



Europe Direct Information Centres:

Good practice in media relations



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Introduction

Aim of the catalogue

The e-catalogue on media relations has been produced in order **to promote good practices of the Europe Direct Information Centres (EDICs)** in terms of co-operation with media representatives at local and regional levels.

These case studies contribute to enhancing the visibility of the EDICs at local and regional level as proactive and reliable providers of information on EU issues. The co-operation with the media has also benefited the EDICs since they have been contacted by an increasing number of citizens for further information and details on EU topics.

The description and promotion of 18 good practices in this e-catalogue should help other EDICs to apply similar information and communication initiatives on EU affairs, which need however to be adapted to the specificities of their environment. Therefore, each good practice includes information on tips and tricks which have contributed to the success of the action, and also on the resources necessary to perform the action in order to facilitate their replication by network members.

Rationale and work of the PEWG

The Pan-European Working Group (PEWG) on media relations was created in 2010. Twenty-two experts from the EDICs were selected on the basis of the quality of their proposal, including their expertise in media relations, resulting from a call for expression of interest which was open to all EDICs.

The PEWG on media relations has a three-fold mission:

- The creation of a knowledge base using a **bottom-up approach** to identify and promote the experiences and the multiple sources of expertise available within the Europe Direct Network;
- The creation of knowledge in **tangible outputs** to enable all Europe Direct Network's members to benefit from it;
- The creation of **"pools of expertise"** within the Europe Direct Network, with the support of the PEWG's members who could act as contact points for further assistance to fellow network members.





The creation of the e-catalogue on media relations has been based on these principles:

- The **bottom-up approach** has been used for the collection of the good practices for the e-catalogue. All members of the network were offered the possibility of proposing their own good practices during a consultation which was conducted in October 2010;
- The e-catalogue represents a **tangible product** which will be distributed online to all EDICs. The content of this catalogue will also be promoted during major Europe Direct Network events (Annual General Meeting, national and regional meetings, training sessions);
- The members of the PEWG on media relations, the EDICs' members involved in the good practices in this e-catalogue, and the coordinators of this initiative in DG COMM and ESN, will represent the **"pools of expertise"** within the Europe Direct Network in order to help EDICs to implement similar stories in their local environment.

Aim and data of the survey on media relations

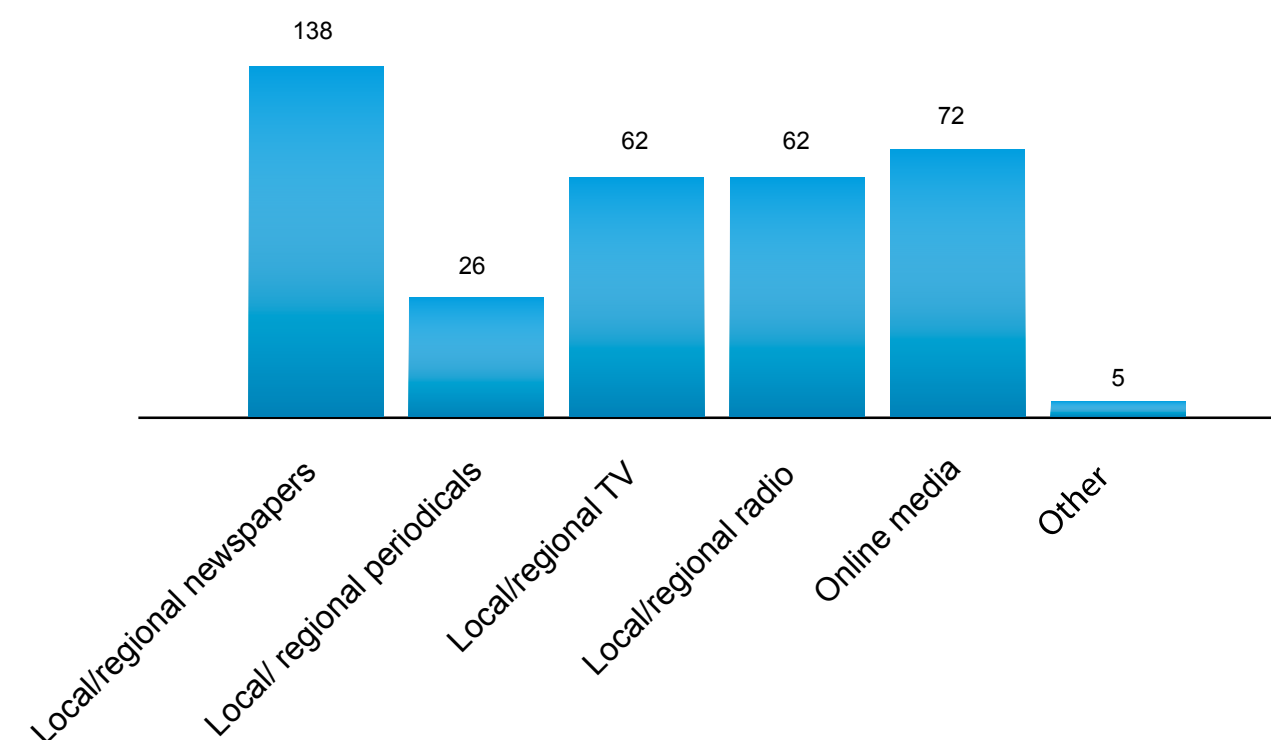
The collection of good practices on media relations was part of a general survey which aimed at identifying the main trends of the Europe Direct Information Centres in terms of media relations.

The general survey on 'EDICs and media relations' was carried out in October 2010. A group of **180 EDICs** responded to the survey, which represents a significant number from whom to draw general conclusions on EDICs' media relations and also to draw up recommendations to help EDICs to improve further their relations with media representatives.

As it appears in chart 1, the majority of the respondents (76.5%) reported a collaboration with local and regional newspapers. Appearances on local and regional TV and radio were each also mentioned by one-third of the respondents (34.4%). These results represent the main reason why a significant number of good practices in this e-catalogue focus on collaboration with local and regional newspapers, TV and radio stations.

An emerging trend can be seen by the use of online media, which has been reported by a large group of EDICs (40%).

Cooperation with the media (chart 1)



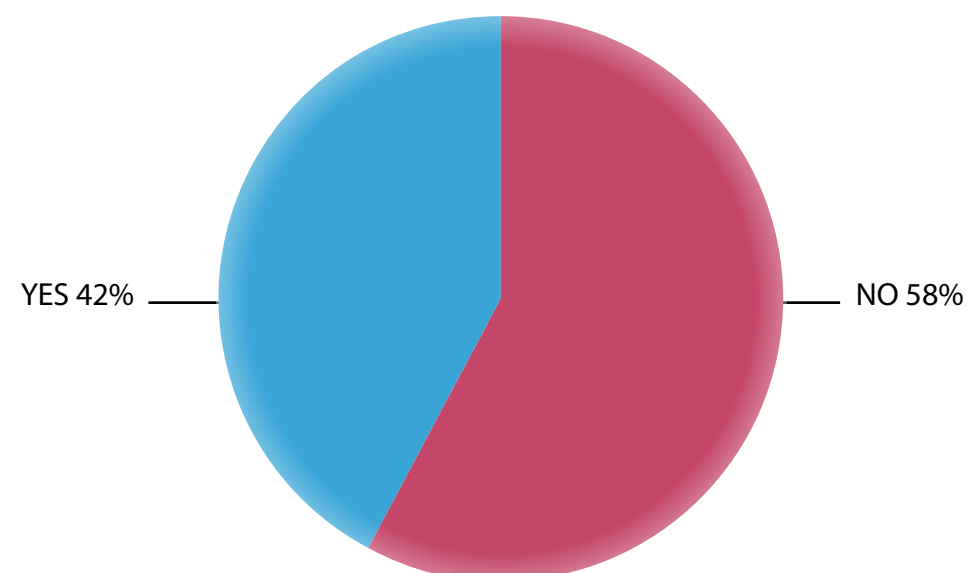


1. Media strategy

1.1. General trends

In response to a survey question on whether the EDICs have a specific strategy for reinforcing their contacts with representatives of the local and regional media, 105 respondents mentioned that they have yet to develop such a strategy (chart 2).

Media strategy developed by the EDIC (chart 2)



This result does not mean that the EDICs are not working with local media.

Indeed, a large number of them are regularly sending information, press releases and press announcements to the media but it would appear that this tends to be a timely action intended to raise awareness of the EDIC's activities rather than a systematic action based on an actual work programme with local media representatives.

In addition, the majority of the EDICs manage lists with journalists' contact details which helps them to develop long-lasting relations with media representatives.

These findings are also explained by the fact that several EDICs have incorporated their media relations within the strategy of the host structure since host structure notoriety and profile makes access to local media easier.

1.2. Training, awards and working meetings with journalists

A few EDICs have also reported **tailor-made activities**, such as training sessions for media representatives, awards and regular meetings to get to know them better and to assess journalists' information needs regarding EU information and co-operation agreements with local media to sustain long-term working relations.

Such qualitative actions contribute widely to the **visibility of the EDIC in the local and regional media**, on the one hand, and to securing easy access to these media for the promotion of EDIC activities on the other hand. Three good practices have been selected to illustrate these qualitative trends in co-operation with media representatives where the EDICs' services go beyond the provision of information on EU topics:

► *Trainings for Northern Transylvania journalists on European communication priorities*

The *EDIC Northern Transylvania Cluj (Romania)* has contributed to the creation of an informal network of local journalists interested in EU issues. It informs them regularly on EU developments, including the organisation of training workshops on the European Commission's communication priorities every year. These workshops have resulted in the development of a regional communication priorities plan involving the EDIC and local media representatives.

► *Writing for Europe*

The *EDIC Epirus and Corfu (Greece)* has defined a strategy with local and regional media which combines the dissemination of EU information through newspapers, weekly radio programmes, and working meetings with media representatives to discuss their interests in EU issues and to reinforce this co-operation.

► *The European journalist of the year*

Each year, the *EDIC Bistrita (Romania)* organises an informal contest "European Journalist of the Year" to stimulate communication on EU issues by local journalists. As a result of this competition, EDIC Bistrita awards those media representatives who have been the most active in EU communication both in terms of quantity and quality.





Trainings for Northern Transylvania journalists on European communication priorities

Brief description of the action including outputs

The Europe Direct Regional Centre of Northern Transylvania encouraged the creation of an informal network of journalists with the suggested name 'The network of the new generation of European journalists in Northern Transylvania, Romania'. The network's objective is to ensure that the community is informed both at the regional and local level about the European Commission's communication priorities.

To achieve this strategic objective, EDIC Northern Transylvania has set up an integrated strategy which contains multiple activities involving the media, such as:

- A celebration of Europe Day, and organisation of a three-day regional fair where the local media's Association of Press Professionals of Cluj has its own stand;
- The organisation of public debates, with journalists acting as mediators;
- The organisation of formal and informal workshops on different issues (funds, contests for journalists, etc.);
- An on-line banner exchange;
- Publication of journalists' columns in the region's InfoREGIO magazine (edited by the EDIC host organisation, the North-West Regional Development Agency);
- Advertising radio and TV campaigns;
- A celebration of the best European communication efforts at the Gala of the European Information Multipliers in Northern Transylvania, where the media receives a dedicated award 'The best European Information Multiplier from media'.

