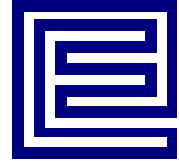

The European Evaluation Consortium



Lot 3: Provision of External Evaluation Studies of an Interim and Ex-Post Nature

Evaluation of DG ECFIN's information and communication activities on Economic and Monetary Union, including the Euro (PRINCE Programme)

FINAL REPORT

February 2007

Evaluation of DG ECFIN's information and communication activities on Economic and Monetary Union, including the Euro (PRINCE Programme)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2007 The European Evaluation Consortium was commissioned by the European Commission to undertake an evaluation of DG ECFIN's Information and Communication activities on Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), including the Euro (PRINCE Programme).

The purpose of this evaluation was to conduct an analysis of the impact and effectiveness of the actions undertaken by the Commission between 2004 and 2006 and beyond in the framework of the Programme d'Information du Citoyen Européen (PRINCE) programme.

EVALUATION SCOPE

The scope of the evaluation was to examine the extent to which the European Commission's communication activities between 2004 and 2006 facilitated the introduction of the Euro.

The focus of the evaluation was the information actions directly or indirectly implemented between 2004 and 2006. Particular emphasis was given to the activities carried out in the new Member States (MS), in particular focusing on the Slovenian changeover.

The evaluation took the previous study undertaken in 2003 into account. However, there was an emphasis on learning from recent experiences.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was based on a three phase approach: Inception, Data Gathering and Analysis; and a Judgement and Reporting Phase.

The key methodological elements included:

- Face to face meetings with 10 stakeholders from DG ECFIN in order to collect relevant information and to validate conclusions.
- Telephone interviews with 16 members of the Directors of Communications Network (DirCom) and other Information & Communication (I&C) stakeholders in MSs.
- Telephone interviews with 10 economic journalists.
- A case study of the situation in Slovenia, which included 13 interviews with representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, the Government, the Central Bank, and the EC Representation.
- Focus groups in three new MSs (Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus).
- Interviews with consumer organisations.

The evaluation commenced in May 2007 and was completed in January 2008. The following is a very brief summary of the detailed findings, conclusions and recommendations presented in the main part of the final report.

NO-COST RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDELINES

No-direct costs interventions are carried out directly by DG ECFIN staff. They include networking activities with existing relays, direct assistance to new MSs in their preparation of developing an I&C strategy for their individual changeovers, as well as, the preparation of guidelines, recommendations, and practical advice to support national administrations in their changeover efforts.

Conclusions:

- The evaluation of 'generic' guidelines and recommendations developed and issued by DG ECFIN is positive. In particular, Euro Team members found the guidelines developed by the Commission for the establishment of the network very helpful.
- Results from the Slovenian case study showed that direct 'tailored' no-cost assistance from DG ECFIN to key national institutional stakeholders is very much appreciated and have a practical impact towards ensuring a smooth changeover campaign.

Recommendations:

- **Short/Medium Term:** Important lessons can be drawn from the recent Slovenian changeover to the Euro and the processes in Malta and Cyprus. It would be particularly useful to take stock of these experiences and update accordingly the existing guidelines for the preparation of national I&C strategies.
- **Longer Term:** The extent of the need for 'focused' no-cost assistance may vary greatly depending on two factors: (i) the 'readiness' of the institutional infrastructure in the MS; (ii) the presence of parallel changeover processes. In the case of Slovenia, the assistance provided was adequate, but it is likely that in certain circumstances the provision of the same level of assistance to other MSs could be impossible. No-cost activities entail an intense use of internal human resources that appear today already overstretched. It would be important then to devise ways to adjust the extent of the provision of focused no-cost assistance to the actual resources available, and identify agreed criteria to ensure that these resources are available to the MSs according to their specific features and needs.

MEMBER STATES GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES AND MEDIA ACTIVITIES

Funding for Member States government programmes and media activities is provided via Partnership and Twinning Agreements. Strategic Partnerships are a vehicle by which the Commission and MSs jointly work on I&C strategies whereas Ad-Hoc Partnerships allow MSs to receive EC funding for specific activities. Partnership Agreements finance such activities as: information products and websites, events, information and co-ordination activities and opinion polling. Twinning Agreements support activities such as: training sessions, bilateral meetings, exchanges of specific expertise etc. More detailed conclusions and recommendation will be presented under the following sections of this summary.

Conclusions:

- Partnership Agreements are key tools in achieving DG ECFIN's objectives of creating public awareness, providing neutral and actual information, contributing to a smooth changeover and providing third parties with information.
- The success of activities conducted under Partnership Agreements is determined by the type of agreement. Although all add-value, in Slovenia the evaluation found that Strategic Partnership Agreements tend to have a greater impact on 'multipliers' and 'intermediaries', while Ad-Hoc Partnership Agreements were more effective for general public and specific target groups.
- Although the above could not be extrapolated to apply across the board, MSs' representatives indicated that the usefulness of Strategic Partnerships (and their broad EU dimension) is magnified in cases where national information and communication issues need to be benchmarked (i.e. through polling for example) or can benefit from a clearer EU dimension. Ad Hoc agreements on the other hand are, by definition, activities which are specifically designed to be implemented at

the local level. Stakeholders from the case study explained that this was most useful in customising their national Ad campaign; this was further echoed by stakeholders from the MS interview programme.

- The added value of Twinning's is the incorporation of experience from other countries that have already undergone the process and in establishing I&C campaigns within a greater European context.

Recommendations:

- **Short/Medium Term:** Twinning's are greatly appreciated and achieve their goal of exchanging information among administrations. It is important to continue to ensure that Twinning's are undertaken in such a manner that appropriate participants are selected to assure the greatest added value (i.e. most similar fit concept). This could be done through more rigorous screening and preparation. Part of this should also include strategic dissemination of Twinning's results.
- **Short/Medium Term:** Trilateral Twinning's proved somewhat more difficult and should be re-evaluated as to their merit.
- **Longer Term:** Partnership Agreements are a key vehicle in supporting MSs in their I&C Activities. Resources permitting, Partnership Agreements should be made available to countries with medium to long term Euro entry horizons.

INFORMATION PRODUCTS AND WEBSITES

To communicate on EMU and the Euro, a range of tools have been developed to provide MSs with support in their changeover activities. These have included: publications (such as booklets, leaflets, posters, etc), promotional materials used at conferences (such as mouse pads, pens key rings etc.), the DG ECFIN website, including 'The Euro Our Currency' site; and "European Economy News", a DG ECFIN newsletter.

Conclusions:

- The major recipients of DG ECFIN publications were national publics who received copies via the EU Representations, their national administrations and other institutions such as banks and schools.
- Major users of DG ECFIN information products and web sites were individuals and organisations responsible for communicating within national contexts. The evaluation's survey of Euro Team, Euro Direct and Information Relays including the EU Representations resulted in a positive assessment of the promotional tools, publications and The Euro: Our Currency web site.
- National stakeholders responsible for aspects of the euro changeover in their country perceive the products produced by DG ECFIN as providing key support to their own activities.
- The content of some publications corresponded to general information needs within MSs, particularly where documents were short, concise and clear. Collaboration between MSs and DG ECFIN is crucial in finding the right balance between general and more specific communication materials.
- Print runs were established on the basis of request from MSs and EU institutions which means that DG ECFIN avoided stockpiling unused brochures.
- The DG ECFIN website was recently re-launched and it is assumed to have addressed a number of issues identified early in the evaluation (e.g. navigation, presentation etc.). However, the link between national and DG ECFIN's website could be strengthened.

Recommendations:

- **Short/Medium Term:** DG ECFIN is providing an important information service to information facilitators and administrators at national level and should continue to provide general documents for these audiences as well as those who proactively seek information on DG ECFIN web sites.
- **Short/Medium Term:** It is recommended that DG ECFIN encourages/requires MSs, to link their national web sites to appropriate electronic DG ECFIN publications.
- **Short/Medium Term:** The Commission should continue to provide information that is suitable for informed groups but should work together with the MSs to allow further targeted approaches to be developed.
- **Longer Term:** Given the acknowledged increased effectiveness of tailoring information materials to specific audiences, it is suggested that DG ECFIN focus on guiding, coordinating and co-financing information and communication campaigns and tools. DG ECFIN should retain its 'information' role, but the communication role, which requires integrated targeted campaigns, is primarily implemented by the MSs.

EVENTS, INFORMATION AND CO-ORDINATION ACTIVITIES

Events, information and co-ordination (EIC) activities encompass a series of public events supported and implemented by DG ECFIN. These initiatives are different in nature, target and scope, but are commonly referred to as a single macro-area of DG ECFIN operations. The activities that fall under this category can be divided into the following groups: international conferences and workshops organised at the EU level or in third-countries; seminars for economic journalists; co-ordination meetings of the Directors of Communication network; meetings of and support to the Euro Team network; and the Euro Coins Genesis Exhibition.

Conclusions:

- Overall, the EIC activities adequately responded to recipients' needs and to a large extent the original objectives were achieved as well.
- Conferences are seen, especially by institutional representatives of pre-in MSs, as very successful initiatives.
- Although appreciated by participants, seminars for economic journalists were difficult to assess. It is not clear what the quantitative impact on journalists' work has been and the level of networking among participants seems low.
- The DirCom Network meetings have broadly facilitated the networking with Member State institutions and helped the exchange of information on general and practical aspects of changeover.
- Euro Team was launched recently and tangible results are still outstanding. Preliminary findings from Slovenia suggest that the performance of the network is positive.
- The Euro Coins Genesis exhibitions are viewed positively, more as a promotional event, rather than an informational one.

Recommendations:

- **Longer Term:** Conferences are generally viewed positively. In order to enhance the cost-effectiveness of conferences, it is recommended to maintain or increase the present level of effort on events for pre-in MSs which on average are better received.

- **Short/Medium Term:** Although seminars for journalists are appreciated, adjustments could be made to improve them further: (i) devise ways to deal with the different backgrounds of participants, including systematic ways to monitor beneficiaries' interests and adjust the programmes accordingly; (ii) propose less demanding schedules. In addition to that, it would appear necessary to gain more insights on the comparatively lower appreciation for regional seminars and to re-consider this formula accordingly.
- **Short/Medium Term:** DirCom Meetings are a successful component of the programme; however, there is a challenge to raise the interests of DirCom members from countries that have stopped communicating on the Euro. To concentrate especially on networking events restricted to new MSs could prove particularly efficient.
- **Short/Medium Term:** In regard to the Euro Team (ET) segment of the programme, it would be beneficial to have more 'tailored' trainings, e.g. segmenting the network in sub-groups with similar level of competences (SME Associations, Consumer Groups etc.). In addition to that, it is advisable to clarify the mechanisms for the involvement of ET members at national level, and to have the ET members contacts details published on the internet.

OPINION POLLING

Part of the implementation of DG ECFIN's I&C strategy on the Euro and EMU includes the use of monitoring and feedback tools to assess the impact of campaigns so as to eventually reorient resources so as to fill in possible information gaps and other communication needs. The instruments adopted in this case include quantitative surveys, and to a lesser extent, qualitative surveys and studies.

Conclusions:

- The approach and methodology chosen for the Eurobarometer survey programmes entail several advantages, such as the comparability of results across countries and over time.
- Opinion polling results are found to be particularly relevant in pre-in MSs, as they provide practical insights for the planning and fine-tuning of the Euro campaigns.
- Evidence indicates that there are some difficulties with the Eurobarometer polls programmes. For example, the methodology adopted does not always ensure that the results are consistent and/or statistically significant; sometimes there are problems with the translations/adaptations of questionnaires to the local context. Although the above are minor aspects and relate to only specific items, they are worth noting for future improvements.
- The questionnaire used by Eurobarometer in Euro Area was recently revised to improve the information collected.

Recommendations:

- **Short/Medium Term:** Opinion polls are considered extremely valuable in planning, customising and adjusting I&C activities. However, in working against the risks of inconsistencies due to either the use of unfamiliar and complex terminology and concepts, or inadequate translation/localisation of questionnaires, it is suggested that the future revision of the questionnaire, include some pre-testing of critical questions prior to the fully-fledged implementation of the survey. This would support the aim of ensuring the maximum comparability of results across countries.
- **Short/Medium Term:** As regards country-specific surveys it could prove extremely practical to insert in the questionnaire specific queries on the effectiveness of the (main) information and

Communication actions carried out by the European Commission and MS institutions. This would represent a helpful source of information for subsequent evaluations.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

It is worth noting that in order for DG ECFIN to maintain a comparable level of effort over the coming 2007-2013 period, the yearly budgetary amounts allocated to the PRINCE Programme may prove insufficient.

The value of Partnership Agreements and other support programmes should be proportional to the size of the country in terms of population, and as such will require significantly higher amounts of resources than for Slovenia, Malta or Cyprus. Depending on the timing of future changeovers the financial requirements could easily scale up to a level which would not allow DG ECFIN to provide effective support.

1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this evaluation was to conduct an analysis of the impact and effectiveness of the actions undertaken by the Commission between 2004 and 2006 and beyond in the framework of the Programme d'Information du Citoyen Européen (PRINCE) programme.

This **Final Report** is the last of four deliverables presented by The European Evaluation Consortium (TEEC) on the Evaluation of Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs' (DG ECFIN) Information and Communication Activities on Economic and Monetary Union. It presents findings and conclusions, as well as recommendations to the evaluation questions.

The report is divided into three parts:

- ◆ **Section 2: Evaluation Overview** – provides an overview of the PRINCE Programme, the evaluation objectives and the methodology.
- ◆ **Section 3: Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations** – presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations for improvement to the evaluation questions.
- ◆ **Annexes: Output reports of data collection** – contains the individual reports of the outcomes of data collection. This is presented in a separate document.
 - Report of the On-line Survey of EU Representations, Information Relays and Euro Team staff;
 - Report on Interviews with Member State Representatives;
 - Report on Interviews with Economic Journalists;
 - Focus on one Member State: Slovenia: Case Study Report;
 - Report on Interviews with Consumer Organisations;
 - Report on Outcomes of Focus Groups of young people held in 3 countries (presented as a separate PPT document).

2 EVALUATION OVERVIEW

This section provides a brief review of the evaluation objectives.

2.1 THE PRINCE PROGRAMME

Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs' (DG ECFIN) Information and Communication (I&C) activities on the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the Euro are carried out in the framework of the EC's Communication 552-final (2004) "Communication on the Implementation of an Information and Communication Strategy on the Euro and Economic and Monetary Union" and of subsequent decisions COM(2006)0310 and COM(2006)6822 which provided some amendments to the budget allocation. The implementation of the strategy is coordinated with Member States (MS) and the Committee on Economics and Monetary Affairs of the European Parliament who receive periodical report of activities and forecasts for the following year. The communication strategy has three main objectives:

- To help achieve the European Union's economic policy objectives (including support for Economic and Monetary Union) by increasing public knowledge within and outside the European Union (EU) of the benefits of EMU, how it works, what its policy requirements are and what role it plays in the world economy;
- To contribute to a smooth changeover in those Member States which adopt the Euro;
- To inform about the policy work and activities in areas other than ECFIN's core business, such as, international affairs, relations with international financial institutions, structural reforms and the Lisbon process, financial operations etc..."¹.

Due to the enlargement of the European Union and the accession of twelve new Member States, the focus of communication activities in the 2004-2006 period switched from the Euro zone to these new countries. In particular, DG ECFIN activities were mainly aimed at helping new MS in the process of introducing the Euro through design and implementation of comprehensive I&C plans, and complementing MS efforts with direct EU-funded intervention. To this end, the Commission set up and implemented an articulated programme encompassing a wide range of activities, including:

- Partnerships between the Commission and the Member States;
- Twinning programmes between the countries of the Euro area and new Member States;
- Guidelines, recommendation and other no-direct-cost activities;
- Conferences within the EU and in third countries;
- Regular meetings of the Director of Communications network;
- Seminar for journalists coming from the EU or third-countries;
- the Euro Team network;
- other type of I&C events in third-countries;
- Opinion polls and studies;
- Publications (booklets, leaflets, posters, CD-rom, etc.);
- Promotional Materials;
- the DG ECFIN's website;
- the "European Economy News" – the DG ECFIN's newsletter;

¹ Excerpt from the "Outline of DG ECFIN's External Communication Strategy" (internal circulation, 2006).

- Exhibitions and other I&C events.

In 2004, the resources initially allocated for the implementation of the strategy amounted to EUR 6.0 million, of which half for Partnership Agreements and half for directly-implemented activities. In fact, the budget foreseen for Partnership Agreements (PA) could not be used because substantial preliminary work was necessary to help new MS prepare their I&C plans. Moreover, some direct interventions could not be started before the end of the year; therefore the level of budget execution remained very low, i.e. at about EUR 2.3 million. The concrete actions launched in 2004 included among other: (i) the first Twinning project (between Austria and Hungary), (ii) several training seminars for journalists; (iii) a major conference in Amsterdam; (iv) the preparation of various publications and information materials.

In 2005, the volume of operations increased significantly, almost all of the EUR 4.0 million allocated was successfully committed. In particular, at the end of the year, it was possible to sign a first wave of strategic Partnership Agreements, namely with Slovenia, Estonia, and Lithuania in view of their then imminent access to the Euro zone. These agreements entailed the direct implementation of I&C activities by the EC in coordination with the national I&C plans prepared by the local Governments. Concrete actions included: (i) the large-scale printing of brochures for the general public; (ii) the organisation of conferences and seminars for local journalists; (iii) the provision of promotional materials and other I&C products, etc. In addition to that, the European Commission (EC) in 2005 supported 9 Twinning projects, organised a high-level conference on consumers and the Euro, started with the implementation of seminars for journalists and opinion polls, and increased its communication efforts in third-countries, especially USA and Japan.

In 2006, the level of activities remained quite high. The budget allocated was of EUR 5.0 million, and the commitments amounted to EUR 4.9 million (about 98% of execution rate), which corresponded to a second wave of Partnership Agreements signed with Malta (both 'strategic' and 'ad hoc' agreement) and Cyprus. In addition to that, an 'ad hoc' agreement was concluded with Slovenia in June 2006, with a view to the introduction of the Euro on 01.01.2007. In the second half of the year activities then concentrate on Slovenian changeover, while most of actions planned for Estonia and Lithuania were suspended or cancelled, due to the postponement of their entry to Euro area. As regards to directly-implemented activities, the EC continued with its programme of conferences and seminars both in the EU and in third-countries (e.g. a major conference was organised in Hong Kong), and increased its effort in the field of surveys and publications. Moreover, in January 2006 the first issue of DG ECFIN's newsletter was released, and in June it officially launched "Euro Team" – a network of speakers coming from the new MS holding substantial expertise of issues related to EMU and the Euro.

2.2 THE EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The evaluation was intended to provide information that built upon already available data, such as the information available through existing reporting mechanisms. However, it also relied on the analysis of additional information collected during the evaluation. The ultimate aim of the evaluation was to develop conclusions and recommendations to a set evaluation questions, as laid out in the task specifications.

As outlined in the task specifications, the overall aim of the evaluation was to examine the extent to which the European Commission's communication activities between 2004 and 2006 facilitated the introduction of the Euro. Furthermore, the evaluation was intended to develop recommendations as to the overall communication policy in relation to Economic and Monetary Union.

The focus of the evaluation is the information actions directly or indirectly implemented between 2004 and 2006. Particular emphasis is given to the activities carried out in the new Member States, focusing on the Slovenian changeover in detail. Ultimately, the evaluation was intended to feed into the revision of the multi-annual communication strategy for DG ECFIN.

The overarching evaluation objectives were the following:

- To test the extent the programme's original objectives have been met;
- To test the degree of success of the different types of actions carried out;
- To test to what extent was the Commission's initiator role fulfilled;
- To test how efficient and effective were the organisational arrangements of the programme at the different levels.

The evaluation took the previous evaluation undertaken in 2003 into account. However, there was an emphasis on learning from recent experience and using the lessons to provide practical and usable recommendations to improve the future communication strategy related to Economic and Monetary Union.

2.3 THE EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

This section presents the evaluation methodology, as well as an overview of the evaluation timetable and limitations.

2.3.1 METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was based on a three phase approach (i.e. inception, data gathering and analysis, as well as judgement and reporting). The following table provides an overview of the evaluation phases, the tasks undertaken during each phase, and the deliverables.

PHASES	OUTLINE OF TASKS	DELIVERABLES
Inception Phase	Kick-off meeting; Initial diagnostic round via in-depth interviews with key stakeholders at EU level; Descriptive analysis of the PRINCE programme; Definition of the evaluation method.	Inception report presented a fully operational evaluation method for Phases II and III.
Data Gathering and Analysis Phase	On-line Surveys with Information Partners, Multipliers and End-Users; Telephone interviews with I&C key staff in MS Ministries of Finance and Central Banks (including European Central Bank), and with economic journalists; Focus groups with general public; An online bulletin boards (interviews) with consumer groups in 3 EU countries; An in-depth study of the Slovenian changeover to the Euro.	Intermediate report presented the results of preliminary analyses of the fieldwork and a first draft of tentative conclusions.
Judgement and Reporting Phase	Drafting of integrated findings, conclusions and recommendations of the results of the fieldwork; Presentation of the draft final report in an internal workshop with Commission staff; Submission and presentation of the final report.	Draft final report provided the answers to the evaluation questions and preliminary recommendations Final report contains a finalised set of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The key elements of the evaluation were:

- Face to face meetings with 10 stakeholders from DG ECFIN in order to collect relevant information and to validate findings and conclusions.
- Telephone interviews with 16 members of the DirCom and other key I&C stakeholders in Member States.
- Telephone interviews with 10 economic journalists, selected from the participation lists of the twenty-two seminars realised over the past three years.
- A case study of the situation in Slovenia, which included 13 interviews with, *inter alia*, representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, the Government, the Central Bank, and the EC Representation in Slovenia.
- A series of focus groups in order to gather public views and perceptions in three new Member States (Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus).
- Interviews with consumer organisations to gather and explore attitudes to the Commission's communications activities on EMU and the Euro.

2.3.2 EVALUATION WORK PLAN

The evaluation was implemented over a 7-month period, commencing in May 2007 and finishing with a final report in December 2007. The following table presents an overview of the evaluation timeline.

EVALUATION TIMETABLE	
PHASE I: INCEPTION	Deadline
1.1 Project Start-up	May 2007
1.2 Initial round of interviews with key Commission staff	
1.3 Descriptive analysis of the PRINCE Programme	
1.4 Definition of evaluation method	
1.5 Inception Report	June 2007
PHASE II: DATA GATHERING AND ANALYSIS	
2.1 On-line survey programme with EC representations, information relays (e.g. Europe Direct network), "Euro Team" members.	July 2007
2.2 Telephone interview programme with I&C key staff in MS Ministries of Finance and Central Banks (including European Central Bank) – DIR-COM group	
2.3 Telephone interview programme with economic journalists	
2.4 Focus Groups with civil society and general public in 3 EU countries (2 per country) (to be carried out by Ipsos MORI)	
2.5 Online bulletin boards with civil society actors in 3 EU countries (to be carried out by Ipsos MORI)	
2.6 Slovenian case study	
2.7 Intermediate Report	Sept 2007
PHASE 3: JUDGEMENT AND REPORTING	
3.1 Integrated analysis of results	
3.2 Draft Final Report	Nov 2007
3.3 Presentation of results to DirCom in Malta	Nov 2007
3.4 Workshop to discuss Draft Final Report	Dec 2007
3.5 Final Report	Jan 2008

3 OVERARCHING QUESTIONS

This section presents the findings and conclusions to the overarching evaluation questions. There are no recommendations made in this section to avoid repetition with the answers to the specific questions answered in Chapter 4 of this report.

3.1 EXTENT TO WHICH ORIGINAL OBJECTIVES WERE MET

The Economic and Financial Affairs Directorate General's (DG ECFIN) Information and Communication (I&C) activities on the European Monetary Union (EMU) and the Euro are outlined in the European Commission's Communication 552-final (2004) "Communication on the Implementation of an Information and Communication Strategy on the Euro and Economic and Monetary Union". According to the communication strategy, DG ECFIN's I&C activities have the following three main objectives:

- Help create public awareness and understanding of the requirements for EMU to function properly, such as the need for sound public finance and the coordination of economic policies;
- Provide neutral and factual information that will enhance citizens' understanding of the Euro;
- Contribute to a smooth changeover in the Member States which are to adopt the Euro;
- Provide the media, economic agents and policy-makers in third countries with the information they need on questions concerning EMU, the Euro and the European economy in order to take informed decisions.

To this end, DG ECFIN's recent activities have been aimed at supporting new MS with the introduction of the Euro. In doing so, comprehensive I&C plans were developed and implemented, making use of a wide range of activities, which included:

- No-cost recommendation and guidelines;
- Member States Government Programmes and Media Activities (including Partnerships Agreements, Twinning Programmes);
- Information products and websites;
- Events, information and coordination activities;
- Opinion polling.

The target population of all these activities varied and included public administrations, the private sector and the general public.

3.1.1 SUB-QUESTION 1

Evaluation Question: *To what extent were actions sufficiently persuasive, stimulating and informative to be able to influence the perceptions and behaviours of target publics in ways that correspond with the programmes objectives?*

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS

No Cost Recommendations and Guidelines

As outlined in Section 4, no-cost initiatives mainly correspond to the third objective, namely the smooth changeover in the Member States which are to adopt the Euro. The evaluation of the no-cost initiatives shows that about 60% of interviewees found the EC guidelines for the development of communication strategies on EMU and Euro guidelines very or fairly supportive in their own work. The support for these increased when only respondents from pre-ins MS were considered, indicating that guidelines are mainly addressed to but also used by MS that are likely to introduce the Euro in the near future.

The DirCom network confirmed that the commitment of the EC to provide assistance through 'no-cost' initiatives was very much appreciated, although not at all items deemed equally useful. For example there were some concerns that the guidelines are too generic and are therefore sometimes used as checklists or as reference documents. There was a marked preference for 'tailored' no-cost assistance, which is provided regularly by the EC.

In the case of Euro Team members, it was found that the guidance received from the European Commission, in particular through the "Framework Guidelines on the Euro Team", were viewed positively, providing the network with the objectives and structures needed to operate successfully.

Other unstructured assistance provided by the European Commission was also seen as fruitful (i.e. interaction with Slovenian officials). This was appreciated particularly during the implementation process of the I&C plan, where support was regular, ranging from telephone to face-to-face contact.

Member States Government programmes and Media Activities

As indicated in Section 4, both Partnership Agreements and Twinings are geared towards contributing to all four of the objectives, by funding a number of different activities. Overall, both mechanisms, were viewed by stakeholders as welcomed instruments in providing support to the I&C activities of EMU and the Euro. Partnership Agreements (i.e. Strategic and Ad Hoc Partnerships) were mainly used in developing / supporting information and communication activities. Overall they were seen as complimenting national efforts and impacting the public in a positive manner. Although activities carried out under Strategic Partnership Agreements were comparatively less adapted to the national needs of the public (i.e. large-scale publication, as well as opinion polls and model conferences), they were still very useful at providing an overall EU dimension to the information and communication process. Ad Hoc agreements were seen by stakeholders as particularly helpful in developing targeted/customised activities geared towards specific national particularities (i.e. national public, or specific minority groups etc.).

Twinings were reported to be extremely useful tools in learning best practices from other jurisdictions. For example, Slovenian representatives reported that they saw strong and useful similarities between the Dutch approach and their own, in particular regarding views on campaigns.

On the other hand, some stakeholders emphasised the need to ensure that Twinning partners were compatible (i.e. have similar strategies) so to achieve the best results.

Information products and websites

As outlined in Section 5, information products and websites correspond mainly with the first, second and fourth objectives (i.e. create public awareness, provide neutral information and provide media and economic agents/policy-makers with information). There were two main types of information products, brochures and websites. The major recipients of publications were national publics who received copies via the EU Representations, their national administrations and other institutions such as banks and schools. The impact of this could not be determined definitely, but it's likely that were helpful in providing general information; however those publications which were developed jointly with MSs were more targeted seems to have been more effective.

Originally, neither the DG ECFIN website nor "The Euro: Our Currency" website was designed to meet the language needs of the Member States. It was therefore not surprising to find that the websites were used mainly by specific target groups, rather than the general public. This issue has been however addressed in the new version of DG ECFIN website² where some sections are translated in selected languages and few items are available in all EU idioms.

Finally, it was suggested by some interviewees that other information products, such as TV or Radio, could or should be harnessed in a more direct fashion (i.e. it is currently done indirectly via MSs).

Events, information and coordination activities

As outlined in Section 5, the programme of events and coordination activities respond to the needs of stakeholders and they seem to have generally met all of the objectives. For example, a series of initiatives organised at local level, particularly in pre-ins MS raised the degree of awareness and positively influenced the general public. However, to a large extent this type of initiatives did not address directly the general public but were rather aimed at involving decision-makers, multipliers, and intermediaries. As such, in many cases the impact of these activities was mainly of political and/or promotional nature rather than merely informative. In particular:

- International 'model' conferences organised in those MS that are soon to adopt the Euro seem to be the most important and effective tool of engaging with the public.
- Media relations are mainly conducted via Journalists seminars, which meet participants' needs, regardless of some issues regarding the selection of journalists and customisation of the information relayed to journalists during seminars.
- The DirCom meetings are viewed as being important and useful by current members, although there is some disappointment that Euro Area institutions that have stopped communicating on the Euro are not very supportive.
- Because the Euro Team network was only recently established, there was limited feedback. However, preliminary indications show that participants view the network positively, due to clear guidance and support from the Commission.

² http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/index_en.htm

Opinion polling

As stated in Section 5, the contribution of opinion polls to the overall objectives is mainly indirect, in so far that they provide media, economic agents and policy-makers with data upon which I&C activities can be adjusted. Overall, there is a positive appreciation of EB polls, as the approach and methodology chosen (i.e. comparability across countries over time) is seen as having a number of advantages, ranging from benchmarking elements to providing specific practical insights. Policymakers in particular find them very helpful (particularly in those countries that have PAs) and consider them as fundamental to their I&C campaign.

As outlined, in Slovenia Country-specific polls were considered important in order to provide more customised information on specific target groups and themes of the campaign. Some stakeholders suggested a need to continue specific polling after the official end of the campaign in order to monitor medium-term public concerns and to react accordingly.

3.1.2 SUB-QUESTION 2

Evaluation Question: *What would have been the likely situation in terms of popular support for the introduction of the Euro and technical preparedness if the programme had not been implemented?*

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS

It is always difficult to determine what the likely situation would be in terms of popular support if the programme had not been implemented. However, evidence from the above section suggests that the PRINCE programme did provide substantial and positive support in planning and implementing I&C strategies.

The no-cost recommendations and guidelines were complementary to other actions and in doing so provided a basic to structure I&C actions (this was particularly true for the Euro Team network, which, although relatively recent, is seen to contribute positively the I&C activities). As a funding mechanism, the Partnership Agreements are very much seen as important vehicles funding a variety of activities. Twinning on the other hand provide an opportunity to learn from and coordinate with other administrations.

Although, publication and websites were in some ways perhaps not vital in supporting public administrations in developing their I&C activities, national mass-distribution publications and national Euro-websites played an important role in reaching the general public and provided a resource for accurate information for those who sought it. Without the programme, this important source of basic information would have been missing.

The impact of events as well as information and coordination activities varies. In some cases, they have mainly contributed to the networking of policy-makers and exchange of information and best practices (e.g. in the case of DirCom meeting and other conferences, in other instances they have more directly contributed to technical preparedness of key-stakeholders and multipliers (e.g. seminars for journalists, training sessions for Euro Team members).

In regards to the EB polling, these are seen as an important tool to be used for the success of the introduction of EMU/Euro. They provide both the media but also the policy maker with vital information in developing strategies to engage with the public. This would not be possible, in such a coordinated way (i.e. across Europe) without the support of the programme.

Although it is difficult to extrapolate from one single case study, it is interesting to note that in the case of Slovenia, the PRINCE programme provided some 40% of the Slovenian I&C programme's total expenditure. This, along with interviews conducted during the case study, indicates that the EC support supported Slovenia in ensuring a level of quality it could not reach alone (i.e. for polls, conferences etc.).

