

## World Leaders on Facebook



Public Facebook profiles

### Executive Summary

Since 2015, the number of users on Facebook has surpassed the population of China, the most populous country on earth. According to Facebook's latest figures, the platform has 1.86 billion monthly active users and 1.23 billion people are active on the social network every day. Given this global audience, it comes as no surprise that governments and leaders of 87 percent of the 193 UN member countries now have a presence on the social network.

The 590 Facebook pages analyzed in this study, conducted by strategic communications and global public relations firm Burson-Marsteller, represent 169 governments and have a combined total of 311 million followers as of February 1, 2017. In 2016, they published a total of 398,982 posts which have garnered 772 million interactions (comments, likes and shares).

Over the past nine years, Facebook has become the channel of choice for community engagement with world leaders. Many politicians discover social media channels during election campaigns – Barack Obama, for example, set up his Facebook page in late 2007 as an electoral tool for the former Senator of Illinois. Since then, a Facebook presence has become part and parcel of any social media political campaign and one of the best ways to engage with potential voters and citizens.

A significant part of Donald Trump's electoral success in 2016 can be traced back to his focus on communicating via social media. Since his inauguration, he has become the second most popular world leader on Facebook with 20 million followers, half as many as Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi who has close to 40 million followers.

Obviously, very few world leaders manage their pages on their own, or post on their timeline themselves. Notable exceptions include Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama; Danish Prime Minister Lars

Løkke Rasmussen and his Foreign Minister Anders Samuelsen, Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong; and Juan Orlando Hernández, the President of Honduras who has done several [Facebook live broadcasts](#) using his mobile device, attracting hundreds of thousands of viewers. For the most part, though, presidential communication on Facebook is a team effort and the pages of most world leaders are run by their respective communications teams.

- When Barack Obama opened his personal presidential @POTUS Facebook page on [November 9, 2015](#) he wrote in his very first post *"This is a place where we can have real conversations about the most important issues facing our country – a place where you can hear directly from me, and share your own thoughts and stories."*
- The Obama @POTUS page, including its 3.9 million followers, has been renamed and archived @POTUS44, and since January 20, 2017 the new U.S. President Donald Trump has started with a clean slate. The Donald Trump @POTUS page surpassed one million followers by February 1, 2017. The Obama White House Facebook page has also been archived @ObamaWhiteHouse and the Trump administration started with another clean slate with @WhiteHouse, which included eight million followers which had been amassed by the previous administration.
- Donald Trump's personal Facebook page has witnessed a phenomenal growth during the election campaign in 2016, more than tripling its followers from 5.1 million to 16.7 million followers. By February 1, 2017, just 12 days after his inauguration, the @DonaldTrump page had 19,806,840 followers and counting.
- Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen has one of the most unusual Facebook page, mainly sharing pictures showing him behind the scenes or on holiday with his wife and grandchildren. His Facebook posts have garnered 58 million interactions placing him third after Donald Trump and Narendra Modi.
- World leaders tend to share mainly posts with pictures, representing 55 percent of all their Facebook publications in 2016. Twenty-two percent are posts with links to other websites and 12 percent are videos posted natively to Facebook. Only eight percent are simple status updates without any visuals.
- However, posts with videos uploaded directly to Facebook receive the most interactions. Native video posts received an average of 4,847 interactions per post, including 824 shares, 623 comments and 297 'Love' reactions. The 47,739 Facebook videos posted on world leaders' pages have been viewed 2.5 billion times with an average view count of 52,000.



- Surprisingly, simple status updates without any visuals are in second place, with 3,739 average interactions per post, more than posts with photos which have an average of 2,935 interactions. Links to other videos and websites only received an average of 2,069 and 468 interactions per post respectively.

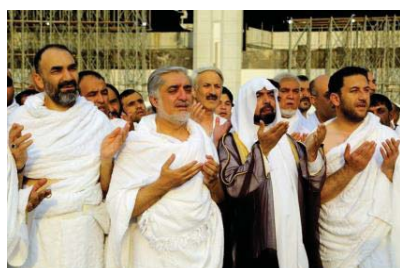
Government use of Facebook varies from country to country. While some pages merely broadcast the daily activity of their leaders, others engage with their citizens, replying to the most salient comments and even allowing a free-flow of visitor posts on their respective pages.

