



# **Evaluation of the communication of the *Employment in Europe Report (2006, 2007)***

**Volume 2 – First Interim Report – Desk phase**

Brussels, September 2008

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## List of the abbreviations used in this report (in alphabetical order)

CN	Communication and Networking
DB	Database
DG EMPL	European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
EC	European Commission
EES	European Employment Strategy
EiE	Employment in Europe (Report)
EIM	Employment Incentive Measures
EO	OECD Employment Outlook
HR	Human Resources
LM	Labour market(s)
MS	Member State(s)
OPOCE	Office for Official Publications of the European Communities
QLMR	Quarterly EU Labour Market Review
TG	Target Group(s)

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# 1. Introduction

This introductory chapter summarises the research work carried out, the structure of the reporting, the background, context, objectives and extent of the Scoping Study, as well as the approach taken by the consultant.

## 1.1. The assignment

In May 2008 and as part of the Framework Contract VC/2007/0034 on services in the field of evaluation of communication and networking activities, Gellis Communications (hereafter 'the Consultant') was tasked by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (hereafter 'DG EMPL') to undertake an ex-post evaluation of the communication of the *Employment in Europe* (EiE) Report, with a special focus on the 2006 and 2007 editions and their related Communication and Networking (CN) activities.

More specifically, and as per Service Order VC/2008/0541, the overall purpose of the exercise will be threefold:

- Enhance key target groups' attention to future editions of the EiE Report;
- Find out how the EiE Report facilitates the understanding of the European and national labour market situations;
- Provide recommendations for improved communication of the EiE Report.

The Contractor's principle objective is thus to identify the best strategy for securing a greater *awareness, use and authority* of the Report amongst its target audiences, and this in line with the main communication objective identified by the European Commission for the PROGRESS programme<sup>1</sup>.

The evaluation will be carried out between the months of July and December 2008.

## 1.2. Background and context

*Employment in Europe* is the main tool of DG EMPL for the analysis of employment performance and labour market developments in the European Union, the acceding and the Candidate Countries. It provides the basic analytical and statistical background to underpin the *Joint Employment Report* as well as other instruments key to the European Employment Strategy (EES).

The report has been produced annually since 1989 and electronic copies are available since 1998. For the last few years, the report has been entirely written by the Employment Analysis unit of DG EMPL in close collaboration with Eurostat.

Although not a communication tool *per se*, the EiE Report plays a decisive role in the way the EES is communicated to its stakeholders:

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the *Scoping Study for PROGRESS' Communication and Networking Activities*.

- Through its online and offline dissemination, it contributes to raising awareness of the role played by the EU in the field of employment policy;
- By providing experts with up-to-date, EU-level data and comparative analysis of current trends in employment performance, it contributes to a better understanding of European labour markets and of the phenomena that affect them;
- By informing national employment policies, it contributes to securing stakeholders' support to the EES.

It is this communication value that is expected to be evaluated through this assignment. Conversely, questions related to the global impact of the EiE Report itself (e.g. accuracy of the data, pertinence of the analysis, etc.) fall outside the scope of the Consultant's mandate.

### 1.3. Issues at hand

CN activities will be key to the successful implementation of PROGRESS, as indicated by a communication made by the Commission to the PROGRESS Committee in March 2007<sup>2</sup>.

Such conviction is drawn from the four Community Action Programmes that preceded PROGRESS<sup>3</sup>, which all confirmed the negative impact of insufficiently targeted and objective-based communication activities on the achievement of the Commission's Social Agenda.

This is also applicable in the specific domain of Employment. One of the main messages that emerged from the Evaluation of the EIM Programme<sup>4</sup> completed in August 2007 was that "the knowledge generated by EIM projects [was] neither transmitted effectively to EU citizens nor even entirely successful in reaching the key stakeholders of the European Employment Strategy". This was perceived as hindering the implementation of the Strategy. The evaluation report suggested that "a formal approach to dissemination of the outputs or a dissemination plan should be included in every project". Similar comments were made regarding the promotion and dissemination of the EiE Report "which contains valid, important information for the public and not simply to decision makers". Although a number of improvements have been made since then to address the issue (such as the 2007 Communication *Key messages from the EiE Report*), the Commission felt that external technical assistance would further enhance the communication of the Report.

These conclusions, along with analogous results from the *Scoping Study for PROGRESS' Communication and Networking activities* have led DG EMPL to formulate and respond to the main communication problem of the EiE Report:

***The awareness and authority of the EiE Report's role in the analysis of trends and issues in European labour markets are insufficient amongst some target groups to help rally EU-wide support to the European Employment Strategy.***

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/progress/docs/communication\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/docs/communication_en.pdf)

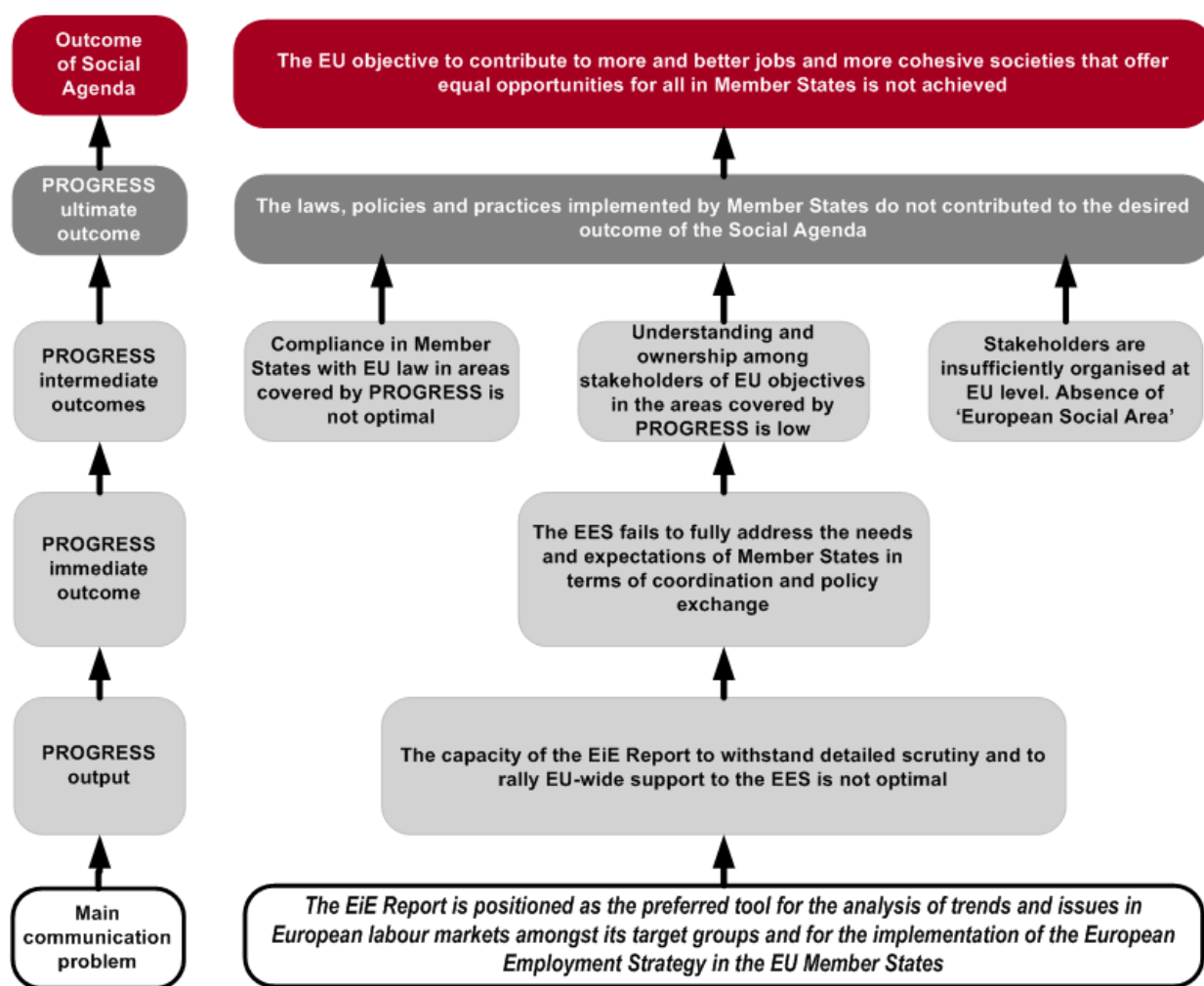
<sup>3</sup> Namely: Programme for Community incentive measures in the field of employment (EIM), Community Action Programme to combat Social Exclusion, Community Action Programme to combat Discrimination and Programme relating to the Community Framework strategy on gender equality

<sup>4</sup> PriceWaterhouseCoopers, *Evaluation of the EIM Programme*, August 2007.

This primary communication problem has the following consequences on the expected outcomes of the European Employment Strategy and of PROGRESS, also identified in the Programme’s monitoring framework<sup>5</sup>:

- At output level: the capacity of the EiE Report to withstand detailed scrutiny and rally EU-wide support to the EES is not optimal;
- At ‘immediate outcome’ level: the EES fails to fully address the needs and expectations of Member States in terms of coordination and policy exchange;
- At ‘intermediate outcome’ level: understanding and ownership among stakeholders of the EES is not optimal.

The graph below illustrates this relationship.



Gellis Communications, July 2008

<sup>5</sup> European Commission, DG EMPL, *Developing and Implementing a Monitoring Framework for PROGRESS 2007-2013*, March 2008

## 1.4. Research scope - Expected outcome of the study

As per Service Order VC/2008/0541, the evaluation is expected to cover the following tools and activities:

- The EiE Report (2006 and 2007 editions); including aspects of content, style, presentation and dissemination;
- The Quarterly EU Labour Market Review, which, parallel to the EiE Report, provides an overview of recent developments in the European labour markets, summarises the latest short-term evolutions of the economy and highlights recent changes in sectoral employment;
- The 2008 Press and Dissemination Conferences.

In terms of the scope of the analysis, the following communication objectives for the EiE Report have been defined, in cooperation with DG EMPL:

1. Priority target groups are aware of the EiE Report;
2. Priority target groups learn new information through the Report;
3. Priority target groups endorse and contribute to the promotion and dissemination of the Report

These objectives have been translated into Research Questions which appear in the Research Matrix below, which also present the corresponding judgement criteria and sources of verifiable information.

## 1.5. Resources

Decisions on the best options to follow will be based on thorough research and judgement, using information gathered through:

### a) Desk phase

- Expert review of existing communication tools and activities;
- Consultations with EC staff;
- Best Practice Analysis;

### b) Field phase

- Consultations with stakeholders;
- Online survey;
- Media analysis;
- Participation to and observation of selected events.

## 1.6. Methodology

A two-way methodology will be used for this evaluation.

- **Top-down (desk phase)** – The Consultant examines the **communication outputs** related to the EiE Report and applies a list of 20 quality criteria to formulate its judgement. Assumptions are then formulated, based on the three Research Questions raised earlier:
  - Awareness of priority target groups;
  - New information generated by the Report;
  - Endorsement and dissemination of the Report.
- **Bottom-up (field work phase)** – Consultations with selected stakeholders, an online survey and media analysis are conducted by the Consultant to analyse the communication outcome and test the hypotheses formulated earlier.

A **third phase** will synthesise the findings from the evaluation, establish cause-effect relationships, formulate the main communication issues and provide recommendations for the future.

### Research Matrix – Desk phase

Research questions	Judgement criteria	Sources of verifiable information
1. To what extent is the CN strategy of the EiE Report <b>relevant</b> ?	1.1. The communication objective is clear, consensual and coherent with the overall CN Framework.	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review of the document
	1.2. Communication of the EiE Report focuses on the individuals and organisations that can initiate the desired change.	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review (Database analysis)
	1.3. The main message(s) is/are clear, coherent and repeatedly reinforced.	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review of the document
2. To what extent are the communication activities around the EiE Report <b>effective</b> ?	2.1. The visual identity of the communication products is distinctive, memorable and coherent.	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review of the document
	2.2. The product makes the most of the knowledge generated by the programme.	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review of the document
	2.3. The message is delivered by an influential opinion leader and endorsed by external organisations/individuals.	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review of the document
	2.4. EU/national contexts have been taken into account at the moment of the launch of the EiE Report.	- Consultations with EC staff
	2.5. The format and presentation of the EiE Report correspond to target groups' needs and preferences.	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review of the document
	2.6. The language selection corresponds to target groups' needs and preferences	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review of the document



	2.7. The direct dissemination is effective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consultations with EC staff</li> <li>- Expert review (Database analysis, web statistics and dissemination reports)</li> </ul>
	2.8. The dissemination strategy makes use of multipliers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consultations with EC staff</li> <li>- Expert review of the document</li> <li>- Digital mapping</li> </ul>
	2.9. The Report is promoted through the media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consultations with EC staff</li> </ul>
	2.10. The Report used/quoted by networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consultations with EC staff</li> </ul>
3. To what extent is the organisation of communications <b>efficient</b> ?	3.1. The division of tasks is clear, consensual and economically efficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consultations with EC staff</li> <li>- Expert review</li> </ul>
	3.2. Quality control is institutionalised and optimised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consultations with EC staff</li> <li>- Expert review</li> </ul>
	3.3. Activities are monitored.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consultations with EC staff</li> </ul>
	3.4. Activities are regularly evaluated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consultations with EC staff</li> <li>- Expert review</li> </ul>
	3.5. A risk management system is in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consultations with EC staff</li> <li>- Expert review</li> </ul>
	3.6. The necessary collaborative tools and procedures are in place to ensure the sustainability of the system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consultations with EC staff</li> <li>- Expert review</li> </ul>
	3.7. Synergies with other organisations/ initiatives are sought and exploited.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consultations with EC staff</li> </ul>

### Research Matrix – Field phase

Research questions	Judgement criteria	Sources of verifiable information
1. To what extent are target groups aware of the EiE Report?	Criteria to be defined after desk phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stakeholder consultations</li> <li>- Online survey</li> <li>- Media analysis</li> </ul>
2. To what extent do target groups learn new information through the EiE Report?	Criteria to be defined after desk phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stakeholder consultations</li> <li>- Online survey</li> <li>- Media analysis</li> </ul>
3. To what extent do target groups endorse the EiE Report and contribute to its promotion?	Criteria to be defined after desk phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stakeholder consultations</li> <li>- Online survey</li> <li>- Media analysis</li> </ul>

## 1.7. Limitations of the study

The main limitation of the study is the following:

- The title of the publication “Employment in Europe” makes the monitoring using search engines – such as *Google*– or media outreach tools –such as *Factiva*– very difficult, as too many results appear due to wide scope of the wording.

## 1.8. Content of the report

This interim report contains the results of the first phase of the assignment. The final report will come at the end of the field phase, where the assumptions of the initial desk phase –stated in this interim report– will be tested and validated.

This interim report contains the following chapters:

2. **The expert review of the existing communication activities**, which is an analysis of the report’s and its by-products communications.
3. **Good practice analysis –the OECD Employment Outlook**, which draws a comparison between the two publications, stressing the benchmarking elements in the EO and analysing them.
4. **Synthesis**, which compiles the analysis of chapter 2 and 3, highlighting the main assumptions which will have to be tested in the field phase.
5. **Recommendations**, which provides examples of possible improvements in the different issues related to the Report’s communications.

## 2. Expert review of existing communication activities

This following section is a description of the tools and processes implemented with a view to facilitate the dissemination of the EiE Report's findings. The objective is to derive, based on the Consultant's experience and methodology, a number of **assumptions** that will be tested, during the field phase, with selected stakeholders. **It should be emphasised that the following description is part of the Consultant's preparatory desk research and does not constitute an evaluation per se.**

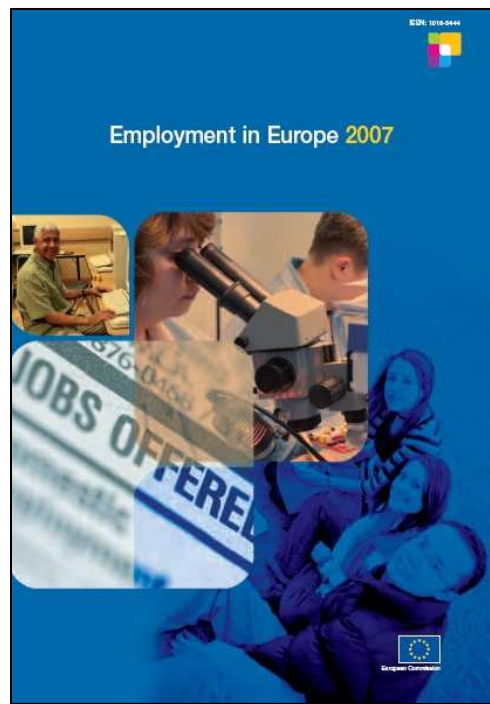
As per the research log frame developed by the Consultant, the subsequent description focuses on three main aspects:

1. The assumed **relevance** of the strategic CN choices operated by DG EMPL for the EiE Report with respect to the organisation's policy objectives;
2. The assumed **effectiveness** of CN activities in delivering their anticipated benefits;
3. The assumed **efficiency** of the EC's organisation in the use of its resources.

