

June 2016

Yours Directly

The Europe Direct
network newsletter



Training seminar for European Documentation Centres *Brussels, 2 & 3 June 2016*

Priorities, policies and publications

On 2 June 2016, representatives of European Documentation Centres (EDCs) in 23 Member States gathered in Brussels for their network's annual training seminar. With nearly 100 participants and 22 speakers, this two-day event – organised by the Citizens Contact unit of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM) – was a fresh opportunity to learn more about EU information services, and make or renew acquaintances in the process.

"It is a pleasure and a privilege for us to be able to meet so many of you again," said Viviane Hoffmann, DG COMM's Director for Communication with Citizens, in her welcome speech.

“We share a task. And that is to provide clear, relevant, timely information on EU policies and policy developments.

I also believe that we share a common purpose. And this is to enable citizens to better understand the activity of the EU, the priorities of the EU, the EU's action to address current challenges.”

The EDCs, Ms Hoffmann added, are key partners in engaging with students, and the academic

and research world in general. "You are reaching out to thousands of people who are helping to design the future of our societies," she said.

Along with the Europe Direct Information Centres (EDICs), the EDCs are thus important allies for the Commission services in communicating about European issues and stimulating debate on these issues in the Member States. "We therefore wanted

to offer you a slightly different event this year," Ms Hoffmann announced. "In addition to providing you with expertise on EU information management, we would like to update you on a few major policy issues."

Europe is facing unprecedented challenges, she noted, and the Commission is working at a fast pace to address them. "[But] policy-making, delivering results and communication go hand in hand,"

Ms Hoffmann stressed. "We could not inform citizens and engage with them the way we do without the valuable support of the Europe Direct network."

The role of the EDCs is changing, and their future was the main topic of the previous edition of the seminar. This event marked the beginning of a deeper reflection on their remit in a fast-changing world, where information and information management are ever more important, Ms Hoffmann noted. "Quick solutions are not the right way forward, and we are now further exploring how to increase synergies between the EDCs and all other partners," she said, expressing her gratitude for the input received so far, in particular from the Pan-European Working Group "EDC – Looking to the future".



**WIKTOR
POZNIAK**

Warsaw, Poland

“We can see a certain decrease of interest. There are universities that have decided not to continue with European Studies, and so some have closed their EDCs. We have to refine and reinvent the EDCs' mission a little bit for the future.”

The Investment Plan for Europe – state of play and outlook

Providing a new boost for jobs, growth and investment tops the list of political priorities set out by the Juncker Commission, and the Investment Plan for Europe was launched to advance this objective. The seminar was a timely moment for a presentation on this plan, as the Commission had issued a Communication taking stock of its implementation to date just the day before, said Tatu

Liimatainen, member of the Cabinet of Jyrki Katainen, Commission Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness.

According to the spring economic forecast of the Commission, Europe's economy will continue to expand modestly in 2016 and 2017, Mr Liimatainen noted.

“Economic recovery is taking hold. So why do we need an investment plan? Compared to the time before the crisis, the level of investment in Europe has gone down 15 %. This drop corresponds to a total amount of €430 billion in missing investments for the 2007-2013 period.”

The Investment Plan was launched to address this issue. It outlines action in three areas identified as pillars of the plan: activating private capital in support of strategic projects, ensuring that this funding reaches the real economy, and improving the investment environment.

The first pillar rests on the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), which was set up in June 2015 with the aim of mobilising at least €315 billion within three years. Financial support is provided in the form of loans, to projects that are potentially riskier than those backed by other instruments and for which the EFSI offers a first loss guarantee.

Established by the European Investment Bank and the European Investment Fund, the EFSI completed its first year of operation on the day preceding the seminar. In a Communication marking this occasion, the European Commission announced that the EFSI would be reinforced and extended in view of a successful first year.

The second pillar involves two dedicated initiatives: the European Investment Project Portal, designed as a meeting place for project promoters and investors, and the European Investment Advisory Hub, which provides information for project promoters. The third pillar comprises actions to foster investor confidence and improve the framework for investments.

