

We also examine how international organisations use these platforms, which are the most followed and which are the most active. Beyond the number of followers, we focused on engagement and how these organisations capture eyeballs and screen time of their followers and fans.

The leaders of international organisations tend to favour Twitter, with 75 personal accounts on the platform, while only 16 have official Facebook pages and five of them are among the select group of LinkedIn influencers.

Twitter has been crucial in the election of [Tedros Adhanom](#), the new Director General of the World Health Organization, and [Audrey Azoulay](#), UNESCO's new Director General. Most of the candidates were actively campaigning on [Twitter](#). The new UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres was notably one of the few candidates who did not have a social media presence, but on January 1, 2017 he activated his personal Twitter account, [@AntonioGuterres](#), which now has close to 200,000 followers and is among the most effective, in terms of average retweets per tweet, of all accounts of leaders of international organisations on Twitter.

However, international organisations have their biggest and most engaged audiences on **Facebook** and all but two have set up official Facebook pages. The median average number of followers for international organisations on Facebook is three times as high as on Twitter, with a median average of 139,274 followers on Facebook compared to 42,371 on their Twitter profiles. Facebook is the key platform international organisations focus on to engage audiences worldwide.

Almost three quarters of the international organisations have active profiles on **Instagram**, which is the visual platform of choice. More and more organisations are now sharing daily Instagram stories to win the hearts and minds of their followers or simply promote their latest blog post on their website.

YouTube is used by 88 international organisations to host their long-form videos and 50 have used Periscope, Twitter's live broadcasting app. Eighty-three organisations have a **LinkedIn** presence, but only half of them are active and the engagement isn't comparable to other platforms. Only a handful of the 82 organisations which have a **Google+** presence and are active on the platform. Fourteen organisations have a presence on **Snapchat**.

Over the past year, we have witnessed a clear pivot to video content among the most successful organisations. Short videos, optimized for mobile devices, tend to garner the biggest engagement on each of the social media platforms analyzed.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (@ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (@Federation), with support from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (@UNOCHA), have recently published a useful [guide on how to use social media](#), namely Twitter and Facebook, to better engage people affected by crisis including the hashtag: #CommlsAid.

There is no right or wrong way for organisations to use social media, some are more active than others, some have more followers than others, some will promote their posts to a larger audience. The key challenge for each is to stay ahead of the social media game. Obviously staying relevant on social media requires resources and staffing which many organizations still lack.

Data for Burson-Marsteller’s latest Twiplomacy study about international organisations was captured on September 1, 2017 using proprietary Burson Tools and Crowdtangle. For more about the methodology and the full data set scroll to the bottom of the study.

We have also asked some of the organisations to share their recipe for success and you can read their blog contributions from learning [how to weather a spam attack](#) to [going live on Facebook](#) from [experimenting with Instagram stories](#) to embracing the [social messaging platform Viber](#) and [using Twitter to target key decision makers](#).

International Organisations on Twitter

Twitter, despite being mainly text-driven, has morphed into a visual network and most organisations attach a photo or video to each tweet. Only five percent of all tweets analyzed are plain text updates.

Three quarters of the 215,779 tweets posted between September 2016 and September 2017 by international organisations are tweets with a link to other websites, where the picture automatically appears in the tweet. These tweets generate 100 interactions (Likes and Retweets), on average, accounting for 69 percent of all interactions. Thirteen percent of all the posts are photo posts, generating 126 interactions per tweet on average and 15 percent of all the interactions.

Tweets with native videos perform best – generating an average of 263 interactions per tweet and representing 12 percent of all interactions. Tweets including a link to videos on YouTube or other video platforms generate only 68 interactions per tweet on average, and plain text updates perform worst with only 51 interactions on average.

However, there is no right or wrong way to tweet. Among the five tweets with the biggest interactions we found a native video, a video link, a text link, a photo and a plain text tweet.

The tweet sent by an international organisation over the past 12 months that received the most interactions was from @UNICEF is a harrowing [video animation](#) of footballer David Beckham’s tattoos explaining: “Violence against children marks them forever.” The one-minute video



Some marks are easier to see than others. After watching this film w David #Beckham, you'll never look at tattoos the same way. #ENDviolence



It's official! #Cuba is the first country in the world to eliminate mother-child transmission of #HIV & #AIDS. bit.ly/2ouj5uQ

posted natively to Twitter totaled 63,225 retweets and likes.



The second most popular tweet sent by an international organisation is [one with a link to a YouTube video](#) including a picture of a pregnant woman shared by the UN Geneva office. The tweet explains that “#Cuba is the first country in the world to eliminate mother-child transmission of #HIV & #AIDS” and has received 59,522 interactions.

9:29 AM - 12 Apr 2017

The United Nations sent a strong message to U.S. President Donald Trump just before he announced the U.S. exit from the Paris Climate Accord. The [message](#) claiming, “*Climate change is undeniable Climate action is unstoppable Climate solutions provide opportunities that are unmatched,*” received 40,088 interactions and included a link to a video statement by UN Secretary General António Guterres about climate change. The tweet used carriage returns to feature larger in Twitter’s timeline and is a not so subtle sub-tweet to the decision of Donald Trump to leave the Paris Agreement.



The most popular [photo tweet](#) was shared by Kenneth Roth, Executive Director of Human Rights Watch, a cartoon criticizing President Trump’s planned border wall, garnering 38,525 interactions.



Only some 3890 tigers left in the wild. Urgent action needed to protect these magnificent creatures!
[#GlobalTigerDay](#)



8:14 AM - 29 Jul 2017

The second most popular visual tweet was shared by Erik Solheim, the Executive Director of UNEP, the UN Environment agency. The tweet, with a picture of a tiger, sent on Global Tiger Day states that: “*Only some 3890 tigers left in the wild.*” and garnered 28,224 interactions.

The [fifth most popular tweet](#) with 36,685 likes and retweets is a 132-character statement by UN Secretary General António Guterres, stating that:



“Racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism & Islamophobia are poisoning our societies. We must stand up against them. Every time. Everywhere.”

Racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism & Islamophobia are poisoning our societies. We must stand up against them. Every time. Everywhere.

12:33 AM - 16 Aug 2017

Most Followed International Organisations on Twitter

The United Nations is the most followed international organisation on Twitter with 9,352,821 followers, ahead of UNICEF and the World Health Organization with 6.3 and 3.8 million followers, respectively. The @WWF and @HRW (Human Rights Watch) complete the Top 5 list of the most followed accounts.

The @ICRC has added witnessed a phenomenal growth of 169 percent on its Twitter page, adding 1,277,777 new followers between September 2016 and September 2017 and is in eleventh position among the most followed international organisations. UNESCO has recorded the second largest growth, a 75 percent increase, followed by CERN (62 percent) adding 1,167,911 and 921,173 new followers respectively.

The ICRC's growth is mainly due to a paid promotion strategy. In 2016, the @WorldBank promoted its different language accounts on Twitter. In 2008 the @WEF and

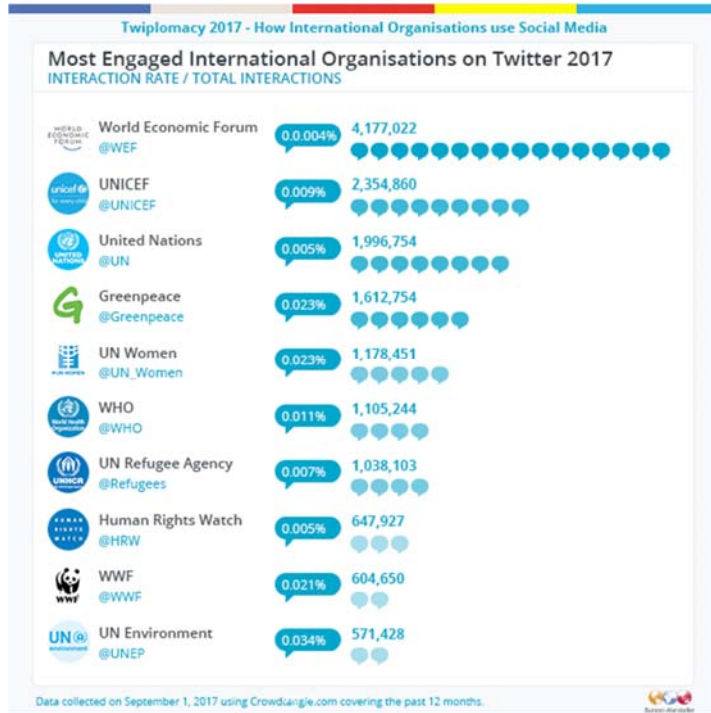
@Refugees accounts received a welcome boost when they were both included on Twitter's initial suggested user list, automatically adding a million followers to their respective accounts. The challenge of promoting accounts is targeting quality followers, and some accounts suffer from large masses of small accounts. Given the sheer size of many accounts, it is difficult to estimate with certainty how many of an organisation's Twitter followers are automated accounts, also known as bots. NATO Spokeswoman Oana Lungescu saw her followers mysteriously soar in late August 2017 when she became victim of a concerted bot attack from Russian accounts that she reported to Twitter. Read her [fascinating post](#) about this new form of spam and hybrid warfare.



