

Evaluation of information and communication activities towards the EU Member States in the area of EU Enlargement

ELARG.A2/18/2014

FINAL REPORT

ANNEXES – Part 1



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Evaluation of information and communication activities towards the EU Member States in the area of EU Enlargement

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List of acronyms

CA	Contribution Analysis
CEA	Cost-Effectiveness Analysis
DG NEAR	Directorate General European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EUR	Euros
IL	Intervention logic
IPA	Instruments for Pre-accession Assistance
MS	Member State
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
P(CC)	(Potential) Candidate Countries
REA	Rapid Evidence Assessment
ToR	Terms-of-Reference

1. Annex 1: Press Trip Reports

1.1 Overview

The evaluation team observed two press trips. The first trip to Kosovo (11 – 13 June) was organised under the campaign which targets stakeholders (including multipliers) and was run by the communication agency Mostra. The second trip was to Albania (1 – 3 July). This press trip fell under the communication campaign specifically designed to inform target groups about the pre-accession funding instrument. It was run by Media Consulta. Reports have been drafted to detail the findings of the evaluation team on the basis of our participation in the trip, discussions with the participants, the communication agencies responsible for putting the programmes together and managing the logistical arrangements on the ground (with translators) and the Commission representative, as well as monitoring reports and feedback forms.

The press trips reached a combined total of 27 journalists. The reports below describe the trips and present an assessment of their main strengths and suggestions for areas in which they could be improved.

1.2 Kosovo

1.2.1. Introduction and context

On 10-13 June, 2015, Mostra arranged a press trip to Kosovo as part of the ‘Stakeholder campaign to inform and communicate about enlargement policy and related developments’. A total of 14 journalists (including one cameraman) from 10 different Member States took part. Eight were print journalists; six were radio journalists. The programme was comprehensive and diverse, providing the journalists with the opportunity to hear a range of political opinions, and in addition to meet with a senior figure from the Serbian Orthodox church in Kosovo.

As per the Terms of Reference of the “Stakeholder campaign to inform and communicate about enlargement policy and related developments”, the contractor was responsible for all the logistical arrangements for the trip and – with the oversight and approval of the Commission – of inviting the journalists and setting the programme. The purpose of the trips is described as follows “*The press trips will serve as occasions to showcase the progress of reforms the visited countries have made in recent years, as well as the modernity and European nature of their cultures. DG Enlargement will decide on the destinations of these trips.*”

Kosovo is a ‘potential candidate’ country. Its Stabilisation and Association Agreement was initialled on July 25, 2015.

Membership of the EU is the long-term goal on both sides, but that is clearly some years away. Moreover, apart from the fact that Kosovo is still a long way from fulfilling the conditions for membership, there is still an obstacle in that five Member States do not recognise Kosovo as a sovereign state: Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Slovakia and Spain.

The economy is weak and unemployment is high. Foreign investors who see potential in the Balkans tend to prefer states whose political status is more certain and the regulatory barriers to setting up and to trading with other countries are lower.

The poor prospects for young people are driving migration, much of it in the form of illegal migration to the EU, or asylum-seeking in the EU, since Kosovo (unlike its neighbours) is not considered a ‘safe’ country, thus leading to longer asylum procedures and a theoretically greater likelihood of asylum being granted.

A major issue for the Kosovars in relations with the EU at present is that they do not enjoy visa-free access to the EU, and are the only country in the Balkans of which that is the case. The Kosovo authorities argue that illegal migration would drop if legal migration were easier.

There is a strong pro-Albanian movement. One political party sees Kosovo's future as being as part of a Greater Albania – it is a party currently outside government which is garnering support by fighting corruption, introducing administrative burden reduction and running efficient public services in Pristina. The sense of being ethnically Albanian on the part of many Kosovars translates into the presence of many Albanian flags and symbols in the streets.

Relations with Serbia and the Serbian minority in Kosovo remain strained. The message from several of those whom the press met was that membership of the EU is the only way in which the countries of the Balkans will be able to live side-by-side.

Corruption and inadequate rule of law remain major issues. This is the reason for the EULEX mission, costing EUR 111 million annually and employing 1,600 staff to support Kosovo in investigating, prosecuting and adjudicating sensitive cases using its executive powers, and monitoring, mentoring and advising local counterparts in the police, justice and customs fields. Its activities are not uncontroversial on the one hand because of allegations of corruption within EULEX and on the other because of resentment of what are seen as outsiders dealing with what should be sovereign issues. While no one seriously disputes that Kosovo has corruption and rule of law are problems which need to be addressed, though they may disagree on the extent of these, there is disagreement on whether the Kosovo authorities are able to do address these without this external support. The EULEX mandate is up for renewal in 2016 and could be a controversial issue.

The trip was arranged over three days and three nights, with journalists arriving in Pristina on Wednesday 10 June staying until Saturday 13 June. Several journalists took the opportunity to come earlier or prolong their trip to get (more) "colour" and context.

1.2.2. Participants

Mostra was contractually required to secure 15 journalists for the trip. Two journalists dropped out, but Mostra found one replacement.

Table 1: Information on participants (number, origin, publication)

No.	Country	Media outlet	Journalist name	Media type
1	AT	Die Presse	Wieland Schneider	Print/Online
2	BE	Le Soir	Philippe Regnier	Print/Online
3	CY	Politis	Ioannis Ioannou	Print/Online
4	DE	BR,WDR and ARD	Elisabeth Veh	TV/Radio
5	DE	Deutschlandradio	Thomas Otto	Radio
6	ES	El Mundo	Fatima Ruiz Martínez	Print/Online
7	ES	El País	Sara Velert Schreiner	Print/Online
8	FI	MTV3	Aino Huilaja	TV
9	FR	Le Monde	Jean-Baptiste Chastand	Print/Online
10	FR	L'Express	Jean-Michel Demetz	Print/Online
11	IT	Rai I	Enzo Arceri	Radio

12	NL	De Volkskrant	Jan Hunin	Print/Online
13	PL	TVP	Joana Wajda	TV
14	PL	TVP	Marcin Wesolowski	TV

The **main criteria for choosing participants were that they be from media with national reach if possible, if not with regional reach, and from enlargement-sceptic countries as measured by the Eurobarometer.**

In the Spring 2015 Eurobarometer, the highest level of opposition to further enlargement were 71% in Austria, 67% in Germany, 64% in Luxembourg (not represented on this trip), 63% in France, 61% in Belgium and Finland, 56% in the Netherlands, 53% in Hungary, 52% in Greece (not represented on this trip), 51% in Denmark and the UK (neither represented on this trip), 50% in Italy and 46% in Cyprus. The positions vary slightly from Eurobarometer to Eurobarometer, so that **selection of this trip broadly tallies with the criterion.** Poland is an outlier, however; It was also represented on this trip despite having the fifth lowest level of opposition (but the lowest as recently as 2013). The explanation was that Poland is a major Member State, and that justified its inclusion.

The journalists were identified by Mostra from journalists known to them or through desk research. There is **a policy of not having the same journalist twice** – though on this trip the journalist from Le Soir in Belgium had been on an IPA trip eight months' previously.

None of the journalists are covering Kosovo – or even enlargement - regularly. However, Jan Hunin of the Volkskrant is an Eastern Europe correspondent based in Warsaw who writes widely about the Balkans

Only one (for German radio) was a Brussels-based EU correspondent, covering EU affairs. Some were on their paper's Europe Desk, e.g. the journalist from the Le Monde, who does expect to write more over time, e.g. when the EULEX mandate comes up for renewal next year.

The others included Middle East specialists (the journalist from Cyprus, who has moved on to covering the Middle East because there is no longer any interest in the Balkans), and political correspondents.

For a number who had covered the war in the Balkans, the motivation for participation was clearly an opportunity to see how the situation has changed; for others, it was just an opportunity to learn. They all tended to have a strong interest in migration issues, seeing that as the main news story. Some felt that there is 'corruption-fatigue' among their readers. They were not really interested in EU enlargement peps, or even EULEX.

A number stressed how travel budgets have become tight over the years and that this was, therefore, a welcome opportunity to visit somewhere that they would not otherwise have been able to cover first-hand.

There is **no official expectation of coverage, and certainly not of short-term coverage.** In practice – assuming most journalists would recognise a moral obligation to produce one article, whether negative or positive, the impact as of August 12 (the date of this report) had been relatively high, but four of the 13 had nevertheless not produced any coverage in print or online.

1.2.3. Programme

The programme was comprehensive, **providing access to the President, the Prime Minister, a range of other Ministers**, all main political parties and both sides of the ethnic divide, and EULEX as well as local media (an independent TV channel, and an NGO, which produces a controversial debate programme for the national TV channel, and also acts as a consumer/citizen champion – at some personal risk to its staff – in print and via the Internet), and European investors. The programme was

developed by Mostra in collaboration with DG NEAR and the EU office in Kosovo. The EU office was closely involved and this appears to have been a success factor.

The programme was tightly packed but included **regular two hour windows of reporting/interviewing time which was appreciated**. Participants expressed their appreciation of many aspects of the programme whilst on the trip as well as on the evaluation forms. The least successful event was probably the dinner with European investors as this was not a subject of real interest to many of the participants and they asked few questions, though Thomas Otto did get a good story out of it – though a happy coincidence of being seated next to the most colourful figure in the group of investors.

Some of the feedback on the feedback forms suggested there were too many interviews with Ministers, that a field trip to Mitrovica should have been organised, there was **not enough free time for bilateral interviews or reporting**, and that there were **not enough opportunities for talking to citizens**.

However, all the journalists rated the trip as satisfactory or very satisfactory, and these were the views expressed to the evaluators. There was indeed clearly **a desire to meet local people**, but the journalists in practice did not hesitate to approach them in the street and in cafés.

What the written feedback does not reflect is the considerable and laudable **effort made by the local media expert and the interpreters** who accompanied the group to provide additional information and set up additional interviews. The **EU office press officer was also proactive** in assisting the group, and this was a success factor that is apparently not always replicated on such trips.

1.2.4. Press pack

A wide range of background material was provided on a USB stick, but it is highly **unlikely that the journalists had looked at the materials**. None seemed to have read the most recent progress report or to know much about EULEX and the issues it had had – **a number would have got far more out of some interviews if they had done so**. Much of the information would have been readily available in advance even if the stick was not distributed until they arrived in Kosovo.

1.2.5. Monitoring and results

The recap below supplements what is in the information in the Mostra database with information on duration/length of the items, their prominence/whether they were broadcast in prime time. This illustrates that most of the coverage was prominent/in prime time.

- Elisabet Veh: B5 (Bavaria) – 23 minutes at 14.35 and 21.35 on a Sunday, BR2 (Bavaria) – 14.05 on a Wednesday and 18.05 on a Saturday and rebroadcast by Deutschlandfunk at 18.40 on a Wednesday; online text picked up by Gazeta Express in Kosovo;
- Thomas Otto: Deutschlandradio– 4.29 radio broadcast and blog item;
- Aino Huilaja - MTV 3 – a 1.48 minute video on the Ten O’Clock News;
- Fatima Ruiz - El Mundo – a prominent article in the web edition foreign pages (also print?);
- Sara Velert - El Pais – a prominent article in the web edition foreign pages (also print?);
- Philippe Regnier - Le Soir – a two-page spread in the weekend print edition;
- Joanna Wajda - TVP - 2.33 & 2.41 videos on Panorama, a 6 p.m. news programme;
- In addition, L’Express carried a blog item by Jean-Michel Demetz not captured in the Mostra monitoring.