<http://ec.europa.eu/invest-eu>
<http://www.eib.org/invest-eu>
<http://www.eib.org/efsi>
<http://ec.europa.eu/eipp>
<http://www.eib.org/eiah>



European Structural & Investment Funds: contribution to the Commission's political priorities

From ESFI to ESIF – following Mr Liimatainen's updates on the Investment Plan for Europe, moderator Martin Watson handed the floor to Eric von Breska for an overview of the assistance provided by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs) in support of the EU's political priorities.

A very substantial budget — €454 billion, to be precise, i.e. some 45 % of the EU budget — has been set aside for investment through these funds in 2014-2020, Mr von Breska noted.

“The main vocation of these funds is to invest in areas which promote jobs and growth.”

The earmarked amount corresponds to the combined budgets of the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, the European Maritime & Fisheries Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative. The European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy is the lead DG for the delivery of the ESIFs, explained Mr von Breska, who heads up the DG's Unit for Economic Analysis.

ESIF funding primarily targets regions with relatively low income levels and high unemployment rates, with investments advancing the agenda for jobs and growth in 11 priority areas. These, Mr von Breska said, include objectives as varied as promoting climate change adaptation and supporting SMEs. A number of these objectives tie in with other Commission priorities, he observed.

The backing provided by the ESIFs is crucial for the less affluent parts of the EU. “Due to the financial crisis, many Member States had to embark on fiscal consolidation measures, which means that public budgets had to be cut,” Mr von Breska observed. “But what you invest in today is tomorrow's growth,” he noted, and ESIF support enables a number of countries to maintain a certain level of public investment.

However, he added, ESIF support is about more than money. It is also intended to help Member States initiate recommended reforms, it is associated with requirements for suitable investment conditions, and it is geared to measurable targets. “At the end of the day, obviously what you want to have is results — tangible results which improve the wellbeing of European citizens,” Mr von Breska underlined.

<https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu>



Parallel sessions | Topic 1: EU priorities

EU-US trade negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)

An interesting aspect in the TTIP debate, said Wojtek Talko of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Trade, "is that it's actually much broader than trade policy alone." In many cases, he notes, the discussion seems to focus on other matters related to globalisation and to be tinged by a certain mistrust of political elites.

The level of interest in the proposed agreement differs from one Member State to another, as does public perception of this prospective partnership, Mr Talko observed. The Commission tries to match the unprecedented interest in the talks by a new wave of transparency initiatives and outreach. It publishes a variety of material to help inform the debate. The EU's negotiating texts, for example, are available online, as are factsheets explaining the EU's proposals.

The rationale for the TTIP is rooted in the changing nature of trade, Mr Talko noted: production today takes place in cross-border value chains, where goods may

well have been handled on several continents before they reach the consumer. "And every time the product or part of the product crosses a border, it may face trade barriers," he said.

One of the main objectives of a trade agreement is to reduce such barriers, he said, adding that some 31 million jobs in the EU depend on exports to non-EU countries.

In addition, he noted that a trade agreement with the US would help to gain a better position in a globalised world. "We are using trade agreements as a lever to increase respect for human rights, labour law and environmental protection worldwide." A good deal with the US, which shares most of the EU's values, could help us to achieve this goal, he added.

But what are the downsides? Would the TTIP erode European food safety standards, for example? "Trade agreements don't change EU rules. Everything that comes to the EU has to meet EU standards," Mr Talko underlined.



And, in turn, goods exported by the EU have to comply with the standards applicable in the importing country. Achieving greater regulatory coherence without lowering standards on

either side is one of the pillars of the proposed partnership, Mr Talko noted.

<http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/in-focus/ttip>



Digital Single Market, one year on — and the contribution of EU Code Week

DESI, the Digital Economy and Society Index, reflects Europe's digital performance in key areas such as connectivity and digital public services. Despite advances for the EU as a whole, DESI 2016 confirms that the Member States are not progressing at the same speed.

