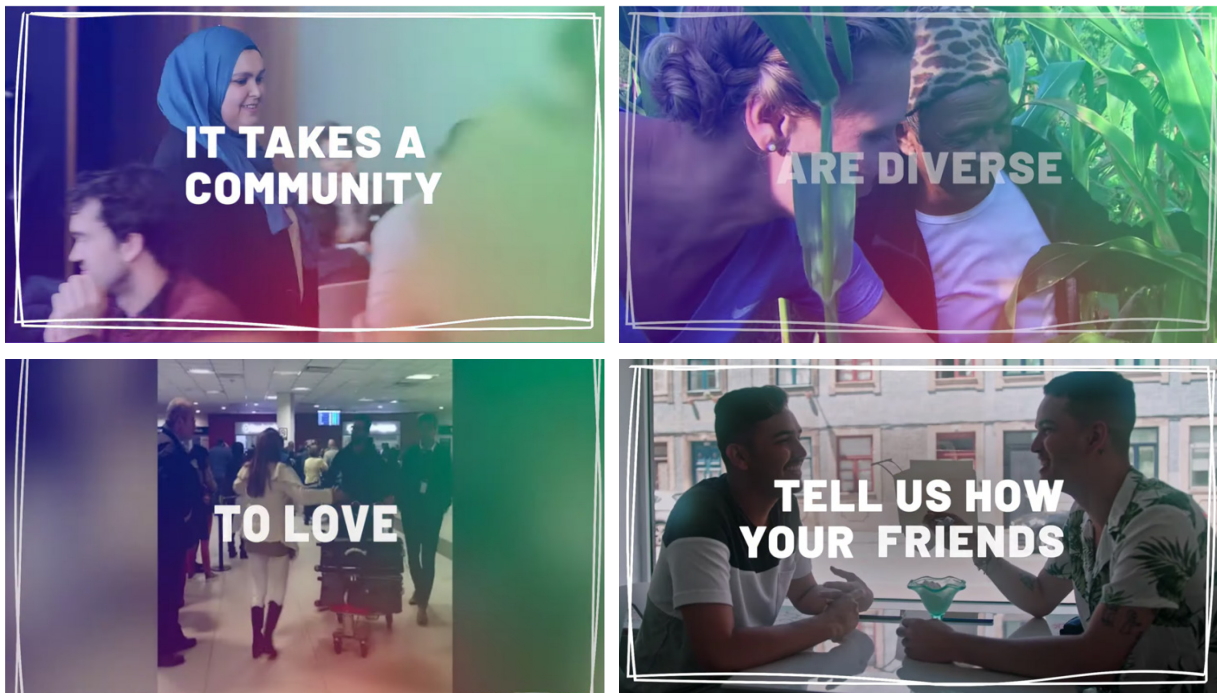
Physiological reactions: Connect, Connect and embrace, Connect and examine

Emotional flow: no

Emotive medium: facial expressions, montage

Comments: Values-basis (see Dennison, 2020) unlikely to sway conservatives (though celebration, rather than persuasion, is the campaign's stated objective)

Figure 6. Stills from "It takes a Community" video campaign



### 3. "Struggling to survive"

Country, organisation and year: Aditus Foundation, Malta, 2021

Video Link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLEm-Nx5A\\_g1p6iArQXZOgkklaeWLC-7opf&time\\_continue=40&v=J4gxFkitAbo&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLEm-Nx5A_g1p6iArQXZOgkklaeWLC-7opf&time_continue=40&v=J4gxFkitAbo&feature=emb_logo)

Objective: Increase support for regularisation, "take action against exploitation", "own integration"

Emotions: Sadness, Sadness + Disgust (Remorse)