Most Engaged International Organisations on Twitter

However, large followings do not necessarily translate into better engagement on Twitter. A more interesting indicator of an account's performance is the total number of interactions – the sum of all likes and retweets. Obviously, this indicator is not perfect, since organisations can pay to play and promote their tweets to garner more interactions.

The World Economic Forum clearly dominates the Twitter rankings in terms of engagement. In the past 12 months, its account received 4,177,022 likes and retweets. This is almost twice as many as @UNICEF and the @UN, both of which have two and three times more followers, respectively, than the @WEF. The World Economic Forum does not pay to promote its tweets and its success is mainly due to highly shareable content. The WEF posts powerful tweets that are on average only 60-characters long and feature engaging visuals or videos.



Most Active International Organisations on Twitter

The World Economic Forum led in terms of total engagements that can also be explained by its hyperactivity. The World Economic Forum is by far the most active international organisation, with an average of 106.64 tweets per day, while the mean average tweets per day of all organisations is only 3.77. The @WEF tends to repeat the best performing tweets up to 10 times over different days and in different time zones to reach the largest possible audience. The industrial-style output of content linking to the Forum blog resembles more a news organization than an international organisation.



Probably because of its size and its hyperactivity, the @WEF has the lowest interaction rate of only 0.004 percent among the Top 10 accounts. The @UN is not faring much better, with a 0.005 percent interaction rate which is the total of interactions divided by the number of posts and the average number of followers over the past 12 months. Among the 15 most followed international organisations, @Greenpeace and @UN_Women have probably the best interaction rates of 0.023 percent. All international organisations combined have sent 2,406,249 tweets and almost a quarter of that number was generated by the @WWF account which automatically replied to any user using the hashtag #EndangeredEmoji encouraging them to donate on the WWF website and now boasts 550,000 tweets.

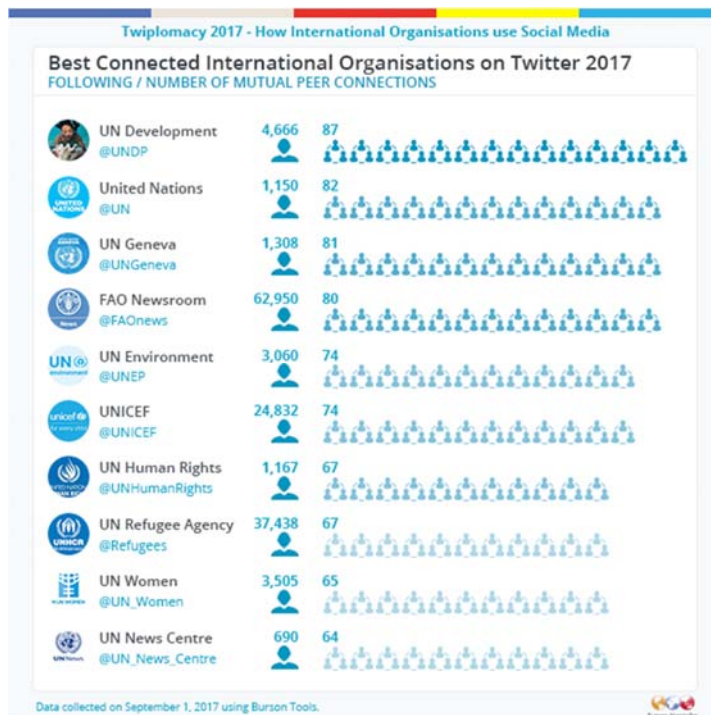
Most Effective International Organisations on Twitter

Another interesting statistic about the effectiveness of a Twitter account is the number of average retweets per tweet. In this regard, @UNICEF is the most effective with 222 average retweets per tweet, ahead of the @UN and the @WHO with 197 and 185 average retweets per tweet respectively.



Best Connected International Organisations on Twitter

UN agencies tend to follow each other on Twitter, which allows their social media teams to communicate with each other via private direct messages on the platform. The @UNDP has mutual connections with 87 other agencies, the @UN and the @UNGeneva accounts are in second and third and place mutually connected with 82 and 81 other organisations.



Most Followed Leaders of International Organisations on Twitter

Since 2011, the leaders of international organisations have increasingly set up their personal accounts on the platform which helps to give the organisations a more personal face. Today, 74 heads of international organisations have personal Twitter accounts that are mostly managed by their teams and very few manage their own Twitter feed.

Luis Almagro, the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS) is the most followed leader of the international organisations, with 577,055 followers. The account of the @UN_Spokesperson, managed by

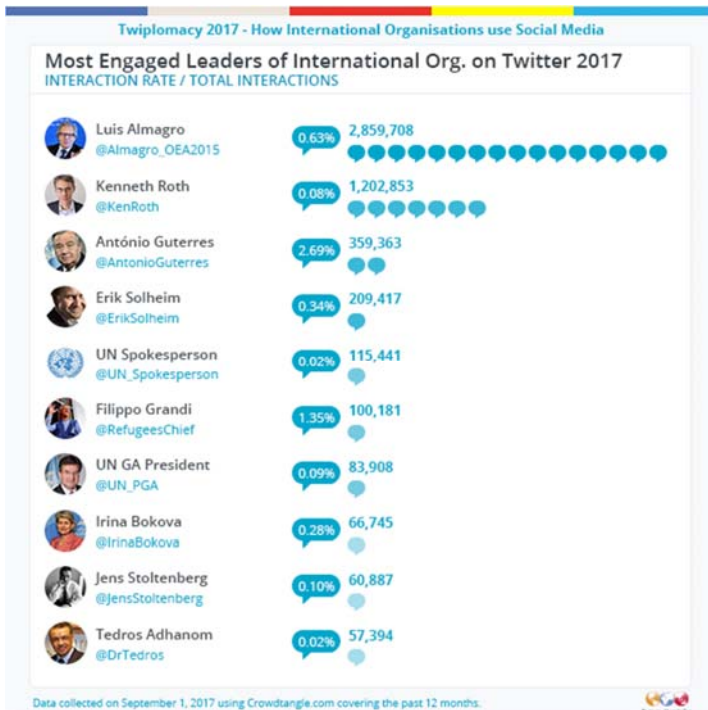
Stéphane Dujarric and his team is in second position, followed by the Secretary General of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg with 450,759 and 445,951 followers, respectively. The UN Secretary General António Guterres, activated his account on January 1, 2017 when he took office has made it into the Top 10 with 151,953 followers.



Most Engaged Leaders of International Organisations on Twitter

Luis Almagro is also the leader of an international organisation with the most interactions, clocking up 2,859,708 likes and retweets over the past 12 months, more than twice as much as Kenneth Roth, the executive director of Human Rights Watch with 1,202,853 total interactions.

Twitter is critical for the work at Human Rights Watch, writes Andrew Stroehlein in a blog post explaining how @HRW uses Twitter to target key decision makers. The UN Secretary General António Guterres is in third position with 359,363 interactions and he can boast one of the best interaction rates of 2.69 percent on his 140 tweets sent since January 1, 2017. Filippo Grandi, the UN High



Commissioner for Refugees, has a respectable 1.35 percent interaction rate on his 344 tweets sent over the past year.

Most Active Leaders of International Organisations on Twitter

Kenneth Roth, the executive director of Human Rights Watch, is by far the most prolific leader of an international organisation on Twitter with an average of 22 tweets per day, four times as many as the President of the UN General Assembly; The @UN_PGA account is a rotating Twitter account which was handed over to Miroslav Lajčák, the Foreign Minister of Slovakia and had been run by Peter Thomson, the Permanent Representative of Fiji to the UN for most of the past 12 months.



Most Effective Leaders of International Organisations on Twitter

The new UN Secretary General, António Guterres is by far the most effective tweeter in terms of retweets per tweet, averaging 1,092 retweets per tweet. Luis Almagro, the Secretary-General of the OAS is not far behind with 1,016 average retweets per tweet. Both men are far ahead of Filippo Grandi with 115 average retweets and Christine Lagarde, Jim Yong Kim and Kenneth Roth with more than 77 average retweets.



Best Connected Leaders of International Organisations on Twitter

The Twitter account of the @UNSpokesperson is the best-connected, mutually following 74 other organisations and peers. The UN Secretary General, António Guterres and Michael Møller, the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, are mutually connected to 55 and 50 organisations and peers, respectively.



Who Do International Organisations Follow on Twitter?

All international organisations combined follow 381,178 other Twitter users. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (@FAOnews) is following 62,950 other Twitter users since it was automatically following every one of its followers. @UNECOSOC and the UNHCR @Refugees follow 46,331 and 37,438 other accounts, respectively. On average, each international organisation is following 2,210 other Twitter users, which is much more manageable.

