

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

Volume 1 – Final Report – Final Draft

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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 Report, the background, context, objectives and extent of the evaluation, 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 purpose of the exercise was to:

- Enhance key target groups' awareness of future editions of the EiE Report;
- Find out how the EiE Report can improve the understanding of the situation of European labour markets (LM) among Experts, Decision Makers and the Wider Public (through the Media)¹.
- 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 EC for the PROGRESS programme².

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

1.2. Background and context

Employment in Europe is DG EMPL's main tool for the analysis of employment performance and labour market developments in the European Union and the Candidate countries³. It provides the

³ Namely Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Turkey.



¹ As per PROGRESS' Target Group Classification. 'Experts' have a non-partisan research mandate and include academics, researchers, analysts and statisticians; 'Decision Makers' are the individuals who have a political or social mandate (in the first category, members of governments and their cabinets, Members of parliaments and their staff; the second category, representatives from employers' organisations and trade unions). In the PROGRESS Classification, the 'wider public' are referred to as 'Beneficiaries'.

² Please refer to the Scoping Study for PROGRESS' Communication and Networking Activities.

basic analytical and statistical background to underpin the *Joint Employment Report*⁴ as well as other instruments which are key to the European Employment Strategy (EES).

The EiE Report has been produced annually since 1989 and electronic copies have been available since 1998. For the last few years, the Report has been entirely written by the Employment Analysis unit of DG EMPL (D1) 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:

- Through its online and hard copy 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 LM policies, it contributes to securing stakeholders' support for the EES.

The present study examined the communication value of the EiE Report and related CN tools and activities, namely: the Quarterly Labour Market Review, the EiE webpage on the Europa website, the EiE Dissemination Conference and the press release announcing the publication of the EiE Report.

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 2007⁵.

Such conviction is drawn from the evaluation of the four Community Action Programmes that preceded PROGRESS⁶, 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 Programme⁷ 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 for 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 commissioning of this evaluation by the EC suggests that external technical advice would further enhance communication of the Report.

⁷ PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Evaluation of the EIM Programme, August 2007.



⁴ The Joint Employment Report is the report through which the European Commission and the Council of the EU examines each National Reform Programme (NRP) in the framework of the European Employment Strategy (EES).

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/docs/communication_en.pdf

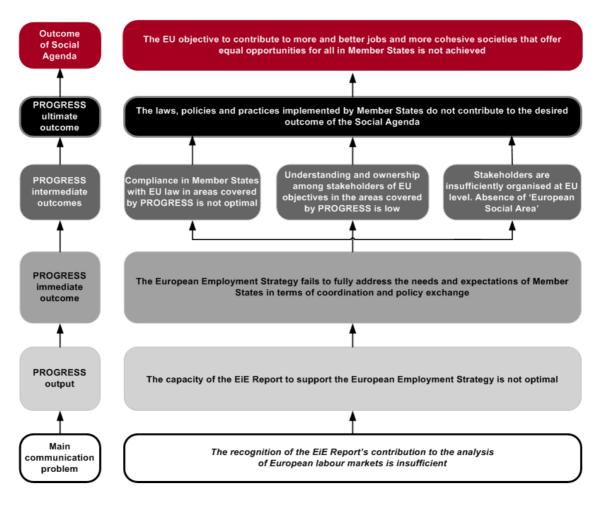
⁶ Namely: Programme for Community incentive measures in the field of employment (EIM), Community Action Programme to combat Social Exclusion, Community Action Programme to combat Discrimination and Programme relating to the Community Framework strategy on gender equality

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: Recognition of the EiE Report's contribution to the analysis of European labour markets is insufficient to help rally EU-wide support (particularly amongst key targets) for the European Employment Strategy.

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 framework⁸:

- At output level: the capacity of the EiE Report to withstand detailed scrutiny and rally EU-wide support of 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

⁸ European Commission, DG EMPL, Developing and Implementing a Monitoring Framework for PROGRESS 2007-2013, March 2008



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1.4. Research scope

As per Service Order VC/2008/0541, the evaluation covered the following tools and activities:

- The EiE Report (2006 and 2007); including aspects of content presentation, usability 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;
- The 2008 Dissemination Conference:
- The EiE webpage on Europa;
- Media outreach tools and activities.

1.5. Resources

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

Desk phase

- Expert review of existing communication tools and activities;
- Consultations with EC staff;
- Best Practice Analysis (benchmarking against the OECD EO);

Field phase

- Consultations with stakeholders;
- Online survey;
- Media analysis;
- Participation in and observation of the Dissemination Conference.

1.6. Methodology

A two-pronged methodology has been applied to this evaluation.

- Top-down (desk phase report) The Consultant examined the communication outputs
 related to the EiE Report and applies a list of 20 quality criteria to formulate its judgement.
 Assumptions were 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 phase report) – Consultations with selected stakeholders, an online survey, an evaluation of the Dissemination Conference and a media analysis were conducted by the Consultant to analyse the communication outcome and test the hypotheses formulated earlier.

A **third phase (final report)** synthesises the findings from the evaluation, establish cause-effect relationships, formulates the main communication issues and provides recommendations for the future.

The following research matrixes align research questions, judgement criteria and data sources



Research Matrix - Desk phase

Research questions	Judgement criteria	Sources of verifiable information
1. To what extent is the CN strategy of the EiE Report relevant?	1.1. The 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 staffExpert review (Database analysis)
	1.3. The main message(s) is/are clear, coherent and repeatedly reinforced.	Consultations with EC staffExpert review of the document
2. To what extent are the communication activities around the EiE Report effective?	2.1. The visual identity of the communication products is distinctive, memorable, coherent.	- 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 influential opinion leaders and endorsed by external organisations/individuals.	- Expert review of the document
	2.4. EU/national contexts have been considered at the launch of the EiE Report.	- Consultations with EC staff
	2.5. The presentation of the Report corresponds to TGs' needs and preferences.	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review of the document
	2.6. The language selection corresponds to TGs' needs and preferences	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review of the document
	2.7. The direct dissemination is effective.	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review
	2.8. Multipliers are used	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review of the document
	2.9. The Report is promoted through the media.	- Consultations with EC staff
	2.10. The Report is used/quoted by networks.	- Consultations with EC staff
3. To what extent is the organisation of communications efficient?	3.1. The division of tasks is clear, consensual and economically efficient.	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review
	3.2. Quality control is institutionalised.	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review
	3.3. Activities are monitored.	- Consultations with EC staff
	3.4. Activities are regularly evaluated.	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review
	3.5. A risk management system is in place.	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review
	3.6. The necessary collaborative tools and procedures are in place	- Consultations with EC staff - Expert review
	3.7. Synergies with other organisations/ initiatives are sought and exploited.	- Consultations with EC staff



