



HELP 2005 – 2008

The European Union anti-tobacco campaign in 27 Member States

Executive Summary

Preliminary Comments: The Help Campaign

Since 2002, the European Commission has been organising wide-ranging information and prevention campaigns related to smoking, targeting young people. The latest initiative, the EU campaign "Help - For a life without tobacco" has reached its end after four years of activity. This large media campaign, aimed at tobacco prevention and cessation and informing about the dangers of passive smoking in the 27 Member States, was one of the largest public health awareness-raising initiatives ever organised in the world.

Campaign Evolution

The Help programme sought to build consistency over time. In 2005 the programme was launched, in 2006 the focus was on capitalising upon what had been constructed to date and initiating the online presence, 2007 was dedicated to dissemination of the campaign through in-the-field activities and 2008 to the further development of already well-established communication themes, reinforcement of messages and reaping the benefits of the programme.

Many of the tools created were continuously enriched and several specific communication schemes, such as the e-coaching programme or in-the-field presence with ENSP projects, were further developed in 2008. A greater use of the Internet to reach young people included the Nicomarket viral operation targeting youth with 8 online films, which received 3 major marketing awards in 2008.

Partnership with Stakeholders

The Help campaign is an example of a unique cooperation since it is designed and conducted in partnership with communication experts, tobacco control professionals from the European Network for Smoking Prevention (ENSP), the European Network of Quitlines (ENQ) and the Youth Forum Jeunesse (YFJ).

An **Advisory Board**, chaired by Prof. Gerard Hastings of the University of Stirling (UK), supervised the campaign development and ensured message consistency with tobacco control themes.

The Help programme tied a close relationship with local **ENSP** (European Network of Smoking Prevention) organisations by providing the possibility of conducting national projects within the Help campaign. The aim of this further involvement was to take into account specific national needs and context as well as enhancing the national implementation of the Help campaign. 39 national ENSP projects were conducted throughout the campaign.



An ongoing engagement with young people was ensured by the close cooperation with the **Youth Forum Jeunesse**. Young people were challenged to actively contribute to the campaign development through European projects (*European Youth Manifesto against tobacco* and the European youth online contest), as well as national projects over the four years of the campaign (44 national projects conducted).

A partnership with **ENQ** (The European Network of Quitlines) over the 4 years of the campaign involved the promotion of national smoking quitline numbers on Help TV films, local websites, at events and through publications produced throughout the campaign.

All Help campaign stakeholders were regularly informed about the campaign's developments via Help **newsletters** (20 in total). Also, scientific articles about the Help campaign were written and published in major scientific reviews (ex. *European Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science...*), and the Help campaign results were presented at several key public health conferences in Europe.

The campaign triggered the interest of a number of European students who requested information to use Help as a case study within the framework of their studies and research.

Action 1: Media

Help TV Campaign

The Help campaign has been present on TV since June 2005 with 7 flights that took place in June and September 2005, January and September 2006 and 2007, and this year in January/February 2008. Nearly 70,000 spots have been broadcast in total, using 96 national and Pan-European TV stations, and addressing the 3 major issues of Passive Smoking, Prevention and Cessation. In total, 4.5 billion media contacts (TV+online) were achieved.

TV campaigns were regularly post-tested by a independent survey institute, IPSOS, in all MS and the results are remarkable: the Help saga hit the mark and communicated a message that was universally understood and approved of across Europe, since one third of all Europeans and 59% of Europeans under 25 declare to having seen the Help campaign.

Key messages were clearly understood as surveys showed that:

- 77% consider smoking as absurd
- 84% agree smoking endangers the life of those around you
- 79% of under 25s agree that Help is available to face smoking problems

MTV partnership

MTV helped create a dedicated TV ad and a mini site "*Tobacco, where do you stand?*" in 2006 for the purpose of an operation aiming to target young people, to encourage debate around the issue and help them to reflect on their tobacco behaviour.



Help Online Campaigns

Between 2006-2008, in an effort to reach its core audience (15-24 year olds), the Help campaign has developed its commitment to online activity exponentially with the number of individual campaigns undertaken. The aim of the Internet campaigns was to generate traffic to help-eu.com where concrete help with tobacco issues was to be found. The campaigns accomplished their objectives in different ways:

- **Help Display Campaigns:** Generating **mass awareness** of the Help campaign & its services. It achieved its objectives by maximising page impressions on selected high affinity websites.
- **Viral:** Optimising the number of **video views** to create '**buzz**' among 15-24 year olds. It achieved its objectives by maximising a peer-to-peer interaction thanks to the seeding strategy of viral partners GoViral & Unruly media.
- **E-coaching:** Recruiting people to participate in the Help's tobacco cessation programme. Objectives achieved by putting the e-coaching programme in **target-trusted environments** such as Facebook that also provide significant reach.
- **Help key figures:** In order to achieve visibility & reach of the Help campaign and to **inform** European opinion leaders. It achieved its objectives by optimising page impressions on principal news sites in all EU countries.