The Twitter account of @TheEconomist is the most followed by international organisations, ahead of the New York Times, the BBC and Reuters. Helen Clark, the former administrator of the UN Development Programme, former U.S. President Barack Obama and Bill Gates are the three most followed personalities. The Twitter account of the @EU_Commission occupies the third place, ahead of the @GlobalGoalsUN account specifically set up to promote the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.



Twitter Moments

Twitter Moments are collections of tweets on a specific topic or from an event. The Moments are displayed on top of the Twitter profiles and are a good way to showcase memorable tweets and give them a longer shelf life. Only 31 organisations have created Twitter Moments, mainly to highlight past events. The United Nations has created [16](#) Twitter Moments, including highlights from the [UN General Assembly](#) in September 2017. APEC, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have created [11](#) and [10](#) moments, respectively, which are highlighted on their respective profiles and will give each tweet a longer shelf life.

Moments

Twitter Lists

Twitter lists are a smart way to display and promote the digital network of international organisations and it pays to update them regularly. Most of the international organisations surveyed have public Twitter lists: 78 accounts have created public Twitter lists and 76 accounts are following at least one Twitter list. The World Economic Forum boasts [50](#) public Twitter lists, including a list of [921](#) participants at the Annual Meeting in Davos with a Twitter account. The UN has [35](#) lists, including one with the 751 Twitter accounts of the of the [UN system](#). The UN office in Geneva boasts [33](#) lists, Eurocontrol, the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation has created [20](#) lists including a list of [61](#) airports and [44](#) airlines on Twitter. The International Federation of the Red Cross lists the [332](#) Twitter accounts of national federations worldwide and Greenpeace has a list with its [278](#) staff members on Twitter. The UNDP lists [210](#) staff members and [150](#) offices worldwide while UNICEF lists the [124](#) country and regional offices on Twitter.

For a closer look at how the UN Women organisation has built its unified network of branded regional and country offices on Twitter [read the blog post](#) by Beatrice Frey with concrete tips about training and regular feedback.

Example of brand consistency across UN Women accounts

<p>UN Women Pacific @unwomenpacific @UN_Women is the #UN entity for #genderequality & women's empowerment. Tweets are from our office in the Pacific.</p>	<p>UN Women Ukraine @unwomenukraine @UN_Women is the UN entity for #genderequality & women's empowerment. Tweets are from our office in Ukraine.</p>
<p>UN Women Arabic @unwomenarabic هيئة الأمم المتحدة للمساواة بين الجنسين وتمكين المرأة تعمل لدعم احتياجات المرأة والفتاة حول العالم. Regional Office for Arab States @UN_Women</p>	<p>UN Women Nepal @unwomennepal @UN_Women is the UN entity for gender equality & women's empowerment. Tweets are from our office in Nepal.</p>
<p>UN Women Moldova @unwomenmoldova @UN_Women is the UN entity for gender equality & women's empowerment. Tweets are from our office in Moldova.</p>	<p>UN Women CentralAsia @unwomenctrasia @UN_Women is the UN entity for #genderequality & women's empowerment. Tweets are from #Kazakhstan, #Tajikistan, #Turkmenistan and #Uzbekistan.</p>
<p>UN Women Europe & CIS @unwomeneca @UN_Women is the UN entity for #genderequality & women's empowerment. Tweets are from our Regional Office for #Europe & #CentralAsia.</p>	<p>ONU Mujeres Ecuador @onumujeresEcu @ONUMujeres es la agencia de las Naciones Unidas para la igualdad de género y el empoderamiento de las mujeres. Tweets desde nuestra oficina en Ecuador.</p>
<p>UN Women Africa @unwomenafrica @UN_Women / @ONU/Femmes is the #UN entity for #genderequality and women's empowerment. Tweets in English and French are from our offices in #Africa.</p>	<p>UN Women Jordan @unwomenjordan @UN_Women is the UN entity for #genderequality & women's empowerment. Tweets are from our office in #Jordan.</p>
<p>UN Women AsiaPacific @unwomenasia @UN_Women is the UN entity for #genderequality & women's empowerment. Tweets are from our Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.</p>	<p>UN Women India @unwomenindia @UN_Women is the #UN entity for #genderequality & women's empowerment. Follow our Representative @rebeccaunwomen facebook.org/unwomenindia.</p>

Twitter Direct Messages

Twitter lists are also useful to run targeted Twitter direct message campaigns, which the World Economic Forum and the Global Fund have done to reach out directly to their most influential followers. Direct messages on Twitter have proven to be extremely effective to contact influential followers and to amplify a specific tweet which is rarely seen by all followers of an organisation.

Only five of the 171 Twitter accounts surveyed, have opened Direct Messages and anyone can send a private message to the Council of Europe ([@COE](#)), the East African Community ([@jumuiya](#)), the UN Postal Union ([@UPU UN](#)), the World Intellectual Property Organization ([@WIPO](#)), and the [@GlobalFund](#).

However, when we reached out via Direct Message about the volume of direct messages received, only two of the five organisations replied. The Council of Europe receives on average 4-5 messages per day. The World Intellectual Property Organization ([@WIPO](#)) receives an approximately 15 Direct Messages per month. For Fabio Weissert, the Digital Communications Officer at WIPO, *"It is a no-brainer to open up direct messaging from accounts that we don't follow."* Read more on his experience with Direct Messages in this [blog post](#). It is interesting to note that Direct Messages on Twitter are still manageable, even if an account has millions of followers, without overloading an inbox.



280-Character Tweets

At the end of September 2017, Twitter doubled the character limit to 280 characters. The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies ([@IFRC](#)) was one of the few organisations to trial a 280-character tweet.



280 characters? Don't mind if we do! Thank you [@twitter](#). We'll be getting out more critical news & info on disasters and emergencies. [@ICRC](#) if you need to borrow some characters, just let us know 🙏.
[#UseResponsibly](#)

1:33 PM - 28 Sep 2017

Obviously, you can say much more in 280 characters, but the Twitter feed then can become very text-heavy. The average length of the 215,779 tweets sent by international organisations is a mere 99 characters, excluding links. Our analysis showed that the average length of tweets sent by the World Economic Forum is only 61 characters. The tweets of UNICEF that were below 100 characters

received on average 661 interactions, almost twice as much as tweets above 100 characters, which received on average 369 interactions. Hence, it is fair to say that less is more and international organisations would be well advised to use the 280-character limit responsibly, as the @Federation put it.

Personal Accounts Have the Best Interaction Rates

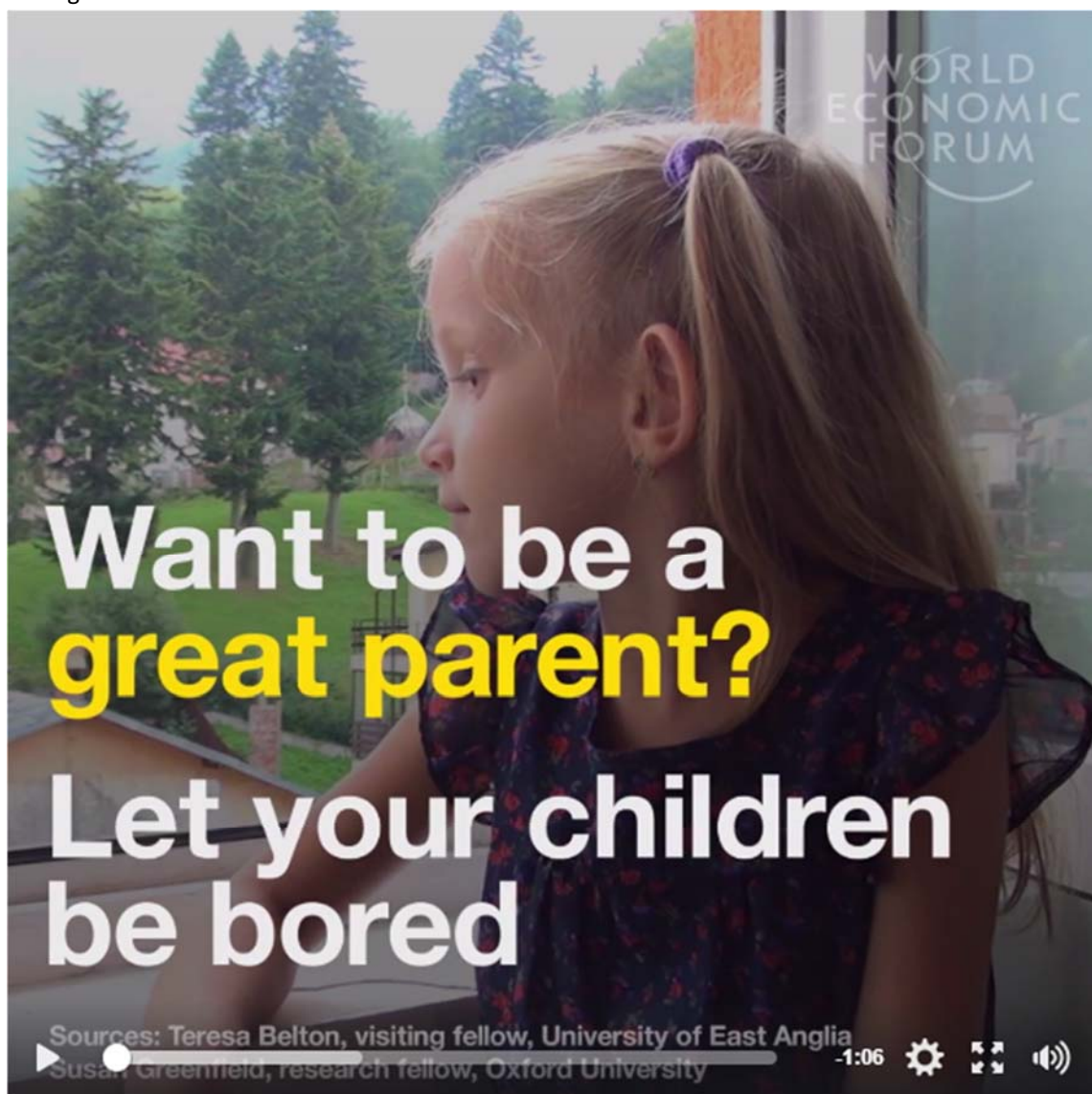
Personal Twitter accounts of leaders tend to have the best overall interaction rate, which is calculated by the number of interactions divided by the number of posts and the average number of followers over the past 12 months. In this respect, the new head of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Thomas Greminger, who only activated his Twitter account @GremingerOSCE in July 2017, tops the list with an interaction rate of 15.63 percent; however, by September 1 he had only posted two tweets.

