



Evaluation of performance of EU Info Centres in the Enlargement and Neighbourhood regions (2011-2017)

Synthesis Report Annex 1

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**Evaluation of performance of
EU Info Centres in the Enlargement and
Neighbourhood regions
(2011-2017)**

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*The opinions expressed in this document represent the authors' points of view
which are not necessarily shared by the European Commission
or by the authorities of the countries involved.*

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1. EVALUATION QUESTION MATRIX: EU INFO CENTRES IN THE IPA BENEFICIARIES

1.1. Evaluation Question Matrix for the IPA beneficiaries

EQ1. To what extent have the objectives of the EUICs been defined considering the specific needs of the target audience in the IPA beneficiaries and contribute to the objectives set in the EU framework on strategic communication in the enlargement region?

JC 1.1 There is alignment between the EUICs' objectives set by EU Delegations and EU strategic communication objectives, and the needs addressed by this framework.

A multi-layered approach is taken to the definition of EU strategic communication objectives for the enlargement region. These are described in a range of documents, for example: the Communication Strategy for the European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, the Commission/EEAS Action Plan for Strategic Communication in the Western Balkans and Turkey, the 2018 Communication from the Commission on A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans and the EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans.

The reviewed EU Delegation Annual Communication Plans confirm how the EU Info Centres fit within the planned forward objectives and the overall strategic communication objectives. These Plans generally contain information about the key activities of the EU Info Centres, but do not always make it clear whether the activity is intended to support the Delegation or is a specific Info Centre activity.

The reviewed EUIC ToR for the period 2011-2017 also confirms an explicit link between their objectives and the objectives set for the region, for example in terms of seeking to increase the understanding of the economic benefits of enlargement and increasing the understanding of EU policies (which was the objective most consistently cited).

While there is some variability in the focus of EUICs' specific objectives, as set out in the ToR, for example some objectives are referenced explicitly and consistently, and others are not mentioned or mentioned infrequently. This is in line with the Commission/EEAS Action Plan for Strategic Communication in the Western Balkans and Turkey, which highlights the need for different Delegations to focus on different aspects.

Strength of evidence: strong

Description of the evidence base: the evidence is drawn from a series of documentary sources, including but not limited to the main EUD communication planning documents, communication strategy documents, available ToRs for EUICs over the period and agreed Intervention Logics developed as part of the evaluation.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: a strong rating is given because this judgement criteria requires only that documentary evidence be assessed, and our review has identified a comprehensive set of appropriate sources for the period (with sufficiently detailed information) to be able reach an understanding on the level and extent of alignment of objectives.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
Indicator 1.1.1 Evidence shows that there is a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU Delegation Annual Reports and Forward Plans indeed confirm 	There is no single document which confirms that objectives for strategic communication for the enlargement region, and feedback from A2 during the ISG meeting on the Desk Report indeed confirms that there is a multi-layered approach, comprised of various documents, which are described below:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DG NEAR Commu



<p>strong correlation between EUICs' objectives and the objectives of strategic communication for the enlargement region.</p>	<p>that Info Centres can and do form part of the planned forward objectives, targets and activities and contribute to strategic regional communication objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no single document outlining the EU strategic communication objectives for the enlargement region, but objectives can be identified across a range of documents. • EUICs' ToR confirm an explicit link between the objectives they are set, and the objectives set for the region • The focus of EUICs' specific objectives differs by country, which is also in line with the Action Plan for Strategic Communication which highlights the need for different Delegations to focus on different aspects. 	<p>DG NEAR Communication Strategy (p6. 2015) confirms that the objectives for the enlargement region are as follows:</p> <p><u>Key objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve dissemination of information and facilitate dialogue on the two policies¹, and related developments; • Increase understanding on the scope, volume and results of the EU's activities in the countries/regions in terms of political, economic and social relations; • Use public diplomacy to explain the EU's role and promote a positive image of it; • Facilitate the access of relevant stakeholder organisations, opinion formers and multipliers, including journalists from national and regional media in the EU and in the partner countries, and grassroots initiatives, to factual and objective information about the two policies and related developments. <p><u>Specific objectives: Enlargement countries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain implications of EU integration to the general public, by informing about the benefits, including the major contribution to peace, security and prosperity, but also the responsibilities related to EU accession; address concerns the citizens may have; • Develop an increased sense of ownership towards the enlargement process at a political and societal level; • Increase understanding of the process by showcasing positive results through human interest stories supported by facts and figures. <p>Action Plan for Strategic Communication entitled 'Non-Paper on Strategic Communication on EU Enlargement in the Western Balkans and Turkey'. This document confirms that the need for effective communication on how the enlargement process works and its implications for citizens' lives remains and that it is essential for ensuring public support. It also states that communication should stress the EU's fundamental priorities, such as human rights, rule of law, good neighbourly relations, economic governance and public administration reform. It also confirms that objectives are being delivered through EUD annual communication plans and the establishment and management of the EU Information Centre network. The objectives described in this paper are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance public awareness in the partners about the EU, its policies and the benefits and obligations that a relationship with the EU brings; • Enable informed debate about EU integration, including in a strong overall media environment; • Increase public support for the process and therefore for the reforms required to make progress. This is vital to encourage political leaders to pursue the required reforms vigorously; • Raise visibility for funding from the EU and the EU's role as the biggest donor in the region, and increase recognition of the positive impact achieved; • Address disinformation about EU policies and objectives. <p>On pages 7 and 8 of this Action Plan, a table is provided, which confirms how EUIC activities comply with the strategic communication objectives set.</p>	<p>nication Strategy (2015)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Paper Strategic Communication on EU Enlargement in the Western Balkans and Turkey (2016) • Communication from the Commission: 'A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans' (2018). • Intervention logic
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¹ The Strategy also covers the Neighbourhood region



		<p>The 2018 Non-Paper on Strategic Communication confirms the importance of communication but is not specific about communication objectives. It instead states:</p> <p><i>'For the accession process to be a success, its opportunities and challenges must be communicated more clearly, in the region and in the EU. In the Western Balkans, it is primarily the responsibility of governments to provide adequate information to citizens and business, and to forge a national consensus around their strategic goal. On the EU side, it is incumbent upon Member States to inform their citizens and provide them with the facts about the opportunities and challenges of the process. The Commission will support these endeavours by stepping up its strategic communication in the countries and in the Union and to ensure the visibility of enlargement policy.'</i></p> <p>A review of EU Delegations' Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans confirms how Info Centre objectives are taken into account in EU Delegation planning and objective setting in each beneficiary. These documents also confirm the link between EUIC objectives and the Action Plan on Strategic Communication on EU Enlargement in the Western Balkans and Turkey. For example, the EU Delegation to Albania's Annual Report and Forward Plan confirms that Info Centres are part of the planned forward objectives, targets and activities (p6, March 2017).</p> <p>The EU Info Centres' ToR describe "objectives" in the section called "Overall Objectives". A review of this section of the available ToR from 2011-2017 demonstrates that the objectives set for EU Info Centres remained relatively constant over the course of the years reviewed. There is some variability in the emphasis placed on specific objectives in some beneficiaries as opposed to others. For example, all ToR reviewed for the seven IPA beneficiaries refer to increasing the understanding of the economic benefits of enlargement and all ToR reviewed, except the ToR for EU Info Centres in Montenegro and Turkey, refer to increasing the understanding of EU policies (third strategic objective). None of the ToR referred specifically to increasing understanding of the benefits of enlargement and support for political good governance, economic and social development is only referred to in the ToR for Montenegro. Overall though there is a strong correlation in ToR between EUIC objectives and objectives set for strategic communication in the region.</p>	<p>agreed in Inception Phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUIC ToR's 2011-2017 • EU Delegation Information & Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans 2017.
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JC 1.2 Specific target group communication needs have been well defined and the EUICs' objectives clearly focus on these needs.

EU Delegations set the target groups for communication and these are then specified in the ToR for the EUIC. It was not possible to confirm that the EUIC objectives are defined using research into specific target groups' needs. Indeed, target groups' specific needs are not mentioned in the documentation explicitly but, rather, stem from the political priorities for a given beneficiary.

EUIC Team Leaders confirmed they do (or plan to do) research into target groups' needs. The results of the EUIC Team Leaders' survey, the North Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia had recently conducted research into target group needs and Bosnia and Herzegovina had done so in the past. Albania and Kosovo planned to carry out research. In Turkey, there was a mixed picture with some EUICs indicating that they had conducted research and some indicating that they hadn't or planned to

not. However, during the field missions it appeared the EUIC conducted research relates mainly to feedback from events. Commissioned research was used in a limited number of beneficiaries (polls, surveys and focus groups) but EUICs generally acted as agents for the EUD to facilitate contracting.² Although most EUICs did not have access to baseline data, output data in particular on social media followers and likes, as well as numbers of events and participants is being gathered in the course of delivery.

Target groups are typically broadly defined, and the communication campaigns conducted by the EU Info Centres focus on the public. Specific tailoring to individual groups is limited. This does not prevent certain groups from nevertheless being prioritised or profiles targeted through different channels and tools. Sometimes prioritisation is done using research (e.g. polling data on topics of interest or attitudes to values), but the level of resources available is a major barrier to developing tailored approaches to target groups according to Delegations and EUICs.

The documentary evidence available is an insufficient basis for assessing the extent of EUICs' contribution to the strategic communication objectives. But did confirm the variability in the EUIC concept in each country. In some cases, EUICs have a strong focus on facilitating and supporting events for example Turkey, including in some cases events for other EU stakeholders (for example Montenegro). In others, the EUICs are the main arm of the EU Delegation responsible for implementing communication activities for example Albania.

Monitoring data is of inconsistent quality. Tracing the contribution of each channel and tool and activity to the strategic communication objectives is made difficult by the fact that indicators are not defined at output, outcome or impact level. They are typically set at activity level and are not specific or measurable or tailored to target groups. Again, the field missions showed that, while there is some (limited) quantitative and qualitative data being collected, it is variable and somewhat superficial. EUICs' own reports suggest that activities are in line with the EU strategic communication objectives, but the extent to which this is the case cannot be ascertained.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: EUIC ToR 2011-2017; Survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders; Interviews with EU Delegation staff; Interviews with EUIC contractors; Interviews with EUIC staff during the field mission; EUIC ToR 2011-2017; EUIC Final Reports; EUD Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans; Non-Paper on Strategic Communication on EU Enlargement in the Western Balkans and Turkey; Interviews with EUIC managers; Survey of EUIC Team Leaders; Review of monitoring data.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: a more than satisfactory rating is provided given that it is possible to triangulate evidence from two different sources (views of contractors and EUD staff from interviews and / or survey) with documentary evidence (from the ToR).

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 1.1.2</p> <p>Quantitative and qualitative evidence that confirms that EU Delegations set objectives for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ToR show that the EUIC objectives are set prior to implementation and that it is not specified in these that EUIC should commission or conduct research into specific 	<p>EUIC objectives are set in Terms of Reference prior to the implementation of work carried out by EUICs. Desk research on EUIC ToR confirms that EUICs are not themselves required to conduct specific target group needs analysis themselves.</p> <p>Of the 20 respondents to the EUIC Team Leader Survey, 9 reported that they had nevertheless recently conducted research into what target groups want to know about the EU; 4/20 said that they had done so, but not recently; 5/20 plan to.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EUIC ToR 2011-2017 Survey of EU Info

² This mainly refers to polls and surveys. However, the EU Office in Kosovo confirmed that focus groups have been used there.



<p>EUICs based on an analysis of target groups' needs and have evidence to show that this is the case.</p>	<p>target group needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation of EUIC Team Leaders shows that, despite this, research has been conducted into target groups needs in most cases or is planned. • Staff from EUD confirmed the use of commissioned research into target groups' needs (polling, focus groups and surveys). But there is no evidence that this is used to set objectives per se. • Staff also confirmed the EUIC target groups are set by the EUD, and align with, the EUD target groups. • Most contractors did not have access to baseline data. • In practice, although target groups are broadly defined, certain groups are prioritised, sometimes on the basis of research but also in relation to ease of access. • Typically, however, the restriction facing EUIC is the level of resource available for developing tailored approaches to target groups. 	<p>Feedback from interviews with EU Delegation staff confirms that there is no quantitative evidence available to confirm that EU Delegations set objectives for EU Info Centres based on a needs analysis of target groups. In terms of qualitative evidence, staff from four EU Delegations confirmed that research into target groups is conducted using various methods (such as polling, focus groups, and surveys). One Delegation mentioned that research into target groups through focus groups and quantitative surveys had started only in September 2018. Another confirmed conducting a needs assessment based on an annual household survey, which assesses EU public perception around the beneficiary in as many regions as possible. This helps set goals, target groups, tailoring of messaging and informs the local strategy. In a next step, this Delegation reported testing messaging in focus groups. Several Delegations confirmed annual polling to gather an understanding of target groups, although this did not necessarily constitute a needs assessment.</p> <p>Staff from EU Delegations confirmed that the EU Info Centre target groups are broadly the same as those for the EU Delegations and are set by the EU Delegations. The contractors confirmed that they conduct further research into target groups' needs through, for example, annual polls and surveys / questionnaires to understand public perceptions. This enables contractors to further understand the target groups at the local level and then work with the EU Delegation to tailor the communication activities.</p> <p>The majority of EU Info Centre contractors confirmed that there were no baseline figures in terms of target groups' needs and levels of awareness / views on the EU. However, one reported receiving this information from the previous contractor.</p> <p>Feedback from EUIC staff during the field mission confirmed that target groups were defined broadly not on the basis of needs assessment. In practice, it was identified that EUICs tend to prioritise some target groups more than others. In some cases, polling data was being taken into account, but EUICs have limited capacity to tailor their approaches to target groups given resource constraints.</p>	<p>Centre Team Leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with EU Delegation staff • Interviews with EUIC contractors • Interviews with EUIC staff during the field mission.
<p>Indicator 1.1.3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Delegations have 	<p>There is a multi-layered approach to defining the strategic communication objectives in the enlargement region, which are described across a range of documents, as highlighted under Indicator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUIC



<p>The monitoring data confirms that indicators set for EUICs are in line with and would contribute to achieving the EU's strategic communication objectives and target group needs.</p>	<p>not used intervention logics to define indicators at activity, output, outcome and impact level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targets are mainly set at the activity level and confirm that required activities have taken place. • The types of activities carried out for example, events, campaigns and information provision, contribute to achieving strategic communication objectives. • It cannot be assessed that indicators are in line with target group needs because target group needs have not been assessed (see Indicator 1.1.2). 	<p>1.1.1.</p> <p>The EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans are part of the approach which describes the EU Delegation objectives in each beneficiary. However, specific indicators for EUIC activities are not described in these documents, which were not developed on the basis of an intervention logic model.</p> <p>The Action Plan for Strategic Communication entitled 'Non-Paper on Strategic Communication on EU Enlargement in the Western Balkans and Turkey' is another document which sets the objectives for communication in the region. This document confirms that the need for effective communication on how the enlargement process works and its implications for citizens' lives remains and that it is essential for ensuring public support. It also states that communication should stress the EU's fundamental priorities, such as human rights, rule of law, good neighbourly relations, economic governance and public administration reform. It also confirms that objectives are being delivered through EUD annual communication plans and the establishment and management of the EU Information Centre network. The objectives described in this paper are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance public awareness in the partners about the EU, its policies and the benefits and obligations that a relationship with the EU brings; • Enable informed debate about EU integration, including in a strong overall media environment; • Increase public support for the process and therefore for the reforms required to make progress. This is vital to encourage political leaders to pursue the required reforms vigorously; • Raise visibility for funding from the EU and the EU's role as the biggest donor in the region, and increase recognition of the positive impact achieved; • Address disinformation about EU policies and objectives. <p>The monitoring data <u>reported</u> in the reviewed 24 Final Reports varies in quality and robustness from IPA beneficiary to IPA beneficiary.</p> <p>In EUIC ToR, targets are set at activity level. The targets set relate to the number and types of events and / or number of participants at these events. Targets in the ToR correlate to the lists of "results to be achieved", which are described in each ToR. However, it can be noted that the targets set in the ToR generally relate to some, but not all, of the "results to be achieved" listed in the ToR. There are fewer indicators than the list of activities to be delivered by the contractor under "results to be achieved", such that the list of indicators does not necessarily correlate with all the "results to be achieved".</p> <p>Generally, no indicators are set at output, outcome or impact level (in line with the way that indicators are defined in the DG NEAR intervention logic and, therefore, monitoring data provides some insights, but the exact contribution of each channel and tool and activity to reaching strategic communication objectives cannot be defined.</p> <p>The targets set are frequently not specific and measurable, which is a challenge for assessing their precise contribution; they are also not tailored to target groups. Therefore, the indicators do not</p>	<p>ToR 2011-2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUIC Final Reports • EUD Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans. • Non-Paper on Strategic Communication on EU Enlargement in the Western Balkans and Turkey. • Interviews with EUIC managers. • Survey of EUIC Team Leaders. • Review of monitoring
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		<p>relate to the strategic communication objectives. The Final Reports do not mention target group needs and how the contractors may have adapted the indicators accordingly to ensure they are aligned with target group needs.</p> <p>The review of monitoring data in the field phase confirmed the above situation, as highlighted by the below examples:</p> <p>Albania: Monitoring data was not sufficiently systematic or targeted at gathering data on messaging to allow for an assessment of whether the activities supported are contributing to the EU’s strategic communication objectives.</p> <p>Bosnia and Herzegovina: Monitoring relies solely on quantitative data; no qualitative data is collected systematically. Overall, monthly reports consolidate the quantitative data from event and social media accounts. Therefore, the quality of monitoring data is considered inconsistent. Data seem overestimated. For example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the figures reported on event participation and reach do not reflect the quality or intensity of the engagement. Even basic data such as the number of walk-in visitors seems to be largely overestimated given that access to the EUIC is very limited.</p> <p>Kosovo: The data for very few of the required indicators are collected or the data is open to question. In the report of the previous contractor for 2017, the number of queries is equated with the number of visitors, i.e. 1 visitor = 1 query; the speed of response is not reported, figures on journalists and events are cumulative with no recording of repeat visitors, making it impossible to assess whether new audiences are being reached; the category of perceptions of participants in events in response to questionnaires is left blank, and the website data is missing. The detail on the number of publications distributed is missing from the Final Report (the total is 459 without any breakdown), and the satisfaction rate with publications is given as ‘High’ based on the (unspecified) number of publications distributed. While lessons are undoubtedly learned, the approach is not structured.</p> <p>Montenegro: Monitoring systems were weak under the contractor managing the contract at the time of the field mission. No baselines and no targets are set. Indicators are quantitative (numbers of events to be organised, number of publications to produce) and unrelated to analysis of need or demand, or are very limited, e.g. website analytics requirements are limited to reporting on the number of visitors when additional analytics are readily available free of charge. The Delegation was not, during the period, following up on the indicators that are available. Staff and contractors changes since the beginning of 2019 have led to the introduction of reforms.</p> <p>North Macedonia: The experts were able to view data collected to confirm the number of visitors and the number of participants at events.</p> <p>Serbia: The quantitative monitoring indicators used confirm that outputs are delivered overall. Numbers of events and event participants confirm the space is well used. But there are no data on the achievement of higher-level objectives (outcomes and impacts). Reports include a large number of indicators, not harmonised, not systematically used and for which no overall value for any particular reporting period is provided.</p> <p>Turkey: In the Info Centres visited data was collected to confirm the number of visitors, numbers of</p>	ng data.
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		<p>events and participants at events, in-line with ToR. Profile data of visitors and participants is not systematically collected. Some satisfaction data is gathered in relation to event attendance, but there is no standard format for collection and based on the small sample of EUICs visited is not gathered in all cases.</p>	
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EQ2. To what extent have the objectives of the EUICs been achieved?

JC 2.1 Extent that EUIC’s communication activities have produced the expected outcomes, which contributed to the achievement of the set objectives.

It is not possible to make a robust assessment of the extent that EUIC communication activities have produced the expected outcomes, which achieved the set objectives for numerous reasons, described above and below.

There is variable use of results chain terminology in EUIC Terms of Reference and EU Delegation communication plans. Neither clearly define specific outputs and outcomes, which will result from the implementation of different activities, nor the way the data will be collected to confirm that expected results have been generated. The EUICs’ ToR used the term “Results to be achieved” in a variable way to sometimes refer to “activities” and sometimes to refer to “outputs”. The way that EUIC communication efforts are described means that it is not possible for DG NEAR or the EU Delegation easily to have a detailed view of EUIC performance. However, according to discussions with the Interservice Steering Group on the evaluation Desk Report, EUIC Terms of Reference are designed to provide a broad framework for EUIC’s work, which allows the Delegations and EUICs to adjust to emerging communication needs. It was explained that setting very specific targets might have a limiting effect.

In the timeframe under investigation, EUIC ToR did not set indicators at output or outcome level and no baselines were set. Instead indicators in ToR tended to relate to the activity level, but nonetheless there was little quantification of targets set. EUICs collected some output level data but did not consistently collect outcome data to confirm the achievement of objectives.

Output data collected relates to the number of visitors to EU Info Centres, number of participants at events, and number of followers and likes on social media, and number of website visits. In some cases, retweet data and comments are collected on social media, which can be considered as a form of result. However, the field mission confirmed that output data is not collected in the same way by all EUICs. Also, the EUIC Final Reports over the timeframe have not consistently reported on the outputs and outcomes of the different activities carried out.

Feedback from EU Delegations confirms that there is limited measurement of communication results achieved, however the EU Delegations’ expectations for EUIC performance are being met. EU Delegations and other EUIC users, including representatives from Member State embassies, NGOs, EU programmes interviewed³ during the field missions suggest that EUIC activities are contributing to raising awareness, even if there is a lack of hard evidence to confirm that this is the case. The survey of Delegations also confirmed that there is a need to place more focus on the setting of targets and monitoring to improve the measurement of EUIC performance.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: the evidence is supported by EUIC Final Reports, EUIC ToR and EUD communication plans, interviews with EU Delegation staff and a range of stakeholders who use EUICs, evidence relating to monitoring data collected during the mission and observations on the approach to the collection of monitoring data.

³ The 10 country notes presented in Annex 3 provide lists of individuals interviewed during the field visits.



Explanation of the strength of the evidence: it is possible to triangulate data from reports and other documentary sources against interviews. However, the fact that data is not systematically collected to confirm the production of outcomes to support the achievement of objectives is a limitation in the assessment of this judgement criterion. Nevertheless, the evidence does suggest that this cannot be assessed and in some cases, there may even be doubts as to the added value of specific activities, where monitoring data suggests low performance for example in relation to visitors to Info Centres.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 2.1.1</p> <p>EU Delegations / EUICs' monitoring data confirms that the communication activities achieved the outputs defined in the ToR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Delegations monitor that EUICs carried out the activities that they are required to deliver. • The desired or required outputs from each activity are not always clearly described in EU Delegation plans. • Over the timeframe under investigation there has been a lack of reporting on the results of activities in EUIC Final Reports. • The field mission highlighted variability in the approach to gathering monitoring data and a tendency to focus on numbers of activities, participants, followers on social media rather than their appreciation / understanding of messages and content. • Types of EUIC activities are relevant to objectives set. 	<p>EU Delegation Communication Forward Plans do not consistently describe the contribution to be made by EUICs to support EU communication in the IPA beneficiary. Inconsistencies can also be observed between the way that activities, outputs and outcomes or impacts are described in these documents. For example, the 2017 Report for Kosovo describes activities, results and impacts, whereas the 2017 report for Albania describes activities, outputs and outcomes.</p> <p>In the timeframe in question (2011–2017), there is very little evidence that EU Delegations have started to set more specific objectives for communication. The 2017 Forward Plan for Turkey confirms the Delegation's target of increasing the number of likes and followers by 25% on social media. For the most part however, Delegation plans have started in recent years to confirm the number of events or activities to be achieved, but do not quantify their outputs / outcomes and there is no description of how any desirable impacts should be measured.</p> <p>There is a focus in EUICs' ToR on listing the types of activities that need to be carried out rather than the "outputs" that should result from these activities. ToR employ the term "Results to be achieved". The ToR also include a set of targets on which the EU Info Centres' performance related to the achieved results are measured. However, neither the results to be achieved nor the targets are sufficiently specific and measurable and, in some cases, not all results to be achieved have a corresponding target.</p> <p>Based on a review of ToR, the number of targets set were fewer than the results to be achieved and the extent to which results to be achieved were achieved was not reported in a consistent way in Final Reports. This was a barrier to the thorough assessment of their achievement. As indicators did tend to be consistently defined in ToR and Final Reports, these were taken as the unit of measurement to confirm whether or not outputs were achieved.</p> <p>Evidence relating to the extent of achievement of outputs varies from IPA beneficiary to IPA beneficiary as well as from year-to-year within each IPA beneficiary. A comparison of outputs based on the targets set in the ToR and reported on in the available Final Reports over 2011-2017 for the seven IPA beneficiaries shows that only one out of the 24 cases reported fully achieving outputs, with outputs of the other 23 cases (95.8%) reporting partial achievement.</p> <p>Altogether, 245 indicators/targets were set in the 24 Final Reports reviewed, of which 168 (68%) of the activities were fully achieved. The picture is not uniform and there is no consistent trend in terms of the achievement among the IPA beneficiaries or among the years. Based on the information reported in Final Reports, the extent of achievement of planned outputs is partial. There may be other evidence in the form of event reports or exchanges between EU Delegations and EU Info Centres, which have confirmed the achievement of indicators, but this cannot be assessed from the Final Reports.</p> <p>All respondents to the EUIC Team Leader survey (20/20) responded that they collect data from social</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Delegation Communication Forward Plans • Interviews with communication coordinators in EU Delegations • Final Reports from EUICs 2011-2017. • Survey of EU Delegation communication coordinators and EUIC Team leaders. • Discussions at the



		<p>media platforms (such as number of likes, comments, retweets and followers), as well as monitoring the number of participants at events. This is closely followed by monitoring the number of visitors to EU Info Centres (19).</p> <p>Sixteen EU Info Centres collect monitoring data on the number of documents (leaflets, brochures, posters) distributed. Fourteen EU Info Centres monitor the number of visitors /pageviews to websites and levels of satisfaction of visitors on events. Two collect data on downloads from their website.</p> <p>Comparatively, few respondents indicate that they collect data confirming whether target groups have increased awareness (8/20), have changed their views on the EU (7/20) or, have improved understanding of the EU (6/20). Evidence from the survey of EU Delegations confirmed all EU Delegation respondents to the evaluation survey: `agreed` or `strongly agreed` that EUICs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are effective at raising awareness of the EU (7/7 respondents agree or agree strongly). • have strong relationships with the media (7/7 responses); • are good at engaging with multipliers to extend the reach of their communication (7/7 responses). <p>However, 6/7 respondents agreed and/or agreed strongly that there is a need to put more focus on setting targets for reach and outcomes. Evidence from the field missions confirms:</p> <p>Albania: The monitoring data shared with the evaluation team, which include visitor statistics, event participation lists, social media activity reports, among others, confirms that communication activities have been in line with the outputs defined in the ToR. Evidence collected by the Delegation and Europe House confirms that outputs have contributed to an increase in the volume of information about the EU, its policies, values and funding through events organised at Europe House in Tirana and around the country.</p> <p>Feedback from the Delegation and contractors suggested that increased visibility in terms of social and traditional media coverage were contributing to the objectives set, but it was not possible to access evidence to confirm that this is the case.</p> <p>Bosnia and Herzegovina: Monitoring data confirms activities were undertaken, but there is limited measurement of communication results being achieved, beyond the measurement of simple metrics on engagement, such as numbers of followers on social media. Very limited account is taken of qualitative feedback. In addition, the approach to monitoring relies on quantitative data but data collection is not systematic. There is also evidence of inconsistencies between activity design and post-activity reporting, when the same indicators are not used and when targets have changed</p> <p>Kosovo: Outputs are being delivered from the EUICCs' activities, but there are no indicators on which an assessment of the quality of the outputs could be based, as there are no baselines (e.g. data from previous years) or targets, and satisfaction surveys are not carried out⁴, so no analysis of the quality of the outputs is possible. In addition, the EUICC results are not defined in the ToR in line with DG NEAR Guidelines (2016). The EUICC ToR, present "Activities" as "expected Results". It is</p>	<p>meeting of the ISG on the Desk Report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG COMM communication network indicators. • DG NEAR results chain ppt provided by the evaluation unit.
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⁴ Attendance records are kept (see Annex). There is consequently no reason not to report the number of attendees per event, but an opportunity is also lost to collect some basic information, e.g. whether the person is attending an event for the first time, how they heard about the event, how often they attend events at the centre.



		<p>also not possible to establish a direct relationship between the outputs and the outcomes.</p> <p>Montenegro: EUIC activities are producing the expected outputs, so that it is reasonable to assume that this is leading to, or at least contributing to, the hoped-for outcomes.</p> <p>North Macedonia: The EUIC has supported the process of raising awareness about the EU accession process and generating visibility for EU activities. There is quantitative monitoring data to confirm the number of visitors to the EUIC and the number of attendees at events.</p> <p>Serbia: The contractors use a number of quantitative monitoring indicators, which confirm that activities are delivered, and that outputs are achieved to a large extent.</p> <p>Turkey: EUIC reports confirm that the number and types of required events are carried out in line with their ToR. However, there is a lack of consistent monitoring data to confirm the effectiveness of events and any outcomes / effects on participants. Only one of the visited EUICs occasionally collects satisfaction data.</p>	
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JC 2.2 Extent to which the quantitative and qualitative effects of EUICs’ activities can be deemed to have contributed to the achievement of the set objectives.

EUIC activities contribute to the achievement of EU Delegation communication objectives, but there is a lack of consistent evidence to confirm the extent of any quantitative and qualitative effects generated. This was confirmed by the survey of EUIC team leaders, which highlighted that in most cases data on the effects on the target groups are not assessed.

EUICs’ Final Reports (2011–2017) confirm that Info Centres generate media coverage, facilitate debates with target groups and dissemination of information on the EU. Overall, some of these aspects, for example increases in networks are not captured in the EU Info Centres’ monitoring framework; others, such as numbers of debates, are. Yet, it is ⁵not possible to determine whether there have been any significant increases in volume and quality.

The Final Reports do not report on (measurable) increases in knowledge and/or awareness among target groups. Indeed, few Team Leaders of EU Info Centres responded to the survey indicating that they collect data on whether target groups have increased awareness of the EU (8 respondents out of the 20 surveyed), changed their views on the EU (7 respondents out of the 20 surveyed) or have improved understanding of the EU (6 respondents out of the 20 surveyed). Where collected, press clippings collected by contractors show that promoted activities generate a good amount of media coverage. It is, however, difficult to assess whether there is an increase in volume or quality– in the absence of data on the baseline.

Strength of evidence: indicative but not conclusive

Description of the evidence base: EUIC Final Reports, EU Delegation communication plans, EUIC Team Leader and EU Delegation evaluation surveys, and interviews with EU programmes and other programme partners.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: whilst the types of activities carried out by EUICs are in line with the objectives set, neither EU Delegations nor EUICs themselves collect consistent data to confirm the exact contribution of these activities to meeting EU communication goals.

⁵ The evidence is based on 20 Final Reports that were available.



Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
<p>Indicator 2.2.1 Evidence collected by EU Delegations / EUICs confirms that outputs have contributed to an increase in the volume and quality of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about the EU, its policies, values and funding; Debate with target groups; Networks with partners and multipliers; Enhanced media coverage; Increased awareness of the benefits of enlargement and EU support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EUICs' reports confirm the activities carried out have resulted in outputs, but it was not possible to have sight of evidence to confirm increased quantity or quality of these outputs. There is a lack of tangible evidence to confirm increases in quality or quantity of information, debates, media coverage and awareness of the benefits of EU support as a result of EUIC activity. Other EU programmes and IPA beneficiary governments cannot be relied on to meet EU Delegation communication objectives, because they have their own specific communication goals. Technical assistance projects provided under IPA II are required to communicate about the EU, but they also have their own organisational goals, which may interfere with focus on reaching target groups. 	<p>In the main documents reviewed, DG NEAR communication strategy, EU Delegation Communication Plans, Terms of Reference, EUIC Final Reports, there is no baseline data available to confirm the pre-2011 situation or to allow year-on-year comparisons over the timeframe under assessment.</p> <p>A review of 24 (available) Final Reports for EU Info Centres in the period covering 2011–2017 confirms that the EU Info Centres report on generating media coverage, facilitating debates with target groups and dissemination of information on the EU. Measurements of increases in awareness of EU values, policies, funding and enlargement benefits are captured by external, nationwide polls, but these increases cannot be attributed to EU Info Centre activities. Overall some of these aspects, for example increases in networks are not captured in the EU Info Centres' monitoring frameworks; others, such as numbers of debates, are. Yet, it is not possible to determine whether there have been any significant increases.</p> <p>All EU Delegation respondents to the evaluation survey: 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that EUICs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are effective at raising awareness of the EU (7/7 respondents selected agree or agree strongly). have strong relationships with the media (7/7 responses); are good at engaging with multipliers to extend the reach of their communication (7/7 responses); maintain the desired level of contact with the Erasmus+ Desk (7/7 responses). <p>Views were more mixed about EUICs' ability to build new information and dissemination networks and to engage with other EU information networks. In each case, three Delegation respondents were neutral on these questions.</p> <p>In the evaluation survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders, few respondents indicated that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> have increased awareness of the EU (8/20) collect data confirming whether target groups have changed their views on the EU (7/20), have improved understanding of the EU (6/20). <p>This was backed up in the field phase. The evaluation team saw little evidence of data collection relating to the effects on target groups, although some EUICs collect basic satisfaction data and in some cases media clippings are kept.</p> <p>The survey of EUIC Team Leaders also highlighted consensus that stimulating debate through conferences and raising awareness about EU projects were <u>not</u> particularly challenging tasks. However, there was more mixed feedback relating to reaching new target groups with little or no</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DG NEAR Communication Strategy EUIC Final Reports (2011–2017) EU Delegation forward plans. Survey of EU Delegations / EUIC Team Leaders Interviews with programme partners responsible for implementing IPA technical assistance. Interviews with EU programme



	<p>awareness of the EU.</p> <p>Based on observations and interviews in the field missions, if EUICs did not communicate on behalf of the Delegations (for example where there is no other EC communication contractor carrying out this task), it can be assumed that some of these activities would either not take place or would take place in a reduced way because other EU networks for example Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020 communicate specifically on their policy and programme areas. Evidence from interviews with IPA beneficiary governments confirms that beneficiary governments do not have the same communication objectives and messages as EU Delegations.</p> <p>In addition, it has been difficult to quantify and qualify the added value of communication about EU funding from other programme partners. During the field mission, however, there was some evidence that these partners may sometimes place a lot of focus on their own organisation's visibility towards the EU Delegation.</p>	<p>me agencies , Erasmus +, etc.</p>
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JC 2.3 Extent to which other factors influenced the achievement of the communication effects.

The main factors influencing (limiting or enhancing) the achievement of outcomes are summarised below and reported in detail in Annex 3:

- Exchanges of good practice across the IPA beneficiaries, which are not systematically collated. The exchange relies essentially on exchanges of information at regional meetings.
- Available resources, implying that a higher budget would enhance outcomes. Six out of seven EU Delegations surveyed 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that higher budgets would enhance outcomes, and this was confirmed in interviews with Delegations and EU Info Centre staff. However, as outcomes are not measured this is a perception, but appears to be a reasonable assumption. The limited budgets have implications on the expected reach of communication activities and ensuring target groups beyond the bigger/capital cities are reached.
- Degree of professionalism and pro-activity of EUIC contractors, which is currently variable. Enhancing factors are good practice examples of contractor staff who are very good networkers and are instrumental in reaching out to partners for the implementation of communication activities and are ready to share their networks. Based on the interviews with Delegations and EUIC users⁶ conducted during the field phase, the networks of the EUIC teams are generally praised in the IPA beneficiaries as this allows target groups to establish fruitful collaborations with partners and multipliers (e.g. universities, schools, EU MS and EU programmes such as Erasmus+). Interviewees also highlighted the EUIC team's good footprint, which translates into the possibility to implement activities in the whole of the territory (well beyond the capital city).
- Uneven quality of EUIC staff, with Delegations not having a say in the selection of non-Key experts and the low budgets affecting the ability of contractors to attract good quality staff according to interviews with Delegations. It can also be difficult to find experts who have a good command of English in remote areas
- Visibility / location of the information and communication structures: of 20 EU Info Centre Team Leaders surveyed, 15 answered 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that the location impacts the ability to engage with target groups; 13 out of 20 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that the lack of visibility of the structures impact their ability to engage target groups. The interviews with EU Info Centre contractors, some EU Delegations, and the Final Reports also highlighted issues around the physical

⁶ These were individual visitors to EUICs who visited when the evaluation team conducted the field missions.



location of the information and communication structures impacting access and visibility, and, ultimately, their ability to reach audiences.

- The focus on events, including hosted events. The hosting is in line with the Terms of Reference. It brings benefits as the EUICs are seen as a hub of EU-related activity across IPA beneficiaries. It also provides a place for networking for the civil society involved in EU projects and fulfils the requirements of the Terms of Reference of building synergies with multipliers. Whilst supporting other organisations’ events can support messaging on the EU, the logistics and promotion associated with hosting events are time-consuming. This can reduce key experts’ availability for EUIC’s own activities.
- In the survey of EU Delegations, six of the seven respondents agreed or agreed strongly that setting targets for EU Info Centres’ reach and outcomes would enhance what EU Info Centres are able to achieve, five of seven agreed or agreed strongly that increasing the focus on monitoring and communication outcomes would be beneficial. This would mean reviewing the monitoring system.
- The risk of rising euro-scepticism among target audiences, including multipliers and the media, due to uncertainty about the timing of accession (or opening of negotiations), unrealistic expectations and general enlargement fatigue. During the field phase, this came up as one of the challenges in all the IPA beneficiaries in interviews with EU Delegations and/or EU Info Centre staff, and frequently with media and civil society as well.
- Duration of service contracts and continuity: around half the EU Info Centre Team Leaders surveyed also mentioned the duration of contracts, and administrative and reporting procedures as factors affecting their ability to engage target groups. When Team Leaders devote a lot of time to managing these processes, they have less time to focus on communication activities. EU Delegations and EUIC contractors noted that continuity can be an issue, either because of frequent changes in contractor and/or because the handover process needs improvement.
- The EU Info Centre contractors and staff pointed to cases of:
 - (1) inadequate handover arrangements when a new contract starts, this means that the knowledge and contacts that are developed by one contractor are not handed over to the next contractor;
 - (2) a lack of clarity over which target groups to prioritise, which results in a fragmentation of effort. The list of target groups is long, but the amount of available resources is limited this means that human and financial resources are spread thinly. A focus on a smaller number of groups could be used to increase the frequency and quality of contact with these groups and to better understand how to engage them;
 - (3) insufficient coordination across EU Info Centres and EU Info Points: in some cases, strengthening coordination between Info Points and Info Centres, with Info Centres providing more guidance to Info Points would help Info Points to maximise their contribution to EU communication goals and (4) the overall administrative burden linked with reporting, which the contractors fear will increase further.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: EUIC Final Reports, EU Delegation communication plans, EUIC Team Leader and EU Delegation evaluation surveys, interviews with Delegation and EUIC team leaders, contractors, EU Info Centre Team Leaders, EU programmes and other programme partners.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: There is a wide range of sources of evidence, but inevitably Reports and interviewees put emphasis on different things despite the use of the same discussion guide for each category of interviewee. Consequently, a mention of an issue or failure to mention it does not necessarily mean that it is present or not. It is for this reason that it is not possible to describe the evidence as “strong”.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
Indicator 2.3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased sharing of 	In the Survey of EU Delegations , the main factors reported as enhancing outcomes were:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey



<p>EUIC Final Reports, EU Delegation staff, EUIC Team Leaders, partners and other EU programmes and target groups suggest factors that limited or enhanced effects.</p>	<p>good practices, supported by more training, increased budget and more collaboration with other EU providers were the top four factors identified by Delegations in the evaluation survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to budget levels contract durations were also viewed as key challenges. targeted and segmented communication. Promotion and location and levels of target group interest are key factors that impact on what EUICs can do. The risk of (rising) euro-scepticism and/or lack of interest in the EU is a challenge everywhere, in particular because of the inherently long draw-out nature of the accession process and unrealistic expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased sharing of good practices across all IPA beneficiaries (7/7 selected strongly agree or agree). Higher budget (6/7 respondents selected strongly agree or agree). Setting targets for communication outcomes and reach (6/7 respondents selected agree or agree strongly). More collaboration with other EU information providers (6/7 selected agree or strongly agree). More training on strategic communication priorities (6/7 selected agree or strongly agree). Increasing the focus on monitoring and communication outcomes (5/7 respondents selected agree or agree strongly). A better balance between face-to-face and other forms of communication (5/7 selected agree or strongly agree). A focus on fewer target groups (5/7 selected agree). Increased coordination / training from HQ (5/7 selected agree or strongly agree). More tailored communication products and materials from EU Delegation (5/7 selected agree or strongly agree) Contracts with a minimum duration of two years, with a possibility of extension to another 2 years (5/7 respondents selected agree or agree strongly to this). <p>The main factors limiting outcomes were reported to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Internal challenges:</i> constraints related to the duration of communication contracts (6/7 agree or strongly agree), followed by the administrative burden related to communication contracts (3/7 agree or strongly agree). <i>External challenges:</i> difficulties in engaging community leaders (3/7 selected agree) and insufficient research into how to target different sectors of the population (3/7 respondents). <p>Meanwhile, the main factors impacting the EU Info Centres' ability to engage with target groups were reported to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of awareness of the EU (15/20 respondents agree or strongly agree). 	<p>of Communication Coordinators in EU Delegations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with EUIC contractors Interviews with EU Delegation staff. Review of EUIC Final Reports 2011–2017 Interviews with EUIC Team Leaders Survey of EUIC Team Leaders
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- Lack of interest of target groups (15/20 respondents agree or strongly agree).
- Location of EUIC/Info Point/Europe/EU House (15/20 respondents agree or strongly agree).
- Lack of visibility of EUIC/Info Point/Europe/EU House (13/20 respondents agree or strongly agree).
- Around half of the EU Delegations mentioned difficulties in engaging the media, negative perceptions of the EU, limited number of information products available, difficulties in tailoring EU information to specific target group interests, duration of contract, limitations on the contract on scope of activities, and administrative and reporting procedures.

