

# **Agenda Setting**

## Newsletter



6<sup>th</sup> International Agenda Setting  
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### **Did Bush visit cause a positive change in reporting or was it just a temporary trend?**

Over the past decade the Anti-American attitude rapidly increased not only in the Muslim world but in all continents including Europe. The world fears and resents the unrivalled power that the U.S has amassed and become more suspicious of U.S motives. The visit of President Bush causes a positive change in the media reporting but for how long? Is the U.S on the way to restoring its trust in Europe?

Media Tenor is continuously analysing the opinion leading media and elaborate studies on the U.S media image abroad. For a long time Media Tenor observed the negative reporting of the U.S in the opinion leading media. The reporting on the U.S positively changed with the Bush trip to Europe. The media coverage in most countries analyzed was considerably less negative during the President's trip. In Europe reporting remained balanced and media concentrated mostly on international relations. In the mean time Middle East Media featured mostly conflict coverage, where they focused on military casualties. This contributed to the negativity in coverage. Al Alam and Al Manar had the most negative approach. Overall coverage was more negative than that in Europe. We can see the first result in Germany where the polls on German negativity towards the U.S dropped from 39% (in January) to 28% (on February 26). In the time of Bush's visit the transatlantic relation between Germany and U.S were according to the poll as good as they haven't been for a long time.

Since 2002 media have been bringing more negative stories than positive. A poll, conducted by Pew Research Centre, on the perception of the US in the UK, France and Germany shows an alarming 150% increase of unfavourable rating of America in the year 2004 in comparison with the year 2002.

Europe decided not to be on the side of U.S policies and this negative attitude also influences the trend in reporting. Sometimes the U.S image in Germany was even more negative than in Al Jazeera caused by the fact that the German media used more internal sourcing which creates overall more negative images. On the other hand Arab TV's are interpreting more US sources what result in a slightly better image. Media Tenor observed that media were reducing the reporting on the U.S to the Iraq conflict what caused the rising negativity. German media portrayed the governance of Iraq more positively under Saddam Hussein than under the U.S. This was a result of the comparison in the time line of 07/2002 – 02/2003 vs. 05/2003 – 12/2003. In the time of the Iraq election the media in Europe were painting a different picture of the reality. In terms of legitimacy reporting in Europe was much more sceptical and negative than in the Arab world.

Growing Anti Americanism also hit the economy. Media Tenor observed by its analysis that the assessment of the U.S related companies in the German media (2001-2003) has also been surprisingly negative even though the overall profit performance of the companies broke the record in the year 2000.

The President’s trip to Europe was successful and it seems that the U.S is well on the way to restoring its image. But to recover the rips in transatlantic relations will take longer and long term positive trends in reporting are essential for restoring trust. Media Tenor will continue to observe the reporting trends and will report on its analysis and predictions.