In accordance with the Commission's Service Order, this chapter scopes the communication of the years 2006 and 2007; combining a short description with an analysis of each particular issue<sup>6</sup>. The **communication outputs assessed** include:

- the EiE Reports themselves and their executive summaries;
- the Communication from the Commission on the Report's main messages;
- the relevant press releases;
- the press and dissemination conferences including opening and closing addresses;
- the Quarterly EU Labour Market Reviews,
- the EiE web page.

In addition, **five interviews with EC staff** – involved in the drafting, production and dissemination of the EiE Report – were carried out in July 2008; the input gathered through these interviews also informs this analysis of existing communication outputs.



<sup>6</sup> Chapter 3 offers a comparison with the benchmarking publication which highlights good practice and concrete problems. Chapter 4 synthesises the previous two chapters and answers the research questions of the desk research phase. Finally Chapter 5 offers some recommendations.

## 2.1. Relevance of strategic CN choices with respect to policy objectives

This section investigates the **objectives**, **target groups**, **messages** and **timeliness** of the EiE Report and its related CN tools and activities, to determine whether they are truly **supportive of the organisation's policy objectives**, as presented in the PROGRESS programme's strategic framework.

### 2.1.1. Communication objectives

There is no reference document clearly presenting the EiE Report, its *raison d'être*, objectives and the resources mobilised to achieve these objectives, which reflects the fact, confirmed during the interviews, that the issue has never been discussed internally. Such remark applies, logically, to CN-related issues.

This does not mean, in any way, that the EiE Report is produced without a clear understanding of the policy objectives to be achieved. The production of the EiE Report is ensured by a small and stable team of experts who, collectively and individually, have an excellent knowledge of the product, its strengths and weaknesses. This is confirmed by, the interviews carried out with the relevant officers, which highlight a broad convergence of views in relation to the policy objectives to be achieved.

However, the absence of a reference document on the (CN) objectives could hamper the communicative objectives of the EiE Report. Specifically:

- it does not facilitate the sharing of knowledge amongst the team of people in charge of communicating the Report. As a result, some of them might have a too vague idea of the report's findings and thus of the communication objectives;
- it does not facilitate the coordination with other services and/or contractors, since there is no common document they could refer to;
- it does not facilitate accountability and performance measurements. It is difficult to measure if the initial objectives have been met when there is not document that clearly states which are the communication objectives of the report;
- it makes it harder to explain in simple terms the added value of the product to target groups, as a formulation of what the Report wants to achieve in terms of communication has not been found (branding).

The following goal has been formulated by DG EMPL staff with the assistance of the Consultant:

***The EiE Report is positioned as the preferred tool for the analysis of trends and issues in European labour markets amongst its target groups and for the implementation of the European Employment Strategy in Member States.***

## 2.1.2. Target groups

The information obtained by the Consultant on the target groups of the publication has been gathered through interviews with EC staff given the lack of strategic document. **Therefore, the aforementioned remark of the Consultant in terms of information sharing and division of tasks also applies here.**

The core audience of the EiE Report is primarily made up of employment policy experts and advisors, who use the report either for its analysis, or to support their own analyses and recommendations. Although these target groups have never been formally surveyed since the launch of the Report, informal feedback received by the Commission either by mail or directly in the course of events and conferences seem, by and large, rather positive. Most appreciated features include the accuracy of the data and the quality of the analysis provided by the Commission. It appears however that the complexity of the report hampers the understanding of some policy makers.

Further research on the field will allow the Consultant to determine more precisely the levels of awareness and satisfaction amongst the core audience. In the meantime, it is the Consultant's view that the **Commission is right to focus its communication on expert and policy makers since they are best positioned to influence national employment policies in accordance with the objectives of the European Employment Strategy.**

The Consultant also supports the idea of broadening the dissemination of some of the Report's findings through specific by-products, e.g. the Quarterly Labour Market Review and the yearly Communication on the report in 23 languages (both already in place), as well as country-related fact sheets, etc. Please refer to section 2.2. for further information on CN activities.

## 2.1.3. Messages

The Consultant observed a **relatively high degree of coherence in the Commission's messaging**, which is mainly due to the fact that the EiE Report focuses on a limited number of issues every year. For example, the themes tackled in the 2007 edition were the following:

- *Active ageing and labour market trends for older workers*
- *Working time, work organisation and internal flexibility" – flexicurity models in the EU*
- *Strengthening continuing vocational training at the initiative of the enterprise*
- *The labour income share in the European Union*

It is therefore not surprising to see the main messages of the press release and executive summary focusing on the same themes, and more particularly on some of the most striking conclusions and recommendations.

**Whilst the messages appear to be coherent, it is less easy to assess the extent to which they are truly supportive of the objectives of the EES.**

Indeed, a major feature of the Report is its relative neutrality. The forecast results are published with an extensive background commentary but without any message transmitting

the views of the Commission on the main employment-related issues raised by these results. This neutrality is explained by the fact that the Commission is both the technical body preparing the forecast and an actor involved in policy making. It could be argued that a greater political commitment in the interpretation of the results might undermine the credibility of the Report. However, the analysis of competitive forecasts seem to indicate that this justification is not valid (please refer to section 3, Best Practice).

Clarity and coherence of messaging will be tested with stakeholders during the field phase.

#### 2.1.4. Timeliness

**No particular consideration for the policy cycle or calendar of target groups** is visible in the timing of the EiE Report's publication and presentation. Instead, EC staff respondents have revealed during interviews that the Report follows the logical timeline of the surveys used to draft it (in particular, the Panorama chapter), the cycle of comments and the subsequent revisions, the duration of the production process, the availability of the venue and the agenda of key speakers. In other words, the date to release the Report is just chosen according to logistical reasons: either the ones related to the entire drafting and production process, or the ones related to the availability of venues and VIPs.

In the view of the Consultant, however, this time consideration is more about having an internal planning of the steps and procedures required and the people involved in them. Unfortunately, it is not really about taking into account the several political agendas in the EU and at Member State level as well as the Commission milestones. **The Commission calendar** is, to a certain extent, **taken into account but even this is not always properly done**, as the Commissioner or the Director General are not always present and other important announcements from the Commission can 'overshadow' the EiE Report's presentation (as will be analysed further on).

## 2.2. Effectiveness of CN tools and activities in delivering the anticipated benefits

This section analyses the effectiveness of the Employment in Europe in meeting the communication objectives *usually* assigned to publications. It should be borne in mind that these objectives have been defined by the Consultant to structure its own evaluation. In other words, the conclusions drawn in this section are rather meant to inform the assumptions that will be tested during the field phase than to lead to firm conclusions.

In order to guarantee that the overarching goal of making sure that "the EiE Report is positioned as the preferred tool for the analysis of trends and issues in European labour markets amongst its target groups and for the implementation of the European Employment Strategy in Member States", three approaches to the Target Groups will be analysed:

- **Expanding readership:** how the Report is made more visible to non-users;
- **Securing readers' loyalty:** how the Report turns first-time users into regular users;
- **Creating multipliers:** how the Report turns regular users into multipliers.

## 2.2.1. Effectiveness of communication activities in expanding readership

The aim of this section is to assess the extent to which communications contribute to raising awareness of the EiE Report amongst target groups. Five criteria are going to be used:

1. Search engine optimization
2. Media outreach
3. Distribution network
4. Outstanding design
5. Language selection

### 2.2.1.1. The publication's meta-data are 'search engine optimal'

Search engines play a great role in scientific and non-scientific research, and they are becoming –if they haven't already become– the preferred way of looking for information amongst the digitally literate. Ensuring a high level of visibility of the publication is likely to increase website traffic. In the early 2000s indexation by keywords was the main guarantee for high visibility with the most used search engines. Nowadays, *Google* dominates the market and its search algorithm, whose exact formulation is a corporate secret, takes into account many other factors, reducing dramatically the impact of keywords.

Although proper search engine optimisation has not been pursued by DG EMPL, the EiE Report receives **quite good results for simple searches, although the situation drastically changes for sophisticated ones.**

The EiE website's keywords have not intentionally been developed to get more results in search engines, neither has the page description. In addition, there is no concrete marketing plan for this purpose. The EiE website exists in English, French and German. The page description and the keywords are also in those languages, which means that a search using keywords in those three languages might also get results. However, with Google's search algorithm this is not the case. What is most important is the number of links towards the website which is being marketed. In the case of the EiE website, 195 pages link to the English version of the EiE website<sup>7</sup>. 69 to the French<sup>8</sup> and 36 to the German<sup>9</sup>. Therefore, encouraging other pages to link to the EiE website would increase its visibility.

Another way of ranking highly is repeating the keywords along the text of the website. The following table summarises this practice on the EiE website.

<sup>7</sup> The 2007 edition ([http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/employment\\_analysis/employ\\_2007\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_analysis/employ_2007_en.htm)). In its 2005 edition, they are 49 links pointing to that year's page. Research done the 17/09/08.

<sup>8</sup> The 2007 edition ([http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/employment\\_analysis/employ\\_2007\\_fr.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_analysis/employ_2007_fr.htm)).

<sup>9</sup> The 2007 edition ([http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/employment\\_analysis/employ\\_2007\\_de.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_analysis/employ_2007_de.htm)).

	Language Version					
	2007			2006		
Keyword <sup>10</sup>	EN	FR	DE	EN	FR	DE
Europa	1	1	7	1	1	6
Commission	3	3	3	1	1	1
Employment	14	17	9	16	19	17
Strategy <sup>11</sup>	2	-	1	2	-	7
Labour <sup>12</sup>	6	9	-	10	11	-
Market *	3	3	-	10	9	-
European Union	1	1	0	0	1	0
EU	4	2	4	6	5	0
Employment in Europe	6	5	5	4	5	5
Analyse (FR) <sup>13</sup>	-	1	-	-	3	-
Arbeitsmarktanalyse(DE) **	-	-	0	-	-	0

'Employment' is the most frequently featured word, followed by 'labour'. However some other key words are almost not featured in the text of the website such as 'Commission' or 'European Union'. Others are hardly mentioned or inexistent in some language versions, such as 'strategy' or 'analysis'. Increasing the appearance of those words would benefit the Report's visibility.

Finally the last criteria to result in a high search ranking which could be highlighted is that the more a website is clicked on when it appears on a result list, the higher it goes on that list in the future. Although this point is going to be further developed in chapter 3, the effectiveness of the EiE Report appearing high in search rankings is uneven. The publication appears in high positions in search engines using the simplest search equations (e.g. 'employment' + 'Europe'). This is probably due to the publication's name, which for non-users could help it to be found. However, when it comes to sophisticated searches (please refer to chapter 3 for more details<sup>14</sup>), in many occasions the publication does not appear in the first 10 pages of results. This is particularly worrying as users scarcely go beyond that page.

### 2.2.1.2. Media outreach activities are newsworthy

Media outreach provides visibility to a publication, its findings, the issues it deals with and the issuing organisation. Since the mass media's domination of the public sphere, appearing in the media is essential for public awareness. Appearing in the media multiplies the potential to reach target groups, however, in a market which is saturated, journalists' attention needs to be attracted and the newsworthiness of the publication need to be apparent. 11 criteria for newsworthiness are often quoted by journalists<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Stated in English, but referring to the French and German equivalent for the respecting language version.

<sup>11</sup> Not a keyword in FR

<sup>12</sup> Not a keyword in DE

\* Idem

<sup>13</sup> Just a key word in that language version

\*\* Idem

<sup>14</sup> Where a comparison is made with the OECD Employment Outlook regarding equations on search engines in the point 3.2.1.3.

<sup>15</sup> The 11 criteria are: timeliness, conflict, uniqueness, trendiness, prominence, impact, proximity, human interest, tragedy, avoiding complexity and have an image which can be associated to the news.



Very few facts match the 11 criteria, but the more criteria they match or the extent to which they fulfil a particular one, the greater the chances of appearing in the media. A specialised and technical publication does not generally match these criteria, excepting for trade media and quality/specialised newspapers. However, some could be matched to a certain extent.

**Despite efforts** being made trying to format the messages into newsworthy tools for journalists (e.g. a press release and a press conference), **results are not satisfactory**. This is due to the tools aimed at journalists not fully taking into account journalists' needs and expectations, which very much relate to newsworthiness factors.

The most important factor is timeliness: “news is new facts”. The tools for journalists do not fully consider this factor. An example is the insistence in the press release to provide journalists with hard facts which are already known as the data was released a long time ago. The new element which the Report brings is its added value: its sound analysis across the EU. However the inclusion of hard facts can be explained by the will to meet other newsworthy criteria.

The impact, the proximity, the conflict and the need to avoid complexity are other factors. Hard facts are easier to understand than nuanced analysis, their impact is clearly seen and they can be translated into a story reporting on a conflict or a controversy. However, the messages of the Report are complex and nuanced due to its expert nature. Conflict or controversy are difficult to create, especially when messages are not very political. The complexity is hard to explain in simple terms and the impact of this study on the media users is also tricky to explain. This is why it is the Consultant's opinion that the media outreach should be expected to only come from trade media and economically orientated<sup>16</sup> and quality<sup>17</sup> newspapers/magazines. Therefore, efforts should be focused to attract those journalists and to create tools which take into account the mentioned criteria. A more personal contact could be considered for this kind of journalist, both at the time to announce the launch and after the presentation to clarify any questions raised.

A last consideration needs to be made on two other newsworthiness factors: uniqueness and prominence. The EiE Report is unique as it appears just once a year and is the only publication in its field which covers all the EU Member States. However, this is not stressed enough and in the eyes of many journalists it might be just another Report from the Commission, losing almost all of its uniqueness. This is especially true when the Report is presented without sufficiently considering other Commission announcements which might overshadow the Report's launch. In addition, an element which might contribute to this uniqueness is giving some prominence to its presentation through the person who is doing it. When it is the Commissioner he lends political weight and the prominence factor is there. However when it is a Head of Unit and the press conference is called a “technical briefing”, the prominence and the uniqueness disappear.

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<sup>16</sup> For example, *The Financial Times* or *The Economist*.

<sup>17</sup> For example, *The Guardian* or *Le Monde*

### 2.2.1.3. The distribution network is adapted to the target audiences

Pan-European networks, such as the European Information Centres, and networks created by local libraries, such as the university ones, spread the distribution of the Report across the EU and thus reach Target Groups (TG) in their own environments. To this geographical expansion, a multiplicative factor is added because of the collective and consultative nature of these information relays.

The impact these **distribution networks** have on expanding readership very much depends on individual cases, as these centres **have very uneven impacts**, and are mainly consulted by already interested individuals. The same goes for these distribution networks' impact on TG, which is very uneven. The dissemination of the Report completely depends on strategies defined by external actors – e.g. DG COMM and local/regional authorities, in the case of the Europe Direct network, and universities across Europe, in the case of university libraries. The Report is distributed to a considerable number of university libraries and is available in all the European Information and Documentation Centres, as well as the libraries of the Commission Representations in the main EU cities and Delegations in capital cities across the world.

The consultant is not aware of any particular encouragement incentives targeting these networks, convincing them to make an effort to better market this publication. Apart from the geographic diversity, stakeholder diversity is needed. Therefore, subscription by these kinds of networks could be more strongly encouraged, considering that the Commission is very keen to work with them and occasional efforts are made in this direction. A more pro-active attitude would be needed in order to get more universities, think tanks, research centres, social partner organisations, public institutions in MS, etc. on board. E-mail could play a role in this initiative.

### 2.2.1.4. The publication has an outstanding design

The external design of a publication can make the publication stand out amongst others and catch potential readers' attention. The design must reflect the essence of the publication and be adapted to the target group's expectations while also being 'catchy' and attractive.

The **external design of the publication needs further improvement** as it does not exploit the possibilities of the media.

The title appears clearly on the cover and spine, and it is quite self-explanatory. In addition, the photographic selection helps to illustrate the theme, as it represents people in diverse working environments<sup>18</sup>.

However, the potential of the graphic language is not exploited by the photographic selection. The pictures on the cover are flat, lack creativity and do not add anything to the image of the Report; they actually contribute to a 'grey' and bureaucratic image, which is not enticing, even for experts and policy makers, who are saturated with specialised publications which have quality photographic selections.

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<sup>18</sup> Respecting in addition DG EMPL objectives to promote diversity and equal opportunities, as well as to fight discrimination.

In addition, the publishing organisations (DG EMPL – the Commission) are not easily recognisable. No symbol or mention appear on either the spine, or on the cover, the European blue flag does not stand out against the blue background.