However, the main collaboration with the media is 'Trainings for Northern Transylvania journalists on European communication priorities'. The regional Europe Direct Centre of Northern Transylvania is organising two trainings per year, meant for regional/local journalists of the Northern Transylvania region (six counties with almost 2.8 million inhabitants), about two of the European Commission's communication priorities for that particular year. The aim of these trainings is to enhance the quality of the mass-media material related to EU communication priorities by increasing the capacity of the mass-media to 'translate' these priorities at the local level.

Information on the media concerned

- ✓ **local/regional newspapers**
- ✓ **local/regional periodicals**
- ✓ **local/regional TV**
- ✓ **local/regional radio**
- ✓ **online media**
- ✓ **newsletter**

Information on the target group

- ✓ **general public**
- ✓ **youth**
- ✓ **enterprises**
- ✓ **women**
- ✓ **unemployed**
- ✓ **disabled persons**
- ✓ **retired persons**
- ✓ **media**

Inputs/Resources

1. Human resources: two EDIC employees;
2. Financial resources: 5 295 euro/training;
3. Logistics: conference room, laptop, projector, memory-sticks, websites of EDIC Northern Transylvania and Association of Press Professionals of Cluj; electronic invitations; press releases; advertisement in the monthly newsletter of the hosting organization 'InfoREGIO UPDATE'; EDIC tools for indoor and outdoor visibility (banner); diplomas; assessment questionnaires;
4. Accommodation expenses and meals were covered by the EDIC.





Impact of the action

Four trainings were conducted in 2009 and 2010; over 90 journalists from all six counties of the Northern Transylvania region participated, along with two to six trainers. During the trainings, two Regional Plans of Communication Priorities were written. This training scheme has already been used again as a good practice by other EDICs from Romania (e.g. EDIC Bistrita) – they will organise a similar training in 2011, but only for local journalists from the city of Bistrita-Nasaud.

Methodology/process

Following the objectives of the project and of the EDIC's host organisation, a target group was defined. Its specific needs were identified by analysing the quality of the press materials related to European issues, by consulting with local media associations and by discussing directly with journalists.

A partnership was established with the Association of Press Professionals of Cluj and UBB Radio Online (Euranet member). They ensured the promotion of events among their members and proposed junior lecturers; they also made sure that their members participated in the training sessions.

Various people – Team Europe members, European deputies from Romania, decision-makers from the national and local public administration, journalists from Romania and abroad – were identified as trainers. This list also included VIPs such as former ministers, European deputies, well-known managers, a former Romanian negotiator-in-chief for the EU, renowned journalists from Romania and Europe, etc.

The visibility of the action was ensured. All the journalists – radio, tv, newspapers, periodicals, on-line, freelancers, etc. – from the six counties of Northern Transylvania were invited. The selection criteria included a CV and three items of press material on European issues published by the candidates over the last year.

At the end, each participant received an attendance diploma. A questionnaire was filled in by the participants, who received follow-up information giving the next steps, plus articles published after the training.

During the training, the journalists tried to establish local and regional communication priorities in line with the EU priorities. This resulted in a Regional Plan of Communication Priorities – a working tool for all the journalists in the region.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Approach media from the partnership point of view, not only as a tool for information dissemination.
2. Approach media from the position of media services supplier, not only as an information supplier.
3. Sign up with the local/regional media associations as partners.
4. Enable possibilities in the market for providers of services for journalists (there are only a few media services providers in Romania, one of which is the Centre for Independent Journalism).
5. Answer the real needs of the target group.
6. Involve journalists directly by creating together a Regional Plan of Communication Priorities, respecting the EU's communication priorities.
7. Always choose the training topics from among the communication priorities of the European Commission!
8. Assure visibility of the action.
9. Bring in European and national VIPs as trainers!
10. Get personally involved (as a supporting member if possible) in media associations and participate in their working groups.

Problems encountered

Because of the small number of journalists at local level, especially in small cities, managers often refuse to authorise their participation in the training.





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Illustrations





Writing for Europe

Brief description of the action including outputs

1. Preparation and dissemination of weekly bulletins on EU activities to several media in the region of Epirus (17 daily newspapers, 6 weekly newspapers, 16 radio programmes, 4 television programmes and 13 web portals) with news of the European Commission, European Parliament and Europe Direct Epirus.
2. Weekly radio emission on ERA (local radio) covering the prefectures of Epirus (Arta, Ioannina, Thesprotia, Preveza) and the prefecture of Aitolokarnania with subjects that are related to European Union policies.

Every Friday evening between 9.15-10pm listeners have the opportunity to learn about the action of Europe Direct Epirus via Greek Radio on the following frequencies: 765 khz –AM, 102.1 , 88.2 , 103, 94.1 Mhz – FM.

3. Conference meeting with representatives of the media in Epirus, every two years when EDIC Epirus organises a gathering of around 100-120 people for all the media of Epirus (print and electronic).

Information on the media concerned

- ✓ **local/regional newspapers**
- ✓ **local/regional periodicals**
- ✓ **local/regional TV**
- ✓ **local/regional radio**

Information on the target group

- ✓ **general public**
- ✓ **youth**
- ✓ **enterprises**
- ✓ **women**
- ✓ **unemployed**
- ✓ **disabled persons**
- ✓ **retired persons**

Inputs/Resources

1. Host organisation: the host structure runs the Europe Direct website and contributes to its promotion in every way. The website contributes to a wider dissemination of European information. The choice of the topics (themes, news, etc.) is carried out by the two office employees who e-mail all (1 200) the receivers afterwards.
2. Co-operation with members of the European Parliament and high-level guests: many events arranged by the EDIC can be broadcast through the internet. During the events, the guests are interviewed by telephone and whenever possible they can also attend the show.

Impact of the action

1. Very good collaboration with the media in the four prefectures of the region of Epirus (Arta, Ioannina, Thesprotia, Preveza) which could lead to a long-term partnership agreement. There is no co-operation agreement yet but the EDIC hopes to achieve this in 2011.
2. Increase in the number of personal contacts with individuals who work in media in Epirus.
3. Continual enlargement of the e-mailing list.
4. Additional requests for information: any matter of concern for citizens about European subjects can be solved in the EDIC office either by e-mail or by telephone. The radio spot plus all the necessary contact information is broadcast at the beginning and end of each of the programmes.

Methodology/process

1. Weekly informative press bulletins

The highlights of the topic are analysed in each show. The EDIC's members choose the topics from the information published on the websites of the European Commission's Directorates-General and information services of the European Parliament (newsletter).

The length of the bulletins depends on the topic being addressed. For example, a Eurostat report about Greece can fill an entire bulletin but some issues about the activities of the





Representation of the European Commission, the Parliament Office, and the latest news on EU policies can all be covered together in one single bulletin.

2. Interviews

The people interviewed are usually members of the local authorities, Greek members of European Parliament or experts who have a thorough knowledge of the subject.

3. Partnership and co-operation

The subjects are always of European interest (information, news, policy developments). They are directly managed by the EDIC Epirus or in partnership with other organisations and experts.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Interpersonal relations with media representatives
2. Continuous collaboration
3. Reliable information
4. Good planning

Problems encountered

None.

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The European Journalist of the Year

Brief description of the action including outputs

'The European Journalist of the Year' is an informal contest that aims to motivate the media and to facilitate communication about European themes. Every year, EDIC Bistrita awards the media representatives who were most active in communicating about Europe during the previous year. The action started from the idea that good motivation of media representatives can lead to an increase in quantitative and qualitative communication activities about the European Union.

The prize was first awarded in 2008; then it went to Florina Pop who, at that time, was a journalist at the Mesagerul journal. Through the contest, the number and quality of articles on European topics increased in 2009, as did the visibility of EDIC Bistrita within the community. To follow up on this positive outcome, in 2009 the EDIC decided to make awards to six local media representatives. A similar contest was organised in 2010.

Outputs from this initiative include awards, increased visibility for the EDIC, mutual recognition, and shared common values.

Information on the media concerned

✓ all kinds of media

Information on the target group

✓ general public

Inputs/Resources

1. Human resources: EDIC coordinator, information officer, documentation officer, IT coordinator – they all worked together on the monitoring, selection and organisation of the awards ceremony;
2. Financial resources: EDIC budget;
3. Technical resources and logistics: monitoring of media articles, ICT equipment from EDIC and CCI BN – host structure, internet connection;
4. EDIC partnerships and networks.

Impact of the action

The action has a triple impact:

1. As regards the media representatives: an increased interest in EDIC actions and European themes is reflected in the media, while the journalists gained new knowledge and skills;
2. As regards the general public: more general information on European themes and EC communication priorities;
3. As regards Bistrita EDIC: enhanced visibility of EDIC activities in the community.

Methodology/process

This is an informal contest that is launched 'unofficially' every year. This ensures the surprise nature of the contest and thus gives the winner even more satisfaction.

The EDIC team carries out an analysis to select the winning journalist(s). This is based on the quantity and quality of media articles published during the previous year and other activities carried out by journalists to communicate about European topics. The winners will receive diplomas and 'symbolic prizes' at a public event which will be held at the end of the year.

The award criteria are: quantity – the number of articles with themes related to the EU; quality – the clarity and reliability of the articles; frequency of contacts with the EDIC and, generally speaking, the interest of media representatives in EU themes.





The action can be repeated easily by other ED members, provided that each EDIC monitors the local media in order to create an inventory of articles published by each journalist in its community.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. The awards must be well motivated and the selection methodology should be very transparent in order to nurture the competition;
2. Organise a public awards ceremony to ensure public awareness of the results;
3. Include a surprise factor;
4. Trust and confidence.

Problems encountered

No problems encountered.

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Illustration

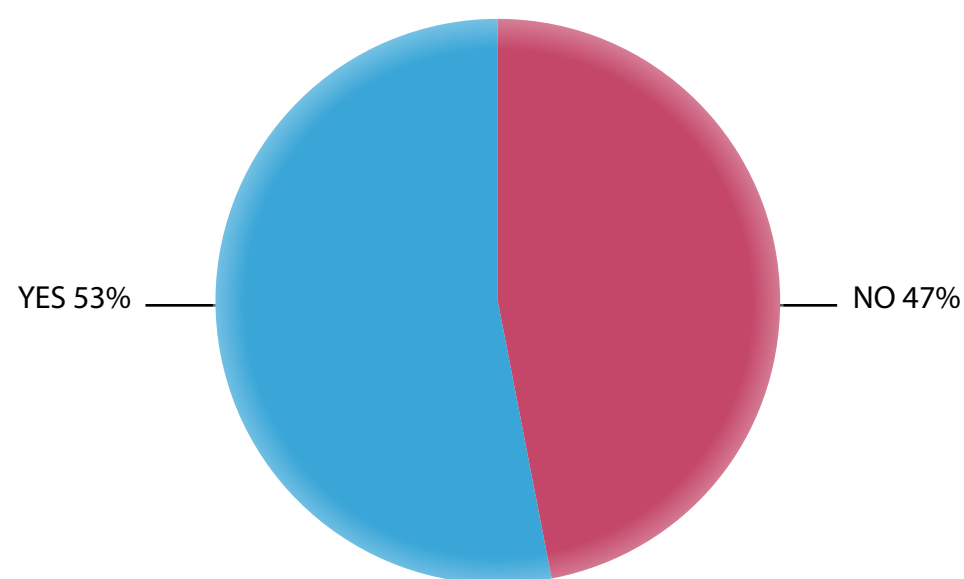




2. Partnering with the media

The survey also explored the nature of the media relations. Just over half the respondents (95 EDICs out of 180 participants) reported privileged access to local and regional media (chart3).