Research Matrix - Field phase

Research questions	Judgement criteria	Sources of verifiable information
1. To what extent are target groups aware of the EiE Report?	1.1. Visibility in the offline media	Stakeholder consultationsOnline surveyMedia analysis
	1.2. Visibility on the Internet	Stakeholder consultationsOnline surveyMedia analysis
	1.3. Visibility on the bookshelf	Stakeholder consultationsOnline survey
	1.4. Viral communications and word of mouth	- Stakeholder consultations - Online survey
2. To what extent do target groups learn new information through the EiE Report?	2.1. CN value	Stakeholder consultationsOnline surveyMedia analysis
	2.2. CN by-products	Stakeholder consultationsOnline surveyMedia analysis
	2.3. Marketing the CN by-products	Stakeholder consultationsOnline surveyMedia analysis
3. To what extent do target groups endorse the EiE Report and contribute to its promotion?	3.1. Annual Dissemination Conference	 Stakeholder consultations Online survey Media analysis Dissemination Conference evaluation
	3.2. Subscriptions	Stakeholder consultationsOnline surveyDissemination Conference evaluation
	3.3. Client management and feedback	Stakeholder consultationsOnline surveyDissemination Conference evaluation
	3.4. External Expert endorsement	 Stakeholder consultations Online survey Media analysis Dissemination Conference evaluation
	3.5. Tools to facilitate reproduction and republication	- Stakeholder consultations - Online survey



1.7. Limitations of the study

It is important to note that due to the scope and timeframe of the exercise, the evaluation and its results are subject to a number of limitations:

- The title of the publication Employment in Europe makes monitoring using search engines, such as Google, or media outreach tools, such as Factiva very difficult, as many results appear due to the frequency of the use of "Employment" and "Europe" in daily parlance. Even if the actual EiE website features highly in a search the same is not true of pages where the EiE Report is cited by third parties.
- The use of the Commission's mailing lists to disseminate the online survey and contact potential interviewees possibly resulted in an overrepresentation of current clients/users compared with the desired audience. However, the Consultant made an effort to counter this selection bias, for instance through a quick stakeholder analysis prior to the definition of the qualitative survey sample. Such measures made it possible to obtain the views of individuals and organisations not already included in DG EMPL lists but who had been identified by the Consultant as key stakeholders, and this in agreement with the EC.
- The revamping of the DG EMPL website during the course of the evaluation made it difficult for the Consultant to interpret the results from stakeholder consultations related to this area. Indeed, it is very likely that, at the time they were asked, some users had not had a chance to familiarise themselves with the new version.
- Factiva does not include all the publications in some Member States, such as Poland.

 However, it remains the most complete search tool for media outreach available on the market.
- The Internet search using key words was carried out in six major EU languages covering nine Member States, which represent around three quarters of the EU population.
- The conference evaluation forms were only filled in by a third of the participants. One can assume that the most engaged people were the ones filling out the questionnaire. Moreover, in this situation (questionnaires distributed, filled in and returned during events), respondents are less likely to be critical.

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2. Main findings and recommendations

The Consultant's conclusions and recommendations are divided into three previously defined criteria, which group issues of a similar nature together. The purpose of this is to better understand the Report's communications, from their conception, to their implementation and organisation. The most probable main finding of this evaluation is that many small and relatively easy to address issues negatively impact the efforts and the good work done in several other areas, such as targeting the Report at Experts and organising a conference to better engage with Experts and Decision Makers. This kaleidoscope of issues is organised in the following three criteria:

- Relevance issues directly linked to the strategy.
- 2. **Effectiveness** issues directly linked to the implementation, including the following questions:
 - To what extent are target groups aware of the EiE Report?
 - To what extent do target groups learn new information through the EiE Report?
 - To what extent do target groups endorse the EiE Report and contribute to its promotion?
- 3. **Efficiency** issues directly linked to the organisation.

The following main findings and recommendations intend to demonstrate how this objective can be achieved.

2.1. To be truly supportive of long-term EU policy goals, communications need to shift from an activity-based logic to an objective-driven one

2.1.1. Communication objectives

Each different research phase leads back to there being an insufficiently clear vision of what needs to be achieved through communications. One of the direct consequences of this is that the communication strategy of the Report does not have a clear direction, and therefore it cannot deliver the expected results. On the other hand, the lack of defined objectives makes the Report's communication difficult to evaluate, as it cannot be known if the objectives have been attained or not.

Recommendation nr. 1

The development of a SMART communication strategy using Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound objectives, which are supported by all the staff and stakeholders involved in the Report's communication. This strategy would refer to the PROGRESS Strategy for the strategic part (e.g. TG classification, objectives, etc.) and develop specific CN by-products (or even better, make the best use of existing ones).



2.1.2. Target groups

In addition, the communication strategy is hampered by the intention of reaching **all the target groups with the same communication tactics**. The main target groups of the Report have been identified – Experts, Decision Makers and the Media, which will rally to inform Beneficiaries (wider public) – although no proper survey had been carried out in previous years to better understand their information needs and expectations. The absence of a proper target group analysis means that their needs and expectations are assumed instead of known. This insufficient knowledge about whom the Report is written for has resulted in its communications activities being led by assumptions, which in some cases have not been completely certain.

Recommendation nr. 2

Be aware of target audience's needs and expectations. Apply the Recommendations for a CN Strategy for PROGRESS to the EiE Report, including the Target Group classification and objectives.