The coverage mainly focused on migration, ethnic tensions and loyalties, corruption and the state of the economy. Discussion of relations with the EU was generally dealt with as a secondary issue, except in the case of the article discussing being part of Europe as a solution to Balkan political and

ethnic fragmentation. Thomas Otto of Deutschlandfunk included information about a successful agrifood investment by one of the investors invited to meet the journalists.

The tone of the coverage is factual, emphasising the difficulties Kosovo faces in becoming a member of the EU, but not suggesting that it should not happen – at some stage.

Tweeting (not monitored by Mostra) was very low and sometimes lacked substance. Chastand of Le Monde, who has nearly 6,000 followers – ten to twenty times as many as most of the others, just tweeted photos of the offices of the President, empty corridors, etc. while waiting for events to start. Jan Hunin (Volkskrant), 677 followers, tweeted extensively on ethnic issues and the Albanian influence during it. Regnier of Le Soir (330 followers), on the other hand, tweeted or re-tweeted on Kosovo not just during but at intervals after the trip, and began following some Kosovar sites as a result of the trip.

It is difficult to say whether there are gaps in the monitoring or whether Mostra picks up everything, but there is no reason to think they miss any print or broadcast coverage, or where a print or broadcast item also appears on a website. There may be gaps in coverage of web-only items and they **do not monitor items on Twitter**, which is important in some countries at least.

1.2.6. Feedback

Evaluation forms are enclosed within the press pack and at the end of the trip, the journalists are asked to fill them in. They are tailored so that participants can rate and comment on the various aspects of the programme but there is also a space for assessing the trip overall and the logistical aspects, with a general open-ended question on areas for improvement to close.

The feedback from participants, organisers and other key representatives, and Mostra's own report was that:

- The local EU Office was closely and positively involved in planning the trip and this appears in general to be a success factor.
- Trips should – in the view of Mostra - be **organised in conjunction with stronger pegs, such as the visit of a Commissioner**. The coverage suggests that a strong peg is not necessary for background/feature-type material. Two strong pegs since the trip – the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and the decision to set up the war crimes tribunal have not given rise to any coverage by these journalists. On the other hand, one German journalist used a visit by German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, to neighbouring countries as her peg.
- Mostra has suggested re-balancing between political interviews and meeting civil society/citizens etc. This reflects the view of the journalists, but would appear to need balancing against the objectives of the Commission.
- Mostra did not comment on the meeting with investors, but it was clear that this group of journalists was not particularly interested (and the dinner-time format was probably not ideal).
- With two radio journalists and three TV journalists – even if one of these was less interested in immediate news, there was often competition for **one-on-one time for interviews** with key figures at the end of the briefings. This needs **careful management** and may explain some feedback about more time being needed for meetings/interviews.

The TV and radio journalists thus sometimes showed signs of frustration that there was not enough time for them to obtain soundbites, as this had to be fitted in at the end of interview sessions. While radio journalists can record the whole interview, the quality is never certain and they moreover prefer to get a personalised soundbite, preferably with a recording of them asking a question.

1.2.7. Key findings from Kosovo press trip

- This was a comprehensive programme which provided access to a wide range of views and allowed the group a great deal of freedom to pursue their own interests, as was evident at the time and is evident from the coverage. This outweighs the criticism from some of the group that not enough time was allowed for reporting or pursuing bilateral interests.
- It was a logistically well run trip;
- Close involvement of the local EU office before and during the trip was a success factor.
- Proactivity on the part of Commission officials present in informal contacts to provide information on the issues important to the Commission is a success factor;
- Selecting the group on the basis of those likely to report on EU enlargement or Balkan issues on an on-going basis could, and probably, should mean selecting more EU-accredited journalists – who could then be briefed before departure;
- There may be a case for slightly **more proactive follow-up to ensure coverage** by all the journalists and to draw their attention to pegs which would justify follow-up coverage;
- Monitoring of coverage should be **extended to blogs and social media**, notably Twitter.

The Commission appears to have very modest objectives for these trips, so that a few articles meet their objectives, irrespective of what those articles are about. This open-minded approach is laudable in theory, but it may nevertheless be possible without abandoning this approach to steer the coverage in directions which are more useful to the Commission through a more judicious selection of the participants and more proactive availability to provide background information. Consideration needs to be given to whether general coverage of Balkan political issues or coverage of economic and migration challenges adequately serves the Commission's objectives.

1.3 Albania

1.3.1. Introduction and context

On 1 -3 July, 2015 Media Consulta (MC) arranged a press trip to Albania as part of the campaign to promote awareness and understanding of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). A total of 13 journalists took part from around the EU, covering a total of 11 MS. The majority were from print media, however two were radio journalists.

The trip formed one of the elements of DG NEAR's campaign to increase the visibility of EU pre-accession funds in the EU and to build a positive attitude towards these, showing the link between the funds and benefit to the EU.

As per the Terms of Reference for the campaign, the contractor was required to propose the concept, speakers and participants for the trip but in simple terms, the objective of the trip was to provide journalists with the opportunity to see how EU accession funds are used in the enlargement countries and to give them opportunity to write about this from first-hand experience. In addition, MC were tasked with providing journalists with access to interesting speakers and high-level officials.

Albania was granted potential candidate status in 2000, but almost exactly a year before this press trip Albania became an official candidate country (in June 2014). It is generally accepted that accession is some way off, however the prospect of future membership is a huge incentive for the political elite and the population as well. This was made clear over the course of the trip by multiple speakers.

Unemployment levels are high (13.3% for 30 – 64 year olds), although not as high as some of its neighbours. For young people, the rate is much higher; around one in three is out of work. The absence of prospects for young people and resulting levels of migration were recurring themes the journalists explored during the trip. The impact of returning Albania migrants who were negatively

affected by the crisis in neighbouring Greece was another hot topic. But, the major issue in Albania remains the rule of law. The independence, efficiency and accountability of the judiciary needs significant investment before it has the confidence and credibility necessary to be considered fit for purpose.

The trip was arranged over three days and two nights, with journalists arriving in Tirana on Wednesday 1 July and staying until Friday 3 July. Four journalists took the opportunity to come earlier or prolong their trip to get (more) perspectives for their stories. This flexibility was appreciated.

The total cost of the trip has not been reported, however discussions with the MC organiser suggest that the cost may end up being less than other press trips (notably the trip to Turkey), since Albania is still relatively cheap after travel has been arranged.

1.3.2. Participants

MC were contractually required to ensure 15 journalists attend (or a suitable explanation for why this number was not reached).

Table 2: Information on participants (number, origin, publication)

No.	Country	Media outlet	Journalist name	Media type
1	UK	Financial Times	Tony Barber	Print/online
2	AT	Wiener Zeitung	Martyna Czarnowska	Print/online
3	HR	Lider Business Weekly	Vanja Figenwald	Print/online
4	NL	Het Financieele Dagblad	Frank Gersdorf	Print/online
5	CZ	Respekt magazine	Lucie Kavanová	Print/online
6	DE	Deutschland Radio	Christoph Kersting	Radio
7	AT	Wirtschaftsblatt	Eva Konzett	Print/online
8	DK	Copenhagen Post	Luisa Maria Kyca	Print/online
9	DE	Tagesspiegel	Rita Nikolow	Print/online
10	RO	Gandul, Mediafax Group	Andrei Luca Popescu	Print/online
11	FI	Radio YLE / Monocle	Wilfred Stenger	Radio
12	IT	L'Espresso	Stefano Vergine	Print/online
13	PL	Rzeczpospolita	Iwona Trusewicz	Print/online

Note: The table in “Monitoring and results” provides a full list of the journalists in attendance, along with details of the media organisation they work for (where possible an indication of the circulation) and a list of stories produced as part of the trip.

MC aimed to identify **new journalists who write about EU affairs** (i.e. not those who have been on a previous press trip) and to **prioritise those from prestigious publications**, in particular those reporting from / for **EU-enlargement sceptical countries**. Despite four last minute cancellations by journalists called away at the last minute to report on the on-going crisis in Greece, two replacements (from press in Italy and Poland) were found bringing the total to 13.

As mentioned above, journalists from more EU-sceptical countries were targeted with the result that around half of journalists came from one of the 11 most critical / sceptical MS¹.

Of the 13 journalists, many specifically covered EU or foreign affairs and this was reflected in their stories, but others had a more specific beat (e.g. energy, economics, culture and social affairs) and again, this was evidenced in their coverage. None of the journalists were covering enlargement – or Albania – on a regular basis, however some had previously visited or written about Albania. The level of circulation of the media organisations represented varied enormously – from the internationally read Financial Times (UK) 720,000 to the local publication The Copenhagen Post (DK) 12,000 (estimated)².

Asked the motivation for their participation in the trip, the journalists gave a multitude of reasons, of which the following were recurrent themes:

- access to high-level officials (otherwise tricky / impossible to arrange);
- low budgets for foreign travel available from their publication;
- the opportunity for networking;
- curiosity (e.g. opportunity to see how things had changed in Albania compared to previous visits / desire to write stories that are off the beaten track).

Some had come with ideas of how to peg their stories (for example, stories related to the anniversary of Albania gaining official status as a candidate country, for the German journalists - Angela Merkel's visit the following week and the impact of the fallout of the Greek crisis on Albania). Other journalists had themes they wished to cover, for example the radio journalist from Finland was working on something related to law and order and eventually produced a podcast for UK-based magazine "Monocle" on Organised Crime in Albania³.

There was no formal requirement for journalists to produce any stories based on the trip, however all those present clearly **wanted to produce a story** to make their time there worthwhile. To date (12 August) 11 journalists had produced stories based on the trip, with four of them producing more than one.

1.3.3. Programme

The Programme (which is included in MC monitoring report) was developed by MC in collaboration with DG NEAR and the EU Delegation to Albania (the EC suggested themes and the Delegation suggest projects based on more intimate knowledge of how they have been rolled out in practice). Clearly there is some difficulty in striking a balance between what the Commission would like to show, what the journalists want and what is feasible, in the time and with the budget available. For example, the journalists tend to enjoy and gain a lot from meeting with civil society but aside from providing the journalists with context on how the country has changed, a precise link with EU accession funds was absent.

The programme was tightly packed but did include a two hour window of reporting time on the second day, which was the only full day of activities. Participants expressed their **appreciation of many aspects of the programme** for example the visit to the IPA-funded Port and the dinner with the local journalists whilst on the trip, as well as on the evaluation forms, but clearly would have appreciated more free time. The dinner with the **Prime Minister was a clear highlight** (and featured in many stories), but so was the background briefing by the EU Delegation to Albania and the meeting with the civil society representatives who were "frank" and very informative. The **journalists rated the trip good – excellent overall**.

¹ i.e. AT, BE, CZ, DK, FI, FR, DE, IE, LU, UK and NL (Although, as noted above the appropriateness of the journalist working for a Danish media organisation is questionable.)