3.2 DEGREE OF SUCCESS OF THE DIFFERENT ACTIONS

3.2.1 SUB-QUESTION 1

Evaluation question: *Which types of actions were particularly successful in reaching and influencing their intended target public? To what extent was the timing of actions crucial in this?*

Analysis of this question draws from detailed findings provided in the following sections:

- No cost recommendations and guidelines
- Member State government programmes and media activities
- Information products and web sites
- Events, information and coordination activities
- Polls and studies

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS

No cost recommendations and guidelines included networking with existing relays, direct assistance to new MS in the preparation of an I&C strategy for the changeover, and the preparation of various guidelines, recommendations, and practical advice.

The guidelines which define the scope, objectives and actions of the Euro Team can also be considered as being successful, particularly when compared to the lack of direction reported by those who are members of Team Europe.

Member State government programmes and media activities concerned in particular the operation of the Partnership (PA) and Twinning Agreements. Partnership Agreements were divided³, into the following three categories: Strategic Partnerships, Ad Hoc Partnerships and Management Partnerships (although the latter were not used).

Assessment of the effectiveness of these indirect actions suggests that Ad Hoc Partnerships were particularly successful because they were geared towards informing the general public (i.e. advertising media campaign had a seemingly large impact). Feedback on these Partnerships was very positive in so far that stakeholders believed they were extremely adapted to the needs of final users (i.e. the general public and other specific target groups). They explained that the flexibility offered by Ad Hoc Partnerships allowed for carefully targeted activities, customised to the local culture and habits. Timing of the Partnerships is important in that they need to be established with enough time for Member States to develop effective information and communication campaigns on changeover.

Information products and web sites these tools included publications (leaflets, brochures, posters, CD-rooms), public relations materials (key rings, mouse mats, tee shirts, MP3 players), the European Economic News newsletter, and the web site The Euro: Our Currency as well as the DG ECFIN web site.

³ Communication (2004) 552 final

In terms of publications: the short guide to the Euro seems to have been the general publication most suitable for general public needs and the tailored publication “*Evro Prihaja*” which was distributed to all households in Slovenia together with a second publication that was distributed nearer to the actual changeover day. The success of this publication related to the coverage of virtually the whole population, providing good balance between user-friendliness and degree of detail and its timing.

Events, information and coordination activities included: international conferences and workshops organised at the EU level or in third-countries; seminars for economic journalists; coordination meetings of the Directors of Communication network; meetings of and support to the Euro Team network; the Euro Coins Genesis Exhibition.

International ‘model’ conferences were particularly successful in main respects: (i) the provision of substantive information - participants appreciated the presentation of other MS practical experiences with the introduction of the Euro; (ii) and as a political event – in various instances conferences helped improve the relations between institutions, and the overall visibility of the I&C programme.

Although there are lessons that can be learned from the assessment of the seminars for journalists, it can be considered that the concept was particularly successful. EC Representations reported that the number of subscriptions to these events was 50% higher than the number of places available.

Although, still in its infancy, the Euro Team network appears to be one of the most promising I&C actions promoted by the Commission in the new MS. Compared to other similar initiatives carried out in the past, the Euro Team has been established with clear scope and objectives and it is anticipated that its members will play an important role in their respective countries in support of the changeover processes.

Polls and studies mainly included quantitative surveys, and to a lesser extent, qualitative surveys and studies. The assessment of polls and studies highlights that the Eurobarometer polls concerning Member States that are preparing for changeover to the Euro (the so-called pre-ins) were particularly well-designed and provide practical insights to both the European Commission and the Member States for the planning and fine-tuning of the Euro campaigns. As reactions to polls in the Euro Area were more mixed the Commission has recently decided to revise and update the questionnaire.

3.2.2 SUB-QUESTION 2

Evaluation question: *Which types of actions achieved their objectives at the lowest cost?*

Analysis of this question draws from detailed findings provided in the following sections:

- No cost recommendations and guidelines
- Member State government programmes and media activities
- Information products and web sites
- Events, information and coordination activities
- Polls and studies

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS

Over the period 2004–2006 the total budget allocated to PRINCE has been €11,260,000. It is not possible to make a meaningful comparative assessment between the cost of the different types of

actions because they comprise a range of very different activities, which vary in terms of objectives, complexity, size and coverage of target groups, types of materials required, size and so on. The important message from the evaluation of activities to communication about EMU and the Euro is that the choice of selection of tools and actions depends on what organisers want to achieve and that this requires a mixture of tools and actions to target a range of multipliers, facilitators and end users to achieve the desired aims.

In order to meet the requirement to quantify actions, the 13 different actions⁴ organised by DG ECFIN have been considered in terms of their total cost over the period 2004-6, the average cost per individual action as well as other criteria including the volume of each type of action carried out and the coverage of the action by Member State, including the coverage by type of target audience. In addition, the ability of each action to meet its own objectives (these have not been assessed in terms of the objectives of the programme) rather what this type of specific action can achieve. The purpose of the table is to allow a quantitative and qualitative overview of the actions carried out, but should not be used as a mechanism to make comparisons between actions. Certain actions, for example the Strategic Partnerships with Member States were used to finance a range of tools carried out thus summing amounts would lead to double counting. Lastly, it should be noted that some of the amounts presented relate to planned costs rather than actual costs.

Figure 1 – Comparison of individual actions

	Quantitative Features				Qualitative Features	
	Cost	Average	Volume	Number of MS reached	Achievement of specific objectives (11)	Coverage of Different Target Audiences (12)
Partnerships (1)	2,300,000	328,571	7	7	H	MS = D, EU GP = I
Twinning programmes	150,000	16,000	11	11	H	MS = D, EU GP = I
Conferences	1,877,000	144,384	13	10 incl. 5 x 3rd countries	H	MS = D, EU GP = D, Media = D, Info Relays = D, 3rd Countries = D
DIR COM mtgs (2)	428,800	85,760	5	27	M	MS = D
Journalists seminars (3)	910,000	40,000	22	29	M	EU GP = I, Media = D
Euro team (4)	200,000	200,000	1	10	N/A	Info Relays = D, EU GP = I
I&C events in 3 rd countries (5)	500,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3rd Countries = D, Media = I
Polls (6)	2,045,600	127,850	16	25	H	MS = D, EU GP = D, Media = D, Info Relays = I
Publications (7)	1,870,000	143,846	13	25	L - M	MS = D, EU GP = D, Info Relays = I
PR materials (8)	195,000	48,750	4	4	L - M	EU GP = D
ECFIN web site (9)	250,000	N/A	1	N/A	M	MS = D, EU GP = I, Media = I, Info Relays = D
EEN (10)	235,000	39,000	6	73	L - M	EU GP = I
Euro Coins Genesis Exhibition	241,000	30,000	8	11	M	EU GP = D, Media = I

⁴ No direct cost actions have not been included in this table

Notes:

1. Partnership agreements were used to fund a range of other activities including some of the other activities listed here, e.g. seminar for journalists, model conferences, opinion polls etc.
2. Some of the Dir Com meetings were aimed at the new Member States only.
3. The average cost of seminars for journalists depended on a range of factors including duration, number of participants and logistics. Annual averages for these events varied between €25,000 and €60,000 depending on these factors.
4. Volume for Euro Team relates to the first training meeting held. It is noted that there are circa 100 Euro Team members (too early to provide any judgement).
5. I&C events in 3rd countries – precise figures were not available.
6. Many of the polls were country specific, or focused on the new Member States or the Euro zone rather than all Member States.
7. Volume of publications relates to the number of publications produced and not the number of copies of each publication
8. Volume relates to the total number of items produced under the Partnership Agreements with 4 Member States, does not take into account unit cost nor the costs related to materials used centrally by DG ECFIN.
9. The amount indicated for the DG ECFIN web site relates to the cost of the update planned for 2007.
10. The volume of EEN relates to 6 editions.
11. H = High, M = Medium, L = Low
12. D = Direct, I = Indirect

Although it is not feasible to answer the question 'Which actions achieved their objectives at the lowest cost', costs are highlighted by the above table and an assessment has been made of the extent that each action achieved its objectives. According to this assessment, Partnerships, Twinning Programmes, Conferences, PR Materials and the Euro Coins Genesis Exhibition were best able to achieve what they were intended to achieve. In addition, conferences were particularly able to reach a wide range of audiences. The other actions listed were able to achieve some but not all of their objectives and are therefore rated as achieving this to a medium extent.

Detailed assessments of each action, including specific cost effectiveness aspects are provided in the answers to specific questions later in this document, based on findings presented in Annexes 1-6 of this document.

3.2.3 SUB-QUESTION 3

Evaluation question: *How did the different types of actions complement each other, if at all?*

Complementarity is defined as the extent that actions support each other in achieving their goals. The response to this question considers complementarity between the different actions pursued by DG ECFIN listed below. Actions have been categorised according to whether they are mainly strategic or operational. In general the strategic actions can be considered to advise, co-ordinate and direct the programme of operational actions undertaken by the Member States, whereas the operational actions can be considered as tools which support information and communication campaigns within the Member States and 3rd countries.

Figure 2 – Categorisation of Actions

Type	Action
S	Partnerships between the Commission and the Member States;
S	Twinning programmes between the countries of the Euro area and new Member States;
S	Guidelines, recommendation and other no-direct-cost activities
S	Regular meetings of the Director of Communications network

S/O	Euro Team network
O	Conferences within the EU and in third countries
O	Seminar for journalists coming from the EU or third-countries
O	I&C events in 3 rd countries
O	Opinion polls and studies
O	Publications (booklets, leaflets, posters, CD-rom, etc.)
O	Promotional Materials
O	DG ECFIN's website
O	"European Economy News" – the ECFIN's newsletter
O	Exhibitions and other I&C activities

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS

The fact that DG ECFIN worked with the Member States at both the strategic and operational level provided a rounded approach to the support provided. Furthermore, with regards to the coverage of actions it can be considered that there was complementarity with regards to actions that targeted Member States in different phases of changeover and allowed synergies to be built between experiences developed centrally by the Commission in the elaboration of communication actions as well as the experiences of those Member States already in the Euro zone, fore example through Twinning Arrangements. Furthermore, actions targeted those inside the EU as well as those outside the EU.

In the assessment of the complementarity of actions it is important to note that actual impact relates to how close Member States are to changeover. For example, it was easier to identify how tools worked together in the case of Slovenia and there are some examples with regards to Cyprus and Malta, whereas assessing the actions in relation to other countries whose changeover dates are some way off is more difficult. For this reason the assessment considers the potential complementarity, how the actions can and could work together, given that this has not necessarily been exploited by each new Member State.

The table below highlights the links between different actions undertaken. This table provides an appreciation of complementarity based on interviews held and background information provided by DG ECFIN.

Figure 3 - Complementarity between DG ECFIN Actions

	PARTNERSHIPS	TWINNING	NO DIRECT COST	CONFERENCES	DIR COM MEETINGS	JOURNALIST	EURO TEAM	3RD COUNTRY EVENTS	POLLS	PUBLICATIONS	PR MATERIALS	WEB	EEN	EXHIBITIONS
Partnerships														
Twinning programmes														
No direct cost activities														
Conferences														
DIR COM mtgs														

Journalists seminars	Yellow			Red		Black			Red	Yellow		Yellow		
Euro team	Red		Red	Yellow		Black			Red	Red		Red		
I&C events in 3 rd countries				Red		Red		Black			Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
Polls	Red				Red	Red		Black	Yellow			Red	Yellow	
Publications	Red			Red		Yellow	Red		Yellow	Black		Red		Red
PR materials	Red			Red				Red			Black			Red
ECFIN web site	Red					Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red	Red			Black	Red
EEN								Yellow	Yellow				Red	Black
Exhibitions	Red			Red				Red		Red	Red			Black

Key: red: high level of complementarity; yellow: possible complementarity/areas where complementarity could be increased/has not been fully exploited; white: no obvious complementarity.

The above illustrates the findings from both qualitative and quantitative research carried out by the evaluation team that the strategic and Ad Hoc Partnerships between DG ECFIN and a number of new Member States have been particularly successful in underpinning a range of other I&C activities as well as benefiting from I&C tools developed by the DG. This is clarified in more detail below.

Partnerships: have benefited from discussions and advice provided through no cost recommendations, twinning arrangements (i.e. the exchange of participants contributes towards building links/ ties and allows for the exchange of information across administrations) and DIR COM meetings, meanwhile findings from polls and studies helped to direct how to develop I&C activities and publications and information made available on the Euro: Our Currency web site provided support to Member State administrations in the development of their own materials. It is also suggested that seminars for journalists may have helped to increase the effectiveness of I&C campaigns run or that will be run (i.e. by providing an additional outlet for the dissemination of information).

This analysis suggests that the **Polls and Surveys** were another key strategic tool which helped to underpin many of the other actions carried out both by DG ECFIN and by its partners in the Member States. This view is backed up by interviews with various stakeholders carried out during the evaluation.

As would be expected **Public Relations materials** were useful to support specific events where these were distributed, but cannot be considered to have had any significant impact upon the majority of other actions carried out. As will be indicated in later in this document, these materials are limited in what they actually achieve.

Although the **Euro Team** did not necessarily provide inputs into the I&C materials developed, in the long run there is potential for this specially selected group to provide feedback in the development of a range of materials and actions. The Euro Team did benefit from the I&C products made available and drew upon these to deliver their activities.

Conferences, journalist seminars and other events were tools used to support **3rd country events**, although it is unclear as to what extent these events also made use of materials on the DG ECFIN web sites or publications that were essentially targeted to audiences in the Member States.

It can be considered that many of the actions carried out did in fact complement each other, but that there seems to be room to increase the extent that actions work together to achieve their goals.

3.2.4 SUB-QUESTION 4

Evaluation question: Did any actions have unintended, positive or negative effects? If so, what were they and what were their repercussions?

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS

This section picks up some of the key outcomes of the programme, which may well have been unanticipated, although it is difficult to assess this with precision, but does not repeat information found elsewhere in answers to the specific evaluation questions.

There were very few unexpected effects with regards to the execution of the PRINCE Programme. The case study on the Slovenian Changeover highlighted that activities had been extremely well organised and executed, and there were no striking aspects that had not been anticipated with regards to the no cost guidelines and recommendations and the Partnership Agreements with the Member States.

With regards to the information and communication products and tools developed by DG ECFIN a few unexpected positive effects ensued including the high level of appreciation of the Euro: Our Currency web site by Member State administrations and those responsible for relaying information to targeted national publics, as well as an appreciation of the publications produced by DG ECFIN in providing background information. The lack of perceived impact/relevance of DG ECFIN web sites to general public audiences is an aspect that had perhaps not been anticipated given that this group was considered to be a key target audience (although the future launch of a new DG web site and understanding of the need to provide information in more languages than English was well understood within the DG).

With regards to the poll surveys carried out, outcomes highlighted issues with regards to relevance of small sample sizes that had not been anticipated and contradictions between quantitative and qualitative data sources called into question the methodology used to collect qualitative inputs. Meanwhile, positive outcomes related to the discovery that daily monitoring of a Member State in changeover can be particularly insightful and the Slovenian example will give provide a benchmark for future changeovers, in addition to the development of greater understanding of how to formulate questions to be targeted to the general public for example avoiding complex terminology particularly on the stability and growth pact.

3.3 COMMISSION'S ROLE AS INITIATOR

The initiator of the information and communication (I&C) activities on the EMU is DG ECFIN's communication unit. The unit is comprised of some 19 people who are responsible for the full range of communication aspects and provide MSs with the tools and mechanisms to develop their I&C strategies.

The two mechanisms used to support I&C activities are the Partnership Agreements and the Twinning arrangements. In the case of Partnership Agreements, the development and implementation of the I&C strategy largely relies on voluntary working partnerships between the Commission and the Member States. This allows leveraging on MSs' own communication capacities and focusing interventions on the real needs of people.

In the case of Twinning, although the EC has promoted them between existing Euro zone countries and the new MS, the EC's role in initiating and influencing these arrangements is limited. The EC essentially makes the funding available and may suggest appropriate participants, but proposals are usually put forward by MSs and implementation is undertaken by national officials.

3.3.1 SUB-QUESTION 1

Evaluation Question: To what extent did the Commission succeed in ensuring that actions fully incorporated a European dimension?

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS

Determining the extent to which the Commission actually succeeded in fully incorporating a European dimension into actions is not straightforward as the mechanisms used to support member states are designed to provide flexibility for national variances.

In light of this, it is clear that the EC's influence on actions is achieved by taking part in the definition and planning of activities that fall within the scope of Partnership Agreements, but also by providing public administrations and other stakeholders with direct support. For example in the case of Slovenia the ongoing coordination and assistance in the implementation of activities ensured that the resources available from the EC were utilised.

However, different actions provide for different opportunities for incorporating a European dimension. For examples information products and websites (e.g. brochures) retain a European dimension via the inclusion of an EU logo and EU content. In the case of events, information and coordination activities, the situation was different, as in there is more scope to incorporate EU content. For example the seminars for Journalists provided a platform for a much stronger EU dimension, by inviting Journalists to Brussels or Frankfurt and having them actively take part in seminars on EMU related issues, often followed up by a press conference on an appropriate subject. In the case of polling, the EB polls, by their branding as 'Eurobarometer' and their EU wide application, contain an EU dimension.

Other actions such as no cost recommendations and guidelines provided users with a structure and objectives to operate with, but the degree to which the EU dimension was incorporated was up to individuals (e.g. Euro Team members).

In regard to Twinnings, the Commission's role is limited to providing funding and does not play a role in shaping the specific action.

Overall, it seems that the Commission is able to successfully infuse an EU dimension to the various actions it supports.

3.3.2 SUB-QUESTION 2

Evaluation Question: *How far were the Commission's actions complementary to those initiated by Member States? To what extent did they fill in the gaps?*

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS

As outlined in more detail in Section 4, overall coordination and complementarity between Commission and MS activities was positive. Partnership Agreements were viewed by public administrations (particularly those who currently make use of them) as very productive and helpful. Some anecdotal evidence from the case study suggests that there might be some issues in regard to administrative burdens of PAs, but despite this stakeholders see these agreements in a very positive light, providing national actors the opportunity to customise actions to national needs.

Twinning are complementary when the right partners engage in an action; this does not involve the Commission, but MS actors.

In the case of information products and websites, publications did correspond strongly to general information needs within the Member States (i.e. in particular the mass-publication materials). A number of publications were very general (i.e. not very specific) and complemented more customised national publications. DG ECFIN's website complemented the national websites, providing useful information for specific target groups, i.e. experts in the national administrations or banks etc.

Findings for events, information and coordination activities, indicate that the Commission's actions adequately complement national needs and expectations. For example, DirCom meetings complemented the needs of national changeover committees in so far that they provided networking opportunity to exchange views and opinions from other MSs.

EB polls clearly complemented national polls, as national polls are specifically aimed at complementing MS own information sources and help the on-going fine tuning of the campaign.

3.3.3 SUB-QUESTION 3

Evaluation Question: *Were target publics better informed about progress, problems and solutions in other Member States as a consequence? If so, was this information useful and why?*

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS

Although it is difficult to measure the degree to which target publics are better informed, the evaluation found evidence that different tools had different levels of success in achieving this goal. To this end, there are only a number of activities which are appropriate for the task of informing audiences of progress, problems and solutions in other MSs (e.g. no cost recommendations and guidelines are not intended to inform target populations, but conferences and networking actions are).

However, such activities as Twinings (i.e. informing specific persons in the participating administrations), but also events such as conferences were useful in informing target audience about the situation in other MSs. For example, initiatives organised at national level, in particular in pre-ins MS, raised the general degree of awareness, and positively influenced the target population on Euro/EMU-related topics. However, the information needs of stakeholders were not always met, relegating the usefulness of initiatives to the realm of networking occasions. That said international 'model' conferences seem to have been the most relevant in terms of providing tangible substantive information.

In terms of media, one of DG ECFIN's I&C strategies of engaging the media across Europe, are via the seminars for journalists. Overall, this received positive feedback in terms of opportunities. However, although the usefulness of the information provided was not always considered optimal (format and detail), it was considered relevant.

The DirCom meetings are another opportunity to enhance the understanding and knowledge of issues and problems arising in other MSs. The importance of this instrument is appreciated by its members. However, the value of these meetings is to learn from past experiences, some feedback suggests that the participation of those institutions that have had extensive previous experiences are no longer very active in the network.

Finally, the opinion polling is an important tool for target audiences (public administrations, EC, media) in getting an overview of different perceptions and trends within the individual Member States. This is primarily important for national administrations in understanding how they must adjust their I&C needs, but it also allows them to benchmark and understand how other MSs are dealing with similar issues at various stages of the changeover campaign.

3.4 ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

As outlined above, the programme's organisational arrangements are based on the interaction between DG ECFIN and key stakeholders in the MSs.

The mechanisms and tools employed to this end include:

- ◆ Guidelines, recommendation and other no-direct-cost activities;
- ◆ Partnerships Agreements;
- ◆ Twinning Programmes;
- ◆ Conferences within the EU and in third countries;
- ◆ Regular meetings of the Director of Communications network;
- ◆ Seminar for journalists coming from the EU or third-countries;
- ◆ the Euro Team network;
- ◆ other type of I&C events in third-countries;
- ◆ Opinion polls and studies;
- ◆ Publications (booklets, leaflets, posters, CD-rom, etc.)
- ◆ Promotional Materials
- ◆ the DG ECFIN's website
- ◆ the "European Economy News" – the ECFIN's newsletter
- ◆ Exhibitions and other I&C activities

The arrangements upon which these operate vary from activity to activity, for example there is one DG ECFIN member of staff responsible for events and opinion polls, one for the seminar for journalists and studies, another for the coordination of publications etc.

3.4.1 SUB-QUESTION 1

Evaluation Question: *How did organisational arrangements at the Commission, the nature of its activities and their targeting, and the involvement of Member States evolve over the period of the programme?*

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS

The organisational arrangements and nature of activities respond to needs of the countries preparing for the Euro changeover and their target dates for joining the EMU/Euro⁵.

Country	Target date for joining the EMU/Euro
Slovenia	Entered Euro Area on 1 January 2007
Malta, Cyprus	1 January 2008
Slovakia	1 January 2009
Romania	Planned for 2014
Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Sweden	Currently no date for Euro changeover

⁵ See COM(2007) 756 final

There are three phases to the adoption of the Euro. The preliminary phase is marked by the fact that there is no clear schedule for the introduction of the Euro. In this phase, I&C activities are relatively scarce and mainly addressed to key-stakeholders and multipliers, such as DirCom. The information needs at this stage are very general and likely to concentrate on political and economic consequences of the introduction of the Euro. There is relatively little to be done on the part of the EC during this phase, as there is little need and interest on the part of the MS. So in this case such countries as Poland and Czech Republic, which don't have clear Euro changeover dates, request little PRINCE programme support.

The second - pre-introduction – phase is when the date for changeover is fixed and there is a need to start developing and I&C plan which can take on a more concrete shape. The closer the changeover date is the more intense activities and coordination between EC and public administrations become. For example, in the case of Slovenia, this phase entailed very close coordination and interaction with the EC. This included frequent operative meetings both in Ljubljana and Brussels, and constant informal relations between the Slovenian and the Commission's officers. The following table provides an overview of stakeholder's comments from the Slovenian case study as to the interaction with the EC.

Slovenian Case Study Stakeholder Comments	
Proactiveness	The overall assessment of the collaboration inside the CWG and with the EU institutions is largely positive. Enthusiasm and common orientation to goals played a major role in the success of the campaign. The initiator role was played alternatively by two parties: sometimes it was the Slovenian side to formulate a request, while in other case it was the Commission to make a proposal. At the national level some form of collaboration has been established also among independent institutions, and especially between the CCI and the SCA.
Intensity	The frequency of contact was high. Beside the formal coordination mechanism (communication cell, reporting etc.) there have been endless phone and email contacts, and face-to-face operational meetings.
Participation	The channels of communication between Slovenian and European Institutions were mainly two: (i) GoS – EC (DG ECFIN), and (ii) BoS – ECB. In the national CWG the main referent was the GCO: it maintained the relations with the EC and collected the requests from the various members. However, at operational meeting with EC various other institutions were normally invited but some would have liked a more accentuated involvement of independent organisations. The decisions were mainly taken jointly by the main institutions.
Concreteness	The Commission officers followed closely the implementation of the campaign and there has been several occasion of face-to-face meeting and exchange of views on even minor aspects of the campaign. This was largely appreciated by the local counterparts as it helped creating a real collaborative environment instead of a cold 'bureaucratic' relationship. Informality of relations was widely reported and appreciated.

The final phase is the post-introduction phase, when the Euro has been introduced and the MS is operating under the new currency. During this phase there are little provisions under the PRINCE programme to provide support, although the evaluation seems to indicate a need on the part of public administrators to address issues which were previously unforeseen. For example addressing concerns of price and inflation related issues which seem to be a public concern in Slovenia after the introduction of the Euro.

Budgetary Issues

Connected with the above it is worth noting that in order to maintain a comparable level of effort over the 2007-2013 period, the yearly amounts allocated so far to the PRINCE Programme may be insufficient. This would be mostly due to the changeover processes expected to take place over the

coming years. Only Slovenian changeover, and to a lesser extent Maltese and Cypriot's ones, were financed with the 2004-2006 PRINCE budget. However additional countries are expected to adopt the Euro over the coming decade (i.e. in many cases before 2013). As a result, this would translate in an increased effort required on the part of the Commission in the realm of I&C activities carried out through PA. Consequently, In addition to that, the value of these PA will have to be somewhat proportional to the size of the country in terms of population, thus requiring in some cases significant higher amounts of resources than for Slovenia, Malta or Cyprus.

Although the objective of this evaluation was not to provide precise estimates of the financial impact of the enlargement of the Euro area, some rough indications on possible scenarios can be put forward to provide the order of magnitude of future needs of the PRINCE Programme. In particular, assuming the population as a proxy of the financial effort needed through PA the approximate expenditure for PA can be estimate as follows:

Countries*	Estimated PA Value**	Estimated joining date***
Bulgaria	€ 3 million	2011-2012
Czech Republic	€ 4 million	2012-2013
Cyprus	€ 0,5 million	2008
Estonia	€ 0,5 million	2011-2012
Hungary	€ 4 million	2013-2014
Latvia	€ 1 million	2012-2013
Lithuania	€ 1 million	2011-2012
Malta	€ 0,5 million	2008
Poland	€ 15 million	2013-2014
Romania	€ 9 million	2014-2015
Slovakia	€ 2 million	2009

* Candidate countries, and countries with an opt-out are not considered in this table;

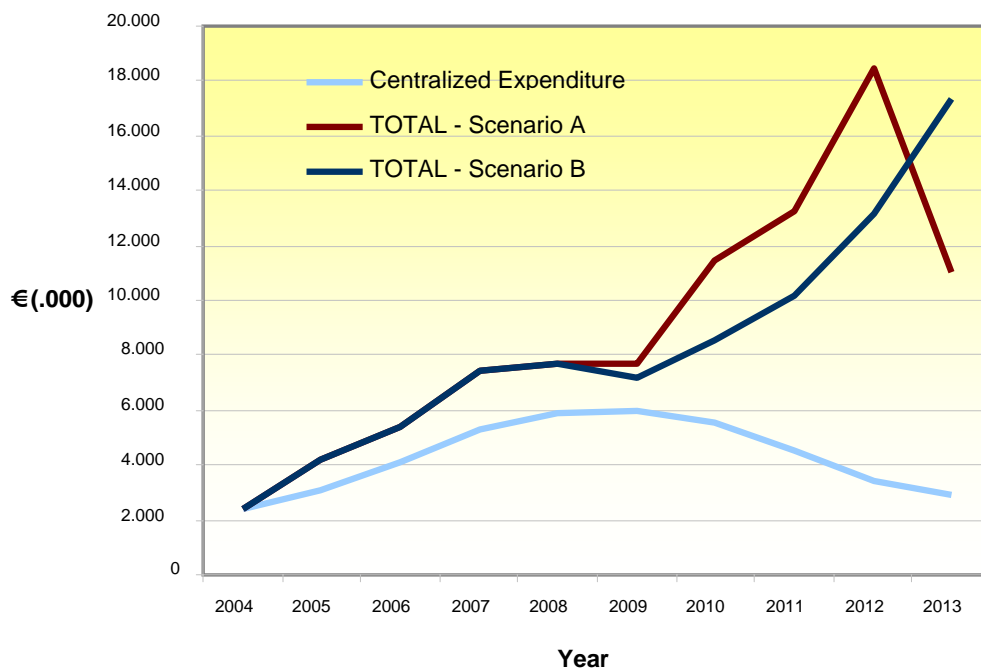
** It is assumed some EUR 0,4 per inhabitant (constant prices). Assistance provided before 31/12/2006 is not included. The value relates to costs incumbent on the Commission.

*** For countries that have not fixed yet a target date two tentative scenarios are provided.

In addition to that, it can be assumed that the centralized expenditure on the other types of activities will need to be increased over the next 2-3 years in relation with the expected peak of the Euro area enlargement process, and then gradually decline in the second half of the 2007-2013 programming period.

To sum up, the budgetary needs of PRINCE programme over the next years can be illustrated as in the figure below, whereas the Scenario A displays the expected needs in the case that countries with no target date for the changeover are able to join at the earliest of the two dates estimated above, whilst the Scenario B represents the likely situation in case of one-year delay⁶. In both cases the results indicate that in order to maintain a similar level of performance the amount of resources for the PRINCE programme should be increased significantly over the next years. This amount would further increase if opt-out countries like Denmark or Sweden, and candidate countries like Croatia are to be included.

⁶ In the scenario A it is assumed that the total amount of the PA is distributed over four years (three years for the preparation and implementation of the campaign and one year of follow up) according the following structure: 1st year: 10%; 2nd year: 20%; 3rd year: 60%; 4th year: 10%. For the Scenario B the estimated total amount has been distributed over a five-years period structured as follows with an average 10% of the total for the first three years. The amounts have been adjusted to reflect price increases.



3.4.2. SUB-QUESTION 2

Evaluation Question: *What were the repercussions of these evolutions in terms of implementation of the actions and the attainment of programme objectives?*

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS

The evolution of activities depends on the changeover date, which has repercussions on the staffing and resources of DG ECFIN's communication unit. As the changeover date is a decision which lies outside the powers of the Commission and the public administrations, they need to monitor the political climate and wait for the final go ahead from the political leaders at the MSs and Council. This often also means that MSs' public administrations only take advantage of the PRINCE programme once there is a tangible need (which is linked to the projected Euro changeover date).

This makes concrete medium and long-term planning somewhat difficult and means that different actions are useful at different points in times. For example, the DirCom meetings facilitate the networking between MS institutions on practical aspects of the changeover between Euro area and pre-ins MS. Although this is particularly important for those countries which are in the process of introducing the Euro, it also serves as a good first forum for public administrations to network and familiarise with potential issues, even if no entry date has been set for their home country.

Other activities, such as conferences or brochures, are activities which becomes more important and are more frequently requested by MSs the closer the changeover date gets (i.e. particularly helpful for representatives of pre-ins MS). This also holds true for the establishment of Euro Team members as well as more intense public polling and the development and distribution of brochures.

3.4.3 SUB-QUESTION 3

Evaluation Question: *How effective was the coordination between the Commission DGs and the Representations and the coordination among Community institutions, notably the Commission, the ECB and the EP?*

FINDINGS / CONCLUSIONS

The coordination with other units and DGs seem to be operating well. DG ECFIN staff indicated that the lines of communication are open and that where opportunities present themselves for improved collaboration these are taken up. Liaison between the communication unit and other internal units have improved over the past years and lead to more informal and cooperative working environment, which allows for closer synergies in developing comprehensive information and communication tools. For example some areas of internal process that were not operating well in past, such as internal reporting and the split between websites are now being addressed more effectively.

Compared to the first changeover, DG ECFIN's coordination with other DGs (i.e. DG COMM, DG SANCO, and DG EAC) is much more limited. For example, DG SANCO is no longer active in the communication on the changeover or the Euro. The withdrawal of DG SANCO has curtailed the opportunities for collaborative communication tools to the specific target groups addressed by the DG. However, one area of continued support is with DG COMM. DG COMM communicates about the Euro on its main EUROPA website and includes the Euro and EMU in general publications. Unfortunately, it does not produce anything specific for the new MSs, rather DG COMM assists DG ECFIN indirectly with the opinion polls as it holds the Framework Contract for the Eurobarometer. More recently, DG ECFIN has collaborated with DG ENTR in so far that ECFIN produced and distributed a brochure developed by DG ENTR. Although this seems to have been a success, there is a need to further strengthen and improve this collaboration with DG ENTR.