Maintain the goal of writing the Report mainly for an Expert audience, adapting the messages through the CN tools and activities for the other TGs, such as Decision Makers.

2.1.3. Messaging: the target group perspective

The assumption that there is an **insufficient audibility of the EC's messages** in the field of employment analysis is valid, as interviews with stakeholders and the online survey demonstrated. Messages should be adapted to targets' needs. **Different stakeholders expect different things** from the same report: Decision Makers are more sensitive to policy messages in order for it to be of interest to them, whereas for Experts the messages need to be more fact-based and not take a political angle. In other words, the broadening of TGs will make this customisation of messages necessary (please also refer to section 2.2.2).

Recommendation nr. 3

Targeted messages are needed for the different target groups.

The EiE Report's structure could be slightly modified to accommodate the needs of both those looking for facts and raw-analysis, as well as for those looking for policy messages. Two approaches are possible: either the creation of a policy recommendations section at the end of each chapter (or as an annex): **statistics** \rightarrow **interpretation** \rightarrow **analysis** \rightarrow **conclusions** \rightarrow **policy recommendations** (for those who are interested) or creating a separate document containing policy recommendations. The Communication from the Commission could be this document if it was reformulated. (see point 2.2.2.1).

More 'political' messages should also be exploited in the Foreword.

The press release to accompany the launch of the Report could utilise these more 'political' messages to interest a wider range of journalists from different publications and geographical locations.



2.1.4. Messaging: the national perspective

Current messaging lacks a Member State specific focus. As the consultations with stakeholders and the media analysis have shown, national opinion remains of key importance, irrespective of the diverse interests stakeholders have in Europe. This point is particularly essential for journalists. Media coverage will increase with a more MS focused approach and specific communication tools.

For instance, *The Independent* (UK quality daily) could well feature an article about the benefits to the British economy that the influx of new MS immigrants (Poles for example) has had. *The Irish Times* might consider an article highlighting the benefits to the Irish economy concerning the boom in the construction industry when immigrant workers were essential to this growth.

Recommendation nr. 4

Develop key MS specific messages which can later be used in CN tools, for example in press releases or country specific fact sheets.

2.1.5. Release and reception of the Report

In contradiction to the assumptions made by the Consultant in the desk phase, the consultations with stakeholders have not revealed that the Report would be better received if it were released at a different time of year. Indeed, it was found that **stakeholders need statistics and analysis all year round** and that they adjust their work load according to when data and information are being made available. The Consultant cannot therefore suggest that the Commission change the release date, but simply that it be published at the earliest date possible.

Furthermore, the reference to the year of publication in the report's title suggests that it is based on the data from that year, which is not the case. When it is published, more recent data has already been made available. The discrepancy between the year featured on the cover and the year from which the data is provided has the potential for creating confusion amongst target groups. As this cannot be changed, the EiE Report should therefore **place the stress on its thematic dimension**, which could be highlighted through the use of a subtitle on the front cover in addition to the main title.

The low-key publication of the 2008 Report – in the context of the fourth quarter financial meltdown and the advent of the economic crisis – is yet another illustration of the necessity to emphasise the analytical angle of the Report, as opposed to the topicality of the data.

Recommendation nr. 5

The EiE Report should focus on emphasising the themes covered. The presentation of the Report should be more in line with that of an academic journal than an annual publication. The stress on the thematic elements could be achieved through a more journalistic approach when designing the cover, where main chapter themes would be highlighted and



formulated into 'enticing' chapter headings (please refer to the point 2.2.1.3. for greater detail).

2.2. Communicating about employment in Europe is much more than merely 'disseminating information'

To achieve a greater recognition of the EiE Report's contribution to the analysis of European labour markets – which has been identified as the main communication goal – the new CN strategy will need to go beyond the mere dissemination of information to embrace a more holistic approach. Three intermediate objectives have been identified:

- 1. raise awareness of the Commission's activities in the field of employment analysis amongst the TGs that are the least familiar with them;
- 2. foster the loyalty of new and existing users through more targeted content and services;
- 3. seek, capture and capitalise on users' endorsement.

These points are developed below.

2.2.1. The uneven awareness of the Report across target groups and Member States as well as a generally weak identity, call for better targeted marketing actions

It is difficult to precisely qualify the level of visibility of the Report amongst its target groups. This is mainly because the sample used for this study is partly biased – both the online survey and the stakeholder consultations were conducted on the basis of databases and mailing lists provided by the EC. Although more than half of the stakeholders interviewed in the consultation phase were identified independently by the Consultant, this is still insufficient to construct a clear picture of the situation (please refer to the point 1.7.).

Having said that, it is still somewhat surprising to see that, out of the 11 individuals proposed by the EC for the in-depth consultations on the basis of its own lists, one was not even aware of the EiE Report. More worrying is the fact that out of the 14 individuals selected by the Consultant further to a quick stakeholder analysis, the majority (eight) were not aware of the Report and a significant number (two) had hardly ever used it. Furthermore, this low level of awareness is not only present in a specific TG but across the stakeholders interviewed, varying from Decision Makers to trade union representatives and even renowned Experts. Some stakeholders even struggled to identify the EiE Report – illustrating that awareness and visual identity are clearly linked.

To remedy this, a marketing strategy is needed to ensure that the EiE Report has optimal visibility:

- on the web;
- in the 'offline' media;



- in the context of EiE-related events; and
- in libraries.

These points are developed below, by order of priority.

2.2.1.1. The online visibility of the EiE Report is not equal to the publication's reputation

Considering the importance of the Internet in today's information society, urgent attention needs to be paid to the visibility of the EiE Report on the web. This includes:

- Search engine results;
- Ease of access through the Europa website;
- Visibility in potential readers' mailboxes.

Search engine visibility

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 relatively low score of the EiE Report in the 'keyword' test suggests that the awareness of the Report is equally low beyond the core target group of Experts and probably still sub-optimal within this very group. This must be balanced, however, by the equally poor results observed for competitive publications.

At the time of writing this Final Report, the old EiE webpage boasted a higher Google ranking than the new one. Efforts are planned to rectify this in the near future.