Privileged contacts with local media (chart3)



This privileged access relies on a series of factors such as interpersonal contacts, a regular provision of reliable and accurate information, regular working meetings, and previous successful co-operation activities.

Once the privileged contacts have been established, they can lead to actual partnerships with local TV and radio stations as well as with local newspapers. This facilitates both the dissemination of information on EU issues and enhances the EDIC's visibility. The EDICs play a crucial role in identifying the most appropriate content for the local communities.

Two examples of partnerships, one with a local newspaper and one with a local radio, are detailed in the following good practices:

► *The Euroconsultant*

The *EDIC Poprad (Slovakia)* initially conducted a survey of local media to create its local media portfolio. As a result of this, a long-term collaboration has been set up with one local newspaper. This enables the EDIC to publish regularly information on EU issues which have a significant impact on local citizens' lives.

► *L'Europe en chemin*

Once a month, the *EDIC Haute-Loire (France)* records a 30-minute radio programme on European topics. Due to the success of this programme over the last five years, it is now part of the radio station's global programme.





The Euroconsultant

Brief description of the action including outputs

Six years ago, the EDIC Poprad has become a member of the Europe Direct Network. In the light of this, the EDIC conducted a survey of the local media in order to create a local media portfolio. This enables effective communication with the press to pass the messages on the EU agenda over to the local community and to be able to address citizen's thinking and everyday lives at the local level.

The EDIC has initially targeted a group of local media (two newspapers and one local TV) with good territorial coverage. At the end, the EDIC has proposed long-term co-operation to one of the newspapers, on a regular basis in the field of communicating the EU agenda to the local public.

Information on the media concerned

✔ **local/regional newspaper**

Information on the target group

✔ **general public**

Inputs/Resources

1. One person able to communicate well with different types of audiences representing the public/private/NGO sector at the regional/local level;
2. Usual office equipment (1 PC, printer, internet, copy machine, mobile phone);
3. Official EU websites as sources of information at EU level;
4. Regional and local municipal government websites as local/regional sources of information;
5. Ideas generated at local meetings and workshops as real feedback from local people aiming to improve their quality of life.

Impact of the action

The communication outputs are columns on EU hot topics published on a regular basis in the local media to relate EU policy to local circumstances.

Another advantage for the EDIC is the strengthening of its position at the local level by regularly penetrating public opinion with EU issues that make a strong impact on the citizen's life. It mainly generates questions from local people asking for more detailed information and opens the opportunities for more visits to the EDIC.

Methodology/process

The EDIC attracted the attention of the local community by regularly publishing EU information and in particular by showing the impact of many of the EU initiatives and actions on citizens' daily lives. The EDIC publishes a monthly column (with the ED logo on the top) in Podtatranské noviny, a local newspaper based in Poprad. The column provides not only an explanation of the hot topic in question but it often gives some practical contact information and recommendations for the local citizen.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

At the very beginning of its operation in 2005, the EDIC developed a good local communication strategy focusing on key local players and the most important public opinion-makers in the media field. The EDIC paid specific attention to the selection of EU topics which were perceived as sensitive by the local community or which offered new development opportunities for the region.

1. The EDIC should develop a good local communication strategy;
2. The strategy should target key local players;
3. The strategy should also include the most important public opinion-makers in the media field.





Problems encountered

The key aspect of either problem or success is to agree on common communication priorities on a long-term basis with the target media at the local level that will result, on the one hand, in highlighting the EDIC position in the community by generating awareness of EU issues and, on the other hand, positioning that local media as an important local player which is able to translate the EU-level topics into local challenges.

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Illustrations



Column on the EU Student Exchange Programme



Column on the European Year of Volunteering 2011





L'Europe en chemin

Brief description of the action including outputs

Once a month, the EDIC manager and a member of the "European Movement" association record a 30-minute radio programme about Europe. European policies, problems and strategies in line with current events are discussed during the programmes.

Information on the media concerned

✔ **local/regional radio**

Information on the target group

✔ **general public**

Inputs/Resources

1. The programme is broadcast by the local RCF radio (Christian associative radio);
2. Human resources – the EDIC manager, one person from the European Movement and one technician employed by the radio station;
3. No need for financial resources – you simply need to find a radio station willing to broadcast a programme about Europe.

Impact of the action

The audience is rather small as the radio station's target group is quite specific (for Christians) but it is the only local media which is interested in European topics and which enables the EDIC's members to express themselves. By collaborating with this station, the EDIC reaches a new target group as, generally speaking, its audience is not accustomed to hearing about Europe.

Methodology/process

The local RCF radio was looking for new volunteers to prepare a programme. The EDIC applied and was selected to record a programme once a month which is broadcast twice a month.

Each month, the EDIC manager and a volunteer from the European Movement exchange e-mails to choose a topic for the programme. Then they each prepare their script. During the recording there is an open dialogue based on the preparations of each partner. The EDIC's members have also to select a song to illustrate the topic covered by the programme.

The emission has been broadcast for the last five years and is now part of the radio station's global programme.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Find associative radio stations which are looking for programmes about Europe;
2. Take into account the interests of the target groups;
3. Being interested in this type of media.

Problems encountered

Trying to find some interesting things to promote about Europe because the news is not always appealing.





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Illustration





3. Patterns in working with the media

There is a wide diversity of patterns to illustrate the co-operation between EDICs and local media. These take into account different parameters, such as the EDICs' areas of expertise, the information needs of the citizens, the media audiences, and a region's socio-economic features.

3.1. Long-lasting co-operation with local radio stations

Due to their professionalism and the quality of the information provided on EU issues, several EDICs have managed to get access to local and regional TV and radio programmes as content providers on EU issues. When EDICs cover issues related to the socio-economic environment of their respective region and/or issues which affect the citizens' lives, they make a significant contribution to attracting large audiences of viewers and listeners.

Three good practices illustrate the long-lasting co-operation between EDICs and the local media:

► *Weekly radio programmes for over a decade*

Since 1999, once a week, the *EDIC Badajoz (Spain)* broadcasts a programme at a local radio station in order to inform local citizens on EU issues. Despite the wide diversity of topics, the focus on EU agricultural policy and rural policies is a core component of these programmes because of the region's rural character.

► *Four weekly radio programmes*

Since 2007, the *EDIC Entre Douro e Minho (Portugal)* has been involved in four weekly radio programmes. This action has generated a considerable impact in terms of EDIC visibility. The success of the media relations is based on the EDIC's capacity to respond to the interests of each radio station and to adapt the messages to the profiles of the radio stations' audiences.

► *Buongiorno regione*

On a weekly basis, the *EDIC Basilicata (Italy)* promotes job opportunities at European level on RAI3 (regional branch of the national Italian television). The programme is viewed by 40% of the regional population and contributes widely to the visibility of the EDIC at local level.





Weekly radio programmes for over a decade

Brief description of the action including outputs

Once a week, the European Centre for Information and Promotion of Extremadura (EDIC CEIPREX) broadcasts a local radio programme in the region of Olivenza (Badajoz/Spain) during which the latest European news are presented for half an hour. This programme started in September 1999.

Each member of the centre provides 'hot news' about the European Union to keep inhabitants of the Olivenza region well informed. The programme is live and is broadcast every Thursday from 13:30 to 14:00.

For example, the staff members presented a lot of news about the Spanish Presidency of the European Union during the first semester of 2010. The CEIPREX focuses in particular on EU agricultural policy, because of the rural character of its region. Special programmes on various themes such as Europe Day, the enlargement of the European Union, the euro, etc. have also been broadcast.

Information on the media concerned

✔ **local/regional radio**

Information on the target group

✔ **general public**

Inputs/Resources

1. One radio speaker and two CEIPREX staff members;
2. CEIPREX uses a local radio station's installations, microphones, headphones, etc. to broadcast its programmes;
3. Current news from different websites, such as Rapid.

Impact of the action

The radio programme is broadcast locally to approximately 15 000 inhabitants every week of the year except for August. However, the actual audience may be closer to 150 000 listeners as the radio station is also popular among the inhabitants of Badajoz, the capital of the province. The programme is broadcast live and each week the EDIC tries to inform citizens about the latest European Union news.

Those who are interested in more information than provided by the programme may come to the EDIC office. They may also visit CEIPREX's website, blog, Facebook page or Twitter account.

Methodology/process

First the EDIC gathers news from websites such as RAPID to prepare a description of the items which could be covered by the programme. During the transmission, the radio speaker and CEIPREX staff discuss the selected news items. The EDIC simply gives brief outlines of some of the shorter, less important items.

The programme is live and listeners are invited to phone in questions about the news they are interested in. The EDIC tries to answer questions directly but may refer callers to the EDIC office for more complex questions.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Current news;
2. Present the news in a simple way;
3. Involve listeners in the programme.

Problems encountered

Only technical problems are encountered from time to time with the radio signal.





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Illustration





Four weekly radio programmes

Brief description of the action including outputs

Since 2007, Europe Direct Entre Douro e Minho is responsible for four weekly radio programmes. At the beginning, all the programmes were 25 minutes long, but recently two programmes were prolonged into one hour.

One of the radio stations also publishes a newspaper about European issues. The head of the European Commission Representation in Portugal, Margarida Marques, and the director of the Office of the European Parliament in Portugal, Paulo Sande are interviewed alternately in the programmes. All the emissions are also available online.

Programmes are broadcast by the following stations:

- Espaço Europeu, Radio Antena Minho (Braga)
<http://www.antena-minho.pt/index.php>
which is retransmitted by Radio Foz do Ave (Vila Do Conde);
- Magazine Europeu, Radio Beira Litoral 101.7
<http://www.rbl-online.com/emissao.html>
- A Voz da Europa, Radio Ondas do Lima (Ponte de Lima)
<http://www.rol.nortenet.pt/online.htm>
- Programme HORAESA, Radio Regional de Arouca
<http://www.radioregionaldearouca.com/>

Information on the media concerned

✔ **local/regional radio and online, too**

Information on the target group

✔ **general public**

Inputs/Resources

1. Human resources involved depend on the level of co-operation which differs from one radio station to another;
2. Financial resources – EDIC budget;
3. Two of EDIC's staff (part- time) write texts, choose music for all the programmes, and edit each programme. There is one exception: A Voz da Europa-Radio Ondas do Lima is recorded at the radio station but also edited by EDIC staff;
4. EDIC technical resources – two computers and Adobe Edition software;
5. The radio stations are located in different country locations so it is important to have a car to visit them.