In summary, it seems that where it has been possible to collaborate with other DGs this has helped to strengthen the efforts of DG ECFIN by allowing the Commission to target more specific interest groups with information that is specifically tailored to their needs.

Contact with the EU Representations is good. The Representations provide frequent updates as well as press cuttings. The EU Reps participate at the meetings in the Member State and provide on the ground support. For example, MSs go directly to Representations when they request speakers for conferences, or Representation officials provide recommendations for the Journalist seminars.

The ECB is a main counterpart and for this reason coordination is reported to be close and reasonably good. There are differences in views and perspectives as the two organisations have different objectives. However, the ECB participates in the Commission's conferences and the DG often speaks at ECB conferences. The division of labour is relatively clear, in so far that the ECB focuses on bank note security features, and target groups for bankers and cashiers, rather than general issues about the stability and growth pack and governance. There is also a difference in timing; the ECB only becomes active once the Council has taken the decision to accept a country into the EMU. In terms of liaison with the European Central Bank, DG ECFIN seems to have managed to develop a win-win scenario where the two organisations are able to work together to achieve the own objectives and at the same time benefit each other.

4 SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ON “INDIRECT” COMMISSION INTERVENTIONS

4.1 NO-COST RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDELINES

OVERVIEW

Beside traditional budgetary interventions the PRINCE Programme has also benefited from so-called “no-direct costs interventions”, defined as activities carried out by separately financed structures, or, most importantly, directly carried out by DG ECFIN staff. These include networking with existing relays, direct assistance to new MS in the preparation of an I&C strategy for the changeover, and, above all, the preparation of various guidelines, recommendations, and practical advice.

This type of interventions include (i) a generic series of documents issued by DG ECFIN and addressed to all new MS, as well as (ii) other forms of more ‘tailored’ assistance provided to single MS to meet their specific needs.

The first subset encompasses various guidelines issued between 2004 and 2007 for the implementation of the I&C strategy contained in the Communication 552-final (2004), with special focus on the ‘indirect’ instruments of interventions, i.e. the Partnership Agreements and the twinning programmes. The main beneficiaries of these actions have been the MS authorities involved in the preparation of national I&C strategy and in the establishment of Partnerships with the Commission. In particular, four guidance documents of this kind were issued by the EC between 2004 and 2006 covering the following subjects: (i) Ad Hoc Partnerships; (ii) General and practical aspects of the Twinning programme; (iii) the establishment of the Euro Team; and (iv) the preparation of the national I&C strategy. An overview of the subjects covered is provided in Table below.

Figure 4 – Salient features of No-cost Recommendations and Guidelines

Denomination	Date of issuance	Summary
Information and Communication Strategy for the Introduction of the Euro in (country)	07/06/2005	A checklist for the preparation of a clear and comprehensive I&C strategy for changeover to the Euro. The elaboration of an I&C plan is a sort of prerequisite for the establishment of a strategic PA. The document indicates the items to be discussed in the strategy, e.g. the status of the country regards the introduction of the Euro, the degree of awareness of various target groups, the various communication activities planned, the media tools involved etc
Communication Activities on Euro/EMU. Guidelines for using Grant Agreements in the Context of Ad Hoc Partnerships	07/02/2006	Guidelines aimed at supporting MS to evaluate the usefulness of different forms of Partnership, and in particular Ad-Hoc Partnership agreement. It describes how the Ad hoc PA works, the I&C activities that can be supported through it, the procedures to follow, the administrative arrangement etc. It also features the Standard Grant Application Form.
Framework Guidelines and Terms for the Euro Team and its membership	22/05/2006	The note serves to provide a general set of rules pertaining to membership and activities of the newly established Euro Team network. The note also aims to improve the general coherence and efficiency of the network throughout the 10 Member States involved.
Twinning EMU/Euro – Guidelines 2007, General description & Practical procedures	30/03/2007 & 03/05/2007	A synthetic description of the subject and the structure of the Twinning agreement that can be supported through the PRINCE program starting from 2007. It indicates the salient features of the bilateral and multilateral Twinning and describes the type of cooperation that can be established (e.g. exchange of expertise, trainings, common action etc.). The “Practical Procedures” discusses various aspects of Twinning implementation, such as: (i) how to prepare the project (e.g. preliminary meetings, programme of meetings, definition of areas of cooperation etc.); (ii) how to design the project proposal and the procedure for the submission and

Denomination	Date of issuance	Summary
		approval; (iii) the modalities for the execution of the project; and (iv) the rules for the reimbursement of expenses incurred during the project execution

For the second subset of no-cost activities Slovenia represents a good case in point, because of its being the first Country among the new MS to have introduced the Euro. Slovenian counterparts have therefore received supplementary support from the EC in the fine-tuning of the I&C campaign. This was not provided through a precisely structured operational arrangement, but as a constant assistance and collaboration throughout the whole implementation period, inclusive of the formulation of 'ad hoc' recommendations and the proposal of a specific initiative. Similarly, additional assistance is being provided to Malta and Cyprus, that are the next countries to join the Euro area in 2008, and to a lesser extent to other countries that are in the process of setting up their communication strategy for the introduction of the Euro, while this type of assistance is practically negligible for MS whose changeover date is not fixed or very uncertain.

4.1.1 SUB-QUESTION 1

Evaluation Question: *What were the objectives of this type of action and to what extent were they met? Did this type of action generate any unexpected effects, negative or positive, and if so what were they?*

FINDINGS

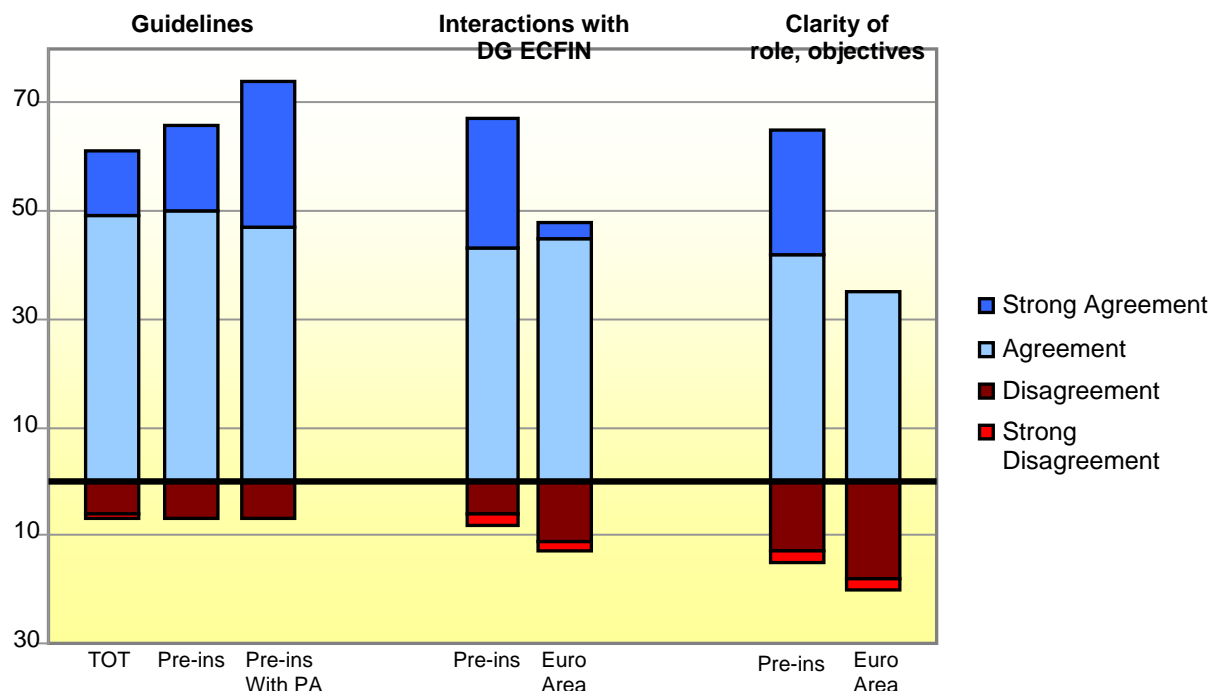
The evaluation of the no-cost initiatives has been based on a combination of both quantitative and qualitative instruments. In particular, quantitative data come from the results of a large-scale online survey conducted among key actors involved in the communication on the Euro at the MS level have been used, while qualitative evidence has been mainly drawn from the Slovenian case-study and, to a lesser extent from in-depth interviews with national members of Director of Communication network and EC officials.

The online survey provides useful indications on the degree of beneficiaries' appreciation of the EC guidelines for the development of communication strategies on EMU and the Euro. The results of the survey indicate that about 60% of interviewees found these guidelines very or fairly supportive⁷. This percentage increases when only respondents from pre-ins MS – especially those that have established a Partnership Agreement with the EC - are considered. These results evidently reflect the fact that guidelines are mainly addressed to MS that are to soon introduce the Euro, and therefore a comparatively more negative assessment in other countries would mainly indicate the lack of a specific interest on this type of initiatives. The same considerations may apply to the results of other two questions included in the online survey, i.e.: (i) the assessment of the impact on I&C activities of interactions between DG ECFIN and MS; and (ii) the extent to which DG ECFIN clarified to MS institutions and networks the role and the objectives of their involvement in the I&C programme on Euro/EMU. The divergence between pre-ins and Euro Area results is substantial: in the case of pre-ins MS, for more than two-thirds of respondents the assistance of DG ECFIN in these areas was

⁷ Respondents that declared being unaware of this type of support are not considered in this figure.

broadly positive, whereas in Euro Area, respondents' views appeared far less encouraging, as illustrated in Figure 5 below⁸

Figure 5 - Divergence between pre-ins and Euro Area



Note: (i) Pre-ins: MS not in the Euro area; (ii) With PA: MS having signed a Partnership Agreement with the EC

The results of in-depth interviews with the representatives of MS financial authorities members of the DirCom network confirm that the overall commitment of EC in providing additional assistance to MS through the 'no-cost' initiatives is generally appreciated, although in practical terms the degree of 'adoption' of guidelines/recommendation issued so far has been fairly limited. In particular, the guidelines for the development of the national I&C strategy appear to be somewhat too generic in the light of the differences between countries, and are therefore mainly retained only as a useful checklist. Further confirmation comes from the Slovenian case. Among Slovenian authorities' officials there was a general agreement on the usefulness of such guidance in principle⁹, but many highlighted that, in practice, it is more important to be able to adapt these recommendations to the national specificities. In other words, while the theoretical relevance of these activities was widely acknowledged, the practical adoption and implementation remain quite limited.

Euro Team members were apparently satisfied with the guidance received from the EC, in particular through the "Framework Guidelines on the Euro Team" issued by EC in May 2006. About two-thirds

⁸ The segmentation of the original sample carried out for this analysis reduces significantly the statistical significance of the results; therefore the data illustrated in this figure should be retained mainly as qualitative evidences.

⁹ In this respect it is interesting to observe that the "communication strategy on the introduction of the Euro" prepared by the Slovenian authorities made explicit reference to two Communications issued by the Commission, namely: COM (2004)196 "Implementing the Information and Communication Strategy for the European Union" and COM (2004)552 final on "(...) the implementation of an Information and Communication Strategy on the Euro and EMU".

of ET members interviewed made a positive assessment of this item. This prevailing encouraging evaluation is confirmed also by qualitative interviews with Slovenian ET members, who indicated that a fundamental factor of the success of this action was represented by the initiator's clear definition of scope, objectives and functioning of this network. On the top of that, it is worth reminding that the Euro Team network initiative recalls another initiative with similar concept – the Team Europe, and in many cases the experts involved in the two networks are the same. However, while the performance of Team Europe is often widely criticised, mainly because of lack of an adequate guidance it is evident the ET members' appreciation of the EC's guidelines is exactly justified by the comparison with that experience.

The 'unstructured' assistance provided by EC officials to Slovenian counterparts was based on a series of frequent and reportedly fruitful contacts throughout the whole duration of the I&C campaign. The Commission officers closely followed the implementation of the campaign and there were several occasions of face-to-face meetings and exchanges of views even on minor aspects. This was largely appreciated by the local counterparts as it helped create a real collaborative environment instead of cold 'bureaucratic' relations.

The existence of a widespread acceptance among MS authorities of 'tailored' recommendations and guidelines appears confirmed also by some results of the online survey. According to nearly two-thirds of pre-ins interviewees national authorities' were "receptive to Commission's ideas for the I&C campaign". Although this question does not refer specifically to no-costs activities, to a certain degree this topic is connected to the assistance provided by the EC for the design of the national I&C strategy. Therefore the results can be used as a rough proxy of MS assessment of this type of support. Compared to the less favourable assessment of the generic guidelines for the design of the communication strategy, these results appear particularly encouraging.

As regards possible unexpected effects, no specific issues have been detected so far.

4.1.2 SUB-QUESTION 2

Evaluation Question: *Was there a need for additional activities?*

FINDINGS

One of the objectives of the evaluation of the 'no-cost' activities was to determine if the level of Commission's effort in this area has been adequate or if conversely there was a need for additional initiatives of this kind and in which specific field. All in all, the analysis of the PRINCE Programme documents and the evidences collected through the various contacts with the Programme's stakeholders indicate that, so far, the EC's commitment in this area has been fairly satisfactory, and no pressing need for additional initiatives of this type has emerged. In particular:

- **Guidelines and recommendations common to all MSs.** The EC has prepared and circulated documents on all relevant subjects, e.g. guidelines for the design of the national I&C strategy, and on the functioning of important I&C instruments like 'Ad Hoc' PA, Twinnings, and the Euro Team. In this respect, no specific lack of guidance from the EC has been reported, and just some requests for minor clarifications on the functioning of the Team Europe were registered. The only possible area that could be strengthened in the future is the guidelines for the preparation of the national I&C strategy. In particular, these guidelines could be updated taking stock of the results of the I&C campaign conducted in Slovenia and those on-going in Malta and Cyprus.

- **'Tailored' no-cost activities.** As discussed in previous section, MS authorities appear more receptive to 'tailored' assistance rather than to generic recommendations. In the only relevant case for this study, i.e. the Slovenian changeover, the additional assistance provided by EC through 'no-cost' activities has been largely appreciated. However, it should be noted that since the very beginning Slovenia could count on a well-organised and prepared national I&C committee and a clearly defined I&C strategy, thus the need for additional 'focused' assistance from the EC in this area was relatively low. The initial conditions in other MS, however, could differ significantly, and therefore in some cases the EC efforts in this field could need to be strengthened. The same applies also in the case of multiple changeovers, as in the current case of Malta and Cyprus that will both introduce the Euro on 1st January, 2008. Although, the need for this type of assistance apparently varies significantly in these two countries, it is evident that the handling of two processes at the same time would put additional pressure on DG ECFIN staff.

Related to the above it is worth noticing that according to DG ECFIN officials, the internal staff is already overstretched and therefore it is unlike that the same level of 'no-cost' focused assistance received by Slovenia could be provided for the next changeovers unless staff-intensive activities are significantly reduced. In the period under consideration, it is estimated that the effort dedicated to this task within the DG ECFIN's External Communication unit has been equivalent to one full-time staff. Multiple changeovers and MS displaying a low institutional readiness may well require a 50% or more increase of the internal staff for this task. Under the current configuration there appears to be mainly two ways to cope with this possible increased request for 'focused' assistance:

- Limiting the provision of focused 'no-cost' assistance to the initial stages of I&C campaigns. In the Slovenian case this type of assistance accompanied the whole implementation of the campaign. However, this could require an excessive effort in terms of human resources assigned to this task, provided that additional resources are contemporarily necessary for the coordination of actions foreseen by Strategic PA (when existing), and other centralised I&C actions. A possible solution, that is in line with the current strategy for PRINCE Programme, would be to concentrate this type of assistance in the initial phase of the campaign: i.e. for 'kick start' of the changeover process, and to limit later guidance to the monitoring of the overall direction of the I&C activities carried out by local institutions.
- Delegating to MS a larger share of responsibility on the material implementation of the I&C campaign. According to some, the I&C activities dedicated to national audiences should be mainly carried out at national level. This would translate, for instance, in taking out from Strategic PAs items such as publications or local seminars and events, and maintain full responsibility only for actions with a clear EU dimension and value-added. As a consequence this would help to free human resources for alternative tasks including the 'no-cost' assistance discussed here.

CONCLUSIONS

Degree of achievement of the objectives

- The evaluation of 'generic' guidelines and recommendations issued by the EC is positive but to different degrees: Euro Team members appear to be quite satisfied with the guidance received (the comparison with the previous experience of the Team Europe likely played a part in it), while MS authorities' appreciation of the guidelines for the communication strategy appears somewhat lower, although at a satisfactory level in those MS that have established a PA with the EC. In the case of guidelines for the preparation of the I&C strategy, the most criticised aspect is the fact that they are somewhat too generic to fit with the specific features of the different countries

- Slovenia has been so far the main recipient of 'tailored' no-cost assistance. Direct contacts with Slovenian key institutional stakeholders highlighted how this type of assistance was much appreciated. In general, tailored guidance and recommendations appears more likely to be adopted by all MS, as demonstrated also by the results of the online survey.

Unexpected effects

- None detected so far.

Need for additional activities

- As regards generic guidelines/recommendations, the results of the study do not suggest the need for additional effort from the EC. Perhaps, the only area that could be strengthened regards the guidelines for the preparation of the national I&C strategy, whose degree of actual 'implementation' appear relatively limited.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Important lessons can be drawn from the recent Slovenian changeover to the Euro and the on-going processes in Malta and Cyprus. It could be particularly useful to take stock of these experiences and update accordingly the existing guidelines for the preparation of the national I&C strategy.
- The extent of the need for 'focused' no-cost assistance may vary greatly depending on two factors: (i) the 'readiness' of the institutional infrastructure in the MS; (ii) the presence of parallel changeover processes. In the case of Slovenia, the assistance provided was surely adequate, but it is likely that in certain circumstances the provision of the same level of assistance to other MS could result impossible. No-cost activities entail in fact an intense use of internal human resources that appear today already overstretched. It would be important then to devise ways to adjust the extent of the provision of focused no-cost assistance to the actual resources available, and identify agreed criteria to ensure that these resources are available to the MS according to their specific features and needs.

4.2 MEMBER STATES GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES AND MEDIA ACTIVITIES

OVERVIEW

This section provides an overview of the findings related to questions on Member States government programmes and media activities, in particular the operation of the Partnership (PA) and Twinning Agreements. It is divided into three parts which answer a number of specific questions. However, as the overall evaluation of these agreements is connected to the effectiveness / efficiency of the underlying actions, details are provided in the following sections. This section provides findings at a more general level.

Partnership Agreements are divided¹⁰, into the following three categories:

- Strategic Partnerships – Member State and the Commission agree on the details of a communication programme and division of tasks between the two partners, each side paying the full cost of the activities they undertake. There is no direct financial relationship between the Commission and the Member State,
- Ad Hoc Partnerships – Commission contributes to expenses incurred by the Member State. Subcontracting costs are eligible if incurred in conformity with the public procurement directives,
- Management Partnership – Member States manage the whole campaign on behalf of the Commission, in accordance with the EU's Financial Regulation.

A first wave of strategic Partnership Agreements was signed on 8 November 2005 with the Governments of Slovenia, Estonia and Lithuania. This led to the printing and distribution of brochures for the general public and/or specific target groups, the setting up of portable information stands on the Euro, the organisation of 'model' conferences, seminars and exhibitions¹¹. However, as the target dates for the introduction of the Euro in Estonia and Lithuania were postponed, some of the activities planned in these two countries were cancelled or suspended. At the same time, after the Council's decision to include Slovenia in the Euro zone, activities with Slovenia increased, leading to an Ad Hoc Partnership Agreement in June 2006.

The second wave of strategic Partnership Agreements included Cyprus and Malta, with agreements being signed in May and June 2006 respectively. Activities carried out included: a 'model' conference, seminars for journalists, opinion polls, the provision of promotional materials and information stands and the "Euro Coins Genesis" exhibition.

The budget committed so far for Partnership Agreements amounted to some EUR 2.3 million¹², almost evenly distributed over the years 2005 and 2006.

¹⁰ Communication (2004) 552 final

¹¹ More details on each of these actions are provided in the following dedicated sections.

¹² The figure includes financial resources already set aside for actions planned within existing PA but not yet implemented.

The intention of the Twinning arrangements is to facilitate the exchange of know-how on all issues regarding changeover. The activities carried out in the framework of the Twinning projects typically include:

- Provisions of advice on the technical aspects of the changeover,
- Strategies to prevent changeover inflation,
- Development of a comprehensive I&C plan.

A Twinning programme may support activities such as: training sessions, bilateral meetings, exchange of specific expertise, seminars etc. It also typically involves a number of different stakeholders within Member States (Central Banks, Consumer Associations, Changeover Boards, etc.). Twinning programmes are intended to promote work between existing Euro zone countries and new MS.

Since January 2005, ten Twinning projects have been launched. The average duration of Twinning programs is 12-15 months, but in some cases the project has been prolonged due to specific issues (e.g. the postponement of Lithuania's entry to Euro zone). Eight out of ten Twinning projects were launched in 2005, and only two in 2006. But with the upcoming entry into the Euro zone of new MS, the Twinning programme is likely to be re-launched. So far 26 institutions from 14 different countries have been involved in Twinning projects.

The expenses that could be covered by EC are limited to the direct costs of the organisation of the Twinning events such as meetings, seminars etc. So far, a relatively modest budget has been allocated, i.e. about EUR 150,000 at an average, cost of about EUR 16,000.

4.2.1 SUB-QUESTION 1

Evaluation Question: *Were these effective / efficient for communicating with target publics and delivering information to them?*

FINDINGS

Desk research indicated the first two types of Partnership Agreements (i.e. Strategic and Ad Hoc Partnerships) were the main instruments used by DG ECFIN and Member States in developing / supporting information and communication activities. Although it was envisaged to make use of Management Partnerships, they – according to interviews with Commission officials – were not used due to the administrative burden associated with them. It was explained that the build-up towards developing such an agreement was difficult because many Information and Communication activities had not been rolled out in time for use as a basis for a Partnership (i.e. there was still a need to establish 'road-maps', indications and guidance on the practical aspects of collaborating with other Member States, etc.).

Stakeholders explained that although activities carried out under Strategic Partnership Agreements were comparatively less adapted to the national needs of the public (i.e. large-scale publication, as well as opinion polls and model conferences), they were still very useful at providing an overall EU dimension to the information and communication process.

In the case of Slovenia, Strategic Partnerships were said to be oriented towards multipliers, rather than the general public (with the exception of the publication). As a result, the impact have been higher on key-stakeholders (e.g. information provided by opinion polls were important so too were the large-scale publications). However, it was not possible to generalise this finding to all of the Strategic Partnerships implemented by the European Commission.

Desk research showed that Ad Hoc Partnerships were geared towards informing the general public (i.e. advertising media campaign had a seemingly large impact). Feedback on these Partnerships was very positive in so far that stakeholders believed they were extremely adapted to the needs of final users (i.e. the general public and other specific target groups). They explained that the flexibility offered by Ad Hoc Partnerships allowed for carefully targeted activities, customised to the local culture and habits.

Overall, Strategic and Ad Hoc Partnerships were seen in a positive light as stakeholders explained that this was due to a good balance between effectiveness and efficiency, in so far that they allowed for high level activities to be implemented by the EC and more local initiatives to be implemented by Member States.

Although the survey findings don't provide direct evidence that the Partnership Agreements were effective in communicating with target audiences, respondents did indicate that they were helpful in improving MS communication activities. The following table provides an overview of the agreement (agree or fully agree) among different stakeholder groups regarding the helpfulness of Partnership Agreements in improving MS communication activities. By segmenting the respondents to the survey one can see that Euro Team stakeholders and in particular public administrations are most supportive of the Partnership Agreements. This also holds true for those countries that have had or currently have a Partnership Agreement, i.e. those who are actively involved in making use of this tool. The following table provides an overview of the agree/strongly agree responses in percentage to the question whether Commission Partnerships with Member States helped to improve their communication activities (segmented first by general stakeholder groups, then separating out public administrations and finally looking at the response rate by home country).

Figure 6: Commission Partnerships with Member States helped to improve their communication activities (general stakeholder groups)

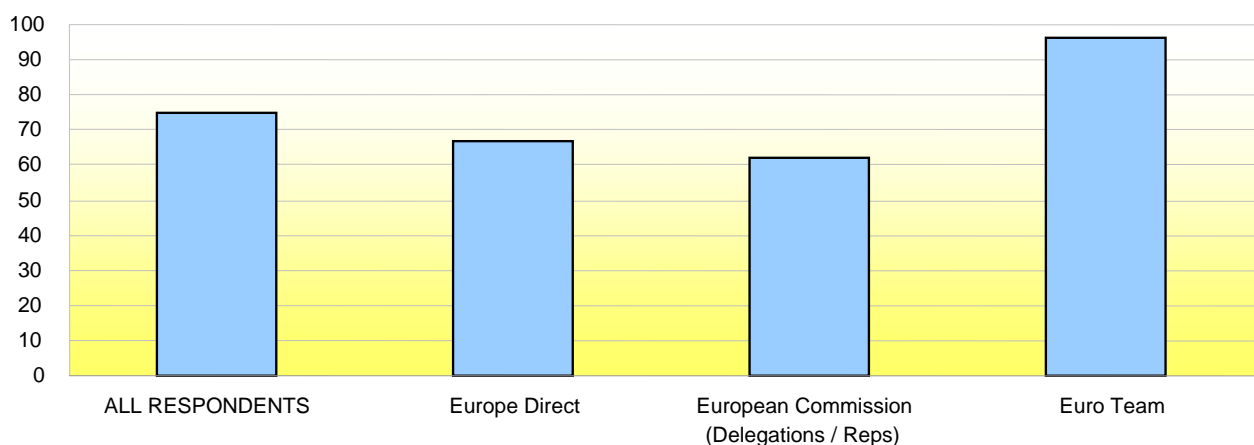


Figure 7: Commission Partnerships with Member States helped to improve their communication activities (public administrations)

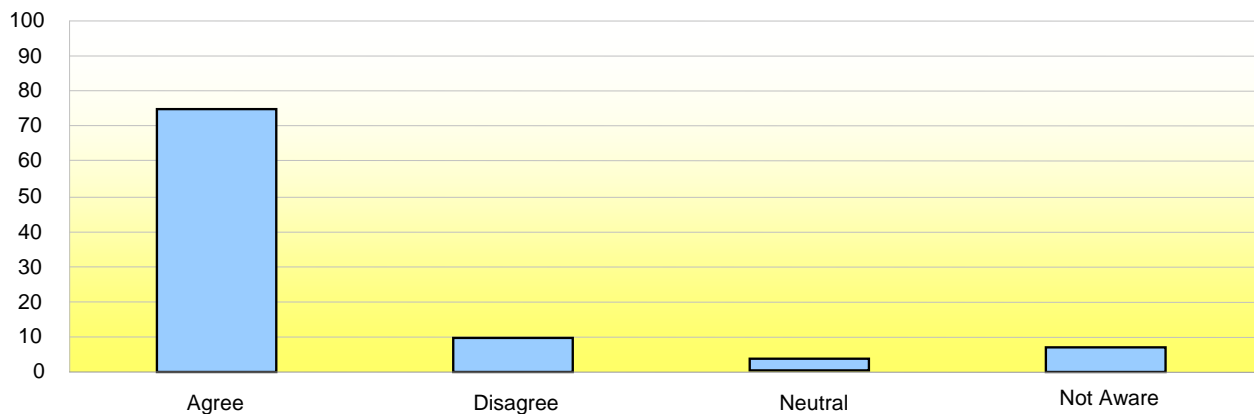
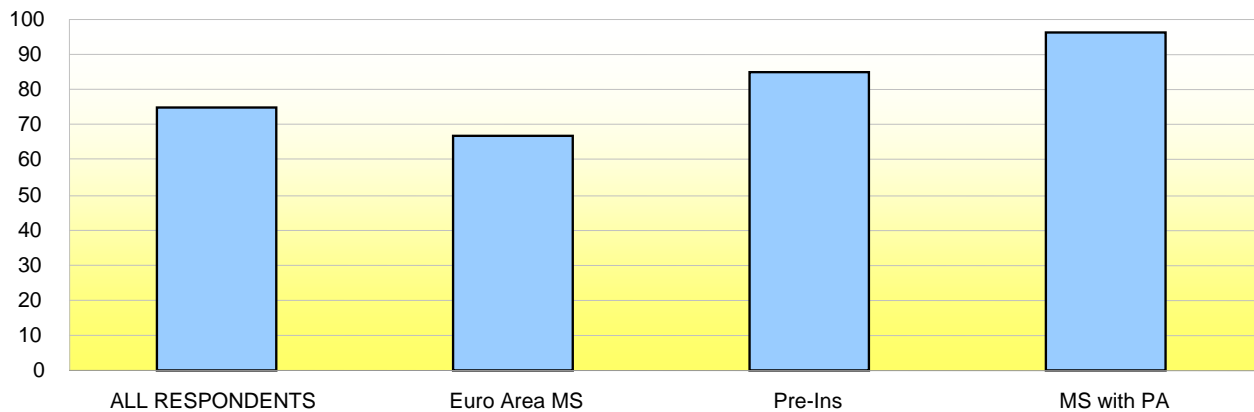


Figure 8: Commission Partnerships with Member States helped to improve their communication activities



The above figures clearly show that those stakeholders who have made use of Partnership Agreements are highly appreciative of them.

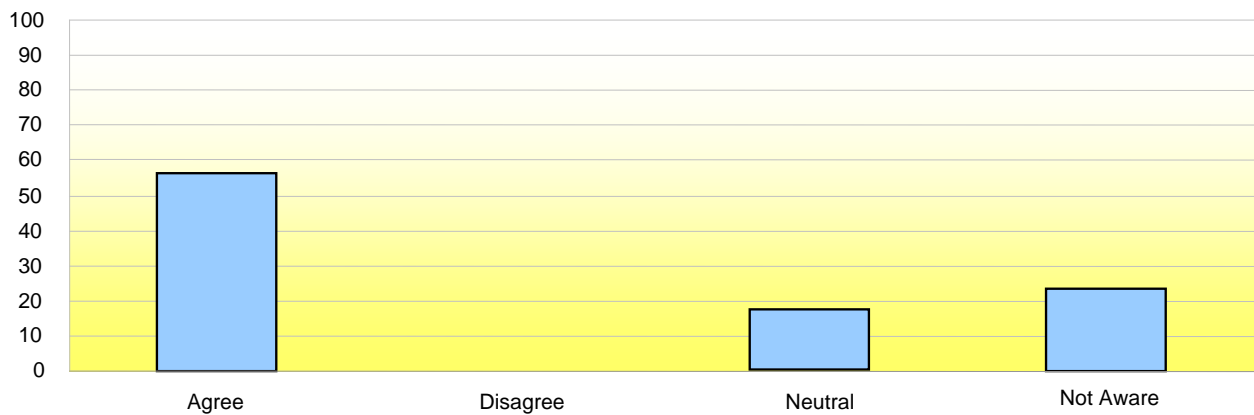
Feedback from the stakeholders met during the Slovenian case study and the telephone interview programme with I&C staff in MSs, indicate that Twinning agreements are meeting user's expectations. For example, Slovenian representatives reported that they saw strong and useful similarities between the Dutch approach and their own, in particular regarding views on campaigns (i.e. focusing on the ordinary citizen rather than the 'celebrity'). Maltese stakeholders expressed strong support for Twinning, as they felt they were important in learning from the experiences of other countries (i.e. Ireland).

However, some stakeholders felt that there was a need to better match institutions (i.e. those with similar backgrounds and expectations). It was also suggested that non-governmental organisations be included in the Twinning as well, such as consumer organisations. There was also a concern that relevant staff in the Euro zone countries is no longer in their posts, therefore making it difficult to identify relevant partners. Finally, there was a concern that the administrative effort to apply for the

Twinning may be deterring some countries from taking part, preferring to hold direct bi-lateral events, rather than involving the European Commission.

This is reflected in the survey response in regard to the assessment of Twinning by public administrators. It is interesting to note that many (55%) agree/strongly agree that they are useful with no respondents disagreeing/disagreeing strongly.