Among the large accounts, David Beasley, the new @WFPChief, boasts an interaction rate of 3.15 percent, followed by UN Secretary General @AntonioGuterres, the @ISOSecGen Sergio Mujica, and Gilbert Hounbo (@GHoungbo), the President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), with respectable interaction rates above 2.2 percent. This also shows that personal branded accounts, such as @WFPChief, work as well as non-branded accounts. It often depends on the account holder how personal and engaged the account is.

International Organisations on Facebook

Facebook is becoming the predominant audiovisual platform for international organisations. While only 16 percent of the 72,736 posts published by the international organisations over the past 12 months are native video posts, they generate 45 percent of all the total interactions. Each native video generates on average 3.241 interactions and 255,000 average video views. Almost half of all the posts link to other websites, and almost a third are photo posts including one or more pictures. Live video broadcasts on Facebook still represent less than one percent of all analyzed Facebook posts and each live broadcast has 1,293 average interactions and more than 21,000 average views.

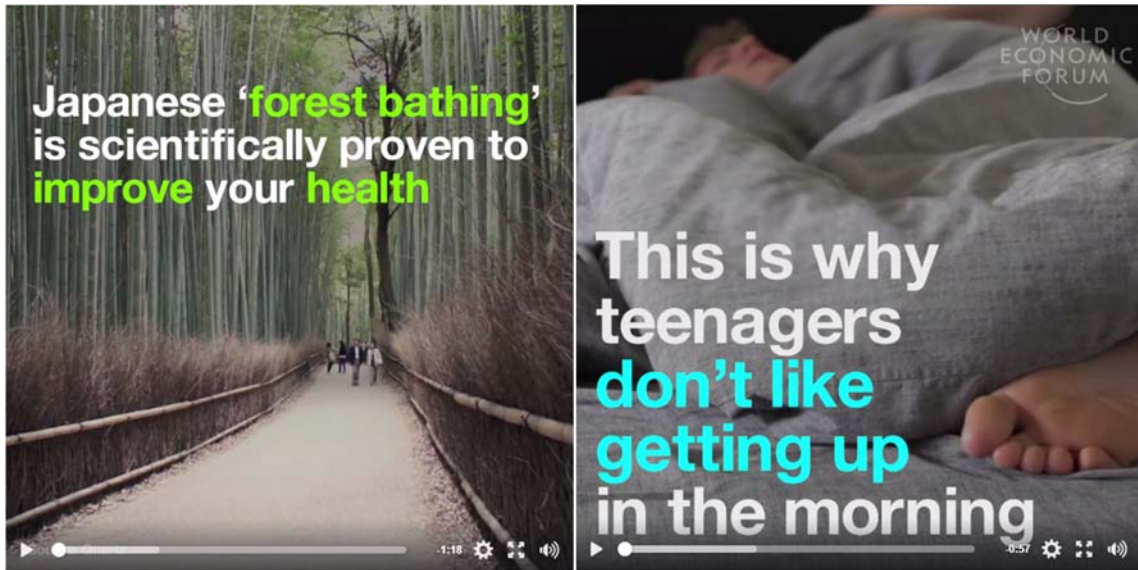
Not surprisingly YouTube videos and videos from other platforms shared on Facebook have the least engagement. Only 2.4 percent of all posts are video posts from other platforms, garnering on average 374 interactions, less than simple status posts without any visual or video which register 359 average interactions.



The three Facebook posts with the most interactions are all one-minute native videos from the World Economic Forum, designed to be watched on mobile devices and in silent mode. The video

titled 'Why being bored is good for children' is the [most popular post](#) of any international organisation and it is also the most watched video with over one million interactions and more than 50 million views. The WEF's videos about [Japanese forest bathing](#) and [Why teenagers don't like getting up in the morning](#) have each been watched more than 32 million times.

The Forum's explainer videos all follow the same pattern: All are in squared format, optimized for mobile viewing, featuring large text overlays, often including a question or are an intriguing statement designed to make the viewer want to watch more. The sound of the videos, often elevator music, is largely irrelevant since most users will watch and read the video in silent mode.



The picture that received the most interactions was posted by the World Bank, encouraging its followers to update their profile picture. The [avatar](#) received 721,111 interactions and, according to the World Bank, more than 20,000 users changed their profile picture in the process, giving the organization worldwide exposure for its message to end poverty. The post was promoted, boosting the engagement on Facebook and you can read about the World Bank's [paid promotion strategy](#).



UNICEF
19 May · 🌐

World leaders at G7 must commit to protecting migrant and refugee children. Share this to stand with #ChildrenUprooted. #AChildIsAChild



The [video](#) posted by the UN Migration organization showing how to make drinkable water with a coagulant has attracted the most amazement with 6,000 'wow'-reactions.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) scored a viral hit with a [Facebook live interview](#) with a humanoid robot which attracted 4,437 'wow'-reactions and has been viewed more than 3.1 million times.

The World Bank organized a series of Facebook Live broadcasts during its spring meeting. And during the General Assembly in 2017 the new

... The [picture](#) of a young refugee including the caption: *'I'm a child, not a threat,'* shared by UNICEF has become the second most engaging picture. The picture posted during the 2017 G7 summit in Italy clocked more 552,690 interactions.



ITU was live.
9 June · 🌐

Meet Sophia, the humanoid robot, here at ITU to discuss how artificial intelligence can help solve humanity's greatest challenges!



Secretary General António Guterres sat down for his first Facebook Live interview.

The Geneva-based United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is trialing weekly half-hour Facebook Live chats with senior staff or a refugee moderated by [Melissa Fleming](#), the Refugees Communications Chief, on her public page. Read how UNHCR turns lurkers into supporters and the essential items to produce a Facebook Live broadcast in this [blog post](#).



JOIN US!

LIVE

WITH
**UN SECRETARY-GENERAL
ANTÓNIO GUTERRES**

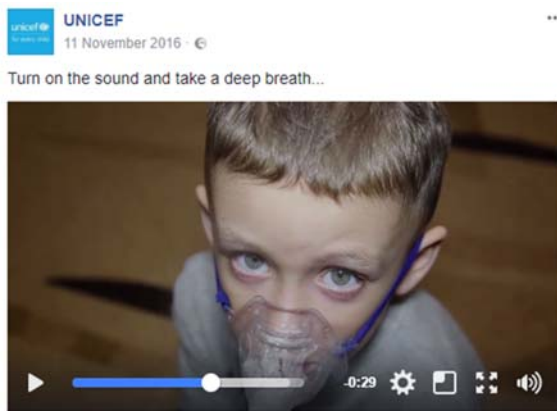
**SUNDAY,
17 SEPTEMBER,
5PM EDT**

**FACEBOOK.COM/
UNITEDNATIONS**

#UNGA

Not surprisingly [CERN's April Fool's post](#) about the alleged discovery of an ancient particle accelerator on Mars attracted the most laughter reactions.

Some of the posts on the UNICEF Facebook page have produced sad reactions, while posts from Greenpeace and Human Rights Watch are producing the most angry-reactions. The Facebook post with the most sad-reactions is a harrowing [video](#) about the effects of air pollution on children. The one-minute video posted on the UNICEF page has been viewed 13,795 times.