### 2.2.1.5. The language selection is adapted to the target audience

The language selection chosen for a publication can become a barrier if target groups do not read the publication because they do not understand the language it is published in. This same of course also goes for its by-products, whose impact may also be limited because of language barriers.

**The language selection for the publication itself does not seem to represent a particular problem.** However, target groups which might not read the entire publication, such as decision makers, might find the **language selection of the by-products too restrictive.**

The publication can be published just in English, as most of the target groups who would actually be reading it are supposed to understand this language.

However, it can be assumed that some individuals amongst the target groups, especially amongst the decision makers or journalists in some Member States, do not have a sufficient command of English. Therefore, if the CN tools and activities mainly rely on English, these people might not find their needs respected. The translation of the press release into all the EU official languages is a good practice, as with the Communication from the Commission. However, in the case of the executive summary translation is not always guaranteed, as in 2007 edition. This might not represent a problem if a Communication from the Commission also exists, but not all target groups are necessarily aware of this Communication. For the press and dissemination conference, presented in English, interpretation is offered in four<sup>19</sup> EU languages. The Consultant celebrates the initiative to ensure interpretation, although the field phase would inform this analysis on the appropriateness of the language choice.

## 2.2.2. Effectiveness of communication activities in securing readers' loyalty

This section assesses the extent to which communications contribute to securing EiE readers' loyalty.

In line with Gellis' methodology five criteria have been applied:

- accessibility,
- diversity of formats,
- navigability,
- subscription is encouraged and rewarded
- access to further information.

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<sup>19</sup> At least for the dissemination conference – French, German, Italian and Spanish.

### 2.2.2.1. The publication is easy to retrieve through manual search

A user aware of the Report but not familiar with DG EMPL should still be able to find the Report easily, be it manually or through the *Europa* search engine.

The manual search of the Report takes place through three main channels: the DG EMPL website, the *Europa* portal and its search engine, and the EU bookshop. The retrieval of the Report through manual search is not very difficult. However, the speed with which users can find it manually and using the *Europa* search function can be improved.

The **retrieval of the Report through a manual search** of the DG EMPL website is easy but it is not very fast. It is easy primarily because it is thematically organised. Secondly, because by typing key words such as “employment” and “Europe” on the search bar the Report appears as the second document of the list. Nonetheless, the retrieval of the document could be made faster by displaying a link to the main documents on the DG EMPL homepage, under which users can easily find the report.

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The retrieval of the Report on the *Europa* portal is not very direct or fast, although this is not really surprising considering the colossal size of the portal. Although there are links related to the policy areas, such as employment, under the section “documentation” no link to flagship publications is present, which would make the recovery of the document quicker.

When entering the keywords “employment” and “Europe” into the *Europa* search engine no direct link to the Report appears in the first search results page. By contrast, as aforementioned, when typing the same keywords into *Google* search engine, the EiE Report appears as the first result.

Finally, the retrieval of the Report through the on-line EU bookshop does not allow users to easily and quickly find the document if they search for it by theme. The fact that it is not in the ‘key publications’ section hampers its dissemination. However, when its exact name is typed in the search function, it appears on the first page of results. However a brief explanation of what they contain would help the reader to find relevant information even faster. Overall its marketing could be improved but it has to be stressed that the EU-bookshop has run out of stock for the 2007 edition as all the 1.000 copies were distributed, an improvement on the results from other years<sup>20</sup>. DG EMPL has many copies stored to be used on an ad hoc basis. Considering that it is unlikely that they will use their entire current stock, it would be better to make spare copies available to the EU-bookshop.

### 2.2.2.2. The publication is presented in the format(s) which best adapt(s) to stakeholders’ needs

A rule should be respected: different ways of shaping the information for different target groups. It is difficult to use the same tool for both experts and decision makers. Therefore, if the audience of the EiE Report is to be broadened, secured and, ultimately, engaged, separate tools need to be developed.

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<sup>20</sup> Which was not the case for the 2005 and 2006 editions, the other two available on this facility.

**Same tools target several target groups**, which cannot fully satisfy all of them. An example of this is the dissemination conference, targeting experts and decision makers at the same time.

Despite the variety of tools available, they do not differentiate among different users and thus do not meet specific users' needs.

- The Communication from the Commission – for policy makers and experts, as well as the executive summary, which could also ultimately be useful for the media;
- Direct dissemination of copies – for experts and policy makers (especially the executive summary);
- Online dissemination – for all targets as it combines some of the above tools;
- Quarterly updates – for experts and policy makers.
- The dissemination conference and its related presentations – mostly for policy makers, plus experts and interest groups;
- The press release and the press conference – for the media and wider public;

The distribution of tools per TG means that experts have access to reliable first-hand information quickly. The European Commission is confident that experts needs in this regard are fulfilled, an assertion that needs to be verified during the field phase. However, decision makers are not so well served. They want information on the feasibility/social acceptability of reforms. The current communication tools do not fully meet this necessity; new communication tools need to be foreseen and those already available need to be adapted in order to make sure that decision makers have the information they need concerning the feasibility/social acceptability of reforms.

### **2.2.2.3. The publication is easy to navigate and reading habits are fostered**

The publication should be easy to navigate in order to help users to find the information they are looking for, thus helping to turn first-time users into regular users. In addition, the design has to foster reading habits, creating expectations for the user, who will be used to the publication and who will expect a new edition. For this matter, there has to be coherence among the Report's design, the goals and themes it deals with and its different editions.

**People already familiar** with the Report **can easily identify it**; however, DG EMPL **does not have the intention to create a collection of similar reports**. The **reading can be done comfortably** thanks to the layout being clear layout and the text not too dense. Furthermore, main messages as well as key chapter findings are easy to identify.

Regular users need to quickly identify the publication, and thus they expect a high degree of coherence from one edition to the next. Therefore, the Report's editions should have a similar, yet distinctive look from other DG EMPL publications. The Report is easily identifiable for people familiar with it. However, there is no explicit intention to create a collection of similar reports, which would create expectation for the next report and thus increase reader loyalty

The EiE's layout is clean and reading can be done comfortably. Graphs and tables are consistent; however, the colours used do not differ enough from one another. Instead, they need to be visible and clearly distinct, especially when photocopied. In order to obtain consistency and approachability, an EiE Style Guide created by the production contractor is in place, which provides guidance to Report writers. In addition, there is a post-evaluation of the product, which enables Report writers to learn from past experience and improve future editions.

The text is not too dense, presented as it is in three columns (and hence easy to read). Main messages as well as key chapter findings are easy to identify. The executive summary gives an overview upfront, and each chapter reinforces the same ideas in its introduction, conclusion and summary. There is a detailed table of contents and graphic material, both of which help the reader to move quickly through the Report; however, the Consultants identify a need for, firstly, a final combined bibliography and, secondly, an index section for quicker navigation and better orientation.

#### 2.2.2.4. Subscription is encouraged and rewarded

Subscription is an effective way of securing loyalty, and should therefore be encouraged. In order to do so, subscription services need to be actively marketed to users.

Although considerable efforts and improvements have been made in this sense, **subscription is not sufficiently encouraged** and is not particularly rewarded. Instead, a passive approach is currently in operation; i.e. waiting for people to exert themselves or adding the participants of seminars and conferences. No extra services are offered other than receiving the Esmail newsletter.

In addition, the **existence of several dissemination lists**, owned by different staff within the unit, DG EMPL and OPOCE, some of them not very well designed or maintained, **does not contribute to the securing of loyalty**. Most of the dissemination lists are difficult to navigate – as they are not constructed with fields but are just a compilation of labels – and this makes it harder to retrieve information, although considerable efforts have already been made to reverse this trend. The difficulty is further increased by the existence of a variety of lists, which creates confusion and makes their updating less efficient.

DG EMPL has a thematic distribution list which new names are continuously added to. This is the most organised list but it does not have a completely reliable system for updating it, as its maintenance relies on members' feedback, and thus the existence of non-updated names is a reality, and the number of names affected is unknown. The other dissemination lists in existence are updated on a more ad-hoc basis, mainly through extracting participant contact details from conference and seminar attendee lists. Having the publication on display in DG EMPL's documentation centre (J27) might have a limited impact on some Commission staff, but it is unlikely that it has any impact on target groups. The ones visiting DG EMPL building probably come to a meeting and they are presumably quite informed about the Commission's activities in their areas of interest.

These subscriptions are done on an individual basis or on behalf of an institution. The latter ones have large memberships, and access is given to a wider range of users. The different dissemination lists cover a wide range of stakeholder groups, such as NGOs, universities, libraries, specialised media, labour chambers, employment services, members of local governments, think tanks, corporate sector organisations, research institutes and state ministries. Commission staff and facilities, as well as other EU institutions, are also covered: agencies and organisations of the EU, the Bureau of the EP, EU institution libraries, Commission cabinets, documentation and library services of the Commission, delegations and permanent representations.

However, there is no bonus for people subscribed to one of the dissemination lists in terms of getting access to certain data earlier. The time-sensitivity of information is exactly the same as for those who simply download the publication from the website. The reason for this is probably because a great deal of its dissemination is effected through subscription; therefore, it has become the most common way of obtaining the Report.

#### 2.2.2.5. The publication is positioned as a knowledge point by the organisation

The information contained on the Report's analysis needs to reach target groups in the most effective way. Ideally, target groups need to find the information they were expecting; in order to achieve this, the CN tools need to create a narrative which is understood and adapted to target groups' needs. The publication needs to be positioned as a tool from which target groups can learn. There is a combination of internal and external knowledge which is used in the Report; however the Report and its by-products do not take sufficiently into account target groups' information needs, such as the national approaches.

**A credible narrative** is put into place and some expert terminology is explained in tables, footnotes and in the text. On the other hand, in order to facilitate the understanding of the content by non-experts, the methodological approach and some subjects also need to be better explained and adapted to the afore-mentioned scope.

The content should be adapted to target group expectations, and this is not always the case. All EU Member States are currently covered in the Report's analysis, although greater emphasis should be put on specific national examples to which respective users can refer. Proof of this is the questioning received from journalists and policy makers during both the press and dissemination conferences. In order to help the user to find relevant national information, specific communication tools or activities should be sufficiently planned and executed.

In addition, the publication and its related CN by-products should offer a wealth of links, references and contact details for further information on specific issues (e.g. a bibliography, etc.). Although this is done at present, there is still room for improvement.

At this point it is interesting to briefly analyse the contribution of a particular tool, namely the Quarterly EU Labour Market Review (QLMR), which provides updates on recent developments in the EU labour market and which, in the opinion of some D1 staff, constitutes a supplement to the yearly EiE report (although some EiE authors consider the QLMR as an independent product from the EiE Report). The additional value that

the QLMR provides to the EiE Report is well defined, as it gives a continuous, quarterly review describing the labour market situation whereas the EiE Report appears once a year. This gives the target groups the possibility to link one tool with the other. The QLMR messages are furthermore easier to read than the EiE Report. For the time being, a clear separation exists on the portal between the EiE Report and the Reviews, which underlines the QLMR's independence from the EiE Report. Moreover, since the QLMR is presented as an internal document, its opportunity for market expansion is greatly reduced. In addition, the Reviews are not optimally indexed by search engines, and are thus difficult to retrieve by online users, who might very easily not be aware of its existence. The association between both publications is not sufficiently stressed, which does not contribute to the creation of a narrative combining the knowledge generated in the Report and in the QLMR.

### 2.2.3. Effectiveness of communication activities in facilitating quotations and endorsement

This section assesses the extent to which EiE-related communications contribute to facilitating quotations and endorsement, which is the aim of most scientific publications and constitutes an important element of credibility.

Five criteria are considered:

- the political endorsements,
- reproduction issues,
- feedback and discussion issues,
- marketing issues and
- advertising issues.

#### 2.2.3.1. The report is politically endorsed

When an influencer supports a publication it can be beneficial in many ways. It can result in greater media attention being given to the publication, the target audience can be convinced of the utility of the report and to use it and ultimately follow its recommendations. Endorsement can take many shapes: a public presentation, participation to an event, a written contribution, a mention of a website, etc.

**The Report does not make the most of gathering endorsement** on a political level. Although there is an editorial signed by the Commissioner, he does not attend its presentation. On the other hand, although some experts discuss the Report in the dissemination conference, their presence is limited and it is not directly translated in the Report itself.

It is important that it is the most senior official in the organisation introducing the publication and the fact that the editorial of the publication is signed by the Commissioner gives it a certain political weight. However, political messages could be strengthened: in addition it should also always be the Commissioner who presents the Report in Brussels, and this should be at a proper press conference and not at a 'technical briefing', whose name enables an interpretation of it lacking any political weight. Potential touring or parallel presentations in Member States could be



undertaken by the Head of Unit, to explain the main findings to national/regional/local decision makers and experts.

Alongside internal hierarchical endorsement, external endorsement is also sought: an external influencer or organisation can create an even greater impact. To an extent this happens at the dissemination conference, where academics present the Report alongside the authors. This external endorsement could be incremented by adding a second, theme-based editorial signed by a guest with expertise in the policy area, for example an economist or sociologist. Alternatively, experts could be used to introduce thematic chapters.

### **2.2.3.2. Reproduction/quotation is permitted and encouraged (provided the source is acknowledged)**

Publicity of the Report will be increased if reproduction and quotation is encouraged and made as accessible as possible. This can be realised with a range of downloadable graphics, information summaries and highlighted statistics on the website. Reproduction and quotation is closely linked to the policy messages within the publication, and therefore the quality and type of policy messages present needs analysing. For the 2006 and 2007 editions, downloadable features were present on the website, and aimed to provide experts with the raw data used in the Report.

The disclaimer at the beginning of the report is **not sufficient to encourage acknowledged reproduction and quotation** but with effective communication tools readers can be encouraged to reproduce and quote the EiE Report.

It is thus important to diversify the functions available to download the publication, its by-products and the data. This goes, for example from enabling individual chapters be downloaded to enabling the data be converted into excel files, thus facilitating the work of researchers and consequently increasing the chances of it being used and quoted. Key employment and macro-economic indicators are available as separate PDFs and this facility needs to be extended to the graphs too, because these are the most reproduced elements of scientific publications. However, the possibility to individually download the graphs and tables should be organised in a systematic way to avoid an eternal lists of links on the website. By making this information readily accessible the chances of quotation are increased.

The stronger and clearer the policy message, the greater the chances of being quoted. Regardless of the quality of the analysis, the policy messages, although present are conservative. The consultant understands the importance of policy messages but they could be disseminated in a different form, for example within the editorial rather than the body of the report. In its current format the policy messages of the report offer limited possibilities for quotations.<sup>21</sup>

Lastly, displaying and allowing the downloading of the presentations used in the dissemination conference is a good practice. However, a general presentation would

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<sup>21</sup> This issue is closely related to the broader issue of messaging, which is dealt with along this Report, and in particular in the point 3.1.3.

probably be missing. The main findings of the report in a presentation format (e.g. *PowerPoint*) would be an excellent information dissemination opportunity: a PowerPoint presentation is easy to produce while also being of use to a wide target audience who could modify the presentation to suit their needs and widely disseminate information related to the report. This idea could be tested during the field phase.

### 2.2.3.3. Feedback, discussion and networking are facilitated

An important aspect of producing a publication is to ask for feedback. To be accepted and endorsed, a publication must take account this feedback, both positive and negative. This is mutually beneficial: it is an opportunity to learn new things and it is a sign of consideration to the audience.

There is definite **scope for improvement concerning the feedback**, discussion and networking facilities related to the Report and its dissemination. The time dedicated to debate needs to be addressed, along with the level of technical language and questions. The physical process of collecting, interpreting and storing any comment and evaluations received of the event also needs consideration.

It is clear that the European Commission is making an effort to stimulate dialogue with its stakeholders: the audience is given the opportunity to debate the findings of the Report. Since 2006 a dissemination conference is organised following the presentation of the Report to the press and the speakers at the conference include external experts as well as senior Commission members, which enables discussion and reinforces the importance of the Report. In contrast the absence of some of the Commission's most senior staff, despite their attendance having been announced, undermines the report's impact. There are opportunities to ask questions during the conference but there is *limited* time available for debate. Many questions come from experts and other international organisations whereas policy makers are less vocal and some confess confusion as a result of the conference's over technical content.

Users of the report are kindly invited to submit their comments and queries to the Commission; mainly using the functional mailbox of the D1 unit, although multiple channels are available (e.g. staff email addresses or informal discussion in meetings). The result is that feedback is not fully centralised and therefore its impact is limited, as some information is not shared with all the staff. In addition, this feedback is not stored, which limits its use, particularly in relation to future reference when planning future events. A more systematic approach is required and the content of both the hard copy and website evaluation form could be developed.