A review of the “problems encountered” section in the EU Info Centres’ **Final Reports** indicates that the factors that were judged to limit communication effects are the time taken to approve activities, insufficient financial resources and changes of key experts during the reporting period (Albania 2015). The accession status of the IPA beneficiary was reported to have an impact on the receptiveness of audiences. The quality of staff working in the EU Info Centres was in some cases reported as a limitation and in others as an enhancement factor.

Some of the EU Info Centres (Bosnia and Herzegovina) reported teething problems of logistical nature, such as the entrance to the door being located in an inopportune spot, limiting access to the EUIC, or the city council forbidding external EU Info Centre signage. These were reported in the initial stages of the contracts only and seem not to have been ongoing problems.

The sections on problems encountered were often empty in the Final Reports. This implies that EU Info Centres should be explicitly encouraged to report on challenges they encounter and reassured that such reporting will not affect the evaluation of their performance but is designed to capture the wider institutional and social challenges, rather than to identify EU Info Centre underperformance.

Interviews with EU Contractors and EU Info Centre Delegations

In interviews with EUIC contractors, it was made clear that the physical location of the EU Info Centres can enhance what they are able to achieve as this provides good visibility and can help with media coverage by bringing in media.

Factors that limit communication effects mentioned by the EU Info Centre Contractors included:

- Limited budgets, which has implications on the expected outreach of activities (e.g. ensuring rural areas are also targeted, or outreach even beyond larger/capital cities);
- Target groups not being suggested to the EU Delegation because of a perception that a “political” decision had already been made regarding the priority target groups and that this could not be changed;
- The physical location of the EU Info Centres; the security required disincentivises visitors;
- The size of the EU Info Centres’ space, which did not cater for events with a large number of

participants.

Factors that limit communication effects mentioned by staff in EU Delegations included:

- The need for EU Info Centres to modernise/adapt their approach to be more in tune with the changing communication environment and respond to new tools and channels (e.g. to reach young people);
- The lack of flexibility in the ToR limiting the contractor's ability to propose things that are new / innovative;
- The low budgets, which affect the ability to attract good quality staff among contractors. It can also be difficult to find experts who have a good command in English in remote areas of IPA beneficiaries;
- The uncertain quality of the staff as Delegations have no say on the selection of who fills most positions, with one EU Delegation staff member describing it as "a lottery in terms of who you get", and Delegation staff concerned that there is overemphasis on experience in the region and not enough on how much experts understand communications and the EU as well as how much experience they have in the region;
- Staffing issues inside the EU Delegation, with staff turnover every four years entailing that not every new joiner has the relevant country/policy background;
- Insufficient emphasis on outreach outside the main/capital cities.
- Discontinuity in contractors (the example of three contractors in a six-year period was raised).

Another EU Delegation staff member mentioned that the EU Delegation should pool the budget for communication contracts for larger, more effective events (like campaigns) rather than smaller events.

The following strengths and *weaknesses/challenges* surfaced via the **field missions** each IPA beneficiary:

- **Albania**
 - *Risk of euro-scepticism among opinion shapers and media analysts, due to uncertain deadline for the opening of the negotiations and general enlargement fatigue;*
 - *Lacklustre environment for debate, such as media self-censorship and political parties not debating EU membership.*
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina**
 - Sustained interest from the public, for example researchers, who are likely to be interested by very specific information, such as grants funded by the EU to support their mobility;



- Politicisation of EU news;
- The communication experience of the EU Info Centre team;
- *The overcrowded communication environment;*
- *Location of the EU Info Centre in Sarajevo strongly limits its accessibility;*
- *Too much focus on youth, which leads to neglect of other segments of the population;*
- *Focus on event organisation in the absence of a more strategic approach to communication;*
- *Too much emphasis on social media at the expense of traditional communication channels.*

- **Kosovo**
 - Use of thematic campaigns to cluster communication on projects are bearing fruit, although both the EU Delegation and EUICC could benefit from EU-funded projects improving their communication strategies and then developing synergies with the EUIC in deploying those;
 - Staff networks;
 - *Insufficient resources;*
 - *Strained relations at times between the EU and Kosovo;*
 - *Infrastructure limitations in Pristina (since resolved) and Mitrovica North;*
 - *Difficulties in obtaining information on projects, and in particular concrete results which can be packaged as success stories.*

- **Montenegro**
 - Quality of logistics services for event organisers;
 - Professionalism of media experts;
 - *Event planning and selection insufficiently strategic (since addressed under new contractor)*
 - *Relations between the EU and the government are good, but there is always a risk of tensions or unrealistic expectations, which could trigger euro-scepticism;*
 - *Narrow approach to communication by projects, based on opening and closing events (since addressed);*
 - *Failure to exploit to the full the communication potential of European or International 'Days' or 'Weeks' (since addressed).*

- **North Macedonia**
 - *Freedom of expression and the media, and journalists being intimidated, are serious challenges;*
 - *Underfunding of EU Info Points;*

- **Serbia**
 - Professionalism and pro-active attitude of the contractor;
 - Contractor staff members perceived as very good networkers;
 - Very good premises, appropriate to hosting a number of events;
 - *Poor handover when the new contractor started (in 2015);*
 - *Lack of clarity over which group to prioritise, resulting in a fragmentation of effort;*

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Administrative burden linked with reporting.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Turkey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>EU Info Centres are staffed only by one individual and have a small budget;</i> ○ <i>Turkey-EU accession process has stalled;</i> ○ <i>Media reporting on EU Delegation activities can be inaccurate.</i> 	
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JC 2.4 Extent that the communication tools used by the EUICs were appropriate for each target audience.

Overall, the information provision part of the EUIC service (i.e. a walk-in information service) is not meeting any specific target group need. EUIC Team leaders suggest that a physical info Centre is appropriate for retirees, but there is no evidence to confirm that this is meeting a strong demand.

Events can be a way of providing targeted information to specific audiences. However, there is a lack of feedback to confirm how these could be improved, including what the key characteristics of a good event are and / or if there are options to increase the efficiency of events, without compromising quality. A significant focus and resources are placed on the organisation of events, but there is a lack of measurement of satisfaction or understanding on how to increase their usefulness.

Traditional media, particular TV, are recognised as offering important opportunities to engage with target audiences, particularly older audiences, but their cost is mainly prohibitive. EUICs and Delegations view social media as useful to reach young people. Websites are used to reach all audiences. There is a demand for publications if these meet the target audience’s need. However, there is a lack of rigorous assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each tool in each beneficiary and whether funds saved by cutting back on certain tools could be used to enhance other tools. It is not possible to make a generic assessment of a channel because its value relates to the way that it is managed and the extent that it fits within a planned and measurable approach. EUIC staff understand which tools suit different target groups (for example, debates are suitable for academic audience, and plays and stories work well with children). However, there is lack of systematic evidence to confirm the actual effectiveness of these channels and tools and if improvements could be made.

There is a lack of qualitative data to confirm different target audiences’ actual perceptions of their interactions with the EU Info Centres although other EU programmes and Member State embassy staff indicated that they appreciate EUIC support.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: final reports of EUICs, survey of EU Delegation communication staff, survey of EUIC Team Leaders, Interviews with EUIC contractors, evaluator observations in the field.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: there are more than two sources of evidence to confirm that Info Centre function of no longer serves a purpose. However, only anecdotal evidence and EUD and EUIC Team Leader perceptions confirm the relevance to each target group.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
Indicator 2.4.1 EUICs’ tools reach desired target groups, and improvements cannot be made without increasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Based on visitor numbers, walk-in Info Centres do not correspond to a target group need in the Western Balkans and Turkey, but Info Centres may provide a 	<p>From EUIC Final Reports, it can be observed that the number of walk-in visitors (one of the target groups for the EU Info Centres) has been decreasing from 2011 to 2017. For example, this is the case in Turkey, and, according to interviews with Communication Coordinators in EU Delegations and EU Info Centre Team Leaders, the number of visitors has been steadily decreasing over the years and/or is low. However, no targets were set as such for the number of visitors or the amount of information to be provided.</p> <p>The survey of EUIC Team Leaders confirms that students, children, academics and researchers are the most frequent type of visitors to EUICs. In Turkey entrepreneurs/businesspeople were also</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Final Reports of EUICs from 2011-2017. ● Survey



<p>costs.</p>	<p>useful venue to host events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events can be used to target specific groups but are limited in the number of people that can be reached. • Print publications are still used and there is a demand for these providing they meet the requirements of target groups. • Social media, email and websites make a wider reach of target groups possible, but there is no evidence to confirm the quality of this reach/which groups are reached. • Mass media, particularly TV can further strengthen reach and has been used in some IPA beneficiaries for example in Kosovo and Turkey the communication contractor makes use of TV, but the evidence of its use as a tool has not been measured. • Info Centres reach traditional media with press releases and placing articles under the aegis of the Delegation. • There is insufficient evidence to confirm that wider meaningful 	<p>suggested to be frequent visitors, although the evaluation team observed that this was not actually the case in practice in Turkey. The EU Info Centres' online presence in Turkey shows that, although the EU Info Centres are embedded into Chambers of Commerce and Industry, there appears to be little attention to the business community (with the exception of Bursa) or a focus on opportunities for the business. There also appears to be little update of the EU business world's agenda and during the field mission, interviews with contractors suggested that the business community are actually not particularly served by the EUICs. Nevertheless, the answers for Turkey do show an emphasis on businesspeople that is different from that of the other IPA beneficiaries.</p> <p>In this survey, when EU Info Centres were asked about the most effective channels and tools: the three most effective in Turkey were reported to be events in other locations, walk-in information services, and Facebook. In other IPA beneficiaries, the three most effective channels across the target groups are events at the EU Info Centres/Info Points/ Europe/EU Houses, telephone, and Facebook</p> <p>In IPA beneficiaries other than Turkey, walk-in information services are considered <i>effective</i> only for retirees, whereas in Turkey these services are effective across all target groups. EU Info Centres' websites and newsletters are perceived as the least effective tools across the board for all target groups in all IPA beneficiaries. Twitter is also seen as effective for students and politicians in IPA beneficiaries other than Turkey, whereas it is effective across many different target groups in Turkey.</p> <p>In summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Turkey, walk-in services are most effective for teachers, followed by journalists, governmental / local institutions employees, entrepreneurs / businesspeople, academics / researchers, school children, and retired people. In other IPA beneficiaries, walk-in services are only effective for retired people. • Telephone services are most effective for journalists, academics / researchers, entrepreneurs / businesspeople, teachers and retired people in all IPA beneficiaries. • In Turkey, email is mostly an effective tool for politicians, governmental / local institutions employees, and entrepreneurs / businesspeople, followed by academics / researchers, and journalists. In other IPA beneficiaries, email is mostly effective for journalists, governmental / local institutions, and academics / researchers. • Events at EU Info Centres/Info Points / Europe/EU Houses are most effective for schoolchildren, students, teachers, entrepreneurs / business people, journalists, academics and politicians in all IPA beneficiaries. In Turkey, these events are also effective for governmental / local institutions employees. • Events in other locations are most effective for schoolchildren in all IPA beneficiaries. In Turkey, they are also effective for academics / researchers, teachers, entrepreneurs / businesspeople, governmental / local institutions employees, and journalists. • Twitter and Facebook are considered to be the most effective tool for students in all IPA 	<p>of EUIC Team Leaders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of EU Delegation staff. • Interviews with EUIC contractors • Evaluator observations in the field. • Data relating to social media use in the IPA beneficiaries.
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reach could be achieved without increasing costs.

beneficiaries.

In **the survey of EU Delegations**, a majority of respondents 'agreed strongly' or 'agreed' that EU Info Centres/Info Points / Europe /EU Houses are effective at reaching almost all target groups, particularly youth groups/associations, women's groups, journalists, think tanks, academics and researchers, teachers, students, and school children.

Field phase

It is a characteristic across the beneficiaries that the tools are broadly seen by EU Delegations, the EU Info Centres and external stakeholders sufficiently familiar with the work of the EU Info Centres to form a judgement to be appropriate and to be targeted to the extent that budgets allow, but that the widespread absence of targets, monitoring of outputs and outcomes means that this is not an evidence-based judgement.

Albania: Based on the feedback from interviews with partners, there is agreement that the right tools are used for communication. The evidence also confirmed that social media is considered a relevant channel (and one widely used by partner organisations as well). There was no evidence that other communication tools could have a higher outreach than the ones used.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Based on the external stakeholders' feedback during the field mission the mix of communication tools is appropriate. However, efforts need to be made to reach pensioners and older people, as traditional media works best for them. At present, the EUIC has insufficient budget for these channels. Events are an important communication medium used by the EUIC and EUICPs for direct interaction with stakeholders. EUIC managers confirmed the increasing importance of the Internet, including social media. The fact that TV advertising is beyond reach of the budget was underlined by interviewees from the Delegation and the Info Centre as TV is the primary communication channel in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The costs associated with the development of a TV programme and with securing prime time is a serious obstacle to a larger use of this channel.

Kosovo: There is evidence from interviews with the EU Info Centre (EUICC) and the contractor, as well as from observations by the field team, that the of publications produced and the languages in which they are available are not suitable for many target groups because they are too long and too policy-oriented, whereas the demand is for information on opportunities and general knowledge on Europe in the widest sense of the word. The availability of news magazines from various EU countries in part meets the latter need and is a popular service. TV is a popular medium and has been used to transmit information videos. Thematic campaigns from an additional budget have enriched the mix. The EU Info Centre organises a large number of events for multiplier audiences, coordinates with cultural and other entities, and Member States on events at its own locations and elsewhere, including film screenings, and reaches out to citizens on Europe Day in particular. The EU Info Centre has a website but does not have its own social media channels and staff supplement use of the EU Office channels through their personal accounts in order to maximise effective outreach to the target groups. Interviewees in the Office and the EU Info Centre consider the mix appropriate, but EU Info Centre staff believe they could be more effective with their own social media channels.

Montenegro: Events for a wide range of audiences are a strong feature of the mix of tools in Montenegro, but the EU Info Centre also disseminates publications, and has a website and a social



media account. Interviews with the EU Delegation and evidence from interviews with the EU Info Centre together with observations by the field team suggest that there is an over-emphasis on certain types of event for groups that are not among its target groups. The EU Info Centre has a strong media team, which also supports the Delegation. A film festival that visits cities across the country as well as organizing screenings in Podgorica is a major communication tool. Support has been provided to the EU Delegation for a campaign which uses billboards as well as other forms of media. The EU Delegation was broadly satisfied with the tools and the mix (though not necessarily with the delivery during the period under review).

North Macedonia: From the field mission there was no evidence to suggest that the EUIC or EUD are not using the appropriate communication tools. Social media is important in North Macedonia; nevertheless, traditional media continues to be important in reaching larger audiences. Also, the use of events allows the public tangible opportunities for direct engagement with the EU, and although there is limited evidence (due to the fact that qualitative data is not or is not systematically collected) to confirm the significance of events.

Serbia: The most successful activities are those which target academia and NGOs because these groups have a pre-existing, strong interest in the EU and the EU integration process. Even if young people are a target, it can be challenging to reach out to them, especially when they are under 15 years of age because they have no interest in the EU. Traditional media (TV, radio) might still be more relevant, but they are also more expensive.

Turkey: There was no evidence collected during the field mission to suggest that the range of tools used by the Info Centres is not appropriate, debates are relevant for academic audiences and theatre plays and cartoons are relevant to young children. However, the tools available are limited by the limited budget, which is allocated to each Info Centre. This relates to the fact that there is a separate communication contractor, which is responsible for communication campaigning and also uses TV, which can have a broader reach. The contractor, Norm Consulting, which has run a series of TV programmes, with a regional focus to reach target groups who still make significant use of TV.

JC 2.5: Extent that the EU Delegations' use of other communication tools (e.g. social media) has or could have a higher outreach to different categories of the target audience.

Given the low levels of spontaneous visitors to EU Info Centres, it can be considered appropriate to use other tools, which are able to have higher outreach than the provision of Info Centre services.

Based on desk research, there are extensive but variable levels of social media use across the IPA beneficiaries. There are high levels of use in Albania, Montenegro and Turkey (96.1%, 81.9% and 60%), but much lower levels in Serbia for example (38.5%). In beneficiaries for which there is no social media data, i.e. Kosovo and Montenegro, the Internet and mobile phone use data can serve as proxies for the likelihood of social media use and show high use. Correspondingly, social media is used extensively by the EU Info Centres, particularly Facebook and Twitter, and to a lesser extent (depending on the EU Info Centre) YouTube and Instagram. The EUICCs in Kosovo are unusual in not having their own accounts and feeding their material through accounts of the EU Office. The EUD believes that it is better for the EU to speak with a single voice and that this is the view of EEAS. The EUD also believes that the target groups are essentially the same.

Of the 24 EUIC Final Reports reviewed, 18 reported on social media indicators, but do not consistently use the same indicators or report on all channels used. This makes comparisons of social media use inherently difficult and suggests a need to improve social media monitoring and reporting. The level of detail in the reporting of Facebook



followers, likes, website views, and tweets varies significantly. On the data available, Facebook and Twitter are generating the most following and outreach.

The interviews with EU Delegation staff confirmed the need to use or improve the use of social media and that social media is a tool that is becoming paramount in creating visibility of the EU Info Centres and EU Delegations' activities. Most of the interviewees noted that social media is better than traditional media tools (newspapers, TV, radio), especially for reaching young people, giving its growing prevalence and the move to more online platforms.

The field phase findings confirmed that social media is the best mechanism to increase the reach of the EU Info Centres cost-effectively, though not to the exclusion of other channels. This includes findings from discussion groups with stakeholders (including students). Different communication channels have their strengths and weaknesses and should be used in line with the objectives set. This implies the need for a planned approach so that effective choices can be made about which channels and tools to use at what time and to what desired effect. In this context, the use of social media is clearly appropriate. However, the use of social media requires specific skills within EU Info Centre and Delegation teams, which are not always present. It also needs to be used more-or-less in real time, implying that processes for approving EU Info Centre posts must be fluid, which is not always the case.

Social media like any channel has its limitations. Even if social media allow wider reach of target groups, reach is not considered a very meaningful level of communication performance. Best practice in communication is about generating target group engagement. On social media, this means shares, comments and click-throughs/downloads, in addition to likes, but this data is not consistently monitored by EUICs. Consistent measurement of the performance and effectiveness of social media is an area where there is scope for improvement to allow comparisons with other stakeholders' performance. Engagement with target groups on social media is, nonetheless, less impactful than direct contacts, via for example a face-to-face meeting. Therefore, for high profile / important contacts particularly with individuals who may amplify EU messages, social media are unlikely to be the best channels of choice although they may support promotion and awareness raising efforts.

A further issue that relates to the effectiveness of social media is consideration of the limitations of earned as opposed to paid promotion. Even where Final Reports confirm that, the numbers of followers have grown, for example, particularly following a communication campaign, after a certain point it can be difficult to grow the number of followers organically. However, expansion of a social media community at this point comes at a cost. The capacity of any channel and tool to reach different target groups inevitably relates to the amount of available human and financial resources available to support this outreach as well as the effectiveness of messages and content and a range of other factors, including target group resonance, topicality, timing, etc.

Strength of evidence: strong

Description of the evidence base: expert literature on the evaluation of communication campaigns, EUIC final reports, EU Delegation interviews, EUIC and EU Delegation Facebook pages, feedback from young people in focus groups.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: the evidence base is sufficient to allow a robust response to this judgement criteria because it is clear that different communication tools could be used to greater effect depending on budgetary and strategic choices in relation to their use. At the same time, the evaluation team is able to draw on expert literature, which confirms that social media has its limitations and is not the answer to addressing all meaningful outreach to target groups. Independent views from focus groups confirm that there is still scope to make improvements to EUIC social media to meet young people's expectations.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 2.5.1</p> <p>There is reliable and accurate evidence in the public domain to confirm that different target</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is limited evidence to confirm the need to improve the use of social media given that limited quantitative qualitative feedback is gathered. 	<p>As reported elsewhere in this matrix, observations at EUICs during the field mission confirm low levels of footfall to EU Info Centres, so that alternatives for reaching general audiences are important.</p> <p>Desk research on publicly available data on social media habits in the IPA beneficiaries confirms that there is extensive social media use by population across the IPA beneficiaries. A review of recent publicly available data on social media habits confirms that in Albania, Montenegro and Turkey the percentage of the population using social media is 96.1%, 81.9% and 60%, respectively. In Serbia,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Reports from EUICs 211 – 2017



<p>groups use social media extensively, and that other stakeholders achieve a wider reach than EUICs or the EU Delegations, which confirms the need to use or improve the use of social media.</p>	<p>However, there is some evidence that young people may find EU Delegation / EUIC social media to be too bureaucratic / not sufficiently engaging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some EU Delegations suggested a need to increase the focus on social media. • It is not possible to assess whether other stakeholder organisations make better use of social media than EUICs, as there is not enough baseline data from the EU Info Centres to be able to make comparisons. • The concept that EU Delegations and EU Info Centres should increase their use of social media, and use a wider range of social media channels, i.e. at least Instagram and YouTube in addition to Facebook and Twitter, can be confirmed in the absolute backed up by evidence. 	<p>the percentage is 38.5%. No information was found for Kosovo and North Macedonia, although the percentage of the population using internet is 57% in Kosovo (of which 99% use the internet regularly) and 74% in the North Macedonia. High social media use and its suitability for general audiences was confirmed by observations in the field phase.</p> <p>Evidence gathered from the reviewed 24 Final Reports received from EU Info Centres reveals that the EU Info Centres across the seven IPA beneficiaries use Facebook and Twitter. Some of the Final Reports for Bosnia and Herzegovina (relating to contracts for the years 2013-2015), Albania (relating to contract year 2015) and Montenegro (relating to contract year 2013) report on YouTube videos. Blogs are used in Albania and Kosovo for the Final Reports pertaining to contract 2015 and 2016, respectively. Instagram is only reportedly used in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia in the Final Reports for the contract year 2015. However, information in Final Reports is incomplete, e.g the EUIC in Montenegro has an Instagram account, but this is not reported on.</p> <p>However, the level of detail in the reporting of Facebook followers, likes, and tweets varies significantly. The same applies to web data. Of a sample of 24 Final Reports, 18 reported on social media indicators and only 8 on website views. However, some Final Reports report on Facebook likes or re-tweets or Twitter impressions instead, making comparisons of social media inherently difficult. It appears that Facebook and Twitter generated the biggest followings. EU Info Centres do not report on shares or comments.</p> <p>As the evaluation team does not have access to comparable historic data on social media use over the course of the whole period, it is not possible to confirm increases in social media use since 2011. From the data available, there seems to have been an increase of 727% in Facebook followers between October 2014 to October 2017 (from 2,865 to 20,818) in the EU Delegation in Albania's social media account. There has also been an increase of 651% in Twitter followers during the same period (from 852 to 5,548).</p> <p>Comparing the number of Facebook and Twitter followers of the Info Centre in North Macedonia Info Centre in 2018 (though out of scope) to the Final Report for the contract year 2015 shows that there was an increase in Facebook followers (from 38,509 to 40,247) and Twitter followers (from 1,354 to 1,571). Similarly, the number of Twitter followers in Turkey was 260 in the Final Report for contract year 2013, which increased to 1,969 in 2017. The number of website page views of the EU Info Centre in Serbia increased by 165% between 2016 and 2017 (from 142,412 to 234,480). The unique number of website visitors also increased by 163% during this period (from 95,570 to 156,001).</p> <p>Empirical data provided in interviews with Delegations and EU Info Centres during the field phase confirmed that the social media accounts of the EU Info Centres are increasing in popularity. Desk research suggests that YouTube is under-utilised relative to its growing popularity among young people and the general trend for young people to access information via video rather than text.</p> <p>While the data suggests that social media use is prevalent, it does not enable the team to confirm increases in social media use since 2011 in the IPA beneficiaries, or make comparisons with other stakeholders.</p> <p>The interviews with EU Delegation staff confirmed growing use of social media and the need to use or improve the use of social media and. Most interviewees noted that social media is important in comparison with traditional media tools (newspapers, TV, radio) given its growing prevalence and the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluator observations in the field phase. • Evaluating communication performance by Professor Jim Macnamara • DG COMM Communication Networks • Focus groups with young people. • EUIC Facebook • EU Delegation Facebook
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move to more online platforms. This is particularly the case for targeting youth.

One EU Delegation staff member noted the need for a digital media officer. Another EU Delegation staff member highlighted the efficacy of social media for reaching target groups, as the media and government retweet EU Delegation tweets “within a matter of hours”.

Field phase

Albania: Even though traditional media are still important, interviews with the EU Delegations and the EU Info Centre confirmed that social media is increasingly popular as a news source, particularly among the young.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Interviews with contractors during the field phase and EU Delegations confirmed that social media (and an online presence) are essential communication channels in Bosnia and Herzegovina. During a focus group, the young people who participated criticised the EUIC Facebook presence for mostly re-posting and sharing EUD posts rather than developing its own content.

The approach to social media is perceived as not satisfactory. On the one hand, it is expected to be the primary channel to target young people, but feedback suggests that these channels are not being used to achieve the desirable effects: engage young people in discussion on EU. On the other hand, the focus on social media seems to be at the expense of other communication channels which remain essential to target other groups.

Kosovo: there is no independent EUIC social media accounts. EUIC material is posted via the EU Office accounts. EU Info Centre staff see this is seen as an obstacle to live posting from events, sending more frequent pre-event reminders, posting press releases after the event, posting more videos of interviewees of event attendees and artists exhibiting. They use their personal social media accounts for this.

Montenegro: The social media following of the EUIC has been growing steadily and the EUIC Facebook account has more followers than that of the Delegation. The use of social media is clearly appropriate; mobile phone penetration (a key factor in social media use) is the highest in the region, with more than 1,600 subscriptions per 1,000 inhabitants, a higher ratio than in the EU’.

North Macedonia: Interviews with EUIC contractors suggested that social media is one of the best mechanisms to increase the impact of the EU Info Centre, given that the EU Info Centre Facebook page is taking the limelight (with 40k followers), while it is the EUD Facebook page (with fewer than 2K followers).

Serbia: Discussion groups with stakeholders (including students) confirm that social media are a key communication channel and therefore relevant to use.

Turkey: EUICs’ use of social media is appropriate for reaching a young audience and students, however evidence suggests that there is variable performance / effectiveness in the use of social media by different EUICs and this relates to the communication competence of the individuals

		<p>working the in Centres.</p> <p>More specifically, the EUIC maintains websites and social media although it was noted that much social media activity relates to tweeting and retweeting messages crafted by the communication contractor in line with the requirement for posts to have official approval. This situation raises questions about the added-value of Info Centre social media, where there are few followers and difficulties in increasing follower growth.</p>	
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EQ3. To what extent the organisation and management of the EUICs have been conducive to an efficient, effective and sustainable implementation of the communication activities?

JC 3.1: The management of EUICs through service contracts is conducive to an efficient, effective and sustainable implementation of communication activities.

EU Delegations confirm that appropriate contractors have been selected with the appropriate level of expertise to manage communication activities effectively and efficiently. They also consider that the staff members proposed by the contractors had the right level of expertise. Occasional problems with individual contractors, experts or delays in finding non-key experts are not such as to modify the overall picture.

Clear ToR are a success factor for contractors. Again, occasional problems are not such as to modify the overall picture that contractors find the ToR workable, subject to the Delegation’s expectations of implementation being in line with the budget available.

There are nevertheless some common, but not necessarily universal, challenges:

- a learning curve in terms of working on EU issues or with a Delegation;
- failure to achieve the indicators set in the ToR;
- outreach beyond the capital (or other physical locations);
- the responsiveness of the Delegation due to its workload;
- excessive expectations on the part of the Delegation;

There is also a disadvantage for qualified local contractors with superior local knowledge compared to experienced international consultancy firms when contracts are tendered internationally. This was the case in Turkey where a direct negotiated procedure was preferred over an international tender. Views differed on the extent to which local expertise exist. Evidence collected in the field phase seems to suggest that the international tendering procedure is often critical to identify contractors with the relevant communication expertise and project experience who provide access to local teams.

Desk research showed that the management of EU Info Centres or similar structures is usually conducted through a service contract, where the premises are approved by the Delegation and the cost of the rent is included under the incidentals of the service contract or is subject to a separate lease contract. Contracting using lease contracts represents an element of risk for the Delegations including in relation to building upkeep and other obligations but guarantees continuity in facilities management the availability of a physical location (though this can be made a condition of the ToR), but it frees the EU Info Centres’ staff to concentrate on communication. The contractual landscape is tailored to needs in each beneficiary, for example in relation to the availability of rent-free accommodation to host EU Info Centres or EU Info Points. One critical factor is to ensure that when an EU Info Centre is to move to new premises, furniture and equipment be either covered by the EU Info Centre contract or that contracting coincide with the move.



Service contracts are serving the purpose of effective and efficient communication and, where works, supply and lease contracts are covered by the costs of the service contracts (as is the case in Albania and Kosovo), these do not appear to be a barrier to effective and efficient communication. From the survey and interviews of EU Delegations, it was clear that the majority prefer service contracts to other contract types (e.g. fee-based).

In summary, service contracts do facilitate the intended activities across all beneficiaries, but there are complementary pathways: There are also works, supply and lease contracts that are concluded by the EUD separately from the EU Info Centre service contract.

Interviews with EU Delegation staff as well as evidence from the field phase and desk research confirm a high degree of continuity in the use of service contracts. Service has generally been continuous (with some occasional significant exceptions). Short contracts and short contract extensions/bridging contracts are more of an issue, but there is a move away from these, with one notable exception in Serbia, creating uncertainties for both the contractor and EU Delegation. The trend to longer-term contracts and renewal of contracts is consistently regarded as positive, as the EU Delegations in IPA beneficiaries noted in response to the survey that constraints linked to the limited timeframe of contracts are the most significant internal challenge faced by EU Delegations.

Overall, the level of administrative burden when addenda were required for changes to personnel, for service increases or budget has been high, but without it having been possible to quantify this, e.g. in number of days. In any event, the ability to use administrative orders has led to a sharp reduction in the number of addenda.

Contract management is overall burdensome for both sides, including both the contractor and the Team Leader in the case of the EU Info Centre. The low level of resource in many Delegations for this, and lengthy approval processes, mean contract management eats into the time the Delegation Communication Coordinators and EU Info Centre Team Leader have for communication work, and is particularly acute if the Team Leader is part-time (e.g. Kosovo).

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: survey of EU Delegations, interviews with EU Delegations, interviews with contractors, documentary evidence relating to contracts.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: there is consistent evidence from the EU Delegations in the IPA beneficiaries that can be triangulated with documentary evidence and feedback from contractors. Whilst there are some gaps in documentary evidence in relation to the availability of contracts, an assessment can be made that direct feedback from EU Delegations provides sufficient insights into the evidence, given that they are responsible for managing EUIC contracts.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 3.1.1</p> <p>Evidence that an appropriate contractor was selected with sufficient expertise to manage communication activities effectively and efficiently.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not possible to assess the appropriateness of contractors over the whole 2011-2017 period. EU Delegations are satisfied with current contractors and the level of their expertise. In some cases, for example Kosovo, 	<p>It is difficult to gather a consistent historic picture of EU Delegations' experiences of the appropriateness of different contractors over the 2011-2017 timeframe due to changes to staffing within the Delegations over this period. However, EU Delegations are satisfied that the current contractors have the relevant expertise to manage the communication activities required by their ToR. Issues raised relating to expertise nevertheless included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the ability to meet the level of demand from the EU Delegation; failure to comply with the indicators in the ToR; examples of previous contractors who required too much EU Delegation guidance and were not able to handle a thematic campaign; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of EU Delegation staff. Interviews with EU Delegation staff prior to and during the field



	<p>Turkey and to some extent Bosnia, EUICs are not required to take responsibility for all EUD communication activities as these are implemented by a separate communication contractor or the EUSR in the case of Bosnia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International tendering can fill gaps to allow consortia / contractors to provide expertise that may be lacking in the ground; this works well in conjunction with local experts who have their own networks. • In Turkey, some variability in communication expertise between different members of the network was observed and confirmed by the EU Delegation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some individual experts not working as expected; • challenges of dealing with contractors not headquartered locally; • inability to provide coverage across a whole beneficiary. <p>In the survey of EU Delegations, six out seven respondents to the EU Delegation survey agreed strongly or agreed that EU Info Centre staff members had the right level of expertise.</p> <p>All contractors interviewed proved to have relevant experience in managing different projects on information and communication within or outside the EU. Almost all contract managers in all IPA beneficiaries stated that they get involved in the day-to-day implementation of the activities, but most of their time is dedicated to the management of the contract. Similarly, most contractors reported frequent meetings and consultations with the EU Delegation, either on a weekly or monthly basis, either in person or electronically.</p> <p>When contractors were asked about their ability to meet objectives, the key messages included the need for ToR and requirements that are clear and appropriate, although in some cases discussions to clarify the EU Info Centre concept and the appropriateness of the premises had been needed. This clarity in requirements was seen as a success factor in effective and efficient communication.</p> <p>EU Info Centre contractors also reported that individual centres are well equipped in terms of their communication expertise, with clear expectations for key and non-key experts described in the ToR. Barriers to efficient and effective communication included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • volume of requests from EU Delegations; • the workload of the EU Delegations, resulting in delays in approval of activities, and excessive expectations on the part of the EU Delegations; • the amount of budget relative to the objectives and expectations; • difficulties in meeting outreach requirements, in particular in more remote or rural areas; • difficulties in finding appropriate staff, e.g. a specific example related to finding individuals to provide media expertise or in recruiting non-key experts in small countries with a limited pool of expertise; • the system of international tendering which can work to the disadvantage of local contractors despite recognised, and possibility superior, expertise with better local knowledge being available locally; and • shifts over time between local and international tendering (as budgets/contract duration changed). 	<p>missions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with communication contractors who supplement the work of EUICs. • Interviews with users of EUICs.
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		<p>Findings from the field missions:</p> <p>Albania: The contractor was new, and the EU Delegation was currently satisfied with performance. Feedback from EUD suggests that generally there are few agencies in Albania with the right type of communication expertise.</p> <p>Bosnia and Herzegovina: An international tendering procedure was suggested by EU Delegation staff to be critical in attracting the relevant communication expertise, which might not be available locally. This brings an added value to the team, which consolidates existing relationships and networks. The EUSR fulfils some roles in Bosnia and Herzegovina which otherwise would be filled by the EU Info Centre.</p> <p>Kosovo: There are currently two contracts that foresee provision of services in relation to information and communication services: (i) The EUICC contract, with a international company with a Serbian sub-contractor (ii) a second communication contract, implemented by a different contractor, which covers communication deliverables that elsewhere are provided by EU Info Centres. According to the EU Delegation, these two contracts will be integrated once the second communicating contract expires in October 2019. Integrating these two contracts plus the thematic campaigns under a budget add-on to the current Info Centre contract is expected by the Delegation to be more efficient. The current EU Info Centre contractor is considered by the EU Delegation to be operating effectively.</p> <p>Montenegro: Feedback from the EU Delegation confirms that in 2015, 2016, 2017 the contractor focused on formal compliance with the ToR rather than creativity. A greater focus on creativity is expected from 2019. The EU Info Centre budget includes some media services to the Delegation that are provided under other arrangements in other beneficiaries.</p> <p>North Macedonia: The use of service contracts is considered to be appropriate by those in EUD and there is consensus that longer contracts, at least two-year, are better than shorter ones because of the reduced administrative burden that these imply.</p> <p>Turkey: There is a service contract in Turkey to support the EUIC network. As the Info Centres are hosted in chambers of commerce, requirements in terms of equipment and premises are provided for within the partnership agreements. Interviews with EU Delegation and observations during the field mission, highlighted that there could be some variability between different members of the EUIC network. Creative communication content is provided by a strategic communication agency as confirmed through an interview with the agency.</p> <p>Serbia: The contractor identified through the international tendering procedure was also in a position to propose a local team. During the field mission there was unanimous feedback from users that the contractor is very professional.</p>	
<p>Indicator 3.1.2</p> <p>Degree of continuity in use of service contracts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been continuity in the use of service countries across the IPA beneficiaries over the 2011-2017 timeframe. • The increased use of 	<p>In the initial interviews held, EU Delegation staff did not highlight particular issues related to gaps in service provision. It was noted that where Info Centres are not involved in supporting logistical / time-critical aspects, such as media monitoring, then a small gap is not a significant problem.</p> <p>Contract duration is related to the issue of gaps in service provision. Over the 2011-2017 timeframe, and in particular from 2015 onwards, there has been a tendency to move away from 12-month contracts towards longer contracts of 18 months or 2 years, which are frequently extended once or twice by one year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUIC contracts over the period 2011-2017.