“What we are trying to do is to make the situation of the countries that top the list become the norm.”

explained David Ringrose, Acting Director for Cooperation at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CONNECT). “Everybody can be a Denmark,” said Claire Hewitt, who coordinates the Press and Media team of the Communications unit of DG CONNECT.

Action has been taken in a number of areas, Mr Ringrose reported. Reviews of the audio-visual media framework and of the sharing economy are under way, for example, with proposals having been submitted, and advances in many other areas are in the works. “We are launching a public-private partnership on cyber security at the end of June,” noted Ms Hewitt.

As Europe goes digital, it is increasingly important for citizens to embrace the trend. “To take part in the digital society that we live in, you need a number of skills,” said press officer Annika Östergren Pofantis of DG CONNECT. Coding, she noted, is one of these skills, which are also increasingly important on the labour market.

EU Code Week is a grassroots movement launched in 2013 to celebrate coding, Ms Östergren explained. “The aim is to bring digital literacy to everyone,” she added, encouraging

the EDCs to organise events in support of this year's edition on 15-23 October. Then again, “every week is Code Week!”

<http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/digital-single-market>

<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market>

<http://codeweek.eu>



Annika Östergren

Horizon 2020 & the SME Innovation Associate pilot call



Agata Stasiak

The programme promises more breakthroughs, discoveries and world-firsts by taking great ideas from the lab to the market.

“Horizon 2020 can provide support at every step of a research project, from the initial idea to the moment when it's commercialised,” said Agata Stasiak of the Communication Unit of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation. Collaboration is central to this process, she added. The Commission promotes open access to scientific publications in Horizon 2020, and it has launched a European Cloud Initiative to create a virtual environment where research data can be stored and shared.

The recently launched Innovation Associate programme is a concrete example of how Horizon 2020 generates innovation, and thereby growth and jobs, says Alessandro Quadri di Cardano of the Executive

Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME).

“The aim is to help SMEs and start-ups overcome the barriers they face in recruiting researchers and highly qualified specialists,” Mr Quadri di Cardano noted. Preliminary analysis of two existing instruments had revealed the need for an additional scheme to address this issue, he explained.



GEORG WINTER

Krems an der Donau, Austria

“There is a tendency to put everything online, which of course is cost effective. But when it comes to key scientific information, I feel that it is important to have this in print.”

The Horizon 2020 SME Innovation Associate programme is based on the principle that there is no innovation without imagination. It offers very early stage support to businesses with a brilliant idea, enabling successful applicants to recruit an expert to help bring this idea to fruition.

<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020>

<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/open-science-open-access>

<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/cloud>

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1408_en.htm

<https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/h2020-sme-innovation-associate>

Parallel sessions | Topic 2: Access to EU documentation

Information sources of the Council of the European Union



Paulo Barroso Simões

The Library of the General Secretariat of the Council provides access to a wide range of paper and online information sources in all the official languages of the EU. These sources include news media, periodicals, articles, theses, books and databases relevant to the work of the Council.

"Our team monitors scholarly journals, think tank publications and conferences, and we have established a network with the academic community," said Paulo Barroso Simões of the Directorate-General for Communication and Document Management of the General Secretariat of the Council. In addition, it is responsible for the library's Think Tank Review, as well as for a blog.

In line with the Treaties' provisions regarding transparency, the Council also provides comprehensive information on Council meetings, said Carla Santos Moore of the

DG's Unit for Transparency and Access to documents. Public sessions can be followed through live webcasts. To demonstrate how the required qualified majority is determined, the Council has developed a voting calculator, which can be accessed on its website or downloaded as an app.

A public register of documents and publications is also available online, as are three open datasets, Ms Santos noted. Accessible through the EU's Open Data Portal, they respectively comprise metadata of the Council's public register, metadata on requests for access to documents, and voting results on legislative acts.