### 2.2.3.4. e-Marketing and promotion of links

Partner organisations can effectively, cheaply and easily demonstrate their support for a publication and the knowledge it generates by adding a link on their website to the EiE Report, which is something measurable<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Please, refer to the point 2.2.1.1.

The Commission needs to assess its collaboration with like-minded partners to develop an e-marketing strategy. With a link-placing strategy publicity of the Report would efficiently be increased while its political weight would also improve thanks to partner endorsement.

However **there is no active link-placing strategy in place**, the Consultant's research reveals that the number of links is low, both in the number of links on third party websites pointing towards the EiE one and vice versa, and in the number of external links on the EiE website. These limited results illustrate an insufficient collaboration and partnership between the European Commission and its potential partners. In addition, space needs to be offered on the EiE webpage for the strategic placement of partner organisations and alternative/complementary publications rather than exclusively links to internal pages and documents. Furthermore, a link-placing strategy is preferred to the authorization for uploading the publication on a partner website because it allows for more accurate monitoring.

#### 2.2.3.5. Endorsement is publicised

It is not enough to solicit and get endorsement; endorsement adds value when it is *publicised*. Maximum visibility should be given to external endorsement.

With endorsement the publicity and therefore weight of the Report increases, but currently **the potential advantages that endorsement offers are not being capitalised** on due to the lack of publicised endorsements. If endorsement is not publicised then its benefits are not being fully utilised.

One of the problems in this respect is that the hard copy of the publication does not carry a lot of political weight in the form of endorsement (please refer to 2.2.3.1.). On the other hand, although some external expertise is required, this is not stressed in the Report. In addition, neither of the CN outputs carry a great deal of endorsement, as it has been analysed.

CN by-products could be better utilised: the OECD and ILO, both key partners, do not reference the EiE report on their websites. Their endorsement would provide valuable enhancement of the report, particularly amongst policy makers. In addition, partnerships with academic institutions could be envisaged and clearly publicised. Finally, what endorsement is available needs to be emphasised: individual comments received through the functional mailbox could be publicised, for example, in a box on the webpage.

## 2.3. Tools and processes intended to make the organisation efficient

Organisational aspects related to the development and production of the EiE Report are analysed in this section with a view to assess the efficiency of the current operations and identify areas for improvement. Aspects such as collaboration paths, division of tasks, quality control mechanisms, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks are studied.

### 2.3.1. Internal resources

The production process of the EiE Report is articulated around two steps and managed by two units:

- Unit D1 (Employment Analysis) is responsible for the research, the authoring of the report and its presentation to the press and stakeholders;
- Unit H3 (Communications) is responsible for the production, publishing and dissemination.

The view according to which the authoring of the EiE Report should remain a prerogative of DG EMPL (D1) seems to be widely shared. Two main arguments are cited:

- Firstly, the numerous synergies with other activities that in-house production makes possible, in particular those which relate to the Employment guidelines and the monitoring of European labour markets, contribute to enhance the analytical capacity of the Commission (e.g. forecasts are included in the AMECO database). **It is therefore both a question of analytical capacity and credibility.**
- Secondly, the current level of satisfaction within the core audience (experts), which is felt by DG EMPL and will be tested in the field phase, advocates for a **status quo**.

It makes also sense for the Consultant to charge the Communications unit (H3) with the publishing and dissemination of the Report, given the constraints imposed by the overall communication strategy (respect of the visual identity guidelines, formal monopoly of the Spokesperson on media relations, formal monopoly of OPOCE for the production and distribution of the report, etc.).

However, the broadening of the EiE Report's audience and the set-up of an objective-based communication strategy calls for a **number of adaptations**:

- It is the Consultant's view that the production of 'satellite' communication tools around the fully-fledged report should be handed over to the Communications unit or to the Communication Correspondent and this based on the following rule: experts write for experts, non-experts (e.g. journalists, communicators) write for non-experts. However, D1 should remain responsible for quality control.
- Specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound targets should be assigned to the Communications unit for the dissemination of the Report, in line with the triple objective: expanding readership, encouraging loyalty and securing endorsement.
- The monitoring system needs to be improved and regular quantitative and qualitative reports should be issued by the Communications unit.
- The practice of multiple mailing lists/databases managed by several units should stop. The Consultant strongly advocates for a single database, owned by the Communications unit.

### 2.3.2. External resources

Making the best use of external resources means:

- Hiring external contractors to strengthen existing capacities;

- Working in partnership with like-minded or complementary organisations for the dissemination of the Report.

Concerning the first point, only the layout of the EiE Report is contracted out by DG EMPL (as part of the Framework Contract VT/2007/016 to implement a programme for paper and/or electronic publications on European employment, social affairs and equal opportunities).

Here again, the upgrading of the EC's communication strategy calls for a redistribution of tasks between DG EMPL and its contractors. The PROGRESS Communication Framework Contract should be used as follows:

- Lot 2 for the production of 'satellite' communication tools around the report;
- Lot 3 for the dissemination to the relevant stakeholders.

Concerning the second point, the Report does not have any established partnership with other organisations for its dissemination and there are no plans to create one. Disseminating the Report and its results together with another organisation (which may or may not have contributed to the production and the drafting) might increase its impact or, at least, put more resources available for this purpose. **Such option will be further investigated during the field phase of the evaluation.**

### 2.3.3. Tools and processes for quality control

On the research, analysis and drafting of the Report, internal quality control mechanisms exist; however, are less present in relation to communication aspects. This is mainly due to the absence of sufficient number of requirements (with the exception of spelling and layout mistakes). Furthermore, since the authors have to focus during spring on the drafting and in summer on the corrections, little time is left for cross-checking and for working thoroughly on communication tools and activities. No particular advice or review of the communication materials prepared by authors is given, though the contractor provides them with a PowerPoint template for dissemination conference presentations. The authors are given a style guide<sup>23</sup> to help them draft the Report and present the findings.

In order to overcome this problem, the Consultant suggest to strengthen common requirements, such as messaging architecture, visual identity, guidelines, just to mention few examples. These will be accompanied by checklists for contractors or EC staff.

### 2.3.4. Tools and processes for planning

From a communication point of view, the release of the EiE Report at the end of the year is identified as an issue with a potentially negative impact on journalists' and stakeholders' attention. Further investigation will be needed during the field phase to test this hypothesis.

Considering the internal constraints related to the production of the report and which result in the impossibility to advance the release date, the postponing of the publication to January is an option which, in the Consultant's view, would deserve reflection.

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<sup>23</sup> Provided by the contractor.

Likewise, opportunities offered by the media/policy agenda to communicate on the Report's findings should be seized (important conference on labour issues, specific reform of the labour market in a given Member State, controversies, etc.).

### 2.3.5. Monitoring tools and processes

When performing this evaluation, the Consultant noticed some **deficiencies in the monitoring framework** of the EiE Report's communication. The data is therefore not complete, some relevant aspects are not covered (e.g. the number of downloads) and the information is not centralised. Problems have been noticed in the following areas:

- Dissemination through the website. As mentioned above, some data cannot be retrieved;
- Media impact not treated and therefore difficult to evaluate;
- No practice of storing and retrieving feedback via email exists;
- Problems related to the OPOCE database (missing fields);
- Distribution list organisation is too messy and difficult to work with as some information about the contact might be missing, they are not updated and the way they are built makes it difficult to retrieve information.

### 2.3.6. Evaluation tools and processes

This is the first evaluation on the way the EiE Report is disseminated and its content communicated. Communication outputs have thus never been evaluated either. In addition, as mentioned above, target groups have never been surveyed and thus their communication needs and preferences are unknown and just based on assumptions and informal feedback. Considering this lack of surveys and evaluation, the staff is unaware of the actual relevance, efficiency and impact of what they are doing, which can take away, at medium-term, a part of their motivation.

### 2.3.7. Risk management tools and processes

**No risk management system** is in place in order to tackle possible communication problems. Neither is there a reference document or protocol, to enable profiting from previous knowledge regarding these situations. The only tool which somehow acts as a contingency plan is the **corrigendum**, which is inserted inside the Report if issued before distribution or published on the website and communicated via email.

For communication tools and activities, almost no contingency plans are taken into account, despite the fact that dissemination conference presentations are introduced on the server 24 hours in advance. Instead **the EC relies on the assumed contingency plans of the contractors**. For instance, if something goes wrong during the dissemination conference with all the technical and communication-related facilities (image, sound, translations, etc.), it would be the contractors' responsibility to fix it and the EC staff interviewed assumes (without being certain) that they have a contingency plan.

### 2.3.8. Knowledge management tools and processes

The sustainability of the whole process over time and over changes in human resources is insured by a **set of procedures and tools which gather and organise knowledge** in order to **facilitate the work of the team**, gain time and learn from past experiences. However, these tools are either not in place or they are insufficient.

The main tools and activities for this purpose have been identified by the Consultant:

- **No proper stakeholder database exists.** What exist are distribution lists which in some cases are not organised and cannot be dealt with (as they are a compilation of mail labels). In other cases the organisation is better, but the main problem is to insure all potential main target group readers are there.
- **No proper message database** exists though authors create several drafts with the main findings of the chapters for the executive summary, the Communication from the Commission, the dissemination conference presentations and the press release. However these documents do not form a database, where messages can be easily retrievable.
- **No messaging architecture exists**, to adapt main messages for different contexts and to organise secondary messages.
- **No calendar of related events** and reforms at Member State and EU-level exists, although the ESF geographical desks have this kind of information.
- There are **some quality charters or guides**, such as the style guide for the authors and some visual guidelines for layout and cover design.
- **No monitoring or evaluation frameworks** exist.

### 2.3.9. Lesson-learning tools and processes

As no evaluation has been conducted, changes in publication strategy or in staff organisation are not based on a global and evidence-based scope of the problems faced, but on more **individual experiences**, which are valuable but inevitably subjective and may lack this global vision. According to these experiences, some changes have been implemented in the way the team works, the Report's direction and the way it is communicated. Apart from the fact that authors seem more comfortable and happier with the level of analysis achieved after changes concerning the fostering of teamwork, there are no certainties of other changes' impact yet. The **need for training**, if addressed, will prompt and further facilitate learning.

## 3. Good Practice Analysis – the OECD Employment Outlook

The Good Practice Analysis aims to put key aspects of the EiE Report's communication evaluation into a wider context, as well as to highlight good ideas adopted by other, *relatively* comparable organisations. Given the specific political nature of the European Commission, a more formal comparison was not feasible. The information used for this analysis was sourced from online material, combined with two consultations with relevant officials. It should be noted that the following section *does not* constitute an evaluation of the **OECD Employment Outlook (EO)** communication insofar as it mainly relies on facts and opinions reported by the publication's editors. In any case, a full evaluation is not the objective of this exercise.

The OECD Employment Outlook has been identified by DG EMPL as the EiE Report's most pertinent benchmark in terms of objectives, target groups and lessons to learn.

Issued for the first time in 1983, the EO provides an annual assessment of labour market developments and prospects in OECD member countries. Each issue contains an overall analysis of the latest trends, with short-term forecasts and reference statistics. The publication is considered an 'OECD flagship publication' by the Secretary General and is the most significant publication on employment affairs of the 8-10 published per year on that theme. In this respect, the OECD Employment Outlook can be considered as a competitive analysis, and a forecast to the EiE Report.

The following section successively addresses issues of strategy, implementation and organisation.

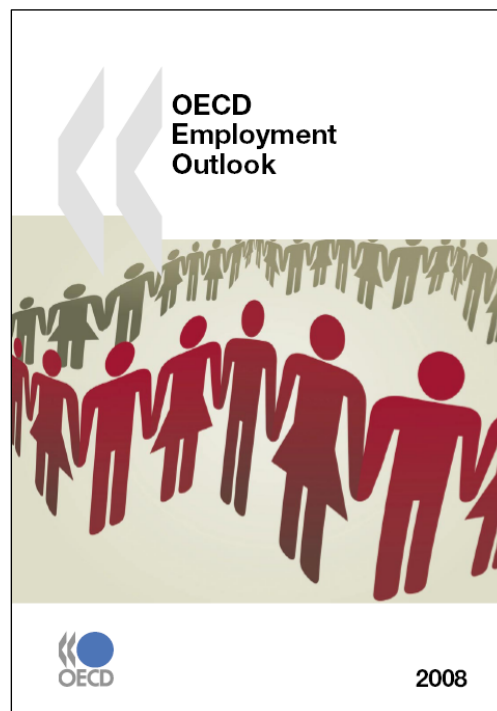
### 3.1. Strategy

Analysis of the EO's communication strategy reveals numerous convergences between the two publications, thus confirming the relevance of this Good Practice Analysis.

#### 3.1.1. Objectives

The following similarities appear in the objectives of the two Reports:

- the international scope and benchmarking approach;
- the labour market analytical approach;
- the provision of statistics;
- the retrospective and prospective (forecasts) dimension;
- the match with the respective organisation's policy recommendations.





The main divergence appears in the Reports' scope, which reflects each organisation's particular membership: European for the EiE Report and international for the EO, with five continents involved and seven of the G8 countries. The number of countries benchmarked is, however, very similar.

Another key divergence is the different way in which both organisations position themselves with regard to publications.<sup>24</sup> In contrast to the EC, which does not position itself as a publisher and main provider of information, the OECD in its own description and *de facto* mission statement, highlights publishing as one of the organisation's main activities. Therefore, the OECD positions itself as a clear source of information<sup>25</sup>, an aim which is demonstrated for instance by its *SourceOECD* service<sup>26</sup>, also reflecting its pride in being quoted regularly as a source. This web-description also mentions that the OECD issues 250 publications per year. According to consultations with OECD staff, there are three possible ways in which the organisation positions its analytical publications:

- **Structural** – regular publications, e.g. 'Outlook', 'At a glance', etc.;
- **Specialist** – limited publications such as monographs and proceedings;
- **Strategic** – irregular (one-issue, several-issues) or sporadic reports.

The EO is structural: a "flagship publication for the Employment Division and the entire OECD", and a key publication in its well-organised publication catalogue. Being much more publication-focused than the Commission, the organisation offers a stronger and much more defined backing to its publications, such as in the EO's case.

### 3.1.2. Target groups

The two publications are very similar in their target groups, with experts and policy makers as the main target, and social partners (trade unions and employers' representatives) as a secondary target. Both organisations mention the 'wider public' as a third-tier audience but with the awareness that their limited resources preclude a measurable impact on that group.

### 3.1.3. Message

This issue is more difficult to compare, as it relates specifically to the policy being promoted, and beyond that to the OECD's and EC's respective mandates. However, it is striking to notice the different approach taken by the two organisations to convey their main policy messages<sup>27</sup>:

- The EO is straightforward and prescriptive in the presentation of its policy messages, while the EiE Report is less committed politically;
- The EO's message is formulated according to the audience being targeted, unlike those of the EiE, which try to target different groups;
- The Commissioner's influence is not fully used in the EiE Report's publication (marketing message vs. political message).

<sup>24</sup> Due, amongst other things, to their different nature and political goals.

<sup>25</sup> [http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en\\_36734052\\_36734103\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en_36734052_36734103_1_1_1_1_1,00.html)

<sup>26</sup> <http://titania.sourceoecd.org/vl=1538391/cl=32/nw=1/rpsv/home.htm>

<sup>27</sup> The impact of EiE's approach and the quality of the dialogue between DG EMPL and its stakeholders in particular will be tested in the second (field) phase of the evaluation process.

The three documents most likely to contain explicit policy messages have been compared from both Reports' 2007 issues:

- The press releases announcing the Reports' publication;
- The editorial of the EO and the foreword of the EiE Report;
- The summaries of both publications.

These documents are successively analysed below.

### 3.1.3.1. Press release – Comparison of main messages (title + first paragraph)

Press releases are usually addressed to the mainstream media and beyond to their respective audiences (the so-called 'wider public'). Therefore, the information is often presented in a non-technical way, free of jargon and with a strong focus on policy beneficiaries.

The following comparison highlights a number of differences between the two approaches:

- The OECD is much more prescriptive in its approach; the EC more analytical;
- The OECD uses simple words (governments, workers); the EC uses more jargon;
- The OECD quotes itself in the title of the press release;
- The OECD's policy recommendation is straightforward; the EC's vaguer ("badly needed structural reforms").

Press release <i>OECD Employment Outlook 2007</i> <sup>28</sup>	Press release <i>2007 Employment in Europe Report</i> <sup>29</sup>
<p><b>Governments must do more to help workers adapt to new global economy, says OECD</b></p> <p>Rather than seeing globalisation as a threat, OECD governments should focus on improving labour regulations and social protection systems to help people adapt to changing job markets.</p>	<p><b>Integrated labour market policies deliver better employment performance</b></p> <p>The robust recovery of EU labour markets in 2006 brought an increase in employment of 4 million – the strongest since 2000, according to the 2007 'Employment in Europe' report, published today. But rather than being an occasion for premature celebration, the improved economic climate presents a unique opportunity to push more strongly for badly needed structural reforms. Member States need, in particular, to develop more integrated employment and training policies to improve employment security for EU workers in the changing global economy.</p>

### 3.1.3.2. Foreword/Editorial – Comparison of main messages

The editorial/foreword of a publication, usually endorsed by the most senior official within an organisation, is addressed to readers (expert readers, in both analysed cases). It is the most 'political' piece of the publication. Its aim is to persuade.