	<p>24-month contracts that can be extended by one or two years enhances continuity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are examples of some minor gaps in service provision, relating to the need for bridging contracts for example in Kosovo and Serbia. 	<p>Interviews with EU Delegations and contractors confirm that one-year contracts are generally considered to have been sub-optimal. There is a general issue of a learning curve when contractors or their Key Experts are unfamiliar with the EU Delegation and the way that it works, and the Delegation needs time to get to know a new contractor, but this issue is particularly acute where a contract is only for 12 months. A 12-month contract also does not give new contractors sufficient time to generate synergies / get to grips with the work. Running annual procurement procedures is burdensome for the Delegations.</p> <p>From a contractor perspective, short project durations impact upon project sustainability and relationships with stakeholders, who may take some time to trust the team. Longer contracts make it easier to hire staff, generate greater commitment from staff and have a positive influence on motivation.</p> <p>An additional factor linked to gaps in service provision noted by contractors relates to changes in EU Delegations' own staff and structures, which tend to involve loss of institutional memory and result in a significant re-think about approaches when new staff arrive. The implication is that this may affect efficiency.</p> <p>Respondents to the EU Delegation Survey indicated that constraints linked to the limited timeframe of contracts as the most significant internal challenge faced from the list of challenges presented.</p> <p>From a review of EUIC contracts, the duration of gaps in service varied between three days (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and 222 (Serbia) in 2011-2017. There were more gaps in service in Serbia and Kosovo IPA beneficiaries than others, while Turkey habitually recorded gaps in provision between the years, ranging from 10 days to 8 months.</p> <p>Field phase</p> <p>Visits to the IPA beneficiaries confirmed challenges related to continuity in the use of the service contracts:</p> <p>Bosnia and Herzegovina: The EU Delegation reported that there had not been enough continuity in the use of the service contracts in the medium term. The challenge comes from the management of a series of relatively short-term contracts (from 12 to 18 months). This:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creates a heavy administrative burden; • prevents lessons being learned; • creates a perverse incentive not to explore innovate communication tools and channels and the development of content which might have a longer time horizon. <p>In Kosovo: The EU Delegation confirmed that the use of one-year or bridging contracts is not conducive to continuity in communication. The move to a two-year contract (renewable for up to four) is positive. Greater efficiency is anticipated from merging a communication deliverables contract and the EUICC contract after they expire in October 2019 and February 2020 respectively. The gap between the two contracts is considered by EUOK staff to be manageable with sufficient advance planning.</p> <p>Interviewees from the Delegation in Montenegro pointed out that the use of longer-term contracts/renewal of contracts poses the risk of being locked into a less than satisfactory contractor or EUIC team, but the continuity has on balance outweighed any lack of flexibility and creativity under the contractor in place until end-2018.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of EU Delegations. • Interviews with EU Delegation contract staff.
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<p>Indicator 3.1.3 Frequency of extensions to the service contracts due to delays in implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent extensions to services contracts due to delays in contracting have rarely been a significant issue over the 2011– 2017 timeframe. • Contracts tend to be extended because EU Delegations want to retain contractors. 	<p>From a review of contracts available to the evaluation team, there were eight contract extensions were identified in the 2011-2017 period. Contract extensions were required in Kosovo, Montenegro, Turkey and Serbia. There are still occasional short-term extensions, but frequent short-term extensions are not currently an issue.</p> <p>The interviews with EU Delegation staff corroborated the findings from the desk research. These suggested that when a good contractor is in place and implementation is working well, there can be an interest in extending contracts to continue benefiting from a contractor's know-how and to limit the administrative burden. Several examples were cited where there are plans to extend current contracts. The overall message, as highlighted elsewhere, is that longer contracts are preferable. Extensions to contracts for one or two years infers a positive situation and is beneficial therefore to continuity of service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUIC contracts covering 2011-2017. • Interviews with EU Delegation staff.
<p>Indicator 3.1.4 Level of administrative burden when changes were required to personnel, to service increases or budget; e.g. the number of addenda to contracts was limited / there are no addenda.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not possible to quantify the level of administrative burden related to contract addenda. • The need for addenda in relation to changes to EUIC personnel did not emerge as a significant issue in interviews with contractors or EU Delegation staff. • The need for contract addenda has reduced over time thanks to the increased use of administrative orders. 	<p>Feedback from the survey of EU Delegations suggests mixed views and experiences in relation to the internal challenges posed by the administrative burden. Three out of seven respondents strongly agreed or agreed that administrative burden was a particular challenge, but the same number of respondents were neutral on this point.</p> <p>From a review of EUIC contracts there were 18 addenda to contracts in the following IPA beneficiaries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey between 2011 and 2017. The reasons for the addenda were extensions of the original duration of the contract (in 9 cases) as well as, for example, changes in personnel.</p> <p>The interviews with EU Delegation staff did not allow any consistent quantification of the level of administrative burden, for example the number of days required to implement changes to contracts. Although one cited example is that addenda take at least one month to arrange.</p> <p>There are workload implications for the Delegations when changes are made to contracts, staffing or budgets. There is some differentiation in types of administrative burden across different Delegations, with two levels of requirements that need to be met. Requirements that relate to the whole Commission, in relation to the PRAG; and those that are determined by EU Delegations themselves. One specific example of Delegation level rule is the need to revalidate experts' contracts every 50 days. In addition, the time taken, and number of people required to sign off on EU Info Centre plans within Delegations may vary and can sometimes hamper progress.</p> <p>There is evidence that over the 2011-2017 period levels and types of burden have evolved positively. Whilst most staff interviewed were not in place for this whole timeframe – though some of these had earlier experience in the region, several examples of the evolution of administrative requirements were cited.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with EU Delegations and EUIC contractors. • Survey of EU Delegation staff

		<p>One example is the increased use of administrative orders for small changes, where in previous years an addendum would have been required for all changes, without exception. The level of specificity of the ToR helps to ensure clarity on what is required, and this approach helps to reduce the need for changes. Despite this some contractors still indicated that approvals for incidental expenditure could be time-consuming if each individual expenditure needs to be approved.</p> <p>Problems with continuity and sustainability come not from service breaks, unless there are gaps in the provision of time-critical elements. Short contracts and short contract extensions are more of an issue, but there is a move away from these (see Indicator 3.1.3). The trend to longer contracts and renewal of contracts is consistently regarded as positive as it also reduces the significant administrative burden on the EU Delegation in drafting ToR.</p>	
<p>Indicator 3.1.5</p> <p>Evidence that service contracts facilitated intended communication activities, including the purchase of specific equipment, tools or services, renting of space to enhance the reach of communication.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Delegations' use of service contracts has been variable, with some Delegations covering all expenditure under service contracts, including via incidentals expenditure and other Delegations contracting separate supply and works contracts for example in relation to rent and property renovations. • Service contracts facilitated the intended communication activities, but variations in what they cover need to be taken into account. Where supplies, works or lease contracts are used in connection with service contracts, these are not an obstacle of facilitation of the intended communication activities. • Supply, lease and 	<p>There were gaps in the contracts available to the evaluation team. However, from the available evidence, service contracts are in use across all seven beneficiaries, but were not the only contract in use. In several beneficiaries, supply, works or lease contracts are also used in connection with EU Info Centres or their equivalent.</p> <p>The management of EU Info Centres or similar structures is usually conducted through a service contract, where the premises are approved by the Delegation and the cost of the rent is included under the incidentals of the service contract or is subject to a separate lease contract. In some cases, the premises are provided rent-free by municipalities.</p> <p>The contractual landscape is tailored to needs in each beneficiary, for example in relation to the availability of rent-free accommodation to host EU Info Centres or EU Info Points. In summary, service contracts did not always cover, and therefore facilitate, all the intended activities across all beneficiaries.</p> <p>What would be provided under supply and works contracts is covered by the costs of the service contracts in the case of Albania and Kosovo, while in Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, the supply and works contracts are separate contracts.</p> <p>In some IPA beneficiaries, service contracts cover all EU Info Centres/Info Points and in others there are separate service contracts. The exceptions to the use of service contracts are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Macedonia, where there is a Memorandum of Understanding in place for the Info Points and an agreement in place for the three EU Documentation and Information Centres; and • Turkey, where there is a non-legally binding collaboration agreement for Info Corners and one service contract covering the 20 EU Info Centres. <p>Key issues relate to contractual arrangements for EU Info Centre premises and equipment. In Turkey, there are no specific lease contracts as EU Info Centres are hosted in Chambers of Commerce, whereas North Macedonia and Montenegro have made use of lease and service contracts. For Kosovo, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina rent was included as incidentals under the service contracts. In Serbia, premises are provided free of charge by the city authorities and Info Points are hosted by municipalities. Kosovo has faced a problem following recent changes of premises of a gap between contracting for the new (larger) premises and contracting for the equipment needed for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of EUIC contracts covering the period 2011-2017. • Interviews with EU Delegations finance staff and communication coordinators. • Survey of EU Delegation staff.



	works contracts have also been used over the 2011-2017 period to provide some facilities covered elsewhere in service contracts. No single model emerges as preferable, as this can depend on local circumstances.	those premises. Contracting using lease contracts represents an element of risk for the Delegations including in relation to building upkeep and other obligations but guarantees continuity in facilities management, the availability of a physical location (though this can be made a condition of the ToR) and frees the EU Info Centre staff to concentrate on communication. From the evaluation survey of EU Delegations : two survey respondents (2/7) agreed strongly that using other types of contracts would be preferable to using service contracts. Other respondents were neutral or disagreed on this point.	
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JC 3.2: The different EUICs and Info Points / Corners set up in an IPA beneficiary have worked together in an efficient and effective manner to reach the target audience and achieve the set objectives in that particular beneficiary.

In the Western Balkans, the different EUICs within each IPA beneficiary often collaborate on developing and sharing communication activities, in particular, events. In Turkey, the EU Info Centres tend not to collaborate with each other particularly because they are based in different regions, and focus exclusively on their local communities

Where Info Points/Info Corners exist in addition to EUICs (i.e. everywhere except Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro, considering that the EUICs in Turkey are akin to Info Points), the level of collaboration between EUICs, Info Points and Info Corners is variable, and constrained by budgetary limitations and the voluntary nature of the cooperation with municipalities⁷. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there has been strong collaboration between the EUIC and Info Points, whereas in North Macedonia collaboration between the EUIC contractor and EUIPs has not worked as smoothly, with EUIPs feeling a sense of isolation. The amount of annual budget allocated to Info Points of EUR 800 and their position as municipal employees limits what can be achieved. Interviews with Info Point staff in Serbia also pointed to insufficient communication with the EUIC.

Overall, there is little evidence of planning in this collaboration. Where EUICs and Info Points work together well, this stops short of actively promoting synergies and there is no evidence of unforeseen synergies. Synergies may occur but there are currently no processes in place to capture this information.

In Turkey, the EU Info Centres activities are focussed on the implementation a defined number of events in their region of location. There is no apparent need to collaborate with other Info Centres located in other regions which are geographically far.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: EUIC Terms of Reference 2011-2017, Survey of EU Delegation staff, Interviews with staff in EU Delegations, Interviews with EUIC and EUIP staff.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: There are several sources of evidence so that it is possible to triangulate the data. The documentary evidence is nevertheless weak because there is no evidence of strategic planning and reporting on the activities of Info Points/Info Corners is limited. In addition, the field mission was only able to visit a very limited number of Info Points within the time and budget available. There is consequently a risk that these were not fully representative even though the advice of EU Delegations and EU Info Centres was sought in making the selection.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of
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⁷ If municipalities are the host organisation for an EUIC or EUIP.



			evidence
<p>Indicator 3.2.1</p> <p>Evidence that collaboration between EUICs and Info Points was planned and generated synergies, which enhanced communication effects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where there are EUIPs (exceptions are Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro, with EUICs in Turkey being akin to EUIPs), EU Delegations are satisfied that EUICs and EUIPs work together well. The level of intensity of collaboration is variable and relates to a great extent to amount of funding that is available to EUIPs and in the case of Turkey EUICs, as well as the voluntary element of these structures. When EUIPs receive little funding there is limited collaboration and staff working in EUIPs can feel somewhat isolated. It was not possible to detect evidence relating to additional synergies being created as a result of collaboration between EUICs and EUIPs. 	<p>The coordinating role of the EU Info Centres in the capital city is sometimes stated in the EU Info Centre's ToR, for example, where there is a network of EU Info Points or EU Info Centres.</p> <p>From the survey of EU Delegation staff in the enlargement region, six out of seven respondents confirmed that EU Info Centres/Info Points / Europe/ EU Houses collaborate well with each other. (The question was not relevant to Montenegro.)</p> <p>The survey of EUIC Team Leaders confirms that EUICs, EUICCs and Info Points use a variety of ways to collaborate with the other information and communication structures in the same IPA beneficiary. A majority of these information and communication structures in IPA beneficiaries, other than Turkey, frequently share communication products developed for local audiences, carry out joint events, develop communication products together, connect via a social media platform, and are in contact by telephone / email.</p> <p>Four out of seven respondents from the Western Balkans indicate that their information and communication structures frequently share ideas but work on their own activities; and four note that they sometimes work separately. The responses from Turkey provide a different picture. The results indicate that the EU Info Centres in Turkey collaborate more rarely on activities such as carrying out joint events, developing communication products together, meet to discuss work, and share communication products that are developed for local audiences.</p> <p>Eight respondents from Turkey and five from other IPA beneficiary countries indicate that their EU Info Centres are the main contact point with the EU Delegation. Furthermore, five Team Leaders from Turkey note that the EU Info Centres coordinate communication planning and progress reporting to the EU Delegation</p> <p>The field missions showed differentiation among IPA beneficiaries regarding the degree and quality of collaboration between EUICs and EUIPs. It was not possible to identify clear planning processes or specific synergies generated as a result of their collaboration.</p> <p>Albania: As the EU Info Points in Shkodra and Vlora had been closed down prior to the field mission, it was not possible to verify the effectiveness of communication with these Info Points and the Europe House in Tirana in situ.</p> <p>Bosnia and Herzegovina: Interviews with EUIC and EUIP staff confirmed that communication between EUIC and EUIPs is daily. Examples of cooperation between three EUIPs and the EUIC mostly relate to event organisation. Interviews with EU Delegation staff confirmed that in 2018, the EUIC and EUIPs worked on five campaigns, but there is no conclusive evidence on the existence of synergies and enhanced communication effects.</p> <p>Kosovo: The situation in Kosovo is particular in that there are two full EUICCs. These are in regular contact and collaborate, particularly in event and campaign content and programming. There is also a sharing of ideas, which can be synergistic. This is a function of both being fully funded with qualified experts, so that they cannot be compared with Info Points.</p> <p>North Macedonia: Interviews with the EU Delegation suggested that the consortium partners managing the EUIC / Information Network have not always worked together well, with the result that there have been disagreements about work allocation and the Delegation is considering ways to address the issues. EUIC coordination of the network appears to be 'light touch'. Interviews with Info</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EUIC Terms of Reference 2011-2017 Survey of EU Delegation staff. Interviews with staff in EU Delegations. Interviews with EUIC and EUIP staff.

Points highlighted a view of being provided with some direction, but a sense of isolation and a need to feel more integrated. At the same time, there are limits to what the Info Points can realistically achieve with the EUR 800 budget per annum and a voluntary level of support from the municipalities. Based on observations and analysis during the field phase, the evaluation team concluded that the extent that the Info Points are able to add significant value to the overall EU communication effort will remain limited as long as there is no significant budget and they are arms of municipalities not the EU Info Centre. This makes the question of the opportunities for more synergies and opportunities to work together more theoretical.

Montenegro: Not applicable as there is only one EU Info Centre.

Serbia: There was anecdotal evidence from interviews with EUIPS of insufficient communication between the EUIC and EUIPs. Moreover, the voluntary nature of the cooperation with municipalities and the small budget they are allocated limits the potential for developing synergies.

Turkey is a slightly different case as here is no real need for EUICs to work together. EUICs are based in different regions, which means that they have different target groups and cannot help each other in practice.

JC 3.3: The system setup for monitoring the EUICs' activities functioned at regular intervals and was capable of collecting data and detecting problems (indicators were appropriately designed to measure the progress in relation to the baseline situation and the effectiveness and of the targets, and extent that targets were set realistically).

The prerequisite for assessing the data is to have an articulated monitoring framework with clear targets based on SMART objectives and indicators.

Monitoring of EUIC information and communication work is characterised by a focus on the collection of evidence to confirm that activities have taken place and the number and or reach of target groups through these activities. There is no systematic definition of baselines or targets (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro) nor gathering of qualitative feedback and insights. Data collection focussed to a large extent on use of Info Centre services (visitors and enquiries), events, social media and website use, which reflect the main EUIC activities. However, where there is data, it does not cover all activities, and the same type of data is not available consistently across the EU Info Centres per communication activity, or year-on-year.

In addition, there appear to be problems with the way that data has been collected with some double counting, for example, of numbers of visitors and numbers of attendees at events, conflating inquiries about the availability of event space with requests for information about the EU; lack of rigor in the collection of data, with not all EUICs following the same approach, for example, with regards to the collection of satisfaction data / and or the approach to collecting qualitative data and some data of questionable plausibility. There are some examples of focus groups being used to gather pre- and post-campaign feedback, e.g. Kosovo, but this approach has not been systematically applied during the timeframe under consideration, for example, not in Montenegro or by EUICs' in Turkey.

The monitoring approach has essentially been a set of data collection activities rather than a monitoring 'system' as such. It has not been possible to identify evidence to confirm that monitoring activities have allowed EU Delegations to detect problems and take corrective action. It is likely that the frequency of interactions (at least weekly and sometimes daily) and the high level of focus on managing EUICs by the Delegations results in this type of information being conveyed by EUIC contractors/Team Leaders in this way, and discussed with EU Delegations, but it is not documented in a systematic way, which allows a detailed view on performance in country and / or at Headquarters level.

The weaknesses related to monitoring appears to be a structural issue driven by the templates of the main reporting e. EU Delegations' Annual Communication Plans place limited emphasis on monitoring requirements and data collection tools. In addition, the EUICs' ToR analysed over the 2011-2017 period have not described either the requirements for monitoring or the processes for data collection. Under the heading "indicators", the ToR have instead provided a list of expected activities to be carried out. However, a comparison between this list and the activities listed in the "results to be

achieved” section of these ToR confirmed that not all the expected “results to be achieved” were listed.

Overall there has been little or no focus on setting indicators for outputs, outcomes and impacts. In consequence, the monitoring data in the Final Reports only enable an assessment of whether activities were undertaken, and outputs achieved. In consequence, a monitoring database, which can provide a consistent picture of results across the region, is missing.

Strength of evidence: very strong

Description of the evidence base: EUIC Final Reports 2011-2017; Interviews with EU Delegation staff; Survey of EU Delegation communication staff; Survey of EUIC Team Leaders; Monitoring data gathered in the field missions; Evaluator observations in the field missions

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: There are a range of sources of information that all point in the same direction, i.e. the weakness of monitoring data on outputs in the absolute and in relation to targets and indicators in the ToR, and the virtually total absence of data on outcomes and impacts.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed insights	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 3.3.1 Aggregated quantitative and qualitative monitoring data is available to confirm the performance of activities / if targets were met in relation to outputs, outcomes and impacts and demonstrate quality and appropriateness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUICs largely collected quantitative data relating to numbers of activities carried out and numbers of individuals who are reached by these activities, together with some web and social media statistics. • EUICs do not tend to collect qualitative data on how target audiences respond to their activities. • General public polling data is collected, which confirms public perceptions in relation to the EU, but it is not possible to correlate this data to specific communication activities. • Observations during the field missions and 	<p>In EUIC ToR, targets are set at activity level. The targets set relate to the number and types of events and / or number of participants at these events, or number of publications, for example. Targets in the ToR correlate to the lists of “results to be achieved”, which are described in each ToR. However, the targets set in the ToR generally relate to some, but not all of the “results to be achieved” listed in the ToR. There are fewer indicators than the list of activities to be delivered by the contractor under “results to be achieved”, so that the list of indicators cannot be correlated with the “results to be achieved”.</p> <p>Generally, there are no indicators at output, outcome or impact level (in line with the way that indicators are defined in the DG NEAR results chain) and, therefore, monitoring data provides some insights but the exact contribution of each channel and tool and activity to reaching strategic communication objectives cannot be defined.</p> <p>Whilst EU Info Centres’ ToR include a section on monitoring, it cannot be said that the monitoring system is a clearly articulated EU Info Centre process. The current approach to monitoring is characterised by the definition of a number of qualitative indicators, which do not necessarily cover all of the results to be achieved. Indicators are not specific, which is not best practice in communication, and this means that progress is not sufficiently measurable.</p> <p>Indicators are listed under the monitoring section (section 8) of each ToR and could be used to provide insights into some but not all aspects EU Info Centre performance. Indicators measure the extent to which outputs are achieved (which are delineated in the “results to be achieved” section of the ToR); as such, it is possible to determine from a review of the monitoring data in 24 Final Reports whether outputs were achieved.</p> <p>The monitoring data reported in the reviewed 24 Final Reports varies in quality and robustness from IPA beneficiary to IPA beneficiary.</p> <p>Reports for the period 2011-2017 for the seven IPA beneficiaries show that in only one (4.2%) out of the 24 cases outputs were fully achieved, with outputs of the other 23 cases (95.8%) being just</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUIC Final Reports 2011-2017 • Interviews with EU Delegation staff • Survey of EU Delegation communication staff • Survey of EUIC Team Leaders • Monitoring data gathered in the field



	<p>comparisons with estimations of participation rates and visitors in the EUIC Team Leader survey suggest that some over estimations may have been made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some satisfaction data is collected but not all EUICs / Info Points collect this. • Nearly all EU Delegations consider that setting targets would help to improve EUIC performance. 	<p>partially achieved. Altogether, 245 indicators were set for the 24 cases, out of which 168 (68%) indicators were fully met. Of the total of 245 indicators, some were the same across the IPA beneficiaries. The picture is not uniform, however, and there is no consistent trend emerging among the IPA beneficiaries or among the years. The extent of achievement of planned outputs is partial.</p> <p>The monitoring data in the Final Reports moreover only enables an assessment of whether activities were undertaken, and outputs achieved; but the indicators do not have a causal link to outcomes and impacts. Contractors are not required to measure outcomes and impacts, though a review of contractors' technical offers confirms that some contractors view the ToR as providing minimum not maximum requirements. In practice, the achievement of these broad goals is measured in terms of the short term or immediate impact on or response from individuals who, for example, participate in EU Info Centre activities.</p> <p>As such, the number of events, visitors and participants are usually tracked. Yet, in terms of the performance of communication activities and whether they are having any effect, it has not been possible to identify baseline measurements to confirm whether, for example, a particular contractor is making progress or improvements.</p> <p>There is evidence that satisfaction is a key indicator used by contractors to measure the effectiveness of individual activities / events. From the available evidence, none of the cases reported measuring behaviour change, only 1/21 (4.8%) cases reported on measuring awareness and just 6/21 (28.6%) reported on measuring satisfaction.⁸ However, there is an inherent difficulty in understanding the accuracy of what people are aware of and in attributing a causal link between the communication activities conducted by the information and communication structures and outcomes and impacts.</p> <p>In the survey of EU Delegations, six out of the seven respondents agreed or agreed strongly that setting targets for EU Info Centres' reach and outcomes would enhance what EU Info Centres are able to achieve. Respondents were also in agreement (one respondent was neutral) that an increased focus on monitoring communication outcomes would also enhance performance. This suggests the need to redevelop the monitoring system.</p> <p>Responses to the survey of EUIC Team Leaders suggest that EU Info Centres consistently monitor social media metrics (likes, followers, retweets) as well as participants at events and visitors to the centre. Most indicated that they also measured whether target groups had a changed view, raised awareness or more understanding of the EU, as a result of their activities. Yet desk research on Final Reports suggests that this may not have been systematically reported over the 2011-2017 timeframe. There was also no evidence relating to longer term outcomes or impacts. However, even if EU Info Centres confirmed that they do these activities this information is not consistently reported in their Final Reports. Also, evidence relating to other metrics, website hits, numbers of followers and likes on social media, is barely included. It may be that this information is conveyed to the EU Delegations outside these reports, but their lack of consistent reporting is indicative of the lack of consistent monitoring system.</p> <p>Several interviewees in EU Delegations mentioned the importance of results-oriented</p>	<p>missions .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluator observations in the field missions .
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⁸ In many cases, it proved difficult to confirm whether satisfaction has been measured as annexes potentially containing information on this were missing.



measurement but indicated that this had not been implemented in their beneficiary and there were questions about the relevance of targets for communication outcomes. In addition to event-related surveys, some examples of focus groups being used to gather pre- and post-campaign feedback were highlighted although the extent of their use across all beneficiaries is limited.

Polling data is available for some beneficiaries, including with information on the awareness of the general public of the existing of EUICs, but the questions as currently formulated do not provide enough information that can be used to improve EUIC activities or targeting.

Evidence collected and observed by the evaluation team during the field phase is as follows:

Albania: The contractor confirmed tracking of the following output metrics: Numbers of events, participants in events; Numbers of social media posts, number of followers; Number of visitors to Europe House, Profiles of organisation participants and contributors to Europe House events, for example MS embassies, government ministries, universities,

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Evaluator observations on monitoring data during the field phase led to the assessment that the quality of monitoring data is inconsistent and that figures reported on event participation and reach do not reflect the quality or intensity of the engagement. Even basic data such as the number of walk-in visitors seemed to be largely overestimated given that walk-in use of the EUIC is very limited. This suggest double-counting of event participants.

Monitoring is relatively limited and focuses on quantitative evidence. It follows that there is no data on perceptions, the extent to which desired effects are delivered and how views of the EU are evolving. Stakeholders consider that the activities implemented are of good quality but that there is no way of knowing whether they are delivering the expected results.

Kosovo: The evaluators observations and evidence collected at the time of the field missions shows that monitoring systems are weak. No baselines and no targets are set. Indicators are quantitative (numbers of events to be organised, number of publications to produce). Visitor numbers are not analysed. Social media data is not collected systematically. There is no process for understanding what is generating peaks in website activity. Distribution of publications is not tracked. Measurement of satisfaction is based on collecting oral feedback.

North Macedonia: The evaluators observed that the system set up for monitoring allows the EUD to track the achievement of performance indicators relating to reach and engagement of the public, but metrics are not aggregated and compared year on year, which would provide a greater sense of the cumulative effect of the activities and progress made in extending communication to wider audiences. There is no systematic gathering of qualitative feedback and insights and this means that quantitative data provides relatively superficial insights, but cannot explain whether target groups noticed, liked or understood the messages disseminated.

Montenegro: No baselines and no targets are set. Indicators are quantitative: events to be organized and publications to produce. Website analytics requirements are limited to reporting on the number of visitors when additional analytics are readily available free of charge. Visitor numbers (which are very low) were not being tracked at the time of the field mission. Participant numbers for the film festival are tracked, but satisfaction at these events and at events at the EU Info Centre is not measured. Event numbers do not differentiate clearly between core outputs and non-core use of the event facilities (e.g. for meetings where the Info Centre is substituting for the absence of a

		<p>meeting room in the Delegation.)</p> <p>Turkey: EUIC reports highlight the types of activities undertaken, the number of participants, the number of brochures / materials disseminated and social media activity. This approach allows the Delegation to have a good overview of the performance of each EUIC and the performance of the whole network but does not provide any understanding of effects.</p> <p>Serbia: The feedback on the services provided by the contractor is positive; however, the aggregated quantitative and qualitative monitoring data are insufficient to evidence this assessment. The quantitative monitoring indicators used confirm that outputs are delivered overall. Numbers of events and event participants in particular confirm the space is well used. However, there are no data on the achievement of higher-level objectives (outcomes and impacts). A set of common monitoring indicators would support a consolidated reporting, which would easily provide an accurate picture of the implementation status.</p>	
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JC 3.4: Extent that the use of financing and management mechanisms could have provided better cost-effectiveness.

EU Delegations consider that longer-term contracts, which reduce “dead time” during start-up and winding down, concentration of funding on priorities rather than spreading it across a range of small activities are the most cost-effective way of enabling both Delegations and Info Centres to improve the quality of their outreach at no additional cost. This could free time/resources for target groups in geographic areas that cannot be reached at present. Increased exchange of good practice and access to a bank of games, audio-visual tools and on-line products in the local language could aid effectiveness and efficiency, as could needs-based targeting, fewer ‘thick’ publications, a service fee for organizing events for other organisations, which could help to ensure that centres are used efficiently for events not just because they are free of charge., though these would have to be funded through efficiency gains elsewhere if resources remain the same.

From a EUIC contractor and Delegation perspective, a reduction in levels of administrative burden would free up time to concentrate on communication activities. But there is a recognition that a degree of administrative burden is inevitable for an entity such as the European Commission. Evidence from the field suggests that if deliverables are well identified, it makes sense to conclude a global price contract because it gives the Delegations more insight into and say over the EU Info Centre activities according to staff responsible for financial matters in the Delegations. However, it would be almost impossible to define all EUIC deliverables in advance. Even if similar types of types of channels and tools are used, volume, content and formats are variable. In most cases, EUICs require a flexible approach, which is responsive to EU Delegations’ and the target groups’ on-going needs. Even where activities are annual, e.g. Europe Day or film festivals, a fresh approach is needed each time. The fee-based contract meets these requirements and they are the usual option.

EU Info Centres could often work more closely with other EU programmes and projects than they do, and vice-versa, in order to increase target group reach, but the gains are likely to be in improved communication services to target groups. It is not certain that the level of coordination required could be achieved without increasing costs.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: Interviews with EU Delegation Finance staff, interviews with EUIC contractors, Interviews with EU Delegations communication coordinators, survey of EU Delegation communication staff, survey of EUIC Team Leaders.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: The assessment is that the evidence is more than satisfactory given that several sources confirm the benefits of longer contracts with a greater financial value, which reduce the need for a frequent learning curve for new contractors or gaps in contracts. However, the assessment is not strong given that it is not possible to define with any precision the extent of cost-effectiveness that these types of contract achieve. Also, other contributory factors are identified, but again it is not possible to assess with any precision their potential impact on cost effectiveness.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of
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			evidence
<p>Indicator 3.4.1</p> <p>Quality of evidence of ways to increase the levels of target group reach and engagement without increasing cost.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is recognition across Delegations that pooling budgets from smaller communication contracts reduces the fragmentation of communication efforts and would help increase reach. • Some EU Delegations advocate a greater focus on social media and less on publications. • Working with professional communication agencies can be cost-effective. • Delegations suggest that greater collaboration with multipliers (other partners, embassies and programmes, etc.) could also help to extend reach. However, there are barriers relating to these organisations' own capabilities and capacity. • Longer contracts of at least two years (which has now become the norm) and the possibilities to extend 	<p>In the survey of EU Delegations, six of the seven respondents agreed or agreed strongly that setting targets for Info Centre reach and outcomes would enhance what EU Info Centres are able to achieve. Respondents were also in agreement (with the exception of one respondent, who was neutral) that an increased focus on monitoring communication outcomes would also enhance performance. There were mixed views on whether or not EU Info Centres require more EU Delegation guidance on expectations or whether they need more discretion to act independently. All agreed that issuing contracts with a 2-year duration and the possibility of a two-year extension would be likely to enhance EU Info Centre performance. Although it is not possible to quantify this in monetary terms, it is likely that a longer timeframe would be more cost effective as it reduces the human resource required for procurement in the Delegations.</p> <p>Other aspects where there was agreement on the potential to enhance communication outcomes (although cost was not factored into the question) were increased sharing of good practices across all beneficiaries (all 7 respondents agreed or agreed strongly) and more collaboration with other EU information providers (6 agreed and 1 respondent was neutral).</p> <p>Respondents to the survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders agreed that a wide range of initiatives would be likely to enhance their work, including more sharing of resources with other information providers in the beneficiary and other EU Info Centres, direct contact with project beneficiaries and more sharing with national IPA coordinators and more constructive feedback on their work. Access to a bank of games, audio-visual tools and on-line products in the local language would be welcomed by all, but this, of course, could probably not be achieved at no extra cost without cutting back elsewhere.</p> <p>From interviews with EU Delegations, suggestions included pooling communication budgets across Info Centres to allow bigger, more prominent events, rather than spreading funding too thinly with many small-scale events. The move to more thematic communication campaigns is also a form of pooling, which reduces fragmentation. Some staff suggested encouraging Info Centres to place greater focus on the use of social media and a reduction in print publications (which would probably need to be driven by the ToR). From observations in the field mission, there is still a demand for print materials, but generally flyer-type brochures, no longer publications. As noted elsewhere, however, record-keeping on distribution of publications is poor.</p> <p>Barriers to more outreach were generally expressed in terms of time and distance/remoteness, but these relate to budget, so cannot be solved without increasing cost unless efficiency gains can be identified.</p> <p>The use of multipliers⁹ can be a cost-effective way to improve outreach if properly managed and if the staff of multipliers are properly trained, even where the multipliers have the willingness and capacity to support the EU Info Centres, but it is not clear that this is always the case. This is in any event shifting cost increases, not avoiding them.</p> <p>Working with communication agencies can help to professionalise the approach to communication, as</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of EU Delegations. • Survey of EUIC Team Leaders. • Interviews with EU Delegations, including Finance staff. • Interviews with EU Info Centres. • Observations from field mission. • Interviews with Member State embassies and other partner organisations.

⁹ Stakeholders that multiply and amplify information by disseminating or sharing information to large groups.



	<p>for a further two years also reduces 'dead time' when new contractors take over and need a learning curve. This is more important than the choice between a fee-based or a global price contract in terms of cost-effectiveness.</p>	<p>highlighted by the case in Turkey. Thematic campaigns, which are now becoming more common across the Western Balkans, should be more cost-effective, but this is difficult to measure at present.</p> <p>There was a widespread view that reducing the administrative burden would indirectly benefit the efficiency of the Info Centres by enabling both Delegations and Info Centres to concentrate more on the communication activities. At the same time, there was a recognition that the EC as an organisation is no different from other international organisations in needing to meet requirements on transparency and accountability which necessarily bring with them an administrative burden.</p> <p>The longer contracts of at least two years (which have now become the norm) and the possibility of extending these contracts for a further two years helps reduce the administrative burden by reducing 'dead time' when new contractors take over and there is a learning curve. This is more important than the type of contract.</p> <p>Interviews with EU Delegation finance staff confirmed that two types of service contract are in use – fee-based and global price. The decision on which to use is sometimes driven by the availability of staff to deal with a global price contract, which is more complex to manage, but gives the EU Delegations more insight into and say over the activities of the EU Info Centres. Other factors also come into play in obtaining the best results in terms of communication, e.g. the use of unit prices or definition of fixed deliverables in a global price contract, as it would require an addendum to modify the latter. The flexibility of the contractor is a key factor in being able to work within the constraints of either type of contract.</p> <p>There was no clear consensus in fact among the interviewees on whether the level of administrative burden is less for a fee-based contract or a global price contract. While the days and expenses need to be individually checked in a fee-based contract, the global price contract requires outputs and deliverables to be reviewed. The level of administrative burden for a fee-based contract depends on the level of incidentals for, for example, rent and facilities, where there are a lot of expenses to be verified.</p> <p>In the case of a global price contract, the level of administrative burden depends on the manner in which the service contract has been drawn up; for example, if the outputs are expressed as a set of deliverables (e.g. "produce 5 prints") rather than a unit price (e.g. "X amount for prints") then the level of burden is more, as the contract requires an addendum to use the money for other outputs.</p>	
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JC 3.5: The physical location of the EUICs in the IPA beneficiaries has facilitated the implementation of planned communication activities and the achievement of planned effects on the target audience.

There are issues relating to the accuracy of data on the number of visitors to EU Info Centres. The data available in the Final Reports provide some insights; however,

frequently there is no distinction made between the number of visitors and event participants, and there may be double-counting. The approach followed by the EUIC contractors (and successive contractors in a beneficiary) is not homogenous. Responses by EUIC Team Leaders in the evaluation survey suggest some over-estimates¹⁰ of the number of spontaneous visitors to Info Centres in contrast to the low levels of visitors observed at each Info Centre visited during the field visit

The field visit showed that a common problem among beneficiaries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Turkey) was the physical location of the EUIC/EUIPs, which are not clearly visible and cannot be identified from the street. There is therefore a mismatch with the goal of providing a public walk-in centre. In the case of North Macedonia, public perception research run by the EU Info Centre together with local Think Thanks in 2017 found that the general public are put off visiting the EUIC because it is in the same building as the EU Delegation. However, a good physical location, as is the case in Kosovo and Montenegro, does not mean a larger number of walk-in visitors. In those Centres, numbers are in fact low.

Based on the available evidence, the Info Centre part of the communication services provided by EUICs does not add value given the low numbers of visitors. It is not possible to assess the extent that this relates to a lack of promotion or lack of visibility, which is an issue in some beneficiaries, but even where Info Centres are in prominent locations, spontaneous visitor numbers are very low.

However, the Centres also provide an event space, which is frequently welcomed by EU Delegation staff and by other communication partners such as MS Embassies. A visible and easily accessible location is important for attendance at events and use of the Centre by Member States and partners.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: observations during the field visit, Survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders, EUIC Final Reports.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: the assessment of the evidence is considered to be more than satisfactory given that the evaluation team were able to visit a sample of Info Centres to view their actual location. However, it is difficult to triangulate findings from documentary sources given that some of the data appears to be based on estimations and double counting of visitors to centres and participants at events run by the centres.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 3.5.1 Visitor numbers confirm the space is well used, and the location of the EUICs is clearly visible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor numbers suggest that EU Info Centre spaces do not add value as Info Centres. The locations of Info Centres are not all clearly visible to passers-by. 	<p>Evidence from the survey of EU Info Centres' Team Leaders suggests that average EU Info Centre visitor numbers vary greatly. The responses highlight the difference between the number of visitors in Turkey (circa 30 per month), where centres are hosted in chambers of commerce and have a different function to EU Info Centres in the other beneficiaries, and beneficiaries where that the number of visitors was significantly higher, for example between 850 and 900 per month in Serbia and more than 1600 per month in Bosnia and Herzegovina.</p> <p>It is not possible to disaggregate the number of individuals who walked into the centre looking for information and the number who attended an event, who for example may have been invited to attend. From the survey, it is also not possible to determine the number per centre, as combined totals may have been provided. These are areas where a more focussed and disaggregated approach to monitoring is required.</p> <p>From the 24 EUIC Final Reports reviewed, there are issues regarding the accuracy of data on reach and engagement. For instance, some Final Reports reviewed only present an approximate number of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders Evaluator observations during the field missions

¹⁰ Q3 of the survey of EUIC Team Leaders asked how many people visit the centre each month. Bosnia and Herzegovina indicated 1677 per month, Albania indicated more than 600 per month and Serbia between 850 and 900 per month. The plausible explanation for the difference between the result and what was observed was that this related to the number of attendees at events.



	<p>visitors or event participants. Beyond this, there are clearly differences in the ways contractors collected and reported this data, and in the ways successive contractors in a beneficiary report the data. There are also problems of double-counting; some people who might have been counted as 'visitors' for events might also have been counted as 'visitors' because they sent letters or emails. For example, in the Final Reports for Albania and North Macedonia (contract years 2014 and 2016, respectively), the annual walk-in visitor numbers are a mere 429 and 271. This contrasts significantly with 5,414 and 2,228 annual walk-in visitors in the respective IPA beneficiaries in the survey. As such, the data is not reliable.</p> <p>For Turkey, the number of walk-in visitors from 2011 to 2017 slightly decreased from 3,924 to 2,525, with an average of 2,718 annual walk-in visitors over the period. In North Macedonia, the annual walk-in visitors increased from 2,398 in the Final Report for contract year 2011 to 4,017 in the Final Report for contract year 2015. In Kosovo's Final Reports (for contract years 2014-2016), the annual visitor numbers were 1,559, 3,940, and 1,093, suggesting the numbers decreased. In Albania, the numbers also decreased from 7,705 (contract year 2012), peaking at 9,685 (contract year 2013) and then decreasing to 3,837 (contract year 2015).</p> <p>From the available data, it is not possible to clearly discern trends regarding walk-in visitors over the course of the years.</p> <p>Evidence from the field visits confirm low numbers of visitors to the Info Centres in terms of spontaneous footfall. This raised questions about the validity of numbers reported by EUICs in their reports and in the evaluation survey and some double counting of event participants can be assumed. Moreover, there is no disaggregation of those attending events organised by the EU Info Centre and those attending events hosted by the Centre.</p> <p>Physical location and ease of access (parking, public transport) also affect footfall. The field visits also revealed that EUICs are not always clearly visible. Where the EU Info Centre is located location within the EU Delegation with its strict security rules to access the building, for example in Sarajevo, this is not inviting to passers-by. In some cases, EUICs cannot be easily seen from the street. The EUIC in Istanbul is on the 11th floor of a tower building and in Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina), it is located in a shopping mall, which makes it completely invisible from the outside. Public perception research run by the EU Info Centre together with local Think Thanks in North Macedonia in 2017 found that because the EUIC is located in the same building as the EUD, the general public associate the Info Centre with a formal institution and avoid going there. Furthermore, the idea of calling the venue a "centre" was seen by the general public as too bureaucratic, formal and uninviting.</p> <p>However, in Kosovo, the physical locations of both EUICCs are appropriate¹¹. Both centres are accessible to any casual visitors who want to ask questions or use the facilities (though there are few) and are suited to hosting events and acting as an EU hub. The location in Montenegro is also central. However, neither Centre receives large numbers of walk-in visitors, so a good location does not necessarily draw in walk-in visitors.</p> <p>Participants in events are less concerned by the physical visibility of the EU Info Centre, but ease of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUIC Final Reports 2011-2017 • Interviews with other partners and MS embassies.
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¹¹ The EU Info Centre in Pristina has moved since the field mission, but to another central location.



access is important. First-time participants to the less physically visible Centres may be deterred by the location, but it has not been possible to collect data on this.

