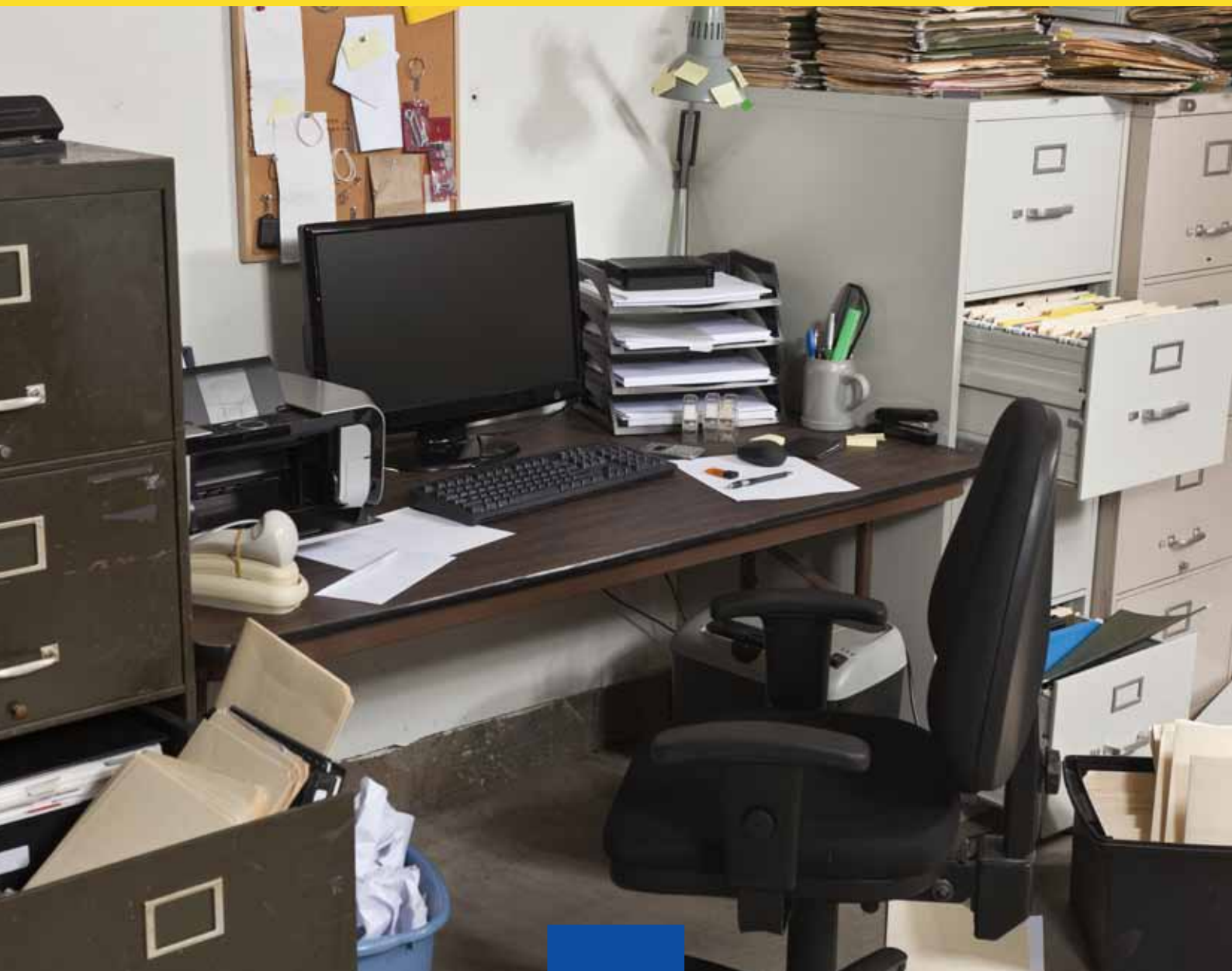




Europe Direct Information Centres:

Good practices in the management
of an information centre



Europe Direct Information Centres:

Good practices in the management
of an information centre

Introduction

Aim of the catalogue

The e-catalogue on the management of daily activities of an EDIC has been produced to promote the good practices of Europe Direct Information Centres (EDICs) related to **the good management of daily activities of a Europe Direct Information Centre**, such as the efficient management of **an EDIC information service**.

It illustrates the **main trends on these issues within the Europe Direct network (2011-2012)** and includes **18 good practices** which feature elements of added value which can be replicated by network members. This applies in particular to newcomers who will be confronted with several questions on the smooth set-up and organisation of their Europe Direct Information Centre at the start of their activities in 2013.

The presentation of 18 good practices should help EDIC staff members to consider a series of ideas related to their EDIC's daily activities and help them to determine and apply the most appropriate solutions for similar activities within their Centre. The proposed stories can be considered as 'case studies': they include information on the resources required to perform the action, details on the methodology, plus tips and tricks which have contributed to an activity's success, so that similar stories can be replicated by network members.

Rationale and work of the PEWG

The Pan-European Working Group (PEWG) on the "Management of daily activities of an EDIC" was active in 2012.

A group of **18 experts from EDICs** were selected on the basis of the quality of their proposal, including expertise in issues related to the good management of an EDIC information service, EDIC promotion activities, the organisation of events, and time and quality management.

This PEWG fulfilled a three-fold mission:

- **Creation of a knowledge-base** using the multiples sources of information and the valuable experiences of members in the Europe Direct network;
- Making this knowledge available via **tangible outputs** to enable all Europe Direct network members to benefit from it;
- Identifying "**pools of expertise**" within the Europe Direct network able to act as "contact points" for further assistance to fellow network members.

The creation of this e-catalogue on the good management of an EDIC has been based on the principles described above:

- A **bottom-up approach** has been used for the collection of good practices for the e-catalogue. All network members were given an opportunity to propose their own good practices during a consultation carried out in September – October 2012.
- This particular e-catalogue represents a **tangible product** which will be distributed to all EDICs. In addition, its content will be promoted during major Europe Direct Network events (Annual General Meeting, national and regional meetings, training sessions).

Identification of main trends in the network

As a basis for this e-catalogue, a general survey on issues related to the "management of daily activities of an EDIC" took place in September – October 2012, in order to identify the main trends within the network on these issues.

The survey was addressed to EDICs in the 27 EU Member States. As a result, 201 members responded to it, which represents a response rate of approximately 50 % of the EDICs. The detailed results of the survey are available in a separate report.

Chapter 1 :

The EDIC information service

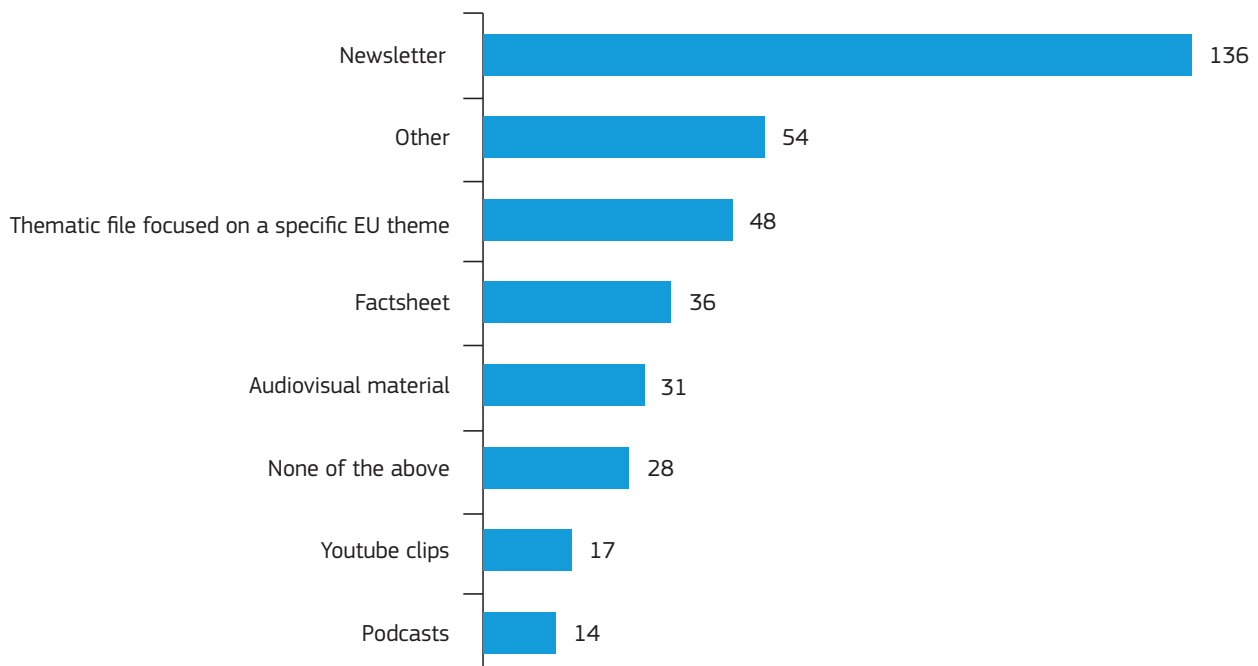
1.1. Main trends in the Network

The survey included several questions related to the management of an EDIC information service.

A. EDIC Information products

As shown in the chart below, several information products have been created by EDICs, **newsletters**, **thematic files** and **fact sheets** being the most important: 67.6% of the respondents publish a newsletter, while 51% produce thematic files and fact sheets.

Typology of information products



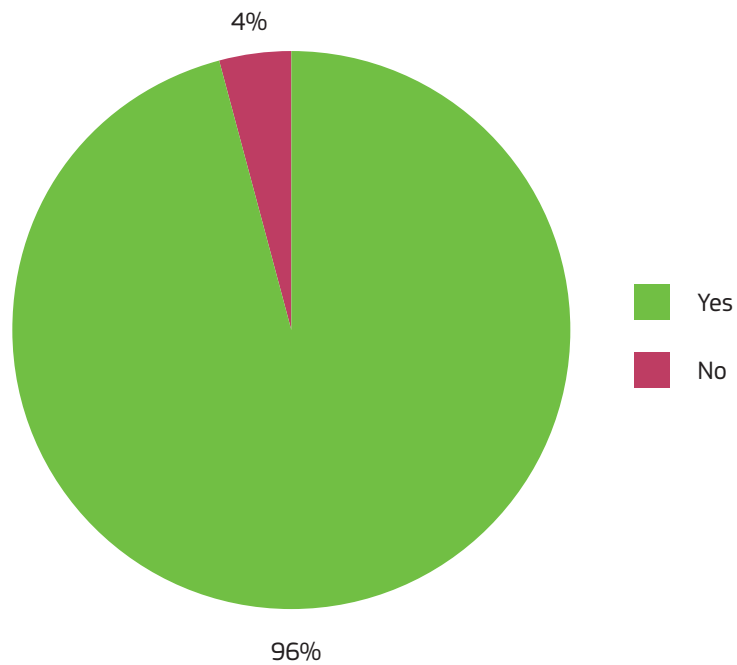
(201 respondents)

In the “other” section, EDICs included information products such as press releases, press articles, brochures, flyers, posters, and information material for conferences and events.

B. EDIC Website

The survey has shown that the **overwhelming majority of the EDICs have a website.**

Website?

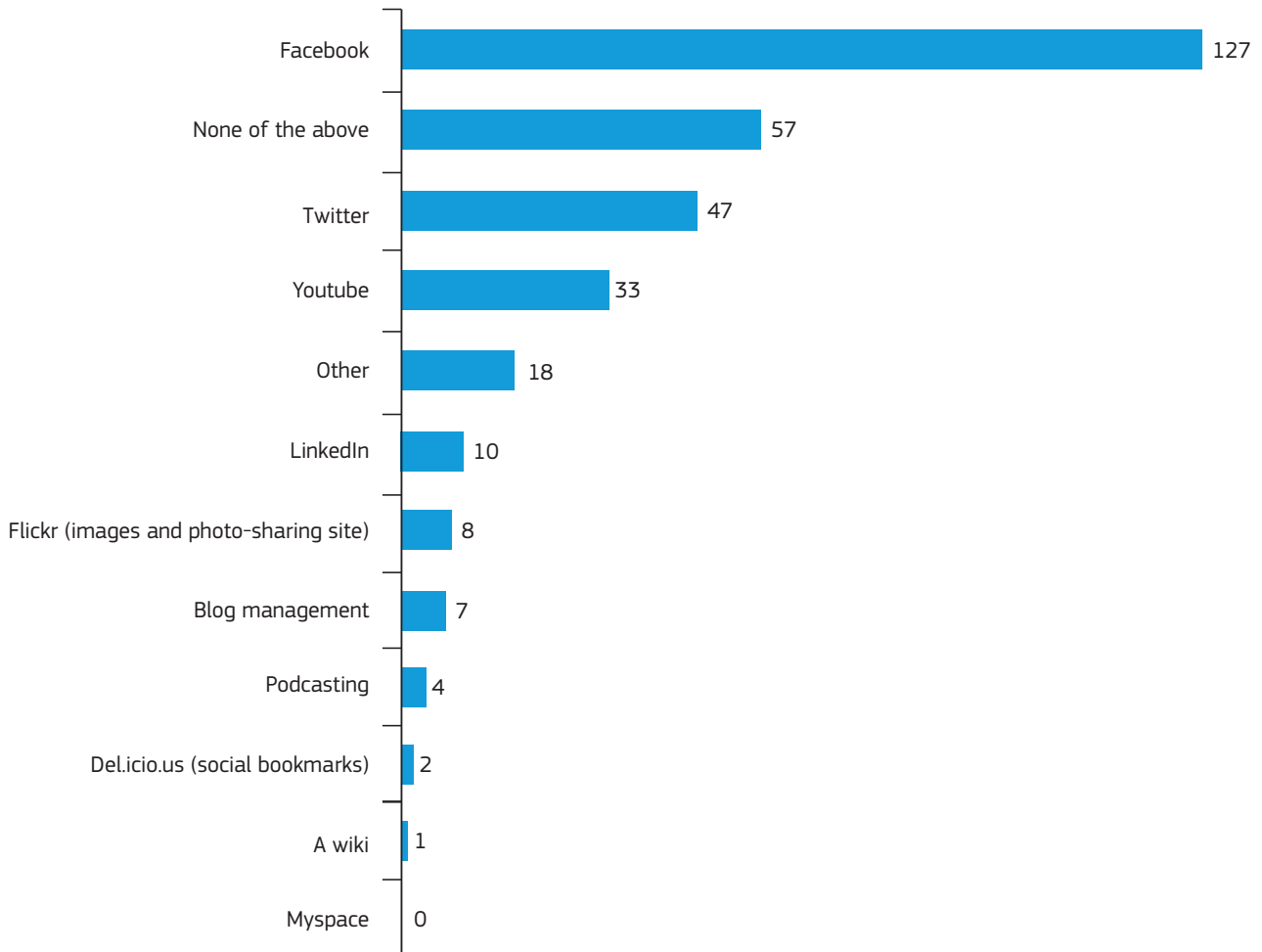


(201 respondents)

C. Use of social media

Regarding social media, **Facebook** represents by far the main tool used by the EDICs, with 63 % of respondents managing Facebook accounts. **Twitter** (23 %) and **YouTube** (16 %) represent the other two most popular tools for EDICs.