Recommendation nr.6

The following steps need to be taken to optimise search engine visibility (as per Google guidelines):

- Ideally, the EiE webpage should be divided into separate sections for each TG, with different key words and meta-tags and page descriptions with a view to maximising the relevance of content;
- Translate key words into all EU languages, as people might look for information in their native languages but when they find a source in English they might still want to read it;
- Use key words extensively in the webpage text (the page presenting the Report and its related tools and activities);
- Ensure superior or highly competitive content through high quality writing and detailed information, regular updates and add-ons and links to relevant documents
- Reach out to likely online 'partners' and 'products' so that they insert a link towards the EiE webpage.
- Improve existing web analysis systems and issue regular traffic reports:



Access to the publication through the DG EMPL website

The most effective way to reach the intended audiences is to ensure that the Report and its CN by-products are well marketed and highly visible on the Europa websites and especially the DG EMPL website.

Visitors of the revamped DG EMPL website have at least three ways of finding the EiE Report:

- Thematically, via the Employment section (four clicks);
- By accessing a 'service', via the Publications section. Although in principle this is
 the most direct way (three clicks from the homepage), this is also the most
 confusing, as the EiE Report is filed under Brochures.
- Through the DG EMPL search engine. The EiE Report is the first result when conducting the search using "Employment + Europe".

At the time of writing this Final Report, the EiE Report was still available on the old DG EMPL website, although it is planned that this will be changed very soon.

In principle, these results are satisfactory but in practice, searches are made more difficult by confusing section titles.

Recommendation nr.7

Improve access to the EiE Report from the DG EMPL website by:

- Using more user-friendly section titles (especially under the 'jobs' section);
- Revamp the 'Jobs' section to make it more user-friendly;
- Distinguishing Reports from brochures;
- Labelling the EiE Report as a 'key publication' (as per OPOCE publications taxonomy);
- Encouraging the use of the internal search engine.

Visibility in email traffic

The EiE Report is also promoted through the ESMail newsletter⁹; however no more specific e-mail newsletter is sent to inform stakeholders of the release of each new report, apart from the invitation to the Dissemination Conference. This is seen by the Consultant as a missed opportunity considering the popularity of e-mail as a way of disseminating information amongst consulted stakeholders and also considering its cost-effectiveness.

⁹ ESmail is a free regular email news service provided by the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the European Commission. It is published on a monthly basis.



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The development of a stakeholder database (please refer to section 2.3.2) should make it possible to maintain more frequent contact with TGs.

Recommendation nr.8

Improve the visibility of the EiE Report in email traffic through:

- Regular news alerts about EiE-related events. These could potentially be sent on a quarterly basis to coincide with the QLMR's release.
- Alternatively, viral communication tools such as short videos, Flash-based cards and short messages to be placed in staff's email signatures could be envisaged in consultation with H3 and implementation partners.

2.2.1.2. The existing media outreach strategy is insufficiently adapted

Existing PR activities for the promotion of the EiE Report mainly focus on 'mainstream¹⁰', quality publications (be they daily, weekly or monthly) reached through 'classical' tools (such as press releases and press conferences) and in a uniform fashion (the same message is delivered to all publications).

As demonstrated by the Consultant's media analysis (please refer to volume 3, chapter 4), such a strategy seems to have failed to generate a significant media footprint with only 29 clips (including news briefs) for the 2007 edition of the Report in the six most spoken EU languages, none of which featured in the most influential publications. In qualitative terms, the neutral to positive coverage would seem to indicate that the EiE Report is a respected publication providing data which is of interest to readers.

Out of the three lessons that can be learnt from this analysis, two are actually concrete consequences of the inconsistencies between means and ends observed earlier in this report (please refer to section 2.1).

Firstly, there is a mismatch between the Report's actual audience (Experts), the desired audience of the Report (Experts + Decision Makers + to some extent "Citizens"), the publications selected to reach the desired audience (mainstream quality publications) and the messages delivered to these audiences via the media (mainly neutral and rather technical). Again, it is the Consultant's view that a differentiated strategy would be more likely to have an impact on each of these TGs.

Secondly, the insufficient consideration of national contexts in PR activities is a big obstacle for the wider promotion of the Report in MS. The issues having been addressed at length in a previous section (2.1.), the Consultant invites the reader to refer to this section for more information.

Thirdly, rare and irregular contact with the media is unlikely to produce the results expected by D1. There is a need to better serve journalists through regular contact, the

¹⁰ In this case, 'mainstream' is opposed to 'specialised' or 'trade' publications.



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more regular provision of news and story ideas and, resources permitting, tailored-made service (such as training and field trips). Likewise, the presentation of news stories to journalist needs to be reconsidered to better emphasise the 'human' angle of the EC's work.

Recommendation nr.9

Media outreach activities need to be:

- Differentiated (different tools/activities with different messages for different TGs);
- MS specific (through, for instance, country fact sheets);
- More regular and service-minded.

2.2.1.3. Visibility in EiE-related events

The Consultant's comments and recommendations on the visibility of the EC in EiE-related events are exclusively based on secondary sources (mainly consultations with staff) as the cost of a direct observation of the situation would have outweighed its benefits.

Two remarks can be made on this issue:

- There is no established strategy aimed at better promoting the Report at relevant events. Rather, reports are disseminated on an ad-hoc basis, either at events where D1 staff are represented or on the basis of specific requests. Spontaneous initiatives are generally more erratic.
- There are no collateral visuals and tools (such as stands, posters, flyers, slideshows) to ensure the promotion of the Report at relevant events and conferences.

Against this background, it is probably safe to conclude that there is scope for a greater visibility of the Report in relevant fora.

Recommendation nr.10

Improve the visibility of the Report at EiE-related events through:

- A clear dissemination strategy, which would be made possible thanks to the planning tool (please refer to section 2.3.2.);
- Promotional tools such as stands, posters, slideshows or flyers (to be discussed with implementation contractors).