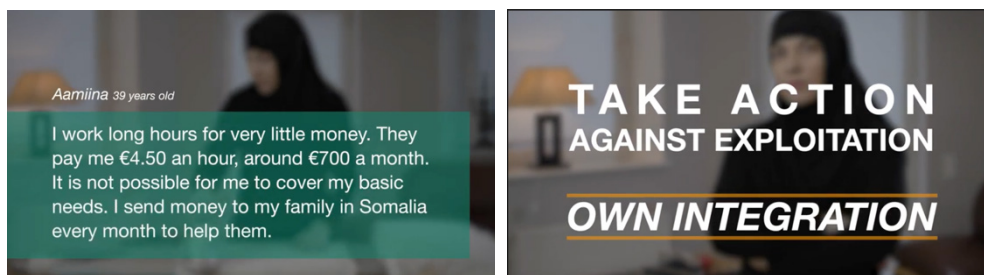
Physiological reaction: Withdraw, Withdraw and reject

Emotional flow: no

Emotive medium: music; script

Comments: Physiological reaction of withdrawal unlikely to lead to action; use of sadness + surprise (disapproval) may have been more applicable; facial expressions are blurred; use of emotional flow would have increased the impetus to action

*Figure 7. Stills from "Struggling to survive campaign"*



### 4. "Anyone trafficked"

Country, organisation and year: Ireland, Government of Ireland and the IOM, 2021

Video Link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=19&v=pwnZzV2RoJ4&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=19&v=pwnZzV2RoJ4&feature=emb_logo)

Objective: "The campaign aims to raise awareness of the general public regarding the forms of trafficking, the signs of trafficked people and the possible ways to support them and provide help."

Emotions: Joy, Joy + Disgust (Morbidness), Fear

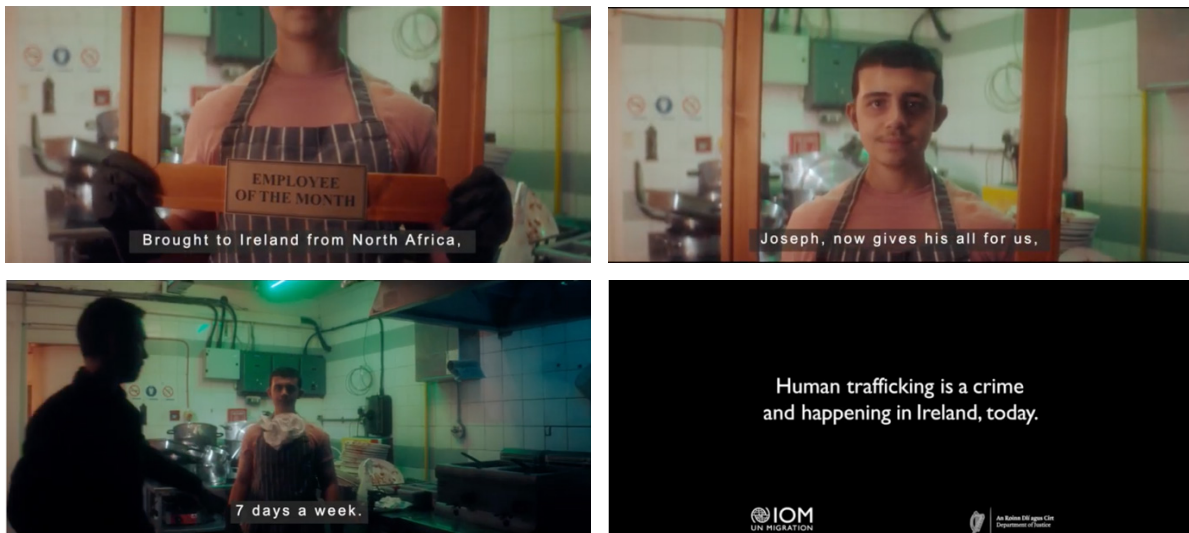
Physiological reaction: Connect, Connect + Reject, Feel small

Emotional flow: Yes

Emotive medium: music, script

Comments: Clear use of emotional flow, moving between such different emotions so quickly (around 20 seconds) may however make message unclear and physiological reaction less pronounced.