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.oecd.org/document/12/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_33927\\_38792716\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/12/0,3343,en_2649_33927_38792716_1_1_1_1,00.html)

<sup>29</sup> <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1761&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Here again, significant differences can be observed:

- The EO’s editorial headline summarises the whole report in one sentence;
- Again, the EO’s approach is highly prescriptive, with very clear policy messages;
- The EiE Report’s foreword focuses more on the marketing of the publication.

<b>Editorial</b> <b>OECD Employment Outlook 2007<sup>30</sup></b>	<b>Foreword</b> <b>2007 Employment in Europe Report<sup>31</sup></b>
<p><b>Addressing the globalisation paradox</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Globalisation holds the promise of better living standards, but is sometimes perceived as a threat.</li> <li>• This paradox reflects the unprecedented scale of globalisation and coincides with wider earnings inequality and perceptions of job insecurity</li> <li>• Globalisation is not the major factor behind these concerns, which still need to be addressed to avoid a backlash</li> <li>• Well-designed domestic policies are crucial, encompassing first, removing barriers to the expansion of sectors where comparative advantage lies, second supporting the mobility of workers rather than protecting jobs which have no future, third ensuring adequate social protection and making it employment-oriented and finally, supporting the low-skilled through make-work-pay policies and lifelong learning</li> </ul>	<p><b>Foreword</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Commission actively supports Member States in the analysis, design and implementation of their employment policies. The EiE Report is one of the main instruments of this support.</li> <li>• The strong employment expansion that the EU has experienced in 2006 is very positive news which shows that policy efforts in the area of employment are beginning to bear fruit in many Member States.</li> <li>• The Report aims to inform the broad policy debates on flexicurity, equal opportunities, work-life balance and youth employment.</li> <li>• Presentation of the Report’s content.</li> <li>• The findings of the EiE report are highly relevant to the employment policy debate in the EU.</li> </ul>

### 3.1.3.3. Summary – Comparison of the main messages

In most cases, a publication’s summary has a double objective: (1) incite its core audience to read the full report – or guide it to a specific section; and (2) present main findings and recommendations to a secondary audience unlikely to read the full report.

In both cases, the attributes of a well-written summary include: conciseness, clear language, targeted messages for each audience, attractive layout and presentation and easy access to more detailed information.

The two publications’ summaries are relatively similar. Although key policy messages are equally visible, the EO distinguishes itself by the following features:

- Shorter (six pages instead of eight);
- More prescriptive;
- Easy access to corresponding graphs and figures.

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/26/38749245.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/employment\\_analysis/eie/eie2007\\_chap1\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_analysis/eie/eie2007_chap1_en.pdf)

Summary <i>OECD Employment Outlook 2007</i> <sup>32</sup>	Summary <i>2007 Employment in Europe Report</i> <sup>33</sup>
<p><b>Activating the unemployed: what countries do</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although active labour market programmes have been shown to help long-term unemployed, only a few countries have followed the OECD's recommendation to make attendance in such programmes mandatory.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Active ageing and labour market trends for older workers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Despite the recent improvement, efforts to promote active ageing must still be pursued vigorously. Labour market participation of older people in Europe remains low by international standards.</li> </ul>

### 3.1.4. Timing

The final question to be considered is whether external factors are taken into account when deciding the timing of the publications' launch.

Interestingly, the EiE Report is published late in the year in comparison with the EO. For example, the 2007 EO was officially presented to the press in June of that year, whilst the 2007 EiE Report was presented in November. The Consultant believes that such a delay could act as a brake to the Commission Report's dissemination, considering the two publications' similar objectives and target audiences. Further research, particularly with target audiences, is needed to assess the validity of this point.

The interviews realised with OECD officials reveal that the only 'external' factor taken into consideration for the launch of the EO is the launch of other OECD publications, which is not so far of the EiE Report's timing considerations.

### Lessons learnt: *A focused and tailor-made strategy*

- Publishing is a mission; the OECD positions itself as a quality source of reference information and target groups are aware of that.
- Messages are formulated according to the audience being targeted and are clearly prescriptive.
  - Use is made of OECD-gathered knowledge, i.e. tools employ the right narrative.
  - Summaries of key messages are as short as possible.
- Messages have political weight and are presented by the Secretary General.

## 3.2. Implementation

In line with the Consultant's quality criteria, implementation is evaluated in terms of effectiveness in delivering the following benefits:

1. Expanded readership;

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/28/32/38798341.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/employment\\_analysis/eie/eie2007\\_chap1\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_analysis/eie/eie2007_chap1_en.pdf)

2. Reader loyalty; and
3. Conversion of existing readers into multipliers.

### 3.2.1. Expanding readership – making the report more visible to non-users

For a definition of ‘non-users’, please refer above to 2.2.1.

As in the previous chapter, the following fields will be examined:

- Shaping the information
- Visual identity
- Language selection
- Direct and web dissemination
- Media dissemination

#### 3.2.1.1. Shaping the information

The variety of ways in which the EO formats information to appeal to different targets was one of the reasons this publication was selected as a benchmark. Amongst the series of tools and activities related to the EO, some are targeted at making non-users discover the publication. They form a great advantage because they distil the messages and present them attractively to the user, employing innovative channels to convey the information. According to OECD staff, accessibility equals readability, which defines the Report’s style and language, achieving maximum relevance and impact.

The following table summarises the different tools and activities for each publication. From a methodological point of view, the 2008-issue of the EO has been chosen, as it has a greater number of related materials and thus makes a better benchmarking exercise. Using editions from different years is not counterproductive in this context, because the EO and the EiE are issued in different periods of the year, as well as coming from different organisations with slightly different focuses and scopes.

OECD Employment Outlook (2008)	EiE Report (2007)
Specific webpage, which can be bookmarked easily	Specific webpage
Key facts/messages on flash animation	--
Podcast (EN/FR/ES) – Raymond Torres, Head of Division	--
Summary in 22 languages	Summary in 23 languages
Abstracts of the chapters	--
‘How does your country compare?’ Factsheet	--
Editorial signed by the Director of EMPL	Foreword signed by the Commissioner
Informal seminars	Dissemination conference (November 2007) + presentation materials
Press Release + press conference in Paris (July 2008)	Press release + press conference in Brussels (November 2007)

Presentation conference in Mexico, Tokyo, Washington and Berlin	--
Speech by the OECD Secretary General	-- <sup>34</sup>

### a) Multilingual summaries

The multilingual summaries are **one of the most important tools to introduce the publication**. They aim at all target groups, including users and non-users.

Though the EiE summary is translated into 23 languages, the EO summary's translation into 22 languages<sup>35</sup>, goes beyond the official languages of the Member Countries<sup>36</sup>, including non-OECD country languages such as Mandarin (referred as 'Chinese') and Russian. This is a clear added value, which shows a commitment to being a global publication and a reference across the world. Further reflection on language selection will be provided in 3.2.1.3.

The multilingual summaries consist of:

- A **front page** including a box with four bullet points on the nature and main findings of the EO. This is an interesting feature, as it helps new readers have an initial idea of the publication and of whether it will interest them. A small negative point is the bad resolution in the reproduction of the EO front cover and of the label "OECD Multilingual Summaries".
- The **editorial, in its exact wording**. A slight format change in the typography has been noted, though the rest of the formatting remains the same. At the beginning of each section, a short sentence in blue sums up the consequent paragraph(s). It is equivalent to the second column of text in the EiE's executive summary, and is a useful tool, enabling an almost immediate assimilation of the main messages.
- An **additional summary**, constructed from all the **chapter abstracts in their exact wording**. It has headings – some in the form of a question – and graphs, and its function is to show the Report's structure.
- **Reference information** for further reading and legal information related to the publication. This is useful in ensuring that the tool is not a dead-end, providing a path for further information and guiding interested users to the website.

This tool is thus an example of recycling already produced materials – i.e. the editorial and the chapter abstracts – and shaping them differently to create a new tool. The new tool offers an added value, condensing the introductory texts, and is offered in a wide variety of languages. It could be argued that reproducing the editorial and chapter abstracts might make the multilingual summaries redundant. However, this tool is a worthy example of an efficient use of resources and recycling of information, offering

<sup>34</sup> This year there was no speech from the Commissioner. The publication was presented by the Head of Unit.

<sup>35</sup> The 22 languages are: English, French, Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, German, Greek, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Slovak, Spanish, Swedish and Turkish. The only two official languages of an OECD state not represented in the multilingual summaries are the non-widely spread Gaelic and Romansh.

<sup>36</sup> A list of the 30 OECD countries is available at

[http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en\\_36734052\\_36761800\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en_36734052_36761800_1_1_1_1_1,00.html)

the targets different ways to get at the same content, and allowing them to choose the most appropriate form for them.

As this tool has to be downloaded after having navigated to the right webpage, some initial interest is required from the user. It therefore seems to be particularly apt for journalists (as non-users) or for policy-makers and experts (as first-time or regular users).

## b) Country notes

The country notes offer a **national perspective on the EO's main issues**. They provide a short analysis on the labour market's state and the situation in each given country regarding the Report's main themes. The notes combine a scoping approach with elements of analysis, graphs on basic figures establishing a comparison among OECD countries, and clear political messages (e.g. "legislation can be improved to reach best practice"). They all start with the question "*How does [country name] compare?*", which is an effective heading, catching the attention of users interested in the national perspective. According to consultations with both EC and OECD staff, journalists and some policy makers tend to be much more interested in their national perspective than in the European or global one. The Consultant highlights this tool as a best practice example because it fulfils the reader's expectation of finding such information in the publication, and his/her preference of understanding the trend in his/her own country first. From a message point of view, the EU or global perspective can be raised through comparison, which brings other states into play, defines a context and creates a desire in the user to be more informed about that context. Following this logic, the country notes can function as entry points to the report.

Nine country notes have been issued for the 2008 edition, being the first year this has been done. The intention is to create notes for all OECD countries and relevant non-OECD ones. However, due to a matter of resources, the initial step has been to cover G7 countries plus two big-sized OECD ones: Mexico and Australia.

The country notes are issued in English and the official language of the country. Although the other official OECD language is French, a French translation is not guaranteed.

## c) Making the information accessible

According to consultations with OECD staff, the EO is becoming increasingly technical. Language editors and internal revisions are fostering efforts to increase the clarity of the text in the Report itself. The related materials, however, tend to contain a lower information level and density, making them more accessible for non-experts. Therefore, these materials are key to expanding the readership amongst non- and first-time users.

A good example of this is in the editorial and the multilingual summaries, where brief and clearly identifiable sentences inserted between paragraphs constitute a summary of the summary.

### 3.2.1.2. Visual identity

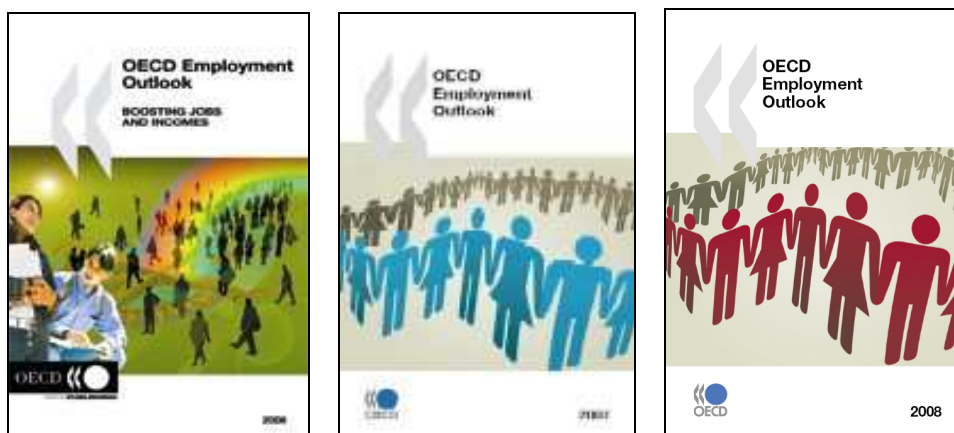
The visual identity of an organisation is often defined as the ‘translation’ of its mission statement into symbols (colour, artwork, etc.). It can have a great effect on the end-user’s perception, so a great deal of attention needs to be paid to this area. In accordance with predefined methodology, visual identity is evaluated under three criteria: **coherence**, **impact** and **distinctiveness**.

**COHERENCE** – A careful review of the last three issues of the OECD Employment Outlook reveals a **very coherent presentation**, due not only to the identical layout adopted for all OECD publications but also to choosing the same picture to illustrate the 2007 and 2008 front covers (with just a colour variation). This shows a commitment to relating the editions with each other. Moreover this coherence goes beyond just the Employment Outlook: the other themed Outlooks produced by OECD all have very similar covers. The internal distinctiveness in each set of Outlooks is ensured by a different photography on the cover, though in the EO’s case there is no evident relation with the Employment theme. More issues related to coherence will be developed in 3.2.2.2.

**IMPACT** – The front cover’s **impact** could be higher: the artwork not being very original as well as its abstract and general meaning does not suggest what exactly the publication deals with. However, it has also to be stressed the difficulty of illustrating issues with economic components which in addition cover many related themes.

**DISTINCTIVENESS** – The presentation also appears **distinctive** from an external point of view, with a prominent OECD symbol (<<) and a clear title. The logo has been made more visible in the 2007 edition. The publication’s title appears clearly and includes the word “Employment”, the main theme with which it deals. Finally, the year appears clearly in the 2008 edition, in contrast to previous editions where it was quite difficult to take in at first glance.

OECD Employment Outlook front covers since 2006



All these elements together show the intention to incorporate different thematic series within a significant collection of OECD publications. The *Outlooks* represent a collection of analysis and statistical information on current trends in concrete issues. Such a



collection is a very effective way to market individual publications, contributing to its own dissemination. More importantly, an evolution can be observed – a learning process in which small improvements from issue to issue work to better the visual identity and thus impact of the EO.

The organisation of the collection by theme makes it quite easy to retrieve the desired publication. Finding many more positive elements than negative, the Consultant highlights as best practice the way in which the OECD has created and marketed this collection, where visual identity plays a big role.

### 3.2.1.3. Language selection

The EO and by-products are issued in the official languages of the OECD (English and French) and in German. Some supplementary materials are available in German, as well. Although the OECD has fewer official languages than the EC, it **makes a wider use of other languages** in its communication. The *country notes* and multilingual summaries are issued in six and 22 different languages respectively, including a couple of non-EU languages. In the case of the EiE's – its press release, executive summary and Communication from the Commission (depending on the year), are issued in all 23 official EU languages.

Another intelligent use of several languages is the **country notes**, which are expected to increase for the next edition and will thus be issued in even more languages. The last tool deserving mention at this point is the podcasts, which are produced in English, French and Spanish.

As with the EiE Report in its early editions, the EO's French and German translations are issued somewhat later than the launch of the original English version, owing to tight schedules and the time taken for revisions. Some additional translations of the EO were mentioned during consultations, for example those done by Member State governments such as Spain. These translations are available in the multilingual pack when the publication is bought through the online bookshop. The OECD issues a disclaimer denying responsibility for their content.

### 3.2.1.4. Direct dissemination

Direct and online dissemination will now be analysed from a non-user perspective.

The points of sale for the EO are as follows:

- *SourceOECD*, the online library service, for subscribers and readers at subscribing institutions. Sold at different subscription rates dependent on package ordered.
- OECD online bookshop, which offers a print paperback copy and a PDF document as an extra copy. At the price of €80.
- A protected site for accredited journalists. For free.
- OLIS, a tool for government officials with OECD accounts. Restricted use.

There is a clear difference between both organisations in their approach to dissemination. As policy, DG EMPL disseminates all publications for free. In order to

get the EO, however, people generally have to pay, for both the hard and the online copy, with the exception of accredited journalists. Old editions are available for free. Charging for the publication slows down its dissemination, but on the other hand it gives a material value to the final product, which could make sense from a marketing perspective. Publications received for free tend to be less appreciated or associated with lesser quality (e.g. in the newspaper market). Consultation with stakeholders would be required on this matter.

The vendors list demonstrates the importance of web dissemination for the OECD – in fact, even to obtain a hard copy the user must pass through the OECD website. Nevertheless, hard copies still play an important role, with around 500-600 distributed for free or sold through the online bookshop. OECD staff are not considering abandoning paper publications, even though online dissemination is increasing.