Type of social media account



(201 respondents)

28% of respondents stated that they do not use any social media account.

In the “other” section, a few EDICs mentioned social media such as Google+, Vimeo and Viadeo.

1.2. The importance of the good management of an EDIC information service

WHY is it important to run a good information service?

- It is vital for an EDIC to provide **clear, concrete, accurate and valid information** to both its target groups and visitors, since this is one of an EDIC's main and daily activities.
- It is important that information for the general public is **useful** and **easy to understand**.
- It is essential that the EDIC is always **up to date** on issues of interest for its target groups.
- The provision of valid and current information will increase the **EDIC's visibility** at a local and regional level, and will position it as a **reliable player in the field of disseminating EU information**.

WHAT are the elements to be taken into account when it comes to providing information services?

To be able to address the challenges of a good information service, as mentioned above, a series of issues should be considered, such as:

- What information is of interest to the target groups?
- Where can this type of information be found?
- How can this information be distributed/communicated to the different target groups?
- How can an EDIC ensure that the information is used/understood by the target groups?
- How can information sources/content be kept up to date?
- In what language should the information be delivered to the public/visitors (when it is not available in the language of the country)?

HOW does the EDIC information service or action work in practice?

Searching for and collecting information

The information service's main mission is to respond to requests from citizens for information on EU issues. The EDICs welcome **visitors** daily, take **calls from the public**, and receive **written question** on a wide variety of EU issues. Their role is to act as a first port of call for the EU citizens. For specialised questions the EDICs should cooperate and get information from the other EC networks or the EDCC.

It is necessary for EDICs to **make use of different tools** to provide a quality information service on EU issues to local citizens. An **EDIC can search for EU information** via various information sources such as:

- The Europa portal
- EU information websites
- Information products and fact sheets
- Newsletters
- Publications
- Reports, etc.

These are just a few examples of available information sources on EU issues (see lists of most useful Europa links in [Annex 4](#) of the guidelines). The list is not exhaustive but experience shows that the information tools must be used/monitored by EDICs depending on the concrete needs/requests of local citizens. It is also highly recommended that EDICs create **favorites** (10-15 best sites) and their own **RSS feeds** in order to better monitor interesting websites. Similarly, **collaboration between EDICs** represents an additional tool for EU information searches as they can exchange and share useful sources.

DG COMM plays an active role in helping EDICs keep their knowledge of EU issues up to date:

- DG COMM **creates and adapts tailor-made information products on EU issues** that EDICs can use immediately, i.e. thematic fact sheets with references to additional sources of information.
- On a weekly basis, DG COMM **promotes** on the ED intranet **information products available on Europa** which EDICs cannot readily find, such as competitions, consultations and videos on EU issues.
- DG COMM organises **centralised training sessions** for EDICs.
- The EC Representations include thematic issues in their **annual/quarterly meetings with EDICs**.
- DG COMM encourages **co-operation with EC networks at local and regional level**, on a regular basis. This co-operation is a concrete means of enriching EDIC knowledge whilst also facilitating signposting activities to the corresponding EC network, where appropriate. Since it is not possible for an EDIC to specialise in all EU issues, the Centres should provide a general EU information service but also know to whom (EC network and/or local organisation) they should redirect questions when receiving a complex request on an EU issue that a specialised EC network could better respond to. The EDIC should always be informed about what is going on at the EU level as well as what is happening at the local and regional level, since citizens may contact the EDIC about an issue being discussed at local or regional level;
- The **e-catalogues of the different Pan-European Working Groups** are a valuable source of information for EDICs, and include concrete examples of EDIC knowledge and expertise on several issues.

The distribution/dissemination of information

In addition to searching and collecting information, the EDICs' role is to disseminate and distribute the information to the public. The EDICs have many tools for dissemination, such as:

- **A regularly updated website**, including information on EDIC events, sections with EU themes, press releases, articles and news. It is important that an EDIC maintains and regularly updates its own website or alternatively a webpage on the host structure's website. A well-maintained website could include, for instance, an EDIC's activities with pictures, its products, such as audiovisual or printed material, information categories on EU issues, including interactive features to enable the public to request or comment on EU information;
- **Social media** to promote the EDIC, its events, and information content on EU issues. The use of social media has become increasingly popular over the last three years. These tools are a quick way for EDICs to promote their activities and their knowledge not only to their local public, but to a larger audience via the networking possibilities social networks provide. Furthermore, the EDICs can release information on ongoing or future events through social media, and thus do not have to rely on publications in their local or regional press;
- **Information products** on EU issues produced or compiled by the EDIC (fact sheets, reports, leaflets);
- **Newsletters distributed via an EDIC's mailing list**: newsletters are a fast and accessible way for the public to access news that interests or informs them. For example, a successful newsletter could include news of the latest EU developments in general matters of interest for citizens, news from the country's EC Representation, recent and upcoming EDIC activities, details on funding opportunities, as well as information on other newsletters available either from EDICs or EU institutions. Newsletters should be written in a clear and understandable way, including tailor-made information for specific target groups (information sections for students/youth, for job-seekers, for entrepreneurs, etc.);
- **Visits to schools and educational institutes** to raise children and students' awareness of the European Union values, the benefits of EU membership, and general European Union themes.

1.3. Overview of good practices from EDICs

The following good practices illustrate several components of information services on EU issues:

- **1.3.1. EDIC Bologna** has organised around **150 visits to primary, secondary and high schools** to raise awareness of issues related to the EU to 2500-3000 students.
- **1.3.2. EDIC Craiova** has produced an **educational card game** to enable young people and teachers, children and parents to learn about the 27 Member States in an enjoyable way during their leisure time.
- **1.3.3. EDIC Firenze** runs a weekly 30-minute programme on EU issues on **web radio**.
- **1.3.4. EDIC Modena** runs **two helpdesks** for EDIC experts and local stakeholders to discuss project ideas on EU funding programmes related to mobility (such as LLP-Comenius and LLP-Grundtvig).
- **1.3.5. EDIC Paphos** has produced **video spots** on **EU issues** which are broadcast on a local TV station and promoted during EDIC events.

1.3.1. Education towards European citizenship

Brief description of the action, including outputs

The main aim of this project of EDIC Bologna - Forlì is to spread awareness of European citizenship among the younger generation, improving the capacity of schools to teach EU matters. The project includes meetings in schools (primary, secondary and high schools) with the goal of informing students about the EU, and improving their awareness of being European citizens. The EDIC believes that school education is the first important step towards becoming aware of being a European citizen. For this reason, it has been organising meetings in schools and then focusing on more specific issues linked to the EU.

The project is in response to the current lack of information about the EU: education in school on the European integration process (at least in Italy) is seriously underestimated, and sometimes totally lacking. Moreover, this action also supports teachers' lifelong learning process.

Information on the type of proposed good practice:

- EDIC information service
- Promotion of the EDIC
- Collecting feedback from citizens on EU issues.

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Jean Monnet Programme – Learning EU at School.
2. Public partnership (EDIC, schools, municipality, region) and co-operation with other EDICs in the region.
3. Information and teaching material from the EU's Publications Office.
4. The person in charge of the project, Prof. Giuliana Laschi, Jean Monnet Chair ad personam at the University of Bologna.
5. A group of young trainers.

Impact of the action

The organisation of around 150 meetings (on average 25 students per class) has had an impact on 2,500-3,000 school students in the Emilia Romagna region. Furthermore, after each meeting, trainers distributed information and didactic material which the students probably took home and thus was also read by their families and friends. Moreover, during the celebration of the Europe Day, about 600 people were involved, thanks to the recreational activities and the info points which were organised.

Methodology/process

The EDIC's sound experience relating to EU information activities is supported by the university which provides both technical support and skilled students in European studies. Moreover, close co-operation with regional and local institutions is necessary for the success of the project.

Initially, students already skilled in European studies were selected from the Forlì Faculty of Political Sciences. They followed a training course which enabled them to teach EU subjects in schools. The project envisaged about 150 meetings in schools. These meetings were arranged according to the students' age and teachers' interest: the first was about the history of the European integration process and the main EU institutions; a second meeting could then be organised on more specific topics, such as EU environmental policy, European citizenship, promoting human rights within the European Union, and mobility opportunities for young people. At the end of each meeting, students received information material on the EU. The final stage of the project was a celebration of Europe Day, with games, and educational and recreational activities for students.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Stimulate students' interest in the EU.
2. Cooperate with the region's university.

EDIC Contact details

EDIC Contact Person:

Fabio Casini

Host Structure:

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www.puntoeuropa.eu



1.3.2. Creating a dynamic tool for learning more about Europe in a playful and creative way

Brief description of the action, including outputs

By winning 'Be a network star!', a contest for the best information product, launched by the European Commission in 2009, EDIC Craiova and the host structure 'Forever for Europe Association' became one of the most popular information relays among the EDICs in Romania.

The challenge was to develop information material which was flexible, enjoyable and interesting. EDIC Craiova came up with a very simple solution which was to create a card game entitled "Play Europe", for children aged from 10-14 years. However, the game proved attractive for both children and adults! This educational game includes information on the 27 EU Member States. It consists of 108 cards divided into 27 groups for the different Member State: each country is illustrated using four cards representing the country in general, the capital of the country, a famous personality, and a curiosity in the country. The game comes with rules that can be varied and adapted by the players. The aim of the game is to teach young people more about the EU Member States. It can be used as an educational tool by teachers, by parents and, of course, by young people during their leisure time.

You can find the product at the dedicated webpage: www.playeurope.mpe.ro

Information on the type of proposed good practice

- EDIC information service
- Promotion of the EDIC

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Human resources: volunteer members from the EDIC and host structure.
2. Internet connection and a strong database on EU information, books, brochures, documents, etc.

Impact of the action

"Play Europe" was a real success among the youngsters who love to play it.

The quality of the game was also recognized by the EDICs, which selected it as product of the year.

Methodology/process

“We invite you to wander about a little bit, through the beauties of Europe; take your time, catch your breath and discover the unknown colours of European life!” was the statement that boosted the EDIC initiative and its path to success.

The EDIC came up with this game through a brainstorming meeting of EDIC members and volunteers who decided to develop “Play Europe”. One of the members, with skills in graphics and design, offered to define how the product would look. Others gathered information and pictures about the 27 EU Member States. The game is designed as a communication tool, offering relevant data about the Member States (politics, geography, culture, art, history, etc.). In fact, it is a recipe for both teaching and learning and, considering the target audience, the EDIC decided the information should be of medium difficulty, presented in an exhilarating way.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. A brainstorming session is necessary to highlight the best idea.
2. A lot of research and work is required to find the best information to include in the materials.
3. Focus on the target group for whom the game is intended.

Problems encountered

The large number of competitors in the competition was challenging, together with the risk of not being selected for the next round. So you have to have trust in your chosen idea and to move on and work at it.

EDIC Contact details

EDIC Contact Person:

Daniel Neagoe-Băcanu

Host Structure:

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europedirect_craiova@mpe.ro

Website:

<http://europedirect.mpe.ro>



1.3.3. Backstage Europa – radio programme

Brief description of the action, including outputs

Backstage Europa is a weekly radio programme of EDIC Firenze, broadcast on Radio Fleur web radio.

First, the EDIC has managed to create a web radio including all the necessary tools and competencies. The objective was to provide a tool which could mix entertainment and information, produced directly by people 'under-30'.

Secondly, the EDIC has designed a programme focusing on European issues. Backstage Europa is a 30-minute programme which focuses each week on a different topic linked to an event, such as Europe Day, news from the European institutions, an EDIC event, or a European opportunity for mobility or funding, etc. Each episode includes interviews with experts, related music including some records.

Each episode is promoted via a post on the blog, information on the web radio's Facebook page and on the radio website, and each is available on Mixcloud (to listen to the podcast) the next day.

Backstage Europa episodes articles: <http://www.edfirenze.eu/category/on-air/>

Backstage Europa podcasts: <http://www.mixcloud.com/tag/backstage-europa/>

Page of Backstage Europa on Radio Fleur website: <http://www.radiofleur.it/11-trasmissioni/91-backstage-europa>

Information on the type of proposed good practice

- EDIC information service
- Promotion of the EDIC

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. To have its own web radio or have a partnership with a web radio (or local radio).
2. Two people involved in collecting information, one of them also as the speaker.
3. Cost of buying songs in the internet.
4. Good local contacts to find experts to interview.
5. A voice recorder (to carry out interviews in the studio), a software program (e.g. SoundForge) for editing, a PC, and an internet connection.

Impact of the action

- A very significant increase in the number of visitors to the EDIC website and Facebook fan page.
- A very significant increase in young people who now know EDIC Firenze.
- A lot of incoming requests from students about mobility in Europe.
- Many requests from the local associations, schools, etc. to co-operate in this radio programme.

Methodology/process

In order to plan the topics, the EDIC prepares a calendar with all the topics and episodes to be focused on, a list of people to be interviewed, the songs to buy, news to read, events to communicate, etc.

Each episode is wrapped up/ready three days before the broadcast.

Approximately one day before the broadcast the EDIC posts an article giving information about the topic, some useful links and news about the interviewees. The information is also made available on the EDIC Facebook and twitter accounts.