² The journalist from the Copenhagen Post (an English online paper serving English-speaking readers), remarked that there is no audience for foreign issues in her paper which raises some question over the suitability of her participation. To date, there were also no articles on the Copenhagen Post website based on this trip.

³ <http://monocle.com/radio/shows/the-urbanist/195/>

However, there was scope for improvement in the programme. For example, while the background briefing with the EU Delegation to Albania was very informative, as the journalists later discovered, it was off the record⁴. The lunch with beneficiaries of the IPA-funded project *Youth Adrinet* was sub-optimal for a number of reasons, the format (sitting around three tables) was not conducive to a quality discussion and there were **no actual beneficiaries** (only management) which may have made it harder for the journalists to write about. The visit to the Seaport of Shëngjin was useful in some respects and there was coverage coming out of that visit⁵ (even if it was not all positive⁶).

Logistically, the programme was incredibly well-run and was practically **seamless**. The representative present from the Commission helped not only in introducing the various speakers but was also making sure aspects of the programme ran smoothly and that the journalists had everything they needed.

1.3.4. Press pack

The press pack contained the following in print form, presented in a branded “Growing Together” folder:

- a list of participating journalists;
- the programme; speaker bios (as provided by speakers themselves);
- summary sheets of IPA-funded projects⁷;
- summary of IPA; EU Enlargement factsheet⁸ including steps to accession;
- 4 x infographics “Growing together”;
- 2013 Progress Report for Albania;
- 2013 Report on IPA;
- empty evaluation form.

On the last evening of the trip, asked their view on the materials, **several journalists admitted they had not read them**. However, they did mention the **usefulness of the speakers’ bios** and indeed, during most of the roundtable sessions (for example the civil society representatives and the visit to the police assistance mission of the EU to Albania), participants referred to the list. Based on the questions asked by the participants, it seemed that they had not read the progress report. Feedback on the material is not systematically collected; including a question about the material and their preferred method for receiving it (in advance, or digitally, for example) may allow for improvements to be made so that the material is better targeted to serve journalists’ needs and facilitate their reporting.

1.3.5. Monitoring and results

As mentioned above, evaluation forms are enclosed within the press pack and at the end of the trip, the journalists are asked to fill them in. They are tailored so that participants can rate and comment on the various aspects of the programme but there is also a space for assessing the trip overall and the logistical aspects, with a general open-ended question on areas for improvement to close. All but one journalist filled this in. There are possibly **additional questions** which could be asked to provide further insight, for example regarding the **usefulness of the press pack** or the extent to which their **knowledge of pre-accession funding has improved**.

A month after the press trip, MC prepare a report on media coverage which has been shared with us and contains the following information:

- a recap of who participated,

⁴ One journalist had to pull their idea for a story because the quote on which it was founded could not be used.

⁵ It featured in three stories (two online and one on air)

⁶ for example, the journalist from Croatia wrote about the “Port without Ships” explaining how despite the clear improvement in capacity, efficiency and service levels, that the port was – at the time of the visit - empty and lacks suitable infrastructure to function properly

⁷ one includes tracked changes

⁸ note this is out of date (Albania is included as a potential candidate country)

- a brief summary of the results of the completed evaluation forms,
- copies of articles published (and translations into English where necessary).

To date (12 August), 18 stories have been published (2 radio broadcasts, 16 articles) (see full list below). Aspects which are not covered and potentially could usefully be covered include more contextual information on the journalists (including their title, the circulation of the media they represent, and a link to their Twitter account, where applicable) and monitoring of journalists' Twitter feeds as well. Furthermore, in addition to presenting a brief overview of the articles, a more rigorous reporting / rating of the extent to which the articles are aligned with the objectives of the campaign (in this case to showcase the use IPA in Albania).

Table 3 – Press trip results (articles)

No.	Journalist	MS	Media name (reach)	Output
1	Tony Barber ⁹	UK	Financial Times (720,000)	1. "Albania braced for fallout from Greece crisis" ¹⁰ , 2 July, 2015 (Online) 2. "If EU shuns Albania radical Islam beckons" ¹¹ 3 July, 2015 (Online and print)
2	Martyna Czarnowska	AT	Wiener Zeitung (22000)	3. "Die Krise im benachbarten Griechenland bremst den EU-Enthusiasmus in Albanien kaum" / "The crisis in neighboring Greece barely brakes the EU enthusiasm in Albania" ¹² , 3 July, 2015 (Online)
3	Vanja Figenwald	HR	Lider Business Weekly	4. "ALBANIJA: Zemlja koja je izgubila 20. Stoljeće" / "The land that lost the 20th century" 17 July, 2015 (Newspaper, print)
4	Frank Gersdorf ¹³	NL	Het Financieele Dagblad 56,819 (2004)	5. "Geen land is corrupter dan Albanië" / "No country is more corrupt than Albania", 6 July, 2015 (Online) 6. "Griekse crisis laat diepe sporen achter in buurland Albanië" / "Greek crisis has left deep traces in neighboring Albania" 7. "Athene eruit, Tirana en Skopje erin" / "Athens out, Tirana and Skopje in" ¹⁴ , 6 July, 2015 (Online) 8. "Balkan volgt griekse crisis met argusogen" / "Balkan follows Greek crisis with suspicion" 7 July, 2015 (online)
5	Lucie Kavanová ¹⁵	CZ	Respekt magazine (94,000)	9. "Smrt českých turistů vyvolala v Albánii vlnu solidarity" / "Czech tourists death sparked a wave of solidarity in Albania" ¹⁶ 8 July, 2015 (online)
6	Christoph Kersting	DE	Deutschland Radio	10. "Tirana klopft an Europas Tür" / "Tirana is knocking at Europe's door" ¹⁷ 8 July, 2015 (on air and online)
7	Eva Konzett	AT	Wirtschaftsblatt	11. "Albanien Trifft Griechische Krise" / "Albania shall take Greek crisis" 13 July, 2015 (newspaper, print) 12. "Albanien: Sehnsuchtsort Europa" / "Albania: Longing [for] Europe" 9 July, 2015 (online and print) 13. "Österreicher in Albanien" / "Austrians in Albania" 9 July, 2015 (online)

⁹ <https://twitter.com/tonybarber8>

¹⁰ <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/55ea2a34-2082-11e5-ab0f-6bb9974f25d0.html>

¹¹ <http://blogs.ft.com/the-world/2015/07/if-eu-shuns-albania-radical-islam-beckons/>

¹² http://www.wienerzeitung.at/meinungen/kommentare/761431_Zukunft-Europa.html

¹³ <http://fd.nl/auteur/frank-gersdorf>

¹⁴ <http://fd.nl/economie-politiek/1110231/athene-eruit-tirana-en-skopje-erin>

¹⁵ <https://twitter.com/kavanluc> and

http://respekt.ihted.cz/?m=authors&person%5Bid%5D=15290080&article%5Baut_id%5D=15290080

¹⁶ <http://respekt.ihted.cz/fokus/c1-64287010-smrt-ceskych-turistu-vyvolala-v-albanii-vlnu-solidarity>

¹⁷ http://ondemand-mp3.dradio.de/file/dradio/2015/07/08/dlf_20150708_0453_8af7fa16.mp3 and

http://www.deutschlandfunk.de/albanien-vor-merkel-besuch-tirana-klopft-an-europas-tuer.795.de.html?dram:article_id=324830

8	Luisa Maria Kyca	DK	Copenhagen Post (12 000 – 15000)	No stories to date.
9	Rita Nikolow	DE	Tagesspiegel (148,000)	14. “Wir brauchen eine Perspektive” ¹⁸ / “We need a perspective [for the future]” 8 July, 2015 (online)
10	Andrei Luca Popescu	RO	Gandul, Mediafax Group	15. “Premierul Albaniei ar vrea și el un DNA la Tirana, dar are o MARE DILEMĂ: „Eu nu înțeleg. Cu atâtea arestări pentru corupție, românii tot mai iau mită?” ¹⁹ / “The Albanian Prime Minister would like a National Anti-Corruption Directorate (NAD) in Tirana, but has a BIG DILEMMA: “I don’t understand. With so many arrests for corruption, how come Romanians still take bribes?” 6 July, 2015 (online)
11	Wilfred Stenger	FI	Radio YLE / Monocle	16. “Organised crime in Albania” under “The Urbanist – Law and order” ²⁰ 9 July, 2015 (Magazine online – podcast)
12	Stefano Vergine ²¹	IT	L’Espresso	No stories as yet. Stefano joined the trip at the last minute after another journalist pulled out. He mainly covers energy. He said that this was just his first visit to Albania and that he would need to return to write something (more).
13	Iwona Trusewicz	PL	Rzeczpospolita	Iwona was another last minute addition 17. “Tirana traci przez Ateny” / “Tirana is losing because of Athens” ²² 12 July, 2015 (online) 18. “Albania bliżej Unii” / “Albania closer to the European Union - Rzeczpospolita Archive” 21 July, 2015

1.3.6. Feedback

Feedback from journalists was very positive, although areas for improvement were identified (see above under programme and below under recommendations). There was a clear sense of camaraderie and enjoyment, **journalists intended to stay in touch** and MC offered to share a list of all the journalists’ email addresses after the trip.

As mentioned above, from the point of view of MC there is clearly a need to balance to strike in terms of keeping the programme attractive to participants (i.e. providing opportunities for “colour” and context) while also ensuring that it meets the objectives of the campaign (namely to showcase the results of EU accession funding).

1.3.7. Key findings from Albania press trip

- The programme – variety, quality of speakers (especially the dinner on the second evening with Prime Minister);
- There was a good mix of journalists from around the EU, including those from prestigious publications;
- Implementation and organisation was professional and smooth, with good use of local support, e.g. a translator who was also able to provide insight into the country, support in organising interviews for journalists in spare time;

¹⁸ <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/albanien-wir-brauchen-eine-perspektive/12028560.html>

¹⁹ <http://www.gandul.info/international/premierul-albaniei-ar-vrea-si-el-un-dna-la-tirana-dar-are-o-mare-dilema-eu-nu-inteleg-cu-atatea-arestari-pentru-coruptie-romanii-tot-mai-iau-mita-14547180>

²⁰ <http://monocle.com/radio/shows/the-urbanist/195/>

²¹ <https://twitter.com/stefanovergine>

²² <http://www4.rp.pl/Finanse/307129906-Tirana-traci-przez-Ateny.html>

- The trip was felt to be short / intense, more free time would have been valued but this would not necessarily have added value for the EC;
- Providing a press pack ahead of trip and systematically ask for feedback on the contents could be beneficial to participants and allow greater insights;
- There was a missed opportunity - the dinner with the Prime Minister included other senior government officials but they were not asked any questions;
- Certain formats work better than others – for example, the lunch with beneficiaries of a project involving young people was sub-optimal due to the seating arrangements at the venue (this could have been easily rectified);
- Clarity – make sure briefings are on the record or if this is not the case, it should be clear from the outset to avoid disappointment;
- In terms of monitoring the journalists output, there is scope for a more rigorous and systematic monitoring of the articles which result from the trip against its objectives;
- The coverage generated by the trip was unlikely to have occurred otherwise. The precise link with the campaign objectives may not be as easily drawn. While IPA funds were mentioned in stories coming out of the trip, the coverage was not necessarily always as positive or prominent as to warrant the expense of the trip for this express purpose. On the other hand, a lot of “good news” stories which challenge stereotypes and stories which put Albania on the map can be seen as fitting under the broader objectives of DG NEAR’s communication activities. For example, stories which describe Albania as safe and as a desirable tourist destination are important to subtly shift opinions which in the long-term can prevent resistance to enlargement amongst the general public.