### a) Hard copies

Compared with the EiE, the number of printed EO copies distributed for free or sold is much smaller, as shown in the following table:

FORMAT	2005	2006	2007
Printed	2,265	2,268	2,400
Distributed for free/sold	457/1,500	534/1,664	655/1,655
Downloads	667	4,180	2,190 <sup>37</sup>
<b>Total disseminated</b>	<b>2,624</b>	<b>6,378</b>	<b>4,500<sup>38</sup></b>

The OECD uses publishing companies who sell mailing lists as a source for client addresses, organised by field and country.

Additionally, **thematic postcards** are sent to OECD customers who have never bought the EO and might be interested in it, according to cross-referencing done with their previous purchases. This list includes around 1,000 names.

In addition, print dissemination relies on:

- A preliminary dissemination program in OECD countries, i.e. privileged conditions (lower price) for pre-buying copies several months prior to the official launch date;
- Standing orders, thematic subscriptions and local promotions, as well as the press conference and related activities organised jointly by the Publishing and Media teams<sup>39</sup>.

### b) Online dissemination

Consultation with OECD staff revealed that the most common means of ensuring visibility of the Report to first-time expert users is through **online marketing**, which is also the most cost-effective. The **OECD website** provides a good platform for that end,

<sup>37</sup> The decrease in downloads for this year is owing to the fact that the EO was also made available by chapter.

<sup>38</sup> Idem.

<sup>39</sup> Printed materials are, for instance, always available at the press conference in English and French, i.e. the Report, press release and often additional handouts containing summaries and graphs.

as thousands of **email alerts and newsletters** are sent out through it. In addition, animations with catchy statistics and highlights from the EO are published on the OECD homepage, providing a first point of contact for the interested.

In terms of online dissemination, several tools are used:

- The online bookshop, accounting for 5-7% of total turnover from sales/pre-sales;
- A “Buy one, get a PDF multilingual pack<sup>40</sup> for free” promotion;
- The possibility of downloading and reading the PDF documents online, but not printing or copying from them;
- E-copies for sale, which are cheaper than hard copies;
- As of the year 2000, the SourceOECD e-library offers to some 1,000 subscribers (mostly institutions who make the content available to their members) one-year access to its full content of thematic books and statistical databases, with main users of this service being universities, governments and the corporate world. Shorter subscriptions are envisaged soon. This offer includes the OECD marketing team travelling to train subscribers in using the tool;
- A partnership with Google Books, which is beneficial in attracting new users;
- Partnerships with significant Internet bookshops, such as *Amazon.com*, to display the OECD logo on their website.

**Statlinks** is a tool deserving special mention. It is a publishing solution that enables links between publications and underlying excel spreadsheets. It is available online and allows the user to manipulate and work with the OECD data. According to consultations with OECD staff, this tool is attracting more and more users to the EO. These excel tables have been downloaded over 900,000 times. According to the Consultant’s criteria, this tool targets expert users and could therefore be useful in turning first-time users into regular users and, particularly, regular users into endorsers.

### **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)**

Web search engines are a very useful tool for all target groups: experts, policy makers and the interested public. They are especially apt for attracting non-users, who might discover the Reports while looking for specific information. Consequently, the position of the publications on the results page of the most-commonly used search engines is paramount to guaranteeing visibility. OECD staff have recognised that their Search Engine Optimisation needs improving; and have displayed a commitment to working on this.

The following can be concluded:

- Both documents have a very low searching engine ranking referring to:
  - Employment and unemployment statistics in the European Union;
  - Flexicurity statistics in Europe;
  - Working time, age discrimination, economic growth and legislation in the European Union labour market;
- The OECD has a higher readership level on European flexicurity statistics;

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<sup>40</sup> The OECD does not have a budget for translating the EO or other Employment publications into all OECD languages. However, some governments, for example the Spanish, and some publishers volunteer to translate for free selected parts of the EO or other publications, which then become available online under a disclaimer. These are usually not for sale.

- The EiE Report has a higher readership level on Europe combined with “labour markets” transitions and trends, and “Employment structure” in Europe.

*Visibility of the publication on search engines when using random search equations (4 August 2008)*

<b>Search Equation</b>	<b>OECD Employment Outlook</b>	<b>EiE Report</b>
“European Union” + employment + statistics	No result in the first 10 pages	No result in the first 10 pages
“European Union” + unemployment + statistics	No result in the first 10 pages	No result in the first 10 pages
<b>Trends + “labour markets” + Europe</b>	<b>Page 4</b>	<b>Page 1 (2<sup>nd</sup> position)</b>
“Youth employment” + Europe + statistics	No result in the first 10 pages	No result in the first 10 pages
Employment + “active ageing” + Europe + statistics	No result in the first 10 pages	No result in the first 10 pages
Flexicurity + Europe + statistics	No result in the first 10 pages	<b>Page 2 (bottom)</b>
Globalisation + Europe + “labour markets” + statistics	No result in the first 10 pages	No result in the first 10 pages
Europe + “working time” + employment	No result in the first 10 pages	No result in the first 10 pages
Europe + “working time”	No result in the first 10 pages	No result in the first 10 pages
“Age discrimination” + employment + Europe	No result in the first 10 pages	No result in the first 10 pages
<b>Europe + “labour market” + transitions</b>	<b>Page 10 (1<sup>st</sup> position)</b>	<b>Page 4 (bottom)</b>
“Employment structure” + Europe	No result in the first 10 pages	<b>Page 4 (6<sup>th</sup> position)</b>
“Economic growth” + Europe	No result in the first 10 pages	No result in the first 10 pages
Europe + legislation + employment	No result in the first 10 pages	No result in the first 10 pages

### 3.2.1.5. Dissemination through the media

#### a) Press release – contacting journalists

The press releases have already been analysed above in 3.1.3.1.

The Media Relations team issues media alerts and news releases by e-mail, targeted at journalists covering the specific subject. They are also posted on the OECD website, in the ‘press corner’.

The OECD journalist database is updated continually according to consultations with staff. New information comes from the Media Team who are in daily contact with journalists or from the media themselves notifying of changes. Journalists fill in and update an online form provided when registering on the database. The database contains about 7,500 journalists in OECD and non-OECD countries.

**b) Press conference**

The press conference is **chaired by the OECD Secretary General** along with the Director of the Employment Analysis and Policy Division, the responsible person for the publication's analysis and drafting. It can be followed live via web-streaming, enabling journalists to attend remotely without having to travel to Paris. When the EiE launch conference is held in the Berlaymont's press room with the Commissioner present, EBS also broadcasts it live – though this does not occur for technical briefings. Having the top person of the OECD present the Report shows the importance the organisation gives to the publication, especially taking into account the Secretary General's position in terms of protocol<sup>41</sup> and representativeness of the organisation.

The Secretary General's speech is written by the Director of Employment and Policy Division and reviewed by OECD communication experts. It makes use of the publication's main messages, combining complex messages with easy wording and simple sentences, which serve to make it easy to understand, and thus to listen to. Consequently, the speech has a more journalistic style than that given by the European Commissioner at the EiE launch and is thus more appropriate for journalistic ears, despite its greater length. The speech for the current edition is available online.

During the press conference the EO is on display and copies are available.

As mentioned above, the timing depends on other OECD announcements and the Secretary General's availability. Thus journalists usually covering the OECD can concentrate on covering just one big event on that day, which differs from the situation in the case of the Commission and the EU institutions in Brussels, where many events and announcements take place. In addition, no other OECD publications on related topics are presented on those days.

**c) Impact**

In order to monitor a first rough impact in the media, comparing both publications, the Consultant has used a specialised tool for this purpose, *Factiva*<sup>42</sup>. In a first exercise, basic search equations have been employed that use key concepts easily identifiable with the publications' names. A second exercise introduces more analytical concepts.

*i) Using basic search elements*

*Visibility of the publication in the media using basic search elements (Factiva – 22/08/08)*

Search Equation	OECD		Search Equation	EiE Report	
	EU	Worldwide		EU	Worldwide
Employment + outlook + OECD	141	201	Employment + report + "European Commission"	164	265

<sup>41</sup> The most senior person in an international organisation is treated as Head of State/Government.

<sup>42</sup> Factiva is a service from Dow Jones Group, which enables the user to retrieve media articles using key words. Available at: [www.factiva.com](http://www.factiva.com)

Outlook + OECD	401	839	Report + “Employment in Europe”	3	3
“OECD Employment Outlook”	22	26	“Employment in Europe Report”	0	0
“Employment Outlook” + OECD	37	54	“Employment in Europe” + report + “European Commission”	3	3

This first comparison prompts the following conclusions:

- The OECD Employment Outlook manages to reach media much more effectively than the EiE Report, which performs weakly even under its own name;
- The exact names of the publications are rarely quoted in the media;
- Some quality media quote the EO, such as *The Guardian* newspaper.

#### ii) Using analytical concepts as search keywords

As a first consideration, certain wording that very rarely appears in journalistic texts might be better replaced with something less technical in press releases and press conference speeches.

What’s more, there is a notable tendency that publication names barely appear in a journalistic article, instead indirect forms are used.

The media feel interested in issues concerning ‘working time’ in Europe, followed by trends on the labour market, unemployment statistics and the globalization phenomenon. Whilst the EO has often been regarded as an information source when referring to globalization, labour markets or employment statistics, the EiE Report has barely been quoted on most of the aspects that interest the media. Only four articles have been found which clearly included the EiE Report as a reference in their body text when talking about employment statistics and trends, and labour markets in the European Union.

### 3.2.2. Securing loyalty – turning first-time users into regular users

As has already been seen in the EiE Report, securing existing readers’ loyalty is the aim of every publication seeking to be a reference in its field. In order to turn first-time users into regular users, the EO relies on several CN tools and activities, which can be studied under the following categories: **direct dissemination**, **visual identity/presentation** and **narrative**.

#### 3.2.2.1. Direct dissemination – relying on web tools

Direct dissemination to experts and policy-makers mainly relies on the tools offered through the website.

However, prior to looking at some of these tools, the clear organisation of the EO website – and the OECD site in general – must first be highlighted. The EO website is accessible through different paths (by topic, by publication, through OECD services, through homepage animations, etc.). In addition it is clearly organised, although the content is presented in a small font and the elements too close to each other – it is the case for instance for the chapter list.

From year to year, a selection is made on what should be published: the 2007 publication for example is available chapter by chapter, but the related materials can no longer be found, with the exception of one single policy paper<sup>43</sup>. Perhaps the OECD goes too far in not posting extra materials, because executive summaries, for instance, could be useful even for old publications. Such selectivity in posting materials is a positive approach, but losing all easy-access materials along the way could be a mistake.

#### a) Expert search of the publications

The following tables show the results of potential web searches by users already aware of the publication.

*The publication is easily retrievable on the web when using the exact expression (Google, 05/08/2008)*

Search Equation	OECD EO	EiE Report
“OECD Employment Outlook”	137,000	-
“Employment in Europe Report”	-	635

Both publications’ websites appear in the first position in the results list, easily directing the user to the required page. However, the enormous difference between the number of times one publication and the other is quoted on the internet is striking.

*Results per language*

Language	OECD	EiE	EES
EN	44,000	2,510	57,200
FR	114,000	1,768 <sup>44</sup>	24,989
DE	3,540	481	10,500
IT	1,170	0 / 399 <sup>45</sup>	23,300
ES	14,500	488 <sup>46</sup>	20,300
PL	847	120,000	114,000

More results appear in French for the OECD publication, probably due to the existence of this language version, and the same goes for the German one. However it is

<sup>43</sup> [http://www.oecd.org/document/0/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_33927\\_40774656\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/0/0,3343,en_2649_33927_40774656_1_1_1_1,00.html)

<sup>44</sup> Searched “L’emploi en Europe + the year’s edition”, from 2002-2007.

<sup>45</sup> Searched “Impiego in Europa”, though the generality of the expression makes the results rather unrepresentative. No results appeared when searching “Impiego in Europa 2007”.

<sup>46</sup> Searched 2002-2007 editions

surprising the clear difference between the OECD and the EES, where the language preponderance is shifted. Considering the EiE Report, it is also very clear the reduced number of quotations in the web. One explanation could be the title of the publication, which has obliged the Consultant to pursue the search using the edition's year in order to avoid irrelevant results

*Accessible web search for the visually impaired (Google, 05/08/2008)*

Search Equation	Number of results
"OECD Employment Outlook"	223
"Employment in Europe Report"	492
"European Employment Strategy"	+ 800

The Commission's publication takes the lead in the search for the visually impaired. The poor result obtained by the OECD is surprising in comparison to the high numbers achieved in other searches.

## b) Tools for experts and policy makers

Apart from the aforementioned tools, such as *StatLinks*, the website relies on podcasts and the publication of policy briefs. The Consultant believes both materials to be suited particularly to policy makers and experts.

### i) Podcasts

These three-minute interviews with the EO's authors were an idea inspired by World Bank podcasts issued as far back as four years ago, according to OECD staff consultations. They are audio files in which the authors explain a chapter's main results. However, some level of expertise is required to fully understand some of the concepts, and for this reason the Consultant believes this tool to be suited to people already familiar with the publication's issues, and thus aware of the EO. It is perhaps ideal for turning first-time users into regular users, as regular users might prefer other tools, such as the executive summary.

There are three podcasts from the EO 2008 edition, each one dealing with a particular chapter. The publication consists of five chapters and an introductory overview, but podcasts were only issued on the last three chapters. The podcasts are mentioned clearly on the front EO website menu, as one of the main tools disseminating the publication's content.

### ii) Policy briefs

Policy briefs are policy papers on related issues. They are referred to as extra information on the website, and could be defined as being somewhere between an executive summary and a chapter. The briefs are an ideal tool for policy-makers, expanding on certain points and giving clear messages with details and statistics. They are formatted as an independent tool, with an appealing graphic design. OECD staff consultations suggested that more effort will be put into the policy briefs for the next edition.



### 3.2.2.2. Visual identity/presentation

#### a) Building a collection

As analysed above in 3.2.1.2. OECD publications, and particularly the Outlooks, display a clear commitment to building a collection. When aiming to turn first-time users into regular users, it's a strong advantage to refer to a series and build expectation for the next issue. The OECD is generally effective in doing this, especially as far as the EO is concerned.

#### b) Facilitating readability through clear presentation and easily navigable layout

The EO uses several navigation features to facilitate the reading experience. The following table compares the navigation elements of both publications, combining online and layout-related features.

Feature	EO (2007)	EiE Report (2007)
Direct access to chapters (online version)	X	X
Easy URL (online version)	X	-
Direct access to statistics database (online version)	X	-
Chapter summaries	X	-
Clickable links (online version)	X	-
Use of sidebars and boxes	X	-
Colour-coding for chapters	-	-
Detailed table of contents	X	X
Glossary	-	-

The EO offers a greater number of elements to facilitate information access. With respect to layout, the EO further employs a 'clean' presentation. Graphs and tables almost always occupy a whole page, separated from text. Considering the complexity and amount of data provided, this decision makes tables and graphs clear without interrupting reading, as the user can skip the pages with graphic elements and return to them later. However, some tables' landscape position makes reading more awkward, as the publication must be turned to see the data. On the other hand, having the two landscape tables on opposite pages and being displayed in the same direction is more helpful as the publication only has to be turned once. Finally, the EO is printed in black and blue, which is a cost-effective way to introduce elements of colour. Though this blue is not the clearest choice for Xerox copies, it does work well.

### 3.2.2.3. Narrative

#### Maximising knowledge through the use of different resources

The EO uses different types of sources for its information:

- OECD employment database
- Eurostat
- Other studies
- Questionnaire to member countries

This diversity means more contrasted information and a more reliable publication. Somehow, the OECD is not seen as a centraliser of the information, rather as the organisation which deals with it, analyses and publishes a report on the issue, covers several countries and uses several tools to make its content accessible.

The different tools used to make the Report's different messages more understandable have been analysed throughout this chapter.

### 3.2.3. Turning existing readers into multipliers

In order to position the publication as the main one in a specific field, which in this case is labour markets analysis, readers have to become endorsers, i.e. people who use the publication regularly, quote it, and expand its findings.

#### Citations and references are solicited, captured and promoted

The following table compares citations in academic articles, governmental pages, international institutions and other sites.

Domain or source	OECD Employment Outlook	Employment in Europe Report	European Employment Strategy
Google Scholar <sup>47</sup>	5,260	197	4,260
Google Blogs	128	0	96
<b>National governments</b>			
.gouv.fr <sup>48</sup>	8	2	777
.bund.de <sup>49</sup>	?	0	4
.gov.uk <sup>50</sup>	157	7	1,160

<sup>47</sup> Google Scholar provides a simple way to broadly search for scholarly literature. From one place, it is possible to search across many disciplines and sources: peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, abstracts and articles, from academic publishers, professional societies, preprint repositories, universities and other scholarly organisations. Google Scholar helps identify the most relevant research across the world of scholarly research. Google Scholar aims to sort articles the way researchers do, weighing the full text of each article, the author, the publication in which the article appears, and how often the piece has been cited in other scholarly literature. The most relevant results always appear on the first page.