Impact of the action

This action has had a considerable impact on the community and in the media. These programmes have made a significant contribution to increasing the visibility of the EDIC, too.

The EDIC receives regular feedback which is very encouraging to continue and improve the project. Using radio and other traditional media contributions, the EDIC is able to reach people who do not usually care about European Union issues. They find news about Europe in the newspaper while drinking a coffee or hear one of the radio programmes when driving.

The staff members feel that these efforts are more important than working with the social media because the social media usually only reach people who are already aware of European issues. For example, how many people talk about the European Union when they communicate on Facebook?

Traditional media outlets continue to be very important in communication strategies.

Methodology/process

Everything begins with dialogue with the radio stations to find a way that works for everyone.

It is important to understand that a weekly radio programme requires regular, very demanding and continuous effort.





The EDIC prepares texts and chooses music for the programme recording at a predefined date. Sometimes it is necessary to reorganise schedules, so dialogue is crucial to ensure the smooth running of each programme.

As mentioned above, there are two hour-long programmes – Espaço Europeu of Radio Antena Minho and Magazine Europeu of Radio Voz de Basto. This is more difficult for the EDIC to manage but is worthwhile as it benefits the Centre's partnership with the radio station.

The EDIC's co-operation with the stations depends on the individual needs of each station. The EDIC tries to make programmes which are suitable for everyone, in a very simple language. Each edition consists generally of three or four parts: News, European Publications, Crossroads, and Curiosities.

News: The European Commission's RAPID press releases in Portuguese are very important for preparing the news because the EDIC does not have much time to translate texts.

European publications: In this part the EDIC gives information about the EU Bookshop and other European publications, which is important for teachers and students in particular.

Crossroads: This section deals with countries and European Union programmes (Erasmus, PAC, etc.) and is interesting for the general public.

Curiosities: Concours, quiz and other curiosities.

The support from the European Commission Representation in Portugal is very important in order to develop this action.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. The EDIC needs to respond to each one of the radio's interests. They are very different and also depend on the cultural level of journalists.
2. The message has to be adapted to the audience, clear but not too long.
3. The EDIC needs to focus on issues that direct or indirectly influence people's lives.
4. Curiosities about European Union countries are very important to increase listeners' interest in EU programmes.

Problems encountered

Trying to find more time to improve the programmes.

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Illustration





Buongiorno Regione

Brief description of the action including outputs

EDIC Basilicata has a weekly slot for promoting European job opportunities (in general taken from EURES, the European Job Mobility Portal). Rai3 is the regional branch of the national Italian television. Every week, the EDIC has three to five minutes at its disposal between 07:30 and 08:00 to present one job opportunity. The broadcast is seen by 40% of Basilicata's regional population (our region). The texts of the job proposals are also approved by Rai3 and presented in a structured way during the interview with an EDIC staff member. For each job opportunity the EDIC gives the following details:

1. Who is offering the vacancy;
2. Town and country where the opportunity is available;
3. Description of the work to be done;
4. Salary proposed;
5. Selection criteria and deadline for applications;
6. Contact for more information.

Information on the media concerned

✓ **local/regional TV (the regional branch of Italian national television)**

Information on the target group

✓ **general public**

Inputs/Resources

1. Human resources: two different people from the EDIC generally promote the job proposals alternating each week;
2. Financial resources: only the costs of the staff members of the EDIC;
3. Technical resources: all provided by Rai3 television;
4. Logistics: the programme is recorded directly in the EDIC premises;
5. The EDIC generally uses the job opportunities coming via EURES. In some cases, the EDIC uses information coming from other networks.

Impact of the action

The programme has a great impact because it is viewed by 40% of the regional population: this means that this action has significantly increased the visibility of the EDIC but also the promotion of the services on EU issues which are offered by the EDIC in the region.

Following every programme, the EDIC is flooded with requests for more information about the job offers. In fact, after each television broadcast the EDIC receives:

1. At least 20-40 specific requests per week by phone;
2. About 15-20 specific requests per week through other internet tools, especially e-mail and Facebook;
3. A large number of visits to the EDIC website.

Methodology/process

Every week the EDIC records a television programme. The Rai3 television crew and a journalist come to the EDIC office to carry out the interview about the job opportunities. Before the actual broadcast, decisions are made concerning the most appropriate day for the transmission and the job opportunities. Then the programme is recorded in the form of an interview between someone from the office with the journalist who is asking for specific information about each job offer. After the recording, the television crew prepares schedules which are presented during the broadcast and which will serve to focus the viewer's attention on the most important points.





Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. The success is due to the use of the media: Rai3 is the television channel most viewed at regional level (40% of the regional population view Buongiorno Regione each day);
2. You need to have connections/relations with directors and/or journalists at the local/regional/national television stations;
3. It is important that the person who is preparing the job proposals has no problems with a television interview;
4. It is also important that your website and your newsletter promote the same proposals as those presented on TV;
5. The television emission must be broadcast at least weekly (the same day every week) to keep the viewers' loyalty.

Problems encountered

No problems encountered.

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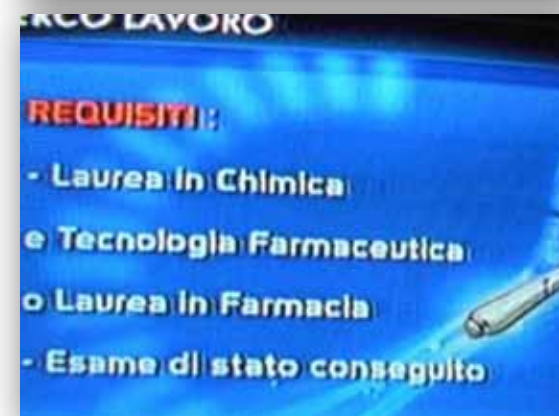
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Illustrations





3.2. High frequency of co-operation

The EDICs have managed to set up partnership relations with local and regional media based on at least a monthly appearance, if not more regular appearances during the month.

This type of co-operation with the media is very demanding as it must keep alive the interests of both viewers and listeners: on the one hand, the EDICs need to monitor EU and policy developments on a regular basis; on the other hand, they need to target EU content of interest to local communities.

Two good practices illustrate co-operation with local and regional media on a regular basis:

► *The voice of Europe Direct*

Every month, the *EDIC Almeria (Spain)* broadcasts a 30-minute radio programme on a regional radio station, normally on the ninth of each month (see reference to 9 May, the Day of Europe) which helps local citizens remember the date of the monthly broadcast. This programme has increased the number of people who know about EDIC Almería and has also reinforced media relations at the EDIC.

► *Europe in the field*

Over one year, the *EDIC Trentino (Italy)* has broadcast 40 editions on issues related to CAP (the common agriculture policy), the Trentino Rural Development Programme and agriculture in the EU Member States, both on a regional television station and on a local radio programme. In addition, an e-newsletter was published on a fortnightly basis giving updates on European agriculture news.





The Voice of Europe Direct

Brief description of the action including outputs

Every month, EDIC Almeria makes a 30-minute radio programme which is broadcast by the 'Agencia de la Comunicación Local', the radio station at Diputación de Almería (EDIC Almería's host structure). Its broadcasts reach the entire Almería province. The programme is normally broadcast on the ninth of each month (as 9 May is Europe Day) and gives the audience information about EDIC Almería's activities or European current affairs, such as the Lisbon Treaty, accompanied by a commentary from an expert.

Information on the media concerned

📻 **local/regional radio**

Information on the target group

📻 **general public**

Inputs/Resources

1. A radio station that covers your region, if possible;
2. Someone to prepare a brief dossier about a topic with points of discussion;
3. A guest speaker who is an expert on the topic of discussion or can share his/her experience related to the topic;
4. A radio journalist (try to always have the same one).

Impact of the action

The geographical impact of this action is very wide as it can potentially reach the whole population of the Almería province (500 000 inhabitants). It is also a very flexible tool to communicate with citizens on Europe as it can be used to:

- Discuss a wide variety of issues from activities organised by the EDIC to European current affairs;
- Promote European citizenship and the opportunities that the European Union offers its citizens;
- Disseminate European values through programmes such as the European Voluntary Service;
- Encourage the population to participate in the European debate, etc.

The programme has also helped to increase the number of people who know about EDIC Almería and who are using its services. Furthermore, it has enhanced the media relations with the radio station including credibility in the media sector.

The EDIC's members have noticed that issues relating to young people have a multiple impact on society as they are of interest to youngsters, their relatives, friends, politicians, etc.

Methodology/process

At the beginning of each month, the EDIC person responsible for this action proposes a topic for the next radio programme as well as the participating guest speaker. The topic selection is based on the activities which are scheduled for the following month and on current European affairs.

Once agreed by the coordinator of EDIC Almería, a brief dossier is prepared on the topic and questions to discuss during the programme in collaboration with the guest speaker. It is very important to approach the EU topic from a practical perspective focusing on those aspects that are close to the citizens.

The week before recording, the dossier is sent and explained to the radio journalist who presents the programme. Using his/her contributions, a final script is prepared. It is very important to get the journalist involved and interested in the subject as he/she will 'sound' more enthusiastic 'on air'.





The programme is normally broadcast live on the ninth of each month (if it is a working day), although the EDIC has the option to pre-record the programme on another day. This flexibility ensures the participation of the selected speaker, thereby reinforcing the quality and success of this media action.

The programme consists of a brief presentation of the subject followed by an open debate. The participants include two representatives from EDIC Almería, the programme organizer, the EDIC coordinator and guest speakers. If the debate is about an event or activity which has already taken place, the EDIC invites (preferably young) people who participated in these activities. When the programme focuses on a current European issue, the EDIC invites an expert who can comment specifically on issues of interest to citizens.

The EDIC's members always send a copy of the recording to the speakers. This seems to be well appreciated among those who are not used to working with the mass media or making a presentation to a large audience.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Choose a topic of interest to the citizens (a successful activity of the ED Action Plan or an issue of current European affairs);
2. Highlight the practical side of the topic related to people's everyday lives;
3. Draw attention to the fact that the options/opportunities/benefits discussed during the programme arise thanks to our European citizenship;
4. Prepare a script based on the main points together with the guest speaker and the radio journalist;
5. Inviting the same radio journalist to each programme encourages him/her to be more involved in European Union issues.

Problems encountered

No problems were encountered.

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Illustration





Europe in the field

Brief description of the action including outputs

This one-year project (July 2008-May 2009) was part of an initiative of DG Agriculture on "Information measures relating to the CAP". To disseminate the news for this project, EDIC Trentino used those information channels that are easily accessible to a large number of citizens, i.e. TV, radio and the internet.

The 40 editions of the TV programme (around ten minutes each) were broadcast four times a week on a regional television station. Each edition dealt with three topics: CAP, the Trentino Rural Development Programme (RDP), and agriculture in the Member States. There were also 40 editions of the radio programme which focused on European rural development news of the week, CAP and the Trentino RDP.

In addition, an e-newsletter was published on a fortnightly basis giving updates on European agriculture news.

To get more people involved, EDIC Trentino also organised a quiz. At the end of each broadcast, the staff members asked a question about agriculture related to one of the Member States. To improve the response rate, ten lucky participants were offered the chance to win a trip to Brussels.