Figure 8. Stills from “Anyone trafficked”



## 5. “I get you” campaign

Country, organisation and year: Jesuit Refugee Service, Europe, 2019

Video Link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=367&v=UFFrLHBRlyc&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=367&v=UFFrLHBRlyc&feature=emb_logo)

Objective: “The campaign aims to promote best practices to prevent racism and xenophobia towards forced migrants through community building. For two years, JRS Europe and its partners in nine countries conducted an in-depth mixed methods research project, with an accompanying public awareness campaign, on the work being done by local societies in welcoming and including forced migrants and refugees. Stemming from that experience, they looked at 351 Community Building Initiatives (CBIs), and how they encouraged encounters and designed innovative ways to promote social inclusion thereby countering racism and xenophobia in society. The campaign is also implemented in Portugal, France, Spain, Italy, Malta, Germany, Romania and Croatia.”

Emotions: Joy, Joy + anticipation (optimism), Joy + Surprise (Delight)

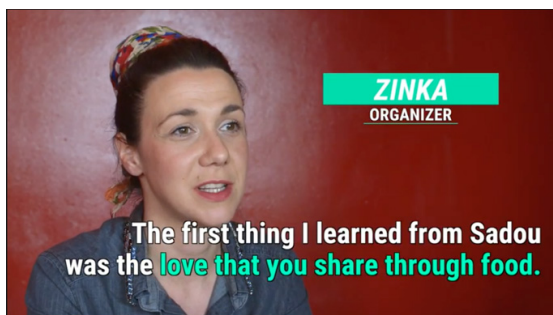
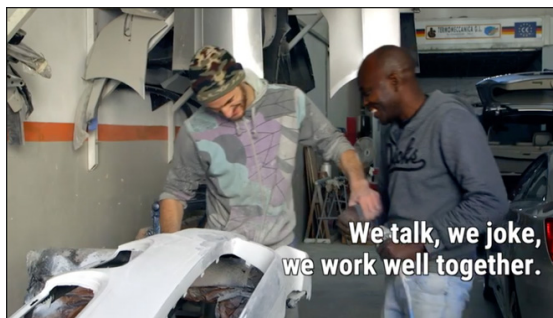
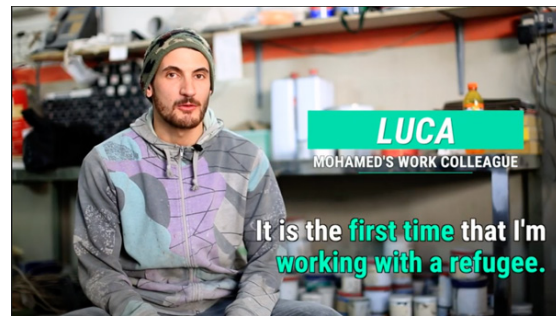
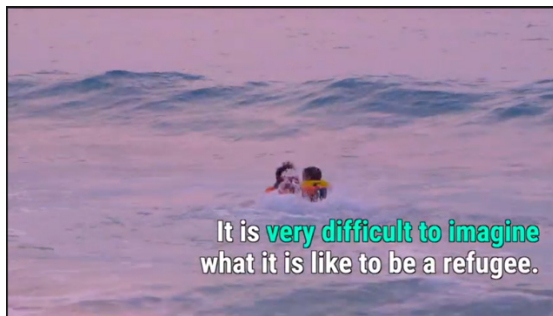
Physiological reaction: Connect, Connect and examine, Connect and jump back

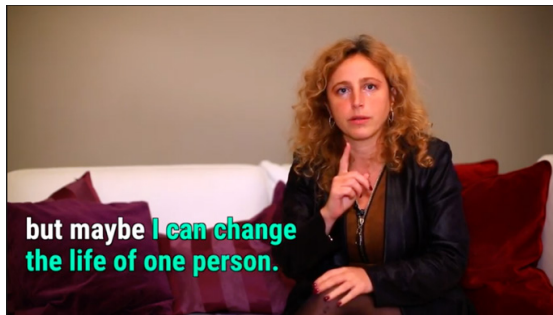
Emotional flow: No

Emotive medium:

Comments: Besides joy, the emotions evocated are perhaps low intensity (interest rather than anticipation and, more problematically, distraction instead of surprise).