After the broadcast, the podcast is updated and people are invited to listen to it.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Use free music available on specific websites, such as www.intervox.de and free software for editing, such as Audacity.
2. Use the same branding (a specific logo) on the websites and social networks.
3. Link the topic of the episode to local events to increase interest and the possibility to disseminate the product.
4. Talk about Europe but from a different angle and with a different easy-to-understand language.

Problems encountered

Problems in the internet connection can occur.

EDIC Contact details

EDIC Contact Person:

Serena Barilaro

Host Structure:

Europe Direct Firenze

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Email:

europedirect@comune.fi.it

Website:

www.edfirenze.eu



**ogni martedì alle 16.30
su Radio Fleur**



BACKSTAGE EUROPA

1.3.4. Help Desk School & Help Desk Youth

Brief description of the action, including outputs

EDIC Modena was established in Modena in 1997. Its main target groups are young people, students and teachers. The continuous collaboration with these target groups has fostered the development of tailor-made information services to address their needs.

EDIC Modena has set up two help desks to assist the local stakeholders take advantage of the European funding programmes covering mobility. The Help Desk Youth and Help Desk School have enhanced the EDIC's visibility among the target groups as they offer support (such as providing an expert) to help organisations dealing with EU calls for proposals on mobility and the related administrative formalities (e.g. LLP-Comenius and LLP-Grundtvig).

Information on the type of proposed good practice

- EDIC information service
- Promotion of the EDIC

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Qualified staff training and investment in continuous updating.
2. Good relational and communication skills, pragmatism and credibility of the staff and experts.
3. Adequate promotion in targeted venues (schools for the teachers and young people, libraries, pubs, universities) and via social media.
4. Collaboration with national agencies in charge of the funding programmes.
5. No additional cost for the host structure in terms of financial and technical equipment.

Impact of the action

In 2011, the Help Desk Youth and the Help Desk School made 66 and 31 appointments, respectively.

In addition, both organised three workshops, on LLP-Comenius, LLP-Grundtvig and Youth in Action. In addition, they organised five meetings on the European Voluntary Service addressing young people, as well as one pre-departure training seminar for young people leaving for European Voluntary Service. They collaborated to set up five partnerships for European Voluntary Service projects, four of which were funded. Finally, they provided support for drafting eight Comenius project proposals, four of which were funded (two individual training scholarships, one assistantship and one partnership).

Methodology/process:

1. In the framework of its ordinary activities, EDIC Modena periodically organises info days on EU funding programmes. Info days are useful to understand participants' needs for information.
2. The Help Desk Youth focuses on Youth for Europe whereas the Help Desk Schools concentrates on the LLP funding programme.
3. The EDIC Modena's expert is available once a week by appointment.

4. End-users are invited to visit the EDIC Modena website where they can find documentation and all the information on the step-by-step procedure to follow when applying for specific actions in funding programmes such as LLP.
5. Each end-user can draft his/her project idea by using the form created by EDIC Modena.
6. Having made an appointment with the expert, they mail or fax the form to the EDIC.
7. The EDIC expert reads and evaluates the project idea and meets the end-user (teacher, student, young person, association, etc.).
8. During the appointment, the expert offers support to the further development of the project idea but does not intervene in the writing of the project proposal.
9. As for the EVS, the EDIC Modena organises ad hoc orientation and training meetings in collaboration with the local association of former EVS volunteers called 'Going to Europe'. The EDIC Modena is an accredited sending structure for the EVS.
10. As concerns teachers and associations, the EDIC expert provides support on partner searches, thanks to the EDIC network's contacts and its intranet.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Regular training of staff members to update knowledge.
2. Good knowledge of procedures for the submission of projects in response to EU calls on mobility programmes.
3. Collaboration with national agencies.

Problems encountered

EDICs should be careful not to raise end-users' expectations about obtaining an EU grant. Unfortunately, EU funding cannot meet everyone's needs and the EDIC staff must warn applicants that not all requests can be met.

EDIC Contact details

EDIC Contact Person:

Antonella Buja

Host Structure:

Comune di Modena

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<http://europedirect.comune.modena.it/>



1.3.5. EU n'U

Brief description of the action, including outputs

EDIC Pafos produced a series of video spots that are both informative and entertaining. The target group was the general public. Each video had a separate theme: The European Health Insurance Card, EU Bookshop, The European Ombudsman, Food Security, Your Voice in Europe, Climate Change, SOLVIT, Studying in the EU, Europe Direct Information Centre, and Social Funding through the European Union. These videos were broadcast daily before the main news in Greek and English, and were subtitled in English. The video spots were promoted on a local TV station and distributed to the public on DVDs, either during visits to the EDIC or during EDIC events.

Information on the type of proposed good practice

- EDIC information service
- Promotion of the EDIC

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Co-operation with the local TV station.
2. Promotion and dissemination of the video spots at the EDIC and during EDIC events.
3. Contract with local TV station, including the production of 500 DVDs and printed covers for their distribution (€9,000).

Impact of the action

Through this activity, the EDIC gained greater visibility and attracted more visits to its premises.

The impact was very positive:

- The citizens of Pafos learned about Europe Direct.
- There was a very significant increase in the number of visitors to the EDIC Pafos website.
- There was also a very significant increase in the number of visitors to the Centre.
- The Centre received a lot of incoming requests for presentations and visits to schools.

Methodology/process

The concept of the project came from the EDIC and was proposed to a local TV station. The videos were made at different locations around the city and at EDIC Pafos. The local TV station undertook the filming, editing and production of the videos and also produced 500 copies of the DVD 'EU n'U'.

Every day for a year the local TV station broadcast a video before the main news in Greek and English. The videos have English subtitles and each lasts approximately one minute (including the end credits). The jingle was also produced by a friend of EDIC staff, and the end credits of each video give EDIC contact details.

This product has proved very useful not just for providing information to members of the public who have yet to visit the EDIC, but also it is a great product to disseminate during the EDIC's events.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Each topic was selected according to the most popular questions from visitors to the EDIC.
2. Good co-operation with the local TV station enabled the broadcast of the video spots.

EDIC Contact details

EDIC Contact Person:

Irena Zavrou

Host Structure:

Municipality of Pafos-Cyprus

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<http://pafoseuropedirect.eu>



Το Κέντρο Πληροφόρησης Europe Direct συγχρηματοδοτείται από την Αντιπροσωπεία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στην Κύπρο και τον Δήμο Πάφου.

περιεχόμενα
contents

1. Ευρωπαϊκή Κάρτα Ασφάλισης Ασθένειας
The European Health Insurance Card
2. Ο Δικτυακός τόπος EU Bookshop
EU Bookshop
3. Ο Ευρωπαϊκός Διαμεσολαβητής
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4. Ασφάλεια τροφίμων
Food security
5. Η φωνή σας στην Ευρώπη
Your voice in Europe
6. Αλλαγή του κλίματος
Climate change
7. SOLVIT
8. Σπουδές στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση
Studying in the European Union
9. Το Κέντρο Πληροφόρησης Europe Direct
Europe Direct Information Centre
10. Κοινωνική χρηματοδότηση μέσω της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης
Social funding through the European Union

EU n' U

europe direct
EU n' U

Chapter 2:

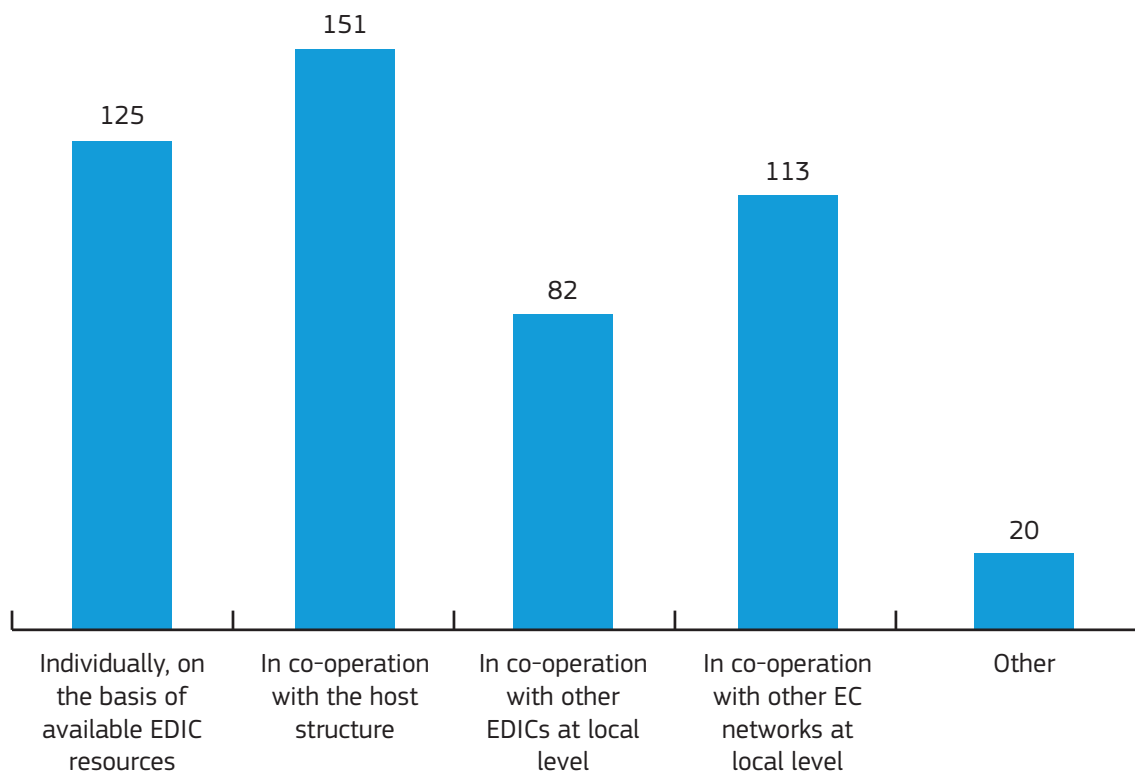
EDIC promotion activities

2.1. Main trends in the network

The overwhelming majority of EDICs (79.5%) carry out promotion activities in collaboration with their host structure.

Joint activities based on co-operation with other EC networks (59%) and other EDICs (43%) also contribute to the promotion of EDICs at the local level.

Promotion activities



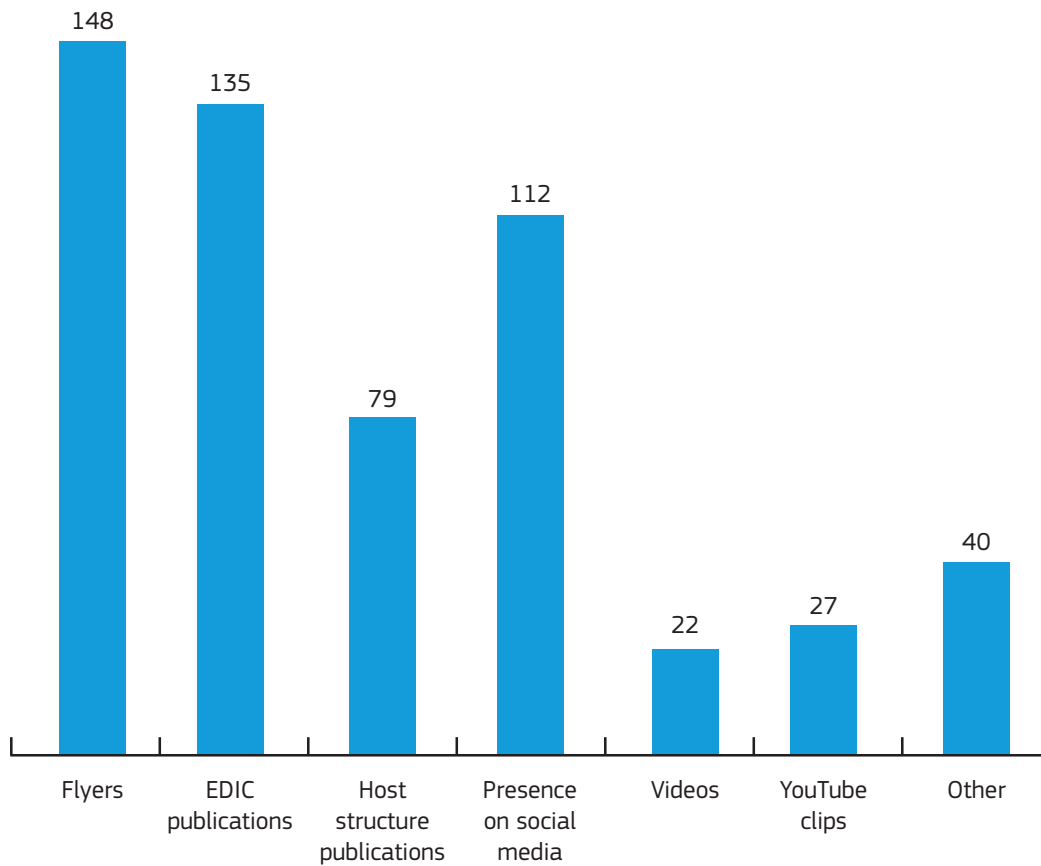
(190 respondents)

In the “other” section, EDICs have reported co-operating notably with the EC Representation offices, local actors, local media and institutional partners in the region.

Two types of promotional material are frequently used to promote EDICs:

- **Flyers** by 78% of the respondents;
- **EDIC publications** by 71% of those EDICs which responded to this survey.

Promotional materials



(190 respondents)

Use of the EDIC website, printing posters on EDIC activities, writing promotional articles, and distributing gadgets (pens, pencils, bloc notes, key holders, USB sticks, etc.) were mentioned in the “other” category.

2.2. The importance of good promotion for an EDIC

WHY visibility is important at different levels?

Visibility is a key factor for EDICs in promoting their own activities and services on EU issues to local citizens, in their capacity as Europe Direct network members.

In this respect, the visibility of the **EDICs' activities and services includes several dimensions:**

- Visibility in/to host structure departments;
- Visibility to general public/specific target groups;
- Visibility to actors at local and regional level.

The visibility in/to host structure departments

This is a **challenge** as many EDICs find it difficult to be visible/recognised by the general public, who often tend to identify the EDIC's activities with its host structure's profile (HS).

To address this challenge, EDICs can seek **co-operation with other departments within the HS**, for instance when organising and managing EDIC events. These interdepartmental teams can work beyond the life of a single event and contribute to other EDIC actions, such as training courses for colleagues, information days for the general public or specific target groups, collecting and analysing feedback, working on projects to obtain EU funds and so on, which can ultimately enhance an EDIC's visibility.

