

# MINUTES

## YEC/YEB – EDITORIAL BOARD MEETING

### 14 NOVEMBER 2013

#### 1. **Introduction** (M. Grubben & P. Wragg)

- Marian Grubben thanks the EB members for their continuous support for the Your Europe project.
- The number of visitors to Your Europe Citizens has been steadily and significantly increasing in 2013. There were more than half a million visits in October.
- As European and national rules are equally important for citizens, it is important to link to national content.
- The Your Europe Action Plan (adopted last September) sets out concrete measures for the Member States and the Commission to ensure that European and national content is provided and Your Europe portal promoted as a gateway to all information and help for citizens and businesses.
- Since September 2013, the newly created unit in DG MARKT "Single Market Service Centre" gathers all the governance tools (Your Europe, SOLVIT, IMI and Your Europe Advice) into one single full package of services for citizens.
- As it is important to measure progress with the implementation of the single market tools including Your Europe, the Single Market Scoreboard has been created in a new online format that will be updated and enlarged next year.
- Mr. Wragg informs the audience that the European content of Your Europe Business has been fully revamped and put online two months ago. It offers more content in a new, more user-friendly structure. An online campaign is ongoing to promote this new content to potential users.

#### 2. **Your Europe Action Plan** (A. Ziller, D. Przylydzka)

- Annegret Ziller welcomes the new representatives of Croatia, Lithuania and Estonia.
- From its re-launch in 2010, the portal has seen a constant increase in visits. Based on the statistics of October 2013, the forecasts point to about 6.5 million visits by end of this year. This success also creates expectations from users towards both the Commission and the Member States in terms of providing and updating content.
- To meet this challenge, in September 2013 the Commission published a Communication for a Your Europe Action Plan addressed to the European Parliament and the Council for boosting Your Europe in cooperation with the Member States.
- In order to fulfil its commitments, the Commission will:
  - carry out a gaps analysis to see what EU content is missing → **Suggestions from MS are welcome**
  - increase synergies with other portals and services in order to avoid overlapping information
  - launch a usability study with an external contractor → **Results to be presented during the next Editorial Board meeting**
  - implement more sophisticated guidance including an "avatar" to assistance services
  - optimise feedback functions so that visitors report their experience on exercising their rights in the MS → **If any, the EB members are invited to give examples**

- integrate Your Europe into social media
- launch a pilot project on blogs, promotional campaigns
- The Commission calls on the Member States to:
  - provide on-line information on national rules and procedures implementing EU law in a practical, user-friendly way via their national portals;
  - ensure maximum access to information on EU rights for all, by co-operating with Your Europe;
  - promote Your Europe on their government pages and in their information campaigns.
- In order to support Member States in these tasks, the Commission has invested in technical developments for the exchange of content between the national and European level (see point 3).
- DE welcomes the adoption of the Action Plan which will raise awareness within the Member States to ensure that information on Your Europe is accessible to citizens and businesses via national governmental portals.

### 3. Models for providing national content (M. Merlino, C. Torrecillas Salinas & D. Przyłudzka)

- The Commission has been exploring new models for exchanging content.

#### Your Europe Citizens

- For some topics, national information can be collected from the database of the Commission's expert groups (eg. taxes from DG TAXUD). Retrieving the relevant information from the database will be soon discussed with the colleagues → This model would avoid asking EB members for information that Member States have already provided to the Commission in another context.
- Further to our investigation and in order to avoid duplication of work, new technical tools have been developed for the exchange of content. For the provision of national information to Your Europe, Member States have the following options:
  - 1) **Content syndication** based on the concept of semantic tags (agreement on certain keywords to mark the relevant part of a portal and to retrieve its content) – where good quality information is available on national portals, even if structured differently from that on Your Europe.
  - 2) **Web forms** to be filled in with content – whenever complete, good quality content is not available on national pages.
  - 3) **Deep links** to be included in a structured page - only where good quality information is available on national pages and where content matches the information required for Your Europe.