Figure 9: Assessment of Twinning (public administrations)



4.2.2 SUB-QUESTION 2

Evaluation Question: *Consequences of the way in which Partnerships were established and managed on the effectiveness / efficiency of this type of action?*

FINDINGS

The overall coordination between EU level and local activities was said to be positive (this was highlighted in particular by stakeholders from the Slovenian case study and representatives from Malta). Some anecdotal evidence suggests that there were some minor difficulties in delivering some products (i.e. brochures) and some issues of translation, but these were usually overcome and did not bring Strategic Partnerships into disrepute.

Ad Hoc Partnerships were viewed by stakeholders from the MS and the case study as productive. Feedback indicated that the coordination and interaction with Commission officials was positive and that internal management worked smoothly. Stakeholders in Slovenia however did report that the administrative burden in engaging the Ad Hoc Partnership Agreements was sometimes time-consuming and complicated. However, despite this, stakeholders saw these agreements in a very positive light.

In regard to Twinning, feedback from the case study indicated that the effectiveness is limited when the 'wrong' kind of countries are paired up. For example, putting together countries with different backgrounds and approaches as Slovenia and Lithuania can have a negative affect on the overall effectiveness of the instrument. In this case, the joint implementation with Lithuania was not efficient as the two countries had very different approaches, i.e. Lithuania externalised the I&C campaign,

which lead to a focus on preparing tenders, while Slovenia conducted an in-house campaign, and was therefore more interested on practical aspects.

The above findings from the case study and MSs interviews are reflected in the survey results, which show strong support (agree/strongly agree) for the positive effects of Partnership Agreements, as well as the coordination/management of I&C activities between the Commission and MSs. This is particularly true among those stakeholders who have or currently do operate under a Partnership Agreement, as can be seen in the following tables.

Figure 10: Commission efforts to coordinate I&C activities have positively impacted on MS I&C activities

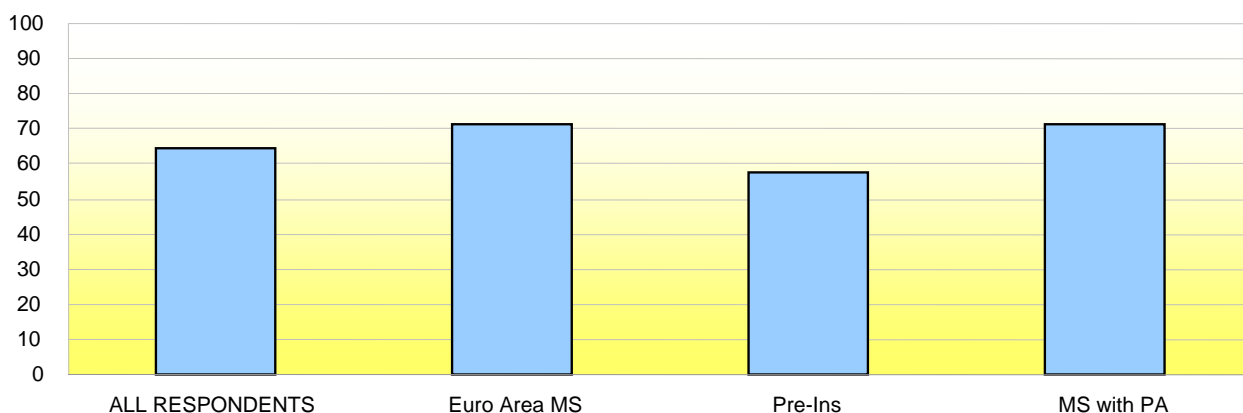
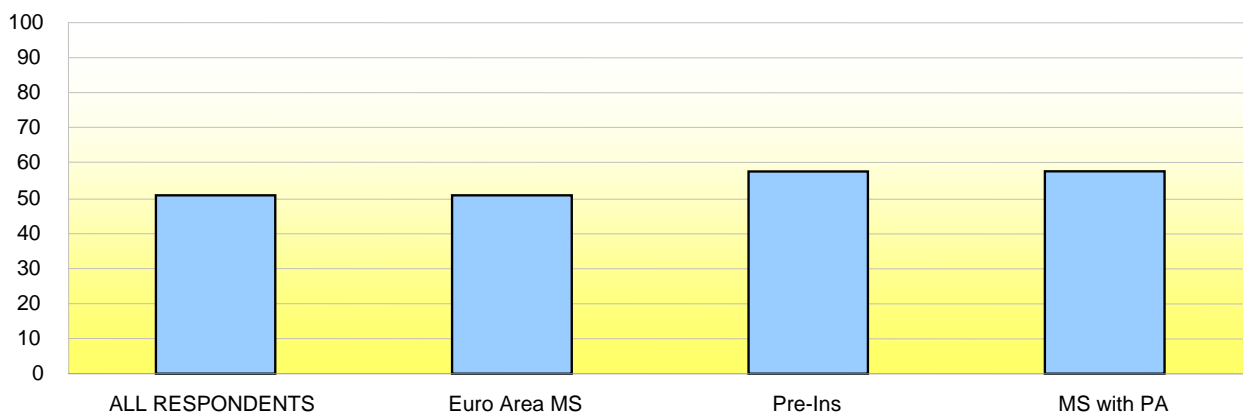


Figure 11: The way that the Commission managed these Partnerships enhanced the productiveness of I&C activities



The data collected during the evaluation did not provide any indication that the Partnership Agreements or the Twinings generated any unexpected effects.

4.2.3 SUB-QUESTION 3

Evaluation Question: Programmes adapted to the needs, problems, issues and sub-issues at national level?

FINDINGS

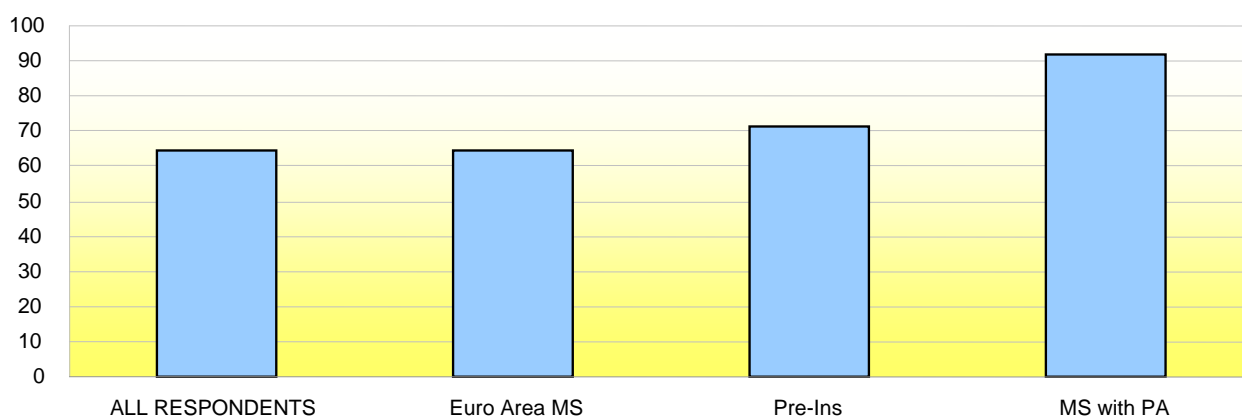
The feedback from MSs representatives indicates that the usefulness of Strategic Partnerships (and their broad EU dimension) are useful in cases where national issues need to be benchmarked (i.e. through polling for example) or can benefit from a clearer EU dimension.

Ad Hoc agreements on the other hand are, by definition, activities which are specifically designed to be implemented at the local level. Stakeholders from the case study explained that this was most useful in customising their national Ad campaign; this was further echoed by stakeholders from the MS interview programme.

There was general agreement that Twinings, in principle, are suited to address specific national needs. However, as pointed out above, it is necessary to identify needs/issues at national level and to find a Twinning arrangement that can address these. It was suggested further customisation could perhaps be provided by enlarging the programme to non government institutions.

Although the survey did not provide specific information on whether the Partnership Agreements and Twinings were well adapted to national needs, they did provided a good overview of the level of agreement in regard to whether Commission I&C activities complemented those of MSs. The following graph shows that many respondents agreed that there was complementarity, with those stakeholders who have had or currently have Partnership Agreements (MS with Partnership Agreements) agreeing most strongly. The survey results therefore support the findings from the case study and interviews.

Figure 12: Commission I&C activities complemented those of MS



CONCLUSIONS

Communication with target publics

- The effectiveness of activities conducted under Partnership Agreements varies depending on the type of agreement. Although all add-value, in Slovenia the evaluation found that Strategic Partnership Agreements tend to have a greater impact on 'multipliers' and 'intermediaries', while Ad Hoc Partnership Agreements were more effective for general public and specific target groups. This however could not be extrapolated to apply across the board. The conclusions in regard to efficiency aspects are similar, but can only be assessed by examining the individual activities. This is presented in the following sections.
- Overall these mechanisms are the tools which are used to achieve the Commission's objectives of creating public awareness, providing neutral and factual information, contributing to a smooth changeover and providing third parties with information.
- Overall, it seems that the effectiveness of Twinings is quite positive. Stakeholders found it helpful to be able to contact individuals from Euro area Member States.

Management of actions

- The coordination between Member States and the European Commission was overall positive. The Slovenian case study showed that there were frequent operational meetings both in Ljubljana and Brussels, and ongoing informal contact. Such ongoing collaboration had a positive impact on the effectiveness/efficiency of the I&C campaign, ensuring in particular that a) a good degree of collaboration among stakeholders was cultivated, b) decisions could be made quickly and effectively, and c) different points of views could be incorporated.
- Minor difficulties were present due to some administrative burden, which meant that some agreements were time consuming.
- Although Twinings are seen in a positive light, it is important to ensure that countries with similar backgrounds are put together to facilitate a positive and productive exchange of information.
- The added value of the programmes were the incorporation of experiences from other countries who had already undergone the process and in establishing the I&C campaign within a greater European context.

Adaptation to needs/issues at national level

- In addition to the financial added value of EC involvement, Partnership Agreements have also added value to locally designed and implemented activities. In Slovenia, the Commission complemented I&C campaign by providing planning as well as implementation support. The usefulness of Partnership Agreements varies depending on the local circumstances. Strategic Partnerships are helpful in framing the Euro changeover in a wider European context, whereas Ad Hoc Partnership Agreements are helpful in providing specific, customised support to certain target groups.

- Twinnings by their nature are well suited to support national needs, however, only if the appropriate stakeholders take part.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure that Twinnings are undertaken in such a manner that appropriate participants are selected to ensure the greatest added value (i.e. most similar fit concept). This could be done through more rigorous screening and preparation. This should include also encouraging the dissemination of Twinnings results.
- Trilateral Twinnings proved somewhat more difficult and should be re-thought.
- Resources permitting, PAs should be made available to countries with medium to long term Euro entry horizons.
- Additional recommendations are found under the specific elements in the following sections.

5 SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ON “DIRECT” COMMISSION INTERVENTIONS

5.1 INFORMATION PRODUCTS AND WEBSITES

5.1.1 SUB-QUESTION 1

Evaluation question: Who were the major users of the information products and the website produced by the Commission? How were these outputs used and to what extent were they effective (in terms of attaining objectives) and efficient (doing so at reasonable cost) in communicating with target publics and delivering information to them?

To answer this question the evaluation team draws from the full range of evidence gathered during the assessment. It should be noted that the evaluation of the websites was based on the version available up until the end of 2007.

FINDINGS

Members of DG ECFIN staff and those performing information relay or facilitator tasks at the Member State level suggest that the main, although not only, target group of DG ECFIN's information products is the general public. Given the volume of publications produced during the period under assessment (2005 – 2006) it is not possible to quantify and qualify the exact extent these were used by the general public, but there is documentary evidence to demonstrate that since 2006 at least 4.2 million copies of publications were ordered by and sent to EU Representations and public administrations in the Member States with a view to their dissemination to the public. Furthermore, publications and promotional items were distributed via events hosted in numerous Member States.

The main purpose of DG ECFIN publications can be considered to be to raise awareness and understanding of the Euro with a view to preparing national populations for changeover. In Slovenia, the evaluators received feedback that would suggest that two specific products 'Fit for the Euro!' targeted at business and 'United in Diversity' for children had provided to be useful. Focus groups of students in three Member States confirmed that some other information products provided clear information particularly those that included questions and answers and this suggests that some products had the potential to meet their objectives. As usage by the general public cannot be determined there is no guarantee that information recipients read the documents in detail that they received or retained any of the information provided. Where documents were provided in national languages (as was the case for the majority of publications produced by DG ECFIN) it can be assumed that a proportion of these were read.

In addition to the different publications that were mainly destined for the general public, at least 175,000 promotional products were distributed under the Partnership Agreements to Cyprus, Estonia, Lithuania and Slovenia at the end of 2005 and the beginning of 2006. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that these products were well received and were complementary to other information tools particularly when used as part of a wider information campaign. It cannot be concluded that they had a significant impact in terms of drawing people's attention or creating consensus on the euro.

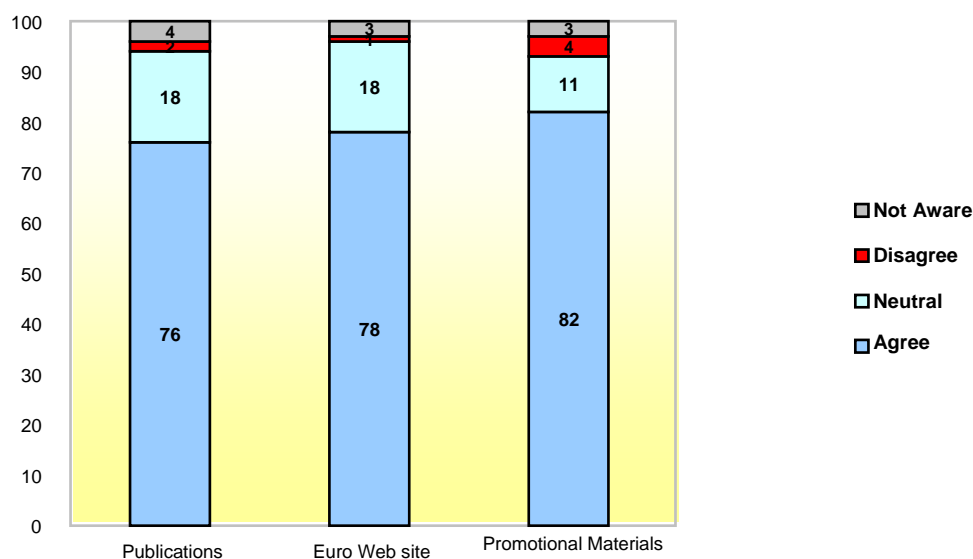
Despite the lack of precise statistics with regards to general public usage of DG ECFIN materials, there is evidence to confirm that the general public made use of and gained access to several tools

that were co-financed/organised under the Partnership Agreements with several new Member States. Young people who took part in focus group discussions conducted in Malta, Cyprus and Slovenia demonstrated recall of several 'national' information products¹³, including the national changeover web sites. Furthermore, evidence from the in-depth case study on the Slovenian case study suggests that for 9% of Slovenes the national site was their main preferred source of evidence on the euro and there are Eurobarometer statistics, which point to 63% of the population seeing the TV spots that were broadcast as part of a major national campaign, which were rated by 8 out of 10 viewers as being useful.

With regards to the DG ECFIN web site and the dedicated site The Euro: Our Currency, it seems unlikely that the mass uninformed public can be considered to be major users. This is confirmed by the fact that the sites are only available in English thus those without fluent language skills are unlikely to use the site, of the national consumer organisations interviewed only one had previously visited DG ECFIN's web site, and that there was consensus among the representatives of the Member States that the DG ECFIN web sites are not appropriate for the general public, but are much more suitable for expert or informed groups. Although detailed statistics are not available on the profile of users of the sites, analysis of the subscription list for the newsletter European Economic News (EEN) provides some indication that there are likely to be users of the web site located in each EU Member State and beyond. Subscribers are located in over 70 countries although again profile data is not available.

In addition to the desired end target users, it should not be forgotten that an important group of major users of the information products and web sites produced by DG ECFIN where the individuals and organisations responsible for communicating within national contexts. The on-line survey of Euro Team, Euro Direct and Information Relays including the EU Representations provides a positive assessment of the promotional tools, publications and The Euro: Our Currency web site, with very high levels of awareness which confirm usage.

Figure 13 – Comparative assessment of DG ECFIN I&C tools on Euro



¹³ It is noted that in July 2006 circa 1.5million targeted brochures were distributed evenly to all Slovenian and Estonian households.

Furthermore, interviews with national stakeholders responsible for aspects of the euro changeover in their country confirmed that they saw the products produced by DG ECFIN as providing key support to their own activities, as highlighted in the below table.

Figure 14: Perceptions of communication tools by national stakeholders

Communication tool	Perceptions by national stakeholders
Publications from DG ECFIN	All interview partners from the Member States indicated that they make extensive use of DG ECFIN's publications. However, some interviews revealed problems with the translation of these products.
Europa – the Euro our currency website	Was perceived by most Member States' representatives as being very useful and has been consulted on a number of occasions for national websites. However, it was indicated that some updates are necessary in order to improve the site.
DG ECFIN website	Most national stakeholders make use of DG ECFIN's website, but did not find it necessarily useful, but rather difficult to navigate.

This group reported making less use of DG ECFIN's newsletters and one of the reasons for this related to the lack of comparable data provided and some suggestions that information needs to be more up to date.

Stakeholders in Slovenia confirmed the high level of usefulness of the DG ECFIN sites for their own purposes, and suggested that these were most appropriate for expert audiences. Although not specifically intended to inform those with information responsibilities in the Member States it seems that DG ECFIN information products served this purpose.

With regards to assessing the reasonable cost of information and communication actions there are no clear benchmarks set with regards to how to determine the reasonableness of costs, in addition average publication and production costs in the printing and publishing sector are not available to the evaluation team. Companies selected to design and print publications are chosen by the Commission on the basis of a competitive open tender on the basis of lowest cost.

In total, in the period 2005 – May 2007¹⁴, circa €1.1million was allocated to the concept, design, printing and translation of publications and €770,000 for storage and dissemination. The volume of publications printed, distributed and ordered (data includes publications on order or pending as well as those sent) was 4,279,287. This suggests a total average unit cost of under half a euro including conception, design, printing, storage and distribution. Considering a sample of specific publications in detail (without distribution and storage), unit costs are again less than half a euro.

Figure 15 - Overview of costs of DG ECFIN publications

Title / Type	Content	Number of copies	Cost
The road to the Euro	The historic adventure of the Euro in a 24 page booklet – in 18 languages	322,041	€ 142.000
Did the Euro cause prices to rise?	Leaflet in 20 languages	836,115	€ 135.000
Fit for the Euro!	A 32 page guide booklet to help SMEs in 14 languages.	79.000	€ 22.000
The road to the Euro	Didactic poster for schools in 21 languages	204,954	€ 72.000
The Euro in an enlarged Europe	Leaflet on the benefits of the Euro in 19 languages.	1,097,800	€ 123.000

¹⁴ It is not possible to be precise with regards to the exact timescales under assessment.

It is noted that public relations materials are distributed taking cost into account with items that typically cost €1 or less for mass distribution at specific events and under Partnership Agreements with Member States, those costing between €1 - €5 for limited distribution and those costing €5 - €30 for small scale distribution. This can be considered to be a reasonable approach. Although these items are considered to deliver minimal impact on their own they help to reinforce messages being delivered as part of a more extensive communication campaign.

DG ECFIN also co-sponsored and financed a range of other materials and campaigns through its Partnership Agreements. During 2005-6 €529,000 was allocated to contribute towards publications and brochures and €145,000 towards promotional materials. Feedback from various groups suggests that this has been money well spent, for example in Slovenia the media campaign is reported to have touched circa 63% of the population and all households were targeted with specific tailored publications.

5.1.2 SUB-QUESTION 2

Evaluation question: Did this type of action generate any unexpected effects, negative or positive, and if so what were they?

Analysis of this question reflects the observations and findings made in response to the other evaluation questions on information and communication tools.

FINDINGS

Although there are few unexpected effects these are summed up below. The unexpected positive effects of information and communication activities carried out by DG ECFIN, include:

- The high level of appreciation of the Euro: Our Currency web site by Member State administrations and those responsible for relaying information to targeted national publics;
- The appreciation of the publications produced by DG ECFIN in providing background information to those responsible for relaying information in the Member States;
- The relative success of the Information and Communication campaign carried out in Slovenia, which was co-financed by DG ECFIN – a Eurobarometer study showed 9% of the population preferred the national website as their preferred choice of information on the Euro; TV spots achieved a coverage of 63% of the population and 8 out of 10 of these found the spots to be useful.

Meanwhile, unexpected negative effects include:

- The fact that translations carried out by DG ECFIN on occasion reduced the quality of publications on the national stage, because of the DG's difficulties in pitching language and style to specific national audiences

5.1.3 SUB-QUESTION 3

Evaluation question: Did the content of information products and the website correspond with identified needs of target publics? How far was it complementary to material provided by other publications and sites?

To answer this question it is necessary to define the target publics and their likely needs as well as to define which materials will be used to provide comparisons.

OVERVIEW

According to interviews with those involved in the PRINCE campaign at the Member State level, the main target group for information and communication activities has been the general public. However, findings from the case study on Slovenia highlight the need for closer targeting at the Member State level and this is taken up by some of the publications¹⁵ and recently by DG ECFIN's web site. Further considerations are the different roles which make up the information cycle, including sender, recipient, facilitators, and multipliers of information that impact upon the effectiveness of information campaigns. Thus, based on discussion with stakeholders, the target publics are defined as follows:

- General public
 - consumers,
 - the informed and interested
 - Schools, young people and students
 - The elderly and vulnerable groups
- Business
- Information facilitators/multipliers
 - consumer organisations,
 - Euro Team,
 - Member State administrations,
 - EU Representations
 - Europe Direct
- Information multipliers (the media)

The extent that each groups needs were met by the content of information products is analysed below. It should be noted that at the time of the evaluation, DG ECFIN was working on developing a new web-site. The analysis presented below refers to the old website (i.e. the one available until the end of 2007). It is understood that many of the difficulties identified in the following section will be/have been rectified.

FINDINGS

General public

The Flash Eurobarometer study 207¹⁶ on the introduction of the euro in the new Member States highlights the general public's interest in highly practical aspects of the changeover to the euro. As demonstrated by the below graph, men and women in the street are interested in how the euro will affect them directly. This view is confirmed by those working in consumer organisations in the new Member States, as well as the focus groups who suggested that information for the general public

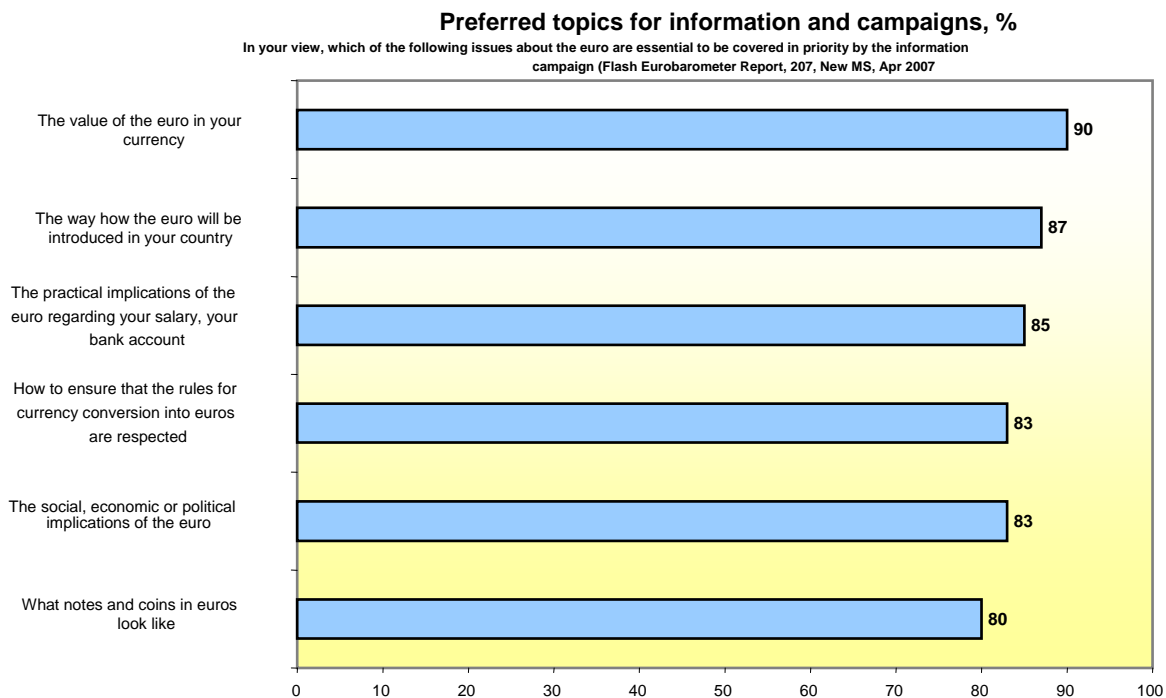
¹⁵ The publication 'United in Diversity' is considered to be targeted to young people and 'Fit for the Euro!' is aimed at business.

¹⁶ The report was published in May 2007

should focus on ensuring that people are informed about the logistics and practicalities of the Euro changeover, including:

- The exchange rate.
- The appearance and value of notes and coins.
- Information about converting savings, and formula for converting the old currency into Euros

Figure 16 – Preferred topics for information and campaigns



Evidence gathered from consumer associations and via focus groups of young people suggests that to meet general public needs publications should include:

- Clear and simple language and concise;
- Use of frequently asked questions;
- Focus on practical aspects rather than technical details on the economic context or historical background;
- Discuss possible difficulties that may be experienced.

Based on these criteria it can be considered that some of DG ECFIN's publications were better able to meet general public needs than others as highlighted below:

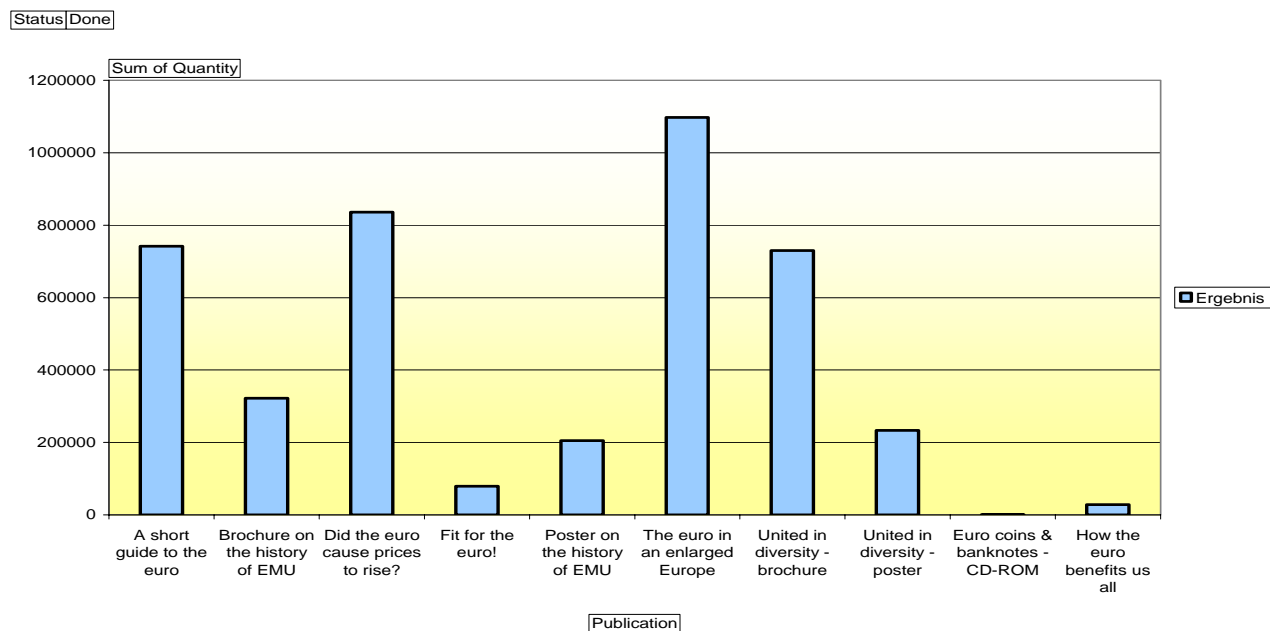
Figure 17 – Strengths and weaknesses of different types of publications

Publication	Features	Appropriateness of content to target group
A short guide to	Strengths:	

Publication	Features	Appropriateness of content to target group
the euro leaflet	Use of questions and answers Short, concise and clear <u>Weaknesses:</u> Lack of reference to home MS weak point Relevance of some images	Overall considered to be appropriate to a broad target group
The Euro in an Enlarged Europe and The Road to the euro	<u>Strengths</u> None highlighted with regards to target audience. Relevant to informed audience <u>Weaknesses</u> Intellectual approach Lack of focus on practical realities Long paragraphs and unbroken text. Advantages / drawbacks section is seen to be 'biased'	Not considered to be suitable for mass distribution only for those who want more information
Did the Euro cause prices to rise	<u>Strengths:</u> Subject matter highly engaging Attractive layout Frequently asked questions most interesting <u>Weaknesses</u> Too much to read Long paragraphs	Potential interest to mass public but would need to be adapted

These findings are backed up by production and distribution figures for DG ECFIN publications between December 2005 and November 2006, because print runs and distributions reflect actual requests for information from the Member States and are not driven by DG ECFIN's own appreciation of what should be distributed. The below graph of publications distributed to date, highlights that the most practical and adapted publications are the most popular.

Figure 18– Production and distribution figures for DG ECFIN publications (Dec 2005 – June 2007)¹⁷



¹⁷ It should be noted that the leaflet “How the euro benefits us all” was launched recently (Nov. 2007)

There continues to be a need for general information type brochures that are not targeted towards specific groups given the need to communicate to the mass population in Member States approaching, going through or having gone through the changeover. Young people pointed to the need to make the link between general publications produced by DG ECFIN and the Member State where they are distributed. Looking in more depth at what happened in Slovenia, several publications needed to be revised at national level because translations undertaken centrally would not appeal to national audiences. Furthermore, within the frame of Partnership Agreements with DG ECFIN a number of tailored information products have been developed and feedback from Slovenia suggests that these have been somewhat successful at 'talking to' national publics. Messages communicated in Slovenian communication campaigns on the Euro were considered to be well tailored to the national public.

An important criterion in the relevance of the content provided is timing. The in-depth look at the Slovenian situation highlighted the need to provide information in relation to at least three time frames:

1. Preliminary phase: when the schedule for the introduction of the Euro is not fixed, I&C information should aim to produce overall consensus and increase key-stakeholder preparedness;
2. Pre-introduction phase: when the date for changeover is fixed and approaching, the information needs of people become more concrete and practical;
3. Post-introduction phase: when the Euro begins to circulate, the information needs further evolve.

The publications produced by DG ECFIN do not appear to have taken this specific timeframe into consideration. The case study on Slovenia also suggested that there were some overlaps in information with regards to that produced by DG ECFIN and that produced by the Slovenian authorities.

With regards to the general public's appreciation of DG ECFIN's web site (as available until December 2007) and the 'The Euro: Our Currency' site, consumer organisations reported that the web site is not appropriate for broad publics as the sites are only available in English, which limits those able to use the site. Additionally, it was stated, on the part of consumer organisations, that the web sites were considered not to be sufficiently interactive to allow the public to find what it wanted. However, there is some suggestion that the web site is more appropriate for those members of the public who can be classified as being 'informed and interested, including those with some expert knowledge and for this group the site can provide an interesting source of information and, together with publications that are targeted at the mass public, allow DG ECFIN to perform its basic information duty to communicate about its work and about the euro particularly as it is responsible for leading European policy developments in the sector.