Much like any other Facebook user, world leaders sometimes share their private lives on the platform, celebrating [birthdays](#), sharing pictures of their children and announcing their latest offspring. These personal posts are generally the most popular ones.



The most popular post of all world leaders in 2016 was posted on the @BarackObama page, a family picture of the Obama's wishing their fans a [Happy Easter](#) with 3.2 million likes, comments, shares and reactions. The same [Happy Easter](#) photo had already been shared on the White House page a year earlier and attracted 2.9 million interactions.

Posts on religious holidays such as [Christmas](#), [Easter](#), Ramadan, [Eid al-Fitr](#), Thanksgiving, Rosh Hashanah, Diwali and the New Year generally perform very well, such as Argentinian President Mauricio Macri toasting the New Year on January 1, 2016 with his wife and daughter. The Foreign Minister of the Czech Republic posted a video of his Christmas message in which he plays [Silent Night](#) on the piano.



The second most popular post is a [collection of three pictures](#) of Narendra Modi with his mother which had 1.8 million interactions; the third most popular post is a [video](#) posted of 106-year-old Virginia McLaurin visiting the White House and dancing with the Obamas during Black History Month which is also the most watched video in 2016.



Family pictures posted by members of the royal families of the UK, [Sweden](#), Monaco, [Norway](#) and [the Netherlands](#) are also highly appreciated by their followers. Other world leaders have also posted pictures of their children and grandchildren, which are often among the most liked posts. Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau wrote: *"They put a smile on me every day"* and these cute family pictures definitely increased the follower count on his page.



Pictures of world leaders which perform well on Facebook often show a lighter side of their personality, such as Ecuador's Rafael Correa [under a waterfall](#), Danish Prime Minister cooling down [in the sea](#) and Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen holidaying on [the beach](#).



Quite a number of world leaders have embraced the selfie craze, posting group selfies to engage their audiences as Argentina's Mauricio Macri did including a selfie stick, or simply taking "A farewell selfie after a final meeting with President Obama" as Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull did in November 2016. Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Razak and Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong sometimes share selfies with important visitors who in turn will share the shot on their pages, increasing the engagement.



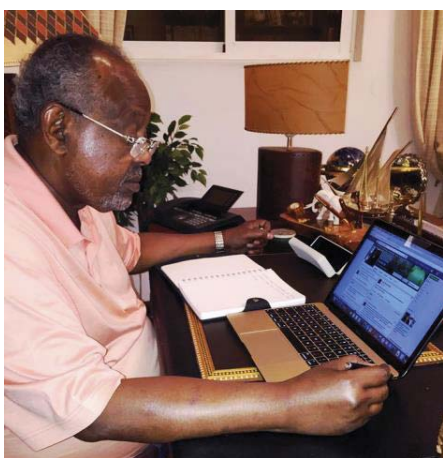


The Rio 2016 Olympics made for engaging Facebook posts as governments and leaders celebrated their athletes. Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Khamenei honoured the [female athletes](#) wearing the hijab and the [picture](#) of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzō Abe dressed as Super Mario at the closing ceremony became a highlight on the Japanese government's page. The [picture](#) of South African sprinter Ntando Mahlangu in the Paralympic Games became the most liked picture on the page of the South African government.



The 2016 UEFA European Football Championship was a [highlight](#) on the page of Iceland's Foreign Ministry when their team unexpectedly beat England and made it to the quarterfinals. The Belgian royal family travelled to France to [cheer](#) the Red Devils during their quarter finals.

The government in Monaco shared [pictures](#) from the annual Formula 1 Grand Prix in Monte Carlo and Argentina's Mauricio Macri posted an interesting [time-lapse video](#) of himself watching the finale of the Copa America where Argentina lost against Chile in a riveting penalty shootout.



A number of leaders use Facebook to connect directly with their fans and engage their followers. The German Government regularly replies to comments posted on its page. The President of Djibouti, Ismail Omar Guelleh, sat down for a Facebook Q&A session where he tried to answer in writing some of the [440 questions](#) put to him.

The President of Costa Rica, Luis Guillermo Solís, regularly sits down for [live chats](#) with his Facebook community answering questions posted beforehand and as they come in live during the broadcast.