The Facebook post with the most angry-reactions is a [picture](#) showing the traces left by birds, turtles and humans and the caption *"Tread lightly,"* posted on the Greenpeace Facebook page, warning that *"By 2050, our oceans could contain more plastic than fish."*



The [post](#) which drew the most grateful reactions was posted on International Nurses Day on May 12, 2017 by the World Health Organization (WHO), thanking all nurses.

And finally, the [most popular 'link' post](#), linking to an external website, was posted by the Asian Development Bank to promote a book about the organization's history. The post clearly benefitted from paid promotion since it garnered 103,384 likes but only 19 likes and 61 shares.

Asian Development Bank - ADB
20 May · €

Asia's story of dynamism and development over the past 50 years is also ADB's story. Read all about it in a new history book. #ADB50



#ADB50

Banking on the Future of Asia and the Pacific: 50 Years of the Asian Development Bank

This book is a history of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), a multilateral development bank established 50 years ago to serve Asia and the Pacific.

ADB.ORG [Learn More](#)

World Health Organization (WHO) added 4 new photos — 📷 ...
celebrating #InternationalNursesDay.
12 May · €

On International Nurses Day we thank ALL nurses!
Thanks for improving people's health worldwide.
Who is your favourite nurse?



Pay to Play

A growing number of organisations tend to boost their posts with Facebook promotions. There is nothing wrong with paying for promoted posts to reach a larger and more targeted audience beyond the page's followers. Some organisations promote every single post, however, if the post is not already performing well organically, it is pointless to put money behind it to reach a larger audience.

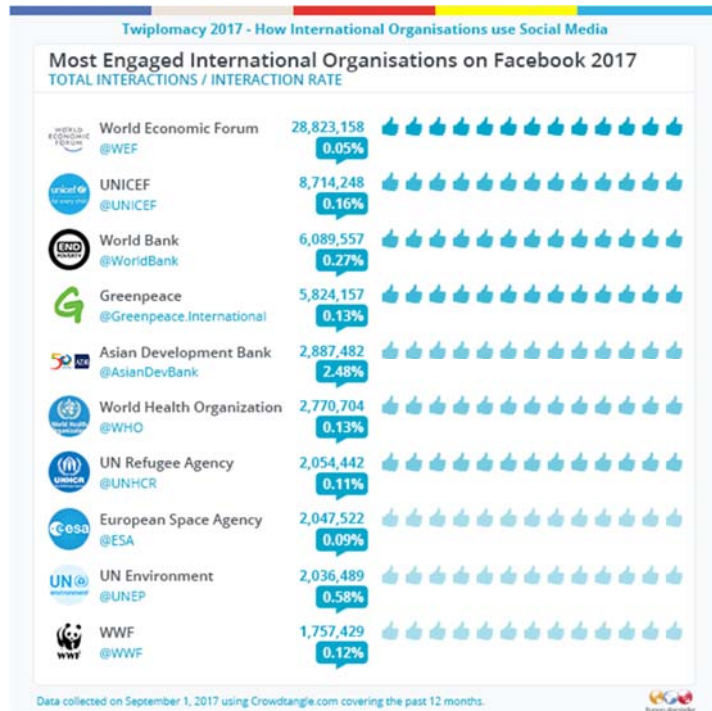
Many organisations do not have a budget to promote the posts and count solely on organic growth of their pages. The 212,227 followers of the International Organization for Standardization are "100 percent organic" as Maria Lazarte, the ISO social media manager points out, "However, as algorithms evolve to favour promoted posts, we may need to reconsider," she writes in this [blog post](#).

The Most Effective International Organisations on Facebook

The World Economic Forum is by far the most engaging international organisation on Facebook with a total of 28.8 million interactions (comments, likes, and shares) on its Facebook page over the past 12 months. The WEF has more than three times as many interactions as UNICEF, which is in second position with 8.7 million interactions, followed by the World Bank with 6 million interactions and Greenpeace with 5 million interactions.

The Asian Development Bank, the World Health Organization, the UNHCR, the European Space Agency, UNEP and the WWF complete the Top 10 list. The average number of interactions over the past 12 months for the 113 pages surveyed is 706,711 and the average interaction rate is 0.46 percent.

Interestingly, the World Economic Forum has the worst interaction rate (the total of interactions divided by the number of posts and the average number of followers over the same period). The Asian Development bank has by far the best interaction rate of the leading international organisations of 2.4 percent which is exceptionally good.



The Most Active International Organisations on Facebook

Part of the success of the World Economic Forum can be explained by its industrial-sized social media activity, with more than 18,500 posts published over the past 12 months. The World Economic Forum posts on average 50 Facebook posts per day, often repeating the same posts up to 10 to 20 times on different days and in different time zones. The hyperactivity of the World Economic Forum also explains the low overall interaction rate. Mike



Hanley, the Director of Digital Communications explains that how the WEF focuses on metrics in his [blog post](#).

The European Space Agency is in second position with an average of 8.5 posts per day, followed by the UN News Centre, which serves as the official newswire of the UN, with more than seven publications per day. Human Rights Watch, the UN in Geneva and Greenpeace publish more than four posts per day on their respective Facebook pages. UN Women, the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation, the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization publish more than three posts per day.

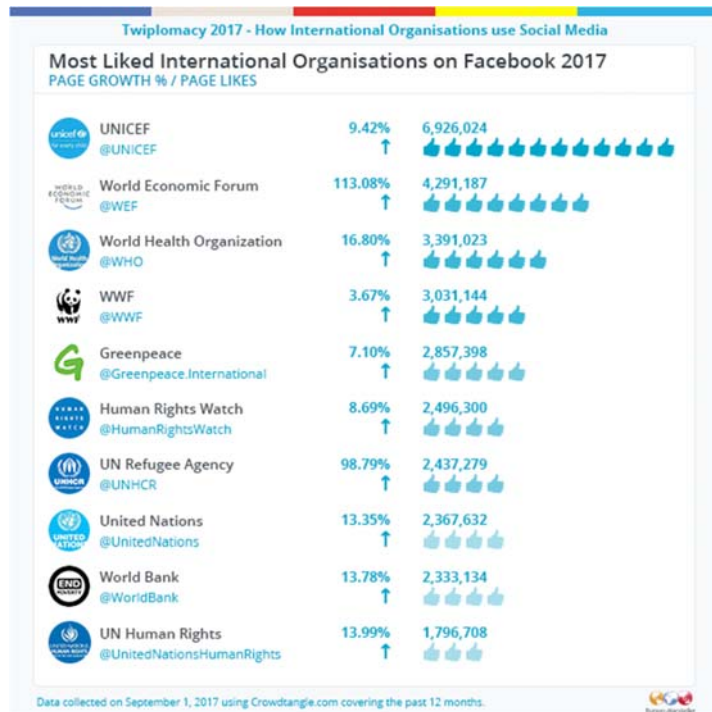
The 113 pages surveyed have published close to 73,000 posts over the past 12 months and the average number of Facebook publications per day is a more reasonable 1.76.

The Most Liked International Organisations on Facebook

UNICEF is the most liked international organisation on Facebook with 6.9 million likes, ahead of the World Economic Forum with close to 4.3 million likes. The World Health Organization and the WWF are in third and fourth position with more than three million followers on their respective Facebook pages. Greenpeace, Human Rights Watch, the UNHCR, the United Nations and the World Bank have all more than 2 million followers on their Facebook pages. The United Nations Human Rights body makes it into the Top 10 of the most followed international organisations, with close to 1.8 million followers.

The average growth rate of the 113 Facebook pages in this study is 17.3 percent over the past 12 months.

Five organisations, namely the UN in Geneva, APEC, the WEF, the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have seen their followers number double year on year. News videos edited specifically for social media have helped increase engagement and accounted for notable follower growth on Facebook and Twitter, writes Dominika Tomaszewska-Mortimer, the UN Social Media Press Officer @UNGeneva. Read her [three take-aways](#).



The World Economic Forum and the UNHCR have witnessed the biggest growth in number of new followers adding 2.27 million and 1.21 million followers to their pages, respectively. Both pages have massively increased their video output with short explainer videos which their followers often watch muted on their mobile devices.

The World Economic Forum's videos get the most traction on Facebook. Only 8 percent of the 18,499 posts on the WEF Facebook page are native video posts which have generated 77 percent of all

interactions, not including the video views. On top of that, the 1,567 videos have clocked over 1 billion video views, and each video is seen on average almost 650,000 times. The bulk of the WEF's output (91 percent) are posts linking to articles on the Forum's blog which have generated 22 percent of the 28.8 million interactions on the page.

Interestingly, the Forum has set up a dedicated [Facebook page](#) for live broadcasts from its events and the [@WEFvideo](#) page has garnered half a million followers. Hour-long live broadcasts from the Forum events tend to decrease the engagement on the WEF's main page, while some of the shorter live broadcasts are also cross-posted on the main page.