2.2.1.4. Visibility on the bookshelf

Improving the visibility of the EiE Report 'on the bookshelf' (that is to say in libraries) is probably not a priority under the next CN strategy considering today's research patterns amongst expert and non-expert users (please refer to section 2.2.1.1). A possible



prediction (based on trends and not on evaluation findings) is that the hard copy of the EiE Report will be discontinued in the medium/long term, but it was felt by the Consultant in the course of its evaluation that neither stakeholders, nor the Commission itself, were yet ready for that.

Having said that, when considering the broader issue of the 'look and feel' of the Report – which remains in all events a key factor of visibility, even for electronic documents – a number of conclusions can be drawn from the Consultant's desk and field work:

- The EiE Report is perfectly consistent with the DG EMPL Charte Graphique;
- Its visual impact could be strengthened by means of simple tips (please refer to volume 2, section 1 for more details);
- Related products (the QLMR and future CN tools) should be based on the same visual identity as the Report.

Recommendation nr.11

The visual impact of the EiE Report could be strengthened through:

The conception of EiE publications and tools as a 'family of products'

2.2.2. The effectiveness of a broadened communication strategy for the EiE Report will to a great extent rely on the development of new, stakeholder-specific CN by-products

Although the EiE Report is not a CN tool *per se*, its readability and usability could be improved through a number of simple communication tips, some of which are presented in the following section.

More importantly, the success of the new CN strategy will largely rely on the development of *new* tools and activities based on the content of the Report, but focus on a limited number of stakeholder-specific messages.

2.2.2.1. Communication tips to improve the usability of the EiE Report

Executive Summary and Communication from the EC

The EiE Report features a five to eight-page Executive Summary (length varying from year on year) which is read and appreciated by many users as shown by consultations and the survey. This is undoubtedly the most popular section of the Report, hence the care taken by the EC when composing it. In this light, maintaining the Executive Summary in its current format is, according to the Consultant, the best option.

Since 2007, a Communication from the Commission on the key messages of the EiE Report has been made available. Whilst the idea of issuing a formal Communication is in principle a good one (given the political weight of Communications over other



documents), its added value to the Executive Summary is uncertain, insofar as the content of the two documents is very similar. This is seen by the Consultant as a missed opportunity to communicate the EC's policy messages to Decision Makers. Therefore, a clearer distinction between the Report's Summary (neutral and technical) and the Communication (more policy-oriented) is more likely to have an impact on Experts and Decision Makers.

Recommendation nr.12

To maximise the usability of the Report it is advisable to:

- Maintain the Executive Summary as it is (i.e. focusing on Experts);
- Make the most of the political weight of formal Communications by focusing on political messages.

Navigation tools

DG EMPL/D1 has improved the presentation of its flagship publication over the last several years and this has increased the usability of the Report. However, the features currently offered to quickly and easily retrieve information are still insufficient compared with similar products such as the OECD Employment Outlook. A series of simple recommendations is included below.

Recommendation nr.13

Tips to facilitate the 'navigability' of the Report include:

- A glossary of technical terms;
- An index linking keywords to specific chapters/pages;
- Chapter abstracts;
- A colour-coding of chapters.

Assistance to the sourcing of extra information

Experts use the EiE Report as a source of information for their analysis amongst some other publications. Links to further and complementary information would be highly appreciated by TGs, as they simplify their search for information. These external links will not 'drain' the website of readers; on the contrary they will increase its traffic and contribute to the better marketing of it (please refer also to section 2.2.1.1).

Recommendation nr.14

Tips to assist readers in sourcing extra information include:

- Bibliographies, which already exist and could be better marketed on the webpage;
- Links to other sources of information, even from third organisations;



- As separate services: mini press reviews, book summaries, provision of key statistics in readable format (graphs), etc.
- A wiki which collates relevant labour market information which can be contributed to by both DG EMPL staff and stakeholders.

Translation and language selection

Which language(s) should be used for communications is a divisive issue. For many stakeholders and in some countries, this is not an issue but the stakeholder Consultation Report revealed that in other countries there is a strong need for translations. The debate is further complicated by the important human and financial resources that would need to be allocated to translate the Report, the QLMR and the Conference (although the latter already offers simultaneous interpretation into EN, FR and DE).

This situation makes it necessary to (a) formulate a general principle that will apply to all future CN products and (b) to communicate this principle and make sure it is understood and accepted by stakeholders.

Recommendation nr.15

The language policy recommended by the Consultant focuses the following points:

- The EiE Report and the QLMR are available in EN only;
- CN tools/activities intended for Experts are available in EN, FR and DE (including the Conference and the website);
- CN tools/activities intended for other TGs are available in all EU languages, resources permitting, otherwise in as many languages as possible (and depending on market needs);
- Translations of all CN tools/activities by MS should be encouraged (with a clear disclaimer highlighting the unofficial character of the translation).

2.2.2.2. Additional CN products and services likely to encourage client loyalty and the dissemination of messages

Beyond the above-mentioned adaptations to the EiE Report, it is through the development of new, stakeholder-specific products and services that the new CN strategy is most likely to reach its objectives.

Given the very specific needs of each TG and the Experts' satisfaction with the EiE Report in its current format, any significant change to the Report and the Conference to accommodate the needs of other TGs (Decision Makers or Beneficiaries) could result in confusing existing users (i.e. Experts) without succeeding in widening the Report's audience. Therefore, the most probable scenario is that the EiE Report (in both its online version and hard copy) and the Conference will remain focused on Experts.



Recommendation nr.16

Develop new CN by-products, which might include, *inter alia*, depending on the resources available:

- Country-specific fact sheets for Journalists;
- Policy briefs, targeting Decision Makers;
- Policy recommendations at the end of each chapter (for Decision Makers);
- Thematic PPT presentations featuring elements from the entire Report (for all TGs);
- · Email alerts:
- EU-level events targeting Decision Makers as well as MS level events for a wide range of pre-identified stakeholders
- Interviews with Experts or Decision Makers that could be podcasted to better engage with citizens regarding the content of the Report;
- A wiki featuring labour market development information.

2.2.2.3. Specific remarks on the website

As acknowledged in the limitations, due to the recent revamp of the DG EMPL website, it is not always possible to know if respondents are referring to the old or new website.