Obviously there is a risk of being inundated with negative comments, but tools such as Facebook Mentions can help vet



questions during the broadcast. Unfortunately, negative comments are part and parcel of any public Facebook engagement and leaders have to be thick-skinned, or just not read all of them. In his New Year [video message](#) 2016 Danish Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen reacted to some of the most insulting comments he had received on his page, requesting: *“that we keep the tone of the political debate civil.”*

Donald Trump’s simple [status update](#): *“TODAY WE MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!”* posted in capital letters after winning the U.S. election on November 8, 2016 has become his most popular post with 1.2 million interactions.



By and large the outcome of the U.S. election campaign has been received with little enthusiasm by world leaders who merely posted customary congratulatory statements on their Facebook pages. Hungary’s Prime Minister Viktor Orban was more enthusiastic [writing](#): *“Congratulations. What great news. Democracy is still alive.”*

The Israeli Prime Minister recorded a [video message](#) congratulating *“President-elect Trump, a great friend of Israel,”* which has become his second most popular message with 24 million views. The German Foreign Ministry posted a [picture](#) of a sunset and the caption: *“All surveys indicate that the sun will rise again tomorrow. In this sense: Have a nice evening! #USElections”*



In June 2016, the German Foreign Ministry also made headlines with its unusual reaction to the UK Brexit vote *“What a day! We will now go to an Irish pub and get drunk. From tomorrow onwards, we will work again for a better Europe. Promised! #EUReferendum.”* The next day the cover picture and the profile picture were changed to the European flag to symbolize Germany’s support for the European Union.

The French Foreign Ministry changed its Facebook avatar several times in 2016 to support the Paris climate conference COP21 in Paris and, most notably, to express the government’s condolences for the victims of the terror attacks in Brussels, Nice, Orlando and Berlin.



Many governments expressed their solidarity by posting pictures of landmarks and government buildings lit up in the affected country's colors. The Estonian government building in Tallinn was lit up in the Belgian tri-colors after the attack on Brussels airport, the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin was draped in the Turkish colors after the attack on Istanbul's Atatürk Airport in Istanbul and the Dutch Royal Palace displayed the LGBT flag after the Orlando nightclub shooting.



The Russian Foreign Ministry opened a virtual book of condolences on its Facebook page in honor of Russian Ambassador Andrei Karlov, who was shot and killed by a terrorist while opening an art exhibition in Ankara, Turkey. The [video post](#) was viewed 300,000 times and received more than 2,800 comments of condolences and messages of sympathy.

A few governments have promoted their posts via Facebook ads. The French government, for example, promoted an educational [film](#) against radicalization which has been viewed 6.5 million times and shared almost 50,000 times. 'Paying for play' is especially helpful when targeting a specific audience. The Estonian foreign ministry is the only one which has organized a competition on its Facebook page with an annual quiz to ['Win a trip to Estonia.'](#)



A look at the mission statements on these pages gives an interesting insight into the objectives of governmental Facebook use. Many institutions want to *"provide timely and relevant information"* to their fans and followers. For the Argentinian Presidency, the page is *"a transparent, peaceful communication channel where all voices are heard and taken into account."* The Foreign Ministry of Ethiopia wants *"to ensure the engagement of the diaspora"* while the government of South Sudan aims to *"establish, develop and maintain good relations and cooperation with foreign governments."* Finally, the office of the Prime Minister of Brunei seeks to *"enhance the effectiveness of executive decision-making."*

On a lighter note, the Prime Minister of Hungary has shared a picture of himself [having lunch](#), the Chancellor of Austria posted the [view from his office](#) of a snow-covered Vienna while Venezuela's President Nicola Maduro shared a video of himself [salsa dancing](#). Anders Samuelsen, the athletic Foreign Minister of Denmark, shared a nine-second [video clip](#) of him drinking a cup of coffee while water-skiing and his most watched [video](#) shows him doing the 'water bottle challenge,' which he seems to be pretty good at! Finally, Argentina's Mauricio Macri has become the first world leader to have done a Snapchat face-swap, a [video](#) which he subsequently posted to his Facebook page.