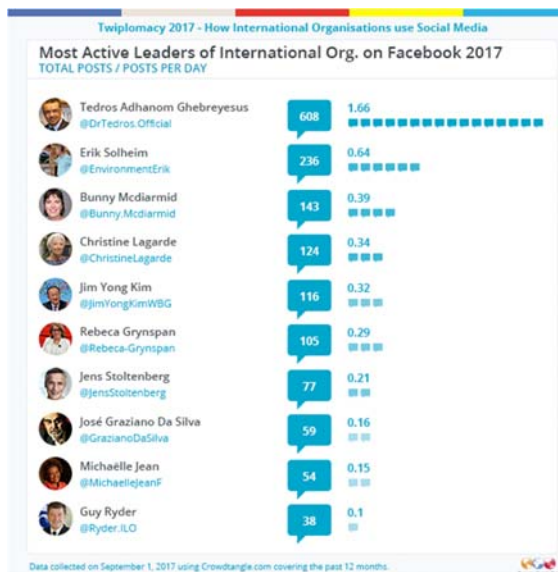
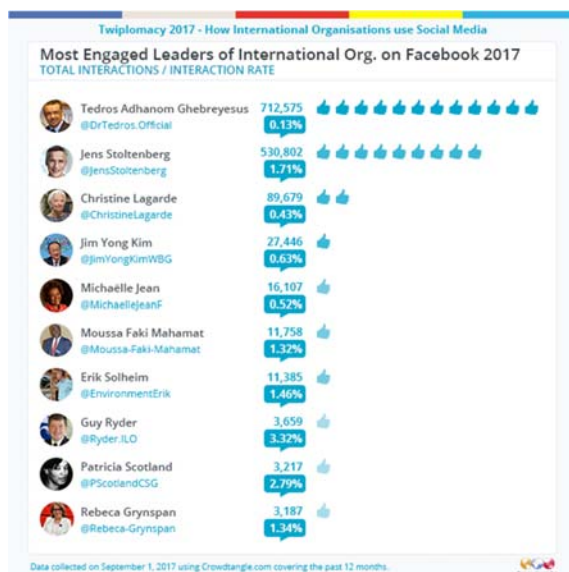
Almost half of all the posts on the UNHCR Facebook page are native videos which garner 58 percent of the 2 million interactions on the page. Photo posts and posts linking to its website generate 26 percent and 16 percent of the 2 million interactions.

Leaders of International Organisations on Facebook

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the new Director-General of the World Health Organization, is the most engaged, most active and most followed among the 20 leaders of international organisations who have personal Facebook pages. The former Foreign Minister of Ethiopia has 946,523 followers and has garnered 712,575 interactions over the past 12 months on his Facebook page which he also used to campaign for the leadership position of the WHO.

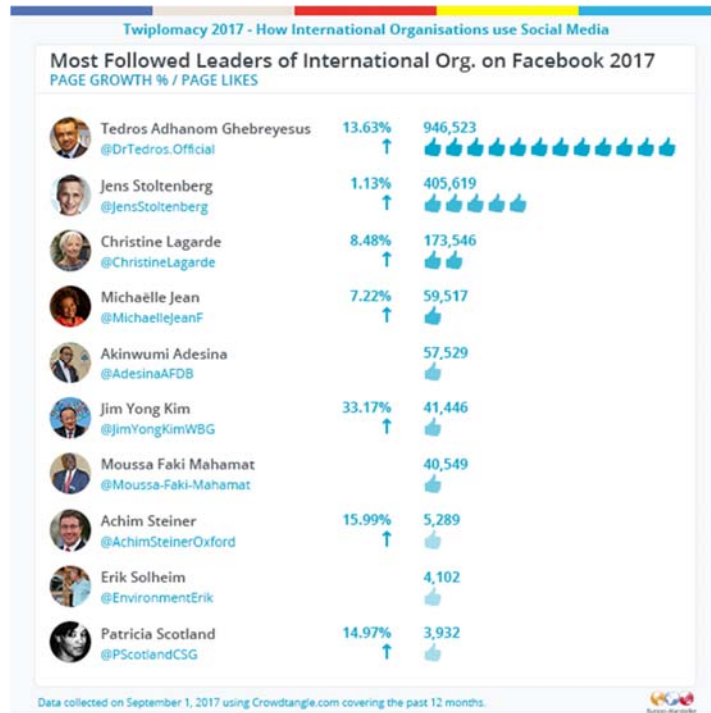
Dr. Tedros manages his page personally and has linked his Twitter account to Facebook, automatically sharing his tweets with his Facebook followers. He has notably posted a 20 second [video postcard](#) from Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe and the [view of a rainbow](#) from his office at the WHO in Geneva. His updates in his native language, Amharic, have also been widely shared.

NATO's Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg is the second most followed leader of an international organisation with 405,619 followers. The page is clearly managed by Jens Stoltenberg himself, posting exclusively in Norwegian and often sharing [video selfies](#) with his father, former Norwegian Foreign Minister Thorvaldt Stoltenberg. Occasionally the page will also



broadcast live events and press conferences from NATO. The page is clearly appreciated by his fans with an interaction rate of 1.7 percent and a total of 530,802 interactions over the past 12 months.

Christine Lagarde, the Managing Director of the IMF, is the third most followed leader of an international organisation on Facebook with 173,546 followers and 89,679 interactions over the past 12 months. Although Christine Lagarde posts in the first-person singular, the page is clearly not managed by her but by her media team and is part of an effort to put a human face on the International Monetary Fund.



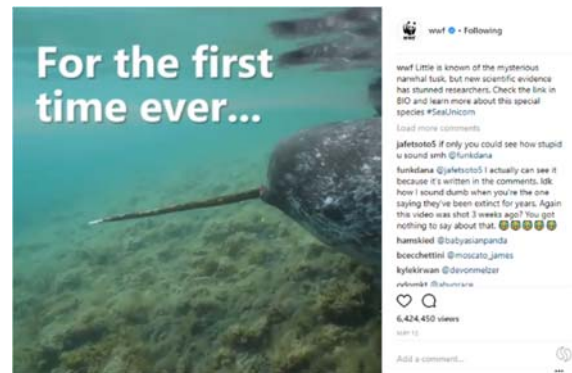
International Organisations on Instagram

Instagram is used by 70 international organisations and five leaders have personal accounts on the platform. Over the past 12 months, these accounts have shared 16,770 posts out of which 86 percent were photos. Only 14 percent are video posts, which garner on average 14,895 interactions (likes, comments and video views) which is five times as much as photos which generate on average 2.785 interactions per post.

UNICEF's photo of their Goodwill Ambassador Orlando Bloom holding a baby in Niger has become the [most popular Instagram photo](#) posted by an international organization, with 61,455 likes. It definitely helps to recruit social media stars who will drive views and likes and help reach new audiences.



The WWF scored a viral hit with an [amazing video](#) showing for the first time how narwhals use their tusks to hunt. The video of the "sea unicorns" whacking their prey is the most watched by any international organization, with 38,120 likes and 6,423,439 views.



Most Followed International Organisations on Instagram

@UNICEF is the most followed international organisation on Instagram, with 1,894,241 followers, ahead of the @UnitedNations with 1,254,732 followers and the WWF with 750,207 followers, respectively. Over the past 12 months, international organisations have seen their Instagram follower counts grow on average by 40 percent. The @WHO, @HumanRightsWatch and @UNDP have doubled their followers on Instagram, while the @WorldEconomicForum and @UnitedNationsHumanRights accounts tripled and quadrupled respectively.



Most Engaged International Organisations on Instagram

The @UNICEF Instagram account has also registered the most interactions over the past 12 months. With 14,583,501 interactions @UNICEF has more interactions than the @UnitedNations and @WWF, the two runners-up combined. Greenpeace has the best interactions rate (the total of interactions divided by and the average number of followers) of 2.29 percent. Sam Waterton, Social Media Content Strategist for UNICEF reveals some of the secrets behind the organisation's success on Instagram in this [blog post](#).



The personal accounts of leaders tend to garner more interest than the institutional ones. Erik Solheim, the Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) boasts a 20 percent interaction rate. @EnvironmentErik received more than 62,000 Instagram messages to #SaveLakeUrmia in Iran which has shrunk to 10 percent of its original size. Erik Solheim addressed these comments in an [Instagram video](#). He is followed by Arancha Gonzalez, the Chief Executive of the International Trade Centre (@AranchaGlezlaya) and NATO's @JensStoltenberg who use the platform personally and enjoy interactions rates of 7.90 percent and 6.60 percent, respectively.

Most Active International Organisations on Instagram

International organisations post on average every second day on Instagram. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, the World Economic Forum, Interpol, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations all average more than two posts per day on Instagram.

