



Brussels, 26 July 2000

**MINUTES OF THE SECOND ANNUAL MEETING OF NATIONAL COORDINATORS OF THE
EUROPEAN DOCUMENTATION CENTRES (EDCs)
ATHENS, 10 - 11 APRIL 2000**

1. Programme

Monday, 10 April 2000

1.1. Opening address by Professor Emmanuel J. Yannakoudakis

Mr Keery gave the floor to Professor Emmanuel J. Yannakoudakis, Head of the Library and also Head of the Informatics Department, who welcomed the participants warmly on behalf of the Rector of the Athens University of Economics and Business, and highlighted the importance of the EDCs in universities as instruments of study and research and as a driving force in the field of European studies. He also underlined how invaluable the EDCs were as sources of information on European integration and the useful role they played as a network and in the Member States or elsewhere.

1.2. Presentation by Mr Keery

After the opening address by Professor Emmanuel J. Yannakoudakis, Mr Keery took the Chair once again to discuss the new Commission policy and its consequences, particularly in areas directly related to the EDC network.

Mr Keery informed the coordinators of the restructuring of the European Commission that was currently under way. The unit responsible for the EDCs was part of the new Directorate-General for Education and Culture, which brought together the former DGs X and XXII. In addition to its EDC responsibilities, Unit EAC-D3 was also responsible for the Commission's Central Library and for Commission databases. This new responsibility for databases offered opportunities for further synergies. The reorganisation of the Commission would continue to involve redeployment of staff and restructuring of costs/benefits. The impact of the reforms on DG EAC was difficult to predict but the current EDC management structure was guaranteed at least until the beginning of 2001. The current political changes in the free distribution of EUR-OP publications was a direct result of the restructuring process and of budget reductions in certain areas of Commission activity. Unit EAC-D3 would continue to fight for recognition of the importance of the EDC network and to ensure that efforts to improve the quality of the network would bear fruit.

1.3. Presentation by Ms Loff

At Mr Keery's invitation, Ms Loff presented the issues to be discussed during the meeting, commenting on or explaining each one.

The issues which had been proposed were as follows:

- **Draft *vade mecum***

A draft *vade mecum* setting out the rights and obligations of the EDCs/DEP, which could in future serve as a guide for the EDCs/DEP, had been distributed to the coordinators in advance to ensure that they were properly informed and in a position to discuss this issue.

- **Evaluation**

A three-year pilot project had begun in 1999 and was based on two essential tools - **activity reports/questionnaires** and **visits by professionals to the EDCs/DEP**:

- A questionnaire had been sent to the EDCs and most had responded.
- The results had already been analysed.
- An initial report had been submitted and sent to the coordinators in advance.

Proposal concerning a new questionnaire that would be launched during 2001, taking account of the pilot project exercise. This questionnaire would be a kind of **annual activity report** and would, of course, still be an ongoing assessment instrument.

- **Training**

Call for comments and suggestions concerning training measures taken by our unit, i.e.:

- basic training;
- further training;
- ad hoc training.

- **Exchange programme**

Comments, suggestions and proposals concerning the management of the next exchange programme.

- **Development of EDC website**

Comments, suggestions and proposals concerning the development of the EDC/DEP website.

- **Distribution of documentation**

The issue of free distribution of publications by EUR-OP. The question of the OJ paper version.

At Ms Loff's request, the coordinators suggested including further points in the discussion:

- modifying the method of organising the coordinators' meeting;
- developing cooperation among the coordinators themselves and between the coordinators and those responsible for coordination in Brussels;
- including in each EDC's web page the grey literature produced in its own university, particularly research theses on Europe carried out by teachers and students.

1.4. Coordinators' presentations

Each of the coordinators in turn described how the EDCs had developed in their country since the last meeting (some of the presentations we received are given in Annex III).

On this subject, Mr Keery suggested following the example set by the Eurolib Group and introducing a form, to be filled in some time before the meeting, which would contain information on the EDCs and their development. This would mean that all information could be sent to all the coordinators prior to the meeting. Then only the most important points would be discussed during the meeting.

1.5. Adoption of working methods

On the afternoon of 10 April, during the time allocated for discussion of issues arranged in advance, it was unanimously decided to change working methods (see point 1.3., suggested additions to points for discussion).

It was decided that each issue would be discussed by ad hoc working groups. Groups were set up immediately and proceeded to work throughout the afternoon and evening so that their conclusions could be presented the following day.

Working groups:

1. Training/Exchange programme

Tony Eklof (IRL), Angelika Grund (D), Riitta Kairakari-Joss (S), Ian Mayfield (GB), Vassiliki Rigakou (GR), Georg Winter (A)

Spokesperson: Ian Mayfield

2. Evaluation

Hélène Galland (F), Gunilla Häkli (FIN), Maria da Saudade Miranda (P), Elisabetta Pilia (I)

Spokesperson: Elisabetta Pilia

3. **Distribution of documentation/Development of Internet site**

Wouter Van Veenendaal (NL), Pieter Jan Boon (NL), Jørgen Hovaldt Nielsen (DK), Michel Fraysse (F), Elvira Aleixandre Baeza (E)

Spokesperson: Wouter Van Veenendaal

The other issues for discussion, such as **the election and mandate of coordinators** and the **draft *vade mecum***, along with other suggestions, were discussed during the morning of 11 April.