Online results: 10 campaigns took place over the four years, with a total of over 1 billion impressions achieved.

Action 2: Press Relations

The purpose of the campaign's PR activities was to further promote the denormalisation of smoking, especially among young people, and to support all HELP activities with extra media coverage.

PR activities concentrated on drawing the attention of the public through media, reports and articles and with a series of press conferences focussing on all key Help activities deployed, for e.g. media campaigns, actions targeting young people (viral operation, YFJ activities), the CO tests survey results. Media partnerships were set up to reinforce the visibility and coverage of the Help campaign.

In total 7,900 press cuttings related to the Help campaign were collected. There was equally an active participation in congresses and conferences on health matters. Over 30 press releases were published throughout the 4 years of the campaign.

Action 3: Events

Over the 4 years of the campaign, CO tests and events were organised in a number of guises in all the Member States. Since April 2006 when this activity was launched, 1,154 national events were performed Europe-wide and 363,211 European citizens measured their tobacco-related carbon monoxide levels.

This widespread in-the-field activity targeted the general public through events and stands present in main public places but also through specific actions in the workplace (**help@work**), and informing pupils about the dangers of tobacco at schools



(help@school). A total of 7,464 school kits were ordered in 2007 and 2008 and some 220,000 pupils were informed about the dangers of smoking thanks to the HELP campaign.

In cooperation with the ENQ, the Help campaign was also present at racetrack events, raising awareness about smoking within a traditional bastion of the tobacco industry **(help@races)**.

Specific institutional Help events targeting European Union institutions (ex. European Parliament), Ministries (Health, Education...) and administrations were organised. Regular activities took place annually in all Member States for the World No Tobacco Day.

European Youth Manifesto for a life without tobacco

A vital theme running throughout the campaign was the development and promotion of the **European Youth Manifesto**, an initiative organised in partnership with the European Youth Forum, which involved over 10,000 young people from all over Europe.

The aim was to give a precise indication of what are young people's hopes and desires towards a concrete policy on tobacco at the European level, by taking into consideration different perspectives and gathering these statements in order to create a European youth position on this matter. The high point of this venture, and a real evidence of the European youth's desire to be more actively involved in the decision and policy making process, was the presentation of the Manifesto to Members of European Parliament in presence of the Commissioner.

“Communicating Health, the Tobacco Example” Conference

The “Communicating Health, the Tobacco Example” Conference held in October 2008, brought together 170 campaign stakeholders from the 27 member states, to review the Help campaign achievements and address the challenge of promoting public health messages to young people, producing recommendations of use for subsequent Commission communication exercises. As a result, 13 recommendations were issued and promoted in press conferences across Europe¹

Action 4: Internet

A specific Internet website (www.help-eu.com), active in 22 languages, was built to provide concrete help, advice and support to those in need by delivering comprehensive information on health and social problems related to tobacco consumption and on the European actions in the field of tobacco control.

The website was structured around general public sections (tips and advice, games etc.), and an institutional section (latest news on tobacco-control policies etc). It also hosted other innovative features such as a portfolio of anti-tobacco adverts from all over Europe, interactive test modules and games.

¹ Conference documents and Recommendations available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/Tobacco/help/ev_20081009_en.htm



A specific e-Coaching e-mail module accessible through the Help website provided help to quit to users who sign up online. E-mails were sent at regular intervals over a 2-month period to help and encourage them in their cessation process.

Results:

- The Help website received 7 million visits over the 4 years.
- 140,000 users signed up to this e-mail coaching module to offer support during the smoking cessation process.

Nicomarket viral campaign

A powerful viral campaign targeting young people was launched in 2007 and continued in 2008. In total, eight viral spots were produced promoting the negative side effects of smoking by advertising spoof products and guiding web users to a fake online store www.nicomarket.com.

The young people could relay the viral message, pass the films on to their friends, place them on their blogs and websites etc. The aim was to integrate web users into the campaign by getting them to spread the message themselves, thus generating attention and further increasing the impact of the message among young people. Web users seeking concrete help and advice were redirected to the www.help-eu.com website at the end of their visit.

Results:

- 8.4 million video views in total
- 711,000 visits to the Nicomarket website

Help Key Figures at a glance

After four years the results of the Help campaign, a public health initiative unequalled in Europe, are impressive:

- 152 million Europeans remember seeing the TV campaign
- 59% of young Europeans remember having seen at least one TV film
- 4.5 billion contacts were made via the TV and online media campaign
- 1,154 national events and 363,000 CO tests were performed Europe-wide
- 7 million visitors over the 4 years for the www.help-eu.com website
- 140,000 subscriptions to the e-mail coaching programme
- Over 7,900 articles and reports about the campaign appeared in the media.

Help is today considered as a reference brand on a European level in terms of information and help facing tobacco.

For more information please visit the European Union website:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/Tobacco/help_en.htm