JC 3.6: Extent that the set-up of a regional communication programme for the enlargement region could enhance the outreach of communication activities both at regional and bilateral level.

It is not possible to assess the extent that a regional communication programme would enhance communication outreach as it is not possible to quantify or qualify the extent of outreach. However, feedback from EU Delegations in the Western Balkans and Turkey suggests that larger communication contracts and working with specialist communication agencies can have a positive impact on target group reach.

EU Delegations in the neighbourhood region, which choose to work with the OPEN programme, find that it adds value to their work. The Young Ambassadors' scheme is valued as an important student network in the neighbourhood regions. Concerning messaging, there is also an argument to be made that an integrated communication programme would add value for beneficiaries sharing the same goal of acceding to the EU despite being at different stages in the accession process. This would be consistent with Delegations' change in Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia to more integrated campaigning at national level.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: survey of EU Delegations in the neighbourhood region, interviews with HQ staff, interviews with EU Delegations in the neighbourhood region and enlargement region, interviews with OPEN neighbourhood programme contractors, interviews with EU ambassadors.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: the evidence base is assessed as more than satisfactory given that findings have been elicited from more than four different sources. However, it is not possible to assess the extent that outreach could be enhanced as there is a lack of precise data to confirm this point.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
<p>Indicator 3.6.1</p> <p>There is consensus among EU Delegations of the added value of the neighbourhood regional communication programme / its transferability to the enlargement region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU Delegations in the enlargement region were largely unaware of plans for a regional communication programme. EU Delegations in the neighbourhood region value the OPEN neighbourhood programme when they use it to complement their activities (which is 	<p>Drawing on the interview with A2 and the Service Contract Notice¹², the new regional communication programme is currently being prepared. It will comprise three elements: integrated campaigning, an on-line news portal and public diplomacy (in particular young EU ambassadors.) The programme is intended to cover the Western Balkans but not Turkey.</p> <p>Responses to the survey of EU Delegations in the neighbourhood region confirms mixed views on the added value of the regional communication programme in the neighbourhood region, with half the respondents indicating that they are satisfied with what the Open programme has been able to do and the other half indicating that they are neutral on this.</p> <p>The survey response coincides with feedback from programme contractors, who highlighted that Delegations are able to collaborate with the OPEN programme at their discretion and that some choose to do this more than others.</p> <p>Interviews with EU Delegation staff during the field phase highlighted that at the time of the field</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview with A2 Interviews with OPEN Programme contractors Survey of EU

¹² <https://ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:161276-2019:TEXT:EN:HTML&src=0>



	<p>not always the case). The Young Ambassadors' programme is a valued element.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no evidence to suggest that a regional programme would not add value in the enlargement region particularly given evidence on the added value of campaigning and pooling funds in the region, which would be replicated through a regional communication programme. 	<p>missions, the Delegations were not aware of the details of (or even the plan for) the new regional communication programme.</p> <p>Feedback from interviews with MS embassies and other EU communication partners in the enlargement region was that overall the interviewees do not agree on a regional communication programme considering that each IPA beneficiary needs to have their own tailored approach to communication and public diplomacy. There is a tendency to view the set-up of a regional communication programme in the enlargement region as a threat to existing tailored communication activities, while recognising that there are currently some gaps in the ability to generate bilateral or regional synergies.</p> <p>Feedback from interviews with Delegations in the field missions to Armenia, Tunisia and Ukraine highlight the perceived added-value and complementary nature of the programme to the work of the Delegations. It was noted however in interviews with the other EU Delegation contractors that these contractors do not always collaborate with the OPEN programme.</p> <p>The EU Young Ambassador scheme in particular is seen to support outreach to young people and students.</p>	<p>Delegations in the neighbourhood region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with EU Delegation communication coordinators in the enlargement region. • Interviews with MS embassies and other EU programmes in the enlargement region. • Interviews with EU ambassadors.
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EQ4. To what extent the EUICs have contributed to raising public awareness about the EU, its policies and values, EU funding and on the enlargement process in the IPA beneficiaries?

JC 4.1: Extent that target groups of EUIC communication activities in the IPA beneficiaries are more aware of the EU, its policies and values, EU funding and the enlargement process.

It is not possible to assess with any accuracy the extent to which EUIC target groups for their communication activities are more aware of the EU, its



policies and values, EU funding and the enlargement process, because EUICs do not systematically collect or report on this data. This was not required in EUIC Terms of Reference. Whilst data relating to the number of visitors to the EU Info Centre, participants in events, website visits and social media followers can be considered to confirm the reach of activities, it is not possible to define the extent that individuals found what they were looking for and or found new information and were therefore more informed or more aware or whether the EU communication activities/products simply reinforced their existing awareness and knowledge. Satisfaction surveys (or events, visits or with the website) and social media metrics can provide measures of engagement but need to be available. Thus, there is no qualitative and quantitative monitoring data to confirm that the awareness raising objective was achieved.

In Final Reports, some EU Info Centres provided assessments on the effectiveness of their awareness-raising efforts, but these assessments were reported using broad qualitative statements. EUIC Team Leaders have some tools for collecting participant feedback, such as questionnaires at events and pre and post activity focus groups, but this type of feedback is not gathered consistently and there is a tendency to rely on informal feedback from participants, which does not facilitate structured analysis. Website, online and social media surveys, which are easy to put in place and could be completed using a mobile phone are not used.

EU Info Centres across all IPA beneficiaries make information available on EU policies and values, EU funding and the enlargement process in different ways in several different formats, though different (publications, brochures, articles, info graphics, video clips, etc.). However, these publications are not always clearly visible on each website's homepage. Moreover, some of the print materials currently available at the EU Info Centres are out-of-date. Some are considered user-unfriendly for the target groups, e.g. publications that are heavy on text and in the number of pages. Distribution data is needed on who has received publications (rather than numbers distributed) and downloaded materials from the website. Information is also provided via social media, but there is little consistency in the availability of data on followers, and information on engagement is not recorded. As noted elsewhere, EUIC Final Reports do not necessarily report on all the social media channels used.

The large size and the diverse profile of the target universe in IPA beneficiaries, coupled with the limited amount of funding available, is a challenge to establishing mechanisms to measure the influence achieved by EU Info Centres in the medium and longer term. However, there are simple tools, which can be used as pointers, such as event satisfaction surveys (paper and online), website and social media surveys, or simple text or sentiment analysis software.

The other challenge is the lack of baseline data against which the extent of raised awareness can be measured. Whilst nationwide surveys were carried out in the beneficiaries over the 2011-2017 timeframe, it is not possible to correlate the measurement of opinions and awareness of the EU or of the Centres with the EU Info Centres' activities and messages or to confirm any causal link also because EU Info Centres are not the only source of EU information in each beneficiary.

Strength of evidence: strong

Description of the evidence base: EUIC Final Reports; Survey of EU Delegations; Survey of EUIC Team Leaders; Interviews with EU Delegations; Interviews with EUIC Team Leaders; Interviews with stakeholders and EU Programmes, Focus Groups, Evaluators observations on monitoring data in the field missions.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: There are reports, surveys, interviews and observations on which to draw in the assessment. There is therefore a strong evidence base to support the finding that the actual evidence to support this indicator has to be based largely on proxies.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
Indicator 4.1.1 Qualitative and quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU Delegations consider that EUICs are effective at raising 	From EU Info Centres' own reports on their activity in Final Reports , it is not possible to give a precise measurement of the extent that the target groups of EU Info Centres were made more aware of the EU, its policies and values, funding and enlargement process. There are several reasons for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EUIC Final



<p>monitoring data, which confirms that target groups exposed to EUIC activities and materials are more aware of the EU, its policies and values, EU funding and on the enlargement process.</p>	<p>awareness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUICs reported that they collect evidence to confirm if target audiences are more aware or if they have changed their view on the EU as a result of participating in EUIC activities, but the evidence of this is weak. • The collection of awareness data is ad hoc and can be unstructured drawing on EUIC Team Leaders informal conversations and feedback with target groups. • Monitoring data focuses on the reach of target groups rather than communication effects. 	<p>this:</p> <p><i>Reporting:</i> EU Info Centres did not consistently report in their Final Reports on the extent that their activities / materials generated awareness, and this is likely to reflect the fact the results to be achieved and the indicators set did not require any quantification of evidence. From the review of Final Reports, some EU Info Centres did report on awareness raising, but this was reported using qualitative statements. It is noted that there were references to reporting on monitoring in Annexes, which were not available to the evaluation team (in other words, accompanying annexes are not available or difficult to find in the CRIS system). The collection of participant feedback was corroborated by EU Delegation staff who confirmed the use of questionnaires for events and pre and post activity focus groups. EU Info Centres' Team leaders also confirmed the collection of monitoring data in their survey (see below).</p> <p><i>Lack of specificity in EU Info Centre requirements:</i> EU Info Centre ToR confirm the broad objective/s for Info Centres, for example raising awareness or increasing information. ToR describe in qualitative terms results to be achieved and indicators. There is, however, a lack of quantification with regards to expected results in terms of raised awareness. The indicators set in EU Info Centre ToR did not require EU Info Centres to measure increased awareness, which leads to a lack of consistency in this area.</p> <p><i>Size of the target universe and available budgets:</i> EU Info Centre goals are broad and suggest an increase in the general level of awareness or understanding in the target population. But target populations are large (for example circa 78 million in Turkey and circa 7 million in Serbia) as opposed to 0.62 million as in Montenegro, so it can be difficult to achieve an impact.</p> <p>The amount of funding available to EU Info Centres and the lack of mechanisms in place to measure any influence achieved in the medium and longer term are also factors.</p> <p><i>Lack of baseline data:</i> the available documentation (EU Delegation communication plans, EU Info Centres ToR, Final Reports, Offers) do not provide a baseline against which the extent of raised awareness can be measured. Whilst nationwide polling / surveys were carried out in the beneficiaries over this timeframe, it is not possible to correlate the measurement of opinions and awareness with the EU Info Centres or to confirm any causal link also because EU Info Centres are not the only source of EU information in each beneficiary. Awareness of the Centre itself may be measured. This is valuable but does not imply impact.</p> <p>In the survey of EU Delegations all Delegation respondents agreed strongly or agreed that EU Info Centres are effective at raising awareness about the EU. Most confirmed the relevance of their communication activities to strategic communication goals, which can be considered to relate to messages on values, policies, funding and the enlargement process.</p> <p>In the survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders: Team Leaders from 6/7 IPA beneficiaries confirmed that they collected monitoring data to confirm if target groups had increased awareness or a changed view of the EU as a result of participation in their activities. Team Leaders from 5/7 beneficiaries confirmed that they collected evidence to confirm improved understanding of the EU. However, there is no evidence in the survey to confirm rates of change.</p>	<p>Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of EU Delegations • Survey of EUIC Team Leaders • Interviews with EU Delegations • Interviews with EUIC Team Leaders • Evaluators observations on monitoring data in the field missions
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Desk research shows that EU Info Centres across all IPA beneficiaries make information available on EU policies and values, EU funding and the enlargement process in different ways. But these issues are not necessarily always clearly visible on each website's homepage. They can be found in a number of different formats, though different (publications, brochures, articles, info graphics, video clips, etc.) and displayed in the respective webpages in a way that sometimes requires users to look for them. Moreover, some of the materials currently available at the EU Info Centres is actually outdated or not available in the local language.

Interviews with **EU Delegations** and **EU Info Centres** indicate some use of focus groups and materials testing, but these are not general practice. There is a heavy reliance on a belief that EU Info Centres know their audience and that oral feedback is sufficient (even though this is likely to contain a positive bias) rather than providing structured analysis based on surveys.

From observations and discussions during the field phase:

Albania: The contractors had been delivering services only for just under one year at the time of the field visit. This being the case, the EU Delegation confirmed that it was too early to make an assessment on their contribution to raising public awareness about the EU. The contractor tracks levels of reach and participation via events, social and traditional media, including TV on a monthly basis, and provides detailed event reports which also report on communication indicators.

Collecting qualitative data can be more time-consuming and therefore costly and there is also no requirement for this from EUD. Therefore, it was not possible to make an evidence-based assessment of whether the activities are contributing to raising public awareness about the EU and its values, EU funding and the enlargement process on the basis of monitoring data, although feedback from stakeholders who participated in Europe House events considered that this was the case.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: There is no evidence confirming that target groups exposed to EUIC activities and materials are more aware of the EU, its policies and values, EU funding and on the enlargement process.

Kosovo: The annual survey carried out by the EU Delegations shows high and increasingly levels of awareness of the EUIC in the populations of Pristina and North Mitrovica. This suggests increasing awareness, but is a proxy, as are the limited data on increases in followers on social media, and visitors to the website. However, there is no measurement of reactions to events and publications, or data on whether these have reached new audiences. The field mission was able to observe that thematic campaigns had increased awareness even at the level of the influencers used, and therefore it is very likely that their audiences' awareness had been increased, but an evaluation was not available at the time of the mission.

North Macedonia: There is no systematic collection of feedback from target groups even if event organisers ascertain participant satisfaction on an informal basis. This makes it difficult to ascertain the extent that target groups awareness has been raised. Whilst figures relating to website visits, visitors to the EUIC and social media followers can be considered to be proxies for raised awareness, it is not possible to define the extent that individuals found what they were looking for and or found

		<p>new information and were therefore more informed or more aware or whether their engagement with the EU communication activities simply reinforced their existing awareness and knowledge.</p> <p>Montenegro: The annual survey by the Delegation shows that awareness of the activities of the Centre is low, but awareness may be increasing among the audiences (existing or new) that are reached. Data on this is not collected, e.g. at events or in surveys on publications or on the website, so proxies that show that increases in social media followers and website visitors are the only indicator available.</p> <p>Serbia: There is no qualitative and quantitative monitoring data which confirm that the awareness raising objective is achieved. Proxies can only be used as is the case of most other beneficiary countries.</p> <p>Turkey: There is evidence to confirm that each EUIC carries out events to raise awareness in relation to a range of topic areas and is available to provide access to EU reports and publications in the local language. However, the current approach to monitoring does not systematically collect data to confirm levels of awareness pre and post participation in or exposure to EUIC activities. However, one of the visited Info Centres did collect satisfaction data in relation to events.</p>	
<p>Indicator 4.1.2 EUIC communication materials and tools convey information on EU policies and values, EU funding and the enlargement process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUIC websites provide information on EU policies, values and EU funding and the enlargement process although in varying degrees. • In some cases, materials that are made available to the public were found to be out-of-date. • Availability of local language publications is sometimes limited. • Some of the publication formats are not user-friendly. 	<p>EU Info Centre websites provided the basis for understanding whether EU Info Centre communication materials convey information on EU policies in each beneficiary. This desk research confirms that EU Info Centres across all beneficiaries make information available on EU policies and values, EU funding and the enlargement process in different ways. But these issues are not necessarily clearly visible on each website's homepage. They can be found in a number of different formats (publications, brochures, articles, info graphics, video clips, etc.) and are displayed on the respective webpages in a way that sometimes requires users to look for them.</p> <p>Some EU Info Centre websites have a reference to EU assistance on their navigation toolbars, but this information is not always up to date. EU policies and values are covered on many EU Info Centres' websites through publication of the EU brochures in English in a majority of the cases, and when available also in local language translations. This raises questions about the availability of materials in local languages, which is underscored by EU Info Centre Team Leaders responses to the survey question on the added-value of a bank of audio-visual and on-line products and tools in local languages as having potential to enhance their communication outcomes.</p> <p>Some EU Info Centre websites put a specific emphasis on issues related to enlargement processes, with dedicated, separate webpages, which provide more detail. The type of information portrayed relates to the nature of current relations with the EU.</p> <p>One of the main ways that EU Info Centres support their information on EU funding is by making links to EU funding programmes available. Providing information on available funding may be easier in many ways given the tangible nature of funding opportunities, in contrast to information about values for example.</p> <p>During the field phase, the evaluation team observed that in each case EUICs make available EU publications and information. However, in some cases publications were out of date and / or not available in local languages. Other identified issues were that more detailed publications are often not</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUIC websites • Final Reports • EU Team Leaders' Survey • EUIC publications and material available in situ in the visited EU Info Centres.



<p>Indicator 4.1.3 Strength of consensus among EU Delegation staff and representatives of target groups in each IPA beneficiary of the contribution made by EUICs/Info Points to raising public awareness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consensus among all groups is that the EUICs and Info Points are contributing to raising public awareness. • The strongest contribution is made by the EUICs, and where they have their physical locations and with civil society. 	<p>suited to visiting target groups. EUIC Final Reports contain some data on numbers distributed, but not on distribution strategy or user reactions to the different publications.</p> <p>In the EU Delegation survey, there was consensus among respondents that EU Info Centres are effective at raising awareness about the EU. Four out of 7 also noted that EU Info Centres are a trusted source of information in the IPA beneficiaries. Five out of 7 noted that the EU Info Centres make a significant contribution to the EU Delegations' communication and public diplomacy efforts.</p> <p>There is consensus across all groups interviewed that EUICs and Info Points are contributing to raising public awareness of the EU. This is particularly the case of the EUICs, which are also seen as contributing to public diplomacy through its support to the Delegation, the Member State embassies and civil society. Where government communicators were interviewed, this was also the perception. The contribution was always assessed as significant, particularly in reaching civil society and the cities where the EUICs are located. It was felt that budgetary constraints were a barrier to the EUICs and Info Points making a larger contribution. The target groups would welcome the EU Info Centres being able to contribute more, particularly among young people, with SMEs (where the EEN is not present), beyond the capitals and major cities.</p> <p>This assessment was common to all IPA beneficiaries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Delegation Survey • Interviews with EU Delegations • Interviews with EU programmes • Interviews with MS Embassies • Interviews with civil society • Focus groups
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JC 4.2: Extent that EUICs reach new audiences with EU messages about EU policies and values, EU funding and on the enlargement process that would not be reached by EU Delegations, or EU-funded projects.

It is challenging to find consistent evidence to confirm the quality and quantity of monitoring data on EU Info Centres' reach with messages about policies, values, funding and enlargement. This relates again to the fact that EU Info Centres' ToR do not require EU Info Centres to monitor the extent that these messages are conveyed. There is also a lack of clarity on the way that statistics on visitor and event participant numbers and on websites and social media are collected and calculated.

A review of EU Info Centres' online and social media reach figures covering the period 2011-2017 in a sample of EU Info Centres' Final Reports (21 out of a total of 56) confirmed that there is a lack of consistency in the availability and presentation of data, both within each beneficiary and across beneficiaries in the period assessed. Thus, the performance across the region cannot be compared. It is also unclear how the monitoring data are calculated, and whether the figures presented are coherent.

The field phase findings are consistent with this – there is no systematic collection of feedback from target groups even if event organisers ascertain participant satisfaction on an informal basis, and the same applies to websites and social media. This makes it difficult to ascertain the extent to which the EU Info Centres reached new – or different - audiences. Increases can only be a partial proxy in the case of social media because an increase does not mean that all followers are active followers. A person may like a page once and never return to it or not have prioritised in their feed. Nor is there any assessment of whether new audiences are reached which are



not targeted by EU Delegation or EU-funded project communication.

In the survey of EU Delegations, the majority were happy with the monitoring and reporting, but a minority were not. There is evidence from the field phase that the workload of Delegations prevents communication staff from reviewing closely the reporting.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: EUIC Final Reports 2011-2017; Survey of EU Delegations; Survey of EU Team Leaders; Observations from the field mission

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: A range of sources are available which converge around the finding. It is therefore possible to make a robust assessment of the indicator and the absence of data to feed it.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 4.2.4</p> <p>Quality and quantity of monitoring data on EUICs' reach / engagement with messages about the EU, its policies and values, EU funding and on the enlargement process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data is collected in relation to reach in particular on visitors and event participants, and to a lesser extent on social media and websites, but the reliability of the data is open to question. Collected data does not allow any disaggregation by types of messages conveyed. 	<p>Survey of EU Delegations: Four respondents indicated that they agreed strongly or agreed that they were satisfied, but three respondents were neutral or disagreed. Six of the seven respondents indicated that an increased focus on setting targets for communication outcomes and monitoring communication outcomes would enhance EU Info Centre communication.</p> <p>It is challenging to find consistent evidence to confirm the quality and quantity of monitoring data on EU Info Centres' reach with messages about policies, values, funding and enlargement. This relates again to the fact that EU Info Centres' ToR do not require EU Info Centres to monitor the extent that these messages are conveyed.</p> <p>There is, of course, evidence in Final Reports that EU Info Centres are disseminating materials and carrying out events, which provide vehicles for this information. It is not, however, possible to disaggregate this reach by type of message.</p> <p>There are several figures that can be used to assess EU Info Centres' reach. These include numbers of visitors to the EU Info Centres, number of participants at events, numbers of visitor to the website and number of followers on social media. The Survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders provide information on visitor numbers; Desk Reports supply data on participation in events; website and social media data is too disparate for it to be possible to make comparisons.</p> <p>Survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders</p> <p>The survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders provided the following visitor numbers in ascending order¹³:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turkey = circa 30 visitors per month Kosovo = 300+ visitors per month; North Macedonia = 51-100 per month; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EUIC Final Reports 2011-2017 Survey of EU Delegations Survey of EU Team Leaders Observations from the field mission

¹³ The information is from the responses from the Survey of EUIC Team Leaders (see Annex 2 for more information).



- Montenegro = 250-500 visitors per month;
- Albania = 600+ visitors per month;
- Serbia = 850-900 visitors per month; and
- Bosnia and Herzegovina = 1,677 per month¹⁴.

These numbers should be interpreted with caution as there is no common basis for reporting or requirements not to count event participants as visitors, or to discount (or at least account separately) for visitors looking for tourist information where the Centre has a street-front location.

There is no user feedback on which to base any assessment of engagement.

Final Reports: The evaluation team considered the number of events and the number of participants at events as one key proxy indicator of direct engagement. Therefore, the team considered the number of events and participants at these events reported by EU Info Centres to be important. The table below presents the figures relating to the highest number of events reported by EU Info Centres in a single year over the 2011-2017 period.

Beneficiary	Highest no. of events	Year reported	No. of participants
Albania	300	2015	37,700
Bosnia and Herzegovina	251	2016	13,245
Kosovo	260	2016	7,046
Montenegro	267	2016	7,388
North Macedonia	652	2015	12,205
Serbia	1,242	2015-2018 reporting period (it was not possible to disaggregate per year)	No data available
Turkey	303	2014	197,328

However, the accuracy of data on reach is questionable. For instance, some Final Reports reviewed only present an approximate number of event participants. They do not disaggregate events carried out to comply with targets in the ToR, additional events organised by the EU Info Centre on its own account, and hosted events. In addition, there are differences in the ways contractors collect and report this data across beneficiaries, and in successive contracts; it is unclear if all Final Reports consistently count event participants at all types of events (including events held outside the information and communication structures or events hosted by partners). In an extreme case, the meeting with the evaluators was counted as an "event".

¹⁴ The information is from the responses from the Survey of EUIC Team Leaders (see Annex 2 for more information).



		<p>There are no surveys of reactions to events that would make it possible to measure engagement.</p> <p>A review of EU Info Centres' online and social media reach figures covering the period 2011-2017 in a sample of EU Info Centres' Final Reports (21 out of a total of 56) confirmed that there is a lack of consistency in the availability and presentation of data, both within each beneficiary and across beneficiaries in the period assessed, so that performance across the region cannot be compared. It is also unclear how the monitoring data are calculated, and whether the figures presented are coherent.</p> <p>Field phase: The observations during the field phase confirmed across the region that EU Info Centres each have their own approach to collating visitor and event participant numbers, so that the monitoring data on reach is of varying quality. Data on engagement is either not collected or not available in a form that can be used with confidence.</p> <p>The field mission also confirmed that there is no monitoring of whether new audiences are reached. (Increases can only be a partial proxy.) Nor is there any assessment of whether audiences are reached that are not touched by EU Delegation or EU-funded project communication. Coordination on the latter is generally not regarded as a priority even though EUICs are in contact with projects to host their events.</p>	
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EQ5i. To what extent the activities carried out by the EU Info Centres have been coherent, complementary and coordinated with those carried out via other EU programmes and by other partners (e.g. Member States, IFIs, international organisations) active in communicating re. EU policies & values, EU funding and the enlargement process in the enlargement region?

JC. 5i.1: EUICs and Info Points liaise in a regular and planned way (either directly or via the EU Delegation) to share intelligence, identify synergies and opportunities to work together with other EU policy / programme communicators in the region.

EUICs are formally required to coordinate with other programmes and organisations, as specified in the ToR covering the period 2011-2017. The interviews with EU MS embassies and partners, notably those implementing EU projects with similar target groups and a significant communication component, confirmed regular meetings organised by the Delegation and attended by the EUIC. UNDP is an example of one such partner. The purpose of these meetings is to share intelligence and ensure synergies in EU MS Embassy and EUD (including EUIC) messaging. In beneficiaries where EUNIC cluster exist, as noted above, there are also regular meetings with the EUNIC (European Union National Institutes of Culture) cluster.

Some interviewees from EU MS embassies and partner organisations, both implementing partners and grant recipients, in the beneficiaries (for which information was also evidenced during the field phase) confirmed collaboration and complementarities with EUIC on the following type of activities:

- Large-scale events such as Europe Day, and other "days", "weeks" and "years" around language, the environment, climate diplomacy, human rights etc. The EUIC can facilitate / act as "hub" / lead organiser linking other actors with common communication goals, as identified in several beneficiaries;
- Support outreach beyond the capital (where the EU MS generally lack capacity for outreach);
- Logistic and content support for event organisation (e.g. provision of guest speaker, development of programme, supply of venue) e.g. in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia;
- Specific stand-alone communication campaigns were also cited as creating opportunities for complementarity, e.g. in Kosovo.

Six out of seven Delegation staff surveyed confirmed more coordination would enhance performance. This sentiment was echoed by EU MS Embassies and EU



programmes. Suggestions were made for more networking events between Delegations and Embassies to establish key priorities, activities and messages. The initiative for this is likely to have to come from the Delegation because the Embassies have their own agendas, limited communication capability and budgets. This means they do not regard joint initiatives as a priority, while recognizing the principle of partnership between Member States and the EU. Several Embassies interviewed pointed out that their own governments do not appear to regard this as a priority.

According to the EUIC Team Leaders, the EUICs engagement with EU MS cultural institutes, EU MS Embassies, the European Documentation Centres, and Enterprise Europe Network occurs "sometimes". Whereas interaction between EUICs and Erasmus+, was indicated to be more frequent. Delegations were most satisfied with the level of EUIC engagement with Erasmus+ and EU Embassies.

The evidence gathered from the field phase shows a mix of experiences¹⁵ but the recurring finding is that collaboration, whilst positively viewed, lacks a strategic approach. This was the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, where reportedly there is no systematic approach to the development and implementation of joint actions with other EU policy / programme coordinators in the region despite good relations and engagement on an ad-hoc basis. In Kosovo, similarly, the approach to developing synergies was found to be more opportunistic than planned. And, in Montenegro, cooperation between the EUIC, Erasmus+, Creative Europe and other implementing partners, was described as good, but is not systematic or sufficiently planned.

A review of implementing partner websites¹⁶ and Facebook pages, and those of the EUICs, showed there would be value in a more consistent and strategic approach to ensuring cross links.

Strength of evidence: strong

Description of the evidence base: The evidence relates to three indicator which collectively draw on a range of evidence, from the field mission in the IPA beneficiaries, desk research (of the ToR; EUIC and partner websites), surveys of the EUD staff and Team Leaders, as well as interviews conducted in person and by phone with a range of stakeholders.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: The evidence was from sufficient number of sources and in sufficient detail to be able to confirm the existence of liaison while also pointing to areas for improvement.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 5i.1.1 Volume and quality of joint actions with other EU policy/programme communicators in the region, which include</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EUIC's are formally required to coordinate with other programmes and organisations, as specified in the ToR covering the period 2011-2017; interviews confirm this occurs to 	<p>A review of ToR covering the period 2011-2017 confirms that in most cases there is a formal requirement for coordination with other programmes and organisations in the IPA beneficiary to ensure synergies.</p> <p>Survey of EU Delegations: Respondents had mixed views on EU Info Centres level of engagement with other EU networks. Six of seven respondents indicated that if EU Info Centres collaborated more with other EU networks this would enhance their performance.</p> <p>Interviews: Interviews with MS Embassies and other partners in the IPA beneficiaries regular</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of EU delegations Desk review of ToR

¹⁵ For example, the collaboration between EU programmes communicators and the EUIC in Serbia was found to be positive but not quantifiable, while in Turkey, there was no evidence to confirm that EUICs work together in a regular and planned way with other EU programme communicators.

¹⁶ Specifically, the review took account of 26 websites and Facebook pages related to the IPA programme; the Enterprise Europe Network; Erasmus+ (general and individual national websites); Horizon2020; Interreg Europe; European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; World Bank; UNDP; and IPARD and found no references to the EU Info Centres.



<p>coordination on target groups, messages and objectives.</p>	<p>some extent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments of how it works in practice suggests room for improvement as the coordination tends to be ad hoc rather than systemic. • The level of engagement of Embassies and other partners varies. 	<p>coordination meetings organised by the EU Delegation, rather than the EU Info Centres, but attended by EU Info Centres. In a number of beneficiaries, there are regular meetings with the EUNIC cluster as well.</p> <p>MS Embassy respondents agreed on the need for consistency with messaging on EU policies in areas in which they are also active (e.g. migration or human rights) and coordination of activities. Interviewees nevertheless indicated a desire for more networking between MS embassies and EU Delegations in order to establish key priorities, activities and messages.</p> <p>Some MS Embassies encounter challenges on how to reach people outside of the capital city and suggested that more effort should be done by the EU Delegation/ EU Info Centre in this direction. Others say that they look to the EU Delegation/EU Info Centre to take more initiatives in their direction because they have more communication resources.</p> <p>The evidence gathered from the field phase showed a mix of experiences, but the recurring finding was that liaison, whilst was typically positively viewed, was lacking adequate planning or insufficiently strategic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bosnia and Herzegovina: there is no systematic approach to the development and implementation of joint actions with other EU policy / programme coordinators in the region. Based on the consultation with a sample of representatives of other EU programmes, the field visit shows that there is a good relationship between the EUIC and other EU programmes. Coordinators of other EU programmes report that the EUIC team may constitute a first port of call for interested citizens looking for information and that the EUIC is very helpful in redirecting citizens to the programme’s contact person. EU programmes do not systematically refer to the EUIC on their channels / in their materials. • Kosovo: EUICCs liaise closely with Erasmus+, including in presentations in cities where there is not an EUICC. The Creative Europe Desk plans to use the EUICC in future. The EUICCs are the location of choice for the events of implementing partners and grant beneficiaries in civil society. The approach to developing synergies is more opportunistic than planned. • North Macedonia: Feedback suggests that there is good collaboration with other EU programme partners, for example Enterprise Europe Network and Creative Europe. Creative Europe communicates with the EUIC almost daily and there is a track record of working together. The programme “cultural stories” was cited as one where Creative Europe and the EUIC have had particularly good collaboration with the EUIC supporting, including via EUIC social media. Both consult with each other on how to improve their reach of target audiences and they collaborated well to support the year of cultural heritage. Relationships with MS embassies are also considered to be strong with their involvement and engagement in a range of EUIC events. These relationships are managed through a regular coordination by EUD. • Montenegro: feedback from other EU programmes confirms that EUIC has hosted events for Erasmus+ and Creative Europe, and cooperation is good, but is not systematic or synergistic. The same is true of implementing partners, i.e. events are hosted, and cooperation is good, but these are not systematically planned. • Serbia: the group discussion with representatives of EU programmes highlight that collaboration with EUINFONET (the EUIC/Info Point network) is of good quality. It is not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with EU Delegations, Member State Embassies, partners and stakeholders • Field visits
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		<p>possible to quantify the collaboration. However, representatives from EU programmes outline the professional approach of the EUINFONET team, its network – which EUINFONET stands ready to mobilise to support partners – and the quality of the support provided by EUINFONET. The quality of the events organised by EUINFONET, which EU programmes might support was also praised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turkey: there was no evidence identified in the field phase to confirm that EUICs work together in a regular and planned way with other EU programme communicators; 	
<p>Indicator 5i.1.2 EUIC Team Leaders and managers of other EU programmes, Member State embassies, IFIs and IOs confirm coherence, complementarity and coordination and provide examples thereof.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence from multiple sources confirms general agreement that there is broad coherence, complementarity and coordination between EUICs and other communicators. This stems from the fact that the communication goals (often) coincide. • Examples of the types of activities provided by a sample of interviewees from MS embassies and partner organisations in the beneficiaries (which were further evidenced in the field phase) confirmed collaboration and complementarities with EUIC 	<p>Survey of EU Delegations: Respondents report that EU Info Centres have the desired level of contact with the Erasmus+ Desk (7/7 respondents agree or strongly agree) as well as the desired level of contact with Member State Embassies and cultural centres (6/7 respondents agree or strongly agree). They also suggested that EU Info Centres have the desired level of contact with NIPACs and other relevant national institutions as well as Creative Europe Desks (4/7 respondents agree or strongly agree to both).</p> <p>Survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders: Respondents indicated that some EU Info Centres frequently engage with Erasmus+, project beneficiaries for EU funding, as well as EU partners and intermediaries in delivering EU funding. Most respondents confirmed that they <u>sometimes</u> engage with other organisations/partners, including Member State cultural institutes, Member State embassies, European Documentation Centres, and the Enterprise Europe Network.</p> <p>Interviews: A sample of interviewees from MS embassies and partner organisations in the beneficiaries confirmed collaboration with EU Info Centres on the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe Day and other EU, European or international “days”, “weeks” or “years” (Languages, Human Rights, Climate Diplomacy Week, European Year of Cultural Heritage) • When the Ambassador travels around the beneficiary • Common events, exhibition openings, award ceremonies <p>Specific feedback in relation to coordination from one interviewee is that “everyone tries to work hand-in-hand so there is no overlapping. The EU Info Centre’s work is coordinated with many EU Member States’ embassies”. Moreover, “the approaches are highly complementary. The Embassy steps in where they can. The EU runs larger campaigns that the Embassy would not be able to do. On the other hand, our Ambassador is very active and committed and is a relevant multiplier of key EU messages.”</p> <p>Evidence from the field phase was gathered, as follows:</p> <p>Albania: Partners and users confirmed the complementarity of the work done by Europe House with their own communication objectives. They were keen on the concept and the possibility for Europe House to act as a “hub” for communication on accession. The “Municipalities for Europe project” is an example of good practice as a mechanism for outreach to rural and more remote communities. There is an absence of a systematic approach to cooperation between Europe House and the “Municipalities for Europe” project. While there would also be room for engagement of the EU MS embassies in the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of EU delegations • Survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders • Interviews with MS embassies and partner organisations • Field visits



		<p>project, for the time being the embassies have no appetite for this kind of engagement and / or may be lacking the budget to travel outside of the capital.</p> <p>Bosnia and Herzegovina: Overall, examples of complementarities between the EUIC and other EU programmes, MS embassies and cultural institutes and other donors relate to event organisation. Focus group discussion participants provided ad hoc examples of the EUIC identifying a guest speaker, hosting an event and mobilising the media community in support of activities organised by partners. But there were no examples of synergies.</p> <p>Kosovo: Coordinated action with partners mainly takes the form of stand-alone communication campaigns and is not part of a joined-up EU communication strategy. Involvement with MS Embassies is ad hoc apart from a Meet the Ambassadors programme of events at which EU Ambassadors speak. There is a close relationship with the French Embassy/French Cultural Institute, which makes films available for screening.</p> <p>North Macedonia: Feedback suggested that there is good collaboration with other EU programme partners, for example the Enterprise Europe Network and Creative Europe. Both consult with each other on how to improve their reach of target audiences and they collaborated well to support the European Year of Cultural Heritage. Relationships with MS embassies are also considered to be strong with their involvement and engagement in a range of EUIC events. These relationships are managed through a regular coordination by EUD.</p> <p>Montenegro: Member State embassies and EU programmes use the EU Info Centre to host their events and those interviewed speak warmly of the provision of this service, but this is not part of a strategic framework. There is close collaboration with Embassies/cultural institutions on the annual film festival, which screens across the beneficiary. At the time of the field mission, there was discussion of closer cooperation with cultural institutes.</p> <p>Serbia: No example was provided of coordination on target groups, messages and objectives. MS representatives did confirm good collaboration and coordination on joint activities. Examples relate to relatively large-scale, and repeated events, such as the Erasmus anniversary, the Researcher’s Night and events organised as part of the European Year of Cultural Heritage (from EU programmes and beneficiary programmes) and the European Film festival (example from MS representatives). The support ranges from financial (funding made available), logistical (the EUIC hosts an event) to substantial element (development of content and help in identifying speakers) and media outreach (mobilisation of the journalist network).</p> <p>Turkey: Given the limitations of human and financial resources and remit of EUICs it seems that it would be difficult for EUICs to increase their level of collaboration with partners. Also, there is no evidence that increased collaboration with EUICs would add any value to partners, who may themselves have much more resources available and a more extensive communication programme than EUICs. Despite this, partners expressed a willingness to work with EUICs, but it is unclear how this could really be implemented in practice, given the limitations and constraints in place.</p>	
Indicator 5i.1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a lack of 	The desk review of 26 websites and Facebook pages revealed the EUIC was very seldom cited on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUIC

<p>Consistency with which other EU programmes and partners link to EUICs on their websites and social accounts and via their literature.</p>	<p>consistency in linkage between EUIC websites and other EU programme / partner websites</p>	<p>relevant partner websites¹⁷. The exceptions were two of the seven IPA beneficiaries' national pages (Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina) and the IPA Programme websites which provide links to the EU Delegations for six out of the seven IPA beneficiaries (all except for Bosnia and Herzegovina).</p> <p>By contrast, the EUIC routinely cited a (varied) range of other sources of EU information and EU funding programmes, although the list is not comprehensive, and it is unclear on what basis the partners were chosen. A couple of examples illustrate the differences in the approach: on the Albanian website, there are links to Creative Europe, Erasmus+, Horizon 2020, the Interreg Adriatic Programme, and the World Bank EDIF. The Serbian EU Info Centre website has a bigger focus on youth, with links to the Council of Europe Youth Partnership, and the European Youth Portal among others.</p>	<p>websites and partner websites</p>
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JC 5i.2: Extent that it is possible to identify other relevant opportunities to improve coordination to develop a more joined-up approach.

The evidence gathered on other relevant opportunities to improve coordination points towards more barriers than real opportunities. The findings from the field phase show that while there may be some (limited) latent potential, there are also real barriers to exploiting this potential. These can be summarised as: limited resources and the need to prioritise, and distinct (even if sometimes convergent) communication objectives. Coordination was seen as a drain on resources not as a potential efficiency gain. The communication gains were acknowledged, but it was not felt possible to achieve this within current budgets.

The example of Turkey is illuminating in this respect. The results from the survey of the EUIC Team Leaders showed that Turkey stood out compared to all other beneficiaries. Turkey reported that the EUICs generally collaborate less frequently with other organisations / institutions. Taken at face value, this would suggest scope to improve collaboration. However, the field phase¹⁸ research uncovered the limitations of human and financial resources and remit of EUICs, which means it would likely be difficult for EUICs to increase their level of collaboration with Erasmus+, Enterprise Europe Network and IFIs such as the EBRD. Further, there is no evidence that increased collaboration with EUICs would add any value to these organisations, who have more resources available and a more extensive communication programme than EUICs.

The situation in Serbia was similar in that further (or additional) collaboration was not considered a priority given the existing resource constraints for EUICs and EU MS embassies, EU programmes (Creative Europe, Euraxess, Horizon 2020) and programme beneficiaries. More importantly, during focus group discussions, these organisations were not able to identify other ways to improve collaboration, yet they were nonetheless satisfied with the quality of the support provided by EUINFONET.

The findings from the Bosnia and Herzegovina field visit suggested the barrier to further collaboration was that other organisations (EU MS Embassies, IFI's) need to pursue their own specific communication objectives.

In Kosovo, there was only one programme (Horizon 2020) where potential was identified for more liaison than currently exists, but it was also recognised that this would always be limited as the specific target group (for Horizon 2020) means that there is little overlap in audiences. MS Embassies recognise the desirability of closer cooperation, but have their own priorities, limited budgets and limited communication capabilities. They look to Delegations and EUICs to lead any cooperation initiatives.