All methods will be available on YEST from December 2013. In a first step, Member States are requested to provide the national content for the residence section on the Your Europe Citizens part by the end of February 2014.

If Member States are interested in content syndication, they should contact the Commission to join the pilot project. For methods 2 and 3 Member States will be able to work with the new online content-management system YEST (Your Europe Support tool). The Commission will shortly provide the necessary information on how to log in [using the European Commission Authentication System (ECAS)] and edit country-specific information.

- EE gives positive feedback from the syndication experience with Estonia. However, he points out that editors do not have access to the semantic tags so that currently this has to be requested through the developers.
- Commission's IT team says that if Member States wish to develop their system towards content syndication, the Commission's IT team will be pleased to collaborate with their technical colleagues.
- MT congratulates the Commission for the development of these models. He also indicates that a gaps analysis of the Maltese national portal is being carried out.
- AT underlines that these models are a constructive way to exchange information and will help to restructure the content of national portals. He stresses that agreement on the content structure is necessary before engaging in content-syndication.
- NO raises the problem of translation, since Your Europe Citizens is not available in Norwegian.
- Annegret Ziller thanks the participants for their feedback. She also stresses that the Commission is ready to support the Member States both in implementing content syndication and the two other methods.
- Marian Grubben strongly encourages the Member States to use the content syndication method as the most sustainable of the three.

#### Your Europe Business

- The content will be migrated to YEST in the first quarter of 2014. The revamp of national content is foreseen for 2014.
- YE-Business will wait for the results of YE-Citizens' experience on the content syndication, and will evaluate the feasibility of content syndication with the resources available.

#### **4. Best practice presentation – Presentation of national portals (LU and FI)**

LU and FI present their respective national portals by describing the main relevant features and how their work is organised.

5.

#### **5. Update on recent developments and plans for 2014 (J. Golinski & Nahid Noyen)**

##### Your Europe Citizens

Over the last few months, several new topics have been added to the sections on Travel ("Safety"; "Money & charges"; integration of the "Travelling in Europe" website) and Consumers ("Unfair treatment"). The addition of information on the Cross-border healthcare directive, which recently became applicable, was used as an opportunity to completely review and update the contents of the Health section. The sections on Residence and Work are being completely restructured – the process should be completed in the first quarter of 2014. Education will also be updated to present information on the new programmes.

##### Your Europe Business

EU pages of YEB have been revamped (online since mid-September).

There are new topics, and focus is only on content which falls within the mandate of the EU. Instead of the former 'business life cycle' structure, topics are grouped into eight themes (Start & Grow, VAT & customs, Selling abroad, Staff, Product requirements, Funding, Public contracts, Environment).

Only practical information (e.g. rules in force) is given (no information or links to policy documents), and texts aim to be short and jargon-free.

In 2014 the national content of YEB will be revamped, to make it shorter and more user friendly, easier to keep up-to-date, and to align it with the new topics at the EU level. Various options for displaying national content are being considered (i.a. basic factsheets, deep-linking, integrating the national information into EU pages). Not all topics require national information.

Also in 2014 YEB will migrate to the YEST.

The 2012-2013 annual national update exercise was finalised mid-November. 16 countries have completed the update of all the business sections, whereas 4 countries partially completed the updates and 8 did not update the available information at all.

As the national content of the Your Europe Business section will be revamped, no annual update exercise will take place in 2014. However, the Editorial Board members will be asked to contribute to the national revamp exercise for those sections where national content is required. This exercise will not start before the second quarter of 2014.

## **6. Promotional activities** (*Luca Mangiat, Tamas Nagy & Maria Del Pilar Molina Serra*)

### Your Europe Citizens

The number of visits has continued to grow over the past few months; by the end of the year, 6 million visits will have been recorded. Two thirds of the visitors land on the Work and Travel sections; the rest are distributed evenly across the other sections.

