

Health policies in the news: communication strategies of the last three ministers in Portugal¹

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Abstract

After being involved in many polemic events for several months, Portuguese Health Minister Correia de Campos left office on January 29th 2008, and was replaced by the paediatrician Ana Jorge. It lagged behind an intense newsability about health policies initiated by that Minister, prolix in declarations to the media. His successor embraced a more sober style. Health policies didn't change much, but the news items wrote about them were drastically different. In June 21st 2011, the government team changed and a new Health Minister was sworn - Paulo Macedo – who, like his predecessor, became known for releasing moderate statements to the media, although several profound reforms in the health sector were to be expected.

In this paper we want to analyse how those Ministers managed their relation with the media during their governments, and to understand their communication strategies and the journalists' reaction to them. We gathered every news article that mentioned health policies and was published between

¹ This work is funded by FEDER funds through the Programa Operacional Factores de Competividade - COMPETE (FCOMP-01-FEDER-0124-009064) and national funds through FCT - Foundation for Science and Technology under the project "Disease in the News" (PTDC/CCI-COM/103886/2008). – www.lasics.uminho.pt/diseaseinthenews.

2008 and 2011 in three generic newspapers: a daily quality newspaper (Público), a daily popular newspaper (Jornal de Notícias) and a weekly quality newspaper (Expresso). 1987 news articles were analysed.

This paper is part of wider investigation, "Disease in the News". This project's purpose is to understand the health sector's mediatisation in the Portuguese media through an analysis in four axes: the themes and sources of the health news articles; the information sources linked to health services; the organisation of those sources; how health journalists understand the health area; how the health sources evaluate the journalists' work. We will share some of the results from the first part.

Keywords: Health journalism, political communication, media relations, news sources

1. Theoretical framework

In political issues, the media are a fundamental piece for the mediation between political organisations (parties, public organisations, pressure groups, governments) and the common citizen (McNair, 2003: 6). This mediation is made by the imposition of certain themes to the public and the complete absence of other themes (Kuypers, 2002: 167).

According to McNair, in democratic societies, the media must *inform* their citizens about current issues, *educate* by explaining the facts, provide a *platform* with diverse opinions, *advocate* political points of view and give *publicity* to the political institutions' actions and ideas through journalistic *persuasion* (McNair, 2003: 21 e 22). And taking in consideration such a perspective, journalists are also political actors, even if they don't accept it. Journalism can be taken as a political institution for several reasons: its historical development¹, the promotion of news products; the connection between journalists and press secretaries; the promotional space that the Government has in the media (Cook, 1998: 164). In consequence communication would become the most important function of those in cabinet; press secretaries tend to represent the thickness of such importance² and sometimes have the same status of a Minister (Seymour-Ure, 2003: 31-32, 123-124).

¹ The most evident of this historical proximity clue lies in the fact that the period in which most journalism flourished, i.e. around 1830, coincides with the period where the right to vote was introduced in the United Kingdom (McNair, 2003: 17).

² There is a widespread perception of the importance that these elements have in any power entity, and because of that they are almost always the target of requests and pressures or they are even the same agents and promoters of influence peddling. The crimes for which Michael Deaver, Reagan's Chief press secretary, was tried in the mid-80, were an example of the latter case (Hertsgaard, 1989: 318).

This is a vision of the role Journalism plays in Society which, in our understanding, tends to reduce the journalists' work to the position of mere actors in a process where they have few or no of control, very close to the "alternative model", such as characterized by McNair himself. We recall his definition: Journalism (such as has existed) is part of "a cultural apparatus, the primary function of which is to maintain relations of domination and subordination between fundamentally *unequal* groups in society" and doesn't serve "[the public interest] (...), but the *dominant, private, selfish* interests of a society" (McNair, 2002: 22). Nevertheless, this is a perspective that aims to crucial issues such as the (not always easy) relationship between journalists and press secretaries and the complexity of political communication, a system where newspapers and journalists work. We would rather say that we conceive Journalism as a crucial agent, since it gives people the ability to choose and decide, through the distribution of quality information, in a logic close to the so called "normative model", an understanding of journalism as a "service", but recognizing the complexity that results from journalists' production contexts.