The archives preserved by the Council are another abundant source of information. "We have nearly 9 linear kilometres of archival material," said David Iglesias Blanco, also of the DG's Archives, Records and Documentation Unit.

These records are consulted by a wide variety of internal and external users, whose digital searching skills, knowledge of EU history and understanding of EU institutions vary considerably. Archivists have to be able to support information seekers regardless of such differences and must try to bridge any gaps, Mr Iglesias Blanco concluded.

Library blog and Think Tank review:

<https://councillibrary.wordpress.com>

Council voting calculator:

<https://publications.europa.eu/en/applications>

<https://open-data.europa.eu>

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/documents-publications/archives>



PATTIE PUNCH

Limerick, Ireland

“We’re in this enormously fast-changing information environment. So we have to keep up with this information environment. This places us in a situation where your subject expertise is only 1 % of what you do. Your knowledge of the systems and everything else that goes into it is another 99 % of what you do. So we’re changing what we’re at, in a sense.”

EPRS & OEIL, the EP's research service and legislative observatory



*Alec Vuijlsteke and
Chrysostomos Panagiotou*

"The role of the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) is to provide Members with independent and authoritative analysis of EU policy issues in order to assist them in their parliamentary work," said Alec Vuijlsteke of the EP's General Secretariat.

The EPRS was established in 2013, through the creation of a dedicated Directorate-General. "We are a comprehensive service, in the

sense that we cover all of the EU's policies," said Mr Vuijlsteke, who heads up the DG's Client Needs Team. "Members can knock on our door for anything from agriculture to justice and home affairs."

The service also produces a substantive amount of publications, which range from concise briefing material to in-depth analyses and research in the area of scientific foresight, global trends,

ex-ante and ex-post impact assessment, European added value and monitoring of the European Council. These publications can be downloaded from the EP website, which also provides information about opportunities for study visits, e.g. to conduct research at the EP's library and archives – as well as summaries of 100 notable books on European integration.

Information relating to the EP itself includes a database that was set up in 1994 to monitor the EU decision-making process: the Legislative Observatory, also known as OEIL. Since its creation, this database has been expanded, said Chrysostomos Panagiotou of the EP's Directorate-General for the Presidency.

"So the title may be somewhat misleading, because the Observatory does not only cover legislative procedures," he noted.

Also addressed are topics such as the EP's budgetary powers and its right of initiative.

"The main features of the Observatory website are the procedure files, the search tool and the plenary calendar," Mr Panagiotou noted. Procedure files are frequently updated individual records of parliamentary procedures, which provide extensive information including a timeline, relevant links, and summaries of key documents.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank>

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/100books/en/index.html>

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil>

<http://www.oelml.europarl.europa.eu/oeilm/home>

What's new at the Historical Archives of the EU?

"The role of the Historical Archives is to collect archival fonds, to preserve them, and to make them accessible to the public," said Monica Steletti of the European University Institute in Florence, where she now works as an EDC information specialist following five years at the Historical Archives of the EU (HAEU).

To date, the HAEU has received deposits from 170 European institutions, movements, organisations and individuals – its holdings also include the private archives of prominent European politicians and high-ranking EU officials. To date, 30 fonds have been digitised, and 14 000 files have been made available online. To demonstrate, Ms Steletti called up a scan of a much-amended handwritten note from the Altiero Spinelli fonds.

The HAEU also collects audiovisual material, and it has begun to archive the websites of EU institutions and agencies, helping to preserve information that might otherwise be lost as these sites evolve or disappear.

As part of its work to make its holdings accessible, the HAEU organises a variety of events. It also offers internships and research grants.

Events are one way in which the HAEU and the EDCs can collaborate, for example by co-organising exhibitions. The HAEU can provide bibliographic

records for inclusion in local library catalogues, it has educational material to share, and also offers on-demand digitisation of documents that are not yet available online, Ms Steletti noted.

The EDCs, in turn, could help the HAEU to identify individuals who might have relevant archives to share — and they are encouraged to subscribe to its newsletter for updates on collections and research grants.