¹⁷ Specifically, we reviewed 26 websites and Facebook pages related to the IPA programme; the Enterprise Europe Network; Erasmus+ (general and individual national websites); Horizon2020; Interreg Europe; European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; World Bank; UNDP; and IPARD and found no references to the EU Info Centres.

¹⁸ The country notes which describe the findings from the field phase of the evaluation are presented in Annex 3, a separate document.



In Albania, the field phase uncovered the possibility of greater complementarity through systematic engagement with the EU-funded Municipalities for Europe¹⁹ project from the EUIC and other local partners. The 'Municipalities for Europe' project is intended to strengthen the governing capacities of municipalities on EU themes. It has a specific objective to enhance coordination between municipalities and the EU Information Offices²⁰. The project has established EU corners in each municipality, which have EU information available. However, feedback from the project suggested a desire for increased collaboration with Europe House to allow the Delegations / Europe House to make more use of the information structure available across Albania. However, limitations and obstacles were cited, for instance, the specificity of agendas, lack of budgets and absence of a strong engine to coordinate and organise activities and keep all parties on the same page.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: evidence mainly comes from the field phase

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: The evidence comes from a multiplicity of sources (i.e. is based on findings from different field visits and interviews with stakeholders across the different beneficiaries).

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 5i.2.1</p> <p>EUIC Team Leaders and the managers of other EU programmes, Member State embassies, IFIs and IOs confirm ways to improve collaboration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The evidence on the possibilities to identify other relevant opportunities to improve coordination points towards more barriers than real opportunities. The findings from the field phase show that while there may be some (limited) latent potential, there are also real barriers to exploiting this potential, i.e.: limited resources available and corresponding need to prioritise, and distinct (even if sometimes coinciding) communication objectives. 	<p>Survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders</p> <p>There is a difference in the frequency of collaboration with other organisations / institutions between Turkey and other IPA beneficiaries. The level of collaboration in IPA beneficiaries other than Turkey is generally "frequent" across the board, particularly with project beneficiaries, EU partners and intermediaries, Embassies of Member States, cultural institutes of Member States, Creative Europe, and Erasmus+. The information and communication structures collaborate less frequently (and even rarely) with the Enterprise Europe Network (which is not in all the beneficiaries) and Horizon 2020.</p> <p>In Turkey, the EU Info Centres generally collaborate less frequently with other organisations / institutions. For example, there is sometimes collaboration with cultural institutes of Member States, Member State Embassies, EU partners and intermediaries, and Erasmus+. In Turkey, respondents collaborate rarely or never with Creative Europe (in which Turkey has participated in the past, but does not now), Horizon 2020, and national IPA coordinators.</p> <p>Interviews: Interviews with embassies and international organisations confirmed that the degree of cooperation is generally regarded as currently positive. Suggestions for improvement included a meeting at the beginning of each year between embassies and the EU Delegations/EU Info Centres; working together more closely outside the capital cities, given that both have constraints on reaching out beyond the capitals; more discussion on public diplomacy; and more initiatives in this direction from Communications Officers in the EU Delegations and an increase in the visibility of the EU Info Centres.</p> <p>Field phase research revealed the following evidence:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders Field research (interviews with partners)

¹⁹ Information on the Municipalities for Europe project (Contract No. 2017/385-831) is available at: <http://www.bpe.al/en>

²⁰ There is currently one Europe House, the two Info Centres in Vlora and Shkoda have been closed.



Albania: the fieldwork found that there is evidence of complementarity of Europe House with activities of partner organisations interviewed and EU projects funded, but that there was still scope for improvement. There is an absence of a systematic approach to cooperation between Europe House and the “Municipalities for Europe” project. While there would also be room for engagement of the EU MS embassies in the project, for the time being the embassies have no appetite for this kind of engagement and / or may be lacking the budget to travel outside of the capital. Similarly, engagement with other partners (such as MS embassies) was not always systematic or regular enough. The main issues were their own agendas, lack of budgets and absence of a strong engine to coordinate and organise activities and keep all parties on the same page.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: There are no clear ways to improve collaboration. All actors during the group discussions seem concerned that their own communication reflect specific interest and visibility objectives, which makes it hardly possible to determine a win-win strategy for EUD and its partners.

Kosovo: Embassies are small, and the sample interviewed expect the EU Office to take the initiative as it is perceived to have more resources. Opportunities with Embassies and partners are exploited as they arise, but there is nevertheless scope for this process to be more structured.

Montenegro: There is recognised scope to work more with cultural institutes.

North Macedonia: Relationships between EUIC and the partners (Creative Europe and Europe Network) prove to be strong, where communication is done daily. Thus, there were no suggestions on how this could be improved.

Serbia: There are no obvious ways to make substantial improvements to improve collaboration with other programmes and Member States. Even if ways could be identified to support a more substantial collaborative effort, this is not considered a priority given the existing resource constraints for all parties.

Turkey: Given the limitations of human and financial resources and remit of EUICs it seems that it would be difficult for EUICs to increase their level of collaboration with partners. Also, there is no evidence that increased collaboration with EUICs would add any value to partners, who may themselves have more resources available and a more extensive communication programme than EUICs.

EQ5ii. To what extent the EU Info Centres can contribute to the development and implementation of a joined-up Public Diplomacy (cf. EU Global Strategy) and act as hubs for EU-related initiatives taking place at the local level (i.e. both EU and non-EU funded)?

JC 5ii.1: There is alignment between EUIC and Info Point communication activities and messages, and public diplomacy activities and messaging in each IPA beneficiary.

A review of the EU Info Centres websites shows that they contain information relating to public diplomacy messaging (meaning they carry information relating to EU policies and values, EU funding and enlargement and the accession process). The materials on display in the EU Info Centres use EU documents (such as publications and brochures, which carry public diplomacy messaging).

The way the issues are presented on the websites and in hard copy show, however, some limitations in the messaging approach and / or content:

- The online information is provided in a range of different formats, through different type of publications, brochures, articles, video clips, etc.), meaning website visitors may not be immediately aware of key communication messages, which is an issue for users who only visit the website landing page. Those who are interested can find out more even if it is not always clearly signposted.
- The online information is not provided in a systematic format. Some EU Info Centres have a reference to EU assistance in their navigation toolbars, but this



information is not always up to date. Issues related to enlargement processes are explained on two EU Info Centres' websites in more detail and through separate, dedicated webpages, but this was not the case in others.

The hard copy documents are, in most cases, in English and not local languages.

- In the case of Turkey, the evaluation team found various posts on the social media accounts of EU Info Centres that carry messages or information, although somewhat sporadically, on EU values or policies (for instance posts related with activities or important dates related with human rights, women rights, climates changes, refugees in Turkey, etc.). However, there is very little information about EU-Turkey relations, progress in the accession agenda, the EU funding opportunities, and the major themes of the contemporary EU agenda.

Public diplomacy means dealing with politically sensitive issues. Delegations have procedures in place to validate messages, which could deal with politically sensitive issues. Delegations have not reported any issues with EUICs not understanding the limits of their remit in this respect.

Strength of evidence: strong

Description of the evidence base: documentary review (online and hard-copies of communication documents observed during field visit)

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: the evidence base needed for this indicator is documentary and sufficient information has been reviewed for us to assess the alignment of messages from a multiplicity of scenarios and angles to show evidence of limitations

Indicator	Summary	Key findings	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 5ii.1</p> <p>Samples of EUIC materials convey EU Delegation public diplomacy messaging.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the EU Info Centres websites for the IPA beneficiaries shows that they do contain information relating to public diplomacy messaging (meaning they carry information relating to EU policies and values, EU funding and enlargement and the accession process). The materials on display in the EU Info Centres use EU documents (such as publications and brochures which carry public diplomacy messaging). • EU Delegations have procedures in place to ensure that EUICs do not convey the wrong messages where public diplomacy messaging is 	<p>All websites of the EU Info Centres in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia contain information relating to public diplomacy messaging, i.e. it relates to EU policies and values, EU funding and enlargement and the accession process. However, the issues are presented in a range of different formats, through different types of information (publications, brochures, articles, video clips etc), which means that visitors to the website may not immediately be aware of key communication messages. This is an issue for users who only visit the website landing page. Those who are interested in finding out more can find the information even if it is not always clearly signposted. The information is also not provided in a systematic format. Some EU Info Centres have a reference to EU assistance in their navigation toolbars, but this information is not always up to date. Issues related to enlargement processes were explained on two EU Info Centres' websites in more detail and through separate, dedicated webpages.</p> <p>In Turkey specifically, various posts on the social media accounts of EU Info Centres carry messages or information, although somewhat sporadically, on EU values or policies (such as posts related with activities or important dates related with human rights, women rights, climates changes, refugees in Turkey etc). However, there is very little information about EU-Turkey relations, progress in the accession agenda, the EU funding opportunities, and the major themes of the contemporary EU agenda.</p> <p>The EU Info Centres also use EU documents (such as publications and brochure), which convey these messages. These are not always available in the local languages. They extent to which they are displayed prominently for visitors and event participants varies.</p> <p>Some public diplomacy messaging is politically sensitive. EU Delegations made it clear in interviews that they have validation processes in place to ensure that EUICs do not enter areas which fall into that category or do so appropriately.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of EUIC websites • Evaluator observations during the field phase.



politically sensitive.

JC 5ii.2: Extent that EUICs, Info Points and staff of EU Delegations responsible for public diplomacy collaborate on joint initiatives or coordinate their initiatives.

In line with the clear demarcation of responsibility commonly observed during the field phase in the beneficiaries, the evidence from the survey of EU Delegations and EUIC Team Leaders points to strong (and structured) collaboration on public diplomacy activities. More specifically, we found that all Delegations agree that EU Info Centres make a significant contribution to the EU Delegations' communication and public diplomacy efforts and five out of seven Delegations agreed strongly on this point.

Illustrative examples²¹ of the contribution of the EUIC to public diplomacy were identified during the field phase. In North Macedonia, the EUIC supported EUD public diplomacy communication with campaigning around the name change to North Macedonia. Other beneficiaries (such as Kosovo and Montenegro) provided examples of the logistical support the EUIC provides to EUD in events with public diplomacy objectives, including presentations by EU Ambassadors. In general, it is the role of EUICs to provide logistics and promotional support to public diplomacy events organised by the Delegation.

Coordination with the Delegations on support for public diplomacy is covered in monthly communication plans and fine-tuned at the regular meetings between the EU Delegations and EUIC Team Leaders. This was a finding from the initial surveys and corroborated during the field phase. The frequency / type of collaboration was structured according to the type of activity, as follows:

- Daily communication occurs in relation to monitoring communication activities, sharing good communication practices, providing communication messages and content, and setting communication goals with teams of experts.
- Weekly face-to-face coordination meetings are held;
- The Delegation participates in events organised by EU Info Centres/Info Points / Europe/EU Houses;
- The EUIC and Delegations develop monthly plans for communication activities.

Strength of evidence: strong

Description of the evidence base: perceptions from interviews, and surveys provided the main evidence for this indicator

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: The evidence base was of sufficiently high quality and reliable to draw a conclusion (i.e. range of reliable qualitative sources which could be triangulated).

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
Indicator 5ii.2.1 EU Delegation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are structured processes in place to 	Based on the survey of EU Delegations , all Delegations agree that EU Info Centres make a significant contribution to the EU Delegations' communication and public diplomacy efforts, and five out of seven Delegations agreed strongly on this point.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of EU

²¹ During the field phase the evaluation team visited the six beneficiaries in the Western Balkans and Turkey. Detailed country notes present the findings from these missions in Annex 3, which is a separate document.



<p>confirms EUIC support is sought and used for public diplomacy activities and there is a structured collaboration process in place.</p>	<p>support collaboration between EU Delegations and EUICs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUICs support is sought for public diplomacy activities. • Where there is an additional communication contractor which supports EUD communication there is greater collaboration on public diplomacy, in particular strategy and the creation of content with this contractor than with EUICs. 	<p>Respondents indicated that EU Delegation staff engage with EU Info Centres mainly on a daily or weekly basis for many activities. The EU Delegations engage with EU Info Centres on a daily basis on the following activities: monitoring communication activities, sharing good communication practices, providing communication messages and content, and setting communication goals with teams of experts. Face-to-face coordination meetings and participation in events organised by EU Info Centres/Info Points / Europe/EU Houses are weekly.</p> <p>Feedback from the survey of EU Info Centres’ Team Leaders suggests that the majority of the EU Info Centres’ Team Leaders strongly agree or agree that EU Info Centres have an information and communication plan, which is updated from time-to-time in collaboration with the EU Delegations; that they plan monthly communication activities in collaboration with EU Delegation; that they are responsive to the EU Delegations’ ad hoc information and communication requests. Fewer respondents plan weekly communication activities with the EU Delegations.</p> <p>Albania: Interviews with EUIC staff and EU Delegation staff during the field visit confirmed that there is intense and regular communication on all messaging, including those relating to public diplomacy. The EUD confirmed that from 2019 onwards, the approach to communication (implemented by the contractor) would be more focused on public diplomacy issues. This suggests that the EUD considers the contractor can be a vehicle for delivery and pursuit of public diplomacy objectives.</p> <p>Bosnia and Herzegovina: According to the EU Delegation survey, the EUIC support is required when it comes to public diplomacy activities. Observations during field phase concluded close cooperation between the EU Delegation and the EUIC on organisation of events and other activities, to ensure the objective sought on public diplomacy are achieved.</p> <p>Kosovo: The EUICC in Pristina is important for the Office in organising Office-inspired public diplomacy events around Europe Day. The EUICCs host public diplomacy events for EU and non-EU funded activities and help with promotion. In both cases, this is a purely logistical function although the EUICCs provide ideas to the Office for Europe Day activities. However, to the extent that the EUICCs provide inputs on content and speakers for events with public diplomacy content, they are supporting the public diplomacy activity.</p> <p>Montenegro: drawing on evaluator observations and interviews with EU Delegation staff, there is close cooperation with the EU Delegation on event programmes and other activities to ensure that they support the public diplomacy objectives of the Delegation. The EUIC hosts public diplomacy events for EU- and non-EU funded activities and works closely with the Delegation in planning these. The EUIC is seen as an arm of the Delegation.</p> <p>North Macedonia: The EUIC supports EUD public diplomacy communication. The specific example of campaigning around the name change to North Macedonia can be provided as an example. The EUIC is very much a communication implementation body for the EUD communication. There is very limited collaboration between EUD and Info Points on public diplomacy given that these are essentially located in municipalities and the staff who run the Info Points are not selected by EUD.</p> <p>Serbia: Overall, even if there is no explicit reference to “public diplomacy” in the 2017 EUD communication plan, the evaluation team considers it is implicit. However, there is a lot of uncertainty regarding the definition of public diplomacy. A number of concepts are used interchangeably: communication, public diplomacy, outreach. The EUINFONET focuses on “cultural diplomacy” as one sub-dimension of communication or public diplomacy, and highlighted activities in</p>	<p>Delegations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of EUIC Team leaders. • Interviews with EU Delegations and contractors during the field mission.
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		<p>this connection, which fell within the remit of the EU Year of Cultural Heritage.</p> <p>Turkey: most political messaging / communication is supported through a separate communication contract. When EUIC events / materials are required to carry public diplomacy messaging this is reviewed by the other contractor.</p>	
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JC 5ii.3: Extent to which EUICs and Info Points support and are a focal point of activities (EU and non-EU funded) to reach public diplomacy target groups.

The notion of a hub is not clearly defined the documentation reviewed. However, it can be defined as the effective centre of an activity, region or network²². There is evidence from interviews to confirm a consensus view among users and stakeholder representatives of target groups that the EUIC are hubs, i.e. they coordinate and support the EU’s public diplomacy outreach activities, though not necessarily to the exclusion of other venues or activities by other programmes, and not necessarily inclusive of host government activity.

In Turkey, for instance, the EUICs provide EUD with regional contact points for EU communication, but do not provided extensive support for public diplomacy actions, which are covered through a contract with a communication agency. However, in the capital at least, in most cases the EUICs have a significant hub function as the location of choice for project events, presentation of programmes and policies. This gives them a de facto networking role among stakeholders. An exception was North Macedonia, where co-location with the Delegation led to the EUIC’s image as an entity separate from the EUD with a different function.

A hub can have a physical or virtual/on-line location. The concept of EUICs being EU hubs is that EUICs support coordination on EU-related activities, i.e. their role goes beyond organising events or hosting others’ events, they also act as coordinator for the activities of several organisations in connection with a specific event or other activity about the EU. Most EUICs do not fulfil that role consistently at present, though many EUICs do play that role for Europe Day or for specific events, such as Climate Diplomacy Week or the European Day of Languages.

The information gathered during the field visit indicates there is no evidence of an explicit clear, agreed concept of Europe House as a hub / focal point of activity. However, the organisation of Europe-week activities shows the capacity to organise hub-type activities, which group together a wide range of communication actors.

Strength of evidence: satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: interviews (phone and in person during field mission)

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: There is adequate evidence to confirm a consensus among visitors and representatives of target groups that many EU Info Centres are hubs for the EU’s public diplomacy outreach activities.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 5ii.3.1</p> <p>Strength of consensus among EUICs’ visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some evidence from the initial interviews with NIPACS suggested the EUIC could act as public diplomacy hubs. 	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Initial interviews with NIPACs suggest that the EU Info Centre is viewed as giving support to organisation of their events. NIPACs reported making use of Info Centres for press conferences and meetings with the line ministries and providing their own brochures and leaflets for distribution via</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with NIPACs Interviews

²² Hub definition

<https://www.bing.com/search?q=what+is+a+hub&form=PRGBEN&httpsmsn=1&msnews=1&refig=8018b516a1bb4b54bfdf2e6352126a4&sp=2&q=AS&pq=what+is+a+hub&sc=8-13&cvid=8018b516a1bb4b54bfdf2e6352126a4>



<p>and representatives of target groups that EUICs are hubs for the EU's public diplomacy outreach activities.</p>	<p>This was broadly confirmed during the field missions if acting as a public diplomacy hub implies support and providing networking capability rather than taking stand-alone initiatives.</p>	<p>the EU Info Centres. The latter was not always evident during the field missions.</p> <p>Field phase findings were limited, as follows:</p> <p>Albania: Based on the information gathered during the field visit, there was no evidence to indicate an explicit clear, agreed concept of Europe House as a hub / focal point of activity. However, there was a desire for the space to be used as a hub for EU-related activity, as expressed by partner organisations. Despite this, Europe-week activities in particular provide examples of the capacity for Europe House to organise hub-type activities, which group together the participation of a wide range of communication actors. The capacity of partner communicator organisations (such as those listed) to take advantage of a hub-type approach also relates to their own capacity levels. An interesting finding from this assessment is that the notion of hub does not necessarily need to relate to a fixed physical structure, the essence of the hub concept relates instead to the coordination and integration of communication efforts by different EU communicators and partners.</p> <p>Bosnia and Herzegovina: The EUICN is a network of EU information units, consisting of the EU Info Centre in Sarajevo, three EU Info Points and three EU info corners (for which the role of the network is limited to providing documents). The EUIC serves as the hub of the network and is the primary contact point for the EUD (as illustrated by the group discussions held during the field visit). The EUICPs aim to enable an outreach beyond the capital.</p> <p>Kosovo: The EUICCs are seen by the Office and civil society as a hub for the Office's public diplomacy outreach, both in the narrow sense of events initiated by the Delegation with Delegation speakers, and for civil society and other stakeholders. It is also a focus for networking on public diplomacy issues.</p> <p>Montenegro: The EUIC is the location of choice for Delegation events, as well as operating as a hub for the activities of other organisations supporting the Delegation's public diplomacy, such as international organization partners, and civil society.</p> <p>North Macedonia: As an event centre, the EUIC and its collaboration with other EU programmes and MS embassies on specific events, the centre can be considered to have potential as a hub, but the fact that it is actually within the same building means that it lacks the independence, which is seen as necessary to engage the public.</p> <p>Serbia: The EUINFONET is a network of EU information units, consisting of the EU Info Centre in Belgrade and EU Info Points in Novi Sad and Nis. The EUIC serves as the hub of the network and is the primary contact point for the EUD. The EUICPs aim to enable an outreach beyond the capital. While the EUICPs develop local activities and are recognised by local stakeholders (as illustrated by the group discussions held during the field visit), the EUINFONET model seems to be steered by the EUIC.</p> <p>Turkey: EUICs provide the EUD with regional focal points for EU communication, but it cannot be confirmed that EUICs provide a focal point for all EU and non-EU-funded public diplomacy actions.</p>	<p>ws with EU Delegations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with EU Info Centres • Interviews with MS Embassies • Interviews with partners
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EQ6. Do EUICs add value to communication on the EU carried out by IPA beneficiaries themselves?

JC 6.1: Extent that it is possible to compare communication activities on the EU carried out by EUICs and those carried out by IPA beneficiaries.

Given the lack of consistency in reporting, absence of aggregated time-series data and indications of double-counting, the evidence on reach and engagement of target



groups is not fully reliable. The data reviewed was limited to reach figures and not engagement (i.e. qualitative data on reception of messages).

Notwithstanding the above issues, there are indications of reach. The data show no significant variation in the number of reported events over the period 2011-2017; an apparent decrease in the number of walk-in visits in some places, such as in the case of Turkey; and in some cases, such as Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, increases in the number of participants in events. Although data available on social media is limited, the highest numbers for outreach generally come from Facebook.

The evidence found in the Final Reports confirms the Centres reported regularly on communicating messages relating to EU policies and values, EU funding and the enlargement process. However, the reporting is not consistent across years or beneficiaries, with gaps for some years in some beneficiaries, and no correlation between messages and activities. The limited evidence available from field visits on the messaging raised questions about their resonance, which was not systematically measured.

While EUIC websites did convey the relevant messages, some limitations were noted. The information was not always easy to find, and it was not always up-to-date. A further issue observed in the material available online and cited by stakeholders during interviews, was the prevalence of information in English. Several users suggested more information should be available in local languages to increase its accessibility to local audiences.

During field visits it was apparent that IPA beneficiary communicators provide very limited information to communicate about the EU values, policies and accession. There is greater information about EU funding. Official communication of information on Accession negotiations and related activities are not targeted at the general public and may be politically motivated, in some cases. For instance, evidence gathered during the field mission confirms that the Turkish government has a different political agenda and conveys messages about the EU, which are not the same with the EU. This being the case, the EUD cannot rely on the Turkish government to convey information about the EU. Elsewhere, the extent of the availability of EU project funds for government communication plays a role in the extent to which the government goes beyond providing only basic information on accession negotiations and official visits. In Montenegro, there is a large EU-funded government communication programme, but the perspective is inevitably different from the specific role of the EU Delegation and the EUIC, with more emphasis on the role of the Montenegrin government, its ministers and the negotiators. It can also be subject to changes in the political climate leading to staff changes and discontinuity in the programme.

Strength of evidence: indicative but not conclusive

Description of the evidence base: the evidence comes from a range of source: documentary evidence; surveys and field visit findings

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: There were too many gaps/ inconsistencies / limitations with the data for be able to triangulate and reach conclusive findings for the reach. Engagement of EUIC and of IPA beneficiaries – making it not possible to provide a robust comparison.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 6.1.1</p> <p>EUIC monitoring data confirms reach and engagement of target groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 24 EUIC Final Reports for the period show different levels of detail and are not of consistently high quality leading to doubts in the reliability of data (e.g. problems of double counting and inconsistent ways of 	<p>Data reviewed in the 24 Final Reports varies significantly in terms of level of detail and there are issues regarding the accuracy of data on reach and engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some Final Reports reviewed only present an approximate number of visitors or event participants. There are differences in the ways contractors collected and reported this data; it is unclear if all Final Reports consistently count event participants at all types of events (including events held outside the information and communication structures or events held by partners). There are also problems of double counting; some people who might have been counted as 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Reports Survey of EU Delegations Survey of Team Leaders



	<p>reporting figures and very limited information on reach and engagement with social media)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notwithstanding the issues with consistency and reliability of the data, our analysis of the available data indicated no significant variation in the number of reported events over the period covered (2011-2017); an apparent decrease in the number of walk-in visits in some places, e.g. Turkey; and some examples of increases in the number of participants in events e.g. Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. • The highest numbers for outreach come from Facebook and Twitter followers. • Delegation staff responding to the survey confirm that target groups are reached. 	<p>'visitors' for events might also have been counted as 'visitors' when they have sent letters or emails.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In many of the Final Reports, the data is presented in different places, such that the evaluation team had to manually aggregate figures to arrive at particular indicators (e.g. total number of visitors). • The data on reach and engagement on social media platforms in the Final Reports is sparse. Of the 24 Final Reports, only eight reported on the number of visits to information and communication structure websites²³, nine reported on the number of Facebook followers/friends²⁴ and 11 on number of Twitter followers²⁵. Some Final Reports report on Facebook likes or re-tweets or Twitter impressions instead, making comparisons of social media inherently difficult. <p>In summary, the data is inconsistent and unreliable, which makes it difficult to conduct meaningful analysis on trends and comparisons.</p> <p>From the available data, the following information can be gathered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By and large, the number of events has not varied significantly over the course of 2011-2017 in all IPA beneficiaries. • It appears as though the number of walk-in visitors has been decreasing since 2011 to 2017. For example, this is the case in Turkey. • In some IPA beneficiaries, the number of participants in events appears to have increased. For example, in Albania, the number of participants at events has increased from 16,183 to 37,700 during 2011-2015. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the number of participants at events has increased from 4,327 to 13,245 over 2013-2016. <p>However, from the available data, it is not possible to clearly discern trends regarding events, number of event participants, and walk-in visitors over the course of the years within many IPA beneficiaries or between IPA beneficiaries.</p> <p>It appears as though Facebook and Twitter generated the most following and outreach, in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field visit observations
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²³ Final Reports for: Albania 2012 / 293/683, 2013 / 336-807, 2014 / 342-929; Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013 / 333-153, 2015 / 371-633; Kosovo 2014 / 439-055, 2015 / 268 345, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2011 / 268-448.

²⁴ Final Reports for: Albania 2012 / 293/683, 2013 / 336-807, 2014 / 342-929, 2015 / 370-136; former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2011 / 268-448; Montenegro 2015 / 368-851, 2016 381-950; Turkey 2013 / 332-034, 2014 / 352-473.

²⁵ Final Reports for: Albania 2014 / 342-929; Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013 / 333-153, 2014 / 352-955, 2015 / 371-633; former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2015 / 362-392, 2016 376-277; Montenegro 2013 / 333-777, 2015 / 368-851, 2016 / 381-950; Serbia 2015 / 364-829; Turkey 2013 / 332-034.



- The survey with Team Leaders confirmed variable reach and engagement and a spectrum of target groups in the different beneficiaries. The figures reported show huge variation: from up to 30 visitors a month cited in Turkey to 1,677 cited in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Research during the field visits further confirms differing levels of evidence regarding reach and engagement of target groups in the different beneficiaries but for the most part, the data were quantitative (i.e. numbers of walk-ins or event attendees or followers on social media) and not qualitative (i.e. research in level of engagement with messaging).

terms of people who were served any activity from the Facebook and Twitter pages including posts, posts by other people, mentions, check-ins. In the Final Reports for the contract years 2016 for North Macedonia and Montenegro, Facebook and Twitter outreach was 328,751 and 218,425, respectively. The EU Delegation in Albania had a total of 26,366 followers from Facebook and Twitter in 2017. In Turkey, the Twitter followers across all EU Info Centres in 2017 was 1,969, while the number of Facebook likes/followers was 2,394.

Survey of EU Delegations: The majority of respondents 'agree strongly' or 'agree' that EU Info Centres/Info Points / Europe /EU Houses are effective at reaching almost all target groups, particularly youth groups/associations, women's groups, journalists, think tanks, academics and researchers, teachers, students, and schoolchildren. But feedback from interviews with NIPACs suggests that EU Info Centres **needed to do more to reach a broader audience and raised questions over visibility**. Research during the **field visits further confirms differing levels of evidence regarding reach and engagement of target groups in the different beneficiaries**. For the most part, the data were quantitative (i.e. numbers of walk-ins or event attendees or followers on social media) and not qualitative (i.e. research in level of engagement with messaging).

The **survey of EU Info Centre Team Leaders** provided the following insights into views / perceptions on reach and engagement:

In most IPA beneficiaries, the most frequent type of visitors are students, schoolchildren (accompanied by teachers), academics/researchers and journalists. The exception was Turkey where students are reported to be the most frequent type of visitors, followed by entrepreneurs/businesspeople and academics/researchers. Entrepreneurs/businesspeople, academics/researchers, governmental/local institutions employees and journalists. Politicians are the least frequent visitor in all IPA beneficiaries, yet governmental/local institutions employees are somewhere in the median range.

The EU Info Centres' experts most frequently visit young people aged 16-25 and people aged over 25 outside the EU Info Centres, according to the majority respondents. Children under the age of 16 are sometimes (nine responses) or rarely visited (four responses).

Overall, experts meet with almost all target groups outside the information and communication structures either frequently or sometimes. Experts are among the least frequently met group in IPA beneficiaries. Again, the response from Turkey was atypical: entrepreneurs / businesspeople are more frequently met by experts in Turkey than in other IPA beneficiaries; and jobseekers were also cited as being visited.

According to the majority of respondents, staff from EU Info Centres meet with the majority of target organisations outside the EU Info Centres. The number of visitors was reported by respondents as follows:

Albania	More than 600 per month
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,677



Kosovo	300+ (two centres in Pristina and Mitrovica North for events, internet corner and library)
Montenegro	250-500 individuals
North Macedonia	Between 51 to 100 visitors
Serbia	Between 850 and 900
Turkey	30 visitors per month

In terms of outreach, the survey of EU Info Centres' Team Leaders shows that the data varies significantly. Most respondents from Turkey indicate fewer than 2,000 individuals reached (directly either face-to-face, via telephone or email) in the previous year; at the other end of the scale is Albania, which reportedly reached 35,000 over the past year, making it the highest for a single centre.

The detailed findings from the field visits are set out below for each beneficiary:

- Albania: Europe House monitoring data confirms some reach and engagement of target groups, mostly through numbers of people reached. It is not possible to quantify the reach or engagement of the Albanian population.
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: There is no monitoring data to confirm reach and engagement of target groups aside from the number of followers on social media. There is some EUIC monitoring data confirming regular communication of messages relating to EU policies and values, EU funding and the enlargement process. These are quantitative data related to the number of events organised, the number of communication materials produced and social media analytics. But the data does not include qualitative data, which would confirm the quality and usefulness of the messaging, the reception by target groups and the results achieved.
- Kosovo: The data is quantitative and not always of high quality. There is no formal research into whether the desired effects in terms of reaching target groups or influencing their sentiments about the EU. The polling is not used for this. The perceptions are, however, that the EUICCs are having an impact on target groups.
- Montenegro: The data is quantitative and not always complete or presented in a manner which facilitates analysis. Data on engagement with events and social media is not available. As EUIC activities run in parallel to the major the EU4ME programme funded by the EU, implemented by UNDP and embedded in the government, unbundling the effects of the different forms of communication is particularly difficult without formal research, albeit perceptions of the work of the EU Info Centre are positive.
- North Macedonia: It was not possible to make comparisons between information provided by the EUIC and information provided by the North Macedonian government for example in relation to reach and engagement of target groups. However, feedback suggests that the key issues, which limits communication capacity by the IPA beneficiary relate to human and financial capacity, internal bureaucracy and for example the capacity to absorb the additional cooperation assistance funding that is supporting the country. There have been frequent changes of staff and processes within the national administration and basic issues relating to delegation and organisation.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serbia: There is no monitoring data to confirm total reach and engagement of target groups. There are data relating to direct, quantitative reach (e.g. number of participants and walk-in visitors, followers on social media) but no data on qualitative reach (e.g. engagement with the content of social media publications, tone of the comments made on social media) • Turkey: It was not possible to collect any data or to confirm the reach of the Turkish government's own communication activities with regards to the EU. Meaning it is not possible to assess the added value of EUICs in relation to IPA beneficiary communication on the basis of the size of target group reach or penetration. 	
<p>Indicator 6.1.2</p> <p>EUIC monitoring data confirms regular communication of messages relating to EU policies and values, EU funding and the enlargement process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is evidence in the Final Reports for the EUIC that confirms the EU Info Centres reported on communicating messages relating to EU policies and values, EU funding and the enlargement process. However, the reporting is not consistent across years or beneficiaries, with gaps for some years in some beneficiaries. • Websites do convey the communication messages, but it is not always presented in the more accessible format possible (including limited information in the local language) and is not always up-to-date. • The issue of language of materials was also raised by local stakeholders who shared concerns about information on, for example, rules for EU funding only being in English. 	<p>A review of the 24 available EU Info Centres' Final Reports covering the period 2011-2017 confirms that EU Info Centres reported on communicating messages relating to EU policies and values, EU funding, and the enlargement process. However, in some contract years do not report on all three; in the Final Reports for all IPA beneficiaries except for Albania (2012 – 2015 contract years), some years focus on communicating all three messaging, while others only on two. As an example, the Final Reports for Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013-2014 confirm a focus on EU policies and values, EU funding and enlargement process, whereas in 2015, communicating about the enlargement process was not a focus. As another example, the reviewed Final Reports for Turkey mention communication on all three aspects, except for the Final Reports for contract years 2011-2012, which only focus on EU policies and values and EU funding.</p> <p>The frequency and regularity of messages is confirmed via the availability of relevant communication materials on EU Info Centre websites and the wide range of different types of events (for example the 2016 Final Report for Kosovo confirms film nights, debates, lectures, workshops, art events, cultural events, kids' events, Erasmus+ celebratory events, Europe Day celebrations) hosted or organised by EU Info Centres</p> <p>A review of websites of the EU Info Centres across the beneficiaries confirms the availability of information on EU policies and values, EU funding and the enlargement process. But these issues are not necessarily clearly visible because they can be found in a number of different formats, though different (publications, brochures, articles, info graphics, video clips, etc.) and are displayed in the respective webpages in a way that sometimes requires users to look for them.</p> <p>Some EU Info Centre websites have a reference to EU assistance on their navigation toolbars, but this information is not always up to date. EU policies and values are covered on many EU Info Centres' websites through publication of the EU brochures in English in the majority of the cases and, when available, also in local language translations. Issues related to enlargement processes are explained in just two out of five EU Info Centres' websites in more detail and through separate, dedicated webpages. There are therefore questions about the availability of materials in local languages.</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Issues about the nature of publications were raised in interviews with other project partners and MS embassies who complained about the amount of information in English. One specific quote was: "Publication of brochures by the Info Centre is good, but should be done more in the local language, with the help of local institutions. Printing in local languages should be compulsory because there are</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUIC Final Reports • Interviews with MS embassy staff and other programme partners • Field visits



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The available evidence from field visits showed that even where messaging on these issues existed, the resonance of the messages was not known / measured. 	<p>so many EU rules people don't know." One Embassy advocated more information in official EU languages other than English to illustrate the diversity of the EU. Moreover, English is not necessarily the foreign language of choice for all young people in the Western Balkans and Turkey, as many young people aspire to study in other European countries, particularly Germany. This also emerged in focus groups, where German TV channels were among the preferred foreign channels.</p> <p>Fieldwork: Albania: Evidence on reach and engagement of target groups provides a snapshot of visitors who asked for information on the accession process (but not whether the information met their requirements). Kosovo: Some quantitative data is collected, but it is not broken down by type of information requested or messages. Empirical data confirms that the greatest demand is for information on funding (notably Erasmus+) and basic information about the EU. There is little interest in policy except among specialists. The EUIC puts a strong emphasis on communicating on values. Montenegro: While quantitative data is available to substantiate regular communication on funding, policies and values, there is no breakdown between the three categories, although the EUIC regards communicating on values as particularly important. Serbia: The contractor collects quantitative data for some activities: events, social media, but this is not done systematically for the reach of campaigns or the dissemination of publications. These data confirm regular communication of messages relating to EU policies and values, EU funding and the enlargement process. But they do not include qualitative data which would confirm the quality of the messaging, if the messages are noticed by target groups, how the messages are received and resonate. It is not possible to conclude on the quality of the activities and the results achieved.</p>	
<p>Indicator 6.1.3</p> <p>IPA beneficiary communicators confirm their activities to communicate about the EU, which include on values, policies, accession and EU funding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limited data suggested the IPA beneficiary communicators confirm activities to communicate about the EU values, policies, accession and EU funding is generally limited, related to official communication (not targeted at lay audiences) and politically motivated in some cases. 	<p>Where available, evidence gathered during field visits showed the extent to which IPA beneficiary communicators confirm activities to communicate about EU values, policies, accession and EU funding was limited; related to official communication (not targeted at lay audiences) and politically motivated in some cases.</p> <p>Montenegro is an exception because the EU-funded, UNDP-implement EU4ME programme embedded in government provides a wider range of information about accession. UNDP works closely with the EU Delegation on implementation.</p> <p>Evidence in the field mission confirmed, on the other hand, that the Turkish government clearly has a different political agenda and conveys messages about the EU, which are not the same or even aligned with the EU. This being the case, the EUD cannot rely on the Turkish government to convey information about the EU.</p> <p>Another example is Kosovo, where official communication on the EU is extremely limited. It is restricted to press releases, e.g. on ministerial meetings or formal aspects of implementation of the European Reform Agenda and providing information on the process of moving towards visa liberalisation. Provision of information on the EU, its policies and value, is, therefore, left to the Office, EU-funded projects and the EUICCs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visits in the IPA beneficiary countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The field visits shed 	<p>EUIC communication on the EU was perceived by EU Delegations, MS Embassies, NIPACs and other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field



<p>Indicator 6.1.4</p> <p>EU Delegations, MS Embassies, NIPACs and other partners confirm additional value resulting from communication activities carried out by EUICs.</p>	<p>only some light on this but EUIC communication on the EU was perceived by EU Delegations, MS Embassies, NIPACs and other partners to add value in a number of ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Albania, the field visit established that IPA beneficiaries at national / regional level have different objectives to the EUD (and by extension the EUIC). 	<p>partners to add value in a number of different ways.</p> <p>The added value of the EUIC as an independent space for debate and discussion, to facilitate learning about the EU was regularly cited. The premises of several EUICs (Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia) are specifically valued by the Embassies and civil society for the fact that its space can be used free of charge/makes available a space with a clear EU identification that the Embassies do not have. The Info Centre often has more resources and capacity to organise or host bigger events than the Embassies and supports Embassies and civil society with logistics and promotion on its websites and social media, both before and after events. EUICs are also locations known to other stakeholders, the media and generally readily accessible, i.e. they have general visibility, which also adds value for the stakeholders and the EU.</p>	<p>visits in the IPA beneficiaries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.</p>
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2. EVALUATION QUESTION MATRIX: EU DELEGATION COMMUNICATION IN THREE NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNTRIES

2.1. Evaluation question matrix for the neighbourhood countries

EQ7. To what extent the objectives of the EU Delegation’s annual information and communication forward plans in the selected neighbourhood partner countries have been defined considering the needs of the target audience and are conducive to the achievement of the objectives set in the EU framework for strategic communication in neighbourhood region?

JC 7.1 Extent that EU Delegations commission research into target group needs and set their communication objectives taking into account these needs.

There is a top-down institutional focus in the definition of general communication objectives to serve the EU’s needs in the region. This is reflected by the fact that general communication objectives are set centrally and apply to all EU Delegations in the neighbourhood region. Specific objectives in EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans confirm the focus of activities and thematic campaigns to be undertaken, but not all of the reviewed plans described that choices had drawn on target group needs, which implies a lack of consistency in the approach. For example, the Ukraine Delegation’s 2017 Annual Report and 2018 Forward Plan confirms that communication campaigns were developed following a detailed situational analysis and qualitative and quantitative assessments. A review of the EUD Plan for Tunisia and current communication contracts does not describe the need to collect target group data.