The new DG EMPL website's design and structure is more thematic, information has been streamlined and usability has been improved. However some issues still need to be addressed: for example when looking for the webpage in a search engine, it is the old one which appears in the top position. Some very useful, specialised information such as downloadable data (with tables, graphs and formulas used in the Report) is not available. It is important to have access to previous Reports and thematic analysis, therefore old editions of the Report must also be available to download. In addition, the slide presentations given during the Dissemination Conferences should be downloadable.

Recommendation nr.17

Improve usability of the EiE webpage by:

- Displaying the links to the Report's individual chapters, each with a short content description;
- Providing more downloadable graphs in Excel format;
- Presenting the Dissemination Conference in a separate box;
- Inserting a link to previous editions of the Conference as well as links to related events and the seminars in the MS:
- Announcing the EiE seminars in the Member States in a separate box, lin the same way as the EiE Dissemination Conference.
- Including external links to related reports, statistical sources or other organisations.



2.2.2.4. Marketing of CN by-products / Cataloguing

The following recommendation is not based on the findings from this study but on those of the Scoping Study for PROGRESS.

In line with the Consultant's *Recommendations on a CN strategy for PROGRESS*, CN by-products will need to be promoted amongst and easily identifiable by their respective audiences. This would be achieved thanks to a catalogue where all tools/activities would be listed by TG. The idea is to guide each TG to the CN tool/activity or family of tools/activities that is most relevant to its needs and to therefore avoid user frustration.

Recommendation nr.18

Clearly specify for each new CN tool or activity:

- The objective (SMART);
- The TG:
- The division of tasks
- The added value of this tool/activity for the intended audience (Unique Selling Proposition).

2.2.3. CN activities are key contributors to the policy objectives of the EC, therefore feedback, endorsements and citations should be more systematically sought, captured and capitalised upon

The capacity of CN to encourage, capture and capitalise on stakeholder endorsement with a view to securing an agenda should be better exploited. This could be achieved through several means:

- The annual Dissemination Conference:
- Thematic subscriptions;
- Online assistance and client management;
- Tools to encourage the reproduction of data (graphs, tables, etc.);
- Endorsement issues.

2.2.3.1. Dissemination Conference

The annual Dissemination Conference is, along with the media outreach activities and the EiE webpage, one of the three CN activities currently promoting the Report. The Conference brings together, each year, about 130 Experts and Decision Makers from across Europe to discuss some of the latest developments in the European labour markets. This event has been the subject of a specific analysis by the Consultant, whose results are synthesised here.



Two main remarks can be formulated.

A first remark concerns the concept of the Conference and its programme. The Consultant welcomes the initiative taken three years ago to organise a Dissemination Conference to better engage with stakeholders. However, it was found that the current format presents limited added value to the EiE Report, questioning the relevance, the effectiveness and the efficiency of this activity. Several elements need to be reflected on and improved:

- Strategic reflection regarding who should be invited. It is important to ensure that all
 potentially interested target groups are invited and that mailing lists are constantly
 updated.
- The similarity between the content of the Report and the content of the Conference
 is another important issue. It is the Consultant's view that the event would add more
 value to the Report if it was focused on developing a limited number of issues
 rather than giving a broad overview of the Report. Rather than simply presenting
 the Report the Conference ought to inspire people to read it and refer to it in their
 work.
- The insufficiency of dialogue between speakers/panellists and participants strengthens this impression that participants came to a lecture rather than to exchange views on relevant issues.
- The title of the conference needs to be adjusted to better explain its scope to the audience. For example 'The Employment in Europe Conference 2008: the impact of mobility on the EU labour markets.'

A second set of more operational matters has been highlighted in the Conference Report (please refer to volume 3, section 3). They concern the organisation of the conference, its promotion and key issues concerning the presentations given by EC staff, where important room for improvement exists. It should be noted however that presentation issues have been dealt with separately, in the course of a one-day mentoring session facilitated by the Consultant.

As a conclusion, the consultant urges the EC to turn the existing 'dissemination conference' into a sort of 'endorsement conference' based on concrete objectives, target groups and messages.

Recommendation nr.19

Turn the existing 'dissemination conference' into a high-standard 'endorsement conference' by:

- Assigning precise CN objectives to the conference (or focusing on very specific issues);
- Better defining priority TGs;
- Identifying key messages and sticking to them;
- Improving EC staff's presentation skills: their slides should say less while they should explain better;



- Envisaging a co-organisation of the event with like-minded organisations such as Eurostat, Eurofound or the Statistics Service of the country holding the EU Presidency;
- Setting minimum quality standards by means of fact sheets.

2.2.3.2. Subscriptions

Subscription is seen by the Consultant as a response to two separate issues: the need to strengthen user loyalty through the offer of exclusive services (to be defined) and the need to better monitor CN activities.

This being said, the interest in subscriptions is proportional to the number and quality of the 'exclusive' products and services being offered.

Recommendation nr.20

Encourage user loyalty through subscription to 'exclusive' DG EMPL value-adding CN products and services, for instance the early release of information, access to the new CN tools and activities to be created, etc. However, it is the Consultant's view that such an option should give access to at least all employment-related CN tools/services (that is to say the entire D Directorate) and preferably to all PROGRESS CN tools/services.

2.2.3.3. Online assistance and client management

Currently, there is no systematic procedure for the management of clients and the provision of 'online assistance' (please refer to Recommendation nr.14). Whilst this is not an issue considering the existing demand – the field phase has revealed that overall, stakeholders are satisfied with the EC's responsiveness to their enquiries – it is important to anticipate this issue in the framework of a broader CN strategy.

Recommendation nr.21

Set up an online assistance and client management procedure including:

- A Frequently Asked Question section on the website;
- Monitoring checklist and management reports on how requests are dealt with;
- A Forum about the EiE Report's themes on the DG EMPL website;
- The regular tracking of EiE-related information to feed into the website, the wiki and the dossiers and articles to be created.

2.2.3.4. External Expert endorsement

A programme like PROGRESS, which bases part of its raison d'être on the exchange of



knowledge and experience, as well as on the establishment of compromises among Member States, needs to gather endorsements to increase its credibility, as this would have a positive impact on policy application, as well as on the Report's notoriety (which would impact on the media coverage it received, which would also help to increase the website's audience, and, ultimately raise awareness of the EC's contribution to labour market policies among 'citizens'.