1.4 Key findings

This section presents our key findings from our observation of two specific trips. We understand that the approach to these trips can be considered to be relatively consistent with other press trips organised by DG NEAR, which we were unable to attend. The findings below draw on our observations, experience of attending other press trips as journalists and evaluators and discussions held with the various relevant parties, and the monitoring / feedback received and reviewed:

Overall, the trips were extremely well implemented, professionally run, were well organised and every effort was made to ensure the comfort of journalists and to facilitate their needs. Close involvement of the local EU office/Delegation is a success factor both before and during the trip, as is proactivity on the part of DG NEAR officials accompanying the trip.

The programmes of both trips were appreciated for their variety and the inclusion of high level speakers, as well as (some) time to pursue own interests. Participants would have been keen for still more free time or opportunities to capture more of the general population’s and civil society’s views and to gather “colour” for their stories, but it is not clear how this would directly align with the campaign (and DG NEAR’s) objectives.

Delivering press packs on a USB stick when journalists arrive is too late for any journalists wanting to do research in advance and is likely to reduce the likelihood that topics relating specifically to enlargement will be covered. If the Commission provided ‘stock shots’ in advance and on these sticks, this could support journalists’ tweeting during the trip.

Most (although not all) journalists produced articles as a result of the trips; these were articles which would have been very unlikely to have come about organically without the “push” and evidence gathered from the trips. However, not only was the coverage not all aligned with the specific objectives of the campaigns, but in the case of the trip to Kosovo, the number of journalists failing to have written anything within two months was relatively high and the reasons in this case at least were

not monitored. In addition, coverage in blogs and Twitter are not currently systematically monitored, but can be important in reaching opinion formers.

Key questions that arise from our attendance at the events include whether there is scope for better definition of the trips. This could in theory allow the European Commission be more directive so that coverage resulting from the trip could be more likely to be focussed on areas that are more useful for the purpose of the campaigns.

Other questions include whether a more judicious selection of the participants and in some cases more proactive availability to provide background information ahead of the trip would maximise the potential for coverage addressing the campaign objectives.

2. Annex 2: Feedback from Journalists

2.1. Overview

This Annex provides analysis of several sources of feedback from journalists and media representatives who have taken part in press trips supported by DG NEAR. The chapter commences with a presentation of the results of the on-line survey, which we launched in June 2015 to gather feedback from journalists who have participated in 14 different press trips between June 2013 and July 2015. Whilst press monitoring had also been carried out by the external contractors who organised the trips, our survey sought to provide independent feedback and allow some comparison between findings. In the ensuing paragraphs we describe first the approach to our independent on-line survey and then go on to describe our approach to reviewing the press monitoring carried out by a number of external contractors.

Our survey was launched on 24 June 2015, subsequently re-launched on 9 July and 11 August to allow us to gather feedback from the participants to the last press trips organised. We sent email reminders to the participants who had not already filled it in on 9 July, 23 July, 4 and 27 August 2015, which resulted in a further increase in responses. The survey was carried out in English, as English was the working language of the different press trips organised. The survey was hosted on-line using a dedicated survey tool and a link to the tool was embedded in invitations to participate, which were sent by email.

As a research tool, online surveys are an efficient mechanism to gather structured feedback from target audiences in diverse locations. The overall aim of this survey was to analyse the relevance, effectiveness and usefulness of the press trips: for example whether the press trips correspond to stakeholders' needs and if the activities deliver high-quality messages. The survey was also used to examine the sustainability of the activities, for example to what extent relevant multipliers have actually shared any information obtained from the programme.

The questionnaire was designed with the support of our communication experts, building on their past experience with the use of such tools to gather feedback from media representatives, and in agreement with DG NEAR. After they indicated which trip(s) they participated in, stakeholders were invited to answer four open-ended questions to allow us to collect qualitative data:

1. Do you think this press trip was a good opportunity for you and the media outlet you work for? If yes, why? If not, why?
2. What do you remember as being the strengths and weaknesses of this press trip – e.g. in terms of access to the right people, access to information and logistics?
3. How did the content and organisation of this press trip compare with similar trips you have been on? (e.g. in term of level of interviewees, opportunities to pursue particular interests, access to information and logistics)

4. To what extent have you been covering (more) the country / countries you visiting, or reporting (more) on EU enlargement in general, after this trip?



Eighty-seven responses were received representing a participation in 102 trips (of a total of 235 emails sent out, which is a response rate of 43.4%) – as several participants went on two or more trips. The breakdown of the answers per trip is as follows:

Trip	Responses
Croatia	15
Croatia and Serbia	3
Albania and the FYROM	6
Serbia	16
Montenegro	8
Kosovo*	15
Albania	20
Bosnia and Herzegovina	10
Turkey	3

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

To complement our primary data collection on journalists' impressions of the press trips, we undertook a review of the monitoring data that had already been collected. Indeed, at the end of each press trip, contractors distributed feedback forms to participants. The sections below also present the existing evidence under each campaign and our analysis.

The approach to feedback collection from the participants was not harmonised across the press trips. This is likely to reflect the fact that different external contractors were responsible for different trips over a time frame of several years. The forms included a combination of scale-based closed questions and open-ended questions, aiming at requesting the participants to rate different aspects of the press trips while providing more qualitative feedback on the trips at the same time. As a standard questionnaire was not used for all trips, it is not possible to provide comparative scores across all trips or to compare responses to open questions; this limits the possibility to formulate consistent findings from the monitoring across all the press trips during this period.

In addition, the feedback data was available in different formats. The returned individual feedback forms were only available for the Welcome Croatia and IPA 1 press trips. For the other press trips organised, our analysis is based on the summaries provided by the contractors.

In the next section we present the results of our survey received between June and August of this year.

2.2. On-line survey results

This section describes the survey question posed and a flavour of the results that are most illustrative of the main points made by respondents.

1. Do you think this press trip was a good opportunity for you and the media outlet you work for? If yes, why? If not, why?

Participants unanimously recognised the added value of press trips and of their own participation. On the basis of their feedback, press trips constituted a particularly valuable opportunity for the following reasons:

First, they praised the substance of the programme of the different trips, outlining that press trips allowed them to better understand enlargement as a policy and as a process, the region and the candidate countries visited.

- **A better understanding of EU enlargement**

“The enlargement issue is a very important one in The Netherlands (with a lot of resistance to it due to enlargement fatigue and only by going there one can weigh the options, expectations and the importance of the closer ties between the EU and the Balkan states or Turkey. As foreign commentator, I have travelled extensively in Western EU-member states, Southern Europa (Balkans, Turkey, Moldova, Cyprus) as well as in Russia, the US, China, Taiwan, North Korea, Egypt, Kenya, Israel, the Westbank, the Gazastrip, etc. In this array the press trips offer a nice, condensed possibility to 'update' oneself on the developments in the neighbourhood of the EU.”

“I could understand the issues about EU's enlargement in the area”

“Excellent opportunity to learn more about enlargement” and for a more specific example “Great opportunity to gain comprehensive insight into the onsite implementation of the EU's pre-accession assistance”

- **A better understanding of the region**

“It was a great opportunity, because we had a good picture of the problems and characteristics of these countries, that are not always simple for journalists.”

A good opportunity: “because it illustrated very well all the different developments that we normally only talk about in our conferences or on air. It's important to have a personal impression of what you report on.”

- **A better understanding of the countries visited**

“It was the best opportunity to have a thorough view of things happening there. And it was very useful because you can learn what people in Serbia think for their future. Good to get an impression of the country, people and national challenges.”

“After many years writing about EU enlargement and trials at the ICFY, I finally got to go to Bosnia. It is this kind of country where we rarely send people to check how things are going, when there is nothing extraordinary happening.”

“The press trip to Albania helped me to get a better understanding of 1) the accession process for a new member state, 2) historical tensions in the Balkan regions, 3) why Albania wants to become an EU member.”

Some participants even emphasised that

“...we wouldn't have reported on either of the countries otherwise.”

Second, participants emphasised that the press trips were designed to respond to their information needs.

- **Contacts with key informants**

“We were introduced to a broad range of public figures, politicians from different parties, the president, opposition leaders, but also independent journalists, critical Human Rights NGOs, businesswomen and cultural decision-makers (theatre).”

“It was a very good “opportunity to meet and talk to several experts, politicians and NGOs in a short period of time”

“A really good opportunity to meet key persons”

“Excellent opportunities to meet high-level government ministers, other policy makers, EU representatives and local business people”

The facilitation of the contacts met the information needs of the participants:

“Thanks to these meetings during these three days you get really immersed in the country and can get to know its problems well.”

“...we could meet the political leaders and ask a lot of questions on the record. Normally it is not that easy to get such interviews.”

“[I made] invaluable contacts that I still use now with my reporting.”

The contacts made extended to a strengthened network of journalists based throughout the EU and working on EU or enlargement-related issues, and **further strengthen the interest** of the programme:

“I also meet many others journalists from all over Europe”

“...the contact with other journalists from other countries helped open the view a bit”

“As journalist, there is not similar possibility to make contact in Albania and to be in contact with colleagues from all around Europe, interested in Albania problems.”

- **Materials**

The substantial quality of the programme, presentation and materials was praised:

“The trip made me qualified to write now and tomorrow about the actual situation in Bosnia and in the Balkans towards EU”

“A great deal of background information”

“...excellent opportunity to receive in such a concentrated amount of time so much info, contacts and a wide range of views about topics which were ‘in the news’.”

- **Format**

Participants also emphasised that not only the contacts made and the topics covered were valuable for their work, but also the format of the trip was adapted to what they were looking for / needed to produce news items, outlining in particular the exclusivity of the coverage made possible:

“As an EU reporter always in the EU quarter, it is always very helpful to travel to other EU MS and aspiring MS to have a broader perspective when reporting from Brussels.”

“Good chances to shoot a couple of news packages”

“We could make exclusive materials. Even though there was no possibility to make face-to-face interviews with ministers and other high ranking politicians, at the meetings they did say things that were easy to quote. A direct quote from an Interior Minister always makes you exclusive.”

In several cases, journalists outlined the timeliness of the scheduling of the trips. The **synergies created with topical issues** and important events (such as state visits) covered by the media were a clear added value to them.

“The trip to Sarajevo was a very good opportunity for me and also for my news agency because it was a month before the 20th anniversary of the end of the war and offered the opportunity to see the changes within Bosnian society after the conflict”

“I was there at a very important moment: when Croatia joined the EU. It was really an exciting period.”

“...because it happened exactly at the time the EU people in Kosovo were in the middle of a corruption scandal”

Lastly, they acknowledged the opportunity of participating to such trips funded by the EU given the current context of **budgetary cuts in most of the media outlets**.

“My outlet was unlikely to send me there on my own”

“...helped me to cover countries that I would have never gone [to] without this program”

“My newspaper would never pay me [to go on] a trip to Albania”

2. What do you remember as being the strengths and weaknesses of this press trip – e.g. in terms of access to the right people, access to information and logistics?