Research on the perceptions of young educated people in three different Member States suggests that this group only has a very basic level of knowledge of EMU and the Euro and that only a minority has a detailed understanding. Despite information gaps, this group is not necessarily interested in detailed contextual information on the Euro and EMU. Young people want to know the practical implications for them. As with communication to unspecified audiences the timing of communication affects the type of content that this group look for, for example in countries where the Euro is about to be produced this group was interested to find out more about what happened when the Euro was produced in other Member States. When asked to assess a range of DG ECFIN materials and those produced at national level (where these were available) this group suggested that the materials were

suitable to meet basic information needs. Young people are interested in being interactive and having the opportunity to ask questions and this could be taken into account. With regards to the DG ECFIN web sites, these were not tested due to language limitations, but all groups in Malta, Slovenia and Cyprus were positive about national changeover web sites which they found to provide interesting information in a user-friendly format.

Although no primary research was carried out on the views of elderly or vulnerable groups and children, the views of students, consumer associations and Member State representatives provide useful proxies for this group. There has been no specific targeting of the elderly or vulnerable by DG ECFIN through its own materials although various stakeholders highlight that these are an important group. There has been some targeting of school age children and several stakeholder groups highlighted the United in Diversity publication as being particularly appropriate. In recent months, the launch of the kids corner on the DG ECFIN highlights the understanding of the need to target specific groups.

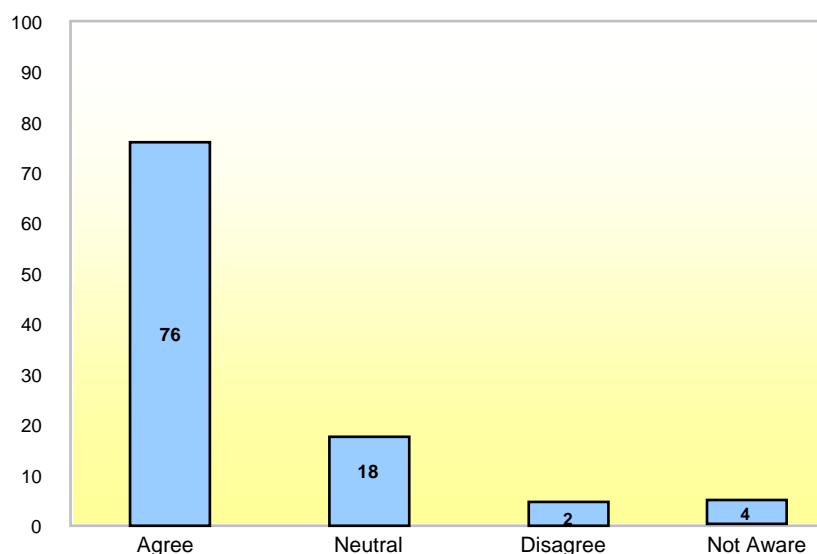
Business

Business has not been the key focus group of DG ECFIN although there have been a few publications which are considered to be targeted to this group, such as the 'Fit for the Euro!' booklet which was judged positively by those interviewed as part of the case study on Slovenia and the euro, because it was tailored to the business community. In October 2007 Conference on SMEs and the euro was held which resulted in a publication entitled: Preparing for the euro changeover. Although there are some attempts to target businesses, for the most part, it has been up to Member States including the national central banks to tailor their communications to this community.

Information facilitators/multipliers

Although not articulated as a key target group for DG ECFIN, this group is clearly important given its role in bringing information to other publics. This group which includes a range of information relays in the public and private sector, including EU Representations, the specifically recruited Euro Team members, Europe Direct relays is particularly positive about the content of DG ECFIN products and web sites as highlighted by the results of an on-line survey of these groups:

Figure 19 – Assessment of publications from DG ECFIN



The above highlights how an average of 76% agreed that DG ECFIN publications were effective and similar results were received when these groups were asked about the web site The Euro: Our Currency. Interviews with representatives of the Member State administrations suggested that the web site had been a useful source of information for their own web sites. In addition this group confirmed that they had made extensive use of DG ECFIN's publications.

Information multipliers – the media

Although publications and web site had not been specifically developed to target the media they had the potential to provide background information to this group. In addition to the provision of poll and study results, press releases and media packs, one of the specific tools used to inform the media were the seminars for journalists. As indicated in the below chart, interviews with a sample of journalists confirm that the content of seminars was highly relevant as well as being useful, although the information was not necessarily novel and did not impact upon their later outputs it helped to raise overall awareness of EMU and the euro. Several suggestions were made as to how to improve the content of the seminars, including greater coverage of the practical consequences of the introduction of the Euro in new MS, the issue of inflation, and technical aspects and mechanism of the changeover, as well as the role and policies of EU as an economic global actor.

With regards to comparisons with other similar events the quality of speakers was considered to be appropriate but certain elements could be changed for example to facilitate better take up of information and networking – key aspects for the media.

5.1.4 SUB-QUESTION 4

Evaluation question: To what degree were information products distributed in sufficient quantities and with appropriate geographical coverage?

This question relates to physical products produced by DG ECFIN: which are publications in their various formats: posters, leaflets, brochures and booklets; public relations materials; and the newsletter.

OVERVIEW

The below table¹⁸ relates to the status of publications between January 2006 and June 2007. It is based on direct orders placed by national authorities. The table does not cover dissemination done directly to individuals through EU Bookshop, Europe Direct relays and other Brussels-based European institutions. Global dissemination figures are therefore higher than reflected here. It is noted that dissemination of publications is also done on-line.

Figure 20 - Overview of sample of publications distributed Jan 2006 – June 2007

Title / Type	Target country/ group	No of printed copies	No of ordered copies	Languages	Distribution (hard copies)
The road to the Euro (booklet)	All Countries – General Public	376,565	296,350	22 (2 more planned)	MT: 89,800 CY: 32,500 LT: 40,000

¹⁸ Data is drawn from statistics provided by DG ECFIN and cover the time period until June 2007.

Title / Type	Target country/ group	No of printed copies	No of ordered copies	Languages	Distribution (hard copies)
Did the Euro cause prices to rise? (leaflet)	All Countries – General Public	894,040	811,745	20	LT: 300,000 MT: 188,100 PL: 95,000
Fit for the Euro! (booklet)	All Countries – Enterprises	84,000	79,000	6	SI: 23,000 CY: 20,000 SK: 16,000
The road to the Euro (Poster)	All Countries – Schools	278,265	197,275	21 (new edition available in 4 languages)	LT: 100,000 MT: 12,750 SI: 12,000
The Euro in an enlarged Europe (leaflet)	All Countries – General Public	1,097,800	1,094,800	21	LT: 505,500 SI: 391,800 PL: 40,000
United in diversity (booklet)	All Countries – For children	1,509,160	449,200 ¹⁹	Multilingual	LT: 120,000 SK: 105,000 CZ: 50,000
United in diversity (poster)	All Countries – For children	150,000	114,678 ²⁰	Multilingual	CY: 17,300 DE: 15,800 LT: 15,000
A short guide to the Euro (leaflet)	All Countries – General Public	801,435	727,800	21	LT: 220,000 MT: 204,000 CY: 114,000
Evro Prihaja!	Slovenia - households	715.000	715,000	SI and minority languages	100% Slovenian households
n.a.	Estonia - households	720.000	720,000	EE and minority languages	100% Estonian households

The total number of copies produced (including those sent to the Member States, those distributed via other channels and those in the process of being disseminated) was 6.6 million. The most produced publication is the booklet for children 'United in diversity' with 1.5 million copies, followed by the publications 'The euro in an enlarged Europe' and 'Did the euro cause prices to rise?'.

To understand the impact of distribution it is important to also take into account the fact that several Member States also distribute their own publications. The above figures can be compared with the level of coverage of information products and services in the specific case of Slovenia, as indicated in the below table:

Figure 21 - Sample of I&C activities carried out in Slovenia

Type	Frequency	Size of Target Group	Coverage (%)
Publication "Evro Prihaja" ²¹ (for general public)	711.000	684.000	100%

¹⁹ Dissemination of this publication was mostly done by additional channels like OPOCE's EU bookshop, and Europe Direct relays to schools and individuals. A total number of 1,290,000 copies were distributed.

²⁰ As for the previous publication, dissemination was also done via complementary channels. All the 150,000 copies produced were distributed.

Publication "Fit for Euro" (for enterprises)	23.000	97.000	24%
Publication "United in Diversity" (for children)	10.000	268.000	4%
TV-spots	~2.000	684.000	63% ²²
Evrophone	3.700	684.000	0,5%
Website "www.euro.si"	180.000	780.000	23%

However, while Slovenia provides a good example of effective distribution comparison with some other Member States for example Poland, highlights much lower levels of coverage and effectiveness, which tends to relate to the closeness of the date for changeover and extent of preparedness of the Member State.

With regards to PR materials and products, the main mechanism for their distribution has been the Strategic Partnership Agreements with Member States. Some 175,000 items were distributed to Estonia, Cyprus, Lithuania and Slovenia. Most of these actions took place at end-2006 and beginning of 2007. In addition to the volume of items indicated in the below table some promotional materials were kept at central level for use at conferences and other directly organised events.

Figure 22 - Number of items distributed through the Strategic Partnership²³ Agreements

Country	Mass distribution	Limited distribution	Small-scale distribution	TOTAL
Cyprus	54.000	13,000	1,000	68,000
Slovenia	52.000	3,000	200	55,200
Lithuania	20.000	7,000	1,000	28,000
Estonia	14.000	5,000	2,000	21,000

The volume of public relations products distributed was decided on the basis of cost with items destined for mass distribution valued at less than 1€ (such as key rings and mouse pads) and those for limited and small scale distribution of greater expense.

Distribution of European Economic News (EEN) is principally done through various proactive and passive mechanisms. The newsletter is produced on a quarterly basis and at the time of writing 8 editions had been produced. EEN is available on-line in html and PDF format as well as being printed and sent out in paper format (the current print run is 13,500) or made available via events and visits. The distribution of EEN between January 2006 and October 2007 has the following characteristics:

- An average of 260 downloads per month of the PDF version of the newsletter from the DG ECFIN web site, with the highest number of downloads per month at 691 and the lowest number 130. This group are likely to read EEN;
- An average of 1523 visits to the EEN index page per month, with the highest number of visits 2269 and the lowest number 802. It is not possible to say to what extent this group reads articles of the newsletter;

²¹ This publication was financed by DG ECFIN.

²² Information drawn from EB opinion polls April 2007

²³ Data sourced from bon de commandes signed by DG ECFIN in September and December 2006.

- At October 2007, there are 1582 subscribers who have proactively requested to receive a copy of the newsletter and can be considered to be likely to read the contents. Subscribers are located across the EU and beyond, with the largest readership in Belgium (344). The list includes readers in 45 third countries;
- 6,500 names and addresses included on DG ECFIN's mailing list of individuals and institutions, including MEPs, libraries, information relays, economists, government authorities, universities and journalists;

This data suggests a potential readership per edition of at least 13,500. However, according to Media Consulta²⁴, it is highly likely that the majority of potential readers do not read EEN from cover to cover and may not read each edition. The most likely readers are those who have subscribed to the newsletter or who download the PDF version, a group of just under 2,400 per edition.

FINDINGS

The assessment of the distribution of information products is based on analysis of production and distribution data provided by DG ECFIN and perceptions of adequateness by information facilitators and target groups. The two dimensions under assessment

Publications

The main target group for publications produced by DG ECFIN is the general public, with a few exceptions where young people or business have been targeted. As the current population of the EU is just under 500 million, it is not possible to ensure 100% coverage of the target audience. However, a key feature of geographic coverage needs to relate to making publications potentially accessible by publishing in the languages of the EU public. With one or two exceptions, the majority of publications have met this criterion and are available in multiple languages.

The size of print runs and the number of publications distributed related to requests for copies by the Member States and the EU institutions, which can be considered to be a cost effective approach. It is interesting here to take into account DG ECFIN's dual role:

1. Responsible for providing information to the EU on EMU and the Euro;
2. Committed to assisting Member States about to or joining the Euro with their information and communication activities.

With regards to the second role: numbers of publications are not sufficient to ensure high levels of coverage of Member State publics. However, this relates to Member State's own willingness and distribution mechanisms than to limitations imposed by DG ECFIN. However in two specific cases in Estonia and Slovenia, DG ECFIN publications achieved high levels of distribution to all households.

Evidence from the focus groups, confirms that young people have no awareness of generic publications produced by DG ECFIN for distribution in Cyprus, Malta and Slovenia, but that there was some awareness of certain publications/communication activities produced by these Member States, particularly Slovenia²⁵ as well as the tailored DG ECFIN publication sent to all households. Those

²⁴ Media Consulta carried out an independent evaluation of EEN in 2007.

²⁵ A Flash Eurobarometer survey conducted in January 2007 in Slovenia reported that 40% of respondents felt well informed about the euro, which of course relates to a range of I&C activities carried out in addition to publications.

representing Consumer Associations in different EU Member States, question the effectiveness of targeting the general public via general publications due to lack of targeting and distribution issues and suggest more effective mechanisms are the mass media. Similar concerns were expressed by the representatives of Member States. A key point to be taken into account is that publications have their limitations with regards to effectiveness, but form an important part of the communication mix not least for informing information facilitators and ensuring a consistent message from DG ECFIN (representatives of the Member States confirmed that they found the publications to be very useful).

PR materials and products

The fact that these materials were distributed under the Partnership Agreements rather than mass distribution across the Member States can be considered to be reasonable given costs involved. The items produced help to create a sense of the euro community and where links to web sites are provided can promote available information, but are likely to have limited impact. From the research carried out there were no strong views from different stakeholders on adequateness of distribution or volume of production of these tools. Thus the approach taken can be considered to be appropriate.

EEN (Newsletter)

The newsletter can be considered to be a relatively specialist publication which is not suitable for the mass public and is more relevant to the informed and interested public, this is reflected by the fact that the newsletter is made available in English only. Hard copies of the newsletter are produced in sufficient quantities to meet demand (current subscriptions) although it may be that the number of printed copies could be reduced as it far exceeds the list of subscribers and the mailing list used by DG ECFIN. It is not possible to provide conclusive remarks on this point due to lack of information on the extent of dissemination of the remaining copies via conferences and events. In terms of geographic coverage, analysis of the list of subscribers confirms wide coverage with readers in all Member States and beyond. Making the newsletter available on-line opens its up wider audiences.

The number of potential readers is likely to exceed the number that has sight of a copy of EEN. However, given the fact that natural limitations are imposed due to the mechanisms of distribution (on-line and via mail) it can be considered that the newsletter is distributed in sufficient quantities to appropriate geographic coverage.

5.1.5 SUB-QUESTION 5

Evaluation question: To what extent was the website designed and managed to optimise 'user friendliness'? Was it adapted to the language needs of the Member States? How regularly was it updated?

It should be noted that DG ECFIN was in preparation of launching a new web site just as this evaluation was coming to an end. It is likely that many of the following findings will have been rectified in the new version; however, this could not be validated during this evaluation

FINDINGS

These questions concern the 'The Euro: Our Currency' web site²⁶, which is accessible via the URL indicated in the footnote. In addition, some observations are made with regards to the DG ECFIN web site²⁷ where these were raised by interviewees. Observations about the Euro: Our Currency web site are, as follows:

Navigation: the site is clearly laid out with six sections:

- Notes and coins
- Origins
- Changeover
- Use in the world
- Benefits
- FAQs

The content of the Euro: Our Currency site is clearly indicated both via a site map and via a series of menus that appear once the cursor is placed over each section of the site. A breadcrumb trail is provided to allow users to track their progress through the site. From a technical point of view, horizontal navigation is clear but the vertical navigation tools in the left margin, can cause confusion due to changes/inconsistencies in the list of links provided and the fact that many of these take the user away from "*The Euro: Our Currency Site*". It is noted that on the Our Currency Site, the addition of a 'back to home' link would also facilitate navigation.

With regards to the DG ECFIN site, feedback from the Member State representatives and provided in the in-depth review of the Slovenian changeover suggest that the navigation of this site could be improved. Information seems to be presented according to what the DG wants to communicate rather than what users might be looking for. Inside DG ECFIN there is an understanding of the need for a more effective presentation and this will be addressed with the imminent launch of a new portal. The need to target different groups has also been recognised, and consequently in September 2007 a new DG ECFIN web site aimed specifically at children/young people was launched, although this is not sign posted from The Euro: Our Currency site.

Presentation: there is limited use of images on the Euro: Our Currency site and this reduces the visual attractiveness of the information. The presentation of the site conforms with that of the main DG ECFIN site and of other web sites of the European Commission. Thus the site conveys to the users that it is European Commission site and it can be considered to be appropriate for such a site.

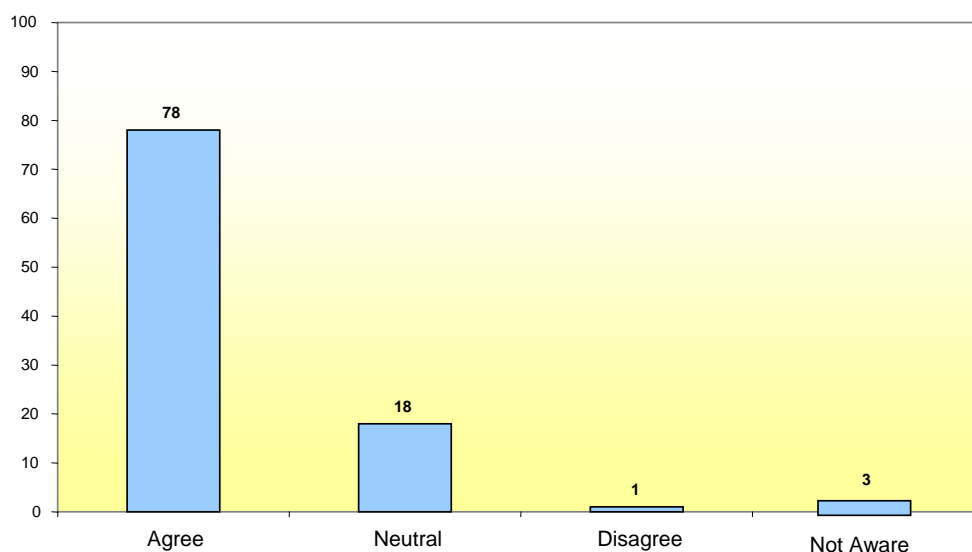
Content: the type of content provided on the Euro: Our Currency site is similar in style to the main DG ECFIN site although the DG has an interest in the site addressing general public needs, in reality this site must be understood to be appropriate to the already informed and likely EU friendly/interested audience. There is consensus among the sample of consumer associations and representatives of Member States contacted that neither the Euro site nor DG ECFIN's main web site are appropriate for the uninformed public although the sites are considered to be of interest to those with more expert knowledge as well as those involved in relaying information to other national audiences. This is confirmed by representatives of the Member States who report that they find the

²⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/euro/our_currency_en.htm

²⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/index_en.htm

site to be very **useful reference point** and that they consult the site regularly to inform their own national sites. This view is confirmed by levels of agreement on the effectiveness of the web site captured in the on-line survey of Euro Team, Europe Direct and Information Relays conducted in August and September 2007.

Figure 23 – Degree to which the “Euro: Our Currency Web Site” supported national I&C strategies



In addition to linguistic issues, the reason that the site is not appropriate to national publics is that there is more of a focus on formal aspects of the process including various reports rather than the practical implications, as highlighted by the types of questions covered by the FAQs for example several questions are devoted to:

- who designed the coins;
- the nickel used in the coins;
- the official spelling of the euro...

Thus the content of the site does not appear to be appropriate for national publics and it is noted that there are no links to national general public sites which further confirms this view. Eurobarometer studies highlight the key areas of interest to consumers and business. There is a lot of evidence to confirm that if the site is to appeal to national audiences it needs to focus upon highly practical questions such as:

- whether prices will go up;
- practical implications regarding salary and bank accounts;
- case studies on what has happened in those countries in the Euro zone;
- whether there are charges on transactions in Euro in other Member States in the Euro zone.

It is noted that much of the information on the site is not general public user-friendly for example sections such as 'Future enlargement of the Euro' must be considered to be relevant for expert audiences and not uninformed publics given the number of references to articles of the Treaty.

Despite the fact that several publications were developed by DG ECFIN to explain the Euro and its implications, these were not provided on this site either in PDF format or as a link to a facility to order a copy. Given that some of these publications are in languages other than English this would have helped to increase the appeal of the site to non-Anglophone audiences.

Linguistic provision: Although the 'cover page' provides several languages as soon as the user clicks for more information he or she is lead to an English only site. The fact that the site is only available in English limits its ability to be used as a tool to communicate to non-informed audiences in the Member States. This is confirmed by those within DG ECFIN, comments received in the on-line survey of Euro Team members, Europe Direct and Information Relays, as well as in interviews with consumer organisations. Furthermore, it was not possible to test the web site in the focus groups of young people held in Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta because it was not available in the languages of these groups, consequently the national sites that were co-produced with the help of the European Commission were tested instead. Those responsible for the site confirm that the main rationale for lack of linguistic provision has related to the resourcing issues (financial and human).

Updating: The evaluation team was not able to make an external assessment of how frequently the web site is updated. However, representatives of the Member States suggested that the site could be kept better up to date. It is noted that the web site provides information that is relevant in its time perspective (past and present and future information is relevant).

5.1.6 SUB-QUESTION 6

Evaluation question: Was the choice of communication instruments adequate in view of the information needs of the various target groups?

OVERVIEW

To communicate about EMU and the Euro DG ECFIN developed a range of generic tools that were available to Member States, as well as providing support to Member States' own communication tools, which were targeted to their own specific audiences. An overview of the communication tools developed directly by DG ECFIN is provided below:

- Between 2004 and 2006: 13 Publications were produced (including four booklets, four leaflets, two posters, two country-specific brochures, and a compendium of the Community Legislation on the EMU)
- Promotional Materials used at conferences and provided to Member States for their own campaigns displaying the Euro symbol and/or a link to DG ECFIN's web site (including items for mass distribution: mouse pads, pens and key rings; items for limited distribution: including bags and tee shirts; items for small-scale distribution, including USB sticks and MP3 players).
- The DG ECFIN website, including 'The Euro: Our Currency' site
- The "European Economy News" – DG ECFIN's newsletter, which is available in HTML format on the DG ECFIN website, can be downloaded in PDF format and is available to subscribers by email and on paper. At the time of writing, eight editions of the newsletter had been produced.

In addition, Member States that concluded Ad Hoc Partnerships with DG ECFIN, such as Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus, developed their own communication tools with support from the Commission, which included²⁸:

- Media campaigns
- TV and radio advertisements
- Targeted national web sites
- Specific publications
- Telephone hotline

This question considers the extent that information tools used by DG ECFIN and those Member States that developed targeted information tools were adequate to allow target groups to become informed about the Euro and the process of EMU. Analysis is based on three elements:

- Segmentation of target groups, their preferences and information habits and needs against the scope and reach of information and communication tools developed to communicate to these groups;
- Anecdotal qualitative evidence from structured interviews and focus groups conducted by the evaluation team with specific target groups;
- Statistical analysis of the results of an on-line survey of information multipliers and relays (including: Euro Team, Europe Direct, EU Representations and other Information Relays at the Member State level).

Eurobarometer surveys and focus groups provide insights into the views of end target users, other information sources should be considered as providing a proxy for the perceptions of the information needs of the general public.

FINDINGS

Segmenting target groups information preferences and needs

There are different roles and relationships in the information cycle: source of information, information provider, information facilitator (this role can be met by tools as well as people), information gatekeepers²⁹ and information recipients. To assess the appropriateness of the information tools developed to communicate about the euro and EMU, the information recipients/end target groups are considered. From discussions with those at DG ECFIN as well as those responsible for the relay of information, the intended information recipients for communications on the euro and EMU can be defined as follows:

- General public (consumers)
- Students and youth
- Elderly, vulnerable groups
- Business community

²⁸ Member States developed different tools including but not necessarily the full list provided here.

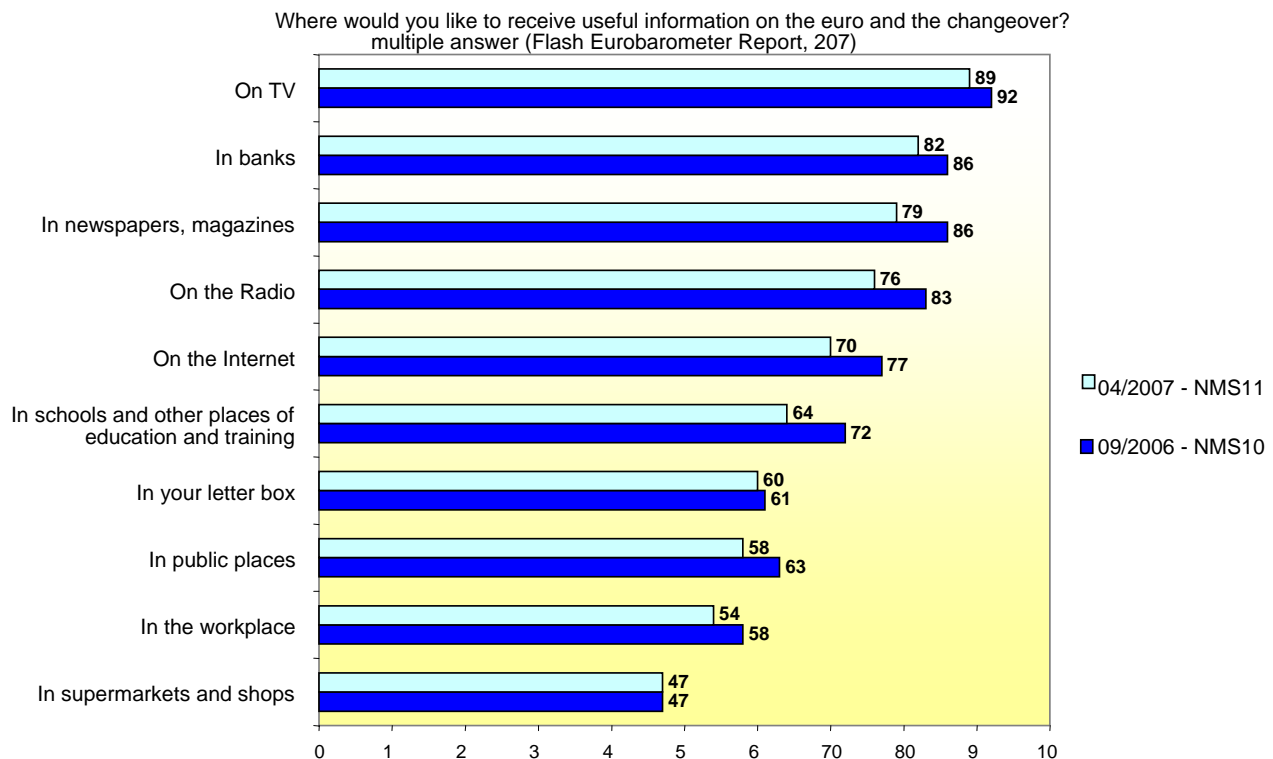
²⁹ Information gatekeepers could include teachers, parents and carers, for example. In addition, information facilitators such as the media and information relays can also play the dual role of facilitator and gatekeeper.

Considering the group as a whole, it is useful to note the results of the Flash Eurobarometer (EB) Poll of April 2007³⁰. The poll considered both the preferred channels for information campaigns, as well as views on the most essential information campaign actions.

As highlighted below, the clear preference in terms of information channel is television. However, print media is also relatively popular. Looking into the EB data in more detail reveals specific differences by Member State as well as by target group. For example, radio is the second preferred source in Romania and Estonia and third preferred source in Bulgaria and scores highly as a preferred source of information, but is then rated much lower as being an essential information campaign tool.

Differences were expressed according to the age group of participants. Older generations and the less educated prefer less technical methods of communication including (via supermarkets and shops, dissemination via their letter box, radio and use of paper copy leaflets and brochures, whereas these are the least popular mechanisms among the young and active population. Whilst the EB data does not provide specific data with regards to the preferred information tools that should be used to communicate to the business community, it is noted that participants placed a high level of importance on banks as the second most important information source and it is suggested that with regards to corporate rather than private needs, written information is likely to be of greatest interest and that the internet is an important access mechanism.

Figure 24– Preferred channels for information campaigns



³⁰ The first graph is taken from page 24, *Introduction of the Euro in the New Member States – Analytical Report*, fieldwork March 2007, publication May 2007.

Figure 25- General Public's views on most efficient information channel (Flash EB April 2007)³¹

Most Efficient Channel of Information	%
(one answer)	
Television	48
Print Media	18
Special website	9
Publications/brochures	9
Radio	7
Family, friends, co/workers	5
Europhone open telephone line	1
Presentations (Shopping centres, fairs)	0
DK / DA	4

Initial analysis of information tools provided directly by DG ECFIN suggests that the tools chosen only partially meet the needs of end target groups and this is to be expected given that the range of tools developed aim to meet generic information needs. There have been no direct attempts by the DG to meet the desire for information to be broadcast via television and some in the DG point to this as a weakness. However, it is noted that this need can be and has been met in a few instances via the Member States.

Anecdotal evidence from structured interviews and focus groups

The focus groups³² held confirm the preference for television as an important information tool. Young people do not tend to seek out information on the Euro and EMU and prefer to receive information via passive sources such as television. If this group does decide to seek out information then the internet is the most likely place for their search, where they may come across a diverse range of information and publications. This group is not particularly interested in paper publications, leaflets and newsletters, but suggests that these forms are most appropriate for elderly and vulnerable groups. Information tools developed by DG ECFIN and by the relevant Member State were tested with young people whose overall assessment was that the mix of communication tools was sufficient and appropriate to meet public information needs.

Statistical analysis of the results of the survey of information facilitators

The survey of information facilitators provides an interesting proxy for usefulness to end target users. A key factor in the assessment of an information campaign is the mixture of information tools and how these worked together. The majority of respondents to the survey (77%) conducted by the evaluation team, considered that the different types of information tools developed were suitable to meet the aims of the Commission. More in-depth consideration highlights that: promotional materials, the Euro: Our Currency web site and publications were considered to be most effective. Whereas the DG ECFIN web site and newsletters were considered to be less effective tools, which is likely to reflect their more technical nature rather than their usefulness as an information tool.

CONCLUSIONS

Major users, effectiveness and efficiency of the information products

³¹ Source: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_207_en.pdf

³² Focus groups were conducted in 3 countries Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus and were comprised of young educated people – termed ‘future decision-makers’ aged 18 – 24.

- The major recipients of DG ECFIN publications were national publics who mainly received copies via the EU Representations, their national administrations and other institutions such as banks and schools. It is not possible to assess the actual impact, usefulness on these users, but it is suggested that publications were useful once a decision to adopt the Euro had been made (i.e. during the lead up to changeover). When DG ECFIN combined forces with Member States this helped to increase the targeting and user-friendliness of materials which in turn had a positive impact on effectiveness.
- Other major users of DG ECFIN publications and web sites were information providers and facilitators within Member States, who used the information to keep up to date and to support the range of activities which they carried out to communicate to national publics. There is strong evidence to confirm that for this group DG ECFIN's publications and web sites were effective tools.
- In addition to information facilitators other users of DG ECFIN web sites were the informed, interested public rather than the mass euro-uninformed public.
- There were no benchmarks set with which to measure the cost effectiveness of activities. However, the volume of publications produced resulted in economies of scale in terms of conception, design and distribution with relatively low unit costs. Meanwhile a sensible approach seems to have been taken to promotional materials to try to ensure very small scale production of more expensive items.

Unexpected effects

- There was a high level of appreciation of the Euro: Our Currency web site among Member State administrations.
- DG ECFIN translations were not always appropriate.

Relevance of contents and complementarity with other I&C materials

- The content of some publications did correspond to general information needs within the Member States for information, particularly where documents were short, concise and clear and used a question and answer approach.
- DG ECFIN web sites (as they were before the end of 2007) were more appropriate for specific interested stakeholders, due to the type of information and level of specialist detail available.
- DG ECFIN information and web sites complemented the activities carried out at Member State level which tended to be more targeted, by providing support documentation and information to those responsible for communicating within the Member States.

Adequateness of distribution features

- DG ECFIN made its publications available for order by all Member States and a high number of Member States took up this opportunity. Therefore, the DG can be considered to have fulfilled its duties with regards to geographic coverage.
- The fact that print runs were established on the basis of requests from Member States and EU institutions means that the DG avoided stockpiling brochures that are never used (there is

evidence that this has been frequent practice in some DGs of the European Commission). In addition, this approach allowed Member States to select from the range of possible publications those which it found to be most useful and in relations to their own distribution mechanisms rather than this being imposed upon them by the DG with the result of stockpiling at the Member State level.