Information on the media concerned

- ✓ local/regional radio
- ✓ local/regional TV

Information on the target group

- ✓ general public

Inputs/Resources

1. Human resources: one member of the EDIC staff on a part-time basis for ten months;
2. Financial resources: around 70 000 euros;
3. Technical resources: television and radio equipment; the video archive from DG COMM's Audiovisual Service;
4. Other important elements: close collaboration between the EDIC and the TV and radio crews as well as collaboration with EDICs in other Member States.

Impact of the action

The number of television viewers and radio listeners (certified by the AUDITEL and AUDIRADIO data provided by broadcasters) indicates that the project made a good impact. The programme had a weekly average of around 6 503 television viewers (with more than 39 000 contacts every week) and 23 000 listeners.

101 people participated in the weekly 'competition'.

In the last issue of the e-newsletter, the EDIC published a questionnaire on the quality of the project and received very good results.

Other indications that the project was well received:

- The Italian Ministry for Agriculture asked to upload one edition of the TV programme on the 'Rete Rurale Nazionale' website;
- The European Commission Representation in Bulgaria asked to present the project to the Bulgarian EDICs;
- Some local newspapers and magazines published articles about the project;
- Finally, many citizens have asked if a new edition of the programme was scheduled.

Methodology/process

After the approval of the project, the EDIC started to define specific contents for every edition of the TV and radio programmes and to prepare texts for the first editions.

The most difficult part was collecting the right images for the TV programme. The EDIC's members examined all the agricultural videos in DG COMM's Audiovisual Service and





drew up shortlists of the available images. Unfortunately, DG COMM's archive does not store agricultural images for all the Member States, so as the EDIC needed these for the 'Agriculture in the EU' part of the programme, the staff members contacted EDIC colleagues in some Member States to find the appropriate images.

Each week, the TV station received the text for the edition with the list of images to use. The text was proof-read by the journalist and the technician downloaded the videos from DG COMM's archive. One EDIC colleague visited the TV studio each week to 'launch' the programme and to close it with the competition question. Every edition was broadcast four times a week.

Similar, but simpler, work was done for the radio programme.

In parallel, the EDIC worked on a monthly e-newsletter and updated the centre's website with weekly uploads of the TV and radio editions as well as the e-newsletter.

As regards the competition, the emails were archived every week and a raffle was held to pick the winners.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. 'Go local': present regional projects, interview people from the region;
2. Involve and engage the television viewers and listeners, e.g. with a simple competition;
3. Make sure you have a regular presence on the screen (a weekly one is probably best);
4. Use both TV and radio: in this way it is possible to reach a lot of citizens because the two media often have different audiences;
5. Take the work seriously.

Problems encountered

First of all, the cost of the TV and radio broadcasters: without co-funding from the EU programme it would have been impossible to achieve the project. It was very tedious having to check all the videos one by one in order to find appropriate images.

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Illustration



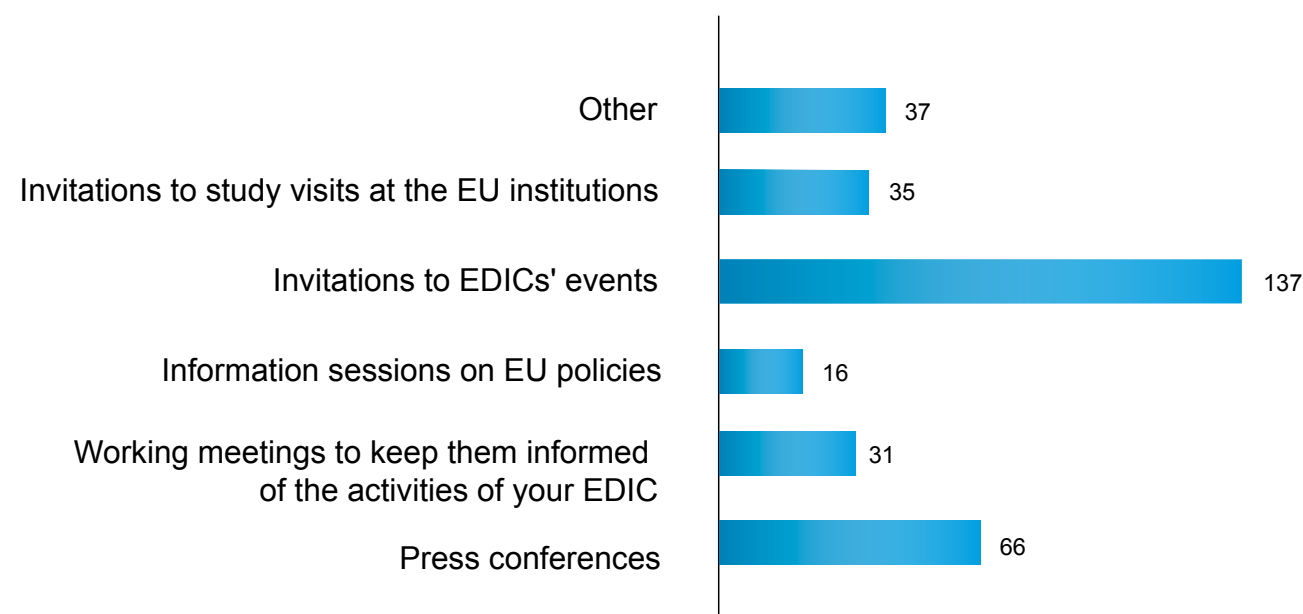


3.3. Different types of co-operation

The survey shows that a significant majority of the respondents (76%) often invite local media representatives to EDICs events, including press conferences (37%), as it appears in chart 4.

A few EDICs (17%) have managed to organise working meetings with media representatives so as to inform them on EDIC activities and/or to discuss their interest in EU issues. A small group of EDICs (19%) has even been involved in organising study visits to EU Institutions.

Typology of interactions (chart4)



Two good practices illustrate the key role played by media and journalists in the successful coverage of EDIC events, including running debates on EU issues:

► Organisation of Europe Day 2010

The *EDIC Lučenec (Slovakia)* organised a unique Europe Day on 7 May 2010. A popular radio station was involved in the announcement, promotion and moderation of Europe Day in Lučenec. Co-operation with this well-known popular radio station at local level secured a high level of publicity for both the EDIC and the Europe Day event.

► Open social debates

The open social debates run by the *EDIC Karditsa (Greece)* involve different experts, including journalists who present their angles and opinions about a particular European issue. The media representatives play a crucial role by helping to put the chosen topic in a wider perspective and, as notable partners of the EDIC, they can facilitate access to (their own) media to promote the event and disseminate the results of the debates.





Organisation of Europe Day 2010

Brief description of the action including outputs

EDIC Lučenec organised Europe Day on 7 May 2010 in Lučenec together with an external company. The popular Slovak radio station 'Radio Express' was asked to moderate on this occasion. This turned out to be a great idea, as their moderator, Ivan "Bindo" Bindas, was able to keep people really interested throughout the programme, partly by organising competitions in cooperation with the EDIC but also thanks to the moderator's own witty remarks and comments. The day turned out to be an unforgettable experience for everyone involved. The EDIC media sponsor – Radio Express – ran the promotion by using banners and posters with radio station logos. The event was announced on Radio Express via a commercial ad which was broadcast four times over three days.

Information on the media concerned

✔ **local/regional radio**

Information on the target group

✔ **general public**

Inputs/Resources

1. Human resources: co-operation with an external company was a good way to connect the organisation of this type of event by collaborating with the most popular radio station in Slovakia;
2. Technical resources: data from internet, market research;
3. Financial resources: resources from an EC grant and co-financing from host organisation;
4. Logistics: to ensure the attendance of many visitors from the region at the event, make an interesting programme with a famous moderator and then promote it through a popular radio station;

Impact of the action

This was an unforgettable experience for the EDIC members, as well as for the guest performers and the moderator. Approximately 300 visitors from the region came to the event where besides enjoying an interesting programme they were also able to get information about the objectives, priorities and activities of the EU and together celebrate the Europe Day.

Methodology/process

As said above, Europe Day 2010 was arranged in co-operation with an external company which was responsible for the organisational and technical aspects of the event. Participation of the radio presenter Ivan "Bindo" Bindas was possible as the radio station agreed to support the event and the EDIC paid for its promotion. The radio station was friendly and provided 30% discount on their services, which included broadcasting a radio commercial of 30 seconds (four times: morning and afternoon) over three days before the event. The commercial was created by staff from the EDIC.

The radio station also wanted to be the only sponsor of this event. The EDIC had to promote their logo on the posters and through banners at the location. All promotional activities had to be approved by the radio station, according to the mutual agreement. The station asked for photos from the event. The EDIC generally co-operated very well with the station and this mutual co-operation will continue in the future.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Work with a popular radio station to secure a high level of publicity;
2. Collaborate with a successful moderator to attract many listeners (approximately 300 visitors from the region attended the event);
3. Search media interested in sponsoring the event to lower the promotional budget;
4. Using a right approach, the EDIC was able to celebrate Europe Day and provide information about its activities and about the EU's actions and priorities in the region;
5. Create the possibility to secure future co-operation with a radio broadcaster.





Problems encountered

Variable weather was a minor problem during the event.

Contact details (for further information)

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Michaela Hrnčiarová

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Illustrations





Open social debates

Brief description of the action including outputs

The EDIC Kardista has organised Open Social Debates. It is a methodology based on public participation and involvement of different representatives presenting their opinions/ideas about a particular issue. The media representatives play a crucial role in the procedure because they ask questions on topics of interest to the general public. It is essential to involve journalists in this procedure because they put the chosen topic in a wider perspective (even out of their area of competence), then promote it.

The implementation of Open Social Debates has brought significant results which sometimes even exceed the initial expectations. Some of these are listed below:

- The participation of a large number of representatives who are familiar with the subject;
- The involvement of journalists from different types of media and their corresponding audience;
- Raising awareness among relevant target groups, such as decision-making stakeholders and local authorities, to help them become active and make innovative decisions;
- Awareness-raising beyond local boundaries.

Information on the media concerned

✔ **local/regional newspapers**

Information on the target group

✔ **general public**

Inputs/Resources

1. Media representatives (local and regional newspapers – periodicals – TV – radio);
2. EDIC's representatives to coordinate the discussion among the participants;
3. Two/three relevant stakeholders involved with the target issue;
4. Suitable information material (digital and/or printed) related to the subject. It is an important feature upon which the debate will be based on;
5. Supporting presentations (.ppt) to facilitate the debate.

Impact of the action

The information produced during the Open Social Debates procedure can be disseminated with journalists' support. The results can be announced via a thematic regional radio programme which treats different issues every month (e.g. social affairs). Every Sunday, a local newspaper highlights a subject which has resulted from one of the Open social Debates. There are Athens News Agency journalists who are correspondents in every region and provide the Agency with regional information. This is the best way to promote information or a newsletter at the national level. Both national and private media have access to the Agency so there is a greater possibility that the information will become widespread.