Participants' overall impression of the trips was reflected in what they identified as the strengths and weaknesses:

*“I work with Serbia on a daily basis and I can digest Serbian media, because I speak the language. But the trip was a **unique opportunity to meet some decision makers** that rarely speak to foreign media. It was also a great networking opportunity. After the trip, I have collaborated with some of the participants on various journalistic issues.”*

*“...very good logistics and excellent organisation team. It would be better to have more time for the journalists to have **more time on their own to conduct their own research**”*

*“We had access to high level officials, but the organisers of the trip were helpful in providing us with contacts of journalists and civil society actors so that we could get **a complete view** of the country and situation”*

*“The **greatest weakness was the lack of time**. The transfer between the two countries took up a third of the waking hours we had in the region. There was absolutely no time to walk around the capital cities **to observe life by ourselves**. The strength was meeting the Prime Minister in Albania and the EU rep in Skopje. Both were frank and honest as opposed to the party apparatchiks we dealt with otherwise.”*

To summarise, participants identified the following strengths:

- Opportunities to meet senior politicians, contacts made, variety of opinions represented
- Logistics (transport, transfers to/from airports, accommodation, meals)
- Communication before and after the trip
- EU full funding

Participants also suggested the following improvements:

- Add half a day without any official programme to give participants the time to do further research to feed into future publications (to explore different perspectives, supplement the materials distributed with their own views)
- Lighten the programme to give more opportunity for discussion
- Alternate between on and off the record session to encourage freer exchanges

3. How did the content and organisation of this press trip compare with similar trips you have been on? (e.g. in term of level of interviewees, opportunities to pursue particular interests, access to information and logistics)

Both the content and organisation of the press trips were praised and in general considered **of higher quality than other press trips** participants might have attended. The **professionalism of the contractors** was acknowledged and participants appreciated the care in the organisation, the information provided, the content of the programme and the access to key contacts:

“It was one of the best press trips I ever had”

*“**Much better organised and prepared than other trips** (with governments or embassies, e.g.)”
or professional organisations*

“Access to interesting interviewees was much better than on other trips”

“My trip was an extremely well organised one. I appreciated the material that had been sent to us participants before the trip. It was a concise, yet informative material.”

The recurrent issue mentioned is that of very packed schedule, leaving hardly any time to pursue one's own research, especially in the case of the press trips covering two countries.

“The time is always missing. But I went with two different organisations, and it was always interesting. The trips were quite similar. Access to information were good. No problem of logistic.”

“Maybe 3 days is a bit too short to visit 2 countries”

“It was just for 3 days as I remember it right and two countries, so everything was really fast, but it was very well organized”

4. To what extent have you been covering (more) the country / countries you visiting, or reporting (more) on EU enlargement in general, after this trip?

Overall, participants responded that their coverage of the countries visited had increased after the press trips with a few exceptions. They emphasised that they had an interest in enlargement-related issues and the candidate countries even before participating to these trips. The trips gave them more materials, contacts to use, as well as the opportunity to form their own opinions by doing fieldwork. The press trips also linked up to other topics and contributed to raising participants’ awareness on these questions.

“After every trip, also the one to Serbia, I write a longer article on the situation in this country, as viewed during the trip. The article on Serbia was a centre piece over two pages. I also use the information in opinion articles on the EU and European issues – e.g. why are Serbian youngsters still so focused on the EU whereas their companions in the 'classic' EU-member states as the Netherlands often have such a negative view? Their wishes show us what we already have and take for granted - assets, freedoms and possibilities they long for.”

*“I am specialized in international radio broadcasts (...). This kind of support for journalists is essential, as **traveling costs are not covered by the radio stations any more**. Without a facilitator of press trips the subjects could not be reported about in a regular manner.”*

“I did a thorough piece about Montenegro after this trip. Deepened knowledge of Montenegro also helps me in writing about different European stories on immigration, enlargement, etc.”

“I’m definitely paying more attention to what is happening in Albania and BiH after the trip and the writing more about them after physically being there”

However, participants also acknowledged that the media coverage of enlargement depended very much on the issues of the day. As some journalists see enlargement as a **“dormant” topic**, their coverage is limited but the information gathered can be retained and used one it is deemed topical again.

“As an international affairs editor, dealing with news and information from the Balkan region is part of my daily occupation. Since EU enlargement is dormant at the moment, [there is] not much reporting about it. This may change though. Then the background knowledge will come in handy.”

2.3. Results from the press monitoring

The summaries provided in this section are ordered by thematic area under the titles of the campaigns implemented, as follows:

- Welcome Croatia
- IPA
- Awareness-raising

- Stakeholder campaign

2.3.1. Welcome Croatia

The objective of the four press trips organised was to go beyond the usual political angle and show the different sides of modern Croatia.

Trip	Dates	Nr participants	Feedback forms returned
Business press	4-6/06/2013	12	2
Cultural press	8-10/06/2013	13	11
Youth press	24-26/06/2013	16	15
Women's and lifestyle press	27-29/06/2103	14	2
<i>Total</i>		55	30

Press trips were characterised by the representation of high quality media outlets. Around 50 journalists attended the four press trips in total, representing important media outlets such as the Irish Times, Il Sole 24 oro, ZDF, Polskie Radio, RAI2, Bulgarian National Radio or SKAI radio Greece. As evidenced in the final report drafted by Grayling, the trips generated a strong coverage throughout the EU.

At the end of each trip, participants were asked to fill in a feedback form. The questionnaires included a mix of closed and open-ended questions, alternatively asking participants to rate on a scale their impressions of the trips or to provide qualitative feedback on it. The approach to the questionnaires was not harmonized across the four trips, with the question on the likely future media coverage by the participants either present or not, and using different wording. Some questionnaires were only (very) partially filled out, which also limits our analysis.

Overall, participants had a very good impression of the press trips they attended and of the quality of the programme. The different sessions were positively assessed, with a very few sessions only satisfactory for a very limited number of participants (such as the visit to the Museum of Contemporary Art during the cultural press trip or the opening session on the transformative power of the enlargement process during the youth press trip). Journalists particularly appreciated:

“The variety of people [they] met” with “many different experiences”

“I felt that there were very good opportunities to interview those leading the sessions and was impressed with the overall level of access offered to anyone involved”

“... not propaganda but meetings with true activists and intellectuals”

“A very good trip with a surprising amount of access to culture in Croatia”

Participants praised the organisation and logistics around the press trips. The contractor's efforts to define an interesting and stimulating programme, invite key stakeholders while ensuring a smooth running of the trips, proving also flexible at times and accounting for individual participants' requests were acknowledged.

The issue of the time constraint was only raised marginally and not in general, but based on the specifics of the media represented (e.g. recording for radio). Some participants only suggested to have more “free time” scheduled to have the opportunity to go discover Zagreb by themselves or to do something beyond the capital city. Only the participants to the cultural press trips suggested including more extracurricular activities in the schedule, e.g. going to the theatre, dance and / or folklore performances.

The feedback forms also included questions on the anticipated media coverage following up from the trips for the culture, youth and lifestyle press. For the culture and youth press trips, participants were asked how they planned to share their experiences of the press trips upon their return. They anticipated a series of stories, on one or several of the topics covered by the programme, and to be either broadcast on radio show or published as articles in newspapers, local newspapers or/and online (e.g. youth magazine online, social media). Participants to the lifestyle trip were asked what would be the main focus of their reporting. They were planning to focus on travel information on Zagreb and the Croatia's "accession to the EU with a focus on the economy".

2.3.2. IPA

The objective of the press trips organised under the IPA campaign was to help journalists understand better the benefits of the EU's pre-accession assistance for both the enlargement countries and EU citizens and to encourage reporting on the benefits and results achieved to the campaign's target audiences and wider public.

Under **IPA1**, the trips had different foci:

- The trip to Croatia and Serbia focused on economic issues and achievements of IPA funded projects within the themes of customs, transport infrastructure and innovation climate;
- The trip to Albania and FYROM focused on non-economic issues, improvements and achievements in border security, the fight against organised crime and corruption, and human rights.

Trip	Dates	Nr participants	Feedback forms returned
Croatia and Serbia	26-28/06/2014	15	11
Albania and FYROM	14-16/05/2014	14	7
<i>Total</i>		29	19

Both trips managed to involve major press/online media outlets, as well as radio broadcasters, such as Les Echos, the Financial Times, der Tagesspiegel and Osterreich 1.

The feedback form consisted of closed questions where participants could rate the different aspects of the trip (the programme, the logistical aspects) and one open-ended question where they could formulate suggestions to improve the press trip.

Overall, journalists were very happy with the two trips.

"Overall the trip was very well thought of and a very professional setting for best results for the following reporting."

"Very good idea to bring us from Zagreb to the border in a tiny town and then by train to Belgrade... interesting journey!"

They particularly appreciated the **efforts to facilitate discussion on concrete projects** not only with high level speakers but also with "ordinary citizens" and/or private sector representatives. The interaction with different types of stakeholders helped journalists to get tangible evidence of the implementation of IPA-funded programmes.

"Apart from discussions with experts and politicians, it would have been helpful to get in contact with local people – in order to demonstrate how they profit from the IPA funds"

"Not clear what the benefits for the citizens of Macedonia are"

Participants were particularly enthusiastic about the more informal parts of the programme. Although meeting with very high level officials (e.g. dinner with the Serbian authorities and meeting with the **Albanian Prime Minister and Interior Minister**) was the highlight of the trips, they liked the **open and honest presentations**, offering them the concrete insights they were looking for. Given the specificities of the reporting exercise, they acknowledged the valuable opportunity to have access to such a wide range of stakeholders.

On the meetings during the working dinner with Serbian authorities:

“Very good atmosphere, very useful”

“The panel was really exciting!”

On the meetings during the working dinner with Albania authorities

“The Albania PM was direct in his answers and the meeting was informative”

“This was the highlight of the trip. Albania MP and Interior Minister were frank, open and their English was exceptionally good”

On the contrary, they were **less enthusiastic about presentations judged too technical or too long** (e.g. the visit to the Central Laboratory of Customs Administration and the Introduction to the Innovation Serbia Project or the presentation on the consolidation of the Law Enforcement Capacities in Albania PAMECA IV). The level was assessed as not adapted to the journalists’ needs and/or would have been more beneficial if presented as an illustration after more background information on IPA had been given.

Lastly, journalists expressed their enthusiasm about a smooth and “impressive” organisation.

Under **IPA2**, four more trips were organised:

- Kosovo*²³ with a focus on culture, sports, youth, civil society and media,
- Serbia covering emergency aid, culture and information, economy (e.g. women’s entrepreneurship), transnational cooperation and capacity building,
- Albania dealing with infrastructure building in the field of transport, institution building, youth and civil society, and
- Turkey focusing on civil society, media, justice and trade capacity building.