- One of the best ways to achieve geographic coverage is working with the Member States. Two tailored DG ECFIN publications achieved high volume distribution in Estonia and Slovenia, due to close collaboration with national administrations.
- Print runs of European Economic News EEN seem to be high given the size of the subscription list and the mailing list used by DG ECFIN. It is likely that the publication is also given out at events, but there may be scope to reduce the print run.
- Tying in distribution of promotional items to the Member States via the Partnership Agreements helps to ensure that these are distributed within the framework of organised communication campaigns rather than at request. This is appropriate given as they need to be understood as being complementary to wider initiatives.

Assessment of DG ECFIN website

- The DG ECFIN website (as of December 2007) nor The Euro: Our Currency website were designed to meet the language needs of the Member States. The vast majority of information is only available in English.
- The content, style and type of information provided on The Euro: Our Currency web site could be improved to maximise user-friendliness to non-expert audiences and several suggestions are made. However, this is a useful reference site for the Member States and it is suggested that their task is to use the information provided to tailor their national sites to national audiences.
- Visual aspects of both sites are weak and could be improved to make the information more enticing and interesting. The Currency site does not bring the euro to life and information is 'dry' and formal.
- There is a need for more effective updating of The Euro: Our Currency web site to maximise the usefulness of the information provided.

Choice of communication instruments and needs of target groups

- An important principle in developing effective information and communication tools is the idea that tools need to be integrated within a campaign of action to reach a specific group with a specific purpose. Use of one off tools, however effective they are, typically has limited impact because of the importance of repetition and the need for several tools to work together to generate interest, raise awareness and to increase understanding. Where DG ECFIN's tools were not used as part of a campaign then their impact was diminished.
- The most effective tool for communicating simple messages to the broad public is the TV. DG ECFIN did not directly harness this medium and this is considered by those inside and outside the DG as a particular gap in the communication tools used. However, given the importance of tailoring messages and information to the precise information needs of target audiences and

evidence that confirms the success of the TV advertising campaign that was run in Slovenia, it appears that DG ECFIN is not best placed to run its own TV campaigns, but that this should be done in collaboration with and via the Member States.

- The development of web sites providing information on EMU and the Euro can be considered to be an appropriate tool given the high level of importance placed on the internet both by the general public including young people, and businesses particularly during the pre-introduction phase.
- Publications and leaflets are appropriate although they need to be considered as support tools within the context of an information campaign rather than tools that are likely to by themselves achieve significant impact for the uninformed public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- It seems that DG ECFIN is providing an important information service to information facilitators and administrators at national level and should continue to provide general documents for these audiences as well as those who proactively seek information on DG ECFIN web sites.
- Given the acknowledged increased effectiveness of tailoring information materials to specific audiences, it is suggested that DG ECFIN focuses on guiding, coordinating and co-financing information and communication campaigns and tools, which are developed and distributed by the Member States. In summary, DG ECFIN should retain its 'information' role, but the communication role, which requires integrated targeted campaigns, is implemented by the Member States.
- It is recommended that DG ECFIN encourages/requires Member States, who receive assistance, to link their national web sites to appropriate electronic language versions of DG ECFIN publications.
- It is recommended that the Commission continues to provide information that is suitable for informed groups but that it works together with the Member States to allow further targeted approaches to be developed.

5.2 EVENTS, INFORMATION AND CO-ORDINATION ACTIVITIES

OVERVIEW

The 'Events, information and coordination activities' category (hereinafter EIC activities) encompasses a series of public events supported and implemented by the EC within the framework of the PRINCE Programme. These initiatives are different in nature, target and scope, but are commonly referred to as a single macro-area of DG ECFIN operations. The EIC activities analysed in the present section can be classified into five main groups:

- international conferences and workshops organised at the EU level or in third-countries;
- seminars for economic journalists;
- coordination meetings of the Directors of Communication network;
- meetings of and support to the Euro Team network ;
- the Euro Coins Genesis Exhibition

International Conferences

The organisation of conferences is one of the pillar of the I&C strategy on EMU and the Euro. Since 2004 thirteen events have been held both in the EU and in third countries, involving politicians, academicians, experts, journalists and other stakeholders. These events can be broadly divided into four subsets, with different degrees of standardisation: (i) international 'model' conferences on Euro for pre-ins MS; (ii) the annual Brussels Economic Forum; (iii) international conferences for third-countries; and (iv) miscellaneous events organised in MS countries and dedicated to specific themes.

'Model' conferences are standard events that are implemented in all pre-ins MS that have started the changeover process. Model conferences have a similar structure as regards the subjects debated (e.g. the Euro changeover scenario, precautionary measures for consumers, information campaigns etc.) and the speakers invited. So far, three conferences have been organised, namely in Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta. In all these cases, the event was carried out within the framework of existing Partnership Agreements between the Commission and the MS. Overall, it is anticipated that one or two conferences will be held every year in different pre-ins MS, depending on the respective timetable for the introduction of the Euro.

The Brussels Economic Forum (BEF) is an annual conference on topics related to the good functioning of Economic and Monetary Union, which envisages the participation of a variety of stakeholders: e.g. institutional representatives, academicians, representatives of the business community, consumer organisations, national and international press, etc. For instance, in 2005, the meeting focused on how to improve the EU's growth potential through sound fiscal policies and economic reforms, whilst in 2006 the BEF was dedicated to the issue of "Renewal in Europe", and this year to "Global adjustment and the EMU".

A number of international conferences on subjects related to EMU and the Euro was also organised in third countries. In 2004, two events took place, respectively in Singapore and South Africa. The following year a large-scale event on "The Euro: one currency, one financial market" was organised in New York, and a second one was held in Kuala Lumpur, on the role of the Euro in strengthening the economic links with the ASEAN community. A similar conference was organised in 2006 in Hong Kong on the subject: "The Euro. Lessons for European and Asian financial markets". In 2007, the main event of this kind was the New York conference on: "The Euro and the dollar: pillars in global finance".

In addition to the above, several other events of different scope and size were organised in the EU. This is the case, for instance, of the conference on 'consumers and the Euro', held in Brussels in March 2005. Other examples are the 2004 Amsterdam conference on: "The Euro after five years. Successes, lessons and challenges" and the conference "Experience with, Preparation for the Euro" organised in Linz in May 2006 in collaboration with the Austrian Presidency. In 2007, a conference on the Euro adoption process in Slovenia was held in Brussels, with the aim of drawing lessons from this Country's success in the management of the changeover process.

Seminars for Journalists

The organisation of a series of seminars for economic journalists is among the first actions set up by DG ECFIN in the framework of the I&C Strategy on the Euro and EMU. The main objectives of this initiative are: (i) to enhance EC relationships with media; (ii) to raise media awareness on the various themes connected with the EMU and the Euro, and on EC economic policies in general; and (iii) to provide journalists with specific information useful for their work. A special focus is given to journalists from new MS and, in particular, from those new MS that will soon adopt the Euro. Typically, seminars have a two or three-day schedule that may include: (i) a preliminary presentation session with DG ECFIN's representatives, and, in the case of decentralised events, the country's EC Representation officials; (ii) various panels on specific topics presented by experts from DG ECFIN, ECB, hosting countries authorities, academicians, specialised journalists etc.; (iii) meetings with the Commissioner and other high-level EU Institutions representatives; (iv) press conferences; (v) visits to specific institutions; etc.

For the implementation of these initiatives a framework agreement was signed with the European Journalism Centre (EJC) and DG PRESS. In particular, the EJC holds the material responsibility for the organisation and the management of the events.

Over the last three years, twenty-two seminars have been carried out. The majority of them have taken place in Brussels, sometimes including a visit to the ECB in Frankfurt, and the remaining ones in new MS countries, namely: Cyprus, Slovenia, Lithuania and Estonia. Most seminars have targeted journalists from the new MS. Only five events have involved instead journalists from the Euro area, and just one seminar has been organised for third-country journalists. Overall, it is estimated that nearly 280 journalists have participated so far in the programme, in particular, some 200 coming from the new MS, 65 from the Euro area, and 13 from third countries. The salient features of the seminars carried out so far are summarised in Table below

Figure 26 - Salient feature of seminars for journalists

Place & Date*	Target	No of participants	Programme
Brussels and Frankfurt 3-6.07.2007	Euro area	13	Days: 4 Conferences: 12 Visits: EP, Money Museum of the Deutsche Bundesbank
Brussels and Frankfurt 4- 7.06. 2007	New MS	15	Days: 4 Conferences: 12 Visits: None
Ljubljana 21-23.05. 2007	New MS	7	Days: 3 Conferences: 5 Visits: None
Ljubljana 19-20.03 2007	New MS	15	Days: 2 Conferences: 6 Visits: None
Nicosia and Brussels 13-16.03.2007	New MS	10	Days: 4 Conferences: 13

Place & Date*	Target	No of participants	Programme
			Visits: None
Brussels and Frankfurt 4-9.12.2006	Third Countries	13	Days:6 Conferences:19 Visits: EP, Money Museum of the Deutsche Bundesbank, and European Central Bank
Brussels 6 – 8.11.2006	New MS	15	Days:3 Conferences:10 Visits: None
Brussels and Frankfurt 17–20.10.2006	New MS	15	Days:4 Conferences:12 Visits: Money Museum of the Deutsche Bundesbank, and European Central Bank
Brussels and Frankfurt 29.08–1.09.2006	Euro area	15	Days:4 Conferences:10 Visits: Money Museum of the Deutsche Bundesbank, and European Central Bank
Brussels 10-12.07.2006	New MS	14	Days:3 Conferences:9 Visits: None
Tallinn, 15-16.05.2006	New MS	10	N/a
Vilnius 03-04.04.2006	New MS	15	Days: 2 Conferences: 7 Visits: None
Ljubljana, 06-07.03.2006	New MS	9	N/a
Tallinn 27-28.02. 2006	New MS	13	Days: 2 Conferences: 5 Visits: Bank of Estonia
Vilnius 27-28.02.2006	New MS	8	Days:2 Conferences: 5 Visits: Bank of Lithuania
Brussels, 2005	New MS	13	N/a
Brussels, 2005	Euro area	13	N/a
Brussels, 2005	New MS	14	N/a
Brussels, 2005	Euro area	12	N/a
Brussels, 2005	New MS	13	N/a
Brussels, 2005	New MS	14	N/a
Brussels, 2005	Euro area	12	N/a

* For seminars held in 2005, details on place, date and programme are not available

Meeting of Directors of Communications

The Directors of Communication Network (DirCom) is the main coordination body for communication strategy at the Community level. It groups representatives from the Commission and the Member States' financial institutions. Periodical meetings of the DirCom network are organised both at the central and decentralised level with a view to ensure a better coordination of EC and MS communication activities and underpin exchange of information between MS on changeover issues. DirCom meetings are typically attended by some 70-80 participants (plenary sessions), including representatives from MS, DG ECFIN staff, and officers from other EU Institutions (e.g. ECB). Some meetings focus on specific practical aspects of the introduction of the Euro, and are therefore open to pre-ins MS only (the so-called 'restricted' sessions).

In the 2004-2006 period, five DirCom meetings were organised, respectively: one in 2004, and two in 2005 and 2006. Three of them were plenary sessions (the last one in particular was also open to the

then accessing Bulgaria and Romania), whilst two were restricted to pre-ins countries. So far, only one event took place at the decentralised level, and precisely in Slovenia at end 2006. In the near future, the EC will reportedly continue this 'decentralised' formula, and plans to organise at least one DirCom meeting per year in countries that are to enter soon in the Euro Area³³.

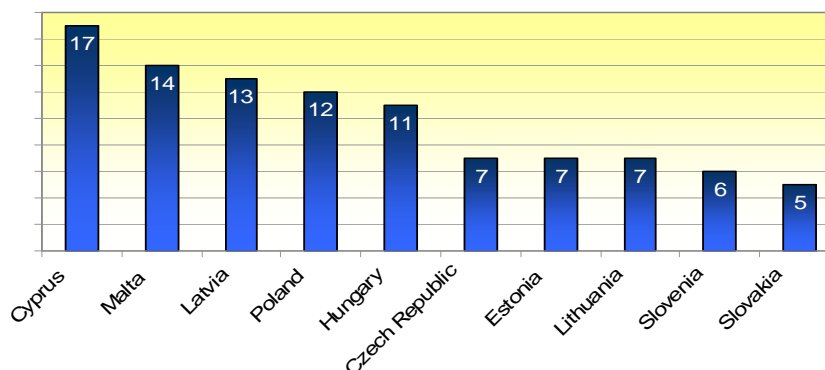
The Euro Team

The Euro Team (ET) is a network of experts qualified in economic and financial affairs (particularly on issues related to the Euro/EMU), who are based in the new MS and can be available to give lectures and participate in seminars and other events on EMU and the Euro-related subjects. The establishment of this network has been supported by DG ECFIN in collaboration with DG COMM and the EC Representations in the various MS. The types of initiatives to which ET members can participate include: conferences, seminars, round-table discussions and lectures, publication of studies or articles, participation in radio or television programmes etc. Although the initiative is coordinated by the Commission (and in particular by the various EC Representations), each member of the network is however an independent speaker and acts entirely in his or her own name. Membership of the Euro team lasts 12 months subject to renewal. Euro Team members receive support from DG ECFIN in various ways, e.g. periodical training seminars, access to information materials (PowerPoint presentations, booklets, studies, opinion polls results, and other background materials), a dedicated website, and other personalised services. No payment to ET members is ordinarily envisaged. However, they can charge a participation fee and/or receive a reimbursement of expenses from the various event-organisers, but are encouraged not to do so in the case of events organised by schools, universities and other non-profit organisations.

Preliminary work was carried out throughout 2005 and early 2006 to create the conditions for the establishment of the network. The initiative was officially launched at end of June 2006 with the organisation of the first training seminar. A second training session was held in February 2007. As of today, the Euro Team includes nearly 100 members, the majority of which coming from the public sector financial milieu (Ministries of Finance and Central Banks' officers), but also including academics, members of intermediate organisations, representatives of European Information centres etc. In many cases, the Euro Team members have also participated in the 'Team Europe' initiative, a network launched a few years earlier with a similar concept and a different scope. Figure 26 below illustrates the number of Euro Team members in the various MS.

Figure 27– The Euro Team Network in the various MS

³³ For example, the next DirCom meeting is scheduled for the 20 November 2007 in Valletta, Malta.



The Euro Coins Genesis Exhibitions

Between March 2003 and January 2007 the “Euro Coins Genesis” Exhibition was hosted in 11 EU countries. This exhibition told the story of the competition to design the Euro coins that were introduced in 2002. It also showed the designs for the common and national sides of the coins that reached the final stage of the competition organised in 1997-98, including those which were eventually not chosen. After November 2005, the exhibition mainly circulated in countries that had signed a Partnership Agreement with the EC. The countries that have hosted so far the exhibition are as follows:

Figure 28– MS that hosted the Euro Coins Genesis exhibition

Member State	Date
Belgium (EC)	Mar 2003
Germany (ECB)	Sep 2003
Italy	Oct 2003
Estonia	Dec 2004 - Jan 2005
Malta	Jul – Aug 2005
Slovakia	Sept – Nov 2005
Lithuania	Nov 2005 – Jan 2006
Austria	May – Jun 2006
Slovenia	Jun – Jul 2006
Latvia	Jul – Aug 2006
Cyprus	Oct 2006 – Jan 2007

In 2006, the Commission ordered an external study for the update and improvement of the exhibitions programme. The aim was to review the format of the “Euro Coins Genesis” and increase the information provided, in order to allow this new product to circulate also in MS which had already hosted the old exhibition. At the same time, the objective was to set up an exhibition that could prove interesting also for Euro Area MS. The new travelling exhibition – named “*The Euro: Our Currency*” (not reported in the table above) was inaugurated in Brussels, where it was shown from 4 – 7 June 2007. After that, it was hosted in Malta (27 June to 8 July), and then it will travel to Cyprus where it will be shown from 22 October to 5 November. As for the old exhibition, this new event is designed to help EU citizen to familiarise with Euro banknotes and coins, but in addition to that *The Euro: Our Currency* is also aimed at presenting the various advantages for the new MS connected with the access to the EMU. The exhibition has been renewed also in terms of technical endowments: in fact,

besides common panels, it features touch screens and audiovisual elements, as well as a corner dedicated to children.

Preliminary to the detailed analysis of the different EIC activities carried out by the Commission since 2004, it is worth recalling the three general objectives of the DG ECFIN's communication strategy³⁴:

- “To help achieve the European Union’s economic policy objectives (including support for Economic and Monetary Union) by **increasing public knowledge** within and outside the EU of the benefits of EMU, how it works, what its policy requirements are and what role it plays in the world economy.
- To contribute to a **smooth changeover** in those Member States which adopt the Euro.
- To inform about our **policy work** and activities in areas other than ECFIN's core business, such as, international affairs, relations with international financial institutions, structural reforms and the Lisbon process, financial operations etc.”

The expected contribution of the various initiatives under review here to the general objectives above obviously differs. In particular, it depends on their specific nature and target public. Before moving to the assessment of each item, it is worth drafting a comprehensive comparative scheme displaying how these activities were initially supposed to contribute to the achievement of the three general objectives. This exercise will later help put the evaluation judgements into framework. In other words, it is evident that, for instance, the results of an Euro coins exhibition are not directly comparable with those of a high-profile international conference, e.g. in New York. This applies not that much to quantitative aspects but above all to the quality and scope of the outputs. These considerations are summarised below.

Figure 29 – Expected contribution of EIC activities to DG ECFIN general objectives

Strategic objectives	Conferences	Seminars for Journalists	DirCom meetings	Euro Team	Exhibition
Increasing public knowledge	Extremely relevant. Articulated programme of conferences and workshops both in EU and third countries.	Extremely relevant, but specific target. A very ample range of topics are discussed in seminars.	Limited target: specifically addressed to policy makers. Scarce and indirect effects on public knowledge.	Relevant, though indirectly, i.e. via Euro Team members who should act as ‘multipliers’.	Informative only on marginal aspects. But the new exhibition appears more relevant.
Supporting smooth changeovers	Especially, ‘Model Conferences’, and few other events are specifically focused on that.	Only moderately relevant: they help avoiding misinformation in pre-ins MS. More relevant is the case of ‘regional’ seminars in local language.	Very relevant, especially restricted sessions. Contribution through the presentations of specific policies, country-cases, etc.	Action specifically addressed to support changeovers in MS	Scarce contribution and mainly of ‘promotional’ character
Raising awareness on policy work	Specific sessions on these issues in most of events	Only marginally discussed within specific sessions.	These are a relevant issue in some DirCom	Item partially at stake, at Euro Team	Not relevant in this field.

³⁴ Excerpt from the “Outline of DG ECFIN’s external communication strategy”, 2006. Prepared by External Communication Unit (R-4), for internal circulation.

			meetings	coordination meetings	
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5.1.7 SUB-QUESTION 1

Evaluation Question: *To what extent were event programmes and other activities designed to respond to identified needs of participants and to meet Commission objectives*

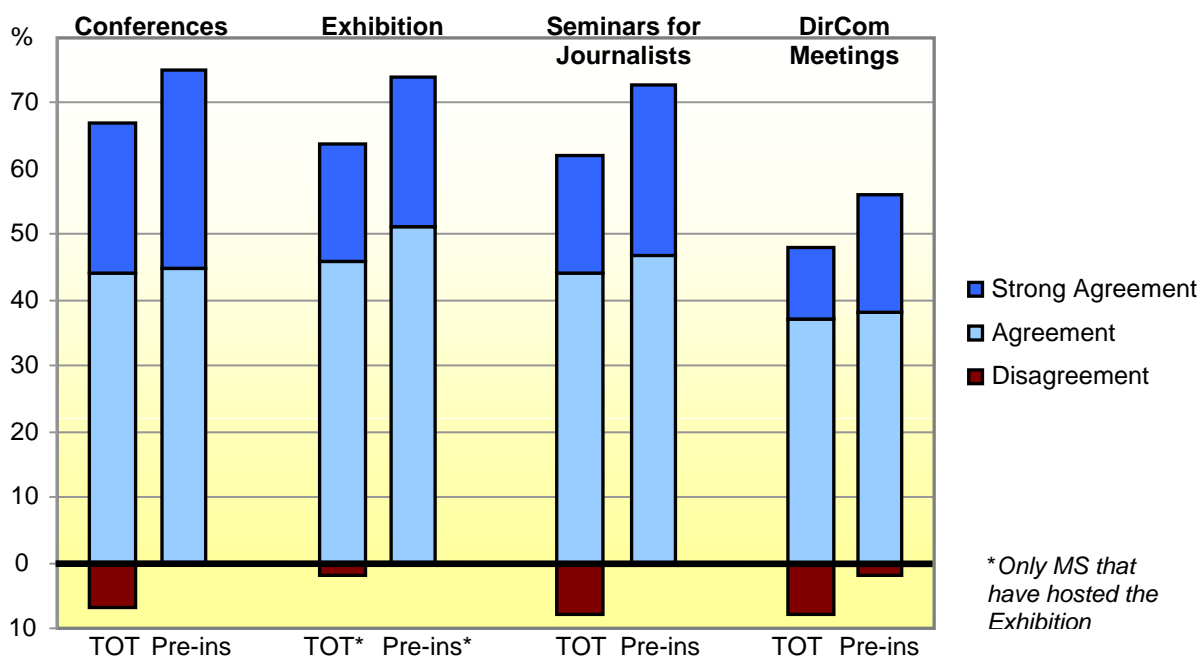
FINDINGS

A first quantitative indication of the relevance of the EIC actions is provided by the stakeholders' views expressed in the online survey. The large majority of respondents agree that all these initiatives were supportive to the needs of the national stakeholders involved in the communication on EMU and the Euro, and negative judgements are very marginal. In particular, positive assessments are above 60% for the conferences programme, the seminars for journalists, and the Euro Coins exhibition, while the judgements on DirCom meetings are comparatively less positive, i.e. with a rate of positive responses below 50%. In addition to that, it is possible to notice that, in line with expectations, the degree of appreciation expressed by respondents from pre-ins countries is significantly higher than the average. In fact, DG ECFIN I&C strategy is mainly focused on new MS and especially on those that are soon to adopt the Euro, hence, although also Euro Area MS are involved in many of these activities³⁵, in absolute terms pre-ins MS are relatively more targeted. The results of the online survey on this aspect are summarised in Figure 30 below³⁶.

Figure 30– Stakeholders views on supportiveness of EIC activities

³⁵ In particular: (i) DirCom network also include Euro Area members, (ii) the Brussels Economic Forum and other conferences and workshops organized are addressed to all MS, (iii) in few cases, seminars for journalists from Euro Areas have been organized, and (iv) the Euro Coins Genesis Exhibition was shown also in Belgium, Italy and Germany.

³⁶ The figure displays only the positive and the negative responses: neutral assessments are not displayed while DA/DK responses are not included. The data for pre-ins countries are based on a limited subset of observations and therefore are provided for qualitative purposes only.



Additional insights on the relevance of the EIC initiatives and their degree of adaptation to beneficiaries' needs have been drawn from a series of in-depth interviews with key-stakeholders and other background materials. The main findings from this qualitative analysis are as follows:

Conferences – The conferences organised by DG ECFIN are widely considered as a useful means to present and discuss issues related to the European economic policy and to improve the collaboration among stakeholders within the EU or in third countries. The objective of reinforcing the networking among key-actors is also overtly mentioned in the overall EC I&C strategy on the Euro and EMU³⁷.

The evidence collected shows that initiatives of this kind are particularly well-received by national authorities: nearly eight in ten found conferences fairly or very supportive and none expressed a negative view. This favourable result is also confirmed by phone interviews with institutional representatives from pre-ins countries. In particular, international 'model' conferences appear to be in line with the needs of these countries under two main respects: (i) the provision of substantive information - it seems that participants appreciated especially the presentation of other MS practical experiences with the introduction of the Euro; (ii) and as a political event – in various instances conferences helped improve the relations between institutions, and the overall visibility of the I&C programme. For instance this was the aspect particularly appreciated of the 'model' conference held in Slovenia in March 2006.

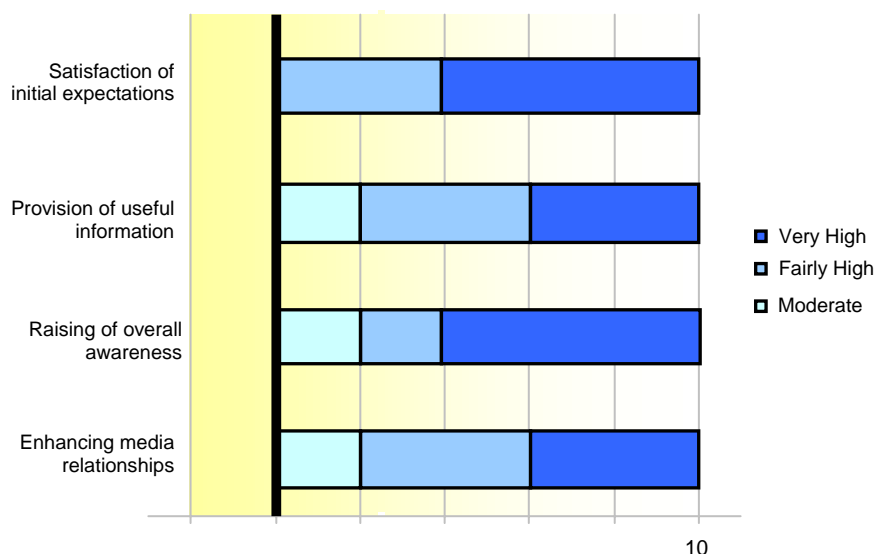
Seminars for Journalists - These seminars have three main objectives, namely: (i) improving EC relationship with the media; (ii) raising journalists' awareness on EMU and Euro-related policies and issues; and (iii) providing participants with specific materials useful for their work.

A first rough indicator of success is that, according to EC representatives, there usually are fifty percent more applicants than seats available for each seminar. An evaluation of the degree of achievement of seminars' objectives was asked to a sample of journalists. In order to assess the

³⁷ See COM 552 final, p.11

relevance of the initiative also the degree to which the seminars satisfied their initial expectations was investigated. The results of the survey are fairly encouraging: for all respondents the seminars were definitely up to expectation and, as illustrated in Figure 31 below, the initial objectives appear largely achieved.

Figure 31 -Satisfaction of Initial Expectations / Degree of achievement of objectives (telephone interviews)



In addition to that, some participants were asked to comment on the relevance of the specific topics discussed in the seminars and on other issues that they would have liked to see discussed more. The main aspects emerged are summed up in Figure 32 below.

Figure 32– Views on the relevancy of specific topics³⁸

Topics appeared particularly relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Case-studies. Especially Slovenian case, but in general discussion linked to specific national cases - Practical aspects of the introduction of the Euro and effects on citizens - Accession parameters and macroeconomic aspects - General EU economic policies (fiscal, monetary, trade etc.) - The ECB session was usually much appreciated
Topics to be increasingly covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Procedures and mechanisms of the changeover to the Euro - Macroeconomic criteria for the accession to the Euro area - Practical examples on how the introduction of the Euro affects the various sector of the national economy and specific industries. - Inflation and possible connection with the Euro - Impact and policies on world trade, also with reference to specific markets (mentioned by third countries journalists)
Cross-cutting Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although relevant, some topics were discussed in too technical detail - Some interesting topics were discussed repeatedly in several sessions

³⁸ The Table also includes some responses provided by means on an evaluation form completed by participants to 2007 seminars.

Directors of Communication Meetings – Compared to other EIC activity the opinions on DirCom meetings are more mixed. In particular, a clear divergence between national authorities and EC Representation officers' opinions can be noticed: nearly seven in ten institutional representatives from MS provided a positive overview on the relevance of these initiatives, while only less than half of EC officials offered similarly positive views. Generally, the most negative assessments came from Euro Area countries³⁹: positive responses in the sub-sample were only one-third of the total. This is partly explained by the fact that in many of these countries national authorities have discontinued communication on the Euro and are by consequence only marginally interested in these issues.

As regards the relevance of the topics discussed at DirCom Meetings, the feedbacks provided by interview partners are fairly encouraging, although some critical aspects have been pointed out. In particular, some DirCom members found that the information provided at the meetings is sometimes repetitive and does not always provide new insights, and suggested that the organisation of the DirCom meetings should be more flexible, and focussed on up-to-date topics rather than on the repetition of basic concepts.

The Euro Team – The kick off meeting of the Euro Team was held in mid 2006 and the second training session took place in 2007, hence it is too early to draw significant conclusions on this experience. However, an initial positive stakeholder assessment of the nature, scope and methodology with which the network has been created can be recorded. In particular, various ET members who had earlier participated in the Team Europe network noticed that the present initiative seems much better organised than the previous one, and its objectives and functioning are better defined. Reportedly, the preparatory activities, and especially the two meetings held so far, well responded to members' needs for preliminary 'guidance'. On the other hand, in-depth interviews with various stakeholders highlighted that there are diverse opinions on some aspects of the network's design, and namely:

- the professional background of Euro Team members is extremely varied. According to some, it would be more productive to have more homogeneous levels of competence or, alternatively, to segment training sessions on the basis of member profiles and needs;
- partly related to the above, some ET members with specific expertise in this area observed that, although relevant, the items discussed in the meetings were to a large extent already known;
- apparently there is no clear mechanism for the involvement of ET members in I&C activities in his/her own country, and this aspect is largely left to the 'proactiveness' of individuals. In some MS, however, it is reported that this informal approach may have a negative impact on the volume of activities carried out by ET members.

Euro Coins Genesis Exhibition – The "Euro Coins Genesis" was the only initiative of this kind promoted by EC under the PRINCE Programme, until a new exhibition was started in mid-2007. Several MS authorities, especially outside of the Euro Area, demonstrated their interest in this information tool, and as a consequence of this the exhibition has kept circulating across the EU for nearly 4 years. Although the objectives of this initiative were evidently much less ambitious than for 'topic' events, several stakeholders found that the exhibition somehow contributed to raise the general awareness on the single currency process. The results of the online surveys indicate that positive assessments came especially from EC Representations in the various MS (about eight in ten positive responses), but also the institutional representatives' judgements are fairly above the average. At the EC central level, however, the consensus is maybe not as strong. Some interviewees

³⁹ Also including countries with an opt-out

in fact raised questions about the usefulness of exhibitions and their added value, and suggested that these types of initiatives should not continue to be supported under the programme.