Figure 9. Stills from "I get you campaign"





## 6. "#Ibelong"

Country, organisation and year: UNHCR, Global, 2019

Video Link: <https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/>

Objective: "The campaigns aims at raising awareness about the situation of stateless people in the world, noting that millions of people around the world are denied a nationality, are not allowed to go to school, see a doctor, get a job, open a bank account, buy a house or even get married. The campaign aims to end statelessness in ten years and call citizens to take an actions."

Emotions: Fear + sadness (despair), joy, anticipation + trust (hope)

Physiological reaction: feel small and withdraw, connect, examine and embrace

Emotional flow: yes

Emotive medium: animation, music, facial expressions

Comments: Emotional flow good but not fully pronounced, joy more clearly evocated than anticipation so optimistic objective not clear

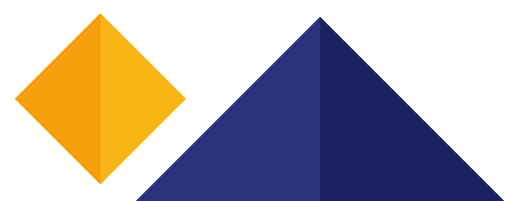
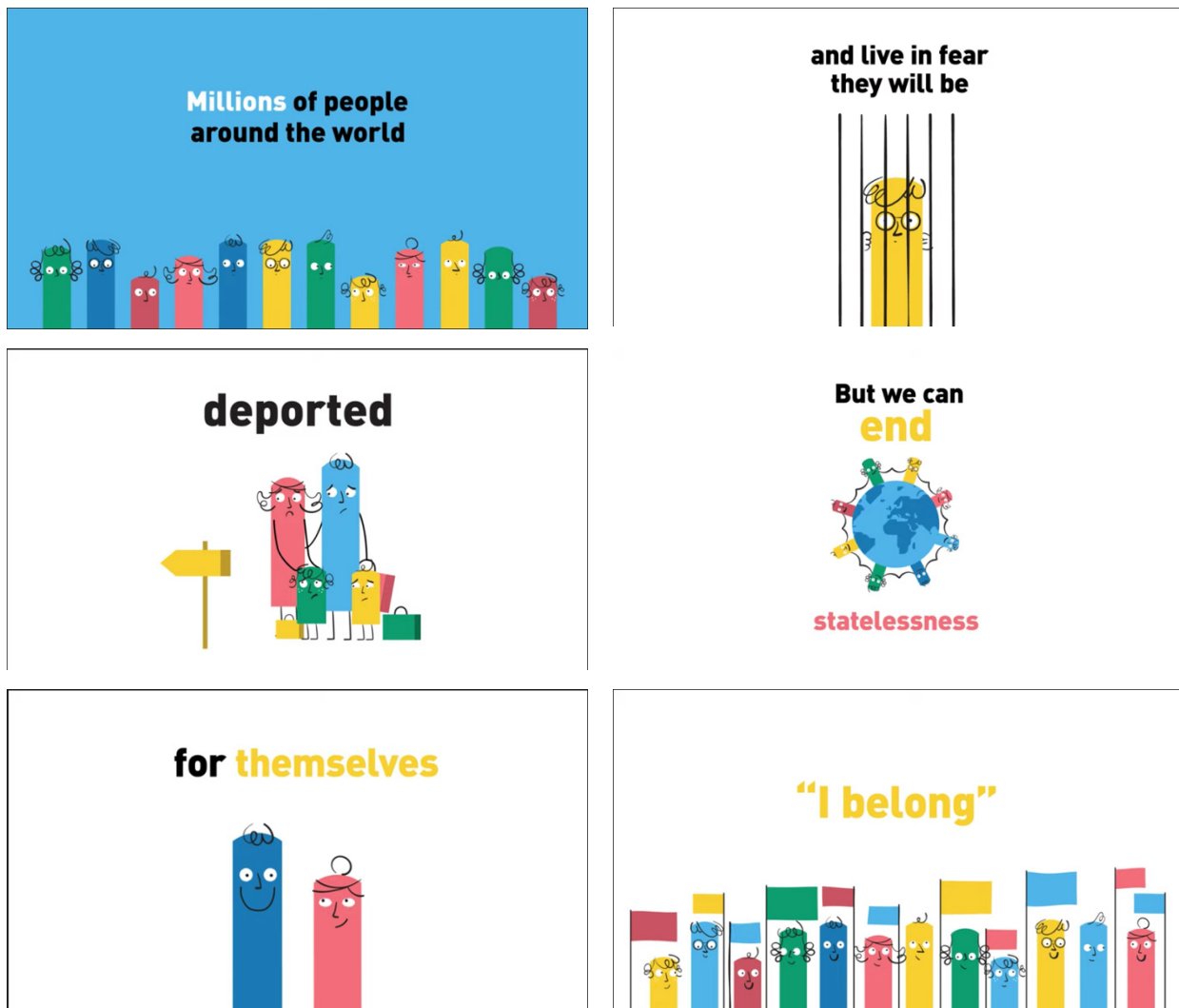