McNair himself (McNair, 2000) approaches this question from a political journalism's point of view and supports a context where people experiment contemporary politics through the media. "(...) That the actions of government and the states and the efforts of competing parties and interests to exercise political power, should be underpinned and legitimised by critical scrutiny and informed debates facilitated by the institutions of the media is a normative assumption uniting the political spectrum from left to right" (1). He also underlines the dimension of construction inherent to the journalistic work: "The accounts of political reality provided by the media are complex constructions embodying the communicative work of both groups, which ideally should, but need not always meet the standards of information accuracy and objectivity expected of political communication in liberal democracy" (1).

With the growing media coverage of politics and with the competition between media, political parties have increasingly been using public relations specialists to promote media facts and create the best events (Boorstin, 1961: 11; Beard, 2000: 188).

Political organisations realised that the press, also called 'free media', was more efficient than political advertising. This occurs because the advertising message receivers know that it reflects the interests, ideas and values of the promoter. The effectiveness of political advertising as a means of persuasion is always limited. Knowing that the advertising message is compromised, readers, viewers or listeners tend to distance themselves from it, or even reject it (McNair, 2003: 130). On the other hand, when a politician's message is given in a news piece, its authorship is attributed to the journalist and it gains authenticity and credibility among the receiver. That is why the investment on the news coverage in election time is crucial to reach for victory (McNair, 2003: 131).

One must remember that, before the advent of television, the election campaigns were amateur, decentralised and stimuli to participation and political support was accomplished through rallies and personal contact (Norris,

2000:14). In a more contemporary era (the period after World War II) the election campaigns became less reliant in the contact with the voters, and media became the main vehicle for the dissemination of the message (Gibson & Rommele, 2001: 33). This new dynamic led to the hiring of experts with knowledge about the relationship with the media which, among other actions, sought to control the communicative process through the centralisation of campaigns and the decrease of messages from political candidates (Farrell & Webb, 1998: 21) also with the purpose of avoiding gaffes (McNair, 2003: 131).

This insistent and pre-built attempt of message control and the growing promotion of the 'packaging politics' led to a shallow political speech, i.e., the content led to shallowness (Franklin, 2004: 5).

Politicians ask for technical and specialised services to work with the media, such as publicists, communication advisers and, recently, *spin doctors*. The reach for some kind of control of media content is the main reason for this procedure.

Publicity is the most important tool of public relations (Cutlip *et al.*, 2000; Bailey, 2006; Skinner *et al.*, 2010), because "in its infancy, public relations was primarily publicity" (Cutlip *et al.*, 2000: 10). Therefore, it appears as the 'heart of public relations' (Seitel, 2010: 346) and "as a management of mutually influential relationships within a web of stakeholder and organizational relational relationship" (Coombs & Holladay, 2007: 2). Some authors define publicity in a perspective of support to the journalistic work through thorough and systematic "information subsidies" (Gandy, 1982: 61), "factual, interesting, and newsworthy" (Yale & Carothers, 2001: 2) and even "media neutral" (Bailey, 2006: 312). However, some other authors open this range of coverage to other tools of communication when they state that "the purpose of press relations is not to issue press releases, or handle enquiries from journalists, or even to generate a massive pile of press cuttings. The true purpose of press relations is to enhance the reputation of an organization and its products, and to influence and inform the target audience." (Theaker, 2004: 148). They may succeed in doing this sometimes, but their failure is as common as success. However, this is where most of the notoriety of those who hire these services is at stake. When one talks about politicians, it might be at stake the very position they hold. If a member of government has the so called "bad press", i.e., when he appears in the media linked to negative events, it will be difficult to continue in that political place. No professional competence can neutralise this public tearing of one's reputation.

2. Methodology

This research aims to study the communication strategies used by Ministers who, between 2008 and 2011, were the head of the Health Ministry: Correia de Campos, Ana Jorge and Paulo Macedo. The first two were part a Socialist Party Cabinet; the last one was part of a coalition Government PSD/CDS. Our analysis is developed in a dual axis:

- The kind of news sources used in news articles that mentioned health policies,
- The way news sources are exposed on those news articles.

This paper is part of a wider research intituled "Disease in the news" and intents to analyse the media coverage of heath issues made by Portuguese newspapers. We want, above all, to understand who talks about what. In order to do so we chose the following newspapers: *Expresso*, *Público* and *Jornal de Notícias*. We have decided, in this case, to choose a non-probabilistic sample of typical cases, ruling out television, radio and online media, for a matter of convenience and considering the available resources and the easier access to data. We chose the generalist press for our purposes, to evaluate, among other things, the relevance (using the number of news articles) of the health affairs in all the Portuguese news. This makes the specialized media inadequate as an analysis unit.