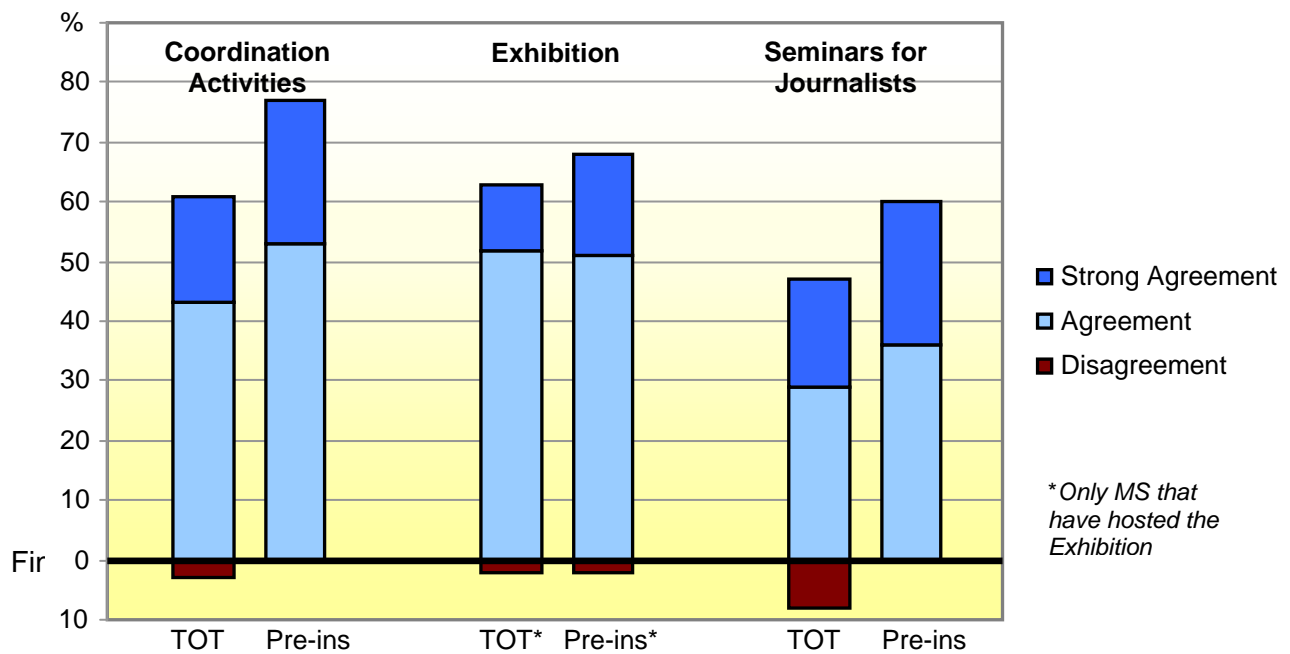
5.1.8 SUB-QUESTION 2

Evaluation Question: *What were the effects of events and coordination activities specifically designed to bring together similar types of actors either physically or electronically? How were results used to improve the effectiveness of the various communication activities?*

FINDINGS

For a first general estimation of the degree of EIC initiatives effectiveness, it is possible to make recourse again to the results of the online survey. As illustrated in Figure 33 below the general evaluation is broadly positive. In particular, more than 60% of respondents report that coordination activities (i.e. DirCom meetings and Euro Team meetings) and the Euro Coins Exhibition can be considered as successful. The appreciation of the impact of seminars for journalists is a bit lower (i.e. nearly half of positive responses). As reported before, also in this case the level of appreciation appears to some extent higher in pre-ins countries than in the Euro area, with the possible exception of the Euro Coins exhibition, for which the differences appear marginal.

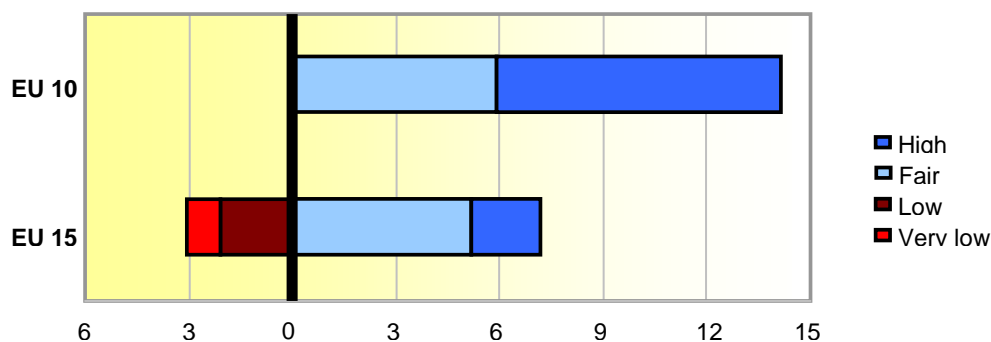
Figure 33 – Impact of EIC activities



Findings of a more qualitative nature are as follows:

Conferences – Indications on how the conferences programme was received by MS Authorities can be drawn from the results of a DG ECFIN internal evaluation exercise⁴⁰. The responses indicate that this is among the three most-preferred I&C initiatives. In particular, nearly nine in ten respondents provide a positive overview and for more than one-third the judgement is very positive. As illustrated below, the appreciation of new MS authorities for these initiatives is comparatively much higher than for old MS.

Figure 34– National authorities' evaluation of conferences effectiveness⁴¹



⁴⁰ The questionnaire was sent to Central Banks and Governments officers of the EU 25 countries, and the results are segmented between 'old' MS (EU 15) and 'new' MS (EU 10).

⁴¹ Author's elaboration on data provided by DG ECFIN.

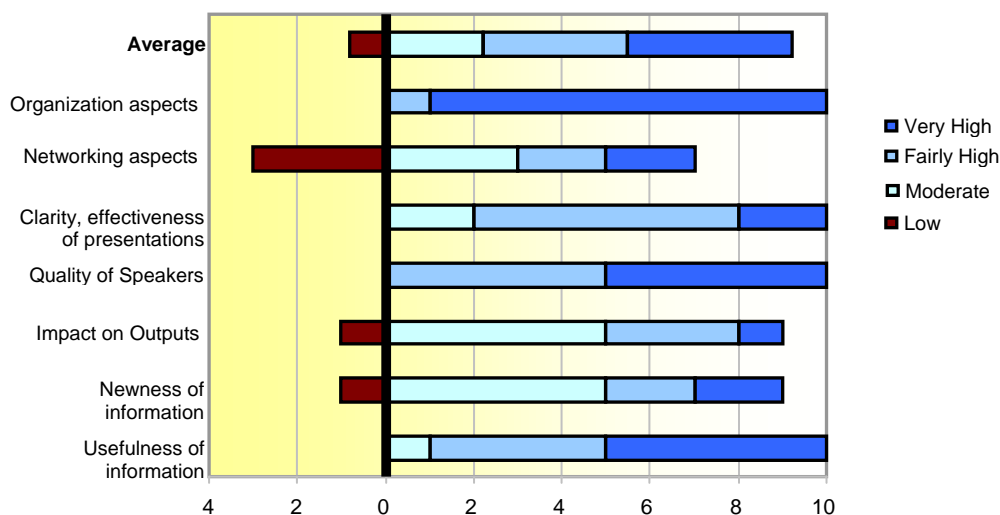
To a certain extent this may reflect the particular value attributed to 'model' conferences, as emerged from direct contacts with key-stakeholders in pre-ins countries. An example is provided by the model conference held in Slovenia on 17 March, 2006, in coincidence with the official kick off of the I&C campaign. The event was attended by some 100-150 participants. The keys of the success of this initiative are threefold: (i) the wide visibility obtained by the conference on the media; (ii) the high-profile of the speakers invited; (iii) the extremely appropriate timing chosen.

Seminars for Journalists - In order to evaluate the effectiveness of this type of initiatives various indicators should be taken into account, in particular:

- Effectiveness of information provided. This is possibly the most important factor. In particular, this aspect can be analysed under three viewpoints: (i) to what extent the information provided was new to the recipients; (ii) to what extent it was useful for recipients' work; (iii) the actual 'quantitative' impact of the seminars on journalist' work in terms of outputs produced.
- Quality of Speakers. Another factor playing a major role on seminars' effectiveness is represented by the participants' appreciation of the speakers, and in particular: (i) to what extent they have been considered qualified and credible; and (ii) to what extent their presentations were clear and effective.
- Networking: a side-effect of all events that brings together similar type of actors is to enable the establishment of working relationships that continue after the event. The results in this field can be used as another measure of the overall impact.
- Organisational aspects: the effectiveness of the seminars was also influenced by organisational aspects, e.g. logistics, schedule, etc.

All these aspects have been investigated through telephone and the review of the results of participants' evaluation forms made available by DG ECFIN. Results suggest that under many respects the seminars proved successful. The information provided was considered useful for recipients' work, although not necessarily new. The high-profile of the speakers invited was positively evaluated, but sometimes their presentations were considered too technical or repetitive. Other respondents pointed out that maybe it would be more interesting to involve additional 'independent' speakers. As regards networking, these initiatives proved moderately effective on average. In this respect, some participants complained that the time dedicated to interactive sessions was perhaps too limited. Finally, an extremely positive review was given to organisational and technical aspects. With the only major critical aspect regarding the schedule, that for many was too tight and tiring. These results are summarised in Figure 35 below.

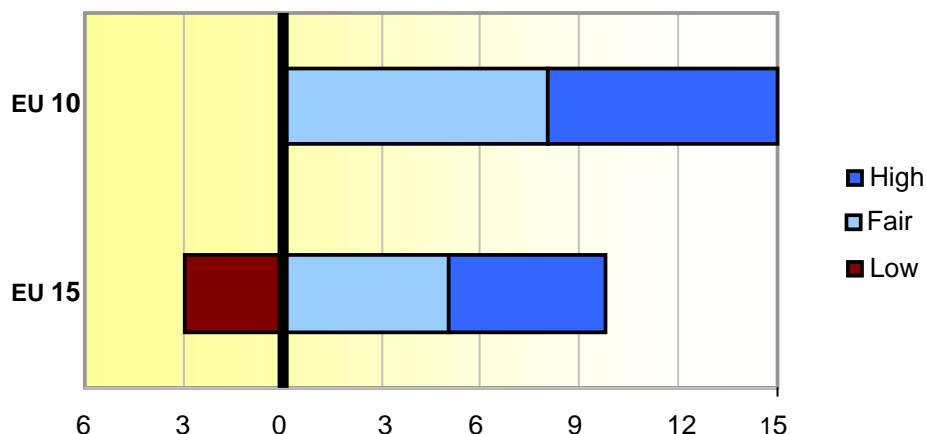
Figure 35 – Journalists' evaluation of seminars



The opinions of other types of stakeholders on the usefulness of seminars for journalists are more mixed. This is mainly due to the particularly negative stance of respondents from the Euro Area (less than one-third of positive responses), which is also confirmed by the results of the internal evaluation conducted by DG ECFIN: while only one-fourth of EU15 institutional representatives made a positive assessment of seminars, in the case of EU10 respondents, the rate of favourable answers is nearly nine in ten. This discrepancy is explained by two factors: (i) most of the EC efforts in this area have concentrated on EU10 countries (only 5 out of 22 seminars addressed Euro Area journalists); (ii) stakeholders from countries that are already in the Euro Area sometimes cannot see the usefulness of continuous continuing I&C actions on EMU/Euro. It is also possible to observe that in some cases the various formula of seminars were received differently: overall, there is a general preference for seminars including a visit to the ECB in Frankfurt. By converse, the regional seminars for local journalists, apparently are not as well received.

Directors of Communication Meetings – Although DirCom meetings often do not have a direct and practical impact on the national I&C campaigns, they were highlighted by the majority of network members interviewed as particularly useful. In fact it was reported that they offer a good platform for representatives from the different Member States to meet, exchange their experiences, receive new information and establish contacts. The positive evaluation of DirCom meeting by its members also results from the assessment conducted by DG ECFIN: nine in ten respondents considered fairly or very positively their experiences with the network. Unsurprisingly, the most encouraging judgements are provided by respondents from new MS, as shown in Figure 36 below.

Figure 36 – Members' appreciation of DirCom activities⁴²



However, some anecdotal evidence provided by interviewees, suggests that, although the meetings were helpful in many respects and extremely important to support the changeover process, the organisational aspects may require some modification. In particular:

- it was proposed the DirCom meetings to take place more frequently. This issue came out also from DG ECFIN's evaluation, with some New MS representatives suggesting to organise up to 3-4 meetings a year (however, when the issue was raised during the DirCom meeting in Malta, this suggestion was not met with any support);
- the exchange of experiences should be made at a deeper level and concrete cases analysed in more details. This issue was also raised by some respondents to DG ECFIN's evaluation who indicated their preference for actual experiences with and practical aspects of the introduction of the Euro (i.e. inflation, and macroeconomic impacts).

The Euro Team – For nearly three-quarters of ET members that have participated to the online survey, the initial feedbacks on their activities is fairly positive. This can be partly attributed to the good preparation received from the Commission especially through the training sessions. With just one exception, all Euro team members interviewed declared in fact that the coordination events organised so far have been fairly or very useful. Given the recent establishment of the network the only case that could be analysed in more detail is the Slovenian changeover. The in-depth interviews with some Slovenian members of the Euro Team highlighted an overall positive assessment. More specifically:

- preparatory activities: the Euro Team meetings have represented useful occasions for confirming notions already known and to see them presented from different viewpoints. The information provided was helpful for members with less solid background, but for experts it had little practical use. Another interesting feature was to have subjects presented by reputed experts and have the opportunity of a direct interaction with them. Also the establishment of connections with colleagues from other MS was mentioned as a

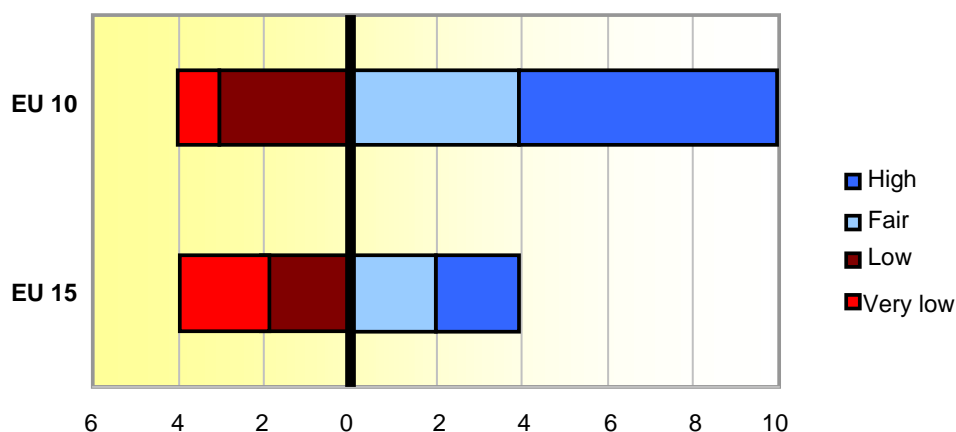
⁴² Author's elaboration on data provided by DG ECFIN.

positive result of these meetings. The materials provided was useful for the same reason: no new information but a different perspective and some practical figures and slides to be used for future presentations;

- functioning: in the case of Slovenia, coordination was not a big problem, as the group was small and all members knew each other well. The relationships were then on an informal ground and this facilitated the overall functioning. On the other hand, it was not very clear if Euro Team member should have proactively proposed themselves for presentation activities etc. or were supposed to wait for calls from other institutions/organisations. In the same vein, it was proposed to give more visibility to the team;
- impact: some Slovenian Euro Team members were very active during the I&C campaign. They participated to initiative of various nature including: presentations to students, participation to TV-shows, interviews with foreign media, speeches at conferences etc. However, as anticipated the impact of Euro Team members' activities on Slovenian changeover was somehow limited by the late launch of the initiative.

The Euro Coins Genesis Exhibition – The stakeholders' views on the success of this initiative were on average fairly positive. The Euro Coins Genesis exhibition was not really considered as an informative instrument but rather a promotional event. In particular, the excessive 'institutional' character of this initiative has been also criticised by some Slovenian key-stakeholders⁴³. The most positive overviews collected through the online survey came from the Government representatives, and especially from new MS.

Figure 37– National authorities' appreciation of the Euro Coins Genesis exhibition⁴⁴



⁴³ Another critical items emerged from interviews with Slovenian stakeholders regard the timing: the period chosen for the exhibition was in fact less than ideal (12 Jun – 12 Jul 2006). In that period schools are closed, and therefore it was not possible to organize guided-visits and use the exhibition for educative purposes.

⁴⁴ Author's elaboration on data provided by DG ECFIN.

5.1.9 SUB-QUESTION 3

Evaluation Question: *To what extent do these types of action contribute towards the attainment of programme objectives at a reasonable cost?*

FINDINGS

Prior to any consideration on the financial aspects of the various EIC initiatives, it is worth reminding that all in all the EC have devoted over the past four years a substantial share of the PRINCE budget to this line of activity. The total expenditure is of about EUR 6.5 million, and account for about one-third of the budget executed so far, as illustrated in Figure 38 below⁴⁵.

Figure 38– Expenditure for EIC activities on the total

	2004	2005	2006	2007 (provisional)
Total executed	EUR 2,36 M	EUR 3,97 M	EUR 4,93 M	EUR 7,00 M
Budget for EIC activities	EUR 1,72 M*	EUR 1,28 M	EUR 1,66 M	EUR 1,91 M
Share of EIC on the total	72,9%*	32,2%	33,7%	27%

* part of the 2004 budget was in fact executed in 2005

More specifically, on the basis of the financial information available some considerations on the cost of the different EIC actions can be made, and namely:

Conferences - The total budget devoted to the organisation of conferences in the 2004-2006 period amounted to nearly EUR 1.9 million⁴⁶. Third-country events absorbed the bulk of resources (about 40% of the total). Model conferences accounted for some 16% of the total: in particular the Slovenian conference cost some EUR 134.000 whilst the Cypriot one about EUR 171.000. The Brussels Economic Forums accounted for 14% of the total, but it seems that in 2005 the forum was only partially financed through the PRINCE budget line. The remainder 30% of resources was committed for other EU events, such as the large-scale conferences on Euro held in Amsterdam in October 2004.

Leaving aside the events organised in third countries for which specific evaluations are not available, it is interesting to analyse in more detail the degree of appreciation for conferences particularly tailored for pre-ins countries as compared to the rest of the programme. The results of the online surveys indicate that, overall, some 67% of interviewees found conferences supportive to national I&C campaign, but considering only respondents from pre-ins countries, this percentage raises to 75%, and to more than 80% when MS with a PA with the Commission are concerned⁴⁷. The existence of significant differences on a country basis is also confirmed by the outcome of DG ECFIN's internal evaluation reported above. If one assumes the results of the online surveys as a

⁴⁵ The information is drawn from internal financial reports provided by DG ECFIN. The figures included also minor initiatives that have not been analyzed in details in this study, e.g. publication stands at public events, euro festivities etc. Data for 2007 are drawn from the DG ECFIN internal work programme on PRINCE.

⁴⁶ The figures include conferences held before 31.12.2006 and the provisional cost for the New York conference of April 2007

⁴⁷ These last two data are however based on a limited number of observations. Hence, they should not be retained as statistically meaningful.

rough proxy for the effectiveness of the various types of events, it turns out that in order to boost the overall efficiency of the conference programme, 'model' conferences and other initiative specifically tailored for pre-ins countries should be further strengthened.

Seminar for Journalists - Detailed information on the financial costs of each seminar and related breakdown of expenses are not known. From the financial data provided by DG ECFIN it appears that the overall budget committed on these actions has amounted so far to about EUR 910.000. This includes: (i) the allocations made in 2004, which were used to finance seminars carried out in 2005 (some EUR 370.000), the resources for the 2006 seminars committed in the 2005 budget (some EUR 300.000); (iii) additional resources from the 2005 budget for the organisations of specific seminars in new MS within the framework of Partnership Agreements (some EUR 100.000); and (iv) the budget committed in 2006 apparently to finance seminars to be held in 2007 (some EUR 140.000). This would turn into an average cost per seminar of some EUR 40.000. However, not all the seminars had evidently the same level of costs. This depended mainly by three factors: (i) the duration (no. of days); (ii) the no. of participants; (iii) the logistics (accommodation and organisational costs in Brussels or Frankfurt are comparatively higher than in Tallinn or Vilnius); and (iv) target groups (moving journalists from overseas is evidently much more expensive than organising regional seminars addressed only to one country's journalists). In addition, it is unclear whether the budget for 2007 seminars was later increased or not, and if some more seminars are planned for this year on top of those listed. Considering only the 2005-2006 period, and taking into account the duration of the seminar and the number of participants, it is possible to estimate the unit cost in terms of participant/day in the range of EUR 1.100. Unsurprisingly, seminars carried out at regional level appear less expensive (i.e. some EUR 900 p/d), but qualitative evidence suggests that in comparison they have also been relatively not so well-received.

The results of the online survey presented above show that the degree of appreciation for these initiatives greatly varies inside and outside the Euro Area. In particular, the rate of positive judgements provided by respondents from pre-ins country is double than for Euro Area countries, thus reflecting the Commission priority in this area and clearly suggesting that it is more efficient to focus on journalist coming from the former than from the latter.

Director of Communication Meetings - The overall financial cost of these initiatives has amounted so far to about EUR 428.000, almost evenly distributed over the 2004-2006 period⁴⁸. Sessions restricted to the new MS appear to be significantly less expensive than plenary sessions, with an average cost of EUR 30 - 40,000 against some EUR 100,000 – 150,000. The only decentralised meeting organised so far (Ljubljana, Nov 2006) cost an estimated EUR 100.000.

The inputs provided by the DG ECFIN evaluation and the results of the online survey suggest that also DirCom meetings are particularly effective when addressing pre-ins countries. In some cases, network members from these countries also proposed to increase the number of annual DirCom meetings. If one considers that the cost of restricted sessions appear to be about one-third that of plenary sessions, adding one restricted session per year would not represent an excessive financial effort in absolute terms and could prove reasonably efficient.

Euro Team – As of end 2006, the budget allocated for the establishment of the Euro Team network and the organisation of the initial activities exceeded EUR 200.000. In 2007 a second training session

⁴⁸ The figures refer to five meetings held between May 2004 and November 2006. Information on 2007 events is not available.

was organised, but information on its cost is not available. Direct interviews with key stakeholders highlighted that the establishment of the Euro Team is broadly considered as among the most cost-effective PRINCE actions. However, so far the volume of activities implemented in this area, has been too small to allow a real estimation.

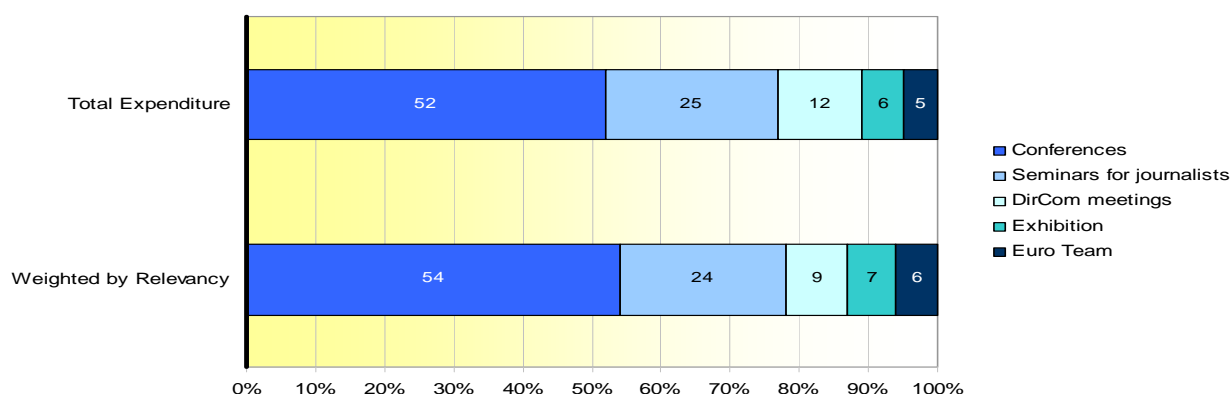
Euro Coins Genesis Exhibition - Overall, the financial cost for the setting up of the exhibition and its circulation across Europe is estimated at some EUR 241.000, being about EUR 20.000 per event. This includes also the events implemented within the framework of Partnership Agreements. For the new exhibition “*the Euro: Our Currency*” apparently some EUR 346.000 has been committed in the 2006 budget, which included also the development cost.

Since information on the attendance to the *Euro Coins Genesis* are not available, it is difficult to attempt an estimation of the cost-effectiveness of the initiative. In some cases the number of participants to the inaugurations in the different MS are known, i.e. ranging from 50 to 300, but it is not clear to what extent the exhibition was appealing for the general public.

Moreover:

1) In absolute terms conferences account for the majority of the PRINCE budget for EIC activities. Seminars for journalists represent the second largest item, absorbing about one-quarter of the financial resources under this title. These data can be combined with the indications on the relevance obtained from the online survey, in order to build a proxy for the evaluation of the balancing of the distribution of programme's resources with respect to the needs. Figure 39 below summarises the results of this analysis, with the first bar reproducing the actual distribution of resources and the second representing the use of resources weighted by the stakeholders' judgements on the relevance of the interventions. The absence of significant differences between the two bars can be interpreted as a substantial adequateness of the balancing of resources. The only notable variation regards DirCom meetings, which appear comparatively less valued than other EIC activities. It must be said, however, that DirCom members were not explicitly targeted by the online survey, and since this activity is not intended to produce effects on the general public, it is possible that external stakeholders were not always in the right position to provide an adequately informed opinion.

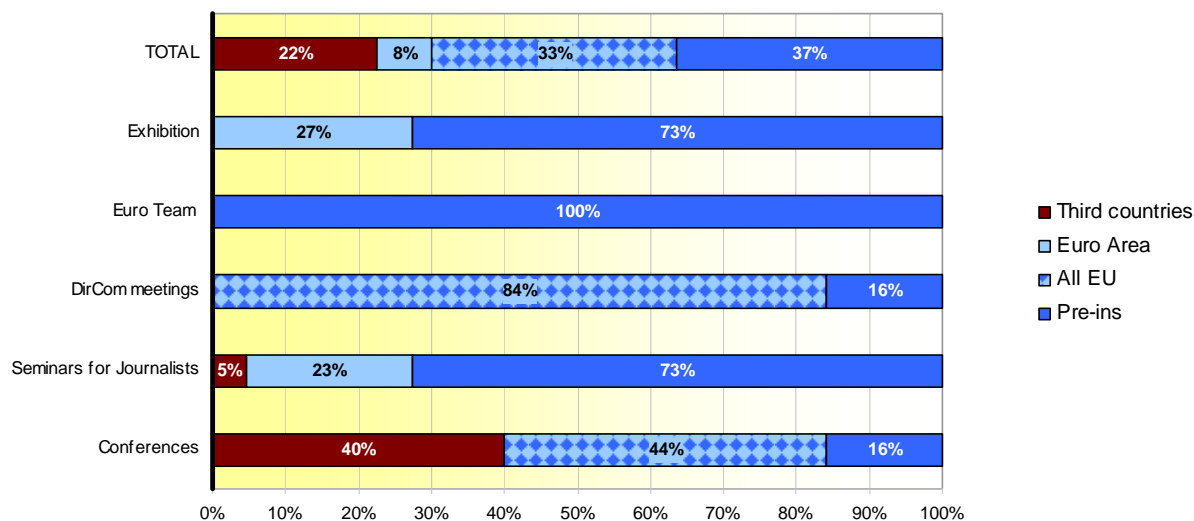
Figure 39– The balancing in the use of the financial resources



2) The analysis shows that in all areas the degree of appreciation of EIC activities expressed by stakeholders from pre-ins MS is significantly higher than in Euro Area. This result was largely expected and is in line with the objectives of DG ECFIN for the PRINCE Programme. Figure 40 below

summarises, on the basis of the information available, how the distribution of the programme resources was compliant with this general orientation.

Figure 40– The distribution of financial resources by nature of MS



CONCLUSIONS

Degree to which EIC activities were adapted to the needs

Overall, the programme of events and coordination activities adequately responded to recipients' needs and to a large extent the original objectives appear achieved. The series of initiatives organised at local level, in particular in pre-ins MS, raised the general degree of awareness, and positively influenced the general public on Euro/EMU-related topics. More specifically:

- A wide range of conferences has been organised at different levels, including high-profile events in third-countries, where they represented by far the major I&C instrument on EMU/Euro communication. Particularly relevant have been international 'model' conferences organised in those MS that are soon to adopt the Euro. Overall, conferences are seen by a vast group of stakeholders as the most supportive among EIC activities set up by DG ECFIN.
- The main pillar of the DG ECFIN I&C strategy for the media is represented by the seminars for journalist's programme, which started in 2005. Feedbacks from participants suggest that these events are typically up to participants' expectations and well adapted to their needs. However, the relevance of the information provided is not always optimal, and some questioned also on the criteria for the selection of participants.
- The Directors of Communication network is the main coordination mechanism between the Commission and the MS institutions dealing with Euro-related issues (typically Central Banks and Ministries of Finance). The importance of this instrument is mainly appreciated by its members, while outside stakeholders have more mixed opinions. A critical point may regard the participation to the network of Euro Area institutions that have stopped communicating on the Euro: the interest of these members to the network activities is apparently fairly low.

- The Euro Team network was recently established but the comments on its preliminary activities are overall very positive. The preparatory activities, and especially the two meetings organised by the EC well responded to the members' needs for an initial 'guidance'. Minor issues emerged as regard - again - the relevancy of topics discussed in the training sessions, and the possibly excessive variety of members' backgrounds.
- Although on a fairly different level, also the Euro Coins Exhibition was judged by most of stakeholders as a quite supportive tool for raising awareness on Euro-related themes especially in pre-ins MS. To a large extent, however, this was identified as an 'institutional' event and not really substantive.

Effectiveness of EIC activities

The evidence collected on the impact of the EIC activities suggests that there is a general positive outlook on the effectiveness of the programme. All initiatives have proved fairly successful though at a different degree. Also in this case the results appear somewhat different between pre-ins countries and the Euro area. In particular:

- Conferences are seen, especially by institutional representatives of pre-ins MS, as very successful initiatives. This is also connected with the good overviews received by 'model' conferences. For example this was one of the best-received EC initiatives in the Slovenian campaign, thanks to its political impact and the wide visibility on media.
- The evaluation of seminars for journalists is less uniform. The results of the interviews with participants indicate a fairly high level of success, with minor shortcomings regarding mainly the quantitative impact on journalists' work and the scarce networking among participants. For external stakeholders, however, the impact of these initiatives was not as enthusiastic, with negative perceptions possibly concentrating on Euro area seminars, and regional seminars held in local language.
- The DirCom meetings organised by the Commission have broadly facilitated the networking with MS institutions and helped the exchange of information on general and practical aspects of the changeover between Euro area and pre-ins MS. The impact was then largely positive, especially for countries that are in the process of introducing the Euro. Some members also suggested increasing the frequency of meetings.
- The actual impact of Euro Team members' activities was mainly limited by the late launch of the initiative. Furthermore, it is difficult to estimate the real impact on the I&C programme since in many cases it is not possible to assess to what extent members' activities can be attributed to the membership in Euro Team or to their professional position. The evaluation of the specific Slovenian case indicated that the performances of ET network in this country were broadly positive.
- The stakeholders' evaluations on the usefulness of the Euro Coins Genesis exhibition are on average fairly positive. However, this was not really considered as an informative instrument but rather a promotional event. In particular, the excessive 'institutional' character attributed to this initiative have been also criticised by some Slovenian key-stakeholders.

Financial aspects of EIC activities

EIC activities represented so far no less than one-third of the total expenditure of the PRINCE programme since 2004, being well above EUR 6.0 million. In particular conferences account for the

majority of this figure, whilst seminars for journalists were the second largest item, having absorbed about one-quarter of the budget. The analysis evidenced that the way in which the resources have been distributed among the various EIC activities is fairly balanced and no significant differences with the structure of needs have been observed. The budget allocations have also reflected the different extent and nature of needs inside and outside of the Euro Area. As regards specific activities:

- In the field of conferences, the most efficient seemed to be 'model' conferences and, more generally, all events addressing pre-ins countries;
- The same consideration applies to seminars for journalists. In addition, it can be noticed that regional seminars, although possibly less expensive, may not represent the most efficient formula;
- Plenary sessions of DirCom meetings are significantly more costly than restricted sessions for pre-ins MS. Considering that pre-ins MS are also the most interested to this initiative, restricted sessions then appear relatively more cost-effective than plenary ones;
- Preliminary evidence indicates that the establishment of Euro team network could result a very cost-effective initiative. This however depends on future developments and in particular on how the initiative will be supported and coordinated by the Commission both at the central and at the national level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conferences. In order to enhance the cost-effectiveness of this programme component, it is recommended to maintain or increase the present level of effort on events for pre-in MS which on average are better received.
- Seminars for Journalists. Minor adjustments to these initiatives can be made, namely: (i) devise ways to deal with the different backgrounds of participants, including systematic ways to monitor beneficiaries' interests and adjust the programmes accordingly; (ii) propose less demanding schedules. In addition to that, it would appear necessary to gain more insights on the comparatively lower appreciation for regional seminars and to re-consider this formula accordingly.
- Directors of Communication Meetings. Raising the interests of DirCom members from countries that have stopped communicating on the Euro could prove extremely difficult. To concentrate especially on networking events restricted to new MS could prove particularly efficient.
- Euro Team. As for seminars for journalists it would be beneficial to have more 'tailored' trainings, e.g. segmenting the network in sub-groups with similar level of competences (SME Associations, Consumer Groups etc.). In addition to that, it seems advisable to clarify the mechanisms for the involvement of ET members at national level, and to have the ET members contacts details published on the internet.