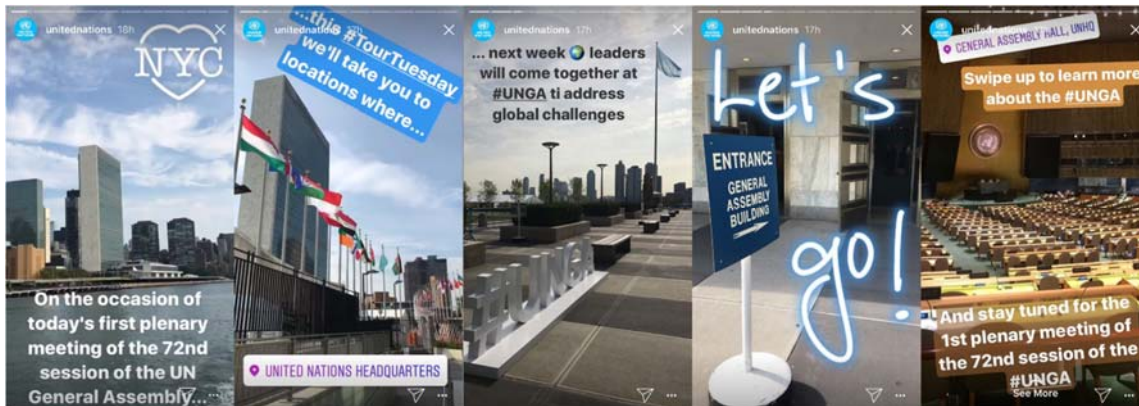
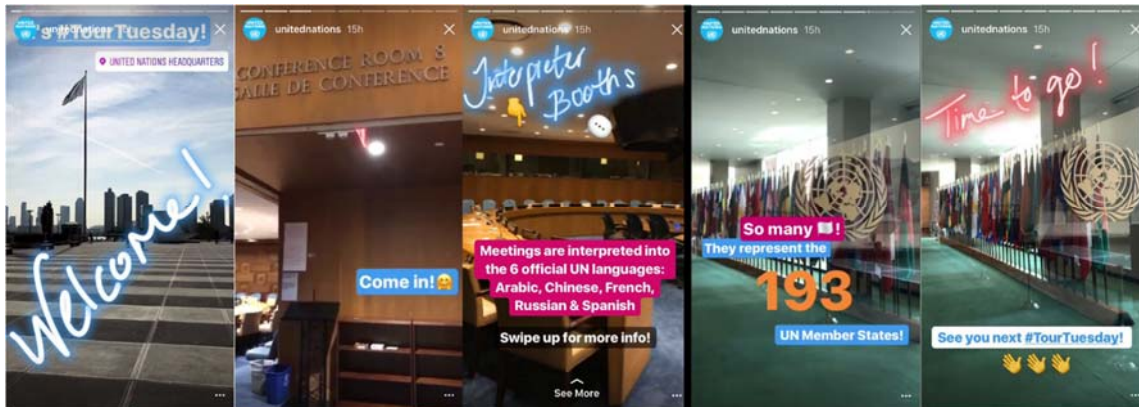


Instagram Stories

Many international organisations are now also posting Instagram Stories which disappear after only 24 hours. These collections of photos and videos are displayed on a top of a user's news feed and therefore it is the best way to stay top of mind and relevant for your followers.

There are no public statistics about Instagram stories, but during the recent UN General Assembly at least 20 organisations posted daily Instagram stories. On any given day, you can find at least five stories from international organisations on Instagram.

The UN social media team documented the activities in the social media space at the UN General Assembly in September 2017, including one-minute video statements by world leaders. In the run-up to the general assembly, the United Nations social media team took their followers on a weekly tour of the UN building in New York sharing behind the scenes pictures and video snippets on a #TourTuesday.



Instagram stories are often rough around the edges with shaky videos and annotated pictures but you can tag other Instagrammers, add a location to the story, add a poll and encourage viewers to read more on external websites. "Instagram Stories offer a new method of storytelling and gives us the opportunity to connect on a more personal level with our supporters," writes Vanessa LimSingh from WWF International in her [blog post](#).

Not all Instagram stories are light-hearted. The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and UNICEF have chronicled their aid work after Hurricane Irma battered the Caribbean. The UNHCR and the UN Migration Organization have shared images from the Rohingya refugee crisis. The @Refugees account generally posts the five top stories of the week, asking followers to swipe up and read these on its website. The @EuropeanSpaceAgency also uses Instagram Stories as a teaser, asking followers to swipe up to visit its website.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has used Instagram stories to boost its follower numbers above 2,000. As the EBRD’s social media team points out, Instagram stories “are refreshingly different from the picture-perfect content we post on other platforms.” (Read the full [blog post](#)). The EBRD also plans to explore live broadcast on the platform as some organisations have already done. Below is a small selection of Instagram stories posted by international organisations.



The International Monetary Fund (IMF) summed up China’s Economic outlook in six slides and 230 characters and analysts will probably have to follow their analysis on Instagram.



While the Instagram stories disappear after 24 hours, the different elements of an Instagram story also can be saved and posted as regular Instagram posts. The World Economic Forum, which prepares videos stories specifically for Instagram, also recycles some stories on its Snapchat account.

International Organisations on Snapchat

Possibly because of the introduction of Instagram Stories, the use of Snapchat seems to be on the decline among international organisations. We have identified 14 international organisations with Snapchat accounts, but only the World Economic Forum, the UN and UNICEF are occasionally active on the platform especially during flagship events such as the UN General Assembly.



Snapchat does not make any follower numbers or story figures public which is probably useful since there is no need to compete for followers. However, we asked each of the 14 organisations to share their Snap score which is the combined number of Snaps an account sends and receives to specific users. The Snap score gives a vague indication of how interactive a Snapchat account is and how often they interact with their followers. The number of Snapchat stories is not included in the Snap score. UNICEF leads the ranking with a Snap score of 1,712, followed by the World Economic Forum and the United Nations with Snap scores of 1,267 and 1,167, respectively.

CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, based in Geneva, is the latest organisation to trial Snapchat. Below are the Snap codes of the 14 organisations currently on the platform which you can simply scan to follow.



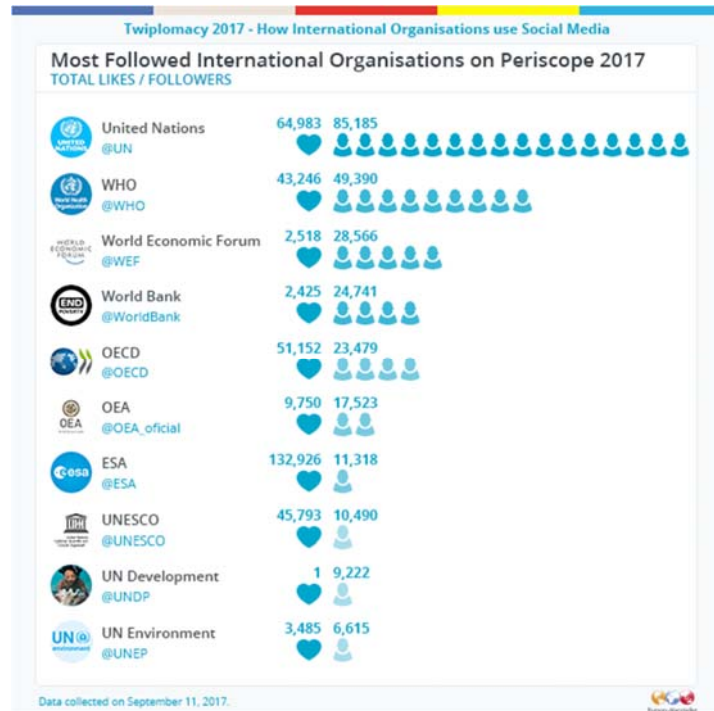
On his first day in office, UN Secretary General shared a statement on the UN's [Snapchat](#) channel and on [World Refugee Day](#), June 21, 2017, Snapchat raised awareness about the refugee issue with a global story aggregating posts from around the world.

International Organisations on Periscope

Periscope, Twitter’s live broadcasting application, is a cost-effective and powerful tool to go live from a mobile device. Fifty-five international organisations have set up bespoke Periscope channels. The World Health Organization regularly uses Periscope and has so far conducted [25 live broadcasts](#) on the platform, seven of which were organized during the UN General Assembly in 2017 in New York. The Nordic Council of Ministers and SEGIB, the Ibero-American General Secretariat, have conducted [17](#) and [11](#) live broadcasts, respectively.

The Periscope channel of the World Health Organization has become the second most followed channel with 49,390 followers, behind the United Nations, which boasts 85,185 followers despite having only conducted three live broadcasts.

The European Space Agency is the organisation with the most likes on Periscope thanks to its 5-minute broadcast from mission control room during the final hours of the Rosetta mission. The United Nations has racked up 64,983 likes followed by the OECD with 51,152 likes despite only two broadcasts.