Facebook has become the place where leaders can reach out to their citizens and have conversations in more than 140 characters. With their publications on Facebook, world leaders can now reach an

audience of millions of Facebook users worldwide, regardless of the number of followers on their respective pages. Engaging Facebook posts often make headlines in the mainstream media and can be more powerful and effective than traditional press releases.

## Most Followed World Leaders

According to the Burson-Marsteller study conducted in January 2017, 87 heads of state, 70 prime ministers and 55 foreign ministers maintain personal pages on Facebook and, in general, they are more popular than the pages of their respective institutions. As of February 1, 2017 all 590 personal and institutional Facebook pages of world leaders had a combined total of 311,093,076 followers

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the most popular world leader on Facebook, with close to 40 million followers on his personal page and 13.1 million followers on his institutional Prime Minister of India page, which is in third position.

U.S. President Donald Trump is the second most popular world leader, with close to 20 million followers on his personal Facebook page, which has seen its followers more than triple during the election campaign in 2016. By the time he assumed office at the end of January 2017, his page had almost quadrupled in size and if his growth rate continues at this pace, he might become the most followed world leader on Facebook in 2017.



Barack Obama was the first world leader to set up a Facebook page in late 2007, while still a Senator from Illinois. He left office in January 2017 with 54 million followers on his personal page, which was not managed by the White House administration.

Jordan's Queen Rania has moved up into fourth position with 10.1 million followers, ahead of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the White House with 8.9 and 8 million followers respectively. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, Indonesian President Joko Widodo and Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto complete the Top 10 list of the most popular world leaders on Facebook.

Fifty world leaders can boast more than 1 million followers on their respective Facebook pages. However, not everyone has such large communities and the median average of the 590 pages analyzed stands at 36,380 followers.



The government of the Philippines has seen the strongest growth of its Facebook page in 2016 with a 70-fold increase from 9,395 followers on January 1, 2016 to 655,547 followers by the end of the year. The page of Patrice Talon, the new President of Benin, has increased 60-fold, gaining more than 178,000 followers in 2016. The revamped page of the Argentinian Presidency, which started from scratch after the previous president had taken the page with her into retirement, has seen a 23-fold increase, counting more than 1.1 million followers at the end of 2016.

## Most Followed Regional Leaders

Indian government figures, including the President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, dominate the ranking in the Asia-Pacific region. The size of the country is clearly a decisive factor for these large audiences, however Facebook has been making inroads in other Asian countries and has become the platform of choice for many Asian leaders.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte and Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Razak all have sizeable audiences, each with more than 2 million followers. Cambodia's Prime Minister has had the most phenomenal growth on his Facebook page, seeing his numbers quadruple, from 1.6 to 6.5 million followers year-on-year.

Jordan's Queen Rania, an early adopter of Facebook, who has almost doubled her Facebook page in 2016, tops the list of the most popular leaders in the Middle East and North Africa, with 10.1 million followers, well ahead of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi with 6.8 million followers and also ahead of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Emir of Dubai, with 3.5 million followers and Jordan's Royal Hashemite Court with 2.4 million followers.

Mexico's President Enrique Peña Nieto is the most popular leader in Latin America with 4.97 million followers, ahead of Argentinian President Mauricio Macri with 4.13 million followers and Peru's President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski with 1.39 million followers.

Kenya's Uhuru Kenyatta is the most popular leader in Sub-Saharan Africa with 2.81 million followers, ahead of Nana Akufo-Addo, the new President of Ghana, and Rwanda's Paul Kagame, with 1.34 million and 700,000 followers respectively.

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the British Monarchy, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Romanian President Klaus Iohannis, Russia's Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev and Albania's Edi Rama are Europe's most popular leaders on Facebook.

The governments of only 24 countries have not yet set up a presence on Facebook, including China, where the social network is banned and Switzerland, where the former president briefly set up a personal page in 2013 before deactivating it only four months later.

## World Leaders with the Most Interactions

Large Facebook pages clearly translate into large interactions (the sum total of likes, comments and shares). In 2016 Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had by far the most interactions of any world leader on Facebook, with accumulated 169 million interactions on his page and an overall interaction rate (the sum of all interactions divided by the number of posts and the average number of followers in 2016), of 0.52%.