In previous research (Lopes *et al.*, 2012a) we quantitatively analysed the themes and the news sources of the news articles that mentioned health topics between 2008 and 2010. Now, we are interested in understanding who talked to the journalists in the Health Ministry and what means were used to reach them. This lead us to choose content analysis in its qualitative aspect: "it's about dismantling a speech and the production of a new speech through a process of location-attribution of significance features, resulting from a dynamic relation between the speech production conditions that are going to be analysed and production of analysis conditions" (Vala, 2009: 104).

We have focused our work in the years of 2008 and 2011, which represent another non-probabilistic stage of typical cases on our sample process. The first year was chosen because it gathered the last months of Correia de Campos's term and the first ones of Ana Jorge's; the second year gathers the last months of Ana Jorge's term and the first ones of Paulo Macedo's. Although our sample contemplated all news articles that focused on health issues and were published between 2008 and 2011 in the above mentioned newspapers, our analysis only included the ones that focused on health policies, which represents a total of 1987 news articles.

3. One prolix Health Minister, one discrete Health Minister and a very private Health Minister

After being involved in many polemic events for several months, Portuguese Health Minister Correia de Campos left office on January 29th 2008, and was replaced by the paediatrician Ana Jorge. It lagged behind an intense newsability about health policies initiated by that Minister, prolix in declarations to the media. His successor embraced a more sober style.

In the first month of 2008 the name Correia de Campos appeared directly in news articles. But starting February, Health Minister Ana Jorge was quoted indirectly: either when she went to Parliament to give a speech, or when she

spoke in public ceremonies. This posture set her aside from controversy, unlike her predecessor. At the end of her term, Ana Jorge took some chances and replied to the controversial matters she got involved in through the media, but she did it with plenty of parsimony. Her successor, Paulo Macedo, initiated his term looking to avoid the media at all costs. The Minister's quotes in the media resulted almost every time from public speeches. This member of the cabinet spoke directly with the journalists very few times and, when doing so, he opted for TV news programmes.

In the beginning of 2008 health stories were about riots against the requalification of ER rooms and 24-hour A&E (Serviço de Atendimento Permanente, SAP). The mayors and respective counties whose populations were covered by the services over which closure impended, made their voice heard loud in the media. And the Minister was reacting, deepening a dispute that grew disproportionately. The January 3rd 2008 issue of 'Público' published the following statement: "Anadia's Town council asks for the Minister's resignation". In the same issue of this newspaper, this was reported:

"Surrounded by protests on the street because of the closure of emergency services and particularly endorsed in the new year message from the Portuguese President, Correia de Campos multiplied, yesterday morning, his statements to radio and TV, in an unique operation of communication, something which he himself admitted to be necessary to improve."

Those statements have caused, undoubtedly, a saturation of news articles. On January 5th, 'Expresso' published a news article saying that: "we even have less births occurring in ambulances (126 in 2004 and 86 in 2006), however they appear more in the news". On one hand we had Correia de Campos speaking permanently with journalists and, on the other hand, complaining from excessive media attention. We can read this in Público's edition of January 20th:

"Yesterday, the Health Minister accused some newspapers and political parties of 'misrepresenting the reality' and acting without any ethics".

One week after this statement Correia de Campos gave an interview to the same newspaper, taking photos in his office and with a fruit basket in front of him. There was a special care in using the media as a means to appease a climate of conflict, whose responsibility this Minister attributed to the action of journalists:

"The minister's office smells like apples. It was a gift from 'a friend' from the West, who was grateful for the announcement of the construction of a new hospital in that region. After all, not every Portuguese shows discontent towards Correia de Campos.

Q – All we see are demonstrations!

A – You see demonstrations occurring constantly in the same place. (...) What represents the country is the number of Family Health Units (USF). Some days ago I visited two of them and the people's satisfaction is different.

Q – But do you agree that there is a helplessness feeling concerning the ER, childbirth rooms and 24-hour A&E (Serviço de Atendimento Permanente, SAP) that were shut down?

A – No. There's that feeling in the media. I have some doubts if the Portuguese people share that feeling. If it exists, my job is to fight against it by demonstrating what we are doing.

Q – We see more of you when things are more agitated. Do you take advantage of the 'airtime' to explain your policy or is it despair?