Feedback from EU Delegations and evidence in planning documents confirm that a major factor in limiting the commissioning of research relates to levels of resourcing to contract research and manage research contracts. However, in addition, at least half of the Delegations in the wider neighbourhood region did not consider that lack of research into target group needs is a problem that needs to be addressed²⁶. EU Delegations gather unstructured qualitative feedback from participants in activities, which is used to improve specific communication channels and tools. At the communication activity level, the use of professional PR companies in the Ukraine and Armenia helps to ensure that activities are tailored to increase their suitability to target audiences²⁷.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: the evidence is drawn from the main EUD communication planning documents and supported via qualitative data from interviews with EUD staff and contractors from the three selected neighbourhood partner countries. Furthermore, survey evidence confirms EU Delegations’ views on research from across the east and south neighbourhood regions. The survey was completed by 18 out of a possible 20 EU Delegations.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: a more than satisfactory rating is provided given that it is possible to triangulate evidence from two different sources (contractors and EUD staff) with documentary evidence. However, whilst survey data is available covering 18 out of 20 of the neighbourhood countries, in-depth evidence is limited to the three selected neighbourhood partner countries.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
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²⁶ The evaluation team considered that this survey result reflects recognition that there are resource implications to additional research and therefore this element may not be considered to be a priority. It was unfortunately not possible to test this hypothesis.

²⁷ Synthesis Report: Annex 3 – Country notes (page 181 for Armenia and page 227 for Ukraine)



Indicator 7.1.1.

EU Delegations and the **communication contractors** that implement the communication activities described in EUD information and communication forward plans confirm that they **research target group needs and these are addressed by the communication objectives** (results chain) described in annual forward communication plans, the ToR for communication contracts and their inception reports.

- EU Delegations do not conduct research into target group needs and this is not foreseen in annual plans in the three countries.
- Communication objectives are set from a top-down perspective, i.e. what the institution wants to communicate.
- Sometimes contractors test materials / messages with target groups and there are some examples of research into target groups in relation to campaign planning in Ukraine.
- The Open Neighbourhood programme provides data relating to public opinion on a wide range of EU related matters.
- EU Delegations' communication objectives are not framed according to target groups' needs.
- There is a lack of consensus among EU Delegations of the need for more

Three standard general communication objectives have been defined for all EU Delegations in the region and with some variation these have typically been:

1. Bilateral issues: explaining and increasing the visibility of specific bilateral issues in line with the EU policy objectives in the country.
2. Aid visibility: the visibility of the EU in many countries around the world is mainly built on its external cooperation.
3. Why the EU matters: explaining why and how the EU is relevant, enhancing the knowledge about the EU in general and ensuring that decision makers and opinion formers understand the EU, its policies and activities.

Delegations also set specific objectives, but these are not specifically tailored on paper to target groups although some describe the importance of providing 'better accessibility to the general public' as well as providing 'visibility' in relation to EU cooperation assistance. It is noted that specific objectives are also described as relating to aligning communication strategies and messages with the Riga priorities.

EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans relating to the timeframe under investigation describe the target groups for each planned activity, but do not provide any information about each target group's specific needs.

The evaluation survey of EU Delegation press officers in the neighbourhood regions, confirms that there are mixed views among EUD Press Officers in both the eastern and southern neighbourhoods on the need for more research to allow Delegations to better target different sectors of the population. Out of 18 EU Delegation respondents, 7 Delegation respondents agreed that a lack of research poses a problem. However, 8 respondents disagreed that the lack of research is a difficulty and 3 respondents were neutral on this issue.

The OPEN neighbourhood programme supports EU Delegations' intelligence about target groups with research into target groups. The ToR of the CSP East and South projects state that specific activities should be designed according to target groups and inception reports confirm the approach to target groups.

The CSP South report provides a detailed understanding of national target groups and some segments, such as youth, local businesspeople, general public, local stakeholders, local officials and media/multipliers.

Documentation on CSP East indicates that there was a baseline study carried out at the onset of the project that looks at the specific needs of target groups. The issue is also addressed all throughout the inception report and confirms that target groups include the general public in the Eastern Partnership countries. The project concentrates its efforts on working with policy-makers and opinion-formers, non-state actors, academia and media professionals. There is a special emphasis on reaching out to young people.

The Ukraine EU Delegation Forward Plan 2018 reports that: 'On the other hand, lack of budget for focus groups analysis and opinion pooling in the previous years was partially offset through regional OPEN NEIGHBORHOOD programme and research conducted by the "Communicating Europe in Ukraine" project.' EU Delegation staff in Armenia and Tunisia also cited lack of resources as the reason why Delegations did not conduct research into target

- EUD Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward plans.
- ToR for communication contracts.
- OPEN neighbourhood programme ToR and inception reports related to East and South Projects.
- Evaluation survey of EUD press officers.
- Interviews with EU Delegation staff responsible for communication contractors
- Interviews with communication contractors.



- research.
- Resource constraints are reported to be the main limiting factor relating to research into target group needs.
 - Communication agencies use available research into the use of channels and tools by the public, for example internet penetration, TV and radio use.

group needs and the reasons cited in Armenia and Tunisia relate to resourcing.

There is evidence to confirm that project contractors conduct research into needs, but there is a lack of evidence to suggest that research feeds back into the design of communication objectives:

- In **Armenia**, the Delegation is not able to conduct research into target group needs as this would require more resources than available. There is, furthermore, no system to gather feedback from target groups; regional projects conduct surveys on this.
- In **Tunisia**, the EU Delegation does not test messages via focus groups. It was reported that this would be a significant task. The messages and content for target groups are determined by, for example, particular events or themes of campaigns (such as gender-based violence or the environment). The EU Delegation then tries to align around those major events or themes.
- In **Ukraine**, the “Moving Forward Together” campaign is conducting market research and using tools to measure audience needs and interests. It has tested messages with focus groups. The project strategically focuses on people who feel ‘neutral’ towards the EU. Generally, participants in EU Delegation activities are asked about their satisfaction and interest through surveys and focus groups. However, there is insufficient budget to test messaging beyond ad-hoc feedback.

JC 7.2. Extent that the intervention logic of the annual forward communication plans has been soundly defined and is conducive to meeting the objectives described in the EU framework for strategic communication in the neighbourhood region.

EU Delegation communication activities appear to be in-line with and supportive of strategic communication objectives for the neighbourhood region, but it is difficult to understand the extent of the contribution of the full range of different activities implemented to the overarching goals.

EU Delegations were not required to use intervention logics to develop their annual forward communication plans in Armenia, Tunisia and Ukraine. In consequence, intervention logic structures, which show how inputs and activities lead to outputs, outcomes and impacts are not reflected in the standard templates that are used for EU Delegation annual reports and forward plans or the Terms of Reference for communication contracts. Furthermore, the terminology used in these documents tended not to reflect DG COMM definitions for communication indicators.²⁸

Intervention logic planning will support the definition of indicators to allow measurement and understanding of the extent that communications have met these indicators (activity, output, outcome, etc.).

Strength of evidence: strong: the key findings are confirmed by EU Delegations themselves and there is no reason to doubt that this is the case given that the Delegations draft their own planning documents. Feedback from Headquarters that the Delegations have received training this year on the DG COMM network indicators provides further confirmation that this type of theory of change thinking has not been in place in the Delegations.

²⁸ For example, DG COMM’s communication network indicators define impacts as relating to opinion change and behavioural shifts, whereas some EUD plans describe the number of visits and participants in events as impacts.



Description of the evidence base: DG NEAR Communication Strategy, EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Report and Forward Plans, DG COMM Communication Network Indicators, ToR for on-going communication contracts in the three partner countries, for example: Ref Ares (2017) 5216432, interviews with EUD staff responsible for managing communication contracts in the three partner countries, interview with staff member from Headquarters.

Explanation of the assessment of the evidence base: a strong assessment is given because of the quality and reliability of sources of evidence. EU Delegations confirm the key findings, and the absence of a sound theory of changes in the EUD planning documents provides further evidence that this is the case. Given that the Delegations are responsible for drafting their own Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans their staff are the most knowledgeable about the way that these plans have been drafted.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 7.2.1</p> <p>There is a sound link (theory of change) between the communication activities, the planned outputs, the outcomes and the impacts in the annual forward communication plans and subsequently in the ToR for contracts on specific communication activities and their inception reports and their contribution to the achievement of strategic communication goals in the neighbourhood region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic communication goals are described in general terms both for the neighbourhood region and at country level. EU Delegations in the three partner countries have not developed a full theory of change to describe how their communication activities are intended to generate effects, which support strategic communication goals. There is no differentiation between outputs, outcomes and impacts in Delegation forward communication plans and this gap is also evidence in the structure of ToR. Communication 	<p>The strategic communication objectives for the neighbourhood region, as described in DG NEAR's communication strategy are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Increase understanding of the neighbourhood policy and EU support in the region; Explain the benefits of the partnership to the public in the partner countries; counteract misleading information where actively propagated by third parties; address the concerns citizens may have and inform about ENP cooperation in other partner countries. <p>The ToR for contracts on specific communication activities, carried out by communication contractors, describe activities, which contribute to specific and general objectives described by the EU Delegations. Yet, the objectives described in Delegation Information and Communication Forward Plans are expressed in general terms. Thus, it is not possible to assess the extent of achievement of objectives and the level of contribution made by communication contracts.</p> <p>Furthermore, the reporting format of Delegation Forward Plans is not conducive to identifying the underlying Intervention Logic and establishing a results chain. Annual Reports and Forward Plans describe general and specific objectives and use a tabular format to describe activities and inputs in terms of human and financial resources. The standard table also includes a column called impacts, but the impacts column is not consistently completed. Also, there is no differentiation between outputs, outcomes and impacts in line with either DG NEAR's results chain methodology or DG COMM's communication network indicators, which are tailored to communication activities.</p> <p>Interviews with communication staff in the EU Delegations in Armenia, Tunisia and Ukraine confirmed that the Delegations have not made use of Intervention Logics for communication planning purposes. However, it was confirmed by DG NEAR HQ that training has been provided recently in the use of DG COMM's intervention logic approach.</p> <p>It is possible to reconstruct an Intervention Logic based on interviews with the Delegations, by observing the communication activities and defining the perceived outcomes, and thereby</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DG NEAR Communication Strategy EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Report and Forward Plans. DG COMM Communication Network Indicators. ToR for on-going communication contracts in the three partner countries, for example: Ref Ares (2017) 5216432. Interviews with EUD staff responsible for managing communication contracts in the three partner countries. Interview with staff member from Headquarters



contractors' Terms of Reference confirm that communication activities are relevant to communication goals and some specific targets are defined for example in terms of attendance rates.

- The fact that some Delegations have a lack of clarity about strategic communication goals, also points to weaknesses in developing communication activities which support communication goals

to conclude that they will contribute to the desired overall objectives. However, metrics are not in place to establish a robust chain of results and the contribution made by specific communication activities to overall goals.

In the evaluation survey, a quarter of Delegations (5) indicated that there was a lack of clarity as to Headquarters' communication strategy for the region and 6 Delegations indicated that that is also a lack of clarity about Headquarters' expectations for communication. Since the survey, however, it is noted that Delegations have received training in how to use the Intervention Logic approach developed by DG COMM.

EQ8. To what extent the objectives of the annual forward communication plans for the selected Neighbourhood partner countries have been/are being met?

JC.8.1. Evidence that the communication activities implemented by the EU Delegation (directly and/or with support from external contractors) are delivering the intended outputs and outcomes, which contribute to the achievement of the objectives set in the annual forward communication plans.

EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans confirm that Delegations gather different type of data to confirm the performance of their activities. However, indicators are not systematically defined at each level of the results chain (outputs, outcomes, impacts). Therefore, it is not possible to assess the extent of achievement of outputs, outcomes and impacts against pre-defined targets using a coherent set of indicators.

Data confirms achievements in terms of the execution of planned activities. The EUD documents contain a description of activities delivered and planned, and the details are notably reflected in the ToR when communication is outsourced. The description of the activities typically includes the list of events and other activities which are planned on a yearly basis (some events been repeated every year). Contractors' and EUD reports confirm that the activities are implemented. However, there remain limitations in the analysis of the reporting as some contractors' reports were not available (e.g. the team did not have access to any of the contractors' reports in Tunisia).

Data also confirms that outputs are achieved to a large extent. EUDs use a range of standard output indicators in relation to events, traditional and social media. Output data is collected in relation to:

- Event participation,
- Website and social media metrics (fans, followers, video views, impressions, clicks),



- Readership numbers
- Media monitoring, and
- Informal feedback from target audiences (which is not collected in a structured way).

However, output data does not seem to be collected systematically (e.g. participation is not reported on for all events/activities organised). The data could also be strengthened as there is a greater focus on reporting on the reach of activities rather than on their effect on or appreciation by target groups. A focus on quantitative variables does not make it possible to take into consideration qualitative aspects such as (evolution of) perceptions, awareness, level of information. The field visits and reports reviewed indicate that the EUDs and their contractors receive informal feedback on the communication activities. However, this feedback is not structured and not systematically analysed. The assessment of communication on social media suffers from the same limitation in terms of an emphasis on quantitative metrics at the expense of a qualitative analysis of the engagement with the content published.

In terms of outcomes, monitoring data is disparate. If the field visits and stakeholder interviews revealed that overall, the stakeholders perceived that the communication activities were strengthening the public’s awareness and knowledge about the EU as an important partner for the ENI countries, data is not systematically available to support that claim.

There is a lack of clarity around the logical framework, what the expected outcomes are, what outcomes result directly from the outputs, as well as around how to measure outcomes. This is exacerbated by the fact that Communication Plans set broad not SMART communication objectives. There are sometimes monitoring systems in place to facilitate the capture of outcome data (e.g. the monitoring of the campaigns in Ukraine). Nevertheless, this is often not the case.

Some Delegations point to the general public opinion polls carried out by the OPEN Neighbourhood programme as evidence of outcomes. The polls indeed provide data on the evolution of public opinion on the EU and related topics but depending on the questions asked and the use of pre and post campaign polling, it is not always possible to establish a direct link between the evolution of opinions and the communication activities implemented. It is, therefore, difficult to assess whether the communication activities triggered the desired changes of opinion.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: EU Delegation Annual Reports and Forward Plans; Interviews with staff at EU Delegations and stakeholders; Public opinion polling by Open Neighbourhood contractors; DG COMM Network Indicators.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: this assessment is given because of the quality and reliability of data regarding outputs. However, there is less evidence relating to outcomes as this is not systematically collected for all activities. However, data confirms achievements in terms of the execution of planned activities.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
Indicator 8.1.1 EU Delegation monitoring data and contract reports confirm, which outputs and outcomes were achieved / are being achieved and to what extent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Delegation monitoring data confirms the outputs are being generated from the planned activities. • It is not possible to assess levels of outputs 	<p>EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans confirm that Delegations gather different amounts and types of data to confirm the performance of their activities. However, targets are not set at each level of the results chain (outputs, outcomes, impacts).</p> <p>From interviews with EU Delegation staff in the Delegations in all three partner countries, there are resource considerations, which relate to choices about which data is collected and for what purposes.</p> <p>Armenia: EUD Information and Communication Forward Plans confirm that there are three main means</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports • Communication contract reports (e.g. 295639 re Europe Day 2018)



achievement for all activities, as with some exceptions output targets are not set.

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- There is a lack of clarity around the outcomes that result directly from the outputs, except where there are monitoring systems in place to facilitate the capture of outcome data, i.e. the campaigns in Ukraine.
- Some Delegations point to general public opinion polling carried out by the OPEN Neighbourhood programme as evidence of outcomes. But there it is not possible to establish a direct link.
- Delegations do use appropriate indicators to measure social media reach, but do not set indicators in relation to sentiment beyond likes.
- There is greater focus on reporting on the reach of activities than on

of monitoring:

1. Traditional media coverage (print, TV and radio)
2. Statistics on social media metrics
3. List of attendance/contacts database

The key results at output level in 2017 relate to:

- By Info Clip views on TV / digital (2,580,000 TV views and 50,894,722 views)
- Press visits, which are reported to lead to 740,770 media impressions
- Publication readership figures (exact figures not reported in the Annual Report)
- Informal feedback (comment, emails, letters, etc. – details were not available)
- Fans and followers on Facebook and Twitter, which increased between January and November as follows: Facebook 24,299–43,038; Twitter 3,899–4,704.

Contractors' contracts / ToR define specific quantitative outputs for example the ToR for Europe Week confirm numbers of visitors required at events in Yerevan (at least 10,000) and in regional cities or towns (at least 2,000), and confirm numbers of promotional items for example for Kids Corner activities (blue and white balloons 500 per regional city and 1,000 for Yerevan, puzzles and colouring books 200 per regional city and 500 for Yerevan, Europe Day stickers, sweets, etc.).

In their offers, contractors set their own specific output objectives. For example, in relation to Europe Days, Publicis set the following targets:

- 6.2m reach on TV and Radio
- 85% of the population (2.5 million) with exposure 31.6 times to the main message
- 20% increase in Twitter and Facebook fans.

Based on desk research, specific outcomes are not defined in EU Delegation communication plans. This may also relate to the fact that broad objectives are set: for example, specific objectives set for 2018, include:

- elaborating a comprehensive communication strategy
- deepening and diversifying cooperation with media
- enhancing Euroclubs and their cooperation with EU Young Ambassadors

The identified 'impacts' of different activities are also expressed in broad terms, for example:

- the impact of the civil society event is described as support to civil society
- the impact of support to the European club is described as supporting the relationship between think tanks and intellectuals

Through the OPEN Programme annual public opinion polls are conducted, which provide

- Interviews with EU Delegation communication staff
- Interviews with communication contractor
- Public opinion polling by the EU Open Neighbourhood Programme



their effect on or appreciation by target groups.

specific feedback on levels of the population who have a positive image of the EU, consider that relations between Armenia and the EU are good and trust, as well as information on awareness of EU contribution to a range of policy areas and the benefits of EU support.

Tunisia:

Broad communication objectives are set in the EU Delegations' communication plans. For example, in 2018, these are described as achieving the widest reach possible of Tunisian citizens at all levels of society, not just the privileged, as well as using all communication means possible (TV, radio, social) to reach these groups.

Monitoring indicators are described as traditional media coverage (newspapers, TV and radio), social media statistics (Facebook and Twitter), web statistics relating to the Delegation and EEAS and attendance rates at events.

There is limited information in the Annual Report on results aside from confirmation of attendance rates, which are listed in the impact column of the annual report (although not systematically). For example, there were 200 participants at the 20th International Forum on Tunisia of Tomorrow, which took place on 27 April 2017. There were more than 1,000 participants the TedXCarthage event of 14 May 2017, which received EU support.

Other outputs described in the report include:

22,714 followers on Facebook (2017)

2,260 followers on Twitter (2017)

Social media metrics provide an on-going record of reach, which can show an evolution over time, but these metrics do not provide an indication of communication effectiveness.

The monitoring in place is limited and does not allow to draw conclusions on the achievement of the objectives set. Firstly, the EUD has quantitative data available to assess its outreach via its website and social media (user statistics) and the number of participants in events (although incomplete) (the data are presented in the annual report and forward planning documents). No further monitoring is in place and despite the usefulness of qualitative indicators being acknowledged, they are not applied due to lack of resources.

The ToR for external contractors working with the EUD include monitoring and reporting requirements. One of the ToR (Ref. Ares(2018)537585 - 30/01/2018) specifies a set of indicators:

- number of viewers of the project websites and EUD website,
- evolution of the traffic on the websites,
- activity on social media,
- number of media articles on EU-related topics,
- number of subscribers to the newsletters,
- number of events organised, and
- number of missions organised outside of the capital.

But the list of indicators does not make the distinction between activity, output and outcome indicators and there is no explicit alignment with the expected objectives. The contractor selected integrated the indicators in its technical proposal, including relating them to the expected activities, outputs and outcomes and setting targets for some of them. It remains to be seen how reporting will be done against the indicators.

There is a gap in the reports available from communication contractors. No monitoring template or reports were available to the communication team.

Lastly, there are hardly any targets defined in the communication documents. The EUD annual reports and forward planning set very few targets for certain activities and outputs (e.g. the activities/events listed in the overview, and the number of expected participants for certain events). The same approach is visible in the ToR defined for two subcontractors (where targets related to the number of events to organise and the number of participants in certain cases). One of the subcontractors included partial targets in its technical offer to the EUD: the offer develops a list of monitoring indicators and sets targets for some of these indicators even when there were none in the ToR (e.g. targets an increase of 20% of the number of viewers of the cooperation page of the EUD website, a 20% increase of the traffic on the websites and 10,000 Facebook followers).

According to the EU Delegation in Tunisia, it is too early to assess whether the monitoring data confirms the extent of achievement of outputs and outcomes. A joined-up approach was only launched in 2018, so there is presently no systematic way of addressing the results of press and media.

The EU Delegation is currently brainstorming on ToR for the future of a joined-up contract, considering feedback loops to constantly monitor and assess perceptions. The EU Delegation has been doing this on a couple of occasions, such as Europe Week and other events (e.g. youth and culture).

With regards to outcomes: feedback from the Delegation suggests that the Delegation and HoD are frequently mentioned in the media, also via television and radio. There was no evidence reviewed during the field mission to confirm this. The EUD 2018 annual report and forward planning indicates that there is a weekly coverage of EU news in the most important media (newspapers, national TV notably) but does not provide figures or the evolution of the coverage over time. An external contractor is tasked with media analysis, which might generate relevant data in the coming months. However, the sample of press reviews made available to the team during the field visit reveals that the reviews do not provide data on the coverage of EU affairs to date (they provide an overview of topical issues covered in the country's media).

Stakeholder interviews highlight that communication activities aim to generate positive opinions about the EU, the opportunities offered by the EU and the EU-Tunisia partnership with the primary and secondary targets (to pave the way for the public's positive opinion on these topics). But there are no data available on whether this outcome is delivered or not.

Ukraine:

The EUD Information and Communication Forward Plan (2018) describes its specific objectives as:

- Increase awareness of the EU's assistance to the Ukrainian reform process and generate support to AA/DCFTA related reforms in the election year
- Explain the opportunities that arise from the implementation of the DCFTA + showcase specific EU's assistance provided (EU4Business, ULead, Creative Europe, Horizon2020 etc.)
- Increase understanding of EU-Ukraine relations among target enlarged audiences
- Further develop EU Networks, creating synergy in order to promote European values with a focus on youth
- Communicate success stories of young entrepreneurs, innovators and exporters, creative and cultural industries
- Strengthen cooperation and coordination with the Government

The main metrics used to measure performance are quantitative and not based on achieving targets²⁹/SMART objectives, qualitative assessment (e.g. surveys of reactions to events), benchmarks or best practice in going beyond reach. They are:

- statistics of the websites and social media accounts;
- number of subscribers in the electronic database of media and stakeholders' contacts (kept at the Delegation and sent to HQ only on request if needed);
- advanced traditional media monitoring (print, TV and radio) and online/social media metrics
- qualitative feedback from the participants in the training courses, public events, press briefings and other network-organised events;
- social media engagement metrics.

In terms of outputs achieved, the following can be detected from the information made available to the evaluation team (EU Delegation Annual Report and Forward Plan 2018 and a Powerpoint presentation on EUD communication in 2019):

- 1.3 million citizens estimated reach via communication explaining AA/DCFTA benefits and opportunities for civil society, business community and local authorities and raising awareness on the EU's assistance to reforms in Ukraine
- increase from 4 to 16 Oblasts in regional media partnerships
- 1,250 EU-related articles in the media
- 53,246 unique website visitors
- 2,800 participants at 10 EU Careers Days events

²⁹ The exception is a target of increasing the number of friends on Facebook from 40,000-50,000, but it is not clear how that is to be achieved, and friends/likes do not measure the extent of engagement or to which a community has been built. That is best measured through shares and comment.



- 40,000 (estimated) views of EU-sponsored Childrens Kino Fest
- Facebook organic growth of 48% to 40,432
- Twitter 9160 followers

A specific outcome noted relates to the follow-up action leading to an increased number of subscribers, which confirms action taken on the part of target groups to engage with the information provided.

- Increased to 1,987 subscribers as opposed to 1,300 in 2016 to the press release database (678 newly subscribed registered from regional media)

The EU Delegation highlights the visa free information campaign as being a particular success of 2017 with the following results:

- 480,000 visits to the website
- 270,000 video views

Here a specific outcome is identified:

- Increase in knowledge of the basic rules of the visa-free regime over a 9-month period from 33.4% to 61.1% in December 2017.

An additional specific outcome found in data supplied by the contractor is that the percentage of Ukrainians who know that a biometric passport allows entry into EU countries without visa rose over the same period from 24.9% to 50.3%.

Specific outputs and outcomes are also reported in relation to the 'Energy in Your Home campaign', implemented in 5 cities:

- 19m views of a video on national and regional TV
- Increase in awareness of energy efficiency issues from 16% to 19%
- Decrease from 45% to 38% of Ukrainians who were willing to shift responsibility for energy efficiency measures to the authorities rather than themselves (suggests attitude change).

As highlighted above, the communication activities implemented by the Delegation (directly and/or with support from external contractors) are delivering the intended outputs at an overall level.

However, these outputs are defined in very general terms and are not based on SMART objectives, targets, or KPIs. Information on outputs in isolation cannot provide an indication of what could have been achieved and provides no basis for assessing performance and possibly penalising poor performance

Linking specific thematic campaigns to specific outcome measures as in the Energy in Your Home and Visa-free campaigns, has allowed the Delegation to understand effects on the public beyond reach, which is not sufficient to confirm performance.

It is not possible to deduce outcomes from the Communication Plan in relation to the other activities given that their monitoring data is focused on reach.

However, data supplied by the Moving Forward Together contractor shows that they are not only using a wide range of output metrics which can be useful for learning (e.g. the percentage of those who watched online reels to the end) but is also measuring outcomes

		<p>with polling at six monthly intervals. This looks at raised awareness, of which there were four components at the time of this research: Decentralisation, the DCFTA, Conflict Response and IDP Support. The polling also measures the decrease in the number of people who have not heard about EU programmes.</p>	
<p>Indicator 8.1.2 Extent that indicators are appropriately designed to measure the progress in relation to the baseline situation and the targets set at each level of the results chain.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Delegations use a range of standard indicators in relation to events, traditional and social media. • Targets are not set at each level of the results chain although individual contractors may set their own targets. • There is a lack of comparative cost data to allow consideration of efficiency / cost effectiveness. • A number of additional indicators can be identified which would enhance understanding of performance. • Resource implications of improvements to monitoring need to be taken into account. 	<p>Communication monitoring data is collected in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • event participation figures, • website and social media metrics (fans, followers, video views) • readership numbers, • informal feedback (which is not collected in a structured way) • media monitoring (TV, radio, newspapers) • increased awareness / views of specific thematic campaigns via polling. <p>Specific targets are not set at each level of the results chain activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts in relation to each activity. However, backward-looking comparisons are made where data is available to confirm the improvement or worsening of for example mainly reach or levels of awareness in some specific cases.</p> <p>Additional specific indicators could be set at output and outcome level to confirm target audience appreciation of communication activities. This data may be collected but based on the field visit there is a lack of systematic collection and reporting on the extent that messages are understood or remembered and / or whether participants have changed their opinion towards the EU or would advocate for the EU.</p> <p>Drawing on DG COMM's indicator matrix the additional indicators to be taken into account <i>in all communication</i> and not just in some are:</p> <p>Videos: output level: video completion rates Social media: outcome level: shares, likes, click-throughs Websites: outcome level: downloads, subscriptions, usefulness Events: outcome level: satisfaction rates, % of people seeking more information</p> <p>Outcome indicators will essentially relate to participants, readers, viewers having a more positive view of the EU. It would be possible to integrate the collection of this outcome data into the roll-out of campaigns / activities, for example short on-line or social surveys, or data from readily available analytics tools.</p> <p>It is noted that there is also a lack of analysis with regards to costs for example cost per contact, although this data is available for the Moving Forward Together campaign, cost per event attendee. This type of information is useful to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of communication activities.</p> <p>Interviews with EU Delegations confirm limited human resources. The implications of a more rigorous monitoring system would need to be taken into account.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans • Interviews with EU Delegations • DG COMM Communication Network Indicators

JC 8.2 Extent that the channels and tools used to implement communication activities are appropriate to meet the target group needs and contribute to the attainment of the forward communication plan objectives.

Overall, there is evidence to suggest that the EU Delegations and their contractors are using appropriate communication channels and tools. Stakeholders interviewed during the field visits indicate that it is important to keep a balanced mix of channels and tools to reach out to different targets. These include traditional media as they still play a key role in the consumption habits of certain segments of the population, events (despite a risk of competition between different events, when many different partners/donors in-country implement their own communication activities without coordination and therefore compete for the audience’s attention), online and social media. The general perception is that social media are the norm in the communication toolbox when young people are targeted.

There has been little research into communication preferences, which would support the selection of channels and tools. However, certain choices are based on opinion polling (e.g. in Armenia, with the inclusion of TV as one of the channels because it remains predominant) and there are signs that this aspect will be strengthened in the future (e.g. the EUD in Tunisia has contracted a communication expert to look into social media communication, and what its potential is in relation to the audience’s use of social media and how to make this channel more effective). Extensive research has been carried out in Ukraine as part of the visa-free and Moving Forward Together campaigns.

There is some feedback, which suggests that adaptations could be made to the way that channels and tools are used. Stakeholders, including young people, indicate that more “relatable” content (including story-telling and a focus on concrete issues) would enhance the attractiveness of the communication. It also appears to be a critical condition for the targets’ engagement with the content of the communication.

Social media metrics indicate that there is an increase in the reach of this channel but the absence of qualitative data on the actual engagement with the content is a constraint for the evaluation. Insufficient data for other channels is currently a severe constraint.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports and forward plans, interviews with stakeholders during the field missions.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: this assessment is given because of the quality and reliability of sources of evidence. The EU Delegations confirm there is a consensus that the EU Delegations and their contractors are using appropriate channels and tools, keeping a mixed balance between traditional media, online and social media.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Source of evidence
<p>Indicator 8.2.1 Representatives of target group associations (interviewed during the field phase) agree that channels and tools used are good ways to reach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders consider that appropriate channels and tools are being used and the evidence of increases in reach is suggested to confirm this point. Communication typically makes use 	<p>Field mission</p> <p>Armenia: The EUD is using appropriate channels and tools to reach their chosen target groups. The focus on the use of TV as a medium is aligned with evidence that high numbers of the population regularly watch TV. Use of social media also makes sense and is the norm in any package of communication activities, including to reach young people.</p> <p>Mixed feedback was received with regards to the series of activities that are implemented around Europe Week. Europe Week / Day is a flagship communication moment that is used by all EU Delegations as an opportunity to communicate about the EU. Significant resources are allocated to the roll out of events. However, feedback suggested that the concept needs a re-think because it is no longer innovative. It was suggested that in previous years target audiences were excited and engaged through Europe Week, but that they have now become somewhat disengaged and are most interested in the</p>	



target groups and that materials would 'speak' to target groups through tailored narratives.

of a range of communication channels and tools and this approach is followed by the EU Delegations and their contractors.

- There is some feedback to suggest that adaptations could be made to the way that channels and tools are used so that they continue to be attractive and persuasive to target groups.
- Channels and tools are described in EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans and therefore they can be considered to contribute to the objectives described in these plans, although it is not possible to define to what extent and whether or not different choices should be made.

giveaways that are made available but do not really engage with the content.

Although no longer in use, feedback suggested that an EU bus tour can be an effective way to reach target populations in the regions. This was highly appreciated by those interviewed during the field visit.

Tunisia: the general perception by non-EU stakeholders is that communication by the EUD has improved over the past years, despite a substantial lack of resources available, as frequently highlighted by actors working directly with the EUD.

However, students also underline that the way communication is actually conducted does not appear to be the most appropriate. In order to respond to target audiences' interests and media consumption habits, communication would need to be more interactive, more focused on concrete results, using story-telling, personal testimonies, etc. This approach seems already mostly followed by the activities conducted under OPEN SOUTH, in contrast to those directly run by the EUD

Ukraine: the channels and tools being used are appropriate to the target groups, with a possible exception based on the limited evidence available within the constraints of this evaluation in the provision of publications to Euro Info Centres rather than putting more emphasis on online tools. In the case of the strategic communication contract, the channels and tools used are based on data on media consumption habits and the contractor is flexible in making adaptations where a tool is proving quite effective.

The overall evidence from perceptions is that the communication is effective, and objectives are being met, with some nuances, such as known unevenness in proactivity of Euro Info Centres, and human resource and budget constraints to being as present across the regions as would be desirable. It is not, however, possible to say to what extent objectives are being met.

EQ9i. To what extent have the organisation and management of the EU Delegation communication activities been conducive to an efficient, effective and sustainable implementation of the communication activities in the selected neighbourhood countries?

JC.9i.1 The EUD human resources working on communication have the capacity and appropriate procedures to design and manage/ implement in an efficient, effective and sustainable manner the communication activities/contracts.



Evidence gathered in the field suggests that insufficient human resourcing of EUDs is a challenge in the design and management / implementation of the communication activities / contracts. Yet Delegations are managing to face this challenge in different ways.

In Tunisia, there is no Communication Coordinator and the level of human resources has reduced each year over the timeframe 2016 – 2018³⁰, whereas the amount of financial resources allocated to contracts has increased³¹. When compared to resourcing in the Western Balkans, the level of financial and human resources in Ukraine also does not appear to be well matched. The need to ensure enough human resources to manage outsourced communication was also raised by staff in DG NEAR. Furthermore, the EUD in Armenia also does not have a Communication Coordinator. The EUD staff reports that the administrative burden is disproportionate to the level of financial resourcing and the human resources available to administer these financial resources. Despite this, EUD staff reported satisfaction with the quality and quantity of communication activities and with current contractors. Yet it is recognised that there could be improvements made to monitoring to provide more evidence to confirm communication performance.

Despite staffing constraints, no delays in the design and contracting of the communication activities were identified, although there was anecdotal evidence from contractors of capacity constraints, which might slow down the roll out of activities. The evaluation team observed a high level of EUD staff commitment among those working on communication. On the implementation side, contractors described good working relationships with their contracting authority, and an appropriate level of engagement of EUD staff.

In addition to the EUD staff working on communication, the support / engagement provided by other EUD staff (e.g. cooperation section, Heads of section, Heads of Delegation) constitutes an enhancing factor: it creates a favorable environment for the implementation of communication activities, engaging staff from different parts of each EUD in creating opportunities for communication and visibility. This helps to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of communication efforts. However, the high level of personal commitment of staff to supporting communication may put long term on the sustainability of the communication results at risk, if results are intrinsically linked to individuals.

The three EUDs are pursuing new options for the design and management of the communication activities / contracts to improve effectiveness and efficiency. There is a move to a more consolidated approach to contracting for communication with larger single, comprehensive communication contracts (implemented in Ukraine – with more to come as a series of other contracts are rolled into one Framework Contract, upcoming in Tunisia and Armenia). These are expected to improve effectiveness by streamlining communication (including a more systematic and comprehensive approach to monitoring and reporting) and creating synergies between activities (for instance, research into the needs of target audiences and communication preferences could support the whole range of communication activities implemented under the new contracts).

The impact on the administrative burden for the EUDs remains to be determined as larger contracts might nevertheless require more resources dedicated to contract management. It might also make the question of the allocation of different financial and contract management responsibilities between EEAS and DG NEAR staff within Delegations a more pressing issue, as this can slow down the approval process because on occasion staff managing contracts are not allowed to authorise payments on a budget line from a different entity, ie EEAS staff managing contractors on DG NEAR budget lines, for example. Aside from this element, there was no other evidence that current procedures are a limiting factor.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: Survey of EU Delegation press and communication staff in the neighbourhood region; Review of available contracts / ToR; Interviews with EU Delegations; Interviews with contractors; EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans.

³⁰ This timeframe is provided as an example and relates to the information that was made available for consultation by the evaluation team.

³¹ In 2017, €286,000 was allocated to communication, in 2018 this was increased to €483,500.



Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: There are at least two sources of evidence and confirmation from EU Delegations, which contribute to this assessment although it is recognised that there are gaps in relation to the whole timeframe of the evaluation 2011 – 2017.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
<p>Indicator 9i.1.1. There have been no delays to contacting or managing communication activities and communication activities meet EUD expectations in terms of quality and quantity.</p>	<p>Indicator 9i.1.1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific delays to contracting were not identified. • The management of communication activities is limited by the availability of human resources within EU Delegations to perform this function. • Administrative burden and lack of human resource capacity are the most significant challenges faced by EUD. • The three Delegations visited are satisfied with the quality and quantity of communication activities and with current contractors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team was not able to map all of the communication contracts implemented in the three focal countries in the 2011-2017 timeframe, based on the information that was available in the CRIS database. This situation related to documents not having been uploaded to the system, different document formats being used and a lack of clarity around the naming of uploaded files. • The difficulties are exacerbated by the use of two different systems: ABAC and CRIS. The CRIS database represents projects funded through the cooperation assistance budget, while ABAC includes contracts relating to FPI-financed public diplomacy activities. • EU Delegations were also not able to provide all of the documents requested due to their own resourcing constraints. <p>From the survey of EU Delegation Press Officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents from 18 out of 20 EU Delegations who responded to the survey confirmed that the lack of human resources to manage external communication contractors is the most significant internal challenge that affects their work. • The second most significant challenge is administrative burden according to respondents from 15 EU Delegations. Other possible suggested constraints, including lack of clarity from Headquarters about expectations and lack of communication expertise among contractors, were not considered to be strongly significant. • The level of contractor communication expertise within each country is an issue in circa half of the countries in the neighbourhood region. The Tunisian Delegation was neutral on this point, the Ukraine Delegation disagreed with the point and the Armenian Delegation agreed on this point. <p>However, in interviews with the EU Delegations in Armenia, Tunisia and Ukraine staff confirmed their satisfaction with communication contractors currently in position. EU Delegation Annual Reports and Forward Plans also confirm satisfaction with the communication activities carried out, for example:</p> <p><i>“During 2017 the above-mentioned 2 contractors have produced a vast number of very high-quality communication products and materials associated to communication campaigns implemented throughout the year.”</i> (Armenia, 2017 – 2018 report, p.7).</p> <p>Human resource restrictions in the Delegations are also reported in the Delegations’ Annual Reports and Forward Plans, as follows:</p> <p><i>“Given the lack of human resources and the complicated procurement procedure the FPI 2018 budget will be contracted as one communication contract for all the activities planned. Thus,</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of EU Delegation press and communication staff in the neighbourhood region • Review of available contracts / ToR.



		<p><i>it will help for the overall smoother and less stressful organization of activities by the Delegation". (Armenia, 2017 – 2018, p.9)</i></p> <p>The Tunisian 2017-2018 Annual Report and Forward Plan notes that the small team working on communication and lack of a communication coordinator are key weaknesses affecting what can be achieved as are the lack of equipment and slow internet connection. According to the EUDs' Annual Reports (2016, 2017, 2018), the budget allocations for information work have increased from a total of EUR 286 000 EUR in 2017 to EUR 463 500 in 2018 (although it is important to note that the figures presented in the annual reports are not fully comparable³²). Whilst this increase is significant, it has not been matched by the amount of human resources available to support this type of work. HR capacity has been consistently weak over the years and was less in 2018 than in 2016:</p> <p><i>"The size of the comms budget is optimal for the Operations, yet the biggest challenge remains workload, with only one person in charge of all the communications in the OPS, with one staff member for secretarial support for communication being reassigned from January 2017. In the course of 2018, a serious support came in from the PR and Media Support contractor, but due to external nature – this help had its obvious limits. (Ukraine, 2017-2018, p.10)</i></p> <p>Interviews with EU Delegations</p> <p>Several key issues emerged relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ratio between the amount of available human resources to the value / volume of contracts / communication activities to be managed maybe disproportionate; • even where there is budget for more external communication, it is not possible to implement projects and do quality work without more staff. This has implications with regard to decisions on possible Info Centres and may also limit current communication contracts due to bottlenecks in approval processes; • communication units / teams, and in one case a communication coordinator, are not in place in each EU Delegation, which means that other sections need to take on the management of communication activities / there is less time for strategic planning; • Direct EU Delegation management of communications activities requires huge resources and very specific expertise. 	
<p>Indicator 9i.1.2 EU Delegation staff and contractors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pooling of communication budgets and larger 	<p>Interviews with EU Delegations in the neighbourhood regions highlight that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pooling of communication resources and grouping smaller projects into larger ones has been instrumental in reducing time-consuming project administration; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with EU Delegations

³² The Annual Report for 2016 only indicates 101,000 EUR for the P&I budget line 19.0601 without giving a total amount. The global allocation is not specified in 2016, neither is the budget under the regional programme for 2016 and 2018.