Once endorsement has been given, it is equally important to make target groups aware that this endorsement has been made. However, endorsements are not always spontaneous and stakeholders or the wider public need to be asked their opinion on EiE-related issues in order for gaps in communications to be clearly identified and then filled. Therefore, a set of activities designed to provoke and publicise endorsements should be established.

Recommendation nr.22

External Experts should be recruited to write chapter introductions and editorials of the EiE and also to allow staff to dedicate more time to working on the development of the CN tools to accompany the Report.

A second foreword, written by a guest Expert (depending on the main theme of the Report) would act as an academic endorsement of the report.

2.2.3.5. Tools to facilitate references and the reuse of information

The Consultant noticed and appreciated the EC's effort to facilitate the re-use of graphs and data (for instance through downloadable items). It is the Consultant's view that it could be improved using simple tips and tricks.

Recommendation nr.23

Improve current efforts to facilitate references and the reuse of information by means of:

- Pull-out guotes in the EiE Report;
- More downloadable graphs (as opposed to raw data);
- More sidebars on specific issues;
- Downloadable PPT presentations;
- Indications on how to cite the EiE Report;

Furthermore, a strategy to better monitor citations of the EiE Report by other publications should be put in place.



2.3. Though moderately efficient considering the existing communication priorities and resources, the organisation needs to undergo a major revamp to sustain the new CN objectives of DG EMPL

The third area of this study covered the efficiency of existing CN tools and activities, with a central question: to what extent does the current allocation of resources ensure the optimal delivery of results?

The conclusions from the research carried out by the Consultant are mixed. The relative efficiency of the development, production and dissemination of the EiE Report and related CN tools/activities is largely due to the seniority and dedication of the current staff. However, such organisational arrangements – relying to a great extent on individual knowledge and skills and not enough on collective ones – will probably not be able to sustain a broader, more proactive CN strategy. Five issues need to be addressed as a matter of priority:

- 1. the division of tasks (within the unit, across units and between the EC and its contractors);
- 2. the development/maintenance of CN systems (planning, quality control, dissemination, etc.);
- 3. the provision of training to staff;
- 4. strategic partnerships;
- 5. the implementation of a monitoring and evaluation plan.

These issues are developed below.

2.3.1. A greater specialisation within the unit, across units and between the EC and its contractors is to be envisaged

So far, the communications of the EiE Report and the QLMR, as well as the organisation and dissemination of the EiE Conference have mainly been managed internally by D1, without affecting the quality of outputs (according to stakeholders) or putting excessive strain on staff (according to themselves). Such practice makes sense considering the resources and skills available within D1 as well as the absence of a communication budget being directly available for the unit until 2008. However, if CN by-products are to be produced, then D1 should make the most of the opportunities offered by the CN Framework Contract.

Recommendation nr. 24

The Consultant's view is that the most efficient division of tasks would be the following:

 D1 is responsible for the production of the EiE Report (for Experts), for the QLMR and for the quality control of communication and networking by-products (to check if the EiE Report's main findings are accurately reproduced);



- The CN contractor is responsible for the development and dissemination of CN byproducts and for the organisation of the Dissemination Conference;
- H3 is responsible for general coordination and for strategic issues.

2.3.2. Knowledge management systems will make the CN effort more sustainable

As already mentioned, the current lack of proper communication systems¹¹ was not identified by the Consultant as the most pressing issue concerning the communication of the EiE Report, considering the costs involved and the experience of current staff. However, the implementation of a broadened CN strategy is likely to make it inevitable; as more people from different organisations/units will be involved and need to access CN-related information. Three systems could be envisaged by DG EMPL in the context of EiE and PROGRESS:

- a planning tool;
- a set of checklists for quality control;
- a stakeholder DB (which differs from the mailing list insofar as it is based on research and not on self-registration).

Most of these systems have already been recommended by the Consultant in previous reports. For maximum efficiency, they should be shared by all the units involved in PROGRESS, although they should differentiate between the fields of specialisation.

Planning tool

PROGRESS' insufficient capability to make the most of existing communication opportunities has been reported many times in this evaluation (as well as in previous studies for DG EMPL). In short, communication activities tend to have a much greater impact when they can be related – directly or indirectly – to the prevailing issues on the agenda and/or combined with other accordant or discordant voices.

Very often, opportunities cannot be predicted, which justifies the need for systems to create custom-made messages which are easy to disseminate (reactive communication). However, in a number of cases (for instance in the course of policy making or in the case of recurrent events), a planned strategy is possible and potentially very effective.

Recommendation nr. 25

The planning tool is a database listing all the 'events' initiated by EiE target groups at EU and Member-State levels and providing the information necessary for the formulation of the most appropriate CN response. As such, it constitutes a key element in the 'reactive' part of the CN programme – the 'active' part being the sum of all tools and activities initiated by the

¹¹ CN systems support human work by improving the storage, retrieval, modification and sharing of information at low cost, usually on an IT-basis. They strengthen the (CN) capacity of an organisation, as opposed to training for instance, which is an individual 'service' (the knowledge leaves when the employee leaves).



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Commission according to its own agenda. Ultimately, the tool should help programme managers and communication consultants better anticipate, coordinate and prioritise their CN activities in the 27 Members States, where policies are shaped, made and implemented.

Given the division of tasks as presented in the CN Framework Contract, it is expected by the Consultant that the actual design and maintenance of the planning tool be assigned to Lot 3 in cooperation with DG EMPL/D1 and H3.

Checklists for quality control

Quality management is the shared responsibility of the implementation contractors (who need to have their own systems in place) and of the Commission (which remains responsible for the content of written materials, for instance).

Currently, there is no systematic procedure to control the quality of CN outputs at EC level. Whilst the publication of the EiE Report is subject to a number of checks (mainly to ensure editing quality and the correct application of the *Charte Graphique*), some other activities, including the annual Dissemination Conference, have never been assessed. In the case of the conference, no fixed internal procedure for debriefing is in place involving all the staff (internal and external) involved in the conference organisation to exchange views and build on experiences. This makes the Consultant think that important learning opportunities are missed every year, which engenders inefficiency costs.