<sup>48</sup> French government

<sup>49</sup> German federal government

<sup>50</sup> UK government

International organisations			
.ec.europa.eu <sup>51</sup>	301	391	4,480
.oecd.org <sup>52</sup>	849,000	0	88
.ilo.org	41	0	81
Other			
.ac.uk	409	18	1,250
.eu	1,460	989	19,900

(5 August 2008)

The EO obtains more results in this field, which can be explained by some hypotheses:

- The EIE has less academic recognition than the EO;
- The DG EMPL report is marketed insufficiently (its name could be a problem); or
- There is a problem with the indexing of documents.

The field phase, involving stakeholder consultations, should contribute to a better understanding of this difference.

### Lessons learnt: *A varied and targeted implementation*

- There are a variety of different formats and innovative channels to appeal to different target groups.
  - Skilful recycling of already produced materials to create new communication tools.
  - Country notes, in the country's official language and English.
  - Simpler language for by-products to better attract non-users and first-time users.
- A distinctive, yet, coherent visual presentation that clearly evolves over time, setting up an easily-navigable collection of publications.
- Podcasts (in three languages) and policy briefs with an appealing design for additional impact.
- Use of professional tools to increase dissemination:
  - Purchasing mailing lists with client addresses from publishing companies;
  - Promotion actions (such as the sending of postcards) and standing orders are an integral part of hard-copy dissemination;
- Online dissemination is essential and carried out with the help of: newsletters and emails, free multilingual packs, downloadable PDF versions, cheaper e-copies, access through an e-library as well as an online bookshop, partnerships with Google Books and *Amazon.com*, the inclusion of *StatLinks*, optimised search engine indexation, references to the EO throughout OECD web pages
- Journalists from a frequently updated OECD database are contacted by e-mail to be made aware of the EO's launch:
  - The Secretary General chairs the EO press conference.
  - His statement is prepared by communication experts.
  - The timing is planned not to clash with any other big OECD event.
- A suitable narrative conveys the OECD's role as a quality analyst of information.

<sup>51</sup> European Commission

<sup>52</sup> OECD

### 3.3. Organisation issues

Considerable differences of the organisational environment exist between the two publications, especially concerning team size and the aforementioned issue of how much emphasis the organisations place on publications. The EO has more people involved, with more specialised tasks. It is drafted by a core team of 10 people (not counting the experts consulted), although there are 27 people assigned in the Employment Analysis and Policy division. These 10 people pursue other tasks throughout the year apart from drafting the EO. In addition numerous people working in the Publishing, Marketing and Media Relations teams also have a task in communicating the EO.

A point by point comparison follows, with the ultimate measurement criteria being efficiency, understood as making the best of existing resources.

#### 3.3.1. Synergies with other organisations

Neither the Commission/DG EMPL nor the OECD have synergies established with other organisations to better disseminate both reports on employment analysis<sup>53</sup>. However, there is a difference in the way collaboration with parts of the same organisation not involved in the production of the reports takes place, and in the use of outsourcing.

Both institutions use their own networks to increase dissemination, although they have used them differently, in part due to their nature. DG EMPL uses the Commission Representations and Delegations, as well as the European Information and Documentation Centres, as libraries. Though this means that the copies are more spread geographically than the OECD ones, it is not a proactive strategy. The OECD does not possess this complexity of networks, but it employs a more proactive method of dissemination, using its regional offices (in Mexico DF, Washington DC, Tokyo and Berlin) to hold conferences to present the EO. In addition, during the Report's drafting, the OECD consults with external experts and sends a questionnaire to elicit opinion from Member countries administrations. This undoubtedly contributes to a better promotion of the EO amongst civil servants and decision-makers of the OECD Member countries.

Cooperation with other international organisations is an efficient and effective way of communicating. Despite not collaborating officially with other organisations regarding the EO, the OECD has some experience in drafting and issuing joint reports – as does the Commission. An excellent example is the *Agricultural Outlook 2008-2017*<sup>54</sup>, issued together with the FAO<sup>55</sup>. In the field of employment affairs, the Commission and the OECD cooperate both amongst themselves and separately with the ILO, especially organising conferences and seminars. Memorandums of understanding have been signed and even concrete partnerships established<sup>56</sup>, but none relate to the EO or the EiE Report.

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<sup>53</sup> Apart from the ones the OECD disseminates online

<sup>54</sup> [http://www.agri-outlook.org/pages/0,2987,en\\_36774715\\_36775671\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.agri-outlook.org/pages/0,2987,en_36774715_36775671_1_1_1_1_1,00.html)

<sup>55</sup> Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. <http://www.fao.org/>

<sup>56</sup> A partnership between the Commission and ILO on Development and Employment affairs was signed, although DG Development and not DG EMPL is responsible for it.

Some slight differences are evident regarding outsourcing parts of the production and dissemination processes. Both organisations consult external experts during the drafting, but the OECD produces everything in-house from drafting to production, except the multilingual summaries, for which external translators are used. This difference in approach can largely be explained by a relatively small human resources capacity.

### 3.3.2. Division of tasks

The drafting, production and dissemination of the EO are a collective project. Most of the work is completed and also supervised in small groups. In this context it is important that the OECD staff are aware of which tasks they have to perform. No conflict on this matter has been reported to the Consultant. A clearer and more regular publications framework, in addition to the OECD's position as an information source, serves to make the staff perfectly aware of the EO's objectives and understand how their concrete tasks fit into the wider picture<sup>57</sup>.

There is a crucial difference in the way drafting and production of the EiE and EO are implemented, mainly due to different team sizes and specialisation. The EO is drafted by the Employment Analysis and Policy division, supervised by the Publishing department, and the Sales and Marketing unit and Media Relations department take an active part in better disseminating the Report. The total size of the team working on the EO is considerably bigger than the one working on the EiE Report. Moreover, consultations with EC and OECD staff have confirmed that in the OECD they are much more specialised – at the dissemination and publishing, as well as at the drafting stage. Being more specialised does not necessarily mean better performance, but it tends to mean shorter time. In the context of tight schedules, faster production means time to focus on other activities, or to review and improve what has already been done.

The staff who have to present the EO have usually received some kind of media training, and been offered the help of the OECD communication experts (Publishing, Marketing and Media Relations teams).

### 3.3.3. Quality control

The different teams involved in the EO's drafting, production and dissemination collaborate and cross-check each other's contribution, to a certain extent. The EO's draft and style are controlled by the editor, but the draft is commented on by many people through several revision processes. The OECD has different divisions and units working together, collaborating and enriching each other's work. On some occasions, the communication experts offer advice to the authors on concrete activities, such as the presentation conference. On other occasions, they collaborate much more closely, such as in creating the podcasts.

Critical parts of the EO communication are drafted by the Head of the Employment Analysis and Policy division, such as the summary and the speech of the Secretary General. Regarding

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<sup>57</sup> The Consultant acknowledges a possible bias in this affirmation. The OECD staff seemed absolutely informed of this wider picture, which was not always the case amongst the Commission interviewees. However, the consulted OECD staff had very senior positions.

the first tool, he works in co-operation with one or two other experts. Occasionally, suggestions from the communications teams are taken into account.

OECD staff seem very aware of the importance of reaching target groups. This determination pushes the authors to prepare and even rehearse some parts of the presentation conference (although this practice is not done for minor conferences). As mentioned above, the presenters have usually received media training.

Finally, corrigenda are publicised on the OECD website, which points to a thorough ex-post review that EOs get (and is discussed in greater detail in section 3.3.7.).

### **3.3.4. Planning**

The EO is issued according to internal planning considerations, not related to timing considerations. It is issued when ready, the exact date chosen depending on VIPs' agendas and other OECD announcements.

However, although they do not have a common calendar as such, including all communication outputs, there is a detailed release plan of the different tools. This can clearly be observed from the planning of the presentation conferences carried out in regional offices.

### **3.3.5. Monitoring**

The EO has a detailed monitoring framework covering both direct and online dissemination. Regarding direct dissemination, relevant statistics on the publication's last editions are easily retrievable. A system is also in place to track online readers' activities before and after they open files. While respecting the user's anonymity, the system monitors features of the visitor's experience, such as visit length and most-read pages, as well as recording aspects of reader behaviour, e.g. which pages of a PDF file have been read. All these systems make this monitoring framework much more reliable than that of the EIE.

Concerning the treatment of feedback, it should firstly be noted that surveys of target groups have taken place. Questionnaires on relevant publications have been sent to stakeholders, and the EO was included in a recent one. Most feedback comes via email in the form of queries. Service queries are handled by the Publishing and Marketing teams; while content queries are redirected to the appropriate team.

### **3.3.6. Evaluation**

Evaluations on OECD flagship publications, including the EO, have been pursued, taking into account stakeholder questionnaires. An organised media outreach monitoring and evaluation is in place, as well. Articles reporting on the press conference and the EO itself are included in biweekly reports and discussed between the authors and the Media team. In addition articles from more prestigious or widely-read newspapers are put online, so external people and also OECD staff can read them.

### 3.3.7. Risk management

A **corrigendum** is publicised on the OECD website. It is displayed in a small font size and appears on a webpage with all other corrigenda issued for all OECD publications, arranged by issue date. Publishing a corrigendum gives credibility to the institution as the publication has undergone a thorough review; and a constant commitment to improvement, self-criticism and honesty is shown.

### 3.3.8. Sustainability

The OECD has several mechanisms ensuring the sustainability of the system in place.

- There is a stakeholder database related to subscriptions and distribution lists;
- The authors ‘distil’ the main messages of the EO, placing them at the disposal of the other teams to work with them and create the supplementary tools;
- The principle of a messaging architecture is respected in the sense that the messages relate to the overarching one. However, the Consultant has no information as to whether a formal messaging architecture as such exists;
- A monitoring framework much superior to the Commission one is in place covering relevant fields. An evaluation framework also exists;
- Quality control mechanisms have been established, especially based on teamwork and collaboration between specialised teams to bring specialised knowledge.

### 3.3.9. Learning process

The changes in the pipeline, firstly to the drafting and at a later stage to the marketing and dissemination of the EO, are to a certain extent based on the evaluation of surveys and user feedback. The EO has become more technical, but more tools have appeared to better disseminate its findings. Country notes and podcasts –inspired by the best practice of the World Bank, produced four years ago already– are recent tools that offer a balance to the technical tendency. Additionally the staff are offered training on how to better communicate the Report, which sustains the learning curve observed in the OECD.

#### **Lessons learnt: *Enough HR and task-specialisation***

- Staff are aware of OECD and EO objectives and endorse them, knowing how their contribution fits into the wider picture.
- The production team is large enough to allow for specialisation; at the same time employing the help of communication experts too.
- Smart planning, close collaboration and peer review ensure the high quality of the team’s work.
- A detailed monitoring framework exists for both hard copy and online dissemination (incl. feedback from target groups), which guarantees sustainability and improvement.
- An organised outreach evaluation is in place.
- Staff are offered training on how to better communicate on the EO.

## 4. Synthesis

The following assumptions, which stem from the Expert review of the EiE Report and the best practice analysis carried out by the Consultant, will be tested during the field phase.

### 4.1. Could the lack of political perspective in the way the EiE Report is promoted possibly hamper the achievement of the Commission's long-term objectives?

- The expert review of EiE-related CN tools and activities reveals a **lack of strategic approach to communications, which could result, if confirmed in the next stage of the evaluation, in a low impact on policy objectives**. Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound objectives are needed if the EiE Report is to veritably affect the way national employment policies are designed.
- **The current practice of targeting Experts<sup>58</sup> is regarded by the Consultant as highly relevant**, considering the importance of Experts in the analysis of labour market trends as well as in the formulation of policies. The broadening of the target audience to Decision Makers and the wider public is possible but contingent on the development of specific by-products (based on a thorough analysis of their interest in the subject) as well as on a more strategic approach to media outreach (greater national emphasis and differentiation between mainstream media and trade media). It is anticipated, however, that the cost-effectiveness of communication activities will drop dramatically as we move away from the core audience.
- **All the data gathered so far by the Consultant converge towards an insufficient audibility of the Commission's messages in the field of employment analysis** – an assumption which still needs to be confirmed in the second phase of the evaluation. The neutrality of current communications is suspected to be a major explanation in the disappointing media coverage of the EiE Report highlighted by the Commission. Conversely, it is interesting to notice the different approach taken by the OECD in the communication of the *Employment Outlook*: prescriptive, action-oriented messages seem to result in much more significant media coverage.
- **Likewise, the Consultant will investigate the impact of a late release on stakeholder and media attention**. The hypothesis is that a publication earlier in the year (year+1, considering time and resource constraints) would be more likely to be noticed, especially with respect to competitive forecasts.

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<sup>58</sup> Please refer to the PROGRESS target group classification for a definition of the 'Expert' group



## 4.2. Do the existing CN tools and activities really contribute to an unequivocal recognition of the EiE Report amongst its target groups?

### 4.2.1. Assumptions concerning the awareness of the publication amongst its target audiences

- High search engine visibility is fundamental to raise awareness of the Report amongst potential users, considering the patterns of expert and non expert research. The quite **unsatisfactory results obtained by the EiE Report in the ‘keyword’ test inclines the Consultant to think that awareness of the report is low to very low beyond the core target group of Experts and probably still sub-optimal within the very group of the Experts**. This must be balanced, however, by the equally poor results obtained by competitive publications.
- This assumption is strengthened by the review of media outreach activities carried out by the Commission to promote the EiE Report. It appears that, despite significant resources and efforts, the footprint of the publication in the media is still considered “disappointing” by the Commission, especially when compared with competitive forecasts. **It is the Consultant’s view that the newsworthiness of all EiE tools and events ought to be better exploited**. Two criticisms have already been made by the Consultant: a message insufficiently compelling and a release of the report too late to interest media and stakeholders. Another can be formulated here: the absence of a national perspective in the press release which makes it hard for EU correspondents to successfully ‘place’ their pitch in their newspaper. Recommendations have been made by the Consultant to address this issue.
- **The language policy for the EiE Report and its related tools is effective**, with the fully-fledged forecasts available in English only and some by-products in all community languages, although there is still room for improvement. A greater number of by-products could be translated, having a positive impact on the visibility of the Report to potential users.
- A balanced geographical coverage as a well as a user-centred approach are two key elements to consider when setting up the distribution network of a paper-based publication. It is felt that the second factor is insufficiently taken into account: there seems to be a slight **disjoint between the clientele of the distribution points where the EiE Report is available and the audience actually targeted by the Commission**.
- Whilst perfectly consistent with the DG EMPL *Charte Graphique*, **the design of the Report seems to lack visual impact** to make it really stand out from competitive publications on the bookshelf.

### 4.2.2. Assumptions concerning the capacity of the EiE Report to secure readers’ loyalty

- The most obvious way of **encouraging readers’ loyalty is to ensure the accessibility of the publication through manual searches**, for instance thanks to a memorable URL or an uncomplicated access path from, say, the *Europa* server. Although in principle the Consultant has noticed a **great scope for improvement** in this respect, potentialities are

restricted by the functionalities of the *Europa* server. Some recommendations have been put forward in this report.

- **The broadening of the target audience will necessitate the development of specific communication by-products** (one per target group, please refer to the PROGRESS target group classification) as the current catalogue of CN tools and activities is primarily intended to Experts, some of them also targeting other, secondary target groups. Overall, a multiplication of simple CN tools is recommended by the Consultant.
- The Consultant welcomes the efforts made by the Commission over the years to improve the presentation of the Report thereby facilitating the reading. However, the **features currently offered to quickly and easily retrieve information are still insufficient** compared with competitive forecasts. A series of simple recommendations are included in this report.
- **Reader's loyalty could be encouraged through the offering of exclusive services and tools to subscribers.** This might include, for example, invitations to the dissemination conference, an early copy of the EiE Report, e-mail updates, etc.
- The EiE Report builds on the knowledge generated both inside and outside the programme (although scope for improvement has been identified) and is conceived as a reference document on EU labour market analysis. However, to truly become the preferred publication of its target groups in its policy area, the **Report and its by-products will need to better orientate its readers depending on their interests.** In other words, links to further, complementary information will need to be targeted. In addition, messages with a national perspective should be better highlighted.