<http://www.eui.eu/HistArchives>



Monica Steletti

Parallel sessions | Topic 3: Information tools and services

The Publications Office online public access catalogue (OPac)

"Someone asked me earlier why we have both EU Bookshop and the OPac," said Carol Riccalton, head of sector at the Publications Office. "EU Bookshop is the public

face of the EU publications. It offers access to anyone and everyone who wants to find an EU publication," she explained. "The OPac is for you. It is for librarians."

Riccalton noted. The interface – which is available in 24 languages, with records decoded according to the interface language – supports downloads in a variety of formats.

you want. So please feel free to use our records."

<http://opac.publications.europa.eu>
OPDL-Cataloguing-Team@
publications.europa.eu



Carol Riccalton

Ms Riccalton's team is in charge of assigning international identifiers – ISSN, ISBN and DOI – to the publications produced by EU institutions, agencies and bodies, and also creates the associated bibliographic records for general publications. "Identifiers themselves make no sense if they have no metadata to go with them," Ms Riccalton observed, explaining this dual role.

"The OPac is the web view of our cataloguing tool. As soon as we catalogue a publication, it becomes available through the OPac instantaneously," Ms

The records are also available through metadata aggregators, or by means of customised exports. In addition, the Publications Office offers several widgets enabling users to embed content in their website.

"We are very dedicated to metadata reuse," Ms Riccalton added. "So we give you our metadata to use freely; the only thing that we ask is that you mention the source. This can be in a field simply saying 'Record from Publications Office'. And after that you are free to do with it what



GABRIELLA JOHANSSON
Lund, Sweden

“I think one of the main questions for the EDCs at the moment concerns the printed collections. Should we keep them? And how do we make individual collections visible?”

EUR-Lex – welcome to EU law

"EUR-Lex is an online portal giving access to EU law," explained Laura von Weissenberg, head of sector in charge of EUR-Lex editorial content at the Publications Office, for the benefit of any participants who might be unfamiliar with the site.

“It is accessible in all the official languages of the EU, obviously free of charge – it is a public service.”

In addition to EU law, the site covers implementing measures in the Member States, along with aspects of national case law.

"We will soon – the publication date foreseen is 7 June – have a new consolidated version of the Treaties," Ms von Weissenberg announced.

Content can notably be browsed by classification (under the heading "EuroVoc"), and three types of search operation are provided: quick search, advanced search and

expert search. Publications can also be called up directly using their document or CELEX number. Particular features of the advanced search include the possibility of limiting the operation to legislation in force. A multilingual display option enables users to view up to three language versions of a document side by side.

The filters proposed for the advanced search offer many possibilities to narrow down results and home in on the required content. However, if search operations need to be defined in even greater detail, they can be carried out using the expert search.

This feature is available to logged-in users, who are invited to adapt the query proposed under the "Edit in expert search" box. "But of course, if you have something very specific, we can help you to create a query," Ms von Weissenberg said.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu>



Laura von Weissenberg

EU Bookshop, the dissemination platform for publications of the EU institutions

The EDCs are familiar with EU Bookshop — but that doesn't mean they don't have questions. As he welcomed participants to the information session dedicated to this service, José Ramón Tíscar, head of the Client Management Sector of the Publications Office's EU Bookshop and CORDIS Unit, invited participants to raise any particular points they wanted to discuss.

Marina Tătărâm, also of the EU Bookshop and CORDIS unit, then presented the service and its latest news. As one major development, she announced that the various websites of the Publications Office, including EU Bookshop, "will soon go into the portal of the Publications Office, which is being developed to allow a single integrated search

for any particular topic in the sites' various themes."

"Each year, there are roughly 10 000 new titles coming from all EU institutions and agencies," said Mr Tíscar. Ms Tătărâm reminded the EDCs that they are considered as privileged users of the service. This status enables them and other EU information multipliers to benefit from a number of advantages — such as the possibility to order various publications and items in bulk.

find them. The titles available in the bulk catalogue are those where the author services have arranged for large-scale dissemination.