Visibility among general public/specific target groups

Visibility among the general public is a priority. An EDIC's action plan should include ad hoc activities for different target groups (local citizens, young people, teachers, job-seekers, etc.) that can also help to build a lasting relationship with the end-users (loyalty approach).

Visibility can be increased through **general activities**, such as Europe Day events, school visits, organising events and conferences on EU issues of interest to local target groups, activities related to the European Year theme, etc.

Visibility among actors at local and regional level

Visibility can also be sought **via partnerships** at local and regional level (local authorities, associations, universities, schools, libraries), including co-operation with other EC networks. Such partners not only help to target a larger audience but they can also assist with disseminating information about an EDIC's services and events via additional (formal) communication channels that could not be accessed otherwise (e.g. partners' websites and intranets, etc.).

Moreover, the partners can provide an EDIC with valuable human resources. For instance, traineeships offered to school and university students, will contribute to an EDIC's daily activities while, and at the same time, becoming "multipliers" of EDIC EU information to their own organisation/school.

WHAT elements contribute to visibility?

EDICs should be **physically and virtually visible within their HS, among the general public and target groups.**

- In terms of physical visibility, they should have **adequate office space** within the HS' premises, which is visible to and easily accessible by citizens. They should be easily recognisable outside (e.g. by means of the ED logo outside, official colours, banners, etc.).
- In terms of virtual visibility, some EDICs have a **dedicated webpage** either on an independent website or within the HS website. If their website is on the host structure's website, EDIC staff members often need to rely on technicians working at the ICT Department for assistance, which can make the production or update of content, slow and time consuming. It is advisable that EDICs invest in creating their own independent website which can be managed by their own staff or webmaster. They are also encouraged to create profiles on social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to ensure adequate visibility among the general public and different target groups.

- Visibility can be enhanced by the **production of communication and promotion materials** (websites, newsletters, factsheets, etc.) throughout the year. It can also be reinforced by distributing **information materials produced by the EU** institutions (e.g. EU Bookshop) to end-users or visitors to the EDIC, free of charge, during a visit to a Centre or an EDIC event.
- Activities such as co-operating with partners in the region, distributing EU publications, visiting schools, Europe Day activities, etc. are simple but practical ways of enhancing an EDIC's visibility.

HOW does it work?

The EDICs can gain visibility through their own activities, the activities of the HS, and through those of DG COMM.

Direct benefits at the initiative of the EDIC

Several initiatives can be highlighted based on EDICs' experiences:

- EDICs should ensure that they represent the **first contact point on EU issues for HS staff members**. The EDIC manager's role is crucial in raising awareness of EDIC activities in large structures and involving staff members from other HS departments in EDIC activities.
- EDICs should identify **existing materials in the network** (e.g. EU Passport, a card game) which could be used or adapted by large groups of EDICs. This could happen during events (AGMs, training sessions, national meetings, etc.) or through regular communication between EDICs on specific platforms on the ED intranet. This action will enable EDICs to get "ready-to-use" material from colleagues in the network (only translation required), which will further increase their visibility among their target groups.
- EDICs should **build or enlarge local partnerships, including co-operation with EC networks** in an effort to become more visible. This type of co-operation will enable EDICs to disseminate/share their products and good practices through these partnerships while, at the same time, getting access to audiences of local partners interested in EU issues.
- EDICs could offer an **information service on funding opportunities**, including the involvement of EDICs in projects co-financed by the Structural Funds and/or local authorities. This type of activity enhances the reputation and visibility of an EDIC.
- EDICs should **design and offer traineeships to students**, especially during busy times of the year. University students can be a valuable asset to help EDIC staff in daily activities such as communication campaigns, surveys, events, etc. Furthermore, the students can become "communication multipliers" for EDIC services when they return to their school or university.

Indirect benefits at the initiative of DG COMM/EC Representation

- The dissemination of EU publications to their target groups can contribute to the visibility of an EDIC.
- The videos and/or gadgets could be adapted to include EDIC details. EDICs could also disseminate these materials to local libraries which, in turn, could increase the Centres' visibility in geographical areas where they are not present.
- The organisation by the EC Representation of annual meetings of EDICs around the country, on a rotation basis, which enables HSs to **host an annual meeting at their premises**, would contribute to an EDIC's visibility within its HS. When the HS holds an annual meeting at its premises, it is easier for its Managing Board to appreciate the importance and benefits of hosting an EDIC, and thus to consider it as adding value rather than coming at a 'cost' to the HS.
- The EDICs can benefit from **visits by the EC Representation to the host structure** (including a working meeting with the HS chairman or director).
- Similarly, HS representatives could be interested in participating in **an annual meeting of HS** at the EC Representation headquarters in each country, to be informed, first hand, about the importance of the EDIC network and to have the possibility to develop co-operation activities with counterparts from other HSs.
- As far as EU publications are concerned, EDICs would benefit significantly if they were systematically referred as **contact points for further information**, including use of the ED network logo. In this way, end-users would receive an EU publication that is easily recognisable while, at the same time, it acts as a reminder that there are local EDICs available to provide information.

2.3. Overview of good practices from EDICs

The following good practices illustrate EDIC promotional activities:

- **2.3.1. EDIC Barcelona** manages a **network of six antennas** designed to enhance the availability of EU information to citizens in the areas covered by these antennas. They enable EDIC Barcelona to gain visibility in these areas.
- **2.3.2. EDIC Covasna** organised a “**European Park**”, a mini fair involving nine EU Member States, on the occasion of the Europe Day. The Park comprised nine tents (one per country) and included information and live performances on the culture, traditions, food, tourist attractions and music of each country.
- **2.3.3. EDIC Galati** organised a “**Spring Day campaign**” on EU issues from March to June 2012 to familiarise more than 500 teachers and students in 22 educational institutions in Galati with EU-related topics.
- **2.3.4. EDIC Szeged** co-operates with **networks of libraries** to make EU information available in territories which are not covered by the EDIC. This also enhances the EDIC’s visibility in these areas and flags up activities on EU requests for information from the libraries to the EDIC.

2.3.1. Decentralised services of Europe Direct Barcelona

Brief description of the action, including outputs

EDIC Barcelona has decentralised its information service to make a bigger impact. Europe Direct Barcelona has six antennas in the Barcelona region with which it coordinates, supports and organises common information and awareness activities, such as courses, conferences, exhibitions, etc.

Using such a strategy, EDIC Barcelona guarantees the best participation of citizens in activities related to Europe while it enables the EDIC to be better informed about citizens' needs and reactions concerning the European Union.

The antennas are located in the Metropolitan area of Barcelona, Garraf County Council, Bages County Council, Maresme County Council, Anoia County Council, and the Berguedà Cultural Centre of Europe. Some of them are located in the least-populated territories of the Barcelona Province.

Europe Direct Barcelona manages and coordinates the six antennas through frequent meetings on the types of action to be carried out in the region.

Information on the type of good practice proposed

- EDIC information service
- Promotion of EDIC
- Quality management in EDIC
- Collecting feedback from citizens on EU issues for provision to EC

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Decentralised action through six antennas.
2. Best participation/involvement of citizens in EU issues.
3. Institutional and technical co-operation with the six antennas, without any financial contribution.

Impact of the action

Information is disseminated more efficiently across the region covered by the EDIC and the antennas, thanks to local access to EU information.

The EDIC can be better informed of the needs and reactions of the citizens within the region.

Methodology/process

Europe Direct Barcelona coordinates the six antennas within the region.

The methodology includes coordination meetings (including phone calls) with the aim of following up on the antennas' activities and initiatives and giving them updated information on the latest developments concerning European grants and initiatives. A calendar of the activities to be developed in the region is also updated following regular meetings with the contact people in each antenna.

The approach is based on the provision of information materials to be disseminated among the citizens in the EDIC's region. Furthermore, it organises courses on European issues in the antennas to upgrade their knowledge on specific issues, including joint visits to primary and secondary schools to inform students about the opportunities provided by the EU and its mobility programmes.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Select antennas in large cities of the region which cannot be directly covered by the EDIC;
2. Organise regular working meetings with the staff members of the antennas;
3. Train the staff members of the antennas on EU issues;
4. Provide regularly antennas with EU information content/materials.

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2.3.2. European Park

Brief description of the action, including outputs

During Europe Day, EDIC Covasna organised an event called European Park in the central park of the Romanian city of Covasna. The European Park was a kind of small fair involving European countries. The EDIC installed tents in the park where, in each tent, a team of high school students presented an EU Member State, its culture, traditions, food, tourist attractions, music and so on. The following countries were represented: Austria, the Netherlands, Germany, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Ireland, Portugal and Spain. The presentations were very colourful: visitors to the park had the chance to admire Dutch tulips, Spanish and Portuguese dances, to taste Austrian, Spanish, Portuguese and English food, and enjoy presentations about the different countries. As a result, they found out a lot about the EU Member States.

The European Park also took the form of a competition between nine teams, each of them comprising five members – four high school students and a teacher. The teams registered via the EDIC webpage.

The European Park was officially opened by the Vice-Mayor of Covasna and lasted three hours.

The success of this event will lead to the organisation of a similar but wider event in 2013. EDIC Covasna will organize another European Park on Europe Day, this time in Sfantu Gheorghe, which will be expanded to include a separate info tent, a kids' corner and a photo exhibition, too.

Information on the type of good practice proposed

- Promotion of EDIC
- Event/conference management by the EDIC.

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Human resources: three organisers from the EDIC, one driver, two members of the Mayor's Office of Covasna County to help install and dismantle the tents, 36 students and nine teachers who prepared presentations and competition activities.
2. Technical resources: nine tents, electricity supply, tables and chairs, one minibus to transport EDIC staff and the tents from Sfantu Gheorghe to Covasna.
3. €700 to buy gifts for the students participating in the competition.

Impact of the action

The participants and the people who visited the European Park found out new and interesting things about the EU Member States.

People also found out about the EDIC and were able to see what it is doing in another town in the county, away from Sfantu Gheorghe where it is situated.

There was also interactivity among the participants and visitors to the European Park, as they had the possibility to vote for the country presentation (activities in the tent) which they liked best.

Methodology/process

First, the Covasna Mayor's Office was contacted by the EDIC to involve them as a partner in the organisation of this event in the city's central park.

At the beginning of April, a competition was launched for high school students to prepare a presentation on one of the EU's Member States and present it in a tent. The invitation, which contained specific details about how they should prepare their presentation, was sent by fax and e-mail to all high schools in Covasna county.

The teams wishing to participate were able to register for the competition via the EDIC's website, using an on-line registration form which ensured that each EU Member State could only be chosen by one team. The deadline for registration was 2 May.

Afterwards, the EDIC made a special effort to collect nine tents for the event. Gifts were bought and a special award certificate was designed for the participants and competition winners. Information about the event was sent to the press.

The EDIC team arrived at the venue early to install the tents and wait for the participating teams, who had one hour to prepare their presentation. The event lasted three hours during which time a jury watched every tent and how each team presented their specific country.

The public voted for one team at the end of the presentations.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Organise an 'open door' activity in a place where it could be easily noticed by visitors and passers-by.
2. Involve high school students who had very creative ideas.
3. Attract the public's attention with original ideas such as showcasing food specialties of the participating countries, promoting traditional dances of countries, etc.

Problems encountered

The biggest problem was the weather: it rained on the morning of the event and then again just before the end.

It was difficult to collect nine tents because the event was organised just one day after the Saint-George City Days, the biggest fair in the county.

At the location, another problem concerned the lack of an electricity cable (power strip) for each tent.

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Madarasi Csilla

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2.3.3. Spring Day Campaign 2012

Brief description of the action, including outputs

The Spring Day campaign was organised by EDIC Galati between March and June 2012.

The target groups of this campaign were the educational institutions (kindergartens, primary schools, high schools) in the Galati County area, in order to raise awareness of specific EU themes of interest to them.

The selected themes are related to EU communication priorities and including other themes of interest to the target groups (e.g. EU general information and institutional affairs, environment, scholarships programmes, consumer rights).

Outputs of the campaign:

- 550 participants
- 22 events
- Promotional products
- PowerPoint presentations
- Contests
- Press releases

Information on the type of proposed good practice

- EDIC information service
- Promotion of the EDIC
- Event/conference management by the EDIC.

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Five EDIC staff members.
2. Financial resources, foreseen in the project budget (€3,200).
3. Promotional products such as puzzles, wristwatches, balls, coloured pencils, bags, flyers, leaflets, brochures, and EDIC Galati publications.
4. Logistical resources: laptop, digital camera, video projector and portable projection screen.

Impact of the action

The activities of the campaign were organised in 22 educational institutions (kindergartens, primary schools, high schools) in the Galati County area. The target group comprised 550 students and teachers, and the activities were structured as information sessions, each about one-hour long.

Methodology/process

All the activities took place at the educational institutions, following an official request made by the educational institution interested in organising a European activity (fax, email). EDIC Galati was represented by two or three members, depending on the complexity of the event. Each activity was structured according to the needs of the target group (PowerPoint presentations, Q&A sessions, practical activities, interactive games, and European information quiz).

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. The campaign topics should be related to the needs of the target group.
2. Promotional products should be offered to those involved in the activities.
3. The activities should take place at the premises of the beneficiary locations (high schools).
4. The information should be adapted to the level of understanding of the target group.

Problems encountered:

The success of this initiative and therefore the requests to organise the activities exceeded those foreseen in the action plan.

The distance between our location and the beneficiary locations in the Galati County area.

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2.3.4. Co-operation with library networks

Brief description of the action, including outputs

EDIC Szeged co-operates with library networks in order to extend information services on EU issues in counties which are not covered by the EDIC. Traditionally, libraries are still the venues where people go to find information, and they also operate as public spaces where groups of all ages with different fields of interest go to spend time.

Libraries have their own type of networks – having a good relationship with library networks is a win-win situation. However, this cooperation is not based on a single action, but starts with the offer of a selection of publications (e.g. books, booklets and publications published within the network, bookshop products) to each member of the library network. In general, they welcome all offers. With such simple beginnings, the EDIC's publications and contact information can reach many and distant locations in the region. Through the dissemination of these publications via the libraries, people living in remote villages or small towns can be informed of and learn about the services offered by the EDIC.