A – Each crises generates an opportunity and I can't miss the opportunity to explain our positive outcomes to the Portuguese people in a direct and frontal way." ('Expresso', January 26th 2008)

Three days later Correia de Campos left the Health Ministry. Ana Jorge, a paediatrician with a more sober style and who didn't talk much to journalists succeeded him. The Health Minister talked, almost every time, in public events: parliament debates, inauguration of health facilities and conference openings. She always looked for an evasive speech when confronted by journalists:

"Yesterday, the new Health Minister, Ana Jorge, declined to talk about a possible 'deceleration' of the reform of Emergency Rooms. In a quick tour through several health units of the North, she declined firmly to talk about closures of services, reassuring the journalists that she would soon give her opinion on that controversial matter" ('Público', February 14th 2008)

Instead of answering to unexpected questions from journalists, Ana Jorge chose to prepare the message she wanted to transmit to the public and communicated it almost every time in predetermined public spaces. She frequently used a non-direct way to express herself when she wanted to make direct statements to the media: *"this week, when questioned by 'Expresso', Ana Jorge's Press Office, said ..."* ('Expresso', March 8th 2008); *"according to a statement of a spokesperson from the Health Ministry to PÚBLICO, the first meeting of this working group 'is already scheduled' and new rules 'will be presented soon'"* ('Público', June 17th 2008); *"A source of Ana Jorge's Press Office just confirmed Público that the Government's intention is to start the single dose trial sale of drugs in pharmacies created in six public hospitals: Oporto, Faro, Coimbra, Penafiel, Lisbon and Leiria (this one is already working)"* ('Público', September 10th 2008). This was the most common way of communication when newspapers published negative themes. 'Público' published, on September 14th, a news article intituled "National Health Service had a financial hole of 330 million Euros in 2007". This news was made using a press release specially directed to that newspaper:

"In a press release sent to 'Público' by the Press Office of the Minister of Health it was stated that 'one cannot talk about finance break, because it is perfectly normal that there is a difference between the forecast and the final value. The Ministry of Health reaffirms that, 'despite the difference between the final and the qualifying forecast presented on the occasion of the discussion of the State Budget [OE] for 2008, the year 2007 was the third consecutive year of balance of the accounts of the NHS ', we can also read in the press release sent to 'Público'."

There was another strategy used to transmit information, particularly the one that could generate controversy: to use of Secretaries of State. They would convey the Minister's message, focusing on themselves a possible political

contestation: "There is no change of course: the 24-hour A&E (Serviço de Atendimento Permanente, SAP) on Health Centres will continue to be replaced' as alternatives to emerge, said yesterday, in Oporto, the Assistant Secretary of State for Health, Francisco Ramos" (Público, March 8th 2008). There was, indeed, a special care not to block communication with journalists. Meanwhile and simultaneously they looked for permanent positive messages. Here's some 'Jornal de Notícias' headlines: "The new minister concentrates her efforts in Family Health Units" (February 14th 2008); "Government may reopen the emergency room in Anandia" (March 12th, 2008); "Minister tries to avoid polemic issues" (October 8th 2008); "Ministry promises a double opening of Family Health Units" (December 22nd 2008). There's an implicit presence of an attentive and efficient Press Office. But the activity of those professionals didn't always held every communication. Also, the Minister couldn't always flee unexpected questions from journalists. And when that happened, her answer wasn't always the most adequate. On November 11th 2008, while leaving the parliament as part of the debate on the Budget, the Minister was asked to answer a question about the amount of the Health sector's debt and answered: "I don't know". And suggested that the Secretary of State for Health would be the best person to give that information. The following day, that statement was amplified by the media and led to severe criticism by the opposition. Then, the Minister opted for her previous strategy, and took the opportunity to speak at the launch of "Missão Sorriso" campaign, where she reassured that the Government would announce the amount of the Health sector's debt: "*The debts are those that are already overdue, worth one million Euros. And on the day the Decree-law comes into effect [approving the support fund NHS Providers], the Health ministry will report on what is the total debt of hospitals EPE [private-public partnerships]. Therefore, [the Portuguese people] will be properly informed about the debt of the Health ministry*", she stated in a declaration to news agency 'Lusa'" (Público, November 13th 2008).