And most of the electronic versions of publications displayed in the EU Bookshop website are available free of charge to be downloaded, printed and reused. However, in the very few cases of co-editions, the Intellectual Property Rights may prohibit display of the full electronic version, Mr Tíscar explained.

Any other questions? Or maybe you have feedback, positive or negative, that might be useful to nurture the functioning of the EU Bookshop website or the communication policies of the author services? Please don't hesitate to get in touch.

<http://bookshop.europa.eu>



So what answers did they have for the attendees? Among other things, it emerged that publications may not be listed if the authoring service had not requested identifiers for them – but if you send EU Bookshop a request, they will try to help you

Meet Find-eR, the new discovery tool & the revamped Library website

User-centred content and responsive design were priorities for the development of the new website of the European Commission Library and e-Resources Centre. One of the site's key features is Find-eR, a discovery tool for electronic resources that enables users to access more than 10 million research articles and other online publications.

The site, which was launched in December 2015, offers specific entry points for visitors depending on their profile. "We have Commission staff as our main user group, but our library is also used by colleagues from other institutions, and then we have external users such as researchers and students," said Taavi Saarimäki of the Library and e-Resources Centre. A further entry point, for visitors interested in interlibrary loans, explains that this service is free of charge for EDCs.

Interlibrary loans can be requested through Find-eR. "Please sign in to use it. Why? Because

once you've signed in, you have access to a lot of resources, and your session won't be over in 20 minutes. Otherwise, all the information is gone," said Gladys Camisón, also of the Library and e-Resources Centre.

The site also includes a section highlighting open access resources. In addition to publications on a number of key topics, it lists an extensive selection of open access search tools, along with several sources of copyright-free images. A tutorial explaining how to find open access research on the web is also provided.

Biblio-Library@ec.europa.eu
<http://ec.europa.eu/libraries>

Find-eR handouts and tutorials:
http://ec.europa.eu/libraries/selection_en.htm

Open access e-learning tutorial:
<http://ec.europa.eu/libraries/doc/videos/module.htm>



How to reach citizens more effectively and gather their feedback



Alessandro Giordani

“It is very important to not only have one-way communication explaining what EU policies are, but also to listen to the public and to gather feedback,” said Alessandro Giordani, Deputy Head of DG COMM’s Citizens’ Dialogues Unit.

In fact, this matters even more today than it may have done in the past, Mr Giordani added. “There is a much greater need to find out what people think and feel about the policies of the EU,” he observed. Dialogue helps to highlight the public’s frustrations or concerns, or indeed appreciation.

The added impetus stems from the fact that the current Commission is a “political” Commission, Mr Giordani explained, in the sense that the EP elections in 2014 were marked by an unprecedented awareness of the impact of decisions made at EU level, and thus of the implications of the choice of leadership resulting from this vote.

The European Commission is the only institution entitled to propose the EU directives and regulations, Mr Giordani underlined. He added that for the first time ever, the

political families at the EP backed specific candidates for the Presidency of the European Commission. The 10 priorities that serve as the political mandate of the Juncker Commission were thus clearly set out before the European Parliament, he noted.

This specificity gives citizens a much clearer frame of reference in judging the delivery of EU policies. However, effective dialogue also involves providing assurance that feedback, once gathered, will actually be taken into consideration, said Mr Giordani.

Citizens’ dialogues where Commissioners or politicians engage with the public face to face provide a powerful setting for this exchange. To date, Mr Giordani’s unit had organised 83 events since January 2015.

EDCs could provide crucial support in organising these events, as they already have done on several occasions. But this is only one way in which they can contribute. The EDCs, Mr Giordani notes, have huge potential with regard to stimulating and informing debate on EU policies. “Don’t feel sidelined, but try to get involved,” Mr Giordani concluded. <http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-dialogues>



EDC conference participants