<p>confirm that the current procedures allow efficient management of communication activities and that no improvements could be foreseen.</p>	<p>contracts reduces the burden relating to procurement / increases opportunities for streamlining</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger contracts increase opportunities for more systematic KPI setting and target audience research • Main improvements relate to increasing human resources / establishing a ratio for the required amount of human resource to manage a defined value. of communication contracts. • Allocation of different financial and contract management responsibilities between EEAS staff and DG NEAR staff within Delegations can be problematic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the shift towards larger contracts contracting PR professionals (e.g. “Moving Forward Together” campaign in Ukraine) appears to be effective with some early results reported in the 2018 EU Delegation Annual Report. • in Armenia, procurement for three four-year Framework Contracts will reduce administrative burden and the need to work with a wide range of different contractors • communication staff do not always consider that they have the skill set to manage procurement processes, despite this they have to invest high amounts of time on tenders and contract work; • this situation is exacerbated when different staff allegiances (EEAS and NEAR) mean that support cannot be provided by Finance and Contracts staff. • in Tunisia, the EUD has launched a tender to streamline efforts on communication and visibility. A larger contract (EUR 5 million) is expected to ensure better visibility of EU communication by (1) putting in place a communication strategy of the EU in Tunisia, (2) piloting this strategy with communication on EU presence and action in addition to individual projects, (3) ensuring coherence and eligibility of EU policies and projects, and (4) tailoring communication and messages according to the specificities of each action, project or programme; • in Ukraine the upcoming framework contract is expected to streamline communication and introduce improvements in the definition of target groups, indicators and required results. <p>From interviews with contractors, it appears that some contractors feel constrained by what they see as bureaucratic inflexibility relating to procedures.</p> <p>The Forward Plans also highlight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication management issues relating to visibility under the cooperation assistance programmes. For example, the Ukraine Forward Plan 2018, highlights the need to pay more attention to EU visibility actions via international organisations, noting that the Delegation does not have the capacity to monitor that these organisations are following the visibility guidelines. In Armenia, the Delegation has found a way around this problem by pooling the budget relating to these partners and creating one communication contract to communicate about the technical assistance projects. A similar approach will be piloted in Tunisia (see description of the communication contract above) • Improvements to internal procedures to facilitate smoother communication management, for example the introduction of: • A standard operating procedure for managing communication contracts in the Armenian Delegation; and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with contractors. • EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans
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- a task force to improve coordination between different parts of the Delegation responsible for communication in Tunisia

JC 9i.2. Current monitoring arrangements for communication function at regular intervals and are capable of collecting data, detecting problems and issues to inform decision-making.

Contractual arrangements over the timeframe of the evaluation have ensured continuity in the communication about the EU in the three selected neighbourhood countries to the extent that it is possible to identify contracts to support EU Delegation communication. However, looking to the future, in the Ukraine, it will be important to plan how the transition from large communication contracts such as the Moving Together contract will be managed when that contract comes to an end.

A wealth of data³³ is collected to measure EU Delegation communication through different channels and tools. This allows the Delegations to monitor the number of people who **will participate or be reached** by events, TV series or on-line campaigns.

However, there is limited focus on gathering target group **feedback**. Contractors gather some feedback at events, and general public polling provides evidence relating to communication campaigns, but there is a need to complement this evidence with a systematic approach to gathering qualitative data, linked to a set of pre-defined qualitative indicators. This would allow comparative analysis across events and would also allow the Delegation to set clearer expectations for contractors.

The monitoring arrangements provide limited insight into the outcomes of communication activities and whether results have been met. However, the communication agencies contracted in Ukraine and Armenia measure the outcomes by testing target audience knowledge of EU support before a campaign and comparing this with target audience awareness following a campaign. Targets were not set to allow assessment of the results of these activities.

Strength of evidence: indicative but not conclusive

Description of the evidence base: EU Delegation Annual Reports and Forward Communication Plans; ToR relating to a sample of specific contracts and contractors offers; interviews with EU Delegation staff.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: although there is more than one source of evidence, there are evidence gaps concerning the whole period under evaluation.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
<p>Indicator 9.i. 2.1. Contractual arrangements resulted in communication objectives being met and continuity of EU communication /</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractual arrangements over the timeframe of the evaluation have ensured continuity in communication about the EU in the three selected neighbourhood 	<p>It is assumed that there has been a continuous EU communication presence in the three focal countries of this study, but it has not been possible to view EU Delegation communication plans covering the period in scope 2011-2017, only a sample of plans were available (for example 2013-2018 in Armenia, 2016, 2017 and 2018 for Tunisia, and 2016 and 2018 for Ukraine). It was not possible to gain access to ToR, contracts and contractors offers covering all communication activities, during this period.</p> <p>As highlighted earlier, EU Delegation communication objectives have been expressed in Forward Communication Plans as general statements, not specific and measurable goals,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Delegation Annual Reports and Forward Communication Plans. • ToR relating to a sample of specific contracts and contractors offers.

³³ Data includes numbers of unique website visitors, TV viewers, followers and likes on Facebook, tweets and retweets on Twitter, etc.



presence in the country / region over the timeframe of the evaluation.	countries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Delegation Annual Reports confirm that results have been achieved in line with planned objectives. 	which makes it difficult to assess the extent that they have been met. Yet Annual Reports consistently describe the results of the plans, which were put into place.	
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JC.9i.3. The type, number and budget of communication contracts managed by the EUD communication officers allow for efficient, effective and sustainable implementation of communication activities.

The situation in the three countries considered differs to some extent, as described below.

In Armenia, the EUD identified that consolidating contracts would be a way to increase efficiency due to what is described as the ‘complicated procedure’ for contracting the FPI budget. A further pooling contract was also considered to reinforce media outreach on EU-funded projects given the high levels of fragmentation of the visibility budgets of these projects. One specific issue highlighted in relation to procurement was the insufficient expertise quality control before the files were reviewed and signed by the hierarchy, this was indicated to be linked to resourcing.

In Tunisia, communication is a shared responsibility among staff in the Political and Operations sections. Human resourcing is considered to limit what can be achieved but there is strong collaboration and goodwill to support communication within the Delegation, which works closely with the OPEN Neighbourhood South Project. In addition, various strategies were planned or being pursued to support efficiency and effectiveness, including extending outreach in the south of the country working together with OPEN South on a campus tour under the #EUforYouth; hiring an external communication expert to help with strategy and day-to-day management of communication activities; and combining existing visibility budgets into one larger contract to consolidate efforts to increase the visibility of EU support. In addition, the Delegation’s decision to focus on one target group: youth, reduces fragmentation of efforts and resources and allows time efficient approaches with the use of social media as key channels to reach this group. It appears, therefore, that despite limitations, the Delegation is maximising opportunities for collaboration and focus, which help to underpin its efforts. An increase in social media followers in recent years is taken as one of the indicators of the success of this approach and external stakeholders also consider that the EUD is more visible although there was consensus that much greater visibility would be more in line with the importance of the EU-Tunisia relationship.

Ukraine has led in the pooling of a significant number of different communication budgets to create a large strategic communication pot. Many other communication contracts exist alongside this, but a first step towards more efficient management has been taken with an overarching contract to co-ordinate a series of networks. A second will be the conclusion of a Framework Contract to cover the activities currently covered by separate contracts and to provide additionally flexibility in contracting for specific activities. This should reduce the current administrative burden involved in drafting Terms of Reference, contracting and managing different contracts, and thus give staff the time they lack now to collate information on outputs and outcomes, and implement improvements and focus more on cost-effectiveness.

Despite these differences, there are similarities. Support to the EUDs and to the implementation of the communication strategy is also provided by the OPEN neighbourhood programme. In both the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood, the programme delivers additional communication activities, often very targeted on youth, which are expected to strengthen reach and engagement (including outside of capital cities). As this is a contract managed by DG NEAR, it does not strictly speaking require additional managing resourcing from EUDs. But political steer and good coordination would harness the full potential of the programme in countries where the EUD works less with the OPEN neighbourhood programme. Although this was not the case in the three countries selected for the focus of this study.

Overall, to improve the efficiency of communication, the approach to communication is moving to larger, single communication contracts (to replace a series of smaller contracts focusing on certain activities, campaigns or topics for instance). It is expected that the synergies created within a single, larger contract, covering the different aspects of communication, and the lesser administrative burden for the EUDs (in terms of management of the tender selection and contracting process) will improve the



cost-effectiveness of the delivery of communication activities across the board.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: Interviews with EU Delegation staff; ToR of communication contracts; interviews with contractors.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: this assessment is made on the basis that evidence is drawn from interviews and can be substantiated through documentary evidence.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
<p>Indicator 9i.3.1. EU Delegation and contractors confirm that resources allocated to communication activities could not be reduced or allocated differently (i.e. different channels and tools) to reach the same or increase reach and engagement of target groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The communication mix of channels and tools is considered appropriate. It responds to the communication landscape and preferences of the target groups The communication mix includes events, traditional media and social media, making it possible to reach and engage with different target groups in capital cities and beyond There is no evidence suggesting that a substantial change to the communication mix 	<p>Interviews with EU Delegation staff highlighted how managing too many small communication contracts reduces the efficiency of the EU communication effort. This relates to the administrative burden in tendering for contractors and setting up and managing contracts.</p> <p>There is a trend to larger contracts, which allow a much more strategic approach to communication with better linkages between different communication activities and less fragmentation and the potential to increase the overall communication effect.</p> <p>The EU Delegation in Armenia confirmed that pooling of communication resources to avoid fragmentation of efforts had led to the decision to establish a new contract worth EUR 3 million, with EUR 1 million per year envisaged under the AAP 2019 to be contracted for 2021-2023 to support strategic communication efforts. The main activities will include utilising different communication and visibility tools for greater outreach and supporting EU Delegation to Armenia in communication. It will also include capacity building for Armenian counterparts in strategic communication on CEPA.</p> <p>In Tunisia the Delegation is also combining existing visibility budgets into one larger contract³⁴ to ensure better visibility of EU activities in Tunisia and enhance public adherence to the partnership offer in-line with the above strategic objectives, including (1) putting in place a communication strategy of the EU in Tunisia, (2) piloting this strategy with communication on EU presence and action in addition to individual projects, (3) ensuring coherence and eligibility of EU policies and projects, and (4) tailoring communication and messages according to the specificities of each action, project or programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with EU Delegation staff. ToR of communication contracts. Interviews with contractors

³⁴ This is an upcoming contract, consortia have been shortlisted and are preparing their technical offers.



is needed, but stakeholders indicate that adjustments are happening as they progress implementation

- The activities implemented by the OPEN Neighbours programme complement activities of the EUDs and their contractors. The programme's focus on youth notably reportedly enhances reach and engagement with this target group.
- The change in the contracting approach in the field of communication suggests that the use of larger contracts (replacing smaller contracts focusing on particular topics/channels and tools of communication) might strengthen the cost-effectiveness of

In Ukraine a EUR 3.7 million **strategic communication contract** concluded in 2017 "Communicating Europe in Ukraine."³⁵ is designed "to deliver a coherent and effective public communications package based on a common and compelling central narrative which convincingly sets out what the EU and Ukraine are committed to achieving in Ukraine, and why it is important."³⁶ Also, in Ukraine there are specific examples of how larger budgets in Ukraine have supported thematic campaigns such as the visa-free campaign, which has supported a bigger communication 'push' and facilitated pre and post campaign research to allow the Delegation to understand the extent of communication effects on target audiences. The Delegation also has plans to bundle a number of other small communication contracts into one Framework Contract.

Re channel and tool usage: EU Delegation communication is **tailored** to the **communication landscape** of the country. From discussions with contractors and EU Delegation staff, EU communication managed by the Delegations is targeted at reaching citizens using the tools citizens use most to the extent resources allow.

In Armenia, television plays the leading role and it is the medium which is most able to reach nearly all of the population – urban and rural, followed by the Internet³⁷ and social networks, which are slightly behind; radio ranks third and print media ranks last. Since 2012, the reduction in the cost of Internet service providers has brought about a massive transition from print to online media. According to one of the communication contractors in early 2019, there was 73% internet penetration in Armenia. The communication landscape is reflected by the communication contracts in place. For example, the 'Communicating EU-Armenia Cooperation and Partnership' in 2016-2017 and 2018-2019. provides PR and media support to the Delegation, using social networks, digital media, a TV series (2 programmes per month), video-clips, infographics, GIFs and animations, events, news articles, social media content and promotional materials.

In Tunisia, the use of social media is prominent. The Delegation considers Facebook to be the single most important network and also note that Instagram rising in prominence. In consequence, the EU Delegation places an emphasis on these channels. It has also been important to place a focus on local radio is used to reach more rural areas and cover the whole of Tunisia. The Ambassador frequently gives interviews on the radio. Conversely, newspapers have less influence as they have a narrower audience (Tunis businessmen and decision-makers). Moreover, with some newspapers more pro-government and others less so,

³⁵ <https://ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:309657-2017:TEXT:EN:HTML&src=0>

³⁶ <https://ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:400549-2016:TEXT:EN:HTML&src=0>

³⁷ In early 2019, there was 73% internet penetration in Armenia, according to Publicis



communication

the EU Delegation tries to handpick journalists to avoid strong biases.

In Ukraine, TV, radio, digital, outdoor, print and events are used across a variety of contracts, bearing in mind that TV remains the main source of news. This is followed by online media and radio. The Delegation anticipates the growth of radio with 3&4G developments. The EU Delegation has observed that its website has fewer and fewer visitors, such that they are shifting to Facebook and Twitter. There is a wide range of media, much of it in the hands of oligarchs so not necessarily objective, but stakeholders expressed the view that audiences in Ukraine are mature enough to switch between channels to obtain a complete picture. The EUD in Ukraine also works extensively through multipliers via a range of formal and long-standing networks. Public libraries have been a recent addition to the list of networks and a forthcoming "Europe House" contract will extend this further, with particular emphasis on the networks of Member State cultural institutes.

From the field missions, there was no evidence to suggest a reduction in channels and tools, although one contractor in Armenia questioned whether all events organised add sufficient value taking into account their costs. Also, some questions were asked by contractors in Armenia about the format for Europe Day events which were suggested to have lost their novelty and to only attract citizens in search of freebies.

Also, on the question of the number of contracts and the possible reduction in channels and tools, the support provided by the OPEN Neighbourhood programme can be taken into account. The OPEN programme provides significant assistance in Tunisia given the shortfall in manpower in contrast to the level of financial resources available. It also adds value to EU communication efforts in Ukraine and Armenia.

In Armenia, the Delegation confirmed that materials produced by OPEN are very appreciated by the EUD. One of the advantages of the OPEN Project from an EU Delegation perspective is that it **allows EUD staff to focus on other tasks**. For example, the EU Young Ambassadors scheme supports EU outreach to students in the regions with 44 volunteer Young Ambassadors and two Young Ambassadors in part-time paid positions. The lack of direct management from EUD staff is a clear benefit, given the capacity constraints.

During the field mission in Tunisia, the evaluators noted that the EUD in Tunisia actively involves OPEN South in a variety of activities, especially #EU4Youth, #EU4Culture, and its Europe Week. Although OPEN South Project is managed by DG NEAR, the interviews revealed that there is close coordination between the Attaché of Cooperation Section at EUD and the OPEN South Project Campaign Coordinator who happens to be located in Tunis. OPEN South Project also provides a communication strategist to support the EUD's communication strategic approach.

In Ukraine, the Young Ambassadors programme has been included in a network-building contract across a range of networks.



With regard to whether cost reductions are possible, there is a lack of evidence to support this hypothesis. The lack of evidence also stems from the approach to monitoring and evaluation. The output data that exists is not always exploited because the resources are not available to do this. It is possible that if the resources could be found, some tools could be used more effectively for the same cost or would prove to be ineffective. Without cost benefit analysis to allow EU Delegations to confirm which channels and tools are generating greatest effects at the lowest cost, there is no basis for any reduction.

A comparison with communication campaign data harvested by the DG COMM corporate communication campaigns, confirms that data is collected with regards to cost per contact, cost per click, etc. This type of data does not appear to be collected or analysed in the same way in the Ukraine, Armenia or Tunisia. Costs per contact should be linked to communication effectiveness and outcomes. There is some focus on measurement of direct communication effects and outcomes for example in relation to large campaigns such as the 'Energy in your home campaign in Ukraine', but this approach is not implemented as a standard across all three countries, which is a limitation in understanding the real benefits of each channel and tool, or combination of channels and tools, which is usually the case, to reach a strategic communication goal.

EQ9ii. To what extent the set-up of EUICs physically located in the selected neighbourhood countries could enhance the outreach of the different target audiences?

JC 9ii.1. A physical space/presence for communication purposes in the Capital and/or other locations would make it possible to significantly enhance the reach and engagement by the EU Delegation of new and hard to reach publics.

There is a lack of evidence to confirm overall, which target groups are hardest to reach. Target group penetration of hard-to-reach groups is not necessarily related to communication channels and / or the need for direct face-to-face contact or making information available via a walk-in centre. Being hard to reach can also relate to attitudes and opinions on the EU.

The survey of EU Delegation Press Officers highlights that most Delegations (12 out of 19 Delegation respondents) aim to target people with little or no awareness of the EU. There was a consensus among staff interviewed in EU Delegations in Armenia, Tunisia and Ukraine that it would be desirable to do more outreach beyond the capital. In addition to the challenge of reaching citizens outside the capital, the Delegation in Ukraine particularly emphasised the difficulties in building relations with local and regional decision makers. In the case of Ukraine, the decentralisation process currently under way has arguably made this even more important.

Stakeholders, including journalists, who are aware of EU communication also suggest that citizens outside the capital have lower awareness about the EU. However, according to the EU Delegation Press Officer survey, the main challenge is the lack of understanding of what the EU does (15 out of 19 respondents) rather than the awareness of what the EU is (9 out of 19 respondents). However, 15 out of 19 respondents proactively target citizens who feel neutral about the EU.

A first step in greater outreach in Ukraine has come through partnerships with regional media, focusing on information for businesses in recent years.

According to the survey of EU Delegation press officers, the Delegations report that they are successful at reaching their main target groups, young people, students, academics, business people, community leaders, cultural organisations, for example. From a pre-defined list of target groups, in the survey, Delegations indicated that they find it most difficult to reach older people. There is no evidence from the neighbourhood region that this target group would be significantly easier to reach through an Info



Centre in the capital or other regions.

The three Delegations considered in this study support their communication activities via direct, physical interaction with target groups via a wide range of different types of outdoor and indoor events, including, festivals and concerts, workshops, training and conferences. Some of these events are 'hub-type activities', which bring together a range of other EU information providers, including EU MS embassies, coordinators of technical assistance projects and EU programmes. The types of events organised are like those organised with the support of EU Info Centres in the Western Balkans.

There is already a network of Info Centres in universities in Ukraine, but with no direct funding they make a limited contribution to the Delegation's overall EU communication effort. These information centres in universities are also open to the general public (though there is no data on how many members of the general public use them). Ukraine has an extensive network of libraries across the country, in which a significant investment is being made. The EUD in Ukraine is taking advantage of this network to provide libraries with EU publications. Under the Moving Forward Together campaign in Ukraine³⁸, i.e. the strategic communication contract, there is a plan for a centre for press conferences and events, while the House of Europe project with cultural institutes to provide information and organise events outside the capital is likely to have a coordinating presence in Kyiv. In addition, Delegation human resources are already stretched, and this would have to be considered if an additional contract was set up.

Strength of evidence: strong

Description of the evidence base: Survey of EU Delegation Press Officers; EU Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans; Interviews with communication contractors; Interviews with EU Delegation staff; Interviews with external stakeholders MS embassy staff, journalists, other EU programme information providers.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: the findings are supported by a range of documentary, qualitative and quantitative evidence, which supports good triangulation of the evidence. Whilst the evidence base is not fully complete and draws on a sample of three countries, evidence from the survey of all EU Delegations in the neighbourhood region give additional weight to the findings. The nature of the judgement criteria and the topic mean that there is no 'absolute' answer and judgement is applied by interviewees and survey respondents who provided evidence.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
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³⁸https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ukraine/41139/eu-delegation-launches-all-ukrainian-%E2%80%9Cmoving-forward-together%E2%80%9D-communication-campaign_en



Indicator 9ii.1.1.
Extent that existing contracts and resources do not / cannot include provisions for on-going face-to-face contact and direct target group outreach relating to EU communication goals.

- Existing contracts facilitate face-to-face communication with target groups via a wide range of different events.
- The EU Young Ambassadors scheme in particular supports outreach to students and young people outside the capitals.
- In the Ukraine there is a network of EU Info Centres in universities, which provides points of contact for further information, but with no grant their support to EU communication goals is limited.
- In all three case study countries, the lack of capacity for adequate outreach beyond the capital is acknowledged.
- EU Delegation are already putting plans in place to support physical centres.
- In Armenia there are already plans for outreach centres outside Yerevan, for example in Gyumri.

There are **no contractual provisions that preclude face-to-face contact** with target groups in the neighbourhood region.

The review of ToR from a sample of the two most recent projects from the CRIS database covering Armenia, Tunisia, Ukraine and covering multiple countries, as well as the ToR for the OPEN East and OPEN South Projects do not make explicit reference to face-to-face and direct target group outreach as such. However, a range of events are planned and implemented via these communication contracts, which involve direct contact with target groups. For example, the ToR for one ongoing contract for Armenia (Communicating EU-Armenia Cooperation and Partnership 2018-2019) notes that face-to-face events are to be one of the communication channels for targeted young professionals (including public servants, business employees, male/female entrepreneurs, start-ups, etc.).

The Delegation Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans confirm extensive use of **events as a vehicle to engage target audiences**. For example, the 2017 Annual Report in Armenia confirms the implementation of a series of events under the umbrellas of EU4Business and EU4Innovation. The Ukraine Annual Report for 2017 also highlights the role of direct outreach via events including culture, music festivals and sport events for example the Odesa Film and Gogol theatre festivals and the Kyiv Euro Marathon and other events which resulted in estimated outreach to 30,000 people across 4 cities. Flagship events are also used in Tunisia.

Continuous face-to-face provision is valued in Armenia. To support the implementation of the CEPA agreement, there are plans in place to establish **a new EU House / Centre in Gyumri or Yerevan** to serve as multi-purpose information hub(s) serving the citizens of Armenia by distributing information about the EU, its Member States and their activities, as well as by providing a venue for cultural events, debates and training courses. The purpose of such a House would be to create a platform between the EU, the MS and Armenian citizens to ensure broader engagement and participation of citizens in the context of the ongoing CEPA implementation and reform process and to use different communication and visibility tools for greater outreach. A social entrepreneurship component to the EU House(s) is also being explored.

Government representatives in Armenia were enthusiastic about the idea of an EU House but understood the importance of making such an initiative viable, suggesting that the concept could be a **shared space** with offices rented to NGOs, for example. Feedback from the government departments consulted was that the concept would be supported as a place to support communication on EU values and feedback that these departments would welcome involvement in the planning of an EU House.

In Ukraine, there is also already **some existing continuous face-to-face provision**, via the network of EU Info Centres in universities which are managed directly by the EU Delegation; others are managed via the contract on Information Support to Youth and EU Networks in Ukraine held by the Open Society Foundation. The future Europe House contract will further intensify face-to-face contact in the Ukrainian regions. In addition, the Head of Delegation travels extensively. However, the Info Centre network is not supported by EU grants and, therefore, the Delegation is conscious that the role that it can play in promoting the Association Agreement is limited. Despite this, the evidence suggests that the Delegation continues to actively engage in outreach because from time to time the Delegation tries to activate the

- Review of sample of ToR / communication contracts in the three sample countries – where available.
- EU Delegation Annual Reports and Forward Plans.
- Interviews with EU Delegation representatives.
- Interviews with OPEN Neighbourhood contractors.
- Interviews with EU Delegation communication contractors

³⁹ The British Council was a co-applicant, but its participation will depend on the final terms of Brexit. Signature of the contract has been delayed until this can be clarified.



<p>Indicator 9.ii.1.2. Extent that there is evidence from existing or past similar EU structures with physical spaces in the selected neighbourhood case study countries demonstrating that these have significantly enhanced or enhance target group penetration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed feedback was received on the visibility and levels of engagement with the former EU Info Centre in Armenia, which implies that more was required to promote the centre and / or that a longer timeframe was required as the centre was a pilot and after set-up had circa 18 months in operation. The former EU Info Centre in Armenia generated several tangible outputs, ICCT system and education materials, lesson plans and instruction on new pedagogical methodologies used by schools and universities. EU Bus tours were reported by numerous stakeholders in Armenia to be a good way to support outreach. Options to link services to citizens with communication on the EU could provide a win-win scenario. Managing additional communication contracts / info centres has implications for 	<p>In the mid-term evaluation of the previous regional communication programme 2009-2014, mention was made that face-to-face direct contact should be more appreciated or included in the range of monitoring and evaluation tools.</p> <p>In Armenia, the '<i>Support to EU communication on reforms in Armenia and technical assistance</i>' was a pilot project that ran between August 2012 and December 2014. The project was comprised of 11 specific activities and one of these activities was the provision of an EU Information Centre. The main objective of the project was to support the communication on the EU development cooperation and reforms in Armenia to increase the visibility, knowledge and understanding of EU-funded programmes, projects and policies among the Armenian stakeholders, media and the public. The project had three main purposes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> to support EUD communication activities on EU funded programmes and projects; to explain to pupils and students the EU, its institutions and relevance to Armenia; and to raise public awareness about EU-Armenia relations. <p>Former key experts highlighted several the below the communication activities as being particularly effective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> off-the record monthly meetings between journalists (10-15 mainly editors) and the Ambassador, which helped to cultivate a network of journalists with an increased level of understanding about the EU. events and collaboration with other EU stakeholders: these included weekly student meetings on EU-related topics; cooperation with Erasmus+ and different MS embassies. By the end of the contract in 2014, it was reported that the Centre was frequented by some 55 spontaneous visitors each day. This was corroborated to some extent by one stakeholder interviewed whose office at the time had overlooked the EU Info Centre and confirmed that there were a lot of visitors coming and going. EU bus and outreach tours: the Centre rented a bus and decorated it with EU flag branding. With the bus, key experts from the Centre visited all 10 regions over the two years of the contract. This provided opportunities for EUD staff to discuss directly with society and provide support with regards to how to apply for grants, as well as information about cooperation assistance support in the region. Efforts were made to present information in a way that would engage local populations. <p>Interviewed stakeholders were consistently positive about the bus tours, which were reported to have been popular with local citizens. Government officials interviewed were in favour of repeating the outreach bus in the future. One interviewee cited government statistics, which confirmed the effectiveness of a similar bus-approach during the recent election campaign.</p> <p>Findings from interviews with stakeholders in Armenia confirmed a mixed picture on visibility and engagement, which was replicated throughout the field mission with interviewees either praising the Info Centre and confirming that it had been useful and well used or indicating that they had no knowledge of the Info Centre.</p> <p>The education component to the EU Info Centre resulted in the development of EU curricula</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid-term evaluation of the regional communication programme 2009 – 2014. Evaluation survey of EU Delegations in the neighbourhood region. Interviews with stakeholders who engage with EUD communication. Interview with MS embassy staff. Interviews with representatives of other EU Programmes such as Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020.
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Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
<p>Indicator 9.ii.1.3. Feedback from HQ, EU Delegations, contractors, national government and other stakeholders and representatives of target groups confirms that direct, continuous, face-to-face contact and / or via a 'neutral partner' is the best way for the EU to engage with the target group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When Delegations want to change perceptions and behaviours re EU values / sensitive topics the EU may need a third party to communicate on its behalf to gain public acceptance. EU Delegations recognised the benefits of having a neutral communication partner in the survey of Delegations. Interviews with external stakeholders in Armenia and Tunisia highlighted the importance of a neutral communication partner. There was no evidence that other organisations, including EU programmes and partners view permanent Info Centre structures as vital to their operations. 	<p>Respondents to the survey of EU Delegation Press Officers agreed (Armenia and Ukraine) or agreed strongly (Tunisia) that a benefit of having EU Info Centres would be to have a less politicised / more neutral face for the EU in their countries. Both Eastern partnership and southern neighbourhood countries agreed and strongly agreed on this. However, in the open comments box, one respondent specifically mentioned that EU Info Centres would still be perceived at politicised because of its EU branding.</p> <p>Feedback from stakeholders during the field mission in Armenia confirmed both the importance of EU support to communicate on values in particular, but also how on some issues such as domestic violence and LGBTQ it is important that the issues are presented by local contractors or agencies as if the push is coming from Armenians rather than the EU. EU communication on sensitive topics would cause mistrust. Working via Armenian companies helps EUD to have a better understanding of the communication environment and allows communication to be presented as Armenian rather than European, when the EUD is advised to be less visible. Both the EUD Press Officer and Communication Coordinator are also Armenian, which also underlines the need to have a deep understanding of the country, its culture, historical context and language to support effective communication.</p> <p>Feedback from stakeholders during the mission in Tunisia was that if set up an EU Info Centre should have a neutral set up to be perceived as independent from the EUD.</p> <p>This concern did not surface in the field mission in Ukraine, which was largely restricted to the capital. Support for links with the EU is high and the EU is associated with strong political support vis-à-vis Russia. In addition, Ukrainians are keen for Ukraine to be perceived as a European country, and even as a potential EU member. Consequently, any association with the EU has a positive connotation as long as this environment does not change. The large communication contract is for the time being de facto providing a neutral channel.</p> <p>EU Delegation respondents to the survey also noted that the following would be most useful in their countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a Europe/EU House in the capital (Armenia: strongly agreed, Tunisia: neutral, Ukraine: disagreed); Having an EU Info Centre in the capital to provide logistical support (Armenia: agree; Tunisia: strongly agree, Ukraine: neutral). a multi-annual communication contract for long term communication campaigning in this country (Armenia/Tunisia/Ukraine: strongly agreed); and additional communication human resources within the EU Delegations (Armenia/Tunisia/Ukraine: strongly agreed). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of EU Delegations in the neighbourhood region press officers. Interviews with external stakeholders. Interviews with representatives of other EU programmes, Erasmus+, Horizon 2020 and Enterprise Europe Network.
Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence



Indicator 9.ii.1.4.

Consulted EU MS, IOs / donors confirm the importance of direct, continuous, face-to-face contact is critical to achieving their outreach objectives.

- There was no evidence or feedback to confirm that continuous face-to-face contact is critical to reaching EU Delegation objectives.
- Delegations in Armenia, Ukraine and Tunisia recognise the need for greater outreach outside the capital.
- EU Delegations identify potential benefits for EU Info Centre / Houses, to provide logistical support / venue in the capital.
- 5 Delegations strongly agree on a need for a communication coordinator and network of info points.
- There is greatest consensus on more Human Resources in Delegations and budget for long term multiannual communication contracts.
- Armenia is already planning an EU House in Gyumri to support CEPA and Ukraine plans to support the set-up

Feedback from EU Delegations in the three countries highlights the need for **greater focus on outreach** particularly given the lack of representation outside the capital. However, from the survey of EU Delegation Press Officers only one third reported difficulties in reaching out beyond the capital.

In Armenia the Delegation is collaborating with TUMO via the EU4Innovation initiative which will provide a platform to support science, technology, engineering and mathematics students (STEM) from different universities. EU support (EUR 12.5 million) will lead to the set-up of a convergence centre or hub offering hands-on workshops, project-based instruction and applied research facilities. The Centre will offer low-cost offices and venture acceleration services for start-ups and small technology companies, which will ensure the financial sustainability of the Centre and the running cost of the shared hub. Furthermore, the centre will develop educational technology content both for higher and compulsory education in Armenia.

During the field mission in Tunisia, most stakeholders reported that, despite enhanced outreach, which may be suggested by the increase in the number of visits/followers on the website and social media accounts, most interviewees noted that there continues to be a significant mismatch between the importance of the EU's role in Tunisia on the one hand and public visibility and awareness of the EU's role on the other hand. However, overall analysis from the field mission in Tunisia suggests that there is **no evidence** to confirm that additional communication resource should be channelled through an Info Centre as it exists in the Western Balkans and Turkey rather than any other communication mechanism, but there might be other models that could be relevant for Tunisia, particularly those who focus on **outreach towards youth**.

In its review of communication in 2017, the EU Delegation in Ukraine lamented the **lack of a regular presence in the regions**, especially in the South East of Ukraine, where the public is not as aware of the value added of EU-UA cooperation and often has negative stereotypes about the EU. Communication partners and media interviewed during the field mission concurred with the need for more outreach beyond the capital and for there to be more face-to-face contact, notably with stakeholders. The proposed solution to address this situation was reported in the Delegation's review of communication in 2017 to be greater focus on outreach in the regions, which is supported through high level visits. During the field mission, this concern about the South East (and East) also came up.

The EU Info Centres in universities and other networks, such as the 15 Business Information Support Centres for SMEs, provide face-to-face contact to some extent, and the Europe House project will go further in that direction – suggesting that there will be significant scope for synergies and coordination, but there are some activities for which there is no substitute for direct contact with the EU, e.g. regional and local officials and politicians, and civil society at local level. This is a need for face-to-face contact that is best met by one-on-one meetings (e.g. with Delegation officials, who currently do not have the time) and by events, but the

- Survey of EU Delegation Press Officers.
- Interviews with EU Delegation staff.
- Interviews with MS embassy staff.
- Interviews with EU programme coordinators.
- Interviews with other stakeholders during the field missions.



of a Europe House.

need for events is not necessarily best met by a walk-in centre.

However, whatever the desirability of direct, continuous face-to-face contact – whether through an Info Centre or some other way, there are questions about the capacity of the Delegations in Armenia, Tunisia and Ukraine to manage this.

In the evaluation **survey of EU Delegation Press Officers**, both Tunisia and Ukraine agreed strongly that an EU Info Centre could lead to increased opportunities for face-to-face contact with target groups. Armenia was neutral on this point. On this issue, the other southern neighbourhood countries agreed and agreed strongly, whereas the other Eastern Partnership countries equally agreed strongly and disagreed. The Info Centre was the only option posited for achieving this. No other models were suggested.

The respondents further either agreed (Armenia) or agreed strongly (Tunisia and Ukraine) that EU Info Centres would help the EU Delegations reach new target audiences. Both Eastern partnership and southern neighbourhood countries agreed and strongly agreed on this. The respondents agreed (Armenia) or strongly agreed (Tunisia and Ukraine) that there would be potential benefits in having additional/new channels for EU Delegation campaigns. Both Eastern partnership and southern neighbourhood countries agreed and strongly agreed on this.

Respondents indicated that EU Info Centres could better help EU Delegations with the following:

- Reach new target audiences (Armenia/Ukraine: agreed, Tunisia: agreed strongly);
- Provide additional/new communication channels for EU Delegation campaigns (Armenia: agreed, Tunisia/Ukraine: agreed strongly);
- Entail greater involvement of local people in EU communication delivery (Armenia: agreed, Tunisia/Ukraine: agreed strongly);
- Help to understand non-specialist target audience needs (Armenia/Ukraine: agreed, Tunisia: agreed strongly);
- Provide technical equipment that is not available at EU Delegations (Armenia: agreed, Tunisia: agreed strongly, Ukraine neutral);
- Help in having a source of feedback from target groups (Armenia: agreed, Tunisia/Ukraine: agreed strongly).

Although Delegations could identify benefits to the set-up of an Info Centre or network of Info Centres, **15 Delegations (79%** of respondents) in the neighbourhood region agreed that **a multi-annual communication contract for long-term campaigning was their preferred option to enhance EU communication performance together with an increase in human resources in the Delegation (15 Delegations)**. This contrasts with 11 Delegations confirming that they would find an EU House useful for purely logistical support, for example as an event venue and for event organisation.

There were **mixed feelings about an EU House** to host other EU information providers (8



Delegations though this was a good idea, 5 Delegations disagreed on this and 4 Delegations were neutral). There were also **mixed feelings about a communication coordinator in the capital with a network of info points** across the country although 5 Delegations agreed strongly with this idea.



EQ10. To what extent the communication activities carried out in the selected neighbourhood countries have been/are coherent, complementary and coordinated with those carried out via EU regional communication programmes (e.g. OPEN Neighbourhood programme), HQ initiatives and by other partners (e.g. Member States, International Financial Institutions, international organisations) active in communicating about EU policies and programmes in the partner country?

JC 10.1 Extent that EU Delegations **coordinate their communication activities in the partner countries** to ensure coherence and synergies with other **EU programmes/projects, Member States, IFIs and IOs.**

The ToR for the OPEN Neighbourhood Programme confirm that collaboration with other partners and projects underpin the communication activities to be carried out. The extent that the East and South Projects engage with the Delegations in Armenia, Tunisia and Ukraine relate to the individual needs and interests of the Delegations, for example the Delegation in Tunisia is appreciative of inputs from OPEN South into the approach to target young people, whereas the Delegation in the Ukraine does not report involving the OPEN East project in its communication planning to any great extent.

There are examples of collaboration with Member State embassies, cultural institutes and other EU programmes around specific initiatives such as Europe Days and for example the EU House being established in Ukraine. There is some joint planning and some collaboration takes place on a more ad hoc basis. The level of interest and capacity of the Member States in each country is a factor that influences the level of collaboration with the EU.

EU Delegation Annual Reports and Forward Plans place appear to place less emphasis on structured planning with IFIs and IOs than with Member State embassies. But there is evidence to confirm specific collaboration in line with major communication themes, with UNESCO and the International Organisation for Migration in Tunisia, and with the UN in Armenia around the annual Human Rights Prize. However, there is regular structured collaboration in relation to visibility and communication around cooperation assistance projects. Armenia has a specific IT tool to support this collaboration. Projects share their communication plans with Delegations, including details of specific opening events. Delegation communication contractors also liaise with projects to source content for thematic campaigns and other communication pieces, and pooling contracts are intended to reduce the fragmentation that occurs when lots of projects communicating in isolation to ensure a more joined-up approach.

According to the EU Delegation survey, for EU Delegation-managed communication, greater importance is attached to working with local stakeholder organisations than international organisations. The survey confirms that civil society organisations are viewed as the most critical partners followed by cultural organisations. Member State cultural institutes are also rate highly, more so than MS embassies. This result reflects the fact that these local organisations are closer to target groups on the ground.

Strength of evidence more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: ToR for the OPEN East and South Projects; Interviews with OPEN East and South contractors; Interviews with MS embassies; Survey of EU Delegation Press Officers; Interviews with EU Delegation staff; Interviews with EU Young Ambassadors; Interviews with EU Delegations; EU Delegations Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: more than satisfactory is indicated given that the evidence results from triangulation of primary and secondary data, as well as quantitative and qualitative evidence.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
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Indicator 10.1.1

EU Delegations, OPEN Programme contractors and staff of other EU programmes⁴⁰ IFIs, international organisations and Member State embassies and cultural institutes confirm regular exchanges on communication activities for coordination/joint planning purposes.

- The level of collaboration in communication planning between EU Delegations in Armenia, Tunisia and Ukraine and the OPEN Neighbourhood Programme relates to Delegation needs.
- Europe Days are key opportunities for collaboration between MS embassies and EU Delegations.
- The level of cooperation between Delegations in Ukraine and Tunisia and Member State embassies appears to be limited, with the Members States particularly focussed on their national interests in Ukraine.
- Communication contracts are expected to collaborate with IFIs, the OPEN Programme and other EU programmes.

The **ToR** for the OPEN East and South projects of the OPEN Neighbourhood Programme refer to the team leader as having to ensure coordination and contacts with relevant project partners (such as projects and programmes and EU Delegations in the region, and Commission Headquarters for regional and cross-border cooperation programmes). Both projects also foresee staff who are to refine themes for campaigns in coordination with EU Delegations and European Commission Headquarters based on annual work plans and to assist in the development of country communication strategies.

Feedback from OPEN project contractors confirmed a high degree of coordination with EU Delegations, given the need to ensure that activities undertaken are in step with Delegation plans. When this is not the case, due to a changing political situation for example, then the OPEN projects retime planned activities. The level of collaboration between the OPEN project contractors, the EU Delegation and HQ confirms that messaging to target groups is aligned. At the same time, OPEN project contractors use content from cooperation contracts and this ensures a degree of coordination of messages. In addition, the contractor representing the Eastern neighbourhood, highlighted its activities to ensure coordination and sharing of communication messages and materials via a Trello board.