Figure 10. Stills from “#Ibelong” campaign



## 7. Campaign to use registered immigration advisors

Country, organisation and year: UK, OISC, 2020

Link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/oisc-campaigns-posters>

Objective: "The OISC have created a series of posters designed to raise awareness among advice seekers of the importance of using registered Immigration Advisers and what to do if they have received poor or illegal advice."

Emotions: Dominance (anger + trust)

Physiological reaction: Feel big and embrace

Emotional flow: no

Emotive medium: facial expression and body language

Comments: Simple but effective use of emotion whereby angle of photo puts person in position of power and calm poise (dominance)



Figure 11. Poster from campaign for use of registered immigration advisors



## 8. "We can give a lot to one another"

Country, organisation and year: Greece, IOM, 2019

Flyer Link: [https://greeceiomint/sites/g/files/tmzbd11086/files/documents/HELIOS\\_A5\\_01.pdf](https://greeceiomint/sites/g/files/tmzbd11086/files/documents/HELIOS_A5_01.pdf)

Objective: "The campaign aims to raise awareness of the Greek population regarding migrants' integration via the Helios Programme, presenting the Helios Programme's actions and passing messages that aim to make the Greek population feel closer to migrants by witnessing that they have and they could have a lot in common, such as language, habits, education, while they could benefit from each other. The campaign targets the general Greek population and in particular those who are not aware of common cultural characteristics between local and migrant population. The campaign also targets migrants in the context of the Helios Programme."

Emotions: Joy

Physiological reaction: Connect

Emotional flow: No

Emotive medium: Facial expression

Comments: This campaign shows how emotions can be used effectively even in very simple terms, eliciting joy to encourage connection.



Figure 12. Flyer from "We can give a lot to one another" campaign

### HOW CAN BENEFICIARIES REGISTER IN THE PROJECT?

The HELIOS staff offers interested beneficiaries detailed information on the project, its services, and the enrollment process. HELIOS teams visit facilities of the official accommodation schemes of the Greek Reception System on a weekly basis, while specialized staff is present Monday to Friday (9am-5pm) at the HELIOS Integration Learning Centers:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Alkminis 36-38, Kato Petralona, Athens</li> <li>2. Kolokythos 23, Metaxourgeio, Athens</li> <li>3. 3rd Septemvriou 24, Omonoia, Athens</li> <li>4. 28th Octovriou 20-22, Omonoia, Athens</li> <li>5. 25th Martiou 7, Tavros, Athens</li> <li>6. Tsorlini 26, Thessaloniki</li> <li>7. Kostantinou Oikonomou 5, Thessaloniki</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Nikolaou Germanou 1, Thessaloniki</li> <li>9. Olympiados 24, Kardamitsia, Ioannina</li> <li>10. Ef. Polemiston 103, Chania, Crete</li> <li>11. Andrea Papandreou 107, Amoudara, Heraklion, Crete</li> <li>12. Piskokefalou KEGE (PO Code: 71202), Sitia, Crete</li> <li>13. Sokratos 111, Larissa</li> <li>14. Charilaou Floraki 22, Karditsa</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15. 3rd km Trikala - Kalambaka road, Trikala</li> <li>16. Chaironeias 39, Livadia</li> <li>17. Moskof 8, Kilkis</li> <li>18. Androutsou 30, Katerini</li> <li>19. Alexandrou Soutsou and Nafpliou, 22100, Tripoli</li> </ol>
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**WhatsApp numbers**  
(Monday - Friday | 9am - 3pm):