A campaign is ongoing to promote YE-Citizens on the forums and platforms Europeans already turn to when looking for information and feedback on their rights. A new promotional contract is being negotiated for the continuation of this campaign into 2014.

Member States are encouraged to further invest in good links to Your Europe from their national portals.

### Your Europe Business

On 23 September a 'pay-per-click' Google AdWords campaign was launched for the promotion of YEB, to run till mid-December approximately. So far the results are very satisfactory.

In just the past 4 months (July-October) YEB had one million visits (the same as in the whole of 2012). October represented 41% of the global visits during the last four months. If the trend continues this year, the number of visits could see an increase of 250% compared to 2012 figures. The growth in September and October is partly due to the Google Adwords campaign, nevertheless visits to YEB have steadily increased throughout 2013.

YEB was promoted at the following events:

- Bruxelles Entreprenre (Belgium)
- Enterprise Europe Network Annual Conference (Lithuania)
- MEDEF Summer University (France)

The YEB LinkedIn account has 1,788 contacts so far and 5 updates per week are sent to our network of contacts.

## 7. Break-out sessions

### ▪ **National content – Citizens section** (*Marco Merlino, Luca Mangiat*)

Luca Mangiat presents the new structure of the Residence section. Marco Merlino introduces the new form to be filled in online with national content via YEST, where Member States choose this option.

LU asks if the translated versions of the national content can be checked to ensure that the right terminology is used for official documents. MT would like to know if several languages can be uploaded. The Member States will be invited to provide their national content on the Residence section by end February 2014.

The participants are invited to cross-check the availability of good quality content on national portals other than theirs concerning the Residence section. In this way, they will see if all the replies to the questions raised in the questionnaire can be found.

The EB members are invited to contact Marco Merlino for any clarification needed concerning the provision of national content.

### ▪ **National content – Business section** (*Dorota Przuldzka & Nahid Noyen*)

Dorota Przuldzka & Nahid Noyen presented the solutions which are being considered for the national content:

- Deep-linking to national pages, if information is available there (and preferably in other languages too);
- Integrating information into EU pages instead of having separate national pages (user tests show that the division into EU and national content is not clear for the users); though this could be resource-intensive.
- Factsheets with basic information, links to legislation, and contacts at the national level.

Some EB members voiced concerns about the workload required. YEB team pointed out that not all topics require national content, and stressed that deep-linking will be a preferred option, whenever possible. In the first stage, YEB team will identify those topics that do not require national content and will work with the remaining ones.

EB members judge that a lot of topics are already covered by the Points of Single Contact (PSCs) websites. YEB Team will liaise with colleagues who manage PSCs on this and asked those EB members who are also in charge of the PSCs for suggestions and comments as well, once the national revamp is launched.

EB members liked the suggestion to spread annual updates throughout the year, e.g. a number of topics each quarter. Ad-hoc updates will also be possible.

## 8. AOB

The next edition of the online scoreboard is scheduled for June 2014: no change in the structure and in the indicators. Member States are invited to complete the provision of national information and let the Commission know about their promotional activities by the end of February so that this can be taken into account for the final ranking in the scoreboard 2014.

Promotional material (leaflets, posters) is available for distribution. Further to IT request, Luca Mangiat will send him copies of the Your Europe, Your rights brochure. It is planned to update this brochure further to incorporate the legislative changes which have occurred since its publication.

Annegret Ziller invites the EB members to make suggestions for designing the next Editorial Board meeting:

- *Most of the participants express a preference for 2 ½-day meetings*
- *Suggested topics:*
  - *Which technologies are used in different Member States? (FR)*
  - *Increased networking (creation of a group in LinkedIn, BE)*
  - *Kind of knowledge market place (IT)*

Annegret Ziller indicates that, in the margin of the next Editorial Board meeting, a meeting with the YEA experts and SOLVIT centres will be organised to allow everybody to network with their counterparts.

The next Editorial Board meeting will be hosted by DG ENTR on 20-21 February 2014.

*The YE team*