Surprisingly, Cambodia's Prime Minister is in second place, with 58 million interactions in 2016. Samdech Hun Sen often shares pictures with his wife and grandchildren, pictures of himself on the beach as well as the occasional selfie. He has also made his page the go to page for all live events from football matches to the *Voice of Cambodia* aired on his page. The success of his posts can also be attributed to the fact that he consistently tags other Facebook users in his photos, ensuring a wider reach of his publications and it is not surprising that his posts have been shared more than 6 million times in 2016.

The Obama White House is in third position with 36 million interactions ahead of Argentina's President Mauricio Macri in fourth position, with 35 million interactions and an interaction rate of 0.90 on his posts, despite having only 4.1 million followers. The personal page of former President Barack Obama completes the Top 5 list with 30 million interactions in 2016. Interestingly, Barack Obama who was until recently the most followed world leader on Facebook with 52 million followers, has one of the lowest interaction rates with only 0.15%.



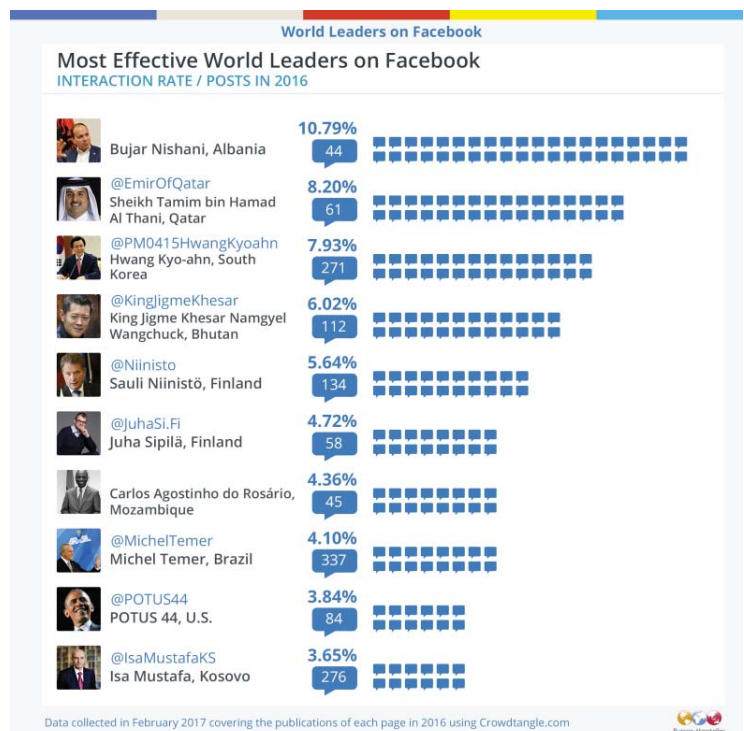
## How Often Do They Post?

Quite a number of governments use Facebook as their government wire service. The Facebook page of the government of Ethiopia is the most prolific page, with an average of 29 posts per day in 2016. The governments of Botswana and Honduras are almost as active, with 28 and 23 posts per day respectively. However, the posting frenzy doesn't necessarily translate into greater engagement, or more followers on their respective pages, and the average posting rate stands at 1.84 posts per day. All 590 world leaders combined have published 398,982 posts in 2016, which is a median average of 401 posts per page.

## Does Activity Matter?

While an active social media presence is vital to keep an audience engaged, pages that are overly active generally don't enjoy high interaction rates. All 590 pages combined have an average interaction rate of 0.72%, which is the sum of all interactions divided by the number of posts and the average number of followers in 2016. A third of the pages analyzed enjoy a better than average interaction rate. Albanian President Bujar Nishani is the only world leader who enjoyed a double-digit interaction rate with 10.79% on his 44 posts published in 2016 followed by the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani in second position. Both men have published fewer than 100 posts in 2016.

Posting intermittently seems to be the recipe for success of the South Korean Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn, Bhutan's King King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck and Sauli Niinistö





with an interaction rate of more than 5%. Barack Obama's POTUS 44 page which had 3.2 million followers by the end of 2016 posted less than 84 posts in 2016.

## What Type of Content Do They Post?

A closer look at the type of content posted shows that the government of Ethiopia also leads the rankings in terms of number of pictures posted, publishing 9,776 pictures in 2016 which is 5,000 more than the government of Botswana, which is in second place.