Tuesday, 11 April 2000

1.6. Presentation and discussion of points raised by the working groups

- The three spokespersons read out the conclusions of each group. The conclusions adopted would be subject to the conclusions of the coordination meeting (see point 2). For more detailed information see copies of the notes presented (Annex IV).
- During the debate, all coordinators had an opportunity to express their views individually. This led to a very lively and productive debate which made a positive contribution to the final conclusions.
- The question of the *vade mecum* was not discussed due to its specific nature; instead, a study would be carried out by a working group which would be set up for this purpose.

This working group's task would be to present another draft *vade mecum* at the next meeting, taking into account all the changes made and also the contributions of all EDCs.

- The Commission proposal concerning the election/selection and mandate of the coordinators was approved unanimously. The details would also be subject to the final conclusions (see point 2).
- The working group dealing with documentation proposed sending a letter to all those responsible at the highest level in the European Union hierarchy (Council, European Parliament, Court of Justice, Commission) (see Annex V).

2. Conclusions

2.1. Organisation of future meetings

- The meeting of national coordinators took place annually and the next one would be held in Dublin on 5 and 6 March 2001.
- Given the success of this coordination meeting and the importance that these meetings could have in future in terms of consolidating the network, it was decided that a **working group** should now be set up and given the task of preparing for the next meeting, although the meeting would still be organised by the European Commission (see Annex VI).

The tasks of this working group would include drawing up forms relating to the EDCs in each country and their development since previous meetings; these forms would be sent out in advance and completed by the coordinators. Replies would be sent some time before the meeting to allow each coordinator to ask questions.

The members of this working group were: Tony Eklof (IRL) (Spokesperson), Georg Winter (A) and Angelika Grund (D).

- Adoption of a new method for selecting coordinators:
 - two per country (one coordinator and one deputy coordinator). In principle, the deputy coordinators would replace the coordinators after two years. This would mean that each coordinator had a mandate of four years (two as coordinator and two as deputy coordinator). Consequently, if a coordinator could not attend he would always have a substitute;
 - elections every two years at national meetings.

2.2. Decisions on specific issues

2.2.1. Setting up the working groups

Given the successful application of the working methods by the groups, it was decided to set up four working groups in which all coordinators would have to participate; their mandate would be from April 2000 until March 2001.

Working group 1

Subject: *Vade mecum*

Presentation of a draft at the next meeting, taking into account the comments made

Participants: Ian Mayfield (GB) (Spokesperson), Riitta Kairakari-Joss (S), Vassiliki Rigakou (GR)

Working group 2

Subject: **Joint web page for all EDCs**

Participants: Wouter Van Veenendaal (NL) (Spokesperson), Elvira Aleixandre Baeza (E), Pieter Jan Boon (NL), Jørgen Hovaldt Nielsen (DK), Cathy Simon (F)

Working group 3

Subject: **Activity report/evaluation**

Presentation of a new questionnaire

Participants: Elisabetta Pilia (I) (Spokesperson), Maria da Saudade Miranda (P), Gunilla Häkli (FIN), Hélène Galland (F)

Working group 4

Subject: **Preparation for the next meeting** (cf. 2.1)

Participants: Tony Eklof (IRL) (Spokesperson), Angelika Grund (D), Georg Winter (A)

2.2.2. Training (see report by the relevant working group)

- agreement in principle with all training measures carried out by the Documentation Centre unit;
- contribution with some points to be added concerning basic training;
- need for ad hoc training.

2.2.3. Exchange programme (see report by the relevant working group)

All coordinators were in agreement with the follow-up to the exchange programme in line with the conditions already agreed at the programme evaluation meeting held in London in November 1997, i.e. the need to:

- be a librarian;
- be a visitor and a host structure;
- have already been a host structure.

There was **unanimous** agreement that the management of this programme should be assigned to the **European Information Association (EIA)**, which had already run very successfully the two programmes carried out in 1996/97 and 1997/98. This was an association of professionals from the various countries and one which, for the moment, was **unique in Europe**.

2.2.4. Grey literature on the website

Where possible, the titles of grey literature relating to theses and other research works on European integration (unpublished works by teaching staff, researchers and students) would be included on the home pages.

2.2.5. Development of the dialogue between the Commission (Unit EAC-D3 Documentation Centre - EDC Section) and the EDCs

- The Commission should inform the coordinators of the opening of new EDCs and the closure of others.
- The coordinators should also be the principal partners of the EDC section and vice versa.

2.2.6. Letter to the most senior officials in the European Union

It was decided to send a letter to the most senior EU officials concerned (Council, European Parliament, Court of Justice and Commission) regarding the fact that EUR-OP had stopped distributing the paper version of the OJ.

2.2.7. Message to Richard Caddel

A message expressing best wishes for a speedy recovery would be sent to Richard Caddel, the 'father' of EURODOC, who was ill and had retired due to his illness.

3. Close of the meeting

Mr Keery and Ms Loff congratulated the participants on the success of this meeting and thanked the organisers, interpreters and host structure, also stressing the importance of this second meeting in developing and consolidating the network given the advent of active involvement by participants.

SIGNED
Isabel Loff
Head of Section
European Documentation Centres