Information on the type of proposed good practice

- EDIC information service
- Promotion of the EDIC

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

- Expenses: books, travel costs to meet/visit librarians, postage.
- No extra staff needed to operate the service in these libraries.
- Creating and keeping a good relationship with the network's 'coordinator library'.

Impact of the action

Library networks are great multipliers in a cost-effective way and the output from this small input is valuable. First of all, EDIC Szeged has been promoted in the area and different target groups have been addressed thanks to the local libraries. Secondly, this co-operation has an effect on the EDIC's information service, too, as people will be redirected to the EDIC information office by the librarians. Thirdly, it can result in events to the EDIC by the librarians, on request either from the library or from local leaders.

To summarise, thanks to this action EDICs can be represented in distant locations and can address various target groups. The promotion of the EDIC is accomplished in a way that can bring further demand for publications, information and events (Go local!).

Methodology/process

First of all, the EDIC had to make contact with the main library in its area/region/county which manages the local library network. The main library ought to survey the (information) needs of the network. It is important that the local libraries are informed about this opportunity (to receive publications about the EU) by their 'coordinator' library. When the number of receptive libraries is known, the packages of publications can be put together by EDIC colleagues with an information letter, then posted by the EDIC or delivered by the 'coordinator' library.

To demonstrate the outcome of this simple but thoughtful action, here are some of the results achieved by EDIC Szeged:

1. Identification of a reliable partner (main/coordinator library) which can co-operate and assist at larger events, e.g. Europe Day 2012 Szeged, Hungary. The library provided the venue, contributed to dissemination and to the event through its presence and own activities.
2. In 2011, EDIC Szeged held a photography exhibition about the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the 'coordinator' library. Local libraries asked to receive and display this collection, which meant that the exhibition could be seen at different libraries, every month during 2012.
3. Local libraries asked to receive other publications from the EDIC Szeged for local events, and the Centre was asked to go local and give lectures on specific topics or to children.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Make the offer through the 'coordinator' library that manages the network.
2. Collect recent and useful books and booklets.
3. Write an information letter to offer the EDIC services to librarians/responsible people within the various locations.
4. Be ready to be at the disposal of libraries when a request arises.

Problems encountered

The EDIC cannot provide enough specific publications (e.g. for small children) when claims arrive from different places at the same time (bookshop). The EDIC must remember to send out fresh supplies as libraries tend not to ask for updates.

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Chapter 3:

The organisation of EDIC events

3.1. Main trends in the network

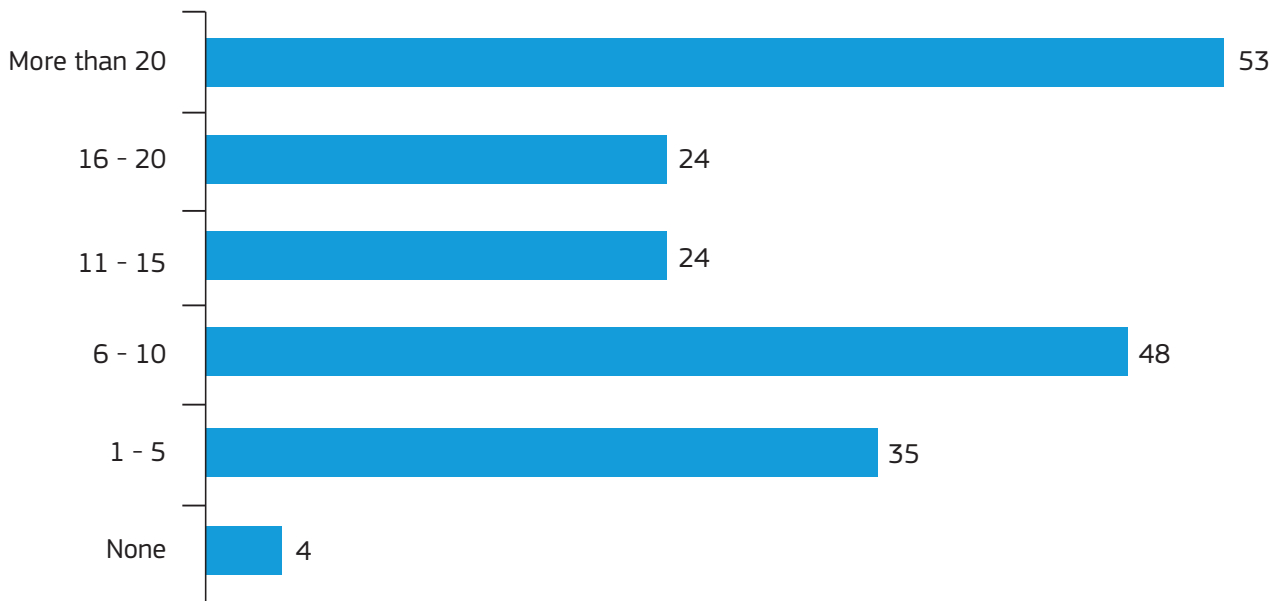
A. Number of events per EDIC

A large group of respondents (28%) reported that they organised **more than 20 events** on EU issues in 2011. A second group of respondents (25.5%) organised **between six and 10 events**.

It should be stressed that the concept of “event” seems to have been understood differently by EDIC members:

- On the one hand, it appears that certain groups of EDICs considered visits to schools, working meetings with representatives of other EC networks/organisations, etc. as “events”.
- On the other hand, another group of EDICs applied a more limited definition to the concept of “events”, only considering events, the organisation of conferences/seminars on EU issues for their target groups.

Number of events in 2011



(188 respondents)

B. Thematic issues of the events

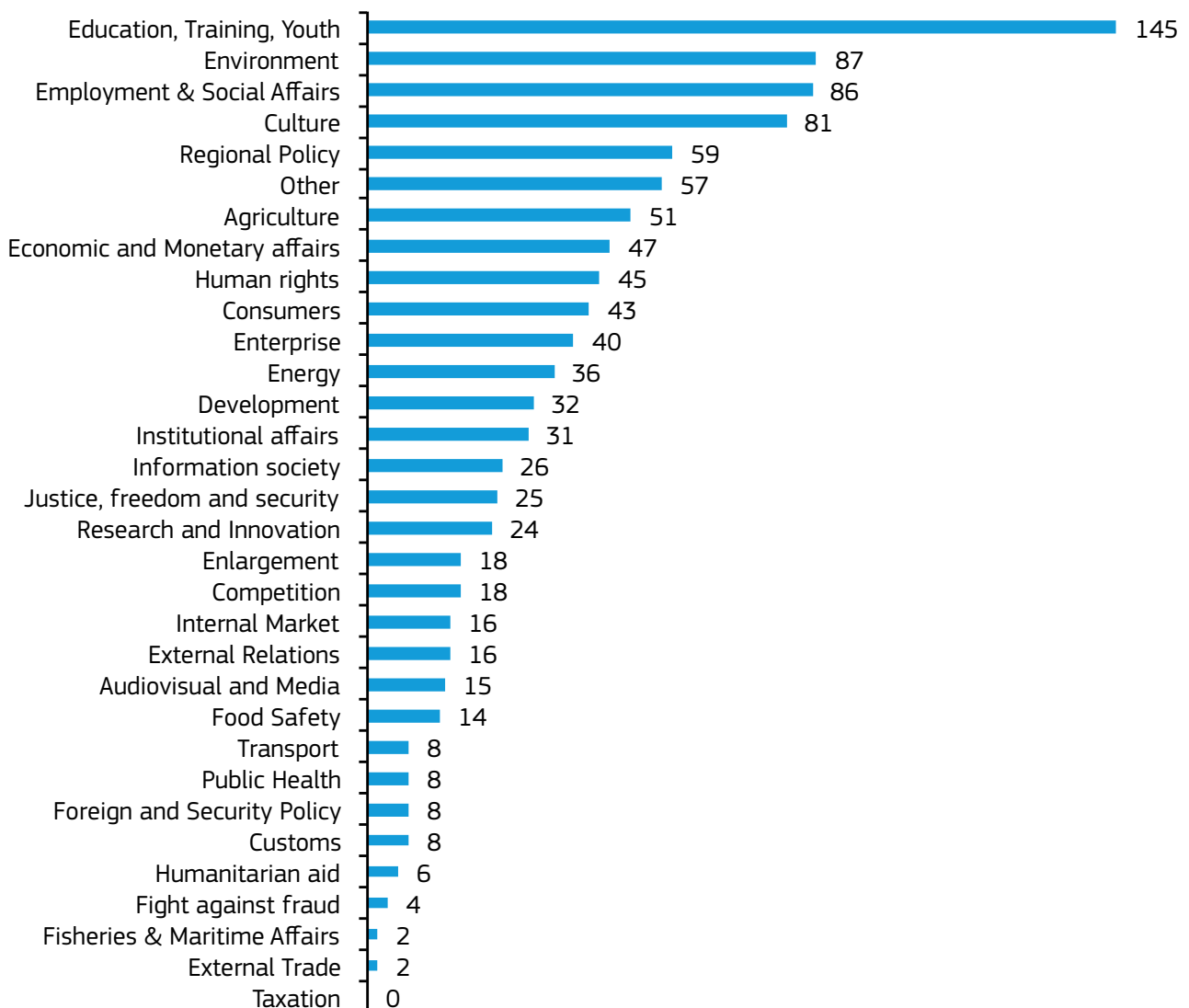
A wide range of EU topics/issues were covered by EDICs in 2011, as illustrated in the chart below.

It appears that four themes were covered frequently by EDICs:

- **Education, training, youth** was covered by 77% of the respondents.
- **Environment** by 46% of the respondents.
- **Employment & social affairs** by 46% of the respondents.
- **Culture** by 43% of the respondents.

The European Year of Volunteering, the functions of the EU institutions, Europe Day, and the economic and financial crisis are the themes mentioned frequently in the “other” section.

Themes covered in 2011



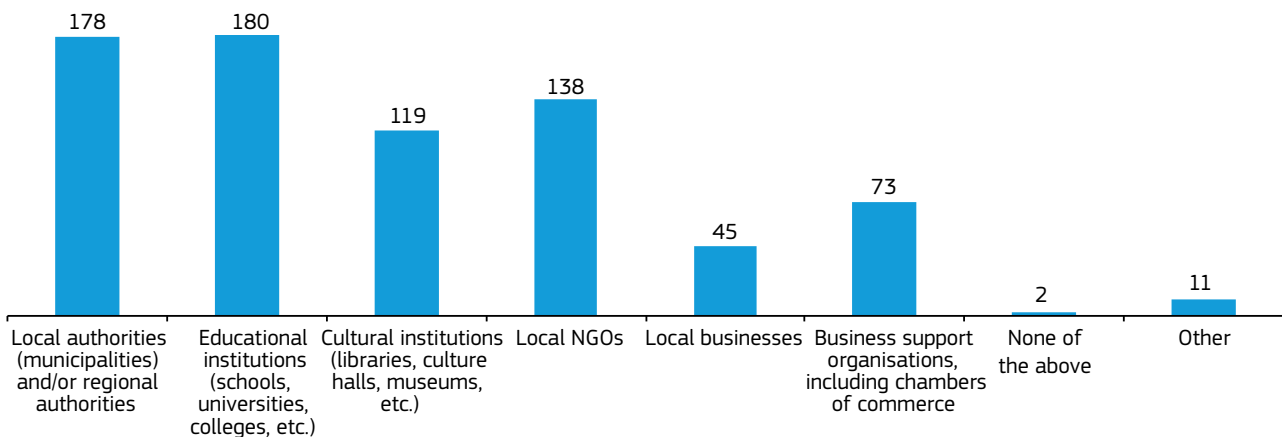
(188 respondents)

C. EDIC partners

In terms of co-operation at the local level, it appears that the **educational institutions** (96%) and the **municipalities** (94.5%) represented the most frequent EDIC partners at the local level.

Local NGOs (73.4%) and **cultural institutions** (63.3%) were also regular EDIC partners at the local level.

Co-operation with local actors



(188 respondents)

In the section “other”, references were frequently made to other EC networks (EEN, Eures, Eurodesks) as well as to local and regional institutions in charge of employment promotion in the region.

3.2. The importance of organising events for an EDIC

WHY is it important to organise events?

The organisation of events represents a unique opportunity to **communicate with large audiences and wider target groups on a particular EU theme**. Such events naturally complement the EDIC’s information service which is based on questions and answers from citizens on a particular issue.

The events can be addressed either to the “**general public**” or to “**specific target groups**”:

- When foreseen for the “**general public**” (citizens, children, students, employees, job-seekers, etc.), they are addressed to different types of target groups and can even increase the EDIC’s audience as they enable “new people” to access information on EU issues;
- When the events are organised for a “**specific target group**”, they focus on a theme which is of interest to this target group (for instance, the mobility of workers and job-seekers). It also happens that EDICs organise an event every year for each target group in an attempt to familiarise this target group with EDIC information services (loyalty approach) as well as helping them to better understand this theme/issue over time.

The **number of events** depends on the annual work programme of each EDIC. There is **no minimum or maximum number** of events that can be recommended. The EDICs should have the capacity to react quickly to the interests of the target groups, and organise an event when they feel that this is useful and necessary for their audiences.

The **connection** between an EDIC's question and answer service and the event is obvious. When an EDIC observes an increase in the number of information requests on a particular theme, it might be a signal that an event/conference should be organised on this theme. Similarly, EDICs often observe an increase in the number of enquiries on a particular issue following an event on the said topic.

It is also important to be able to assess the **quality of an event**, which should not be measured only by the number of participants. For instance, the events organised in a country's capital cannot be compared with those held in rural areas where there are fewer people and often less interest in European issues, due to the distance from the decision-making bodies. The quality of an event should take into account qualitative aspects, such as the accuracy of the information, the usefulness of the information for participants, establishing a relationship with participants/partners (loyalty approach) who will regularly receive information on this topic after the event, and the results of co-operation with other actors/stakeholders regarding the coordination of an event.

WHAT types of events?

The events should cover **issues/themes which are of interest to local target groups**. They could focus on **one single theme** or address **different issues during one event**.