The total number of photo posts being shared by world leaders is far greater than link posts and simple status updates combined, clearly demonstrating the visual nature of communications on Facebook.

Fifty-five percent of posts are photos and 22 percent are posts with links, while simple text status updates only account for eight percent of all Facebook publications of world leaders.

While video posts are less frequent than photo posts, they receive the most interactions and so social media savvy world leaders are increasingly sharing videos natively, with Facebook videos accounting for 12 percent of all posts in 2016. More than three quarters (79 percent) of the pages reviewed have posted videos natively to Facebook. Videos shared from YouTube, Vimeo and other video hosting sites only account for 2.4 percent of all posts.

The Prime Minister of Cambodia, Hun Sen, leads the way: He has transformed his Facebook page into an official video channel with more than 1,459 broadcasts of his official duties. The Mexican Presidency is in second place, having posted 1,357 Facebook videos and third is the Presidency of Panama which posted more than 1,000 video broadcasts on its page during 2016.

## Live Video

Many world leaders are regularly using the Facebook Live function. Examples include broadcasts of leaders arriving at the [North American Leaders Summit](#) from the Canadian Foreign Ministry, or broadcasting the TV signal of the [address to the nation](#) by the King of Bhutan. Argentina's President [Mauricio Macri](#), Cambodia's Prime Minister [Hun Sen](#), Canada's Prime Minister [Justin Trudeau](#), Poland's President [Andrzej Duda](#) and many others have gone live on Facebook broadcasting their speeches and press conferences.

The Dutch Prime Minister's social media team often shoots short video statements by Mark Rutte, updating his fans on his activities such as his [visit to the Facebook](#) headquarters. The President of Costa Rica, Luis Guillermo Solís, regularly sits down for [live chats](#) with his fans to answer their questions.



A handful of leaders have taken matters into their own hands, going live on their mobile device such as Ricardo Rossello, the Governor of Puerto Rico, who did a quick '[piece to camera](#)' in his car on the way to the polls. Danish Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen sent live video [greetings from Washington](#) and even filmed while [cycling](#) with friends. The regular [live broadcasts](#) from Honduran President Juan Orlando on his mobile phone have been watched by hundreds of thousands of people.

## The Most Watched Videos

The most watched [video](#) with 66 million views was posted by the White House featuring 106-year-old Virginia McLaurin dancing with the Obamas during Black History Month in February 2016. The second most watched video is a heartbreaking clip about a six-year old boy named Alex inviting a Syrian refugee into his home, posted on the Barack Obama POTUS page and garnering 29.2 million views. With 24.7 million views the last Christmas message of the Obama's is the third most viewed video. The fourth most watched video posted by a world leader on Facebook in 2016, with 24.6 million views, is a [video](#) posted by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu congratulating President-elect Donald Trump on his election win. The video statement has been shared half a million times on the platform.



## Facebook Reactions

In February 2016, Facebook introduced an extension to the 'Like' button, offering users five possible reactions including love, laughter, surprise, sadness and anger to express their feelings with an emoji on a post. Not surprisingly, Donald Trump's posts have attracted their fair share of angry and sad reactions by his supporters and opponents alike.

### Love

The most loved post by a world leader is the 2016 Merry Christmas video by Barack and Michelle Obama on the Obama White House page with 190,000 hearts. Barack Obama's [photo](#) showing him dancing with Michelle on their wedding day is the second most loved post with 152,000 hearts and his Easter Greetings the third most loved post with 136,000 hearts.



### Anger

The Facebook post which has received the most 'angry' emojis is Mexican President's state of the union town hall meeting with youths at the Presidential Palace, in which he explained his decision to meet with President-elect Donald Trump, attracting 96,000 angry reactions. The publications of Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Razak consistently have a lot of angry reactions and his supporters and detractors often fight it out in the post comments using the hashtags: #respectmyPM and #rejectmyPM.



### Laughter

The post that attracted the most laughs in 2016 is a [video](#) of the final days of Barack Obama in the White House pondering what to do next. The four-minute hilarious video, which attracted 75,000 laughter emojis, was produced for the White House Correspondent's Dinner in 2016 featuring Barack Obama posting selfies with Snapchat lenses.