Trip	Dates	Nr participants	Feedback forms returned
Kosovo*	5-7/11/2014	14	<i>Not available</i>
Serbia	16-18/03/2015	15	<i>Not available</i>
Turkey	15-17/04/2015	13	<i>Not available</i>
Albania	1-3/07/2015	13	12
<i>Total</i>		<i>56</i>	<i>12 available</i>

The trips were well attended and generated print and online coverage, as well as radio broadcast. There is still potential for coverage to be generated as a result of these trips, which took place recently. Large media outlets included Die Welt, Der Standard, Liberation, Le Soir, Politiken, Hamburger Abendblatt, The Financial Times, The Independent, Magyar Nemzet, Nederlands Dagblat

²³ * This description is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

and radio stations such as Deutschland radio, Radio Intereconomia, Radio Cesky rozhlas, RNE Radio and Sveriges Radio.

A feedback form was distributed to all the participants asking them to rate on a 1 to 4 scale (1 – poor, 4 – excellent) the different elements of the programme and its logistics, to rate their overall impression on the press trip. Space was provided for them to make any qualitative comments needed, as well as an open-ended question on their recommendations on ways to improve the press trip. Not all of the feedback forms returned are available. In the case of the trips to Albania and Turkey, the press coverage reports drafted by the contractor include a summary of the evaluation received from the participants. In addition, the feedback forms returned by the participants to the trip to Albania were provided to the evaluation team as part of the follow-up to the visit (which was observed by a member of the evaluation team).

On the basis of the summary provided of the evaluation of the trip to Turkey and the feedback forms for the trip to Albania, journalists had a very good impression of both trips. The balance found between meeting with high-level officials and civil society and/or representatives of the private sector was received positively. Participants really appreciated the easy access to high-level speakers, with whom the discussion was “very interesting and frank” and who were “articulate, engaging and most helpful” providing “interesting insights” into topical issues. The use of an informal setting encouraged an open and honest discussion. During the trip to Albania, participants were very enthusiastic about the high-level contacts made:

“Beyond my expectations to meet the Prime Minister!”

“Great to have the opportunity to talk to such high-level people”

But they also made recommendations to include more youth representatives and local journalists.

Content-wise, they appreciated the content of the programme and the materials provided:

“The civil society representatives were articulate, engaging and most helpful”

“The trip was very revealing and informative”

Participants also suggested that they would have liked more information on the economy of the country and its challenges, as well as on governance reforms (e.g. the fight against corruption).

More specific or technical presentations were less well-received, either because of the format of the discussion (e.g. a meeting with the Youth Adrinet representatives in Albania) or because the discussion was too specific to offer insights to non-specialists (e.g. PAMECA meeting in Albania or the Food reference laboratory in Turkey). When too technical, participants suggested the information to be presented in printed format rather than through an oral presentation.

Overall, the logistics and organisation of the trips were assessed very positively. The only issues noted related to the travel time to/from Albania and Ankara, where the lack of direct flights put pressure on the agenda of the participants. The choice of the destination for these press trips had a strong incidence on the activities that participants could actually attend because travelling overlapped with some of the activities scheduled and the additional activities participants would plan individually to maximise the time spent on site.

2.3.3. Awareness raising

Under the first phase of the Awareness-raising campaign, two press trips were organised:

- Serbia: “Arts and culture, innovation, youth opportunities”
- Montenegro: “Discover Montenegro” with a focus on the rule of law and good governance, the continued economic development and its bustling cultural scene.

Trip	Dates	Nr participants	Feedback forms returned
Serbia	4-7/06/2014	12	<i>Not available</i>
Montenegro	15-18/06/2014	11	<i>Not available</i>
<i>Total</i>		23	

The articles relating to these press trips were included in the final report drafted by the contractor. The trips generated print and online coverage, as well as radio broadcast in media outlets such as The Copenhagen Post, La Croix, L’espreso, El Pais, Irish Examiner, Austria Presse Agentur, RNE Radio.

Individual feedback forms were not available to the evaluators in relation to the above trips and there was limited evidence on the monitoring in the contractor’s final report, which highlighted that journalists had appreciated the way that the trips were organised but indicated that some parts of the programme had been distracting and considered that the trip was too short.

2.3.4. Stakeholder campaign

Four press trips were organised under the Stakeholder campaign:

1. The trip to Albania focused on the key priorities the country still has to tackle according to the latest EC progress report (rule of law, fight against corruption and organised crime, reform of the judiciary and economic stagnation)
2. In Serbia, the programme focused on the accession process and negotiations, economic development, justice, civil society
3. The programme of the trip to Kosovo* was similar and focused on the accession process, Kosovo*’s economic development, justice and rule of law, and media
4. The press trip to Bosnia and Herzegovina covered key priorities for reforms in the country such as socio-economic issues and fundamental rights

Trip	Dates	Nr participants	Feedback forms returned ²⁴
Albania	12-14/11/2014	16	12
Serbia	26-28/11/2014	15	14
Bosnia and Herzegovina	27-30/05/2015	15	12
Kosovo*	10-13/06/2015	14	11
<i>Total</i>		60	49

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

The journalists invited to these trips came from some of the biggest media outlets, notably of the enlargement-critical EU MS. The trips generated print and online coverage, as well as broadcasts (Die Press, Le soir, El Mundo, El Pais, Le Monde, Le Figaro, L’Express, RAI I, The Financial Times, Gazeta Wyborcza, France 24 or Czech radio, Deutschlandradio).

We analysed the summary of the feedback received from participants.²⁵ The press package distributed to the journalists included the feedback from, a template harmonised across the four press trips. The form asked participants to rate different aspects of the trip (--, -, 0, +, ++):

²⁴ Not available

- Logistics and overall organisation
- Very useful
- Briefings and visits very effective
- Working atmosphere very pleasant
- Quality of the information provided good

Before asking them for more qualitative feedback on

- Which was for them the most interesting part of the trip?
- What would they like to see included in future trips of this kind?
- Other comments / suggestions about the trip.

Overall, the feedback received was very positive. Participants considered that the press trips had been very useful, the briefings and visits (very) effective and the quality of the information good to very good. The trips also scored very high in terms of the working atmosphere and the overall logistics and organisation.

Participants particularly appreciated the **opportunity to meet high-level officials**. The format allowed them to have an easy access to these stakeholders, to have direct exchanges with them and to provide relevant materials for any future reporting. Overall, the variety of speakers and the many perspectives on the different topics were praised. In some cases, journalists stated that they would appreciate to have meetings with the opposition, with even higher-level speakers (e.g. the Prime Minister in Albania) or more local people too. They acknowledged the added value for them to establish contacts in the countries visited.

Journalists made a few recommendations as to the practicalities of the trips. In particular, they emphasised the need to use **more off the record briefings**, whenever needed, to encourage a more open discussion with the speakers, as well as the value of informal setting in that respect. A few comments were made on the scheduling of the different activities, to either have fewer but longer sessions and allow for a more in-depth discussion, organise more field trips not to stay in one location only (e.g. field trip to Mitrovica in Kosovo^{*26} or Srebrenica in Bosnia and Herzegovina given the proximity to the 20th anniversary at the time) schedule more free time for the participants to conduct their own fieldwork.

2.4. Key findings

On the basis of the detailed feedback received and reviewed, the following elements can be put forward:

- Press trips constituted a very good opportunity for participants to gain a better understanding of the accession process and of the particular situations of the countries visited
- They also constituted a very good opportunity to collect materials and to establish contacts for any future media coverage
- Participants appreciated the access provided to a variety of stakeholders and key informants, at different levels, although some more time could have been allotted to networking in the countries

²⁵ Individual feedback forms were not available, only the consolidated summary of the feedback was included in the press trip reports.

²⁶ * This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

- Substantially, the value of the programmes was acknowledged, in terms of the range of topics covered and the quality of the information materials distributed, although it could have benefited from a better representation of different perspectives.
- Journalists were appreciative of the use of both formal and informal settings, off and on the record meetings, in order to encourage an open discussion and to have the opportunity to interact with the speakers more freely.
- Despite the time constraint, the excellent organisation and good relations with the contractors and the EC representatives present left an excellent impression on the journalists.
- Minor suggestions as to the programming were made, e.g. rethinking the ratio number of sessions scheduled / length of the session, more field trips to avoid a centric view and allow more free time for the participants to conduct their own field work.

3. Annex 3: Visibility events A

3.1. Overview - film festivals

The communication agencies implementing the communication activities supported by DG NEAR identified a number of existing, well-established cultural and sports events in which DG NEAR could be present. They constituted opportunities to further support the general and specific objectives of the campaign(s) under which they were organised and to reach out to the identified target groups.

As part of this evaluation, it was agreed that the contractors would attend two film festivals:

1. The Edinburgh International Film Festival
2. The Odense Film Festival

The participation of DG NEAR to these festivals took place under the second implementation phase of the awareness-raising campaign. As such, they constituted an additional opportunity to reach out to the general public (the target of this campaign). In addition to providing information on enlargement participation in these events allowed a testing of some of the many films produced by DG NEAR with informed audiences, as well as using films as channels to present the contemporary societies and cultures of the candidates and potential candidates, in-line with the Terms of Reference to the awareness-raising campaign on EU enlargement (p.13).

This annex presents the findings of the direct observation undertaken at the Festivals.

3.2. Edinburgh International Film Festival

3.2.1. Introduction

The Edinburgh International Film Festival (EIFF) is an annual fortnight of cinema screenings and related events taking place each June. Established in 1947, it is the world's oldest continually running film festival. The EIFF presents both UK and international films. All titles are world, international, European or UK Premieres, in all genres and lengths. This year, the EIFF ran from 17th to 28th June. DG NEAR was present over the final weekend of 27th and 28th June.

The three Edinburgh Festivals (the Festival itself, the "Fringe" and the EIFF) are well-established, high-quality events with international status, while Edinburgh as a city has a very strong literary and cultural tradition. *A priori*, any association with these events should be positive. In addition, attitudes towards the EU in Scotland are generally more positive than in England; there is even talk in some quarters of "an independent Scotland in Europe". So issues around the character and status of candidate countries have more than academic interest.

3.2.2. Goals and objectives of EC presence at the event

The purpose of being at the EIFF was to inform people about the countries in the enlargement process. The audience is the general public. The principle was to support film directors from the enlargement countries rather than films that are about the countries. For example, the film "Meet Me in Montenegro" was put forward as a candidate for support. But the director is American, so the DG decided not to support it.

Karl Christian Bauer, senior representative of Media Consulta at the event

Mr Bauer confirmed that the aim of the DG NEAR presence at the event was to raise awareness of the enlargement process. In general, presence at cultural events gives people an idea of what the enlargement countries are doing and of the fact that they are also able to produce good quality films.

Staff members on the stands at film festivals also face questions about Greece and other issues. They are not permitted to give out political information. They have information material, and they refer other questions to the Commission by email or via the website.

Media Consulta have a schedule of countries to cover and a list of DG NEAR films they would like to show. In this case, they were looking for an “older” EU country. They needed an event in Scotland and they made contact with EIFF. The two showings chosen were the most appropriate with regard to the artists and to the films. Any solution also has to work with the timeframe, the budget and the type of film. In the case of the EIFF, they were screening films from candidate countries and inviting the Directors to speak. So it was the best possible combination.

The target audience is quite wide, not excluding or particularly including anybody. Young people make up most, but not all, of the Festival audience. The aim is to give them the idea of the values shared with candidate countries. In this context, the self-completed quiz raises questions which might not be known by everybody to get them interested in these countries and in the process. It also shows them what the candidate are able to offer to the EU.