Different **types of formulas** are possible for event organisation:

- Events organised by the EDIC itself;
- Events by the host structure in co-operation with the EDIC;
- Events by EDICs co-operating at regional level;
- Events in co-operation with a member of an EC network operating in the region;
- Events in co-operation with local partners specialised in the topic addressed by the event;
- Events related to an EU-funded project, etc.

In addition to general conferences and workshops, the **typology of events** illustrates the wide diversity of events that can be arranged by EDICs, such as:

- Open-air events in public spaces to create interest from passers-by and get them interested and informed on a topic;
- Street fairs;
- Roadshows;
- Quizzes and puzzles for children;
- Visits to schools;
- Contests and competitions;
- Events in a renovated castle, museum, public building, etc. which people would like to visit; therefore the location will work as a "teaser" to attract people to the EDIC event.

The events can be organised **indoors** or **outside**:

- Events/conferences/workshops are generally organised indoors (conference room) when large numbers of participants are expected, when the event is of limited duration (one hour, half a day, etc.), when logistics are required (beamers for speakers' presentations, organised discussions and debates between speakers and audience, etc.);
- On the contrary, the format of smaller-scale events can be more creative and thus could be organised outdoors, such as contests and competitions, information stands during Europe Day activities, quizzes and puzzles for children.

HOW to set up an event to reach audience expectation?

As a general rule, the organisation of an event/conference requires a **reasonable knowledge** of European issues to be able to address the heterogeneity of the participants' profiles and the diversity of questions from the audience.

The EDICs should not forget that a successful event might require the **treatment of an EU issue from different angles**, because of the expert/speaker profiles and the various expectations from the participants representing different target audiences. It is important that EDICs keep in mind the different types of audience expectations when they prepare the event programme, including looking for experts/speakers.

The information should be **concrete and easily understandable** for the participants. The use of jargon should be avoided but concrete case studies/stories should be included in the programme to show how different groups of people have been confronted with the issue.

An EDIC can rely on its **own human resources and tools** (website, mailing list, social media, etc.) to prepare, promote and run the event/conference once it feels confident to address the issues mentioned above.

The EDIC can also decide to **co-operate with partners** over distributing the tasks and responsibilities, to get access to multiple sources of information as well as to reach wider audiences. The following elements should be considered when setting up partnerships:

- Identify at an early stage the needs/interests of the target groups in order to decide well in advance which partners should be targeted and approached for co-operation;
- Organise working meeting(s) with possible partners (local councils, NGOs, EC networks, business support organisations, etc.) to consider the work programme of the corresponding organisation so as to identify possible synergies and avoid duplication of work;
- Consider long-term partnerships with other EC networks such as EURES and Enterprise Europe Network, and develop common actions;
- Set up long-term partnerships at local level with key actors to institutionalise co-operation with these associations;
- Identify the annual priorities in school programmes to facilitate the planning of events and activities in schools;
- Identify important events in the region and position the EDIC as a co-organiser for these events;
- Involve the EC Representation office in the event and/or any other important stakeholder at local level;
- Create partnerships with local/regional media to get access to their media for the promotion of the event and publication of information on it.

3.3. Overview of good practices from EDICs

The following good practices illustrate event experiences from EDICs, including co-operation with other actors in order to communicate to a wider audience:

- **3.3.1. EDIC Alicante** organised a **European Day of Languages** to promote learning foreign languages; this included managing a stand where people could write a word in a foreign language.
- **3.3.2. EDIC Botosani**: co-operated with local NGOs to compile a **list of honorable citizens** entitled "Seniors of the Year 2012", and to designate the title "senior" of the year.
- **3.3.3. EDIC Craiova** organised the seventh edition of a **school contest to celebrate Europe Day** and raise awareness of EU themes and values among teachers and students.
- **3.3.4. EDIC Eurokom** co-operated with several institutions in the organisation of a **high-level seminar** on a technical issue related to Italian and European legislation regarding money laundering and suspicious transactions. The co-operation with different partners helped to attract over 300 participants.
- **3.3.5. EDIC Gävleborg** managed an ambitious **programme of nine activities during European Week**, on different issues, for different target groups.
- **3.3.6. EDIC Nuoro** organised a **combined event** covering Europe Day celebrations, activities related to the European Year of Active Ageing, and a photographic exhibition on European Integration which belongs to national authorities.

- **3.3.7. EDIC Panevezys** organised a **conference to promote study opportunities abroad to local students**. Students from the Panevezys region studying abroad were invited to share factual information and their own concrete experiences with local students.
- **3.3.8. EDIC Porto** played a significant role in building a “**local network of partners**” to communicate together on 50 years of the CAP, to reach different types of target groups, and to implement a wider communication programme based on the involvement of each partner in the network.

3.3.1. European Day of Languages – Go outside and make people know Europe Direct!

Brief description of the action, including outputs

The staff members of EDIC Alicante combined a series of initiatives over one week: events, use of social media including competitions via Facebook, visits to schools and education centres, etc.

EDIC Alicante decided to focus its efforts on organising outdoor events for two reasons:

- It is important to be in actual contact with the citizens of Alicante.
- It is vital to collect feedback from the citizens on EU issues.

Information on the type of good practice proposed

- Event/conference management
- Collecting feedback from citizens.

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Coordination with other institutions or organisations
2. Promotion and dissemination of the action on the website and social networks
3. Availability of European publications and gadgets
4. Use of several instruments to promote the EDIC and the ED network: roll-up, leaflets, etc.

Impact of the action

Europe Direct Alicante celebrated the European Day of Languages by carrying out an activity in the state-run Language School to raise awareness among the students on the importance of languages.

The action was very simple: each person had to write his/her favourite word in one of the European Union official languages. EDIC staff members made a collage using all the words.

The impact was very positive:

- A lot of students learned about Europe Direct (a jump in the number of fans on the EDIC's Facebook page was recorded immediately following this initiative, and many participants sent private messages via Facebook).
- There was a significant increase in the number of visitors to the EDIC website.
- Many of the participants in the activity submitted queries, related in particular to European training and scholarships, and the possibilities of working abroad.
- Finally, the state-run Language School was so satisfied with this activity that they expressed their willingness to collaborate with Europe Direct Alicante in future events.

Methodology/process

- Before the action, the EDIC had a meeting with the teaching staff at the state-run Language School to suggest an activity to celebrate the European Day of Languages, during which they explained the core idea behind the action.
- During the event, EDIC staff manned a stand presenting European publications focusing on youth and the importance of learning languages, and provided a good supply of coloured paper and markers. When students arrived, they were told about the activity – naturally, they were excited about writing a word in a different language and getting a present (gadgets) for their input. Finally, they were informed that the final collage could be seen on the EDIC's Facebook page and website.
- After the initiative, the EDIC made a collage of the words inside the stars of the European Union flag and published it on its website.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Make a note of the European Day of Languages and schedule a meeting with teaching staff at a school to suggest an activity to commemorate that date: make a collage with different words in different languages.
2. Get markers and papers of different colours and shapes.
3. Bring a roll-up including the European flag to the table along with leaflets giving information about ED, learning languages, and youth training and mobility opportunities.
4. Encourage the students to write their favourite word in a foreign language in exchange for a prize, such as European merchandising – keyrings, bags, post-its, etc.
5. Use the EDIC's website and Facebook page to promote the finished collage.

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3.3.2. Seniors of 2012 in Botosani

Brief description of the action, including outputs

The “Seniors of 2012 in Botosani initiative” was an important event of EDIC Botosani related to the European Year of Active Ageing. It was also intended to promote EDIC Botosani and increase its visibility among different target groups.

EDIC Botosani released a list of honorable citizens entitled ‘Seniors of the Year 2012’. The list was based on a survey carried out during a large public event – the NGO Fair. The questionnaire was completed by members of 10 NGOs present at the Fair and resulted in 10 nominations that were announced publicly during the event and disseminated through print and online publications managed by the EDIC.

EDIC Botosani awarded the first senior title of 2012 to a reputed local physician, Dr Victor Dragan, author of several specialised works. The award was presented at the launch of the fifth edition of Dr Dragan’s book Health for the elderly. The event was attended by many representatives of the medical profession from the North East Euroregion (including Botosani, Iasi, Neamt and Suceava), deputies and senators.

In December, during EDIC Botosani’s annual event, Seniors of 2012 in Botosani received recognition certificates for their nomination.

Information on the type of good practice proposed

- Promotion of EDIC
- Event/conference management by EDIC.

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Human resources: three organisers and 20 volunteers.
2. Financial resources: about €1000 for managing online publications, printing activities, and organising two events.
3. Technical and logistical resources: computers, cameras and video-editing software.

Impact of the action

Over 1,000 people were targeted directly and made aware of EDIC activities, as follows: 500 participants and visitors at the NGO Fair, 100 at the launch event, and around 400 at the December annual meeting.

About 5,000 people were targeted indirectly by the EDIC’s own publications, on-line materials, local press, posters, and flyers.

The EDIC was involved and co-operated with NGOs during the different stages of the project.

Methodology/process

1. The “Seniors in 2012 in Botosani initiative” required a different methodology compared to usual events dedicated to the Year for Active Ageing, as it was a more complex event requiring a combination of different tools and inputs.
2. The EDIC team started with the survey supported by 10 NGOs and the audience during the NGO Fair.
3. The book promotion with the list of nominees was a success. The EDIC used its local network, plus collaboration with a local publishing house and the event organisers.

4. EDIC Botosani was able to make the most out of its media potential, especially through its own video channel Botosani Euro-Channel, <http://www.youtube.com/user/raducaj> which ranks first in the county, with an audience of almost 2.5 million total views and 1,000 visits daily, Botosani Europe Direct website, blogs and Facebook pages.
5. For the event held in December, the EDIC relied on collaboration with a group of 23 NGOs to which it belongs, including primary schools and high schools.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Link the project to an important event in the region which attracts many visitors (NGO Fair).
2. Use of survey – something useful which has a great impact.
3. Develop strong media channels managed by the EDIC – especially on-line.
4. On-line media must be supported by printed materials: flyers, posters, questionnaires and finally a brochure.
5. Make use of the ‘European Commission’, ‘EU’ and ‘EU Representation in Romania’ brands as they have a very positive impact on the intellectual and academic milieu.

Problems encountered

There was a tendency by some local print and broadcast media to minimise the importance of the campaign. The effect was offset by increased visibility in on-line media, especially using the EDIC’s own information channels.

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3.3.3. Promoting European policies and values through annual school contest

Brief description of the action including outputs

In 2012, EDIC Craiova organised the seventh edition of 'Little European Citizen', a school contest designed to celebrate Europe Day and promote European Union values and the European Commission's priority themes among teachers and all levels of schooling.

The main objective of the action is to increase the involvement and EU knowledge of students through cultural and artistic activities in a school contest carried out in several schools in Dolj county. Every year, according to Commission priorities and local information needs, EDIC Craiova designs the contest to attract children's interest in participating to accomplish the specific educational and social activities. To ensure the correct implementation of the activity, a set of rules and guidelines are provided to show teachers and children what they have to do. Before the agreed start date, the registered teachers are informed by the EDIC about the theme and the priorities, through presentations held in schools by EDIC representatives, brochures, or other promotional materials or activities to ensure they have fully understood the chosen theme and priorities.

Over 10 to 14 days, teachers and children get together to develop proposals according to the theme of the contest. For instance, the theme of the seventh edition was the Common Agriculture Policy, and the participants, according to age and school level, had to create models of farms, or drawings, photo collages, or essays to express their own view of the CAP. Every year, on 9 May, the action ends in a festive manner, through artistic exhibitions of the work created, and rewards for the participants.

Information on the type of proposed good practice:

- EDIC information service
- Promotion of EDIC
- Event management by EDIC

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Human resources: minimum 200 school representatives (teachers, students)
2. Financial resources: 2900 euro/action
3. Technical resources and logistics: promotional materials, brochures, official EU documents.

Impact of the action

This action has become a tradition among Dolj county citizens, thanks to its regularity and the enjoyable activities provided for pupils and teachers.

During the seven editions, the contest has managed to involve more than 2000 students and teachers.

Good relations between Europe Direct Craiova and the schools in Dolj county, which have been reinforced over time thanks to the partnerships established.

Methodology/process

The action is designed to help students and teachers understand EU policies and values, through non-formal education. The most important element for the good implementation of the activities concerns the partnerships agreements between the EDIC and schools, and signing them is the first task to be tackled.

Having built this 'network' of partnership agreements, the next step is to provide the necessary information on the annual priorities to the people responsible in the partner schools. This information serves as guidelines for the school leaders to help develop their projects. A large awareness-raising campaign is run to provide information about the theme and priorities, distribute brochures or other info materials, in schools or directly to the contact person for each involved partner. This stage has the role of making sure that everybody knows the priorities and what their work is accordingly.

The third stage of the EDIC's event is the final one, held on 9 May to celebrate Europe Day together with the teachers and pupils involved. The final event is usually performed at one of the partner schools involved, which is able to support an artistic demonstration, and can offer a room where the work of the students can be exhibited. In 2012, the festive day event was organised by EDIC Craiova at a school where an exhibition of photo collage, pictures and handicraft was set up that required a very large space equivalent to a sports hall and two classrooms. The artistic demonstration was held in the school yard to accommodate the large audience. At the end of the demonstration, the best artwork was given a reward and refreshments were enjoyed by the children.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Create a 'network' of partner schools which will work closely with the EDIC to ensure the contest runs smoothly and efficiently.
2. Agree a definite set of rules for participants to help them clearly understand the purpose of the contest.
3. Choose a good topic of interest.
4. Choose the location for the final stage wisely.

Problems encountered

The weather can be a real problem if you are planning outdoor activities, so it is advisable to have a back-up plan for this to be able to hold the activities indoors.

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3.3.4. Security and Justice in Europe: the development of co-operation among police forces within the new European context

Brief description of the action, including outputs

The seminar was organised by the National Bureau of the Infoeuropa-Coisp (Independent Union of Police) and the EDIC Calabria & Europe, in co-operation with the European Commission, the EC Representation in Italy, Gerace City Council, the Order of the Bar Association in Locri and the Locri Order of Accountants (RC), along with other bodies and associations.

The event focused on Italian and European legislation regarding money laundering and suspicious transactions. This very complex and broad subject was narrowed down into the specific issues relating to the connection of money laundering with the illegal activities of mafia associations operating in Italy and Europe.