Methodology/process

First, the relevant stakeholders determine the topic of discussion during the Open Social Debate. Then the working group chooses the most appropriate participants from each sector (e.g. public authority, private sector, relevant chambers, NGOs, etc.) and invites them to the table. The involvement of media/journalists is important. The working group prepares the working document and other background material upon which the debate will be based. During the debate, journalists can submit their questions and share their opinion regarding the topic being discussed. In the days following the debate, a wide range of information is made available to the local media, providing opportunities to discuss the results of the debate during conferences/seminars/workshops. The interaction with local journalists ensures the continued support for the working group involved in these debates.





Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. The issue being tackled should be relevant to the interests of a region and 'catchy' for each area (e.g. rural development through the new CAP, etc.).
2. Choice of journalists who have access to media with national exposure (e.g. national TV, radio, etc.).

Problems encountered

Not applicable

Contact details (for further information)

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Victoria Topouzi

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Illustrations



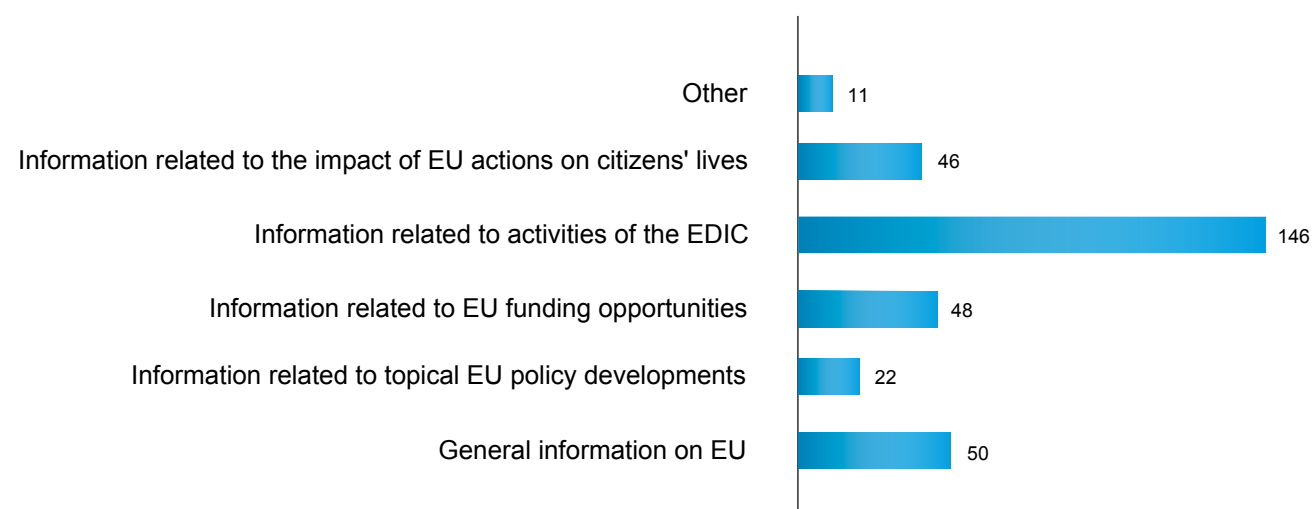


3.4. Different interests in EU information

An overwhelming majority of the respondents (81%) has succeeded in getting information about EDIC activities published in local and regional media, as shown in chart 5.

As far as thematic issues are concerned, it seems that the media have an “equal interest” in general information on the EU, information related to EU funding opportunities, and information related to the impact of EU actions on citizens’ lives.

Type of information published (chart 5)



Three good practices illustrate media interest in coverage of topics affecting citizens’ lives:

► *Information spots on Athens radio 9.84*

The *EDIC Athens (Greece)* broadcasts radio spots on a local well-known radio station during important dates and events, such as Europe Day (9 May), Women’s Day (8 March), the Day of Languages (26 September), and the European elections day. The Deputy Mayor of Athens and other personalities are also interviewed on these days. The radio station’s large audience and the guests’ profiles contribute to the success of the radio spots as well as to enhancing the EDIC’s visibility.

► *Antenna Europa*

In co-operation with the *EDIC Pisa* and the *EDIC Livorno*, the *EDIC Firenze (Italy)* has been involved in 25 broadcasts which were aired at peak times on a regional radio station. The broadcasts could also be listened to via streaming on the EDIC website. Co-operation between the EDICs and the radio station has contributed significantly to the EDICs’ visibility.

► *Journalism Contest “2010 – European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion”*

The *EDIC Piatra Neamt (Romania)* organised a regional contest for journalists on poverty and social exclusion, one for professional journalists working for the regional media and another for young amateur journalists. In addition, the EDIC host structure organised a public debate on “2010 – European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion”. The competition on this interesting issue and contributions to a public debate on the European Year 2010 have reinforced the centre’s media visibility.





Information spots on Athens radio 9.84

Brief description of the action including outputs

The ERA 9.84 radio station broadcasts on the Municipality of Athens radio (host structure of EDIC Athens). It is a very well-known radio station with a large audience in the capital addressing the broad public of Athens' Municipality.

Through brief radio spots lasting 30 to 60 seconds and broadcast five to six times a day, the EDIC Athens informs the citizens about European Union policies.

The radio spots are complemented by interviews with the Deputy Mayor of Athens on the occasion of important dates and events such as:

- 8 March - Women's day
- 7 April - Global Day of Health
- 9 May - Europe Day
- 26 September - Day of languages
- European elections.

Information on the media concerned

✓ **local/regional radio**

Information on the target group

✓ **general public**

Inputs/Resources

1. Human resources : the staff members of the EDIC search for the content and prepare the messages;
2. Financial resources: the costs of the radio spots are co-financed by the EC Representation grant allocated to local EDICs;
3. Technical resources: the content of the radio spots is sent by email to the radio station's public relations department.

Impact of the action

It is very difficult to assess the overall impact of the radio spots.

However, the EDIC has observed an increase in the number of phone calls after the spots, in particular concerning issues related to youth.

Methodology/process

The EDIC collaborates with the Department of Public Relations at ERA 9.84 on the schedule and management of the information spots on EU issues.

The EDIC also arranges the appointments for the interviews with the Deputy Mayor, which are recorded in the radio station's studio.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Target topics of interest towards the citizens
2. Adapt the message to the audiences
3. Prepare brief and appealing messages for the radio spots

Problems encountered

No particular problems. On the contrary, the cooperation is easy going because the radio station belongs to the Municipality of Athens.





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Illustration





Antenna Europa

Brief description of the action including outputs

Europe Direct Firenze has implemented Antenna Europa in cooperation with Europe Direct Pisa and Europe Direct Livorno.

A total number of 25 radio broadcasts have been produced in a period of 8 months. Each broadcast was composed of three sections: General EU news from Brussels, focus on a specific theme and information on Europe Direct Information Centre's events.

The broadcast lasted 12 minutes and was aired in peak viewing time on Controradio e Radio Toscana Network. Each broadcast was aired twice on Controradio (Thursday at 15.45 and Sunday at 21.00), once a week on Radio Toscana Network, and could also be listened to via streaming on the radio website.

Each broadcast link is posted on social networks, such as Twitter and Facebook:

2010 <http://www.edfirenze.eu/category/on-air/>

2009 http://www.europedirecttoscana.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=131&Itemid=123.

Information on the media concerned

✓ **local/regional radio**

Information on the target group

✓ **general public**

Inputs/Resources

1. Two journalists, one Europe Direct Information Centre coordinator.
2. 6.000 euros for each Europe Direct Information Centre.
3. Broadcast radio and a website.

Impact of the action

10 000 listeners for each broadcast.

Methodology/process

Monthly coordination meeting with the three EDICs in order to prepare a calendar of the themes. Each week, the coordinator collected the information (people to be interviewed, seminars to be attended, etc.) for the broadcast and sent it to the journalist.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Prepare a good calendar.
2. Fix a weekly deadline to collect the information.
3. Provide press releases of each event to be promoted.

Problems encountered

Some months there are lots of news and events to promote, but at other times it takes longer to find relevant material suitable for the broadcast.





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Illustration





Journalism Contest '2010 – European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion'

Brief description of the action including outputs

During September and October 2010, Europe Direct North-East together with its host structure, the Agency for Regional Development North-East, organised a regional contest for journalists on poverty and social exclusion. There were two sections: one for professional journalists working for the regional media and another for young amateur journalists.

Prizes were awarded in each category, the most important being a trip to Brussels to visit the press departments of the EU institutions.

The contest was launched in late August and ended on the 27th of October 2010. There were several press releases and radio announcements about the competition and journalists appeared receptive to it; a large number of participants requested further information from the EDIC.

Unfortunately, by the end of October, only six journalists had actually entered the contest. Their articles were judged by Ms Mihaela Danga, Director of Independent Journalism Center in Bucharest, Ms Gabriela Macoveiu, Director of Regional Communication and Promotion Department of RDA North-East, and Ms Roxana Pintilescu, Coordinator of Europe Direct North-East Centre.

Because of the small number of contributions, the contest was reorganised and the following prizes were awarded:

- 1st prize, a semi-professional camera, was awarded to Lucian Balanuta, a third-year student in the Journalism and Communication Sciences Faculty at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iasi, for his article "Last night went normally, first night in wheelchair".
- 2nd prize, an iPod, was awarded to Amalia Dascalu, reporter at Ziarul de Iasi newspaper for her article "Abandoned children in Iasi".
- 3rd prize, a set of books, was awarded to Mugurel Gagi, senior editor at Crai Nou newspaper in Suceava for his article "Sasca Mica, a different world".

- 1st honourable mention went to Magda Axon, main editor at Crai Nou for her article "Abandoned elders – an extreme emergency".
- 2nd honourable mention went to Cosmin Tirla, reporter at Ghimpele de Bihor newspaper for his article "Below the earth".
- 3rd honourable mention went to Sonia Pavelescu, TV editor and publisher at 1 TV Bacau for video material entitled "Margineni - stealthily restitution defendants".

All these articles can be read on the website www.adrnordest.ro

Information on the media concerned

✔ **local/regional newspapers**

Information on the target group

✔ **youth**

Inputs/Resources

1. Human resources: the coordinator of Europe Direct North-East Centre together with the communication adviser organised the competition, laid down the regulations, promoted the contest, received the articles, organised the public debate and awarded the prizes.
2. Financial resources: the competition was made financially possible through the Project Europe Direct North-East Centre of the European Commission Representation in Romania;
3. Technical resources: the RDA North-East and Europe Direct North-East Centre representatives provided the technical resources.
4. Logistics were provided by the RDA North-East and Europe Direct North-East Centre representatives.





Impact of the action

A large number of people heard about the contest. The significant effect of the competition was also due to the final public debate on '2010 – European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion', which took place during the North East Regional Investment Forum, organised by the RDA North-East in Iasi. This debate was moderated by Emil Hurezeanu and was attended by many representatives of the national and regional public administration, media outlets and NGOs involved in anti-poverty projects. The audience numbered around 100 people.

Methodology/process

Europe Direct North-East representatives regularly sent articles to the local media about the journalism contest. The local media broadcast the news and made organisation of the competition possible.

