



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

SMEs and Entrepreneurship

SME Access to Markets

Your Europe - Editorial Board Meeting

7 March 2013 (9:15-16:30)

DG ENTR, Avenue d'Auderghem 45

Meeting room 12/A

MINUTES

PARTICIPANTS

DG Enterprise (ENTR): P. Wragg (Head of Unit), D. Przyłudzka

Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI): N. Noyen, P. Alvito-Grencho

DG Internal Market (MARKT): A. Verhoeven (Head of Task Force), A. Ziller (YE Team Leader), J. Golinski, L. Mangiat, C. Bijlsma-Saelens, M. Merlino, N. Vignerol, C. Franklin

Editorial Board (EB) Members: see attached list of participants.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Mr Peter Wragg (Head of Unit, ENTR) presented the agenda and stressed the value of having the national information on the Your Europe (YE) portal.

YOUR EUROPE ACTION PLAN FOR BETTER INFORMATION – STATE OF PLAY

Ms Amaryllis Verhoeven (Head of Task Force, MARKT) presented the context of the Your Europe Action Plan for Better Information, to be adopted in the autumn of 2013. The Action Plan aims at further establishing YE as a single gateway to information on rights and opportunities in the Single Market, and promoting YE better to its target

audiences. To achieve this objective, it will call on Member States to provide national information on how the EU law is practically applied in their countries.

Ms Annegret Ziller (YE Team Leader, MARKT) presented the results of the surveys on YE done among stakeholders (including the members of the Editorial Board) and users of YE-C (exit survey on YE). The surveys' results will feed into the Action Plan.

325 stakeholders replied to the first survey:

- Overall satisfied with the portal;
- More to be done on national content;
- Overwhelming opinion that YE is not sufficiently known and needs promotion (preferred media: online advertising, social media, and outreach campaign).

Over 3000 visitors to YE-C replied to the user survey:

- The majority found YE through search engines, but also via Europa portal and national portals (overwhelmingly online resources);
- The big majority were the 1st time users;
- The majority of visitors found information they were looking for, at least partly;
- More than 90% of visitors rated Your Europe as satisfactory or better.

Copies of the documents with the summary of results of both surveys were distributed.

EB members wanted to know whether country-specific results are available for the online user survey. MARKT replied that although no information on the country of origin was collected, data exists on which language version of the site the respondents accessed and MARKT can make them available.

In response to a question about the bounce rate of YE, MARKT responded that it is 50-60% for YE-C; however a higher bounce rate on websites such as YE is common, as visitors come for a specific information and leave once they have found the information they need.

[Presentation](#)

THE ONLINE GOVERNANCE SCOREBOARD

Ms Verhoeven and Ms Ziller informed the members of the EB about the online Single Market Governance Scoreboard, whose adoption is foreseen for June 2013. An updated table about the country-specific scores for Your Europe was shown during the meeting (see also PPT). As regards the assessment of promotional activities, MARKT applied a flexible approach (i.e. no strict criteria), considering that circumstances and possibilities differ from country to country.

BEST PRACTICE PRESENTATION FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD ON MANAGING UPDATES TO THEIR NATIONAL PORTAL AND YE

Mr Christian Iversen (Norway) explained how Norway manages its national portal for businesses. They have an Editorial Board (information officers or webmasters in different governmental agencies), who meets 3-4 times per year to discuss promotion and development. Each department is the owner of their topic/content. A central unit is responsible for the updates and the publishing of the content. The team consists of six

editors and one editor in chief, experts in their respective fields, who write updates that are then approved by the department in charge. It is ensured that the editors reserve enough time during the year for editorial work and that the hierarchy in each department is engaged. It has taken Norway about 2 years to establish this system and some hierarchical pressure was required to make different departments cooperate.

[Presentation](#)

Ms Kröther-Delandat from Belgium was unable to attend the meeting. However, her [presentation](#) on best practices is available.

INFORMATION SESSION ON SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION (SEO)

The Everis company presented best practices in SEO. The Italian EB member shared his expertise on SEO:

- YE is quite an old site technically speaking and it would be useful to test its speed, as well as to fix errors in the code;
- Some texts on YE are very long and this is problematic for the YE mobile version. Editing texts for the mobile version is unlikely, due to limited human resources;
- It is very useful to use keywords when linking;
- YE homepage, which we usually promote and link to, is not very attractive and is just a multilingual list of the following words: “Business” and “Citizens”. This can confuse the user.

Following the suggestion from Austria, the YE team called on the EB members to share the findings from the SEO evaluations of their national sites, if any, and the Commission will do the same.

[Presentation](#)

YOUR EUROPE CONTENT SYNDICATION TOOL (YEST) – FINDINGS FROM THE PILOT PROJECT AND WAY FORWARD

Mr Merlino presented the finding of the pilot project on content syndication aimed at testing a sustainable solution to exchange content between Your Europe and national portals.

In order to prove that syndication of national content was possible a test experience with two Member States, Austria and France was performed. The test experience proved that YEST was able to retrieve content from a series of national pages. Furthermore, a study on governance of content syndication resulting from the pilot found that there are some syndication scenarios which stand out above the others. In particular the “**tagged national content**” method has been evaluated as the most suitable and balanced method to obtain contents from MS sites. In this model, the source site adds a series of tags to the content to be shared and YEST maps these tags to content equivalents. Although the original information would not be strictly structured according to the Your Europe content, the tags introduced by the MS will allow matching the topics (life cycle events) of their contents with the ones shown in Your Europe. Unlike other analysed methods, this one represents a shared workload between the EC and the Member States.