Arabic - Sorani - Kurmanji: +30 690 665 6134  
Farsi - Pashto: +30 690 665 6125  
Urdu - Hindi - Punjabi: +30 690 695 6107  
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## HELIOS - HELLENIC INTEGRATION SUPPORT FOR BENEFICIARIES OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

Funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund of the European Union

## WHAT IS THE HELIOS PROJECT?

HELIOS is a pilot integration project implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and its partners, aiming to support beneficiaries of international protection to smoothly integrate into the Greek society. The project is funded by the European Commission (DG HOME) and is supported by the Greek Government.

## WHO CAN JOIN THE PROJECT?

Beneficiaries of international protection (refugee or beneficiary of subsidiary protection), who have been granted asylum in Greece after 01/01/2018 and are registered and reside in the official Greek reception scheme (Open Accommodation Center, Reception and Identification Center, FILOXENIA hotel or ESTIA apartment) at the moment of the notification of the decision granting them international protection, can enroll in the project and benefit from the support provided under HELIOS.

### HOW DOES HELIOS SUPPORT BENEFICIARIES?

#### INTRODUCTION TO AUTONOMOUS LIVING IN GREECE

HELIOS beneficiaries receive targeted assistance in finding and leasing their own house in Greece. Accommodation support under the project consists of the provision of rental subsidies (from 6 to 12 months), specialized workshops, interpretation and translation support, and access to the HELIOS pool of apartments.

#### BRIDGING THE GAP WITH THE HOST COMMUNITY

Integration courses provide enrolled beneficiaries (over 16 years old) with the opportunity to learn how to write and speak Greek and acquire basic soft skills allowing them to navigate through their daily life in Greece. Classes are provided for three (3) hours on a daily basis in three shifts (morning, afternoon, evening), with a total duration of six (6) months.

#### ENABLING ACCESS TO THE LABOR MARKET

Beneficiaries (over 16 years old) can build on their capacities and enhance their chances to find steady employment in Greece through individual job counselling sessions, connection with the local labor market and targeted events.

## 9. "Knit for refugees"

Country, organisation and year: Global, UNHRC, 2019

Video Link: <https://twitter.com/Refugees/status/1144993482244853760>

Objective: "This is an awareness and fundraising campaign made by Twitter, UNCHR and Kniterate (a leading knitting machine brand). The campaign successfully raised \$14,000 for refugees experiencing the harsh effects of winter. On Twitter, the campaign achieved more than two billion impressions reaching more than 76 million people over 37,800 Tweets issued globally. The project was run entirely without paid promotion"

Emotions: Anticipation + sadness (pessimism), Anticipation + trust (hope)

Physiological reaction: Examine and withdraw, examine and engage

Emotional flow: Yes

Emotive medium: Music, scenes of refugees, script

Comments: Emotional flow is weakened by unchanging and unclear tone of music

Figure 13. Stills from "Knit for refugees campaign"



## 10. "At Second Glance"

Country, organisation, and year: Czechia, Lastrada NGO, 2019

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GoxuVdzykYQ>

Objective: "The campaign shows different people saying how they understood human trafficking and how they were wrong in English. It aims to reeducate the public about the accurate definitions of human trafficking and the many forms of it. The campaign is accompanied by the text that Trafficking in human beings is increasingly defined as the slavery of our time. Trafficked persons are mostly selected (recruited), transported or hidden by force, coercion or deception in exploitative circumstances that may include sexual exploitation, forced labour or services."