Press representatives were also present at the final public debate of the competition.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

The success factor depended on a good relationship between the EDIC and the regional media representatives. The EDIC maintains a permanent collaboration to communicate weekly news on EC communication priorities and to promote EDIC events. The EDIC tries to involve the media in almost all actions in order to keep the target groups informed about the on-going and future activities of the EDIC.

Problems encountered

A lack of interest in social issues on the part of journalists from North-East Romania.

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Illustration



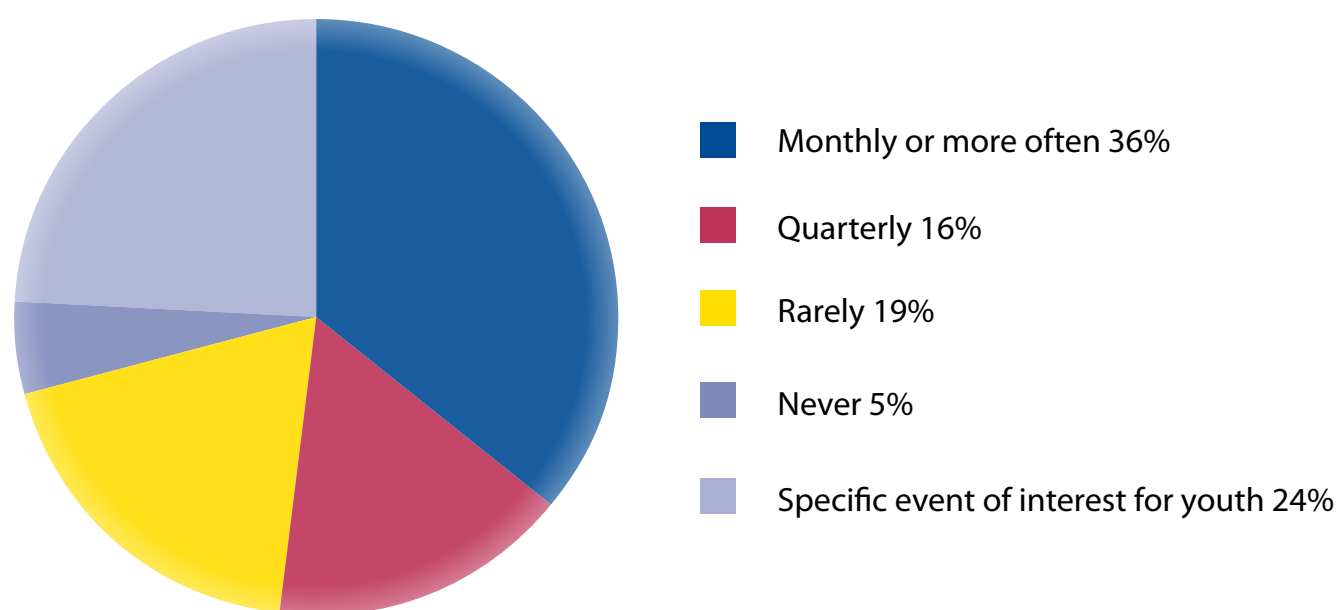


4. Targeting youth

Young people represent an important target group for several EDICs. As it appears in chart 6, one-third of the respondents (36%) co-operate with youth media at least on a monthly basis.

It also appears that a quarter of the respondents (24%) co-operate regularly with youth media on topical events for young people.

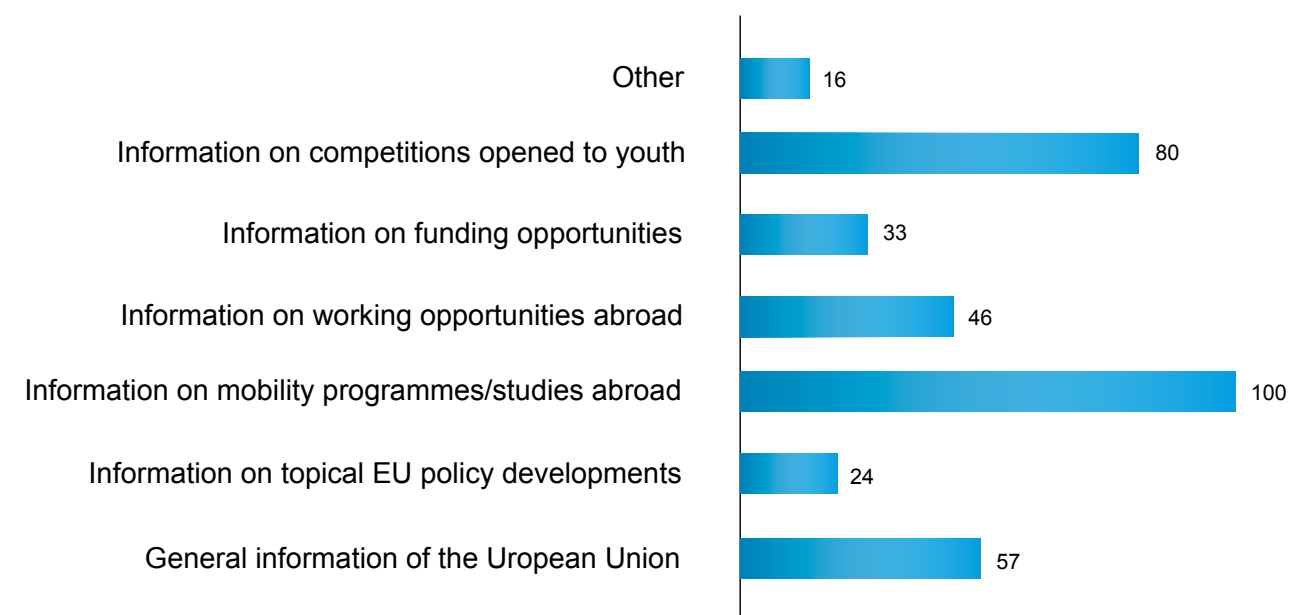
Frequency of cooperation with youth media (chart 6)



The chart 7 shows that the majority of the respondents (56%) use the mobility programmes in Europe and the study opportunities in EU Member States to get access to youth media, which quite logically represent key issues of interest for young people. Student mobility topics represent concrete elements for promoting the advantages the European Union brings to students.

The dissemination of information on competitions open to young people also facilitates interactions with youth media and youth (44%).

Type of information to youth media (chart 7)





Three good practices illustrate EDIC co-operation with youth media on issues related to the mobility of students, volunteering actions and competitions on EU issues.

► *European students' mobility on Basque TV*

The *EDIC Itsasmendikoi (Spain)* promoted European students' mobility within the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci and Erasmus programmes on a local TV programme. This initiative proved to be an excellent occasion for the promotion of the European mobility programmes to local youth as well as the promotion of EDIC services to young audiences.

► *Infopentlja*

The *EDIC Celje (Slovenia)* has created "Infopentlja" which comprises a network of 21 organisations (such as secondary schools, student clubs, youth centres, and libraries) which are active in the youth sector. The creation of this network facilitates the exchange of information between all organisations on issues such as mobility opportunities (Youth in Action programme), training in the Youth in Action programme, volunteering at national and EU level, the work of the EU institutions, new funding opportunities and calls. Infopentlja has also helped the EDIC to develop long-lasting co-operation with the local media as it provided them with information of interest for their target groups.

► *Denbighshire Euroscola competition*

The *EDIC Llangollen (United Kingdom)* organised an essay competition for students (aged 16-18 years) on EU issues, as part of the Euroscola initiative organised by the European Parliament for schools across the Union. This initiative has reinforced relations between the local EDIC and media outlets as the media it reached have continued to promote other EDIC projects.





European students' mobility on Basque TV

Brief description of the action including outputs

EDIC Itsasmendikoi is promoting European students' mobility in the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci and Erasmus programmes in order to try to bring rural areas closer together with colleges and students from different EU countries. The EU programmes offer students the possibility to do their work placements abroad for a period from five weeks to three months.

On 4 May, the Basque TV programme Sustrai recorded a special interview between the manager of the EDIC and three Swedish students (with their teacher) who were doing their practical training in gardening at Itsasmendikoi's Derio unit.

They were filmed while doing outdoor activities such as taking care of different plants. The students were asked about their experience, which was very positive and stimulated the local youngsters to share a similar experience in another EU country. The primary sector is suffering from the [economic] crisis and lack of interest among local young people. That is why the EDIC considered it very important to show that students from countries like Sweden choose the Basque Country as an interesting location.

Information on the media concerned

✔ local/regional TV

Information on the target group

✔ youth

Inputs/Resources

1. Different members of the EDIC's team took part in the action.
2. It was free of charge.
3. Technical needs were covered by the TV crew.

4. Impact of the action

The TV programme Sustrai has a large audience, which is why the EDIC found it interesting to let local young people know about the interesting working and life experience of three young Swedish students in the region. With this action, the EDIC underlined the importance of European mobility for future professionals and informed the audience that the educational level of studies in the field of agricultural and forestry in the region is comparable to that of countries like Sweden. The EDIC also used this programme to provide the audience with information about its activities and services in the region.

Methodology/process

The EDIC tries to keep a close relationship with this TV programme in order to promote and publish the activities of the EDIC such as seminars, conferences, Europe's Day, etc.

The EDIC contacted the programme manager and informed him about the practical training of the Swedish students which he found very interesting. As a result, a team of three people came to the location where the students were doing their training and filmed them in the fields. The EDIC gave an introduction about its activities and the EU mobility programmes, followed by an interview with the students. The interview was broadcast in Basque and Spanish.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Good relations with the media.
2. An interesting topic for the media and its viewers.
3. Motivated students to participate in the action.
4. Solid EU network of agricultural schools that enables this type of placement (MULFOR network).

Problems encountered

There were no problems encountered.





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Illustration





Infopentlja

Brief description of the action including outputs

Infopentlja is an information network of organisations working in the youth sector. It includes 21 organisations from Celje, including secondary schools, student clubs, youth centres, libraries and other facilities. The main purpose of the network is to exchange information within Infopentlja regarding youth topics in general, such as school and extra-curricular activities, informal education, scholarships, jobs and careers, social, medical and legal care, sports and cultural events, interpersonal relationships, mobility of young people and youth tourism, and other EU topics. It gives young people quick and easy access to information and enables them to participate in various activities that have a direct impact on their leisure activities, their participation and, of course, their personal development.

The Celjski mladinski Centre established Infopentlja in 2006 and it coordinates the exchange of the information between network partners. Every day, information delivered by these partners is published on the Infopentlja portal (<http://www.mc-celje.si/sl/Infopentlja/>), and once a week in a newsletter. Moreover, Infopentlja is also included in all of the Celjski mladinski Centre brochures. All partners deliver an information pack to the EDIC coordinator who prepares an info pack which is disseminated among all partners and all organisations working in the youth sector.

Information on the media concerned

- ✓ **local/regional newspapers**
- ✓ **local/regional periodicals**
- ✓ **online media**
- ✓ **newsletter**

Information on the target group

- ✓ **general public**
- ✓ **youth**
- ✓ **unemployed**
- ✓ **disabled persons**

Inputs/Resources

1. One person coordinates the network, collects all information and prepares the info packs.
2. The Web 2.0 interactive portal enables young people to comment on the topic.
3. CMS (Content Management System) is used for the weekly newsletter.
4. It mainly functions on a voluntary work basis.
5. It takes a maximum of two hours per day to collect, prepare and disseminate information.