Brochures and other publicity materials are provided to Media Consulta by the European Commission. As well as information material on the enlargement process, there is also material for the photo exhibition, along with giveaways like calendars, postcards and magnets to attract attention. They distribute the same information materials and brochures at other cinemas and at locations run by the Festival. The Festival organisers supply volunteers to help with this task. In addition, they take a full page advertisement in the Festival catalogue, with logos, and distribute flyers and posters around the city.

Full-page advert in EIFF brochure

So similar
so different
so European

Did you know that as a result of successive enlargements the EU is the largest economy in the world, with more than 500 million citizens?

The EU's enlargement policy aims at preparing for membership those European countries that aspire to join the EU. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland (negotiations with Iceland have been put on hold following the decision of the Icelandic government), Kosovo*, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey are candidates or potential candidates.

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNPCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

GROWING TOGETHER

Enlargement negotiations

Want to know more?
ec.europa.eu/enlargement

Interview with official event partners

Ken Hay, Chief Executive, Edinburgh International Film Festival and **Julianne Reddin**, Development Manager

The EIFF team felt that the film “Hidden Treasure” was of very high quality. They assess all films they show very carefully and this one scored highly. On the logistical side, they reported that Media Consulta were very efficient, providing a clear briefing on the purpose of DG NEAR’s presence and what the volunteers needed to know. They felt this was a strong, clear campaign. *“We sometimes have to create campaigns for our supporters, they don’t have any idea why they’re here”*. EIFF prefer long-term planning rather than leaving it all to the last minute.

They explained that their focus is on directors from the region. The Festival is very much an industry event and their aim is to work with and collaborating with filmmakers. So for them the key question when selecting films to show is how do they fit with the objective of the Festival, not with the objectives of the event’s supporters.

3.2.3. Monitoring

Media Consulta count the number of quiz participants (80 on this occasion) and the number of visitors at the screening.

The representative from DG NEAR, who was present at the event, explained that her role for DG NEAR was on-the-spot monitoring to ensure that what had been agreed with Media Consulta was actually carried out. For the DG, key success factors, included the number of people at the stand and their levels of interest. It was suggested that if people blog about the event afterwards, that raises visibility.

They also look at how many people actually come to see the film and listen to the question and answer with the Director afterwards, there is a moderator and as part of the discussion about the film they ask three to five questions related to how the Director sees their country in the future if they become an EU member etc...The DG pays the moderator’s fee.

DG NEAR also take note of the level of interest in the questions and the answers. More detailed data is provided by Media Consulta. They submit a light report immediately afterwards and within a month, they submit a detailed report of +/- 10 pages with data on numbers of visitors and press clips.

3.2.4. Description / assessment of the event

A film festival is not a single, discrete event; it is a series of screenings at a number of different locations over a period of time and the EIFF adheres to this format.

Filmhouse exterior



The centre of activities is The Filmhouse, a long-established art-house cinema in Lothian Road, not far from Princes Street in the centre of the city. As well as housing the EIFF offices, it has a coffee bar/café which serves as a meeting place and to some extent as a focus for those participating in the festival (directors, exhibitors) as well as visitors.

DG NEAR’s support for the EIFF entailed a presence at two screenings, one in The Filmhouse and one at a separate venue, Cineworld. In both cases, there was a physical presence (stand, brochures, etc.) as well as a screening of the short film “Hidden Treasure” before the main film(s).

The Filmhouse screening took place at 14.50 on Saturday 27th June. Called “Black Box Shorts 4: Forms of Experience”, it consisted of eight short abstract films

around a single theme. The Cineworld screening took place at 13.40 on Sunday 28th June. It consisted of a feature length documentary “Remake, Remix, Rip-off” about the Turkish film industry in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

The Filmhouse

The Filmhouse café seats perhaps 150 people. It was about one third full for lunch on Saturday 27th June. The DG NEAR stand was set up during the morning and opened at 12.00. It was positioned between the café and the entrance to the cinema. It was in a fairly prominent position, although because of the layout of the building it was possible to enter and leave the café and/or the cinema with passing directly in front of the stand. Unfortunately, because of the ceiling height, it was not possible to erect the stand fully and the horizontal banner across the top could not be deployed. This reduced the stand to the level of a counter or desk and did diminish its presence somewhat. Some while after it was set up, it was noticed that one of the posters was in French (Scots, like their English neighbours, are not noted for their mastery of foreign languages). This was later rectified. The desk was well-stocked with brochures and manned by two representatives of Media Consulta and two local volunteers. All wore DG NEAR tee-shirts.

By 14.25 there were still very few cinema goers. One of those managing the desk tried to interest some lunchers in the brochures, but without success.

By 14.50, there were about 40 people in the cinema. In her opening remarks, the moderator explained that the films were about formal contemplation and formal imagination asking us to question the world. This aimed to open up different ways of seeing the world by making a journey through different visual experiences. She then read the text about EC support and involvement in a rather flat, uninterested voice.

The EC logo was shown at the outset, then “Hidden Treasure”, then the eight short films. DG NEAR specifically supported the second short film shown, “A Question Lingers” by the Turkish Director, Kenneth Feinstein. The EC logo and the Growing Together logo were both printed next to the film credits on the half-page handout supplied by EIFF. In Mr. Feinstein’s own words, the film shows “*the movement of criss-crossing elevators inside a department store, creating a formal arrangement that gives rise to reverie, perception shifts and the mind wanders*”. It runs for seven minutes.

The debate at The Filmhouse. Sadly, with no mention of EU support



After all the short films had been screened, the moderator conducted an interview with Mr. Feinstein. During this interview, there were no questions about his Turkish origins, nor about Turkey and the EU, nor about enlargement. At one stage, he explained that the images of the escalator had been filmed in a Turkish department store, which would have been the perfect cue to introduce the country and the enlargement these. This was not done. I raised this point with the Festival organisers afterwards and was told they thought Mr. Feinstein was from Singapore (he is currently working there). They had not, therefore, made the connection with Turkey and had not briefed the moderator – despite the presence of the EC and DG NEAR logos on the programme. This opportunity was thus completely lost.

No media were present.

Cineworld

Entrance to the Cineworld multiplex



Cineworld is located at Fountain Bridge, some 15 minutes by car or bus from the centre of Edinburgh. It is a large, modern complex of 14 screens within a shopping mall. It was immediately obvious that in such a location, with an overwhelming amount of “big movie” branding, merchandise and publicity, it was simply not possible for a relatively small sponsor to have a strong visible presence. It was the EIFF who advised DG NEAR to move their main presence from Cineworld to Filmhouse this year and that was clearly good advice.

However, there was no visible mention at all of “Hidden Treasure”, nor of the “Remake, Remix, Rip-off” documentary anywhere among the EIFF publicity at Cineworld, not even at the EIFF desk of the box office.

The DG NEAR sponsored film was due to be shown in the first Cinema on the left at the beginning of a long corridor with further screens off to both left and right. In theory, this should have been a good location as visitors to other screens would have to pass the DG NEAR publicity stand. Unfortunately, the corridor was so crowded that the stand had to be placed inside the entrance to Cinema 12, where it was not visible from the main corridor. There were probably 500+ people in the entrance area at one time or another, but only those actually coming right into Cinema 12 would have seen the poster and publicity materials.

At 1.10, no cinema-goers had arrived in Cinema 12. The MC organiser said, “*we expect people to come just for the film and they probably won't have time to ask questions*”. As the “goodie bags” were being packed, I noticed that they included a calendar. This was the largest object in the bag and it seemed a little incongruous as an item to be included on 28th June.

The “Remix...” documentary was filmed in Turkey and vividly illustrates how Turkish society has changed and continues to change. The MC briefing to the volunteers concentrated on Turkey and EU candidate countries in SE Europe. The MC organiser talked about the enlargement process and explained that these countries want to join the EU and Europe is helping them develop. He mentioned that there was some criticism of enlargement because of the situation in Greece and volunteers should be aware of that. He explained that the aim of campaign is to raise awareness about the countries, particularly in the fields of arts and culture (so the Commission is also present at book festivals, arts festivals etc). The organisers are helping visitors to understand the values they share as Europeans with the candidate countries. There was no mention of any benefits to the EU of enlargement.

The capacity of Cinema 12 is about 150-175. The cinema filled up rapidly in the few minutes before the film started. About 50-60 people were present. The stand was in a better position at the entry point than in The Filmhouse; there was no way for those entering Cinema 12 to avoid the stand and the volunteers. As far as I was able to see, all those entering picked up a “goodie bag” although no-one had time to stop and ask questions.

“Hidden Treasure” was shown at the outset. It has already won international awards, so it needs no more plaudits from this reviewer. But it deserves to be noted that it looks very good on a big screen in a mainstream cinema. The production quality shines through. The audience was attentive and some started to try and guess which the countries were as the sequences progressed. There were a few happily surprised “ahs” when they turned out to be mistaken.

Because his schedule had changed, the interview with Cem Kaya, the Director, had taken place a week before. There was therefore no introduction and no question and answer session afterwards. Apparently, the interview was available online, but I saw no publicity to this effect.

No media were present.

The EC stand at The Filmhouse



On this occasion, the impact of the stand itself was limited by the fact that the ceiling was too low (or the stand was too high for the room). But the posters were highly visible. The EU blue and the Growing Together branding were both present. During the time I was in the festival café, I counted no more than thirty visitors; but it should be mentioned that the stand was manned with volunteers throughout the afternoon and into the early evening. More than that number completed the quiz, so there was clearly more contact.

Those manning the stand – volunteers and MC staff – worked with unfailing enthusiasm and good humour. They sought people out, they answered questions and they encouraged participation in the quiz.

There was also a photo exhibition at The Filmhouse. This took the form of a slideshow of photographs of interesting and amusing images from enlargement countries, shown on TV monitors around the room. There were a large number of movie posters on the walls of the room and it has to be said that when one was sitting at the tables in the café, the screens did not really stand out.

However, a point made by Ken Hay, EIFF Chief Executive, was that the photo exhibition had been quite a success later at night in the bar. Perhaps because the screens showing the photos were set at eye level, people standing up had been much more interested in them. Quite a few of those at the bar had commented on the photos as being distinctive: they were clearly not stills from movies, nor were they just location pictures. When it was explained by EIFF staff that they were pictures of candidate countries, the discussion had first turned to which enlargement countries would be preferred as holiday destinations, followed by questions about where exactly they were and then the connection to the Festival – at which point the cultural links had been explained.

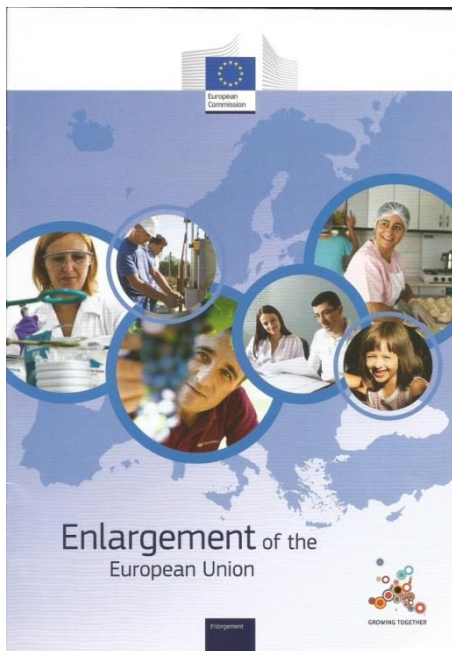
Interviews with visitors to stand/passersby

I spoke to a cross-section of people in the café who had picked up materials from the stand and/or were completing the quiz. The word most used by everyone was “interesting”. They were impressed with the layout and quality of the materials.