At the end of her term, Ana Jorge had shown herself more at ease at the media stage. She gave some background interviews, sending several messages to journalists. Without claiming too much prominence, the Health Minister participated in institutional events and took advantage of the occasion to assure her version of (negative) facts that have been reported by newspapers. Verbs like "contest", "justify" or "react" began to be used to introduce her claims.

If we follow the news articles published on Ana Jorge's team, we can observe a careful communication policy with dissemination of information. Through this strategy she could block questions about requested data ("About the content of the agreement, the Ministry of health has simply confirm that it was signed ... with the Champalimaud Foundation, but refused to reveal more details", *Jornal de Notícias*, April, 2nd 2011); she could provide written clarifications, which are a better means of control of what is said ("The Health Ministry has clarified, in writing, that the price decrease 'aims to ensure a good management of public resources'", *Público*, February, 5th 2011); she could drop non-information to stop controversies ("The Government backed down on the intention of forcing clinicians to remain in public health units after the internship, according to the medical union's information, and confirmed by the Ministry of Health", *Público*, February 26th 2011).

We must recall that, at the end of her term, we didn't hear only from the Health Minister. Her Secretaries of State kept appearing regularly in the media, giving background interviews or specific information. This growing number of statements to the media resulted some natural mismatch between what was said and what was done, something immediately underlined by journalistic discourse: "Over the past few months, the reality has shown that the speech of the Health Minister doesn't correspond to the reality and Ana Jorge has fallen into contradictions" (Público, April, 25th 2011). Yet, we must remember that people in office have the indubitable obligation to report to those they work for: common citizens.

On June 21st, 2011, the XIX Constitutional Government is sworn and a new Health Minister takes place, Paulo Macedo. This new executive started working in an environment of great economic austerity and one of the areas where they predicted substantial cuts was Health. The Health Minister was a previous General Director for Taxation and was known for a strict management and for being very sparse with public discourse. This posture is exacerbated in the few months after arriving to this Ministry.

The Health Minister didn't talk much to journalists and, when doing so, he preferred TV stations. The press was embracing those declarations to the point of exhaustion and quoted them for a long time:

"In an interview given last week to TVI, the Minister stated that we must understand if 'the country can sustain the current number of transplants'", adding that it is not necessary to increase the number of transplants performed annually and that have turned Portugal into one of the world leaders in the area". (Público, September 7th 2011)

Here we could see a communication strategy similar to the early days of Ana Jorge as a Minister: they avoided journalists and exploited official events to pass certain messages. However, Paulo Macedo also seems to move away from institutional ceremonies. When we read the press it's difficult to find him in those kind of initiatives. On September, 5th, 2011, when he was chair of the signature of a protocol with the Board of Health and Welfare, the Health Minister made an observation quoted by 'Público': "the speeches are usually moments of politically correct statements". Therefore, journalists had to find other sources, such as official data, press releases, administrative decisions...

If the Health Minister is very sparse with public discourse, his State Secretary, Leal da Costa, gathers some media visibility. This occurs because the events attended by him deserve media coverage, and he reveals himself to be receptive to talk to journalists about themes outside the agenda and offers to give interviews to a particular media:

"The Assistant Secretary of State for Health, Leal da Costa, ensured yesterday that there are savings solutions that ensure patients 'will continue to be treated in accordance with the best practiced budget'. But he wants to 'improve the ability to negotiate with the pharmaceutical industry', said the Secretary of State,

on the side-lines of a Conference on this disease". *Jornal de Notícias*, October 2nd 2011

"Appearing to be "very concerned" with the financial hole of '110 million Euros' 2011 budget for these units that provide support to patients in convalescence and to people in situation of dependency, the Assistant Secretary of State for Health, Fernando Leal da Costa, stresses that the complex financial situation was inherited from the previous Ministry, that now there is 'no money' and we 'must stop and think'. (...) The [long-term care] network will maintain itself and grow, but within our possibilities", stated to 'Público' Leal da Costa, admitting simultaneously the possibility of shutting down 'too small units that are not viable because they have very high operating costs'. Público, October 14th 2011

If, as we have said previously, Paulo Macedo speaks briefly to journalists, his press office provides some clarifications published by newspapers. We often find Health Ministry's sources such as "Paulo Macedo's spokesperson" (*Jornal de Notícias*, September 1st 2011); "press secretary Miguel Vieira" (*Público*, October 19th 2011); "Press Office" (*Público*, October 20th 2011).