The conference had two main objectives:

- To emphasise the importance of legality in the Reggio Calabria region which is suffering from organised crime;
- To stimulate the debate on European legislation against terrorism and organised crime so as to improve citizen security.

The participation of the national police, local institutions and professionals in the field of justice at national and European level ensured a fruitful discussion during which the general public had the chance to hear about the challenges and situations they face on a daily basis.

Information on the type of proposed good practice

- Event/conference management by the EDIC.

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Financial resources: the speakers participated in the event free of charge which helped the organisers to save money.
2. Logistics: Gerace City Council offered logistical support so that the organisers did not incur any extra organisational costs.
3. Human resources: the profiles of the speakers who have a good and specialised knowledge of the issue guaranteed a strong and successful event programme.

Impact of the action

The event was a huge success with more than 300 participants. The high-profile key speakers managed to provide a down-to-earth but engaging explanation and overview of the complex topic under discussion. This ambitious endeavour was possible thanks to the active work of EDIC Calabria & Europe and the National Bureau Infoeuropa Coisp which collaborated with the following: the European Commission, the European Commission Representation in Italy, the Department of Public Safety, Gerace City Council, the Locri Bar Association, the Association of Tax Advisors in Locri (RC), the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria, and local police and institutions.

Methodology/process

The event was widely promoted and communicated through the media. The organisers asked their partners to advertise the event via their websites.

Moreover, the organisers asked the professional associations and universities to support the participation of their members and students in the conference by offering training and study credits.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Find a topic of interest to all partners and the community/citizens.
2. Keep an active and regular collaboration with all partners.
3. Ensure good co-operation with the regional media.

Problems encountered

1. Lack of adequate funds to create a broader communication campaign for the event.
2. Lack of available speakers from the European Commission to reinforce discussions and exchange of views.

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3.3.5. European Week 2012

Brief description of the action, including outputs

For the past five years, Europe Direct Gävleborg, together with the international office in Gävle municipality, has arranged many activities during the European Week in May. Each year, the EDIC emphasises the importance of international co-operation and highlights many of the opportunities that Sweden's EU membership provides for this region.

The 2012 programme of activities offered a mix of activities and seminars for different target groups: the general public, workers, politicians both in the municipality and in the region as a whole, young people, seniors, and organisations. Europe Direct Gävleborg managed to arrange nine activities during the week and several activities were focused in particular on the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations.

Overview of the European Week 2012 programme

7 May

1. Teacher and student conference at 5pm. With Jan Eliasson, who lead a discussion about Sweden and Europe's role as a global player
2. Evening lecture (7pm) for the public under the theme 'Sweden and Europe in the world'. Lecturer: Jan Eliasson.

8 May

3. Europe is Calling 2012, at 6pm-9pm. Are you young and want to explore the world? Information and inspiration evening for youth about mobility opportunities in Europe

9 May – Europe Day

4. Forum theatre with "Europe" theme for high school students (all day)

10 May – Focus on the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations

5. 'Afternoon tea' from 2-4pm. Information and inspiration for seniors 60+ about mobility opportunities in Europe
6. Lecture: 'Future housing for elderly' at 5pm . Future housing for elderly is a regional EU-financed project; the project manager Olle Persson gave the lecture in the public library in the city of Gävle
7. Lecture: 'My dream of a good elder life', at 6pm. Swedish politician and doctor Barbro Westerholm gave the lecture

12 May – Theme (all day): Refugee and asylum policy in Europe

8-9. A day filled with exhibitions, discussions and lectures on this topic

Information on the type of proposed good practice

- Event/conference management by the EDIC.
- Promotion of EDIC

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Human resources: throughout the European Week two people from Europe Direct Gävleborg planned and carried out many activities for different target groups. The EDIC was also able to rely on co-operation with 10 different partners and received help from them to manage some of its activities.
2. Financial resources: Europe Direct Gävleborg spent approximately €7,700 on the arrangements for European Week 2012. Most of this budget was used to pay for the lecturers' expenses and for advertising activities.

Impact of the action

The nine activities that were planned and arranged by the EDIC attracted a little more than 600 participants in total. Europe Direct Gävleborg collaborated with different actors including Gävle municipality, EURES, University of Gävle, Association for Teachers in Social Sciences, Culture House Lätting, Gävle Art Centre, the Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (RFSU), and the Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights (RFSL). Thanks to this cooperation, it was possible to reach out to more target groups.

Europe Direct Gävleborg also had the honour of inviting Jan Eliasson, UN Vice-Secretary-General, who welcomed in European Week 2012 with two lectures about Sweden and Europe's role in the world.

The local media coverage caught the interest of the EDIC European Week activities and highlighted them in a local radio broadcast report, and in several articles published in the local newspapers.

Methodology/process

The planning and implementation of activities for the different target groups included a variety of events held at convenient times of the day.

The co-operation with the EDIC's partners resulted from its previous experience of working with some of them – all the partners took their duties very seriously and worked hard to make this event flawless.

Europe Direct Gävleborg started its planning with a couple of meetings with the international office in Gävle, at the beginning of 2012. Over the last five years, the EDIC has co-operated with this international office on European Week arrangements, and thus feels comfortable with supporting the EDIC.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Target-group-based planning of the activities: it is often easier to plan activities with specific target groups in mind.
2. Find suitable co-operation partners.
3. Start planning the activity in good time (Europe Direct Gävleborg started planning approximately nine months ahead).

Problems encountered

On one occasion the venue was too small because the demand to participate in this activity (the evening lecture with Mr Jan Eliasson) was far greater than expected, and moving to a larger venue was not an option. Unfortunately, that meant that some visitors could not participate because of space limitations.

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3.3.6. Europe Day and combined events

Brief description of the action, including outputs

EDIC Comune di Nuoro has promoted many campaigns to raise awareness about active European citizenship. In this context, in 2012, the EDIC collaborated with the Italian Department of EU Policy at the Council of Ministers to organise a combined event that could combine the celebrations for Europe Day, the European Year of Active Ageing, and the photography exhibition on European integration. This touring exhibition, which belongs to the Department of EU Policy, recounts the history of the European Union through images. It has been travelling across Italy to raise awareness of EU citizenship and values.

This initiative has:

1. Increased awareness of the EU, its history and institutions.
2. Led to a fruitful collaboration with schools and students.
3. Contributed to EDIC collaboration with national institutions.

Information on the type of proposed good practice

- Promotion of the EDIC
- Event/conference management.

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. One brochure for all the events (cost-effective initiative);
2. Contributions from schools and from motivated students (students were given credits for their involvement in the event);
3. Use of posters and flyers in schools at all levels, libraries and universities, meeting centres, advertisement on social media and partners' websites.

Impact of the action

This action has had an important impact on all target groups: teachers, students, seniors, professional groups and the general public. The photography exhibition on European integration was hosted in Nuoro for two weeks and visited by a large number of citizens (over 1,000). This action has increased the motivation for students to learn more about the EU. This action has reinforced the visibility of the EDIC among the target groups, due to the availability of information materials in several public places. This action has contributed to the set-up of working relations with national authorities.

Methodology/process

To celebrate Europe Day 2012, EDIC Comune di Nuoro, in collaboration with the Italian Department of EU Policy at the Council of Ministers, hosted the photography exhibition from 21 May to 7 June 2012. In order to cut the costs of the management and smooth operation of the main and sub-events, the EDIC contacted the local high schools and asked for the help of several students, who each received three school credits for their involvement. They were briefed on the exhibition so that they could conduct guided tours for the general public and school classes. In this way they increased their knowledge of EU history and its institutions and have become ambassadors of the EU among their peers and the general public.

On the opening day of the exhibition, the EDIC asked the local secondary school's concert band to play the European and Italian anthems, which was highly appreciated by the teachers, pupils and their parents. Another successful feature during the event involved each primary school class: after visiting the exhibition, they were invited to play a life-size jigsaw game about the geography of Europe.

Throughout the duration of the exhibition, the EDIC organised various events in the same venue to attract more visitors:

- EUROPA=NOI (a training course on the EU for teachers): teachers from all levels of education were invited to attend this training event on 22 May 2012 and received a certificate of attendance.
- 'Intergenerational Encounters': during April, May and June, nursery and primary school pupils were invited to participate in a number of meetings with the elders at their schools. The senior citizens taught them to grow vegetables in their school gardens and to make old-fashioned toys (rocking horse and kites). The outcomes were shared on 6 June 2012 during the day of 'Intergenerational Encounters'. On the same evening, the EDIC organised the projection of two short films on active ageing and solidarity between generations which were filmed by the Meeting Centre elders and the participants of a Cinema Laboratory organised by the Municipality of Nuoro's Department of Social Services, respectively.
- 'A one-day information event on 4 EU issues': on 7 June 2012, professionals from different target groups (trainers, lawyers, professional bodies, local administrators, etc.) were invited to take part in four short information talks about dedicated topics (working at the EU, professional certification at EU level, SOLVIT and SIEG), and received a certificate of attendance.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Invest time in the good management and coordination of the event.
2. Seek the voluntary help of schools and associations to cut management costs.
3. Obtain the support and collaboration of partners (local authorities, associations, schools, etc.) to ensure high visibility.
4. Ensure there is a personal benefit for collaborators (credits, fun, intellectual development).
5. Target multiple audiences and provide specific events to attract them.

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3.3.7. EDIC activity mirror

Brief description of the action, including outputs

EDIC Panevėžys organised a meeting addressed to youth entitled „Jei studijuoti – tai Kembridže“ (Study at Cambridge or elsewhere) on 12 January 2012.

The aim of the event was to introduce Panevėžys youth to study possibilities at Cambridge, one of the best universities in the world, and to give practical information about the conditions and Lithuanian student communities at other universities in the United Kingdom and Germany. In addition, information was provided on other opportunities in education, differences in the education systems across the EU Member States, and the free movement of people in the EU.

Graduates of Panevėžys Juozas Balčikonis Gymnasium, who are now Cambridge students, and a student who studies in Germany presented education opportunities in the UK, Cambridge University, and Germany to Panevėžys' academic community. They shared their experiences, answered questions, and discussed other related topics. The 'Kalba.lt' presenter also shared information about study possibilities in other EU member countries.

Thanks to this event, the youth received practical information about study opportunities, and broadened their views and study options on the basis of information and experiences shared by other students from the region.

Information on the type of proposed good practice

Event/conference management by the EDIC.

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Human resources: EDIC Panevėžys, teachers and students of Panevėžys Juozas Balčikonis Gymnasium, specialists from the public organisation www.kalba.lt and the mass media.
2. Financial resources: EDIC Panevėžys.

Impact of the action

Studies in EU countries are chosen by about 15% of all Panevėžys County students.

Practical and concrete information was shared during the event. This information was beneficial not only to the participants but also to larger groups of students, because both the event itself and the highlights of the event were promoted by the mass media.

Methodology/process

1. The Idea for the event was proposed by EDIC Panevėžys.
2. EDIC Panevėžys approached J. Balčikonis Gymnasium to collaborate on the event – teachers at the Gymnasium are in contact with former students now at Cambridge University.
3. EDIC Panevėžys prepared the event programme and identified lecturers.
4. EDIC Panevėžys informed the local media of the event.
5. EDIC Panevėžys invited senior students from Panevėžys' schools.
6. After the event EDIC Panevėžys collected feedback from the participants.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Focus on a popular topic of interest to youth.
2. Define an attractive brand/event title
3. Use clear and simple language; share information.
4. Stimulate active discussions during the event.
5. Attract different types of media (local, regional, national) since the topic of the event is of interest to students all over the country.

Problems encountered

EDIC Panevėžys did not get full credit for the event as the media promoted it without mentioning the event organiser.

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3.3.8. Working together with local and national entities

Brief description of the action, including outputs

During the 2012 Europe Day activities, Europe Direct Porto promoted the idea of establishing a ‘network of partners’ to develop a complete programme about 50 years of the CAP (common agriculture policy).

Local organisations were able to join a network of partners, including EDIC Porto, the municipality (host structure of the EDIC), other local authorities, an EDC, a university, a national media partner and a national economy and agriculture association, so as to communicate together on the CAP.

With this large group of different entities it was possible to run a week of diversified events directed at all types of audiences.

Information on the type of proposed good practice

- Event/conference management by the EDIC.
- Promotion of EDIC.

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Good knowledge of one unique theme
2. Coverage of this theme via several complementary approaches for a heterogeneous population.
3. A planning team (EDIC, EDC) to coordinate so many entities.
4. Budgetary resources combining notably the EDIC budget and the municipality budget.
5. Design of the event materials (EDC and university).

Impact of the action

The impact of the action is estimated from the direct participation of at least 1,000 citizens, ranging from children and senior citizens to agriculture and economy experts.

This programme of activities has contributed to the EDIC’s visibility within the local media, to local institutions, and also in the streets, via concerts, etc.

Methodology/process

The project started at the beginning of 2012 with planning and implementation meetings following the definition of the concept and project idea.

Having identified the role and responsibilities of each partner in the project, all the entities stayed in touch to put the programme into action.

This co-operation led to the production of a programme of diversified activities, including visits to schools, conferences for the general public, expert workshops and conferences, public events (e.g. concerts), workshops for kids, and a communication campaign.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Working with different entities requires time and coordination.
2. The development of the programme takes several months – it is necessary to start well in advance.
3. Find a common issue on which the different entities can communicate with citizens.
4. Different kinds of contributions, based on each partner's profile and expertise (material resources, ability and ways of promoting workshops for kids, advanced meetings for experts, design abilities, etc.).
5. A large range of events with small costs.

Problems encountered

It is necessary to have time and resources to ensure the coordination of such a project, over a long period of time.