International Organisations on LinkedIn

LinkedIn is often overlooked as a powerful social media channel. Eighty-three organisations have a presence on the platform, with a median average of 31,282 followers. Not surprisingly the United Nations is the most followed international organisation on LinkedIn with close to 750,000 followers and 37,136 staff registered on the platform. UNICEF is in second position with 480,000 followers and the World Bank is third with 406,000 followers.

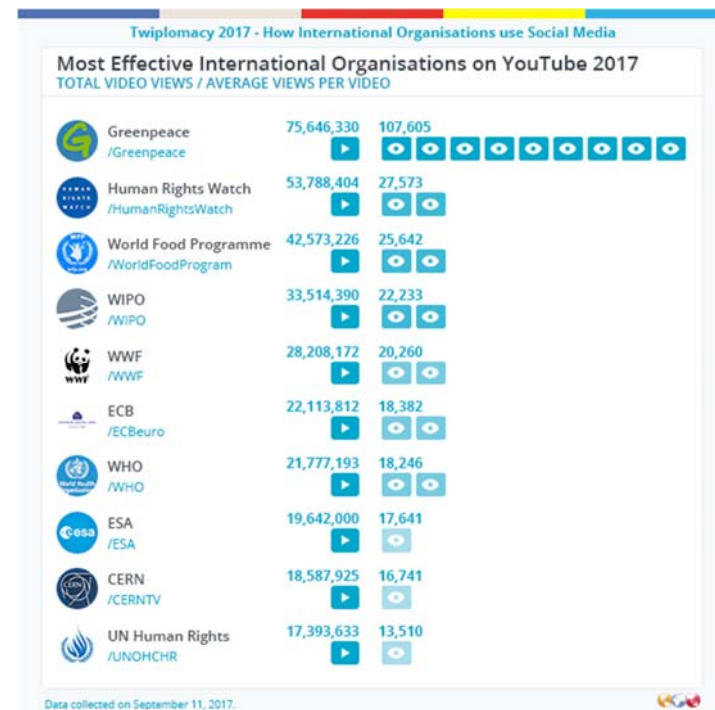
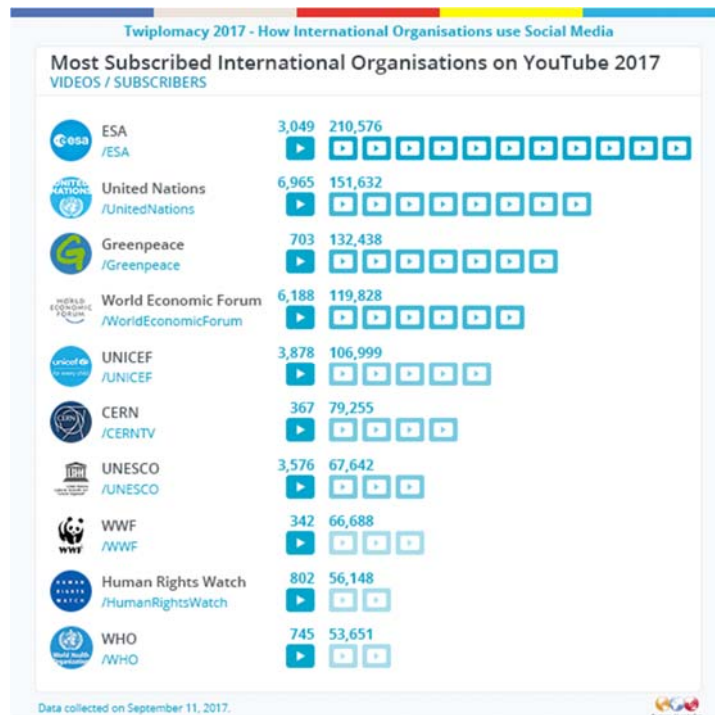
The most active international organisations on LinkedIn post on average an update per day and often less. It seems LinkedIn is the least used social network since the engagement is generally much lower than on other social media platforms.

Only 35 leaders of international organisations have an official presence on LinkedIn, and only five of these are among the select group of LinkedIn influencers. The page of the President of the World Bank, Jim Yong Kim, is by far the most popular on LinkedIn with 1,633,299 followers. The Executive Director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka has close to 600,000 followers on the platform, followed by Christine Lagarde and Seth Berkley, the CEO of Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance and Peter Maurer, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). All five are LinkedIn Influencers and regularly share their personal thoughts in blog post format on the platform. Most other leaders simply have regular profiles on LinkedIn and only a very few are active, posting status updates or long-form content.



International Organisations on YouTube

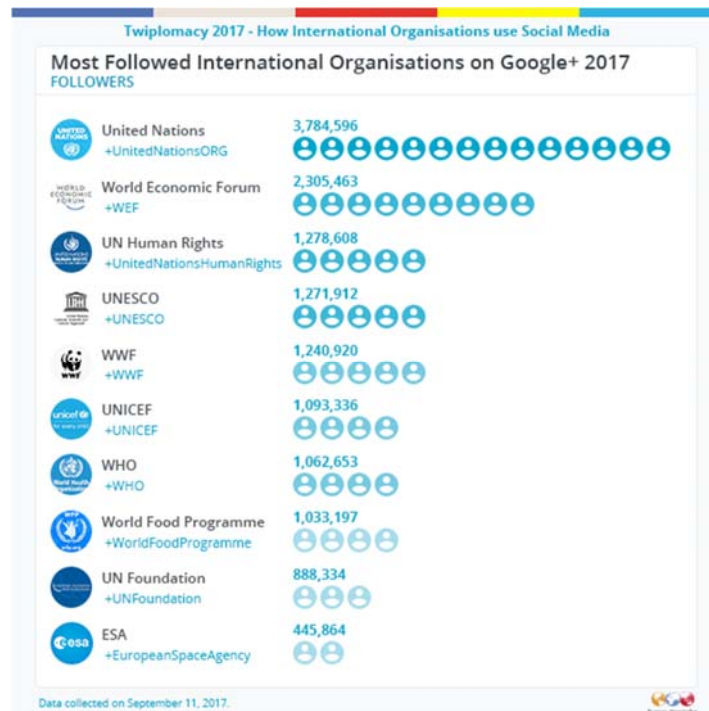
Eighty-eight of the 97 international organisations have active YouTube channels where they share and store their long-form video content. The [European Space Agency](#) has 210,576 subscribers and its 3,049 videos have been watched more than 53 million times. The [United Nations](#) have 151,632 subscribers and more than 33 million video views. However, [Greenpeace](#), with its 132,438 followers, has clocked the most video views with more than 75 million. On average, each Greenpeace video is viewed more than 107,000 times. The [World Economic Forum](#) which has published its hour-long session videos since 2006, is in fourth position, among the most subscribed channels and [UNICEF](#) is in fifth place.



International Organisations on Google+

Eighty-two international organisations still have a presence on Google+ but they are hardly active on the platform. The United Nations is by far the most followed organisation with 3,784,596 followers on the platform. The UN posts on average once a day. The World Economic Forum is in second place with 2,305,463 followers and posts almost hourly content that it also shares on other platforms. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights is in third place with 1,278,608 followers, but the page has been dormant for the past year.

Most of the Top ten most followed Google+ pages are hardly active and the page of the UN Foundation, in ninth position has been dormant since May 2016. Most other organisations have given up on Google+. The very low engagement rates on Google+ have made it a dying network.



About this Study

Twiplomacy is the only global study about international organisations on social media, conducted by leading strategic communications and global public relations firm Burson-Marsteller.

The Burson-Marsteller team has analyzed 171 Twitter accounts of international organisations including 97 institutional accounts and 74 personal accounts of leaders of these institutions. We have identified 113 Facebook pages including 93 institutional accounts and 20 personal pages of leaders of these institutions. We have looked at 75 Instagram accounts out of which five are personal profiles of their leaders. On September 1, 2017, all 171 Twitter accounts combined had a total of 64,268,470 followers compared to 55,045,140 followers on the 113 Facebook pages.

We have identified 83 LinkedIn pages and 35 personal LinkedIn profiles of leaders with a median average of followers of 25,417. Furthermore, we analyzed 88 YouTube channels, 82 Google+ pages, and 50 Periscope channels. The combined total of followers and subscribers on all six platforms is 145'120'969. We also spotted 14 Snapchat accounts, however we were not able to capture any statistics about those accounts.

Data was collected on September 1, 2017 using Burson-Marsteller's proprietary Burson Tools and we also used Crowdtangle.com to capture the historic data for all accounts including the total interactions (likes and retweets), interaction rates as well as all video views and posts over the past 12 months (September 2016 - 2017).

The PDF of the entire study is available here [How International Organisations use Social Media \(2017\)](#).

Acknowledgements

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Geneva, November 29, 2017

Disclosure

Before joining Burson-Marsteller in February 2012, Matthias Lüfkens was leading the digital outreach of the World Economic Forum @WEF @Davos. He has advised numerous international organisations including the Global Fund, the ICRC, ITU, OECD, UNCTAD, UN Foundation, UNICEF and WWF.