5.3 OPINION POLLING

OVERVIEW

The implementation of the I&C strategy on the Euro and EMU is based on the flexible combination of various monitoring and feedback tools to assess the impact of the campaigns and eventually help reorient resources in order to fill in possible information gaps and other communication needs. The instruments that have been adopted to this aim mainly include quantitative surveys, and to a lesser extent, qualitative surveys and studies.

Quantitative surveys have been conducted through the Flash Eurobarometer⁴⁹ (EB) facility, and coordinated by the DG Communication in cooperation with DG ECFIN. Typically, the methodology followed is telephone close-ended interviews, but in some cases face-to-face interviews have been carried out to complement the limited diffusion of fixed-line connections in certain areas of new MS. The interviews are based on similar questionnaires in order to have comparable results over time. The target group of these surveys is normally represented by the general public, stratified by gender, age, profession and geographical residence. In a few cases, ad hoc questionnaires for specific target groups, e.g. enterprises or banks, were added. EB surveys normally cover a sample of 1,000 interviewees per country, but in the case of surveys addressing a specific target group the size of sample can be much smaller.

Since 2004, sixteen such polls have been carried out. More specifically:

- five opinion polls targeting the citizens of the new MS, and aimed at assessing their level of awareness of Euro-related issues, as well as their opinions regarding the I&C campaigns, expectations and fears etc.
- three follow-up opinion polls targeted at the Euro zone, aimed at measuring the changes occurred over time in the public attitude regarding the Euro and EMU
- eight country-specific surveys have been carried out since 2006, of which seven in Slovenia and one in Cyprus, all within the framework of strategic PA with the Commission.

In two new MS, the EB surveys have been followed up by *qualitative surveys* aimed at providing further detail about the findings from the telephone interviews. Finally, the EC has also financed three *studies* on: (i) the changes to the design of the Euro coins; (ii) the evaluation of the newsletter "European Economy News" (EEN); (iii) the renewal of the "Euro Coin Genesis" exhibition.

This chapter will be focused on the quantitative polls carried out through the EB facility, as summarised in Figure 41 below.

⁴⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/euro_en.htm. The institution actually responsible for the surveys is Gallup Hungary, which in some countries has partnered with local companies.

Figure 41– Main Features of EB Opinion Polls

EB #	Title	Geographical Coverage	Date	Target Group
#208	General public survey after the introduction of the Euro in Slovenia	Slovenia	April 07	General Public
#207	Introduction of the Euro in the new MS	New MS	March 07	General Public
#205	General public survey after the introduction of the Euro in Slovenia	Slovenia	Jan-Feb 07	General Public
#204	Dual circulation period in Slovenia. Daily monitoring of the cash changeover process among the general public	Slovenia	January 07	General Public
#201b	Preparedness for the changeover to the Euro among banks in Slovenia	Slovenia	March 07	Banks (branch managers and Euro coordinators)
#201a	Preparedness for the Euro among enterprises in Slovenia	Slovenia	Feb 07	Enterprises (CEO, and Financial Officers)
#200	Preparing for the Euro. Survey among enterprises in the Republic of Cyprus	Cyprus	January 07	Enterprises (CEO, and Financial Officers)
#195b	Preparedness for the changeover to the Euro among banks in Slovenia	Slovenia	December 06	Banks (branch managers and Euro coordinators)
#195a	Preparedness for the Euro among enterprises in Slovenia	Slovenia	November 06	Enterprises (CEO, and Financial Officers)
#193	The Eurozone, 5 years after the introduction of the Euro coins and banknotes	Euro Area	September 06	General Public
#191	Introduction of the Euro in the New MS	New MS	September 06	General Public
#183	Introduction of the Euro in the New MS	New MS	April 06	General Public
#175b	Introduction of the Euro in the New MS	New MS	September 05	General Public
#175	The Euro, 4 years after the introduction of the banknotes and coins	Euro Area	October 05	General Public
#165b	Introduction of the Euro in the New MS	New MS	September 04	General Public
#165	The Euro, 3 years later	Euro Area	November 04	General Public

5.3.1 SUB-QUESTION 1

Evaluation Question: *To what degree did Eurobarometer polling questions reflect relevant issues of concern to the Commission in the overall process of the Euro introduction?*

FINDINGS

The need for adequate mechanisms of measurement of public views on issues related to Euro/EMU is explicitly mentioned in the EC Communication on I&C strategy (COM 552 final), stating that these activities should be aimed at allowing *“the Commission and Member States to set and, if necessary, adjust communication objectives and measure progress in achieving them”*. In the same vein, the importance of taking stock of public’s feedback is also highlighted in DG ECFIN’s *“Outline of external communication strategy”*, according to which: *“Conducting regular surveys to get input from the general public and to adjust our communication strategy accordingly, is therefore vital”*.

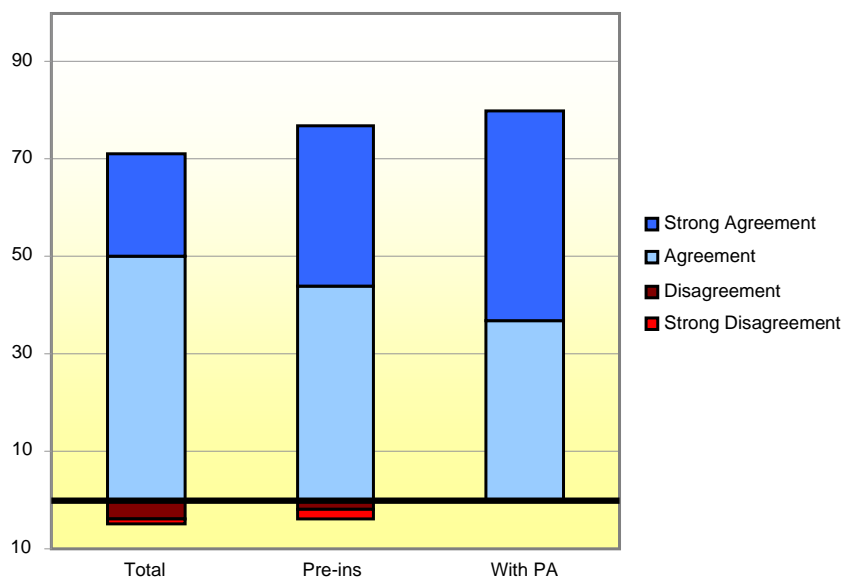
So, DG ECFIN decided to set up a wide multi-annual programme of EB surveys on Euro/EMU issues aimed at providing periodically the Commission and the MS with first-hand data on opinions and needs of both the general public and specific target groups. According to the EC and MS representatives interviewed, the approach and methodology of EB quantitative polls embed a series of advantages, and namely:

- although similar information on these issues is normally collected also by MS statistical offices, the direct implementation of surveys in MS allows the Commission to focus on the specific topics it is interested in, and to have an adequate control on the timing and on data sources;

- the sampling techniques adopted generally ensure an adequate statistical relevance of EB surveys results;
- the surveys are usually designed and conducted in a way that maximise the comparability of data across the countries and over time;
- in particular, the repetition of similar surveys over time allows for the identification of specific trends, and helps gain insights on the impact of EC and MS I&C actions and policies;
- the survey programme entails the possibility of conducting specific country-based surveys specifically tailored to the local features;
- in certain occasions stakeholders in MS would generally attribute greater credibility to data directly provided by the EC, rather than to other “less neutral” sources.

Results of the online survey show that, to a large extent, stakeholders in the MS found the topics covered by the EB polls as particularly relevant. In line with expectations, this positive assessment increases in pre-in countries and especially in those that have established a PA with the EC, as illustrated in Figure 42 below.

Figure 42 – Stakeholders' Evaluation of EB Opinion Polls⁵⁰



Further insights on the relevance of the specific surveying instruments / polling questions can be drawn from a series of in-depth interviews with key referents. As seen in section 1 above, the EB surveys fall within three main groups that can be analysed separately, namely: (i) Opinion polls carried out in all new MS; (ii) Country-specific polls; (iii) Opinion polls carried out in the Euro Area.

New MS polls: These polls are tailored to provide the Commission and MS with periodical assessments of a series of crucial aspects regarding the readiness of MS to the introduction of the Euro, namely: (i) the level of knowledge and experience of the Euro among citizens; (ii) the feelings as regards being informed and the preferred information channels; (iii) the perceptions about the

⁵⁰ The figure displays only the positive and the negative responses: neutral assessments are not displayed while DA/DK responses are not included. The data for pre-ins countries are based on a limited subset of observations and therefore are provided for qualitative purposes only.

single currency; (v) expectations and fears concerning the changeover to the Euro. The polls are conducted regularly in order to monitor trends in different areas. The polls are designed to both assess the overall situation and identify the most suitable initiatives to be undertaken in collaboration with each MS. At the same time, these polls are intended to provide MS with very practical information that could help adjust the national changeover strategy to these needs.

Country-specific polls: So far, these polls have been carried out in countries that are in the final stages of the changeover process with the aim of complementing MS own information sources and help the on-going fine tuning of the campaign. In particular, the bulk of country-specific polls carried out to date has regarded the Slovenian changeover. Four types of polls have been carried out in this country: (i) on the general public; (ii) on enterprises; (iii) on banks; and (iv) a daily monitoring during the dual circulation phase. According to local institutions the overall EB polls programme has probably been the most important activity implemented by the EC in the framework of the PA. In particular:

- The issues covered by **general public polls** are regarded as extremely relevant for the monitoring of the campaign. Very fundamental and practical aspects were investigated such as: (i) personal experiences with converting, distinguishing, understanding value in Euro; (ii) difficulties when adjusting to the Euro; (iii) awareness of advantages of Euro; (iv) preferred sources of information, and so on. Some observed that perhaps specific questions on the various I&C instruments used in the campaign could have been added in order to allow a more precise evaluation of the impact of each item.
- The survey conducted prior to the introduction of the Euro on the readiness of 'cash-intensive' **enterprises** was particularly relevant. It investigated the practical concerns of these operators and helped identify possible critical areas of the changeover process, such as for instance the degree of technical readiness of the business community as regards computer systems and the like. On the other hand, the number of enterprises included in the sample was maybe too small to allow for statistical inferences.
- Similar considerations also apply to **bank surveys** which involved as little as less than 50 respondents. In addition to that, it was reported that some difficulties were faced in the identification of the right contact points and therefore the sample could not be adequately representative. Against this background some stakeholders suggested that this type of surveys are comparatively less interesting and, unless methodology is changed, not so worth repeating.
- The **daily monitoring** carried out during the dual circulation period provided an unique assessment of the first use ever of the 'big bang' changeover scenario, which will prove useful also for comparisons with the future changeovers. The exercise consisted on a series of day-by-day surveys on how much national cash and Euro cash the population was holding, and in which currency they were doing their purchases. Although, statistically not highly significant, (each day a sample of only 300 Slovenes was surveyed), Slovenian stakeholders found this type of survey particularly important.

As regards country-specific polls it is worth noting that according to some Slovenian stakeholders it would have been beneficial to extend the monitoring period well after the official end of the campaign. In particular, additional polling would be required in the area of population perceptions of price increase, in order to better understand to what extent this phenomenon depended on exogenous global trends or on ineffective local I&C policies and actions.

Euro Area polls: On the opportunity of continuing the survey programme in Euro Area and on which methodology to adopt to this end, the views within the Commission are diverse. In some Euro Area countries the public perception of the Euro has become a political issue and the level of public

support to the Euro is deteriorating because of the perceived link with inflation. The discontinuation of Euro communication activities in many of these countries, may have played a part in building this perception. Against this background, some EC representatives questioned whether these polls may to some extent stir sceptical responses, and therefore ultimately result counter productive. However, conversely others maintained that these obstacles should be constructively addressed, as they reflect the necessity of additional efforts to correctly inform citizens on the often misunderstood link between Euro and the inflation. Recently, the Commission addressed this issue updating the questionnaire used for EB survey in Euro area in a more forward-looking fashion.

5.3.2 SUB-QUESTION 2

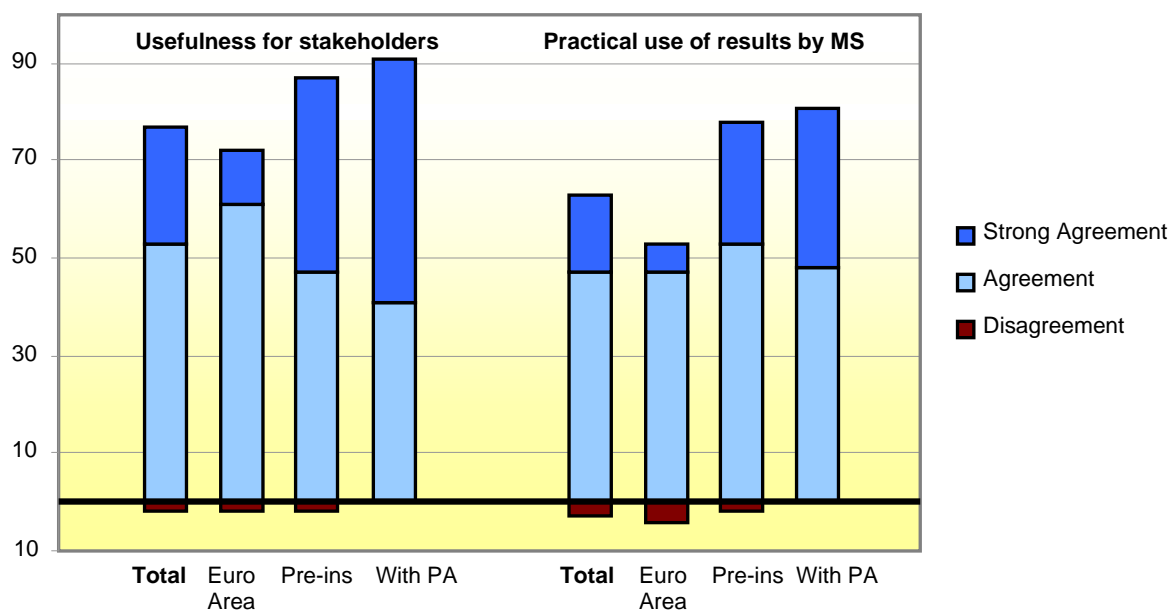
Evaluation Question: *To what extent were Eurobarometer and qualitative surveys used to obtain detailed feedback on campaign activities which was consequently used by the Commission/Member States to develop and re-direct the campaign over time?*

FINDINGS

As anticipated in previous section, EB polls were designed to provide useful information to EC and MS institutions, policy makers and stakeholders. A first indication of the extent to which this objective has been achieved is provided by the results of the online survey. In terms of overall usefulness of the polls input the interviewees provided one of the highest scores of the whole survey, with 77% of positive responses. As regards the degree to which the results of the polls have been used by MS, the stakeholders views are slightly less positive – with 63% of positive responses. These results show that all in all this was a very successful initiative, although some important differences can be noticed in the different regions. In pre-in countries - and especially those that have signed a PA with the Commission – the stakeholders' appreciation is overwhelming positive, whereas in the Euro area the general outlook is less favourable. This is particularly true as far as the translation of polls results into I&C policies and actions is concerned: for nearly eight in ten respondents in pre-in countries these feedbacks have been duly taken into account by the local institutions, whereas in the Euro area this view is shared by just half of respondents

Figure 43 below summarises the above-mentioned evidences.

Figure 43 – Stakeholders' evaluation of usefulness and degree of adoption of EB polls results



More specifically, the use of the polls results made respectively by the Commission and by MS can be summarised as follows:

European Commission – In general terms, the results of the surveys are used for the drawing up of specific EC communications, as for instance the periodical reports “on practical preparations for the future enlargement of the Euro area”⁵¹, and other official documents⁵². Very often this information is also used for presentations at international conferences⁵³ and coordination meetings. In some cases information can also be used to determine the activities to be included in the PA with MS.

The information is also used for internal discussion on specific Euro-related issues. An example is provided by the discussion on the opportunity of introducing a 1 Euro banknote. The polls highlighted that this was not really necessary given that in just two countries there was a significant need for that, whilst in several other instances people were mostly against it. Similarly, the results of polls are currently feeding into the debate on the opportunity of suppressing 1 and 2 Euro cent coins.

Member States – Commission officials described the opinion polls as an indispensable tool in order to get an overview of different perceptions and trends within the individual Member States. All national stakeholders interviewed confirmed their high appreciation of DG ECFIN opinion polls in the

⁵¹ See for instance COM(2006) 322 final.

⁵² Another example is the COM(2007) 233final on the introduction of the Euro in Slovenia, which is largely based on information drawn from EB polls results.

⁵³ See for instance the Gallup presentation at the conference on Slovenian changeover of June 08, 2007 - http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/events/2007/events_brussels_0806_en.htm

process for the introduction of the Euro in the respective MS. In particular EB polls are deemed very useful for those MS, such as the Czech Republic, that reportedly do not carry out own surveys. In MS conducting their own opinion polls, the EB surveys are nevertheless a useful complementary source of information that is also used for comparison with the results of national polls.

Country-specific EB polls played a major role for the Slovenian changeover. Practical aspects of the campaign that might have been influenced by polls results regarded: (i) the channels: the feedback offered by polls on public's preferred sources of information helped determining the right mix of channels to use in the campaign; (ii) the contents: the results of polls indicated what were the main public concerns throughout the various phases of the campaign thus suggesting how to reorient the messages.

The analysis highlighted as well the existence of some critical points as regards the design and the implementation of the EB polls, as follows:

Statistical significance: As discussed in the previous sections, in some cases the size of the samples surveyed appear too small to ensure an adequate degree of statistical significance. By consequence the confidence coefficient resulted often too low to draw meaningful conclusions from small variations. This is for instance the case with certain types of surveys, namely dual-circulation monitoring survey (some 300 daily interviews) and banks polls (less than 50 interviews). In such cases the results should be retained mainly as qualitative evidences.

Inconsistencies. Sampling techniques are insufficiently adapted, as seen, to the diverse local contexts. This may pose methodological problems of reliability and comparability of results. It was reported that some results seem to suggest the existence of inconsistencies of methodological nature. An example is provided by the data on the use of Euro in pre-in countries that apparently fluctuate up and down over time without any reason. This seems to confirm the opinion of those within the EC who affirm that the interpretation of the polls needs to be limited to trend identification rather than as a concrete and accurate evidence of public views.

Translation / Localisation. Some MS partners reported that their national polls do not match with those carried out by DG ECFIN. Leaving aside methodological sampling considerations, it is possible that this discrepancy is due to inaccuracies in the translation of the EB questionnaires. Evidently, this would influence the results and therefore undermine the comparability of data across countries. However, from discussions with key-stakeholders it emerged that the problem could be much broader than just a translation issue. It is reported in fact that people's reactions to the very concept of some questions may greatly differ across MS. In other words, this might be a broader cultural issue – which indicates the need to conform not only to local language but also to local culture, frames of mind, preferences etc. In order to improve the usability of results it would be then helpful to pay an increasing attention to the 'cultural' aspect of the questionnaires, for instance pre-testing different phrasings of the same questions in order to identify the most consistent ones.

Qualitative studies that have been conducted so far to test some of the issues arising from the EB polls did not always provide the expected results. Some EC officers questioned the consistence of the findings of these studies as they seemed either very generic or somewhat contradicting quantitative findings. For this reason, although it is widely acknowledged the need for this type of in-depth studies, so far their overall usefulness has reportedly been rather marginal.

5.3.3 SUB-QUESTION 3

Evaluation Question: *What was the overall contribution of these polling activities to the attainment of programme objectives? Was this contribution achieved at a reasonable cost?*

FINDINGS

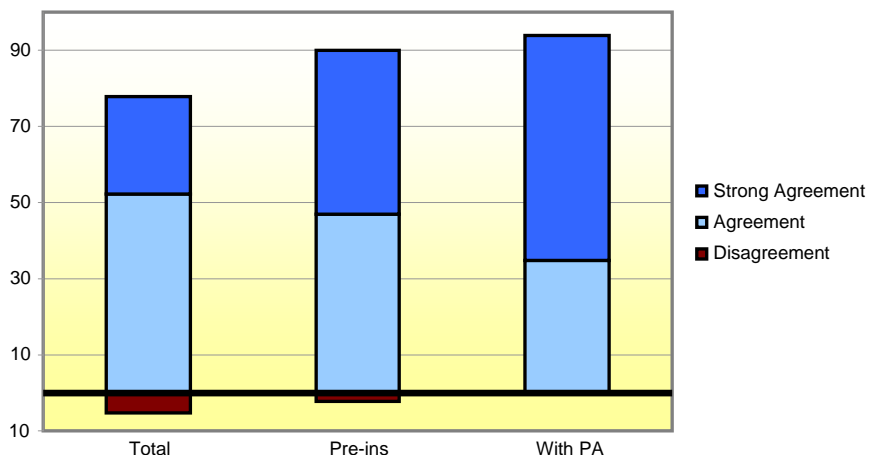
To begin with, it is worth noting that the contribution of the opinion polls to the attainment of PRINCE's objectives has been mainly indirect. Considering that the objectives of the EC I&C strategy on EMU and the Euro are:

- (i) the public awareness of EMU requirements and functioning,
- (ii) the enhancement of citizens' understanding of the Euro,
- (iii) the support to smooth changeover in pre-in MS,
- (iv) the provision of information to media, economic agents and policy makers for more informed decisions.

It emerges clearly that polls may have some impact only on the last one, and to a much limited extent on the third one. Furthermore, it results that the level of contribution of this initiative to the overall goals is strictly correlated to two factors: (i) the smooth circulation of information among media and multipliers; and (ii) the degree to which those who are responsible for the Euro campaigns use the polls results to fine-tune their strategy. This second aspect has been largely discussed in the previous section, while as regards circulation it can be observed that the Commission's commitment in this area is significant. The polls reports are available to public through a specific webpage. Results are actively sent to MS stakeholders such as the Central Banks and Directors of Communication. The EC Representations officers are also instructed to send out information to all national counterparts.

Overall, the stakeholders' appreciation of EB polls contribution to the I&C activities on Euro is extremely positive, as shown by the results of the online survey. Almost 80% of respondents – and nearly the totality in countries having signed a PA with the Commission - affirmed that these were a fundamental component of the Euro campaigns, as illustrated in Figure 44 below.

Figure 44– Stakeholders' evaluation of the contribution of opinion polls to the Euro campaign



In financial terms, the budget dedicated to EB polls over the 2004-2006 period amounted to more than EUR 2.0 million, being some 18% of the total PRINCE budget⁵⁴. Opinion polls carried out in the Euro zone represented so far half of the total, another 46% has been absorbed by new MS polls, and just 4% was allocated for country-specific polls. This distribution is however likely to change in the future with the upcoming changeover to the Euro of several new MS. More specifically, it is expected that a comparatively larger share of resources will be devoted to country-specific polls. In the medium run it is also expected that with the enlargement of the Euro area, the cost for the yearly surveys will increase accordingly. The same would happen with new MS surveys in case of further enlargement of the European Union.

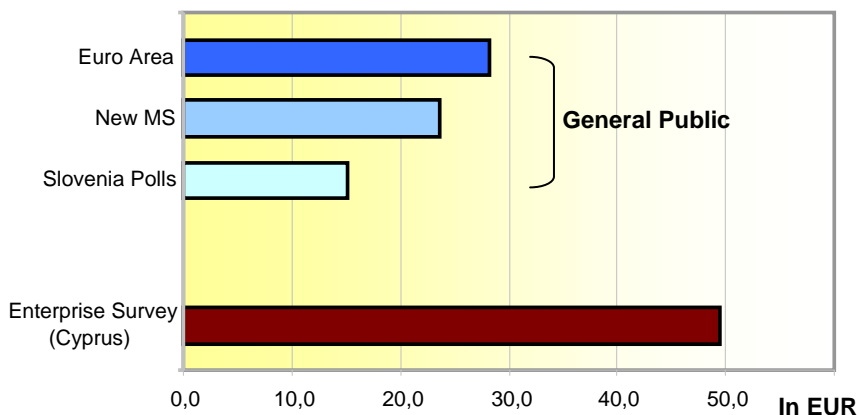
The general figures on financial expenditure for EB polls are summarised in Figure 45 below.

Figure 45 – Financial figures for EB opinion polls

	2004		2005		2006		TOT	
Euro Area	€365.000	57%	€364.200	63%	€285.000	34%	€1.014.200	50%
New MS	€272.300	43%	€212.600	37%	€464.600	56%	€949.500	46%
Country-specific	0	0%	0	0%	€81.900	10%	€81.900	4%
TOT polls	€637.300		€576.800		€831.500		€2.045.600	
Tot PRINCE	€2.360.000		€3.970.000		€4.930.000		€11.260.000	
Polls on the total	27%		15%		17%		18%	

Typically the number of interviews for each poll is of about 1,000 per country covered, which means that until the end of 2006 the sample for Euro area surveys included some 12,000 respondents, whilst in new MS some 10,000 people were interviewed. As illustrated in Figure 46 below, it appears that Euro area polls are somewhat more expensive than new MS polls in unit terms, i.e. some 28 Euro/person against nearly EUR 24. The Slovenian general public surveys were in stead significantly less expensive, with a unit cost of about 15 EUR/person. Finally, it emerges also that enterprise surveys are extremely more costly than general public surveys (i.e. nearly 50 EUR/enterprise in the Cypriot case).

Figure 46 – Unit cost of EB polls

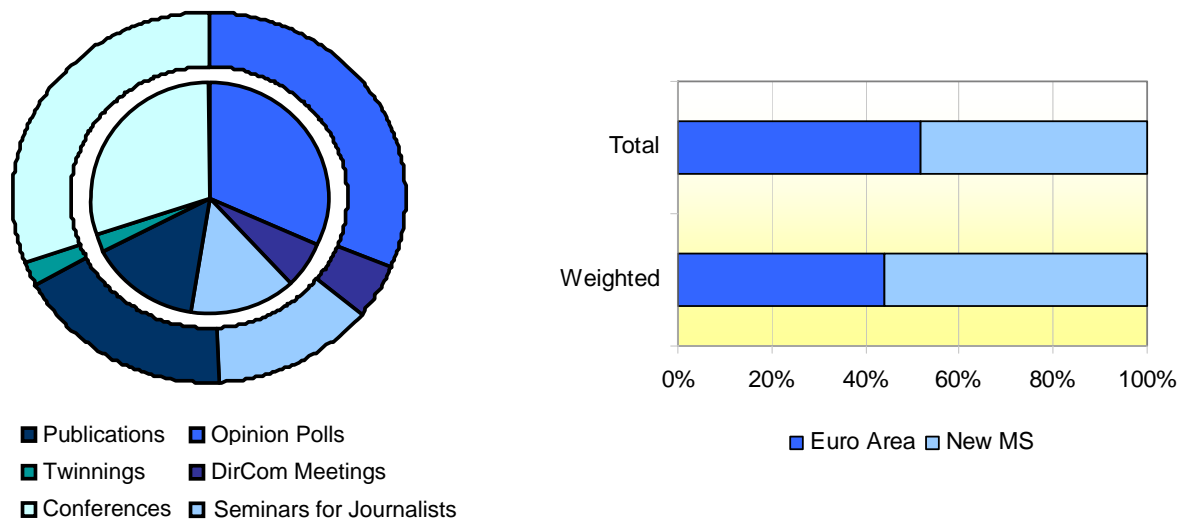


⁵⁴ Information drawn from the financial data sheets provided by DG ECFIN. Figures for 2007 were not available.

A different indication of the efficiency of EB polls can be drawn from the comparison with other I&C initiatives carried out under the PRINCE Programme, in particular: (i) DirCom meetings, (ii) seminars for journalists; (iii) general publications; (iv) Twinnings; and (v) conferences. Altogether these actions account for the majority of PRINCE's budget. For comparative purposes it is possible to use the results of the online survey, as a proxy for the measurement of the effectiveness of these actions, and use this information for the weighting of the contribution of each action. Figure 47a below summarises the results of this exercise: in the inner circle the proportions reflect the relative weight in monetary terms of each action to the total, whilst the outer circle displays the same proportions adjusted to the 'supportiveness' of each action in stakeholders' views. The results highlight that the efficiency of opinion polls is only moderately below the average of the activities analysed. A significant better result would be obtained by considering only new MS polls. Figure 47b below shows in fact that, if in absolute terms the contribution of Euro area polls in monetary terms is slightly above new MS polls, adjusting that to stakeholders' appreciation, the contribution of new MS would be prevailing.

Figure 47 – Analysis of EB polls efficiency

47a - Contribution of selected I&C activities to the programme 47b – Relative contribution of new MS and Euro Area polls



CONCLUSIONS

Overall Relevance

- There is an overall positive appreciation of the relevance of EB surveys programme. The approach and methodology chosen entail several advantages, such as the comparability of results across countries and over time. EB polls are found particularly relevant in pre-in countries – especially where a PA with the Commission is in place.
- EB Polls for pre-in MS appear in fact particularly well-designed to provide practical insights to EC and MS for the planning and fine-tuning of the Euro campaigns.
- The Slovenian case showed that also country-specific polls are a fairly relevant formula, with some considerations: (i) general public polls are well designed, but they perhaps lack some questions on specific I&C activities; (ii) enterprises surveys cover useful items but the approach

was mainly qualitative; (iii) banks surveys had intrinsic problems that severely reduced their usefulness; (iv) daily monitoring during dual circulation period was seen as extremely relevant, although maybe not from a statistical point of view. Overall, the Slovenian case indicated that the need for polls may last well after the end of the Euro campaign, especially on topics related to people's perception of price increasing, and links with the Euro.

Usefulness of the results

- The EB polls results are deemed useful by some 77% of stakeholders interviewed. The degree to which these results have been used by MS appears lower, but still broadly positive (63%). Major differences in the use of information can be observed with reference to the different countries: in pre-in countries stakeholders' evaluation of the use of polls data is overwhelmingly positive (some eight in ten) whereas in the Euro Area only half of respondents share this view.
- For the Commission the results of polls are useful on different levels: (i) the preparation of communications, strategy plans and other official documents; (ii) the identification of activities to be carried out within PA that best suit MS needs; (iii) to fuel internal discussion on specific Euro-related issues.
- For MS the EB polls have a specifically practical value. In some cases they clearly fill an information gap, whilst for most countries they mainly complement locally-conducted surveys. For country-specific surveys this practical relevance of results is enhanced. For instance, in Slovenia, the outcome of polls has been largely used to fine-tune the campaign as regards (i) the information channels, and (ii) the content of messages.
- The evidence collected indicates that there exists also some critical points associated with the EB polls programme, namely: (i) the methodology adopted does not always ensure that the results are consistent and/or statistically significant; (ii) sometimes major problems with the translations/adaptation of questionnaire to local context have emerged.

Overall contribution to the programme

- The contribution of EB polls to the PRINCE Programme objectives is to a large extent indirect, i.e. through the impact that the results of polls may have on policy makers, multipliers, and media. Depending on the degree to which the outcome of polls is used by key-stakeholders to re-orient the Euro campaign, the impact of these initiatives can be assessed also in the quality of the changeover process. Overall, almost 80% of respondents to the online survey affirmed that polls were a fundamental part of the Euro campaign in their country.
- In financial terms, the budget dedicated to EB polls over the 2004-2006 period amounts to in excess EUR 2.0 million, being some 18% of the total PRINCE budget. Opinion polls carried out in the Euro zone represented so far half of the total, another 46% has been absorbed by new MS polls, and just 4% was allocated for country-specific polls.
- Euro area polls are seemingly the most expensive of general public surveys in unit terms (~ €28), followed by new MS polls (~ €24), whilst the Slovenian-specific survey were comparatively the least expensive (~ €15). Enterprise surveys appeared extremely more costly in unit terms (~ €49 in Cyprus).
- Adjusting the expenditure for some selected I&C actions to their perceived usefulness, as measured on the basis of stakeholders' feedbacks, it emerges that opinion polls are quite in line with the average efficiency recorded.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The considerations put forward in the previous sections allow for the identification of a series of recommendations:

- Against the risk of inconsistencies due to either the use of unfamiliar and complex terminology and concepts, or inadequate translation/localisation of questionnaires. In the case of future revision of the questionnaire, it is advisable to carry out some pre-testing of some critical questions prior to the fully-fledged implementation of the survey aimed at ensure the maximum comparability of results across countries.
- As regards country-specific surveys it could prove extremely practical to insert in the questionnaire specific queries on the effectiveness of the (main) I&C actions carried out by EC and MS institutions. This would represent a very helpful source of information for subsequent evaluations.