In practice, in Tunisia the Delegation confirmed that the OPEN South project contributes to the EUD's communication and information objectives towards youth in a very comprehensive and coherent manner. Likewise, the activities of the Erasmus+ office, especially its "campus tours", appear to be linked to the decentralised approaches realised via OPEN SOUTH to be more present outside the capital.

In Armenia, the Delegation confirmed the complementary nature of the work carried out by the OPEN East Projects and the additional communication materials produced and the Young Ambassadors scheme were particularly welcomed in the perspective that the contribution allowed Delegation staff to focus on other tasks. Good collaboration with the EU Delegation was also confirmed in interviews with EU Young Ambassadors.

The EU Delegation in Ukraine reported that the OPEN East project is not very involved in the communication planning process with the EU Delegation. However, the Young Ambassadors programme is regarded as part of the networks that the Delegation is working on bringing closer together.

The survey of EU Delegation press officers confirms that two thirds of Delegations consider that they have a good view of any progress made by the OPEN East and South projects.

Most of the ToR reviewed from a sample of the two most recent communication projects from the CRIS database covering Armenia, Tunisia, Ukraine and covering multiple countries make explicit reference to the need for coordination with other communication partners operating in the country and/or region. These partners typically include European Finance Institutions (EIF, ERDF, ERDF and Human Rights), multi-lateral and bilateral donors (e.g. UNDP, US, Canada), the OPEN Neighbourhood Programme, and other local projects in the countries (e.g. 'EU4Business' in Armenia as well as UNESCO's NET-MED Youth Programme, the Anna Lindh Foundation, and the MedMedia programmes in Tunisia).

However, feedback from EU Delegations and as described in Annual Reports, communication at project level is fragmented and not particularly effective, hence the drive to more pooling of EU funds to support communication about EU projects. This also has implications for

- ToR for the OPEN East and South Projets.
- Interviews with OPEN East and South contractors.
- Interviews with MS embassies.
- Survey of EU Delegation Press Officers.
- Interviews with EU Delegation staff.
- Interviews with EU Young Ambassadors.

⁴⁰ As programmes vary from country-to-country, the exact programmes to be selected will be defined for Ukraine, Armenia and Tunisia. Examples are Creative Europe, Erasmus+, Horizon 2020, TAIEX or the thematic programmes e.g. EU Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (IDHR).



Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
<p>Indicator 10.1.2</p> <p>HQ, EU Delegations, EU programmes, Member State Embassies, IFIs, IOs and other partners confirm and provide examples of joint communication activities resulting from a joined-up approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Delegations collaborate with Member State embassies, but levels of satisfaction with this collaboration vary. • In Ukraine, the Delegation confirms that MS embassies tend to focus on national interests; cooperation with cultural institutes is closer. • Most EU Delegation communication is not done in collaboration with MS Embassies, IFIs and IOs. • Communication contracts managed by EUD strengthen communication / visibility actions of individual partners by communicating on the results of cooperation assistance. 	<p>In Armenia, the Delegation’s 2017 Annual Communication Report confirms that the Delegation works together with the Member States. The 2018 Forward plan confirms how the Delegation planned to increase the number of cultural and sports events to take advantage of the European Year of Culture and anniversary celebrations for a number of EU Member States. Interviews with the EU Delegation and MS embassies, representatives from the Enterprise Europe Network and Erasmus+ also confirm collaboration with the Delegation around Europe Days event. There is also collaboration with cultural institutes.</p> <p>Collaboration between the EU Delegation in Tunisia, MS embassies, IFIs and International Organisations has been limited, but, nonetheless, some specific examples can be identified.</p> <p>The EU Delegation in Tunisia has been coordinating with seven/eight international organisations to pass joint messages about the reform agenda of Tunisia. The EU Delegation and UNICEF hosted an event, together with the Austrian Presidency, to convey messages about children’s rights. With the Global Pact on Migration, joint press statements were released by the International Organisation of Migration, other partners, and projects that the EU Delegation is funding in this area. Moreover, various sections of the EU Delegation work together in a concerted way to create events (e.g. events on Partnership and Youth as well as Culture in the EU-MENA relationship). There were public diplomacy, events and press components in these events.</p> <p>In Ukraine, the Moving Forward Together’ slogan developed by the large Communicating Europe Together contract is being used by other contractors as well, e.g. EBRD for EU4Business. Under the Communicating Europe Together campaign, the Delegation’s communication contractors have also collaborated on promoting Erasmus+, eTwinning and Horizon 2020 on social media as part of the Education and Research strand.</p> <p>The Ukraine 2017 Annual Report confirms that collaboration with MS missions in Kyiv is patchy, despite efforts to invite EU MS to cost-free public events in the regions and join other activities. EUD calls to use shared calendar and employ ready-made EUD communication products for public diplomacy of the EU MS are rarely used. Most of the missions in Kyiv (in particular of smaller EU MS) tend to focus on their national culture and commercial diplomacy events and are not able to join EUD initiatives related to the AA/DCFTA outside Kyiv.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with EU Delegations. • EU Delegations Information and Communication Annual Reports and Forward Plans.

JC 10.2. Extent that the establishment of EU Info Centres (acting as hubs) would enhance coordination, increase coherence and outreach of communication activities implemented by the EUD, the OPEN Programme, the other EU programmes, EU MS, the national government and other donors (communicating on EU policies and values) in the ENI partner countries.

There is little evidence to confirm that the establishment of an EU Info Centre would meet a strong need, that the absence of a hub is particularly problematic. Where there are issues, for example, the lack of coordination with MS embassies in Ukraine, this is largely driven by the fact that embassies have their own agenda / objectives as is the

case for national governments.

Moreover, the venue in Kyiv being planned for media and events as part of the Communicating Europe Together (also known as Moving Forward Together, as that is the strapline) strategic communication project may serve this purpose by attracting Embassies.

Delegations have taken steps through the pooling contracts to enhance visibility on EU programmes and existing contractors, including from OPEN East and South already collaborate with other EU programmes and projects to source content for thematic campaigns. Delegations have flexibility to work with OPEN Project contractors in line with their own requirements.

From the perspective of citizens, most information on EU programmes can be found on-line, even if these programmes have offices in different locations, although in most cases information can be expected to be sourced online given that projects do not offer physical information centre services. Different programmes do not appear to need to collaborate with each other given their different objectives and target groups. But there is, nonetheless, an argument to bring all things EU into one space to show the wealth of what the EU has to offer and to use this as a platform to promote EU visibility. However, the decision to do this would be based on judgement rather than clear evidence and would imply that DG NEAR would need to reach agreements with a range of other DGs to support this move, which would require an integrated EU approach. Within the EU Member States, different EU programmes are also communicated to the public separately via different MS Ministries who have specialist knowledge of their target audience.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: Interviews with EU Delegations; Interviews with OPEN Project South and East Coordinators; Survey of EU Delegation Press Officers; Interviews with EU Delegation staff; Interviews with representatives from government departments; Interviews with reps from other EU programmes

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: there are more than two sources of evidence on these indicators, which require feedback from Delegation staff.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
<p>Indicator 10.2.1 Strength of consensus among EU Delegation staff that more focus on coordination would have been desirable / necessary and there is a consistent rationale for this.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is possible scope for greater coordination, but this also relates to the level of capacity and interest of other organisations. 	<p>Staff in the EU Delegation in Tunisia noted that there is scope to make communication activities more joined-up and coherent, as sometimes the examples of cooperation occur on a more ad hoc basis. The Delegation in Tunisia believes cooperation with IFIs and other international organisations could be strengthened. Collaboration on communication under specific projects co-funded by the EU is perceived as relatively limited. Interviewees pointed out that objectives in terms of the EU/EUD visibility are not always met as partners might have competing visibility objectives. This is an issue not restricted to Tunisia.</p> <p>Interviews with Delegation communication staff in Armenia, Tunisia and Ukraine confirm that engagement with the OPEN neighbourhood programme on the basis of needs, with different levels of collaboration noted. This feedback is consistent with feedback from OPEN East and South Project coordinators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with EU Delegations Interviews with OPEN Project South and East Coordinators. Survey of EU Delegation Press Officers
Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence



Indicator 10.2.2

Consensus among EU Delegation staff and partners that EU Info Centres are a desirable and feasible mechanism to increase coherence between the Delegation, the OPEN Neighbourhood Programme and other regional programmes if there were a EUIC.

- There is mixed feedback among EU staff on the extent that EU Centres are a desirable mechanism to increase coherence between programmes.
- This indicator also does not appear to be a particularly important consideration / rationale for EU Delegations consideration of EU Info Centres.
- As highlighted, Delegations appear to be satisfied with the level of coordination with the OPEN programme.

The interviewees in the three Delegations were split over the question on whether an EU Info Centre would be a desirable and feasible mechanism to increase coordination.

A couple of interviewees agreed that an EU Info Centre would address issues around understaffing around the areas of communication and visibility. As such, an EU Info Centre could enhance communication. For example, although funding has increased to the EU Delegation in Ukraine, there are not enough staff to implement projects. It would therefore be helpful to outsource more work in some way, Info Centres were not seen as necessarily the right answer.

Staff in Armenia confirmed that EU Info Centres could potentially add value, also given the lack of human resources and in view of the significant amount of administrative burden due to contracting. However, given that there has already been an EU Info Centre in Yerevan, which was a DG DEVCO project, which closed with no follow up, there may be some reputational risks to be explored in any field phase. There were various complaints relating to the loss of continuity at the end of the project and the fact that the EU Delegation was unable to harness the networks / track record that had been built up during the project. With changes of staff in the EU Delegation it was suggested that there is now a loss of institutional memory with regards to the EU Info Centre.

Staff in Armenia also underlined the fact that an EU Info Centre would require strong oversight on the part of the EU Delegation. However, the EU Delegation is about to launch four-year Framework Contracts covering media monitoring, print and production and audiovisual. This suggests that if an EU Info Centre model is introduced in the next four to five years, it would focus on outreach activities rather than content production. It is noted that the EU Delegation is satisfied with coordination with the OPEN Neighbourhood Programme and did not see a need to reinforce coordination.

During the field mission to Armenia, interviews with representatives from government departments confirmed that there would be support for a coordinating hub to raise visibility of the relationship between the EU and Armenia. Feedback from the Erasmus+ and EEN coordinators and observations on their out of town, low profile rental locations also implied benefits from relocating to a central hub.

Feedback from other stakeholders confirms that consideration of an EU hub also relates to EU visibility in the capital as compared to other governments or donors. For example, in Armenia stakeholders suggested that it would be important for the EU to increase its visibility in the short term given the potential threat that Russia might want a more visible presence and taking into account the high levels of visibility of China as a donor

Staff from the EU Delegation in Tunisia noted there might be risks to outsourcing communications. Another staff member mentioned that the sheer variety of EU programmes (e.g. Erasmus, Horizon+, grants for civil society, etc.) targeted at different audiences would not be feasible to incorporate in an EU Info Centre. Although there is a need for more systematic approach to deal with incoming requests and information around these programmes, it would make sense to have a more decentralised approach with different

- Interviews with EU Delegation staff.
- Interviews with representatives from government departments
- Interviews with reps from other EU programmes



offices who deal with specific programmes. Conversely, a more uniform approach is required for more strategic communication to centralise the wealth of information that exists across the portfolio of programmes and synthesise it for strategic use; one respondent from the EU Delegation in Tunisia mentioned that the EU Delegation is aiming to have this approach in place by next year.

The existing 26 EU Info Centres (which are housed in universities) in Ukraine are more in the nature of Info Points than Info Centres, as they receive no funding and are not contracted for. Currently, the EU Info Centres bid to organise EU Career Days and organise thematic discussions and public lectures. One staff member in Ukraine noted that the EU Info Centres “have no impact” and have too limited funding, but there is no monitoring data to showcase results. Some staff in the EU Delegation noted that it would be beneficial to move towards a resourced network of EU Info Centres with a centre in Kiev guiding and coordinating the other centres. However, some staff felt that there is no place for new structures given the comprehensive communication landscape that already exists and that the emphasis should be on perfecting the existing channels and tools.

The focus of any EU Info Centre network should be on training, communication methodologies, guidance, and information support. They could focus on creating a uniform approach to communications and lift some of the burden from the EU Delegation. One survey respondent also mentioned that the city/host government could offer space for the EU Info Centres, with the EU providing funds for salaries and running costs. The EU Info Centre model could enhance the work of the EU Delegation and act as central resource office / “one-stop-shop” to ensure greater consistency for the EU Info Centres and projects.

EQ11. To what extent the communication activities implemented by HQ and the EU Delegations have contributed/are contributing to raising public awareness about the EU, its policies and values in the selected neighbourhood partner countries?

JC 11.1 Extent that HQ, EU Delegation contractors can quantify and/or qualify increases in target audience awareness of the EU, its policies and values because of the communication activities.

Annual polling data is available to confirm citizens’ perceptions of the EU. In wave 4, Spring 2019, questions in Ukraine related to the following topics:

- General perceptions of the EU
- Values associated with the EU
- Assessment of EU relations with Ukraine
- Awareness of financial support provided by the EU and assessment of its effectiveness
- Sources of information



- Country evaluation and future expectations

Polling is useful because it gives a year-on-year view of sentiment in each country. However, the collection of data these polls is not specific to test the recall and understanding of messages from specific communication activities. This means that it is not possible to link the results of polls directly to EU communication and it is an unreliable measure of communication performance even if there has been substantial campaigning on for example EU support to energy policy. Poll respondents are required to reply to a pre-defined set of questions and are not provided with the opportunity to say what they really think or feel on an issue.

There is a lack of in-depth qualitative research to confirm these thoughts and feelings and this lack is particularly acute given evidence that successful communication campaigns engage with people on an emotional level. In addition, the frequency of polling makes it difficult to confirm that results are linked to specific communication effects. A different approach is taken to research on several specific campaigns, in Ukraine⁴¹, where there is a focus on pre and post campaign research.

The Communicating Europe in Ukraine campaign is a notable exception (but the smaller visa-free campaign is also an example of good practice). The campaign was designed using research to identify the reasons for the perception of the EU and the influences which formed that perception. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were organised with Ukrainians who are positive or neutral about relations with the EU. There was a “push” rather than a “pull” approach to this research, i.e. the research was based on asking about information on EU support programme not topics identified by research into the interests of Ukrainians. The campaign is also measuring recall and increases in awareness of components of the campaign. This is, however, only a first step as it is necessary to go beyond this to understand whether this led to attitudinal change.

Most of EU Delegation data, however, relates to target group reach, some of this is estimated, for example in relation to TV viewing figures and readership numbers. Different types of reach data are collected in addition to media circulation and viewership figures, including event participation, website and social media metrics and informal feedback. This data provides different levels of insight. For example, it is not unreasonable to expect that participants in a small event gain additional insights, depending on the topic, whereas this cannot necessarily be inferred by the number of visitors to a website or the number of Facebook fans on the Delegation’s Facebook page.

Yet it is not possible to know whether those reached noticed EU messages or whether there has been an increase in target groups’ level of awareness, without testing what the level of awareness was before exposure to communication, which is only feasible if specific unless measurement systems are put in place as has been done in Ukraine. Therefore, increased awareness can only be assumed, unless specific research is carried out to find out from target groups exposed to the campaign if the information that they have received has increased their level of awareness on a topic. It may be plausible to assume that levels of awareness on a very specific topic are low and that putting information into the public domain on the topic leads to an increase of awareness, but this does not necessarily mean that exposure to a topic results in target groups understanding what the topic is about or what the relevance is to their lives. The survey of EU Delegation Press Officers suggests that Delegations consider that the biggest problem for EU communication relates to understanding of the EU rather than awareness of the EU.

Overall, it can be observed that there is a very limited focus on the use of qualitative research for example use of focus groups to better understand target group perceptions

⁴¹ A country note on Ukraine is provided in Annex 3 a separate document.



and to allow better tailoring of messages to inform EU Delegation’s information on communication performance. Even if on occasion there is some message testing by communication agencies, the conclusions of the evaluation of DG COMM’s pilot corporate campaign⁴², highlight the limitations of testing pre-defined messages as opposed to using target audience research for needs analysis and problem definition.

Strength of evidence: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: Survey of EU Delegation Press Officers; EU Delegation Annual Reports and Forward Plans; Interviews with communication contractors; Monitoring data viewed during the field mission; EU Neighbours portal opinion polls; “Evaluating Public Communication: exploring new models, standards, and best practice”; Evaluation of the “EU Working for You” pilot corporate campaign”; Interviews with journalists; Interviews with government representative; Interviews with NGOs; Interviews with other EU programmes; Feedback from focus groups.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: there are several sources of evidence from all three countries.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
<p>Indicator 11.1.1</p> <p>EU Delegation monitoring data confirms that their target audiences have enhanced awareness resulting from their participation in EU Delegation communication activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegations consider that enhancing understanding of what the EU does is more important than raising awareness. • All three EU Delegations’ contractors collect data to confirm the reach of their main activities. • There is limited data to confirm that target audiences have enhanced their awareness as a direct result of EU communication activities, but annual polls in Armenia and 	<p>This indicator can be nuanced by the finding from the survey of EU Delegation Press Officers that lack of public awareness of the EU is considered to be an issue by 47% of respondents, but a bigger problem relates to the lack of public understanding of what the EU does (80% of respondents).</p> <p>Across the three Delegations that featured in this study, data is collected in relation to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. event participation figures, 2. website and social media metrics (fans, followers, video views) 3. readership numbers, 4. informal feedback (which is not collected in a structured way) 5. media monitoring (TV, radio, newspapers) 6. impact on awareness / views of specific thematic campaigns via polling. <p>Delegations report on their key metrics in their Annual communication Reports. For example, in Armenia the key results reported for 2017, were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Info Clip views on TV / digital (2,580,000 TV views and 50,894,722 views) • Press visits, which lead to 740,770 media impressions • Publications' readership figures (exact figures not reported in the Annual Report) • Informal feedback (comment, emails, letters, etc. – details were not available) • Fans and followers on Facebook and Twitter, which increased from January to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of EU Delegation Press Officers • EU Delegation Annual Reports and Forward Plans. • Interviews with communication contractors • Monitoring data viewed during the field mission. • EU Neighbours portal opinion polls. • “Evaluating Public Communication: exploring new models, standards, and best practice”. • Evaluation of the “EU Working for You” pilot

⁴² Evaluation of the European Commission corporate communication pilot campaign designed and implemented by HAVAS Worldwide in Finland, Germany, Latvia, Poland, Portugal and Spain (Contract No COMM-A1/20/2014).



Ukraine are used to confirm increased awareness of specific topics. The Communicating Europe Together campaign, the visa-free campaign and then Energy in the Home campaigns have gone a step further.

- There is a limited focus on the collection of qualitative feedback to confirm if people feel more aware as a result of their exposure to campaigns.

November as follows: Facebook 24,299–43,038; Twitter 3,899–4,704.

For Tunisia, there is limited data on awareness, but the 2017 Annual report confirms attendance rates, for example, there were 200 participants at the 20th International Forum on Tunisia of Tomorrow, circa 1,000 participants the TedXCarthage event in May 2017, which received EU support. Other proxies for awareness raising focus on social media, as follows:

- 2,260 followers on Twitter (2017)
- 22,714 followers on Facebook (2017)

In the 2017 Annual Report of the Ukraine Delegation, the following figures are presented:

- 1.3 million citizens estimated reach via communications explaining AA/DCFTA benefits and opportunities for civil society, business community and local authorities and raising awareness on the EU's assistance to reforms in Ukraine
- increase from 4 to 16 Oblasts in regional media partnerships
- 1,250 EU-related articles in the media
- 53,246 unique website visitors
- 2,800 participants at 10 EU Careers Days events
- 40,000 (estimated) views of EU-sponsored Children's Kino Fest
- Facebook: organic growth of 48% to 40,432
- Twitter: 9,160 followers

Reach figures may not translate directly into rates of raised awareness. Qualitative data is required to confirm that citizens who are reached were more informed as a result of being reached by the data.

Although some contractors gather satisfaction data or conduct post-event surveys, overall there is insufficient attention to the collection of qualitative data. There are some exceptions to this in relation to specific large-scale campaigns in Ukraine. For example, general public pre-and post-campaign polling on the visa-free regime, confirmed that citizens knew more about the basic rules of the visa-free regime over a 9-month period from 33.4% to 61.1% in December 2017. Also, the 'Energy in Your Home campaign', implemented in five cities resulted in 19 million views of a video on national and regional TV

- Increase in awareness of energy efficiency issues from 16% to 19%;
- Decrease from 45% to 38% of Ukrainians who were willing to shift responsibility for energy efficiency measures to the authorities rather than themselves (suggests attitude

corporate campaign".

		<p>change).</p> <p>Annual polling data is available to confirm the citizens views on the EU in each of the three countries. Data provides a view on citizens’ perceptions of the EU, status of the EU relationship with the country, and is tailored to confirm understanding on a range of topics and values. However, it is not possible to establish a direct link between views expressed in these polls and levels of public awareness resulting from specific communication campaigns, even if EU campaigns have had some influence. This relates to the methodology which is applied. For example, some of the key questions are:</p> <p>“Which specific programmes do you know?”. Eleven possible options are provided, including education programmes, agricultural and rural development programmes, health and medicine programmes, economic reforms, etc. There can be some bias in this approach because people do not want to show ignorance.</p> <p>Other questions that maybe considered as influenced by EU Delegation communication campaigning could be the questions relating to the areas that have benefitted from EU support. Here again a pre-defined list of options is given. One of the DG COMM’s advisors on communication evaluation Professor Jim Macnamara, confirms in his book <i>Evaluating Public Communication</i> that polling can provide inaccurate information if samples are not representative and because respondents are required to answer a set of standard questions; they cannot say what they want. For this reason, he recommends complementing polls with in-depth qualitative data collection.</p> <p>Whilst these questions are useful to confirm year-on-year changes of public perception, they are not directly linked to campaigning. Good practice in this area would, for example, be to test unprompted and prompted recall and for this to be an activity carried out as an integral part of the campaign.</p>	
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Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
<p>Indicator 11.1.2. Perceptions of representatives of target groups, multipliers, Member State Embassies, IFIs, IOs and other stakeholders and partners confirm that EU Delegation activities and the regional</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heads of Delegation can play an important role in supporting public awareness of the EU. • Feedback from a range of stakeholders in all three countries confirms the 	<p>This evidence was sourced during the field missions in each country.</p> <p>Armenia</p> <p>Numerous stakeholders highlighted how the Ambassador is making a significant contribution to EU visibility. The Ambassador’s ‘man-of-the-people’ type approach, whereby he puts a strong focus on speaking to ‘average’ citizens, was reported to be very popular. It was even suggested that there might be a petition to keep the Ambassador when it comes to the end of his ambassadorship in Armenia. It appears to be important that senior Delegation staff are pro-communication and recognise its benefits, as they can be influential in public opinion. It</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with journalists. • Interviews with government representative. • Interviews with NGOs. • Interviews with other EU programmes • Feedback from focus



communication programme are contributing to increasing target audience awareness.

- contribution made by EU communication and specific examples were confirmed relating to the last few years.
- Stakeholders are also mindful of potential improvements.
 - In Armenia, some topics necessitate EU communication to be behind the scenes and some for the EU to be at the forefront.
 - Stakeholders in Tunisia are mindful of the level of resourcing impacting what can be achieved.
 - In Ukraine, the Communicating Europe campaign stands out as having taken a more advance approach to identification of target group needs and to measurement and appears to be successful in targeting a wide swathe of the population.

was reported that the Ambassador is a known figure among the Armenian public in Yerevan.

In terms of areas for improvement, feedback from the media, government sources and other stakeholders confirmed that there was good recognition of the EU in Yerevan but a need for greater focus on EU communication outside the capital. There was consensus that the EU needs to be more present in regions.

Feedback from government sources highlighted the way that the Delegations shows some finesse in understanding when it needed to work behind the scenes on particularly sensitive issues such as LGBTQ and domestic violence, but that there are also occasions when the EU needs to be more present for example in communication about the judiciary. The communication support to the passing of the new bill on domestic violence was particularly praised. It was noted during the field mission that the government in Armenia prefers the EU to take a lower profile to some extent given the role of Russia behind the scenes. The example of there being fewer EU flags in Yerevan than in Georgia was cited by some stakeholders.

Feedback was mixed on the Europe Days concept. The Days were suggested to be well known and very visible particularly in the capital given the prominent location of EU stands on the main shopping thoroughfare, but it was suggested that they had lost their novel edge. Despite this the Delegation reports high numbers of citizens participate in the activities.

Journalists suggested that citizens are not necessarily interested in stories about the EU and that people attend the Yerevan-based activities for the free concerts, food or take-aways without really being engaged or interested in the messages being communicated. As well as a need to update the messages and formats to retain public attention (flash mobs and working with VIPs were suggested, for example), scaling back Europe Day celebrations to one week instead of one month of activities was suggested, with each day focussed on a different region of Armenia.

An overarching sentiment among those interviewed was that EU presence is fragmented and, therefore, not as visible as it could be. Hence, by for example bringing together the different aspects of EU presence in one space (Erasmus+, EEN and Horizon 2020, etc.) this could help to increase EU visibility.

One government representative highlighted that EU presence is significant in terms of transparency and best practices but was less visible to average citizens. It was suggested that EU Delegation communication is more transparent than communication by USAID. There were also calls for more innovative ways to communicate.

On several occasions, different stakeholders highlighted the success of the EU bus tours, which had been run by the former EU Info Centre. The bus brought Info Centre staff and EU

groups.



Delegation experts to different regions in Armenia and was reported to have been very well received. Planning trips were carried out in advance to prepare for the visits and take into account local needs, which suggests that the content communicated took account of existing levels of citizens' knowledge.

Feedback from EU Youth Ambassadors, which is coordinated confirmed the wide reach of the activities of the ambassador network to young people and students across Armenia. In focus groups with students, there was some recall of some of the EU Delegation communications, in particular Europe Day, EU4You and EU4Business.

Tunisia:

Interviews with non-EU stakeholders and a journalist outlined that there has been a continued, qualitative improvement in the media coverage of EU affairs. Interviewees indicated that it was most likely due to the availability of information on the EU and the provision of good quality information on the EU by the EUD, the EUD's efforts to engage with media representatives, as well as personal factors (such as the fact that the EUD's press officer has a journalist background and is well networked).

The partners (NGOs) were more critical in their discussion on the communication on the EU and its impact. They noted that EU communication is under resourced (providing the example of billboards which could be set up to recognise the EU-Tunisia partnership on projects of common interest). They also noted structural factors, which weaken the communication efforts:

1. Focus on numbers: they consider that communication on the EU focuses too much on the amount of financial support available and misses the narrative on the content of the partnership. Rethinking the content of the communication and refocusing on storytelling and the relatable character of the stories of the EU-Tunisia partnership are expected to enhance the communication effects.
2. Conspiracy theory: the communication environment remains challenging. Some people question the EU's interest in the partnership with Tunisia and mistrust the engagement in-country.
3. Prevalence of relationship with MS: there was consensus among those interviewed, that the relationships with individual Member States remain very important for historical reasons and that Tunisians know more about individual MS than they know about the EU. For instance, the 2019 Third Wave Report notes that the awareness of the existence of the EUD in Tunisia is below the regional average (39% of respondents in Tunisia against 40% in the Maghreb), after Algeria but before Morocco. There also seemed to be a tension between the communication efforts of the EU and those of Member States whose national, foreign policy interests are important. This point was also confirmed by the interviews with MS representatives.

In terms of beneficiary programmes, interviews suggest that they fulfil the visibility requirements, which contribute to communication on the EU. Interviewees from the

beneficiary programmes emphasised that the working relationship with their managers at the EUD is good and that they consider there has been a qualitative shift, and a renewed focus on communication at the EUD. But they also note that these efforts seem to be delivered mainly through the commitment of EUD's current staff, which raises the question of the sustainability of the investment in communication.

Overall, interviews with the different groups conclude that the quality of communication has improved, and all agree that the main message is the recognition of the EU as a critical partner for the EU. The feedback confirms that:

- when the EUD is visible, it is perceived as reliable information sources and resourceful,
- there is a close and good cooperation between the EUD (with the notable existence of the challenges in the coordination between the EU and its MS represented in Tunisia) and other EU actors, and
- a renewed emphasis and qualitative shift on communication in recent years.

However, the perception is that communication on the EU still punches below its weight due to a focus on numbers (the amount of financial support available) at the expense of relatable storytelling. Among stakeholders, there is general awareness of the important role the EU is playing in Tunisia. Among the Maghreb countries, respondents in Tunisia are the most likely to be aware of EU financial support (48%, compared to a regional average of 30%). But this is not consistently translated into public awareness of the EU's role: Tunisia has the largest share of "don't knows" across the Maghreb countries (36% against the regional average of 25%).

Ukraine:

The EU communication landscape in Ukraine is complex because of the wide range of contracts which cover communication or have a high communication component, leaving aside the standard communication components of budget. This makes it complex to have a single view of EU/Delegation communication in Ukraine.

Reactions among those interviewed to the activities that the Delegation has historically carried out were positive, but that there may be scope to do more in the area of culture. The Delegation is, moreover, perceived to be effective in its historic forms of communication and other areas under the direct control of the Delegation (such as press and social media) as opposed to those handled by contractors (which are also viewed positively), but to be hampered by the constraints of its human resources and budget. This in particular limits its ability to be more effective in the Regions, something that will become increasingly important as Ukraine is in the midst of a major process of decentralisation which the change of President is not expected to reverse. There was a perception on the part of one international contractor that the needs of Kyiv are sufficiently met for anyone who cares to look for the information. In the case of Communicating Europe in Ukraine, the general perception which

the evaluation team picked up was that initial results appear positive, but that it is too soon to judge the real impact. The Ambassador is seen as proactive and visible.

Nevertheless, the campaign is an example of good practice in going beyond most other campaigns in measurement. The campaign was designed on the basis of research to identify the reasons for the perception of the EU and the influences which formed that perception. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were organised with Ukrainians who are positive or neutral about relations with the EU. There was a “push” rather than a “pull” approach to this research, i.e. the research was based on asking about information on EU support programme not topics identified by research into the interests of Ukrainians.

The key insights were:

- Ukrainians do not want to be looked down on or patronised. They are looking for a cooperative partnership with the EU;
- A positive image and attitude towards the EU increase as levels of understanding of the scope of EU cooperation in Ukraine increases. The more clearly the EU can communicate with as many people as possible, the stronger the EU position will become;
- The more citizens learn and discover about EU cooperation, the higher their likelihood of having warmer/positive attitudes and feelings about the EU;
- SMEs do not feel the effects/support of EU cooperation in the EU. A perception shift is needed;
- It is not only financial support or material gains that will change Ukraine. It is when Ukrainians will start to adopt the “values of the EU” that society will become more democratically minded and socially active;
- TV and Digital are two focus channels to reach the nation at all demographic levels.

The campaign is also measuring recall and increases in awareness of components of the campaign. This is, however, only a first step as it is necessary to go beyond this to understand whether this led to attitudinal change.

In addition, interviews suggested that the EU is well known and well viewed (as the OPEN Neighbourhood polling illustrates), but that the extent of EU support for Ukraine is less well understood (as the strategic communication market research confirms). Government communication that targets citizens in language they understand is in its infancy, so contributes essentially to the awareness of business, administrators and civil society. EU-funded communication is the primary institutional source of information about the EU, its policies and values across society, so it is reasonable to assume that the EU communication is a contributor to awareness and positive perceptions of the EU. The main challenge comes from disinformation coming from Russia.

JC 11.2 There are factors that have had a positive or negative effect on raising public awareness.

A range of internal and external factors have had an influence on public awareness. Internal factors include levels of human resources, administrative burden around communication contracts, limitations from management procedures, as addressed in Armenia where a new standard operating procedure has been introduced. This also includes challenges, which result from the fact that responsibilities for managing contracts and financial sign-off is sometimes split between EEAS and DG NEAR, as is the



case in Tunisia. Constraints around pooling contracts to increase the amount of funding available for communication were also indicated. However, from interviews with EU Delegation staff, there was no suggestion that there is insufficient funding available for actual communication contracts.

The personality and focus of the Head of Delegation can also have a significant impact on awareness-raising. People find it easier to associate messages and ideas with real people rather than with institutions or organisations. There is consistent evidence to confirm that a positive push on communication from the Ambassador makes a difference to public perceptions of the EU.

There are also a range of constraints in the communication environment, including:

- existing levels of positive opinion about the EU, which range between circa 50% and 60% in the three countries investigated, according to the 2019 and 2018 polling published on the Open Neighbours portal. However, respondents to the EU Delegation staff survey indicated that levels of understanding about the EU pose more of a challenge than levels of awareness about the EU;
- the current state of political affairs and the level of media freedom, which is important given that the media are the number one target group for Delegations. Propaganda from Russia is noted as a problem in the eastern neighbourhood countries.

Overall Delegations need to avoid a temptation to only focus on target groups that are easiest to reach, for example students and academics, who are likely to have a keen interest in the EU and may already have a basic or good understanding. There is a lot less focus on people who may have limited awareness of the EU and maybe hard to reach. However, this targeting appears to be changing with the increased focus on older people in Armenia, for example, the visa-free and Communicating Europe in Ukraine campaigns in that country, and general acceptance across all three Delegations of the importance of reaching target groups outside the capital.

Strength of findings: more than satisfactory

Description of the evidence base: Interview with EU Delegation communication staff; Interviews with OPEN South and East Projects; Survey of EU Delegation Press Officers; EU Neighbours opinion polls (Armenia, Ukraine), Wave 4, Spring 2019; EU Neighbours opinion poll Tunisia Wave3, Spring 2018.

Explanation of the assessment of the strength of the evidence base: this assessment is made due to evidence from interviews from two different profiles of interviewee and the collection of survey data to provide a wider base.

Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence
<p>Indicator 11.2.1 Perceptions of the Delegation or regional communication project contractors of target group segments who have been harder or easier to reach / influence and the reasons for this.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegations have prioritised certain groups (journalists, students, academics, politicians and businesspeople over others). • Older people have not been a priority group although this is changing in Armenia. • There has been 	<p>Staff from the EU Delegation in Armenia noted that there will be a shift in focus to targeting older people (50+ years old), as they have found that this target group needs to know more about the EU. People in remote areas and older people are harder to reach. The EU Delegation currently focuses on youth and women.</p> <p>The EU Delegation in Tunisia emphasised the importance of youth, as the potential for change and reform lies with this demographic. Other target groups include media, civil society as well as cultural, diplomatic and business communities.</p> <p>In Ukraine, staff in the EU Delegation highlighted the fact that it is targeting people who feel neutral towards the EU, as research has shown that it is easier to shift this group’s perspective (and targeting people who already feel positive about the EU or who feel negatively and will not easily change their minds would not be cost-effective). The main target groups are students, the academic community, civil society, older populations, and the business community, but there is and has been for many years a heavy emphasis on children and youth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview with EU Delegation communication staff. • Interviews with OPEN South and East Projects. • Survey of EU Delegation Press Officers.



	<p>limited focus on new target audiences and those who are hard to reach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The choice of priority groups is likely to relate to perceptions of interest levels, relevance of information and each reach, i.e. via existing networks and social media. • There is consensus that cultural organisations have facilitated the dissemination of EU messages. 	<p>According to the survey of EU Delegation Press Officers across the neighbourhood region, Journalists are the number one target group (99%) followed by students (93%), this is followed by youth groups (83%), academics (82%) and politicians and business people (78%). Only 37% place a focus on new and hard to reach target groups. The survey suggested no clear focus on older people and groups representing older people, and limited focus on sports associations.</p> <p>Interviews with OPEN Neighbourhood Programme contractors indicate that according to the interviewees, young people have been easier to reach, due to their exposure to social media, such as Facebook and Instagram.</p> <p>There were four main factors highlighted in the survey of EU Delegation Press Officers, which were indicated to limit EU communication:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of understanding of the EU (80%) 2. Lack of awareness of the EU (47%) 3. The current state of political affairs (44%) 4. Difficulties relating to press freedom (38%) <p>There were also four main internal factors that stood out from the survey of EU Delegation staff:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of human resources in the Delegation (90%) 2. Administrative burden related to communication contracts (77%) 3. Level of communication expertise of external contractors (57%) and Constraints on pooling funding from different sources (57%). <p>From a range of other possible factors affecting the effectiveness of EU communication, none of the factors scored above 50% except the possibility that target groups might be confused by messaging from international organisations (54%), although this was not specifically identified by the evaluation team.</p> <p>Working with multipliers can enhance EU communication and most effective multipliers of EU messages were reported to be civil society organisations (94%) followed by Member State cultural institutes (82%) and local cultural associations (77%). This highlights how culture is an important hook for EU communication in the neighbourhood region.</p> <p>Feedback from interviews with stakeholders and EU Delegations highlighted that there were instances of deliberate misinformation and counter propaganda from Russia, which intended to put the EU in a negative position.</p>	
Indicator	Summary	Detailed findings	Sources of evidence

Indicator 11.2.2.
Level of awareness that the citizens of the selected case study countries have about the European Union and the EU cooperation with their country

- Circa 50-60% of citizens in Armenia, Tunisia and Ukraine have a positive view of the EU.
- Opinions on the relationship between the EU and the respective countries is circa 10% higher than citizens' view of the EU.
- In all three countries Education programmes are the most well-known.
- In all three countries citizens see support for tourism as the area that has most benefitted from EU support.

Armenia

62% of Armenian's have a positive view of the EU

Acknowledgement of the EU's financial support has seen a slight increase of 2 percentage points since 2018 in line with the historical trend (up 9% since 2016) and **71% of citizens currently know that the EU supports their country**. A more positive opinion with regard to the effectiveness of EU's support was also recorded (72% up 10% since 2016). 40% know about specific EU-funded programmes in Armenia, particularly in the fields of education (32%), which may related to the continued participation in Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ and the Mobility Partnership.

- Around 45% of the citizens who have heard of the EU believe that the Russian Federation provides more financial support to their country than the EU does (down 4 percentage points since 2018) and another 18% are convinced that the support provided by the two institutions is almost the same.
- Tourism is the area that benefited most from the EU's support – according to 68% of citizens. This figure, which is consistent with 2018 findings, confirms the progress of Armenia-EU relationship in the area of mobility, including the dialogue on visa liberalisation which, once completed, would make Armenia the fourth EaP country with a visa-free regime with the EU, alongside Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.
- Compared to 2018, EU support to democracy was acknowledged by more citizens (up 8 percentage points), possibly due to the recognition of the EU's role in the administration of the electoral process and, in general, in supporting democratic governance reforms in the country.

Tunisia

50% have a very or fairly positive opinion of the EU
67% think that the relationship between the EU and Tunisia is very or fairly positive.

In term of awareness of EU programmes, the percentages by type are:

- 37% education programmes
- 51% cultural programmes
- 28% infrastructure development projects
- 22% agriculture and rural programmes
- 24% health programmes
- 35% economic reform
- 36% human rights
- 22% youth programmes

Tunisians feel EU support has contributed the most to tourism (40%), economic development (21%) and trade (20%) in their country and are keen for the EU to play a greater role in the areas of economic development and migration.
50% think that EU financial support to Tunisia has been effective.

Ukraine:

- EU Neighbours opinion polls (Armenia, Ukraine), Wave 4, Spring 2019
- EU Neighbours opinion poll Tunisia Wave3, Spring 2018



56% of Ukrainians have a positive image of the EU.

- **Over 60% of Ukrainians describe the relations between their country and the EU** as 'fairly good' (51%) or 'very good' (12%); 57% of citizens are also aware that the EU supports Ukraine financially, and 46% of them consider this 'effective'.

- The knowledge of EU-funded programmes in Ukraine continues to increase and currently over half of those who are aware of the EU's financial support know about specific programmes (56%, up 8 percentage points since 2018 and up 24 percentage points since 2017). The most well-known programmes relate to the field of 'education' (51%, up 8 percentage points), which appears to relate to positive exchanges in the areas of culture and science. Ukraine participates in/benefits from several EU programmes, such as Creative Europe, Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020.

The main positive effects of the EU's support are the increase in 'tourism' – mentioned by 58% of the population – and 'trade' (54%), as well as the 'greater access to products and services' (58%). Conversely, 'corruption' and 'judicial reforms' remain the most problematic areas in the country – and those that, in the eyes of the citizens, have benefitted the least from EU's support (19% and 26% respectively).