Emotions: Love (joy + trust), fear (intense: terror), surprise, disgust

Physiological reaction: Connect and engage, feel small, jump back, reject

Emotional flow: yes

Emotive medium: music

Figure 14. Stills from "At Second Glance" campaign



That's exactly how the trafficking in human beings doesn't always look like...

Global estimation is that around 40.3 million persons are in a slavery-like situation, 3.6 million in Europe and Central Asia. The Global Slavery Index and International Labor organization estimate that only in the Czech Republic, there are around 38.000 trafficked and exploited persons.

# Discussion

Emotions are regularly cited as vital components of effective strategic communication in the world of migration and beyond. However, until this report, there was relatively little guidance about how emotions should be used in migration policy communication. Emotions are vital to persuasion because attitudes have a cognitive (thinking) component and an emotional (feeling) component. Moreover, eliciting emotions causes involuntary but predictable physiological and behavioural reactions.

This report showed how emotions can be used in communication to make one's messages more resonant and impactful on both attitudes and behaviours, supporting policy objectives via persuasion. Communicators should choose the desired emotional reaction according to the desired physiological and behavioural reaction using existing psychological schema, one of which this report analyses with 32 separate emotions and physiological reactions. Eliciting unsuitable emotions may have adverse reactions from audiences. Communicators can use this report's recommendation and framework to ensure that the emotions, and physiological and desired behaviours of their campaigns are aligned and thus effective.

Narratives, personal-based messages, facial expressions and body language, and aesthetics can be used to create emotional resonance and reduce psychological distance. Frames, ordering ("emotional flow"), intensities, and combinations certain combinations can also be used to elicit different emotions with predictable outcomes. Emotions should be used to make one's argument more resonant but the argument should not be simply based on the emotional reaction—the "appeal to emotion" logical fallacy. Indeed, for emotion-based communication to work it should also use facts, values, identities, and efficacy.

This report critically analysed 10 examples of good emotion-based migration communication, highlighting the different emotions and physiological reactions that they are likely to induce, and to what extent these are in line with the communication campaign's stated objectives. However, emotion-based communication in the field of migration, although widely used, is still largely untested—communicators should test different approaches but also can take lessons from other fields such as corporate, health, and climate change communications.



# Appendices

## Alternative classifications of emotions

Theory	Emotions	
<i>Plutchik</i>	Acceptance, anger, anticipation, disgust, joy, fear, sadness, surprise	Relation to adaptive biological processes
<i>Arnold</i>	Anger, aversion, courage, dejection, desire, despair, fear, hate, hope, love, sadness	Relation to action tendencies
<i>Ekman, Friesen, and Ellsworth</i>	Anger, disgust, fear, joy, sadness, surprise	Universal facial expressions
<i>Frijda</i>	Desire, happiness, interest, surprise, wonder, sorrow	Forms of action readiness
<i>Gray</i>	Rage and terror, anxiety, joy	Hardwired
<i>Izard</i>	Anger, contempt, disgust, distress, fear, guilt, interest, joy, shame, surprise	Hardwired
<i>James</i>	Fear, grief, love, rage	Bodily involvement
<i>McDougall</i>	Anger, disgust, elation, fear, subjection, tender-emotion, wonder	Relation to instincts
<i>Mowrer</i>	Pain, pleasure	Unlearned emotional states
<i>Oatley and Johnson-Laird</i>	Anger, disgust, anxiety, happiness, sadness	Do not require propositional content
<i>Panksepp</i>	Expectancy, fear, rage, panic	Hardwired
<i>Tomkins</i>	Anger, interest, contempt, disgust, distress, fear, joy, shame, surprise	Density of neural firing
<i>Watson</i>	Fear, love, rage	Hardwired
<i>Weiner and Graham</i>	Happiness, sadness	Attribution independent

Source: Ortony and Turner (1990)

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