## Surprise 🤯

The [picture post](#) of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi taking a close-up shot of a tiger at the Nandan Van Jungle Safari in Naya Raipur has attracted the most 'surprise' reactions with 7,162 "wow" emojis.



## Sadness 😞

The announcement of the passing of King Bhumibol of Thailand by King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck of Bhutan has become the post with the most expressions of sadness of a world leader in 2016 with 54,000 crying emojis. The passing of Indian actor- turned-politician Selvi Jayalalithaa, who served as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, attracted 38,700 sad expressions on the page of Narendra Modi and the death of singer Prince was mourned 36,300 times on the White House page.



His Majesty King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck added 6 new photos.  
13 October 2016 · 🌐

13 October 2016

His Majesty The King received the news of the passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand with immense sorrow.

## The Most Visited Institutions

Almost a quarter of the 590 pages surveyed are 'place pages' where Facebook users can check in with their mobile devices. According to this measure, the White House is by far the most popular government location with more than four million people who "have been here."

More than 34,000 Facebook users have "checked in" at the State House in Uganda, the Foreign Ministry in Thailand and the Presidential Palace in New Delhi, the Rashtrapati Bhavan. The presidential pages of Ivory Coast, Turkey, South Africa and Ukraine have all seen more than 10,000 mobile check-ins each.

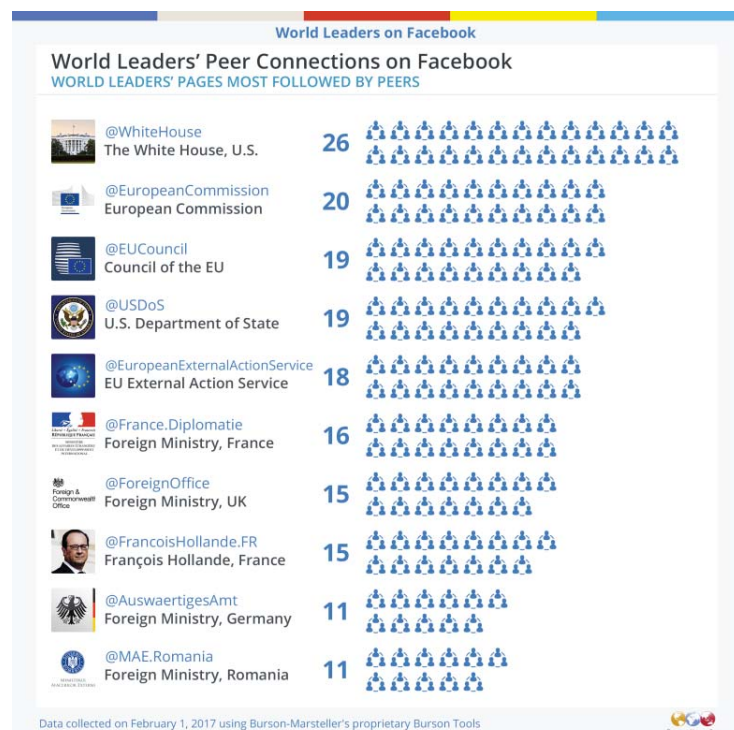


## Do World Leaders Follow Each Other?

Following other Facebook pages is essentially an act of courtesy. While a follow does not allow these pages to message each other privately, it makes it easier to follow the posts published on those pages. Almost half of the 590 pages analyzed follow at least one other peer Facebook page.

The Russian Foreign Ministry follows 57 other pages and they are so far the only ones that follow the personal page of @DonaldTrump. The Foreign Ministry of Nepal follows 39 other world leader pages and the Presidency of Panama and the Croatian government follow 29 peer pages each.