The study concluded that a thorough review of the current content structure is required in order to align it with both business and technical requirements. This is derived from the fact that neither current YE contents nor MS contents are prepared to fit a single content structure. This assumption has led to the conclusion that a more flexible content structure is required. It is now essential to agree on a full list of standard topics (citizens' life cycle events in the case of Your Europe Citizens) in order to be able to exchange contents.

In the future a restricted group of 12 voluntary countries will join the pilot to syndicate the content of one section of Your Europe from their portals while the other countries will be able to provide links or use templates online to fill the requested information.

Presentation

BREAK OUT SESSION 1: CORE GROUP: CONTENT SYNDICATION

Content syndication and the concept of ontology have been presented during this session to a group of 12 interested countries. In particular the following aspects have been explained and clarified:

- How are we going to define the ontology?

It won't be a unilateral process, this will be done in collaboration with a group of pilot Member States. The Commission will propose a roadmap and consult the core group before going on.

- How contents will be transferred to Your Europe?

An automated process executed from YEST will connect to the different data sources to download the tagged contents.

- Will syndication be a totally automated process?

There will be the possibility to manually select what we want to publish in YE or it can be a totally automated process.

Next steps:

- MARKET will send out a guide on how to use YEST and implement content syndication;
- Countries will be asked to confirm their participation in the project.

BREAK OUT SESSION 2: WHAT NATIONAL CONTENT FOR YOUR EUROPE?

The session participants discussed in two groups what national content is needed for YE-C and YE-B (for the latter, based on the draft sitemap for the revamped EU content), and how it should be integrated with YE (content syndication, texts provided by the EB, linking to national websites).

The question was raised on the possibility of linking to non-governmental sites, if they provide better and more detailed information than the government. The YE team agreed it is a dilemma but the preferred source should be an official and trusted one.

The United Kingdom asked whether we are asking users what information they look for. This was actually done in the context of the user survey.

Ireland said that due to resource constraints, a sustainable approach like linking to national sites would be a preferred option.

With regard to YE-B the EB agreed that (also based on the statistics on their national portals) the most important sections to have exhaustive national information are: ‘start & grow’, ‘VAT & customs’, ‘Staff’, and possibly ‘Selling abroad’. ‘Public contracts’, ‘Environment’, ‘Funding’, and ‘Product requirements’ are either chiefly managed by the EU with no or little information on the national level or not a priority topics for businesses, so linking to national sites, if appropriate, should be sufficient. The EB members also pointed out that ‘winding-up’ section, which is no longer foreseen in the YE-B EU content, is popular on national portals and should be re-integrated into YE-B. ENTR explained that as the company has to go through the winding-up procedures in a country where it had operated, we can assume that they are sufficiently acquainted with the country’s administrative set-up and rules, to find the necessary information on the national portal. Nevertheless, YE-B team will keep this issue in mind, do further testing and user surveys, and possibly sign-post to the relevant national sites.

The EB also suggested to have a list of VAT rates in each country and to add information on corporate/direct taxation.

Also, a comparison of some basic prices (e.g. rent, food) and fees (e.g. registration, legal help) between countries could help both businesses and citizens decide where to settle.

Including contacts to the relevant authorities in each country would be useful too.

With regard to **YE-C** it was obvious that more work was needed to look into the details of possible national information for the different sections. It was agreed that in a first step Member States would send the content structure of their national portals to the Commission. Further work on the semantic asset will be done by the content syndication core group.

[YE-B new EU sitemap proposal](#)

[Presentation on YE-C](#)

YOUR EUROPE – BUSINESS – STATE OF PLAY

Ms Nahid Noyen and Mr Alvito-Grencho from EACI presented the progress of the EU content revamp, the state of play of national updates, the statistics (steadily growing for YE-B, with over 100,000 visits in 4 out of the previous 5 months), and promotional activities (subtitles in DE and FR available for the animations on Youtube, and new promotional material available on the promo pages). An online campaign is planned for after the revamping is finished.

[Presentation](#)

YOUR EUROPE - CITIZENS - STATE OF PLAY

DG MARKT team presented the latest developments and foreseen improvements on YE-C in terms of addition of content, statistics, and promotional activities on-going or planned: linking to YE-C on the most popular national blogs and forums, also by

recruiting ‘ambassadors’, linking to YE from national sites, a targeted online advertising campaign.

Presentation

The next Editorial Board meeting will be held on Thursday 14 November 2013 in Brussels.

Follow-up of the meeting

EB members are requested to:

- Confirm to DG MARKT if their country is interested to participate in the YEST-project;
- Send the semantic asset/content structure of their national portals to MARKT;
- Install as many links as possible from their national websites to YE;
- Order promotional material for their promotional activities, which is available from <http://europa.eu/youreurope/promo>. A stand and roll-ups, produced by YE-B, can be borrowed for events;
- Share their best practice and findings with regard to SEO on the interactive online platform.

The Commission will:

- Upload all presentations, attendance list and minutes of the meeting on the interactive online platform;
- Send a YEST guide (MARKT).

Annexes:

Participants list

Presentations