#### 4.2.3. Assumptions concerning the capacity of the publication to secure endorsement

- **The impression of 'political weakness'** already highlighted by the Consultant in the analysis of the publication's main messages **is strengthened by the analysis of existing endorsements.** The Report certainly benefits from the Commissioner's editorial, but the comparison with a competitive forecast and the Consultant's experience demonstrate that there is a great scope for improvement. Simple ideas have been proposed. Politically endorsed publications have better chances to be noticed and used by target groups.
- **Another explanation for the supposed low level of quotation and endorsement of the Report is the insufficiency of tools and gadgets** which facilitate the reproduction of graphs, messages and parts of the core text. Here again, the best practice analysis provides the Commission with a wealth of easy-to-implement examples.
- **The recent initiatives taken by the Commission with a view to stimulate feedback from and discussion with experts (such as the dissemination conference) are welcomed by the Consultant.** This is positive for the influence of the Commission's forecast activities. However, some more efforts will be needed to align the EiE Report with competitive forecasts in this area.
- **The importance of links seems to be underestimated** in the promotion of the EiE Report and related tools/activities. Links are important in many ways: by constituting a

'reference' from another organisation, by driving traffic and by offering extra information to the user.

### 4.3. Will the current organisation need to be adapted to reflect the broadening of the target audience wanted by DG EMPL?

- **Whilst the current division of tasks between D1 and H3 is considered adequate by the Consultant**, it is expected that the broadening of the target audience to Decision Makers and the wider public (to some extent) will require greater resources, insofar as new, specific CN by-products will need to be produced. Whatever re-organisation this decision may imply, the Consultant recommends having a different pool of copywriters for the by-products to be developed. Such pool would need to be supervised by H3 to ensure full compliance with the PROGRESS Messaging Architecture.
- **The current practice of writing the EiE Report in-house is perfectly justified**, considering the importance of the forecasting activities to the Commission's policy mandate. However, the production of CN by-products addressed to Decision Makers and the wider public ought to be outsourced and the opportunities offered by the PROGRESS CN framework contract fully exploited.
- **Whereas quality control mechanisms are in place for the Report itself, the situation is different with regard to by-products**. The authors neither have the time nor the communication expertise to fully check the CN tools and activities produced, thereby contributing to their improvement.
- **The release date of the Report and CN tools/activities does not take account of the policy and media agenda** but is the mere outcome of the production process. Missed communication opportunities have been noticed by the Consultant.
- **The Expert review of CN activities has shed light on the many deficiencies of the monitoring system**. In fact, some comparisons and analyses have not been possible due to missing or unreliable data. This will need to be addressed with some degree of urgency, given the importance of these indicators in the learning process.
- **It is striking to notice that the readers of the EiE Report have never been surveyed since the launch of the publication in 1989**. Regular user feedback is an easy and effective way to align communication activities on stakeholders' needs and preferences.
- **No proper risk management systems are in place, with the exception of the corrigenda** issued following the discovery of mistakes. The two main events presenting the Report to its target audiences do not have a Commission risk contingency plan or they fully rely on the contractor's supposedly existent one.
- **The insufficiency of existing knowledge management tools and processes is seen as a potential threat in the perspective of an objective-based communication plan**. Scattered and multiple mailing lists/databases, the lack of Quality Charter, the underdevelopment of the monitoring system and the absence of reliable FAQ system make the publication of the EiE Report and its related CN products too contingent on the existing staff and insufficiently on the institution. Knowledge management systems need to be seriously strengthened.

- The fact that **the Report has never been properly evaluated** deprives the Commission of much appreciated information on target groups' opinions and preferences. However, good practice examples have been identified, such as the post-production evaluation of the Report's hard copies by the drafting and producing team, in order to improve next year's edition. Training should be considered at all levels of the production process, from the writing to the presentation of the Report.

## 5. Preliminary recommendations

Based on the previous conclusions and analysis, a first set of recommendations has been formulated with the objective of facilitating the achievement of the communication objective presented in section 2. A full set of recommendations will be presented by the Consultant in the Final Report.

### 5.1. Strategy

#### 5.1.1. Immediate recommendations

- Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART) **communication objectives** need to be brainstormed internally (preferably with the Consultant's assistance) and stated in a short document that would serve as the EiE Report's communication strategy. All future CN tools and activities would need to refer to one or several of these objectives and would be evaluated against them.
- It is the Consultant's view that the current EiE Report, addressing first and foremost an **expert audience** (at the risk of failing to interest a wider public), should be maintained as such, given the satisfaction reported by the Commission from its core audience. Whilst improvements to make the Report ever easier to read are possible and desirable, it is felt that any major attempt of 'simplification' would be detrimental to the credibility of the Report and its publisher, the Commission.
- Broadening the audience of the EiE Report and enhancing media coverage implies the development of a **series of peripheral communication tools** that would address specific publics. Recommendations on the kind of tools which should be used and how they should be integrated with the Report are presented below under the Implementation and Organisation sections.
- **Target groups** should be surveyed on a regular basis in order to have an idea of their needs, preferences and expectations that is more accurate than current assumptions.
- Use **PROGRESS target group classification** to ensure a coherent approach amongst all the CN tools and activities of the Programme.
- **Differentiated messages** should be devised for each target group to better reflect the different levels of expertise and different interests. Please refer to the recommendations formulated by the Consultant on a CN Strategy for PROGRESS for a more detailed presentation of Target Groups' interests.
- Any major event happening at EU or Member-State level and to which the EiE Report (or more broadly the European Employment Strategy) could be related should be considered as a **communication opportunity** (e.g. conference on employment issues, national debates on the best way to reduce unemployment, etc.).

- It is felt that a **presentation of the EiE Report** to the press by the **Commissioner** would have a positive impact on its media coverage.
- **DG EMPL announcements** on employment issues should not occur in the weeks around the Report's presentation. The QLMR autumn edition should be launched together with the EiE Report in order to gain greater media attention.

### 5.1.2. Recommendations beyond the EiE Report

- DG EMPL and, to some extent, the Commission in general, should market and **position itself as a source of knowledge** – or more specifically, as a **publishing organisation** – apart from its other missions (more related to its political role). This is particularly relevant when compared to other institutions, such as the OECD. It is true the Commission's objectives are very different to those of the OECD, but when it comes to publishing expert analyses, they both compete for the same recognition. DG EMPL has no mission statement, and though it deals with policies promoting knowledge exchange (such as the OMC best practice exchange), the organisation does not seem to consider itself as a publisher. Apart from literally publishing, being a publisher also means acting accordingly: it means putting the accent on knowledge dissemination. Consequently the Report's final aim would not be the analysis itself but informing of its target groups; making the analysis available beyond the circle of authors and Commission staff. A relevant analysis depends on its value for target groups, which in turn is dependent on dissemination. Analysis and dissemination cannot exist without each other if a political impact is expected.
- The current objective of making information available to selected stakeholders and the wider public in a comprehensive and neutral form needs to be reassessed. The reason is that it does not seem sufficient to maximise the contribution of DG EMPL's analysis activities to the higher objective of better employment policy formulation and decision-making in the EU institutions and the Member States. The Commission's political agenda is to push for the objectives stated in both the Lisbon Strategy and the European Employment Strategy to be realised. Neutral messages might not be 'pushy' enough for certain target groups. **Policy messages need to be given more visibility.**

## 5.2. Implementation

### 5.2.1. Improvement of existing tools, activities and systems

#### Web

- The meta data of the EiE webpage (e.g. keywords) should be optimised, and the path which Internet users need to follow to go from the main DG EMPL website to the EiE page should be simplified.
- Newsletters and email alerts should be considered; along with giving wider access through e-libraries (university libraries); and obtaining references to the Report on the websites of OECD, ILO, and other international labour and employment-related organisations.

- Links to different tools and activities on the EiE website (e.g. such as the slide presentations, the dissemination conference or the QLMR) should include a brief explanation of what they are about, as was the case in old versions of the EiE website.
- More emphasis could be put on the EiE Report by the EU bookshop, labelling the EiE Report as a 'key publication'.

### **Press releases**

- Titles must focus on the Report added value and be newsworthy.
- Policy messages should be made more obvious.
- Press releases with a national focus should be considered.
- Main messages should contain less raw data and facts and more analysis instead, as it is the added value of the Report. The messages need to be explained in an easily-understandable way that conveys their relevance. Newsworthy elements need to be stressed.

### **Press conference**

- Ensure that the press conference is always streamed on the web. This way journalists not present can follow it live.
- Ensure timeliness and coordination with related events/publications. The press conference should be hosted by the Commissioner or the Director General of DG EMPL.
- Ensure that the Report's added value is stressed during the press conference, as straight facts are already known by journalists and are no longer news.
- In general, media relations and the journalist database should be improved, for example by direct contact with key journalists and even a follow-up phone call, which are not systematically done by the Spokesperson Service. Although journalists are not among the Report's primary targets, they are important multipliers who can help to reach main targets.
- Trade publications specialised in employment issues should be invited to the press conference and be given a copy of the Report.

### **Executive summary/Communication**

- Have a copy of the Executive Summary and a copy of the Communication on the website which can be downloaded separately from the Report.
- Disseminate the Communication separately from the Report for maximum awareness impact.
- Ensure translation of the Executive Summary into all EU official languages.

### **Editorial**

- The seniority of the editorial's author allows the inclusion of political messages: this opportunity should therefore be exploited to the maximum.

### **Design and layout**

- Appropriate photographic language (i.e. relevant and attractive images) should be used, with a clear reference to the EC on the cover. In addition, the Report and by-products should be designed in line with the DG EMPL Graphic Charter and with a common visual identity in order to create a brand and establish a collection. For example, the spine should show more clearly that the Report is a Commission publication.

### **Translation**

- Whilst the fact of making the fully-fledged Report only available in English does not seem to be a major obstacle to its dissemination, it would seem more appropriate to translate the 'communication by-products' into as many languages as possible.
- The relevance of translating the fully-fledged report into other Community languages will be assessed during the field phase of this evaluation.

### **Dissemination lists**

- It is essential that only one mailing list be used for the dissemination of the Report.
- Recommendations in terms of database design will be formulated in the Final Report.

### **Dissemination conference**

- More time should be given for questions and discussion with participants, as it was revealed during the consultations that debate could be fostered during the dissemination conference.
- Two separate conferences for experts and policy-makers should be set up, with different presentations for each one. Another possibility would be to have different activities for different target groups during the same umbrella conference, while having some common sessions. In any case, all presentations should be created and delivered with the help of communication experts.
- Participants' feedback should be collected and swiftly addressed after the conference.

### **QLMR**

- The complimentary link between the QLMR and the fully-fledged Report should be better emphasised and marketed.
- The QLMR should also be seen as a vehicle for the promotion of the Report, for example by announcing the release of the next Report. The visual identity of the QLMR should be a slight variation on that of the Report.

### **Ideas to facilitate 'navigability'**

- A **glossary** of technical terms.
- **Chapter summaries**.
- A **colour-coding** of chapters.



## 5.2.2. Peripheral communication tools

- The organisation of **national dissemination conferences** should be considered.
- **Country-specific fact sheets** and recommendations would facilitate the dissemination of the Report's findings at Member-State level.
- **Video podcasts** (in several EU languages) ought to be envisaged for the wider public.
- Draft **policy briefs** for policy makers on the most striking findings and most relevant subjects.
- Create **multilingual packs** and upload them to the web portal, which might be organised per language and include all the features related to the Report available in that language.
- Make the Report's **graphs and tables downloadable** individually, and make the data usable.
- Optimise the **visibility of the Report on** mainstream and specialised **search engines** using techniques such as including the website keywords profusely in the text and regularly updating the site.
- **Promotional items** could be envisaged (such as creative e-cards with easy-to-understand policy messages).
- **Questionnaires** on the publications' communication channels and messages should be sent to Member States so as to have a clear image of the Report's impact in each country. They could also investigate their main concerns and address some of them in the next edition of the Report. These questionnaires should be sent by e-mail and take a maximum of 15 minutes to complete to be sure of a good answer rate.
- At the end of a conference attendees should receive a **short satisfaction questionnaire** going through the event's main subjects, and assessing:
  - The quality and clarity of the information;
  - The quality and clarity of the speeches;
  - The way the event was organised;
  - Any information they might have missed.
- **Marketing tools** could include *inter alia*:
  - A website banner – a flash animation containing the main findings or the most striking facts;
  - Quotations from authors of other specialised publications;
  - Simple mentions of the Report as a reference or information source.
  - Ads in other DG EMPL and EC publications and documents.Preferably these tools should appear in publications and on websites external to the EC to reach a wider target and achieve more credibility.
- In order to promote the Report among its target a **teaser campaign** could be implemented, for instance through e-cards sent to target group members. These electronic cards would announce the Report's launch and schedule of dissemination events (e.g.

press conference, annual dissemination conference or seminar in Member States), with a brief description of the Report's main themes.

- To give stakeholders a clearer image of the Employment in Europe world, an **online forum** could be created, offering them the opportunity to share information on different topics, receive updates, and get acquainted with the main employment issues in their countries or in Europe as a whole.

## 5.3. Organisation

### 5.3.1. Internal resources

- Create a **directory** of all staff involved in the Report's production, including each person's specific task, which would need to be updated in due course.
- Encourage **specialisation** and training wherever possible (e.g. writing skills training for the authors).

### 5.3.2. External resources

- **Partnerships** should be studied with other services or organisations sharing similar goals. The Consultant specifically points out possible partnerships with:
  - **Eurostat**: The possibility should be examined of Eurostat writing the Panorama chapter, which would free up authors' time to focus on the other chapters and CN outputs.
  - **DG ECFIN**: The experts of unit B/3 – Labour Market Reforms could collaborate with the Reports' drafting or dissemination.
  - **EU agencies**: On Employment-related issues (such as Eurofound or OSHA).
  - **International organisations**: For example the ILO or OECD;
  - **University research institutes** or relevant **think tanks**.
- **Subcontract** the creation of some **CN tools and activities**, such as flash animations of the main findings or dynamic slide presentations targeting i) journalists and ii) decision makers.
- Strengthen **contact with external specialists** during the Report's drafting: the authors cannot become specialists if their subject changes every year. Therefore authors need a significant amount of time for research, a part of which could be used to focus on the Report dissemination.

### 5.3.3. Ensuring consistent quality control

- The DG's Communication unit should be involved in the Report's dissemination and the supervision of its by-products.

- Offer **communication advice** and **training** to staff responsible for presenting the Report.
- Ensure **authors** have **time to check all CN tools** in order to ensure that the EiE Report's findings are accurately presented despite being adapted for the CN tools and activities. A supervision of the **activity plan** would also be needed, in order to identify missed communication opportunities.
- Foster **teamwork** and **cross-checking**, through established **coordination** and clear procedures.

### 5.3.4. Going local

- Foster author participation in **seminars/conferences taking place in Member States** that are related to the Report's findings.
- Make as many **CN by-products** as possible available in **several EU languages**.

### 5.3.5. Improving monitoring and evaluation

- Clear and measurable indicators should be defined to create a monitoring framework for all tools and activities. This is especially relevant for online dissemination.
- A **Frequently-Asked-Questions** (FAQ) system should be put in place.
- **Keep track** of all requests and responses to these requests.
- Media monitoring should be strengthened and systemised. DG EMPL should implement a regular media market evaluation to discover:
  - How many articles on the EiE can be found in the print press and whether these articles are thorough and positive;
  - How many articles on the EiE can be found on the web and whether these articles are thorough and positive;
  - How the audiovisual press responded and to what extent they considered the Report an important issue for a given period of time.
- Evaluate the Report's communication on a regular basis in order to learn from past experiences and improve.

### 5.3.7. Risk management

- Continue issuing corrigenda and better market this tool. This could be achieved in the Report itself, by announcing that a corrigendum will be produced around a month after publication. Readers should be encouraged to subscribe to Esmail, which would publish the corrigenda. It could be stated that the corrigendum will be sent to them along with the QLMR and announcements of EC employment analysis events too.

- A risk contingency plan should be prepared for the press conference and main dissemination conference in case the main speakers cannot come. For example, if the Commissioner cannot give the press conference as planned, the DG EMPL Director General should replace him, rather than the Head of Unit.
- Be sure that the contractors organising the conferences have risk plans.

### 5.3.8. Putting the systems in place

The organisation must have **systems to help the work of the staff**.

- A single **dissemination list**, properly organised and easy to maintain, update and retrieve information from, which would act as a de facto stakeholder database.
- A **database of attendees** to conferences and seminars, with defined fields, which is easy to maintain and retrieve results from.
- A **knowledge database** of the Report's main findings, organised by keywords, so that everybody involved in dissemination can retrieve relevant information for the CN tools and activities. This would lead to a **Messaging Architecture**.
- **Quality charters and guides** should be promoted.
- A **calendar** of related events and reforms in Member States.

The above-suggested preliminary recommendations will be verified and tested during the next phase (field work phase) of the evaluation of the EiE Report. During the field phase consultations with stakeholders and an online survey will help gather opinions on the Report's communication aspects. The assumptions drafted in the problem analysis and the recommendations will thus be tested, in particular their relevance, impact and sustainability. The final list of recommendations will then appear in the Consultants' Final Report.