Impact of the action

Information from Infopentlja is published once a week in the newspapers and on the radio (local media), depending on the type of information (workshops, festivals, funding). If there are workshops or projects then this information is published every day (two weeks before the start of the workshop or event). Infopentlja is also known at national level, as its results were disseminated by the Ministry of Education and Sport – Office of Youth.

The network has turned into a serious information network that provides information of interest to the media. The creation of the network has helped the EDIC to get in touch with the media and also to develop long-lasting co-operation with the local media, as they receive information that is of interest to their readers.

The impact of the action can be measured by the number of people seeking further information from the EDIC (up to 34%). In addition, the number of youth exchanges has increased by 20% and the percentage of the organised youth exchanges and initiatives has increased (up to 12%). The EDIC has also established informal collaborations with schools (primary, secondary) to participate in the events and workshops.

Methodology/process

Infopentlja is a network of organisations active in the youth sector. All partners send information to the coordinator who prepares an info pack and disseminates it among the target groups. The coordinator maintains the Infopentlja portal, prepares printed info about the topics that correlate to the Infopentlja topics, compiles a weekly newsletter, and disseminates information from Infopentlja in all the Celjski mladinski Centre brochures, especially in the youth centre's monthly calendar. The network also enables the integration of young people to participate in the info packs preparation. Such integration provides





more knowledge in the field of project work. In addition, knowledge concerning the use of web applications is necessary (website, online social networks, web announcements). Infopentlja also presents peer-to-peer information, as young people talk about the Infopentlja network and the content.

The content includes information about the possibilities regarding mobility (Youth in Action programme), free EVS placements, workshops, trainings in the Youth in Action programme, volunteering at national and EU level, concerts, new funding opportunities and open calls, the work of the EU institutions, and so on.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Good co-operation with youth organisations;
2. Presentation of the mutual benefits for potential network partners;
3. Besides the general information content, it also includes details about parties and concerts to motivate youth participation.

Problems encountered

Within the network, no problems occurred.

Contact details (for further information)

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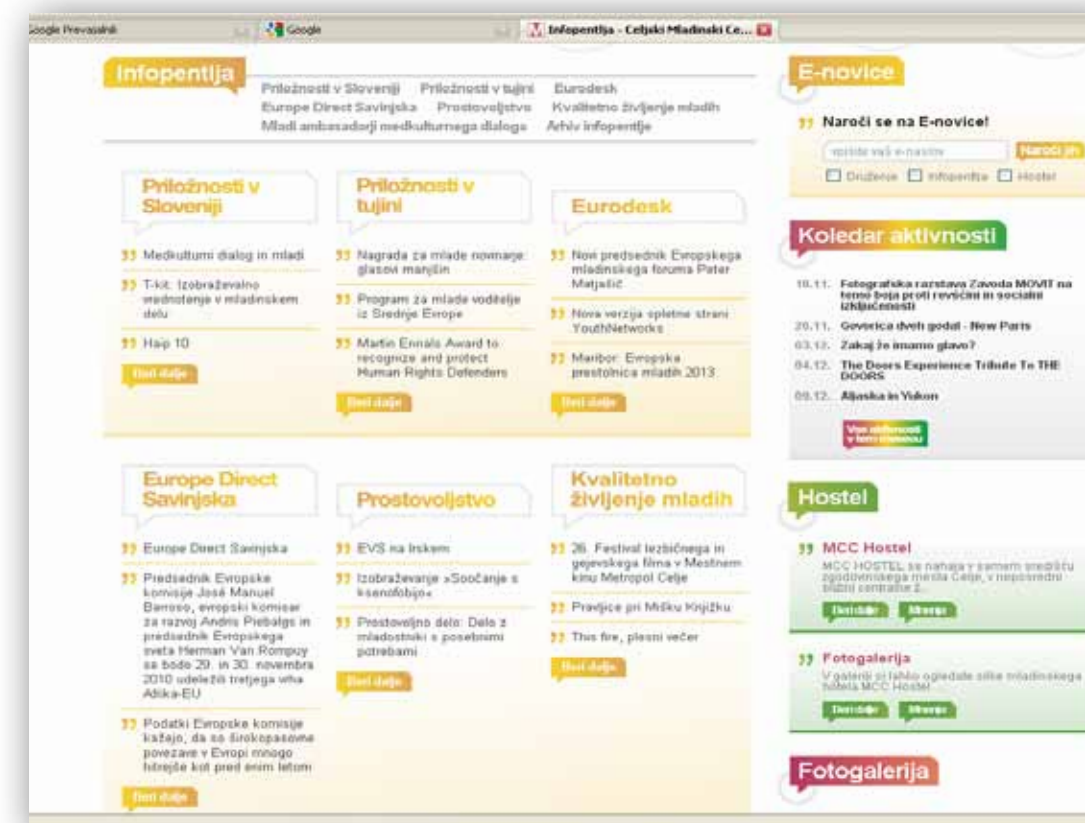
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Illustrations





Denbighshire Euroscola competition

Brief description of the action including outputs

Europe Direct Llangollen organises a competition annually and hosts a visit to Strasbourg for students aged 16-18 years old in the region as part of the Euroscola initiative. This initiative is open to all EU Member States so it can be replicated by any EDIC, providing places are secured from the European Parliament. The competition prize is one of 25 places on the Euroscola initiative, organised by the European Parliament for schools across the EU. During 2008, Europe Direct Llangollen held an essay competition in collaboration with the European Commission Office in Wales, where entries were judged by a panel of local and regional leaders. The 25 winners all won a place on the Euroscola visit, and the best essay was published on the European Commission Office in Wales' website. Europe Direct Llangollen emailed all media contacts, and telephoned a number of radio, television and the larger local and regional newspapers to attract press attention. The UK's BBC decided to cover the EDIC story, and sent a journalist to Strasbourg to record a 10-minute piece for BBC Radio Wales.

Information on the media concerned

✔ **local/regional radio**

Information on the target group

✔ **general public**

Inputs/Resources

1. Administration: emails to media contacts, telephone calls to reinforce emails to larger media contacts;
2. Support from local councils, schools, and European Commission Office in Wales achieved by arranging meetings with potential stakeholders;
3. A controversial EU essay competition to attract media attention, which involved posting publicity to schools;
4. Financial – cost covered by the European Parliament Euroscola grant including funding from the local council.

Impact of the action

This action promoted both the Euroscola programme, which is a programme all EU Member States can participate in, and Europe Direct Llangollen. Consequently, more people are now aware of the programme and the EDIC and, as a result, Europe Direct Llangollen has received more enquiries and the Euroscola programme has received more uptake from regions in the UK. The action raised awareness of the European Parliament and its role. In addition, the action strengthened media relations between EDIC and media outlets – the BBC now contacts EDIC Llangollen on a regular basis regarding events and has promoted other projects. Finally, the action gave young people in the region a strong voice, and promoted a Wales-EU link to the public.

Methodology/process

Europe Direct Llangollen emailed several press releases to all media contacts. Following this, the project was promoted on social media sites and websites, and promotional materials on the Euroscola essay competition were sent to all schools in the region (followed up with phone calls) to encourage plenty of submissions. The EDIC obtained financial support from the local council, and the European Commission Office in Wales agreed to publish the winning essay on its website to make the competition more prestigious and attract media attention. The EDIC followed up emails with phone calls to larger newspapers and media corporations and promoted the project by demonstrating how relevant it is to the local people and the region, and by emphasising how this project would promote Wales in a positive light. The European Parliament pay for a journalist to accompany any Euroscola group, so the EDIC sent out invitations to media corporations inviting journalists to contact the EDIC's members if they would like to cover the story and benefit from a free visit to Strasbourg. The EDIC also followed up these invitations with phone calls to ensure that all invitations had arrived and that journalists understood the competition.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Touch base with all media contacts initially with an email offering a press release on the competition and visit, and follow up emails with a telephone call to establish personal contact.
2. Involve as many schools as possible in your region – the more people you reach out to, the more people the competition is relevant to, and the bigger the attraction for the media.
3. Make your competition for Euroscola controversial – this always attracts more media attention than normal.





4. Emphasise to the media the fact that young, local people will be giving your locality a voice in Europe and representing your region.
5. Contact all media outlets, including the national corporations – you never know when you may strike lucky, as hearing about initiatives such as Euroscola appeal to the general public since they promote young people in a positive light.

Problems encountered

Getting an initial response from the media can be tricky – perseverance is important. Send out press releases on the same subject each week if necessary, and follow up with telephone calls.

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Illustration





5. Future activities

In addition to the dissemination and promotion of this e-catalogue among Network members, the PEWG on media relations will focus its activities on the following **priorities in 2011**:

- Gathering and analysis of **new good practices** on media relations;
- Selection of the most pertinent good practices and **preparation of a consolidated report** for further dissemination of these to the EDICs via the Europe Direct Intranet;
- Gathering and analysis of EDIC practices in terms of **co-operation with youth media**;
- Definition of **tips and tricks** on successful media relations;
- Promotion of the PEWG's results/findings during the **Annual General Meeting**;
- Promotion of the PEWG's results/findings in the **Annual Report of the Europe Direct Network**;
- Promotion of the PEWG's activities during **national and regional meetings of the EC Representations**.

6. Conclusions

Based on the results of the survey on media relations and the good practices in this e-catalogue, it is evident that there are a series of **key factors** which help EDICs to develop successful media relations.

These elements can be grouped into two categories:

- EU Information of interest to citizens;
- Working approach with the media.

EU information of interest to citizens

- Cover EU issues affecting citizens' lives (employment opportunities, mobility programmes, EU rights, funding opportunities);
- Emphasise the concrete impact of the EU topic in relation to the everyday life of citizens;
- Prepare brief and appealing messages to present a topic;
- Use clear and easy-to-understand information for the general public (avoid using jargon and specialised vocabulary);
- Actively engage with the target group during the programme (quizzes, prizes, questions and answers);
- Adapt general EU information to the socio- economic profile of a region.





Working approach with the media

- Approach the media in a way that shows an EDIC's added value for their work (organisation of training seminars for media representatives, management of study and visit programmes);
- Insist on the dimension of mutual communication benefits on EU issues, both for the EDIC and the media;
- Involve well-known journalists in your events (debates on EU issues, animation of activities);
- Organise competitions for journalists to stimulate their coverage of EU issues;
- Use the notoriety of the host structure in the local and regional environment to approach the media;
- Fix a timetable and keep to it for the provision of information to local and regional media;
- Arrange working meetings with journalists (to discuss their interests and adapt the provision of information accordingly);
- Keep regular contacts with (the same) journalists and (the same) media to be able to build up long-lasting relationships;
- Match the provision of information to the profiles of readers/viewers of the corresponding media;
- Involve local media with a strong interest on EU issues for the promotion of your events (Europe Day, conferences and seminars on EU issues).