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Chapter 4:

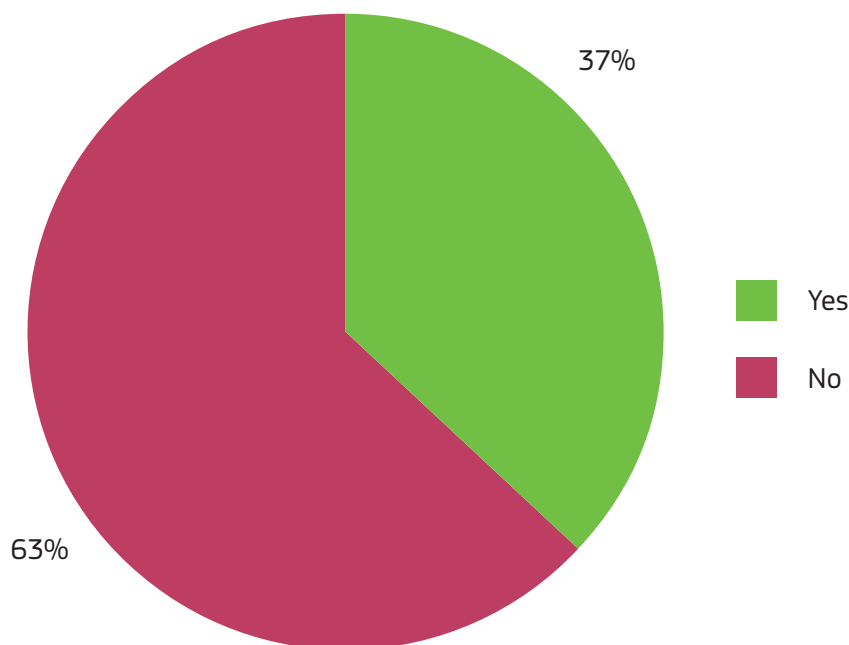
Quality and time management

4.1. Quality management

4.1.1. Main trends in the network

The majority of respondents do not implement a quality management system.

Quality management system?



(188 respondents)

The survey relating to the “management of EDIC activities” shows that **only 37% of the respondents consider they are implementing a quality management system.**

However, it also appears that two-thirds of EDICs collect feedback from their citizens on the quality of their information service on EU issues, even if this feedback is not collected systematically with tools standardised according to the activities of the Europe Direct network. This finding shows that there is concern about assessing the quality of the information provided.

4.1.2. The importance of quality management

WHY is it important to develop a quality management system in an EDIC?

EDICs act as a gateway to EU information. Taking into account that most EDIC activities involve a relationship with their public, it is very important to guarantee that the **information** provided is of **good quality** (clear, accurate, up to date). It is not only the quality of the information which is crucial, but also the need to assess that the information has been **useful** and has thus met end-users’ expectations.

Despite the need to assess the quality of the EDIC information service, this does not appear to happen either in a systematic way or through the use of tools that could be used by large groups of EDICs.

The survey does not identify the reasons why **EDICs do not implement a quality management system**, but we could find **possible explanations** in the following feedback:

- It is not a compulsory contractual activity between the EC Representation and the EDIC, to be performed systematically and within a pre-defined framework;
- It is difficult at EDIC level to organise this type of assessment with methods enabling comparison/evolution over the time, as such an approach requires large volumes of data;
- The workload for running an EDIC is very heavy and (additional, specialised) resources are not available for this qualitative action;
- Figures do not always reflect the true picture. An event with 200 participants cannot be considered by definition as a success. The way visitors/participants use information provided by an EDIC is more important than the number of visitors/participants at a specific event.

WHAT elements could be taken into account for a quality management system?

A quality management system is based on citizens' **feedback** on the services provided.

It could address issues such as:

- Are the visitors/participants/partners satisfied with EDIC services?
- Do the EDIC services answer the needs of its visitors/participants/partners?
- Is the information provided through information services and/or events useful to the end-user?
- Is the information spread/disseminated by the EDIC useful and used by the target groups? How can this be monitored?
- Is the EDIC recognised by local/regional institutions as a gateway to EU information and EU institutions? Is the EDIC recommended by local/regional institutions when the latter are contacted by citizens searching for EU information?

Being aware of these types of questions is a good start. It is also necessary to go a step further in order to collect and measure this feedback in an organised and structured way.

HOW does quality work in practice?

Different procedures and sometimes tools have been designed individually by EDICs to assess the quality of their services at their own level. However, it is not enough to create tools and procedures – it is also necessary to be able to gather feedback from the visitors, participants, partners, etc.

In this respect, EDICs have developed several **procedures and tools**, such as:

- Assessment forms to be filled in during visits to the EDIC;
- Satisfaction surveys on EDIC information products (newsletters, websites, etc.);
- Satisfaction surveys on EDIC events;
- Working relations with the “same” interface in a partner organisation, to ensure this person will act as an intermediary for the dissemination of the EU information from the EDIC to the members in his/her organisation;
- Management of databases with contact details of representatives from local, regional institutions, municipalities, schools, local associations, NGO, media, enterprises, etc.;
- Surveys of target groups/partners to identify the actual requirements for EU information;
- Provision of tailor-made information to the (priority) needs of the target groups and partners, to ensure that the information will be useful to these target groups;
- Provision of attendance certificates, only a few days after the event (to make sure that the participants will fill in the assessment questionnaire!).

4.2. Time management

4.2.1. Main trends in the network

Although the survey shows that most EDICs do not implement quality and time management, it also reveals that this topic is not among the main issues on which EDICs would like training.

The survey categories related to “regular information on the intranet from DG COMM on EDICs activities in quality and time management” and to “A platform on the intranet to share/exchange information with other EDICs on quality and time management” were mentioned by only 10% of the respondents in their main expectations from DG COMM in 2013.

4.2.2. The importance of good time management

WHY is it important to develop time-management activities in an EDIC?

Implementing time management is important as it helps EDIC staff members **manage tasks in the most time-efficient way**, thereby making better use of limited resources.

Time management can be implemented on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis and/or by project, by module, by target group, etc. This approach guarantees the best possible use of the limited time resource, as well as optimum use of all available EDIC resources, such as human, technical and financial resources. **Time management contributes to quality management** when the work is done and organised in such a way, and can help reduce stress in the workplace.

WHAT elements should be considered in a good time-management policy?

- What types of resources are available for what period of time?
- Is the EDIC making full use of all resources, in an optimal way?
- How is work distributed over time? Does each staff member use all the time available?
- Does the EDIC have a yearly/monthly/weekly time schedule for EDIC activities in general, or by module and by project?
- Are there time limits for each action?
- Are deadlines defined?
- Does the EDIC work as a team or as a group of people with individuals focusing on a specific objective?
- Does the EDIC assign work to other departments in the host structure? How is this co-operation organised in the host structure?
- Does the EDIC involve volunteers, trainees, resources from partner organisations?
- Can the EDIC count on partners, when activities are co-shared/co-managed?

The concrete responses to these questions and challenges differ from one EDIC to another but also from different factors such as, for example, the internal organisation of a host structure, the workload during a certain period, implementation (or not) of an (additional) project, etc. In any case, the EDIC manager should take time to examine these questions in order to choose the optimal time-management system in his/her EDIC.

HOW does time management apply in practice?

Based on existing EDIC experiences, a series of recommendations can be formulated which need to be adapted to the work environment of each EDIC:

- **Work as a team:** teamwork saves time and resources. The team can identify the strengths of each member and his/her personal interests, which could be an added value for the EDIC. Team building is also important as it breaks down barriers between management and staff and helps build friendships;

- **Consider distributing the tasks** among staff members, **including giving them all responsibilities and empowering** them. The EDIC manager should know staff members' assets and should assess their main interests, skills, availability, weaknesses and knowledge to define the most suitable member of the team to be charged with a (new) task or commitment;
- Define **time limits and deadlines** for each task;
- Develop **partnerships/co-operation activities** at local and regional level (which saves time for shared activities);
- Work with **reliable partners** to ensure the partnership does not become a burden;
- Make **'intelligent' use of social** media during the working day;
- Organise **team meetings** on the same day every week and/or month. The aim of these meetings is to discuss new tasks and evaluate work done during the past week/month. It is advisable to **schedule regular staff meetings** because, if done on a weekly basis, everybody will plan and be prepared for the meeting which should save time;
- Give the **floor to each team member** during the staff meeting so that each member's progress on his/her files can be monitored;
- Organise **brainstorming session** when new projects or activities are launched to encourage staff members and volunteers to bring new ideas and to take an active interest in activities and tasks;
- Use **checklists** (including deadlines when possible), create **templates**, etc. that can be used for more than one activity. The checklist should be adapted for every event to be organised, with information as to who is responsible for what. And have a B plan in case something does not go as planned;
- Organise **"ice-breakers"** during weekly staff meetings and project meetings with partners to help the EDIC and partners' staff to get to know and understand each other better;
- Arrange a **staff in-house meal** on a monthly basis, for example. Perhaps members of staff can take it in turns to prepare a meal for their colleagues. This helps to create a friendlier atmosphere and helps colleagues to get to know and understand one another.

Recommendations concerning co-operation with departments within the host structure and with local partners can facilitate access to additional resources as long as time is foreseen for coordination activities.

These recommendations have been formulated for EDICs comprising at least two staff members. However, when an EDIC is staffed by just one person, successful time management is also necessary to make sure that the EDIC will fulfil its contractual obligations.

4.3. Overview of a good practice from an EDIC

4.3.1. EDIC Aveiro uses several daily routine **checklists** to monitor the progress of different actions, to make good and effective use of the resources available, and to adopt any corrective measures required.

4.3.1. EDIC Daily Routine Checklist

Brief description of the action, including outputs

EDIC Aveiro uses daily routine checklists to monitor its work progress and to take any (corrective) measures, if required.

In general, EDICs have limited human resources to cover a large number of activities and specific projects. Therefore it is essential for EDICs to pay special attention to the organisation of their work in order to optimise available time and resources.

Even when an EDIC has several years of experience, it is important to plan its activities on a daily, weekly, monthly basis or even for a full semester. Prioritising is fundamental. Regardless of careful planning, changes to the programme can occur, obliging an EDIC to adapt its agenda. The creation and use of a daily routine checklist is important to control one specific event or multiple events at the same time. It will enable the EDIC to verify and monitor the various steps and coordinate all activities without losing the overall view of the workload.

Information on the type of good practice proposed

- Quality management in EDIC
- Time management in EDIC

Inputs/Resources for the good management of this initiative

1. Only one person is required to update and monitor the checklists. It is important to note the main action points, taking into account the various activities related to their promotion, dissemination and implementation.
2. As regards financial resources, there are no extra costs thanks to the availability of standard Microsoft software such as Microsoft Excel or even Microsoft Word to create the checklists.
3. Similarly, no extra technical resources are required as it is not difficult to create and update the documents using basic knowledge and skills.
4. EDIC activities are diverse and the checklists can help to track the progress of one or more events at different stages and different times. It is vital not to lose sight of the whole, so the logistics will depend on the type, dimension and requirements of each ongoing event.

Impact of the action

If the organisation of all stages of an activity are kept under control, it is more likely to be well organised.

The use of checklists enable staff to anticipate better, to react faster to unexpected situations and to avoid (unpleasant) surprises.

Methodology/process

When an EDIC organises an activity or an event there are many stages and different elements to be managed.

The checklist serves to control all phases of planning. Even when taking into account that each event is unique, there will always be details that differ from the previous event, and it is always possible to add to and improve the matrix according to the needs or objectives to be achieved.

All relevant information is inserted in the checklist so that it can be accessed at any time and adjustments can be made on time, if necessary.

Tips and tricks for the success of the action

1. Invest time in creating a good checklist, including a planning.
2. Control daily tasks and routines.
3. Update checklists with new information whenever available/required.
4. Take (corrective) actions on time.

Problems encountered

The checklist is a useful tool but it needs to be adapted to the specificities of each action/event. For instance, the checklist for an event will be different if the EDIC organises it alone or shares the responsibilities and co-organises the event with another actor.

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5. Conclusions

A series of useful **tips and tricks, recommendations and suggestions** have been identified to help EDICs ensure the good management of the EU information service, promotion activities, the organisation of events, and quality and time management.

The tips and tricks, recommendations and suggestions have been grouped by category of EDIC activities, in conformity with the structure of this catalogue.

The EDIC EU information service

- Provide clear, accurate and updated information on EU issues
- Focus on EU issues of interest to your target groups
- Provide useful and concrete information to your target groups
- Update the EDIC information website regularly
- Collect information from different sources (Europa portal, ED Intranet, etc.)
- Collect feedback on your EU information service.

EDIC promotion activities

The promotion activities include both internal visibility within the host structure (HS) and external visibility to the target groups.

Internal visibility

- Make sure that the 'EDIC premises' are sufficiently visible and recognisable to the HS colleagues
- Keep HS colleagues informed of key EDIC activities (such as Europe Day, events and conferences, outdoor events, etc.)
- Provide HS colleagues with information on EU issues which could be of interest to them, in their capacity as European citizens
- Become the 'reference' for all HS departments for any requests for information on EU issues
- Invite HS colleagues to EDIC events
- Promote the involvement of the EDIC in European projects.

External visibility

- Use the ED network logo on EDIC information products and communication materials
- Promote the EDIC information website and information products
- Make good use of social media
- Co-operate with EC networks
- Build partnerships with local organisations which have good visibility at local/regional level
- Edit and disseminate a newsletter including information on EDIC activities (online format or print version)
- Develop connections and work contacts with local/regional media
- Be present on the ground during main 'European events' (Europe Day, European week of languages, etc.) and during local events (job fairs, contests, etc.).

Organisation of EDIC events

- Plan events (well) in advance
- Start the preparations in good time and use checklists/tasks planning
- Involve HS colleagues (when possible) in the preparation/management of an event
- Consider co-operation activities with EC networks and local organisations
- Address thematic issues of interest to your target groups
- Use a combination of media (website, social media, newsletter, local press, etc.) to promote the events
- Consider the benefits of outdoor events (street fairs, roadshows, open-air quizzes and puzzles for children, etc.)
- Be present in schools, universities, job days, job fairs, etc.

Quality management

- Collect feedback on EDIC activities (information service, events, etc.)
- Use multiple channels (online forms on the website, assessment forms during visits to the EDIC and/or after events, surveys, spontaneous feedback during visits to the EDIC, etc.)
- Use feedback to improve the level of services
- Empower EDIC staff members and assess/monitor the quality of their services
- Be reliable for the target groups
- Respect commitments with partners.

Time management

- Use checklists
- Define time limits and deadlines for each task
- Work as a team
- Schedule team meetings on the same day every week and/or month.

6. Additional information

This catalogue has been produced in co-operation with the selected members of the PEWG on “Management of daily activities of an EDIC”.

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For further information on the content of the catalogue, please contact the [webmaster](#) on the Europe Direct intranet.