Faced with situations in which no one assumes the origin of the information, although there is someone from the Ministry of health that gives certain information to the media, journalists choose to quote not identified news sources:

*"According to an official source at the Health Ministry, of the 251 doctors in retirement who have returned to the NHS, just 152 belong to that quota, so there is still room for about 50 doctors". *Jornal de Notícias*, July 9th 2011*

*"Contact by 'Jornal de Notícias', Paulo Macedo's Press Office said that the meanwhile resigned Administration claimed only personal reasons and that the other members of the Administration have not submitted resignation". *Jornal de Notícias*, September 28th 2011*

Politicians are not indifferent to their presence in the media. They know that part of their notoriety is played in media stages. And if there are those who strive to be always on the scene, featuring positive events, there are some others that deviate to avoid bad news. There are those who are more skilled and those who do not have the means to manage a balanced relationship with journalists; There are those who want to talk permanently, eager for a visibility that, when in excess, blinds; and there are those who run away from any quote in a medium, fearing the adverse effects that often are brought by a news piece. In recent years, Ministers who could fit in different profiles conducted the Health Ministry.

In 2008, António Correia de Campos would resign from his position as Health Minister, leaving behind a communication strategy that had hoped to promote open channels of communication with journalists. In times of crisis, as were those in the end of his term, this option would have been fatal. Any statement from him, looking to neutralize a controversy had the opposite effect: it would increase the objection towards him, already growing among the population and

at the local power level. He asked to leave. Ana Jorge, a doctor who had no political profile, replaced him.

Belonging to the same Executive of her predecessor, Ana Jorge soon neutralized the controversies that had been unleashed. Entering without making much noise and little media notoriety, and capitalizing few media notoriety, the new Minister shielded herself behind pseudo-events (Congress openings, inaugurations of installations...) to convey a message previously prepared by her Office. Every public discourse seemed to be calculated by press offices that were surely working in the backstage. It is not by chance that Ana Jorge hired Cláudia Borges to be her press secretary. She was one of the founding journalists of SIC, a Portuguese TV station, and that in the end of the 90' gain notoriety with some health TV programmes with high TV ratings. Slowly, the Health Minister had learnt to dominate media codes, and passed virtually unscathed by the information management around the swine flu, a pandemic that only existed in the media (Lopes *et al*, 2012b), but caused great wear in some official sources at the international level. Here, Ana Jorge gave the word to her Secretaries of State and the General Director for Health and, like that, she learned to protect herself. However, whenever she provided information to journalists she didn't rekindled controversy. The same would occur shortly after with the management of the E. coli outbreak (Lopes *et al*, 2012c). The standard procedure seemed to be: no permanent communication channels were opened, but media were not antagonised by demising them information. The speech was moderate and always under control.

When the Socialist Government came to term, the coalition PSD-CDS was sworn, choosing a manager who was General Director for Taxation for Health Minister. The current Health Ministry had someone outside the Health sector with the intent to settle the finances seemingly uncontrollable at that level. Advancing quickly with measures of budgetary restraint, Paulo Macedo automatically triggered a loud opposition from different actors, mainly doctors and nurses. Those professionals are not always heard in the public space (Lopes *et al*, 2012a) in a contesting tone, but this time they chose this mean to underline their displeasure before a ministerial team receptive to speak with the medical and nurse unions, yet unavailable to give clarifications to the media. The Minister avoided journalists, his Secretaries of State spoke in a moderate way and his press secretaries gave fewer clarifications. In this context, the journalistic discourse used several documents (official and specialized) and repeated quotations already used has background information. We can see here a good communication strategy for the media: in times of crisis, official sources are contained in public speaking and unavailable to act in media stages. This is certainly a legitimate and right attitude when calculated for a limited time. It is not effective for a prolonged action because journalists are obligated to seek alternative sources of information almost always hostile to the ruling power.

4. Final notes

Covering the three ministers who, between 2008 and 2011, occupied the Health Ministry, we conclude that Correia de Campos did not adopt the right communication strategy: he talked a lot, talked when he shouldn't have and, given the excess of words, it became impossible to manage the Ministry with the serenity that was necessary; Ana Jorge, although without media training, managed to conquer a balance, even in the most delicate situations: she spoke moderately, but didn't refuse information in crisis situations, showing that she knew that a growing spiral of silence may not be the most appropriate strategy; Paulo Macedo has opted for silence. He can be warned in time to put in place far-reaching reforms, but it will not be prudent to prolong this option for a long time.

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