For the record, Boris Johnson and the UK Foreign Office are the only pages that follow the new Donald Trump @POTUS page. Donald Trump follows the pages of Daniel Scavino Jr.,



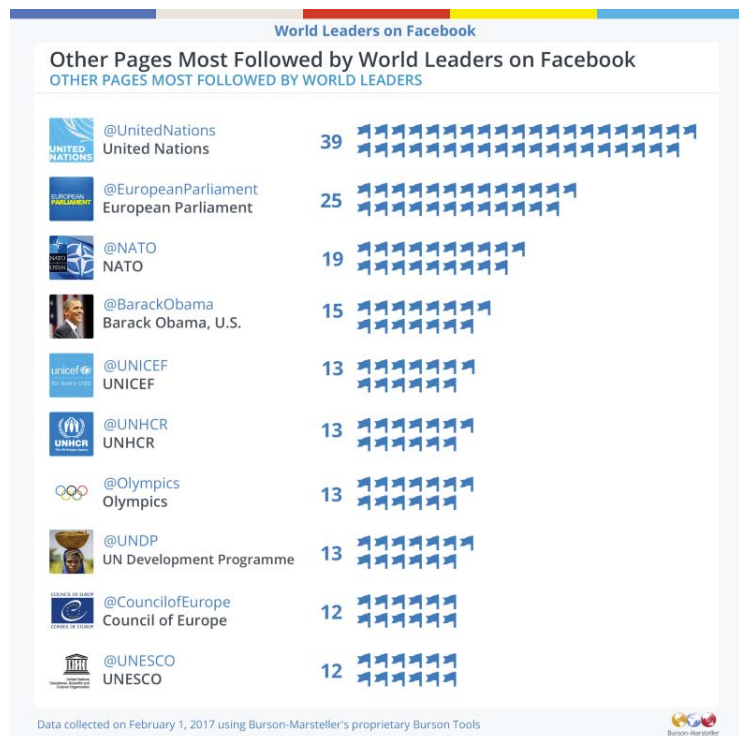
the new Director of Social Media at the White House, as well as the pages of his children and the pages of the different Trump properties around the world, but the page doesn't follow any other foreign leader yet.

Politicians tend to follow their respective political party. Governments sometimes follow all their ministries on Facebook and foreign ministries often follow the pages of their embassies worldwide. A few foreign ministries also follow the Facebook pages of embassies accredited in their respective capitals. Page owners can feature selected pages in the 'Liked by This Page' box on their pages, which at times can be the only place where you can find a list of a Facebook pages belonging to a country's diplomatic missions.

In terms of peer connections, the White House page is the most popular page, followed by 26 pages of world leaders and the European Commission is second, followed by 20 – mainly other European leaders. The Council of the European Union and the State Department share the third position, ahead of the European External Action Service and the French Foreign Ministry in fifth.

The United Nations Facebook page is by far the most popular page with all world leaders, followed by 39 other pages, and the European Parliament is in second place. The NATO page and the personal page of Barack Obama close the top five list.

A good way to draw attention to posts and potentially increase their reach is by tagging other Facebook pages in publications. The President of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo and the Prime Minister of Cambodia Samdech Hun Sen consistently tag many other Facebook users in their pictures to increase the reach of the publications. The French government often tags other ministries to alert them about the post and the Foreign Ministry of Israel thanked 13 governments that sent firefighters to help quell the forest fires by tagging their foreign ministries in the [post](#).





## About this Study

*World Leaders on Facebook* is Burson-Marsteller's latest research into how world leaders, governments and international organizations communicate via social media. The research builds on Burson-Marsteller's highly acclaimed annual *Twiplomacy* study. Initially focused solely on Twitter, the study has been expanded to other social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Google+ and more niche digital diplomacy platforms such as Snapchat.

Burson-Marsteller has identified a total of 590 Facebook pages, 288 of which have been verified by Facebook and carry a blue verification mark. The 302 remaining pages are not verified, but we believe that they can be considered as official pages. We also discovered seven personal profiles of world leaders including the personal profile of Japan's Prime Minister [Shinzō Abe](#), which we did not include in this analysis despite having half a million followers and 4,712 friends. And finally we have not included inactive pages as it was virtually impossible to determine their authenticity.

Data was collected on February 1, 2017, using Burson-Marsteller's proprietary Burson Tools to analyze the 590 world leaders' pages. More than 50 variables were considered, including: followers (page likes), check-ins, were here count, location, liked by this page, etc.

We also used Crowdtangle.com to capture the historic data for all 590 pages including the total interactions (post comments, likes, shares), interaction rates as well as all video views and posts from 2016.

**Terminology:** In this study we have used the term 'followers' for each page and 'likes' for publications to make a clear distinction between page likes and post likes. Interactions is the sum total of comments, likes, and shares for each post).

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