Recommendation nr. 26

Quality control mechanisms need to be put in place, both within D1 and among the staff involved in the Report's communications (H3 and contractors).

A simple way of improving the value of CN activities whilst building capacity is to put some time and effort into planning and assessing these activities. Quality checklists would allow DG EMPL to avoid the most common mistakes when launching CN products and to better understand the CN process. These checklists would need to be updated after each activity and stored on the units' drives.

Stakeholder Database

The Consultant's assumption that the lack of a proper stakeholder database might have a negative impact on the knowledge of TGs and the dissemination of the Report held true, as demonstrated by the In-depth Consultation Report. In addition, the coexistence of (outdated) mailing lists leads to multiple mailings, inaccurate data and serious omissions.

The division of tasks with OPOCE – which is responsible for the management of the self-registration list – also needs to be clarified.

Recommendation nr. 27

The Consultant urges the EC to stop using multiple mailing lists. Instead, a centralised, comprehensive and research-based stakeholder database should be built and maintained.



In contrast to mailing lists, stakeholder DBs make it possible to communicate with very specialised audiences, on a country basis, on a policy basis or according to the type of stakeholder.

Given the current division of tasks under the PROGRESS CN Framework Contract, it is expected that the DB would be built and managed by the contractor responsible for Lot 3.

2.3.3. Punctual and tailor-made training will facilitate staff's endorsement of new CN objectives and make working processes more efficient

In order for staff to be efficient and for CN objectives to be met, it is crucial that employees are fully briefed and trained regarding their responsibilities when it comes to communications. Both the desk and field phases showed that staff are unevenly prepared in this field, since for many years communicating the results of their analysis has not been seen as part of their work but as an extra task.

Training would have two clear benefits:

- It is an opportunity to clearly and comprehensively explain the strategic orientations of projects to staff and to therefore look for their endorsement;
- It also allows the efficiency of working processes to be increased through the promotion of new methods and tools.

Training should be built into the annual work plan and a variety of trainings should be available; different units could share the trainings, which would be organised in a sort of PROGRESS training pool. One of the advantages of training is that it also allows employees to learn from their colleagues and to complete tasks during the training so that concrete results can be seen.

Recommendation nr. 28

All speakers who will be presenting at the Dissemination Conference or delivering presentations in seminars should have completed a public speaking training, as this will increase the effectiveness of the activity. Updates and reviewing concrete aspects of this training, where staff might still feel weaknesses are present, should be contemplated.

2.3.4. Setting strategic partnerships with a view to maximise the impact of CN activities

The Employment Directorate of DG EMPL already has a track record concerning the organisation of events and the publication of studies in collaboration with other Commission Services, such as Eurostat, and with independent organisations, such as ILO, the OECD, Eurofound and OSHA. It is the Consultant's view that this best practice ought to be repeated in the area of CN with a view to boosting the cost-effectiveness of new tools/activities.



Collaboration acts as endorsement of the Report and the increased audience of a combined event increases the number of target group members who are reached. Of all existing activities, the annual Dissemination Conference would seem to be the most appropriate with respect to a joint organisation. Experts from other organisations, such as Eurofound, already participate in this conference, although the presence and involvement of these organisations is currently minimal. These partnerships should also be used to reduce costs when organising seminars in Member States.

Recommendation nr. 29

The participation of external Experts in the Dissemination Conference and other CN tools and activities should be fostered, reflecting upon both the organisations involved and the number of representatives invited. Presentations of joint studies should also be considered.

The feasibility of organising an annual EiE Conference that is co-sponsored by other Commission Services and EU bodies, such as Eurostat and Eurofound should be explored. The development of a precise calendar for the organisation of such an event would be crucial. (Please refer to 2.2.3.1. for more details on the Dissemination Conference).

2.3.5. Using lesson-learning to create innovation and improvement opportunities

The process of simply setting objectives is not sufficient to ensure the effective delivery of CN products to accompany the EiE Report. It is also crucial that lessons are learnt from previous experiences and built upon to ensure that the products are constantly improving.

This can be achieved in two ways:

- Monitoring is a key tool to allow the EC to internally assess its progress towards the
 predefined goals, which can culminate in annual monitoring reports being produced.
 Performance indicators need to be established and data collected through predefined
 systems. This area is particularly weak in relation to the EiE Report CN activities. The
 most striking example is the lack of relevant data regarding the EiE website, which limited
 a rigorous analysis of this tool's performance. Continual in-depth monitoring of the
 product is needed to ensure that lessons are learnt and it is continuously improved.
- Evaluation is the second stage, as it allows a more objective, external judgement of
 progress to be developed within a long term framework. Evaluation is not undertaken
 annually but instead focuses on a long term analysis of why strategies have or have not
 been effective. The current evaluation of the EiE Report's CN activities had not previously
 been carried out.

Recommendation nr. 30

A clear monitoring framework for all the CN tools and activities, with detailed performance indicators needs to be established urgently.

In addition, users of the Report should be invited to give feedback all year round, as it is extremely important not only to be in contact with one's audience, but also to be informed about their views, opinions and needs.



To aid monitoring, checklists should also be developed, as these are the easiest way to secure the smooth delivery of CN tools and to ensure that objectives are quantifiable. To accompany the checklists, a brief communication plan with SMART objectives is needed.

Alongside the checklists and performance indicators, an internal debriefing should be carried out annually for each by-product (see point 2.3.4.), as only then can the product be improved. A written record should be produced of such internal evaluations, in order not to lose information from year to year and person to person. Checklists should also be updated accordingly. For example, after the publication of the Report or after the Dissemination Conference, there should be a formal internal evaluation and debriefing session. The evaluation should be focused both internally and externally on similar publications in order to learn from others' mistakes and successes as well as their own.

In addition to internal evaluation, in five years time an external evaluator should be sourced to evaluate the Report and its CN by-products.

Further operational advice should be provided by the consultant responsible for the implementation of the developed by-products.