Flyers distributed at EIFF



Brochure distributed at EIFF



However, they were mostly unaware that one of the short films to be shown was made by a Turkish director and frequently surprised to hear that Turkey was still a candidate for membership of the EU. All agreed that the staff on the stand had been polite and helpful. When asked what they would like to see from the EU on the topic of enlargement, the most frequent answer was that they would like to be told what was happening, was somebody about to join, etc.

Quiz distributed at EIFF



Check out the leaflet about Enlargement of the European Union for help with the answers!

Enlargement of the European Union

How much do you know about the EU and the countries hoping to join it?

1. Which country joined the European Union on 1 July 2013?
 Croatia Bulgaria Poland
2. How many Member States does the European Union now have?
 27 28 36
3. From which candidate country of the European Union does tennis player Novak Djoković come from?
 Turkey Serbia The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
4. Which UNESCO World Heritage site is located in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia?
 Mont Saint-Michel Göreme National Park City of Ohrid
5. Kosovo has the youngest population in Europe with a median age of...?
 27 years 30 years 35 years

turn page →

Interviews with cinema-goers

The Filmhouse

At the end of the screening, I introduced myself and asked the group of five or six people sitting around me what they thought of the films. This first question was deliberately vague, I made no specific reference to the EC film. There was general agreement that the various shorts were interesting and that it was good to have the director there to explain the thinking behind one of them.

When I asked what they thought of the EC film in particular, the initial reaction was “*which one was that?*” Only one person asked “*was that the one with lots of different places?*” I had the impression that the fact they had just seen eight short films made the EC film just one of nine, rather than the single short before the main picture.

When I asked what they thought of it, there was no real response, just a long pause. Eventually, one person asked me what it was trying to say. I explained that the theme was that our near neighbours, just beyond the borders of the EU, are really very like us. Everyone agreed, once it was pointed out, that this was true. However, one of those present then said, “*perhaps you’re not asking the right people*”. It transpired that two of the group were American, one was Argentinean and only two were Scots.

I asked the two Scots what was their view on enlarging the EU. Their first reply was that they thought this a strange question coming from an Englishman, as the English were trying to leave the EU. I repeated that I was working with DG NEAR and added that not all the English shared that point of view, then re-asked the question. The conversation immediately turned to migration in the Mediterranean, which had been on the TV news, and the possible impact of further enlargement. I explained that much good work was being done on the ground in countries of origin and at sea, as well as in reception centres. But before I could bring the conversation back to enlargement, they had to leave.

Cineworld

As at The Filmhouse, at the end of the screening, I introduced myself and asked the group of five or six people sitting around me what they thought of the films. I made no specific reference to the EC film, but I did mention that I was working with the European Commission.

The immediate, very strong reaction was a series of negative comments about the “goodie bags”. Among the printable remarks were:

“Wouldn’t you say there’s not much good in the goodie bag?”

“You’re just creating landfill”

“I’ll recycle the bag, but you can shove the calendar”

“A calendar and a couple of postcards, so what?”

“Turkish delight it isn’t”

As they delved further into the bags and discovered the brochure, the mood softened slightly. Comments included:

*“Europe’s a good thing and all, but most of this is ****”*

“Oh, there’s a brochure, aye that’s brings it back a bit”

They then left the Cinema.

Outside, only two people had stayed to look at the poster and read it on the way out. The two of them then went and sat down nearby and read the printed materials very carefully. After giving them time to absorb what they had read, I went over and asked them what they thought of the materials.

They replied: *“We like the brochure. We are both Serbian and we hope to join. But we know it won’t be for a long time yet”.*

I suggested it might be ten years. *“That’s optimistic, we think it will be longer than that.”*

3.2.5. Main findings

- **Film festivals**

It should be said at the outset that if the DG wishes to emphasize the cultural similarities and connections between the EU and its candidate neighbours, then film festivals are good places to do so. They are attended by people who are already interested in culture, have an interest in cultures other than their own and are ready and willing to debate the issues raised by the films they see.

One of the aims of this campaign is to stimulate informed debate - information without debate or reinforcement is only half the task – and, in general, Festival organisers like to arrange debates; indeed they positively encourage them.

So it is greatly to be regretted that no debates took place alongside the films on this occasion. But if it so wishes, DG NEAR does have the opportunity to re-enforce its presence in Edinburgh in the future. One suggestion made by the EIFF organisers was for the DG to host a dinner or dinners for small numbers of opinion-formers. This allows for a more wide-ranging question and answer session to discuss issues in more depth. Another suggestion was for a hosted discussion with two or three film makers in front of an invited audience (100 – 200 people). This would be separate from the film screenings, run for longer and delve more deeply into the issues.

Specifically, 2017 will be the 70th anniversary of the Festival and the emergence of the post-war sharing of ideals in Europe is intended to be one of the major themes of the year. On the face of it, this seems to fit very well with the broader aims of the DG NEAR campaign.

Two caveats: this is a truly international audience, not just a European one. Not all those present will be EU citizens. Also, the Festival organisers have their own agenda – much more so than at, say, a

Trade Show which is more of a neutral platform. The exact synergy between the campaign messaging and the Festival messaging needs to be carefully considered.

- **Logistics**

DG NEAR provide Media Consulta with very clear briefs and monitor their adherence closely. This is laudable, but does leave little room for manoeuvre on the ground. Last-minute changes entail a cumbersome approvals process.

There is also an issue in the briefing process: the DG briefs one team from Media Consulta, but another team from Media Consulta actually manage the event. They in turn brief the organisers, who are then supposed to brief the volunteers, although I saw briefings (well) conducted by Media Consulta, rather than by EIFF. In such a chain, it is easy for the nuances in messaging to become lost. In my opinion, it was this long chain which meant that the importance of asking the EU-related questions to Mr Feinstien was overlooked.

- **Value for money**

Media Consulta have an overall budget which is divided between the various events they attend, but they are only able to provide a final budget figure after the event, since there are a large number of variable costs.

However, both Media Consulta and the DG NEAR representative agreed that the approximate budget for DG NEAR's attendance at the EIFF in 2015 was approximately 10,000 euros. That is not actually a complete figure, since it does not include the production costs of the publicity materials.

About 100 people saw the "Hidden treasure" film; around the same number visited the stand and/or talked to the campaign staff. On the face of it, that does not seem to represent value for money. It is true that flyers and posters were distributed elsewhere, but sending a team of people with equipment to spend two days on the ground just to leave materials on the off-chance that they will be picked up is not efficient communications.

- **Communications mix**

The priority for the EIFF presence seemed to be on distributing the printed materials rather than engaging directly with the target audience. Leafleting may have been effective 10 or 15 years ago, but the world has moved on. Audiences expect dialogue, not just one-way communication. That does not mean trying to change the mind of every visitor to the stand, but it does mean establishing a forum or fora where real debate can take place and where festival-goers can more closely engage with the issues. The DG produces high quality communications tools, but on the evidence of this event, does not make best use of its communications channels.

3.3. Odense International Film Festival

3.3.1. Introduction

Odense Film Festival²⁷ – “Expect the unexpected”. Celebrating its 40th birthday in 2015, Odense Film Festival is Denmark’s oldest film festival and in 2013 they became Denmark’s first Oscar-qualifying film festival. Meaning winners from the Main Competition and from the Danish Competition go straight to the pre-jury of the Academy Awards in Hollywood. As of 2015, they are in yet another Oscar-qualifying category, which means that this year, the winner of the Animation Competition will also be in the running for an Oscar nomination. The event is open to all; everyone can take part in the festivities. The events and film screenings are free, so everyone may join.

This is an international event with a local flavour and a wide target audience, ranging from the young to pensioners, but also with an extensive programme for youth from pre-schoolers to high-school students. There is no specific profile of the people attending; they come from all walks of life; but are united by their interest in film and their curiosity.

The festival takes place in the very heart of Odense, in the area of the century-old Brandts textile mill, closed in 1977 and later renovated. Brandts has been a cultural institution at the heart of Odense for decades. In 2005, it gained an Educational Centre with three workshops: a media workshop, a photo workshop, and an art workshop. The area around Brandts is the cultural centre of the city and a very familiar name to all Danes. The area around Brandts includes the Café Biografen (Cinema), Kulturmaskinen, Magasinet and the open-air area of the Amfi Theatre, all in very close proximity; creating a bubble of film festival and culture aimed open to all.

The festival took place between 24/08/2015 and 29/08/2015.

3.3.2. Goals and objectives

Objectives

The objectives for DG NEAR of the campaign and specifically of being at OFF2015 were:

- to raise awareness about the enlargement process; and
- the countries:
 - o their cultures;
 - o the differences but above all their similarities with the Member States of the EU (common values and common aspirations, being quite close culturally, going beyond stereotypes, shedding light on the cultural aspects and on how modern they actually are).

The goal was to reach the public, particularly youth, as well as media. The reason for the focus on media and youth was that both are (seen as) information multipliers.

Why this event

The event was chosen because it is a well-known, high-visibility event. Furthermore, it attracts many visitors. An important aspect in choosing this event was also the possibility for the films to have their own “section”, with multiple films shown in sequence²⁸, thus bringing people together and giving a clear image of the region / topic. Furthermore, having the Directors of three of the films present for a Q&A after the screening gave the opportunity for a debate around enlargement as well as filmmaking in the region.

²⁷ <http://www.filmfestival.dk/en/what-is-off/> last visited 18/08/2015

²⁸ The five films shown as part of the EC sponsored “So similar, so different, so European” campaign were: Heavens; Morning prayers; Agri and the mountain; Sthorzina; and Drop by sometime.

The messages and getting it across

The key campaign message for the event that it was hoped people would take away was “So similar, so different, so European”.

The materials made available for the event were deliberately lightweight as people were unlikely to want to carry around a lot of materials. These materials include a leaflet and postcards. The idea of these materials was awareness-raising. A stand with a screen and materials was also used.

Monitoring

For the DG, key success factors were considered to be not just reaching the target audience (both general public, but also youth and media), but the number of people stopping at the stand, their level of interest (in the subject and the materials), whether they wanted more information and how engaged they were in the debate.

Birgitte Weinberger, Head of Festival for OFF

Birgitte Weinberger, Head of the Festival and Culture Consultant for the Odense municipality has been organising the festival for the last seven years. She was positively inclined when they were contacted and asked if they were willing to participate in the campaign, but surprised by the subsequent need to apply for this.

OFF is an open festival, diversity is a key value and message. Diversity and openness to what is beyond Denmark and beyond the EU - across the world - is essential. The events include films from over 35 countries and Birgitte was eager for OFF to serve as enabler and personally found the slogan “So similar, so different, so European” very good and an important message. She assumed OFF was selected as a partner, because it was an international short film festival with a wide audience and therefore a good platform.

She felt that South East Europe and the films shown are a hard topic to communicate about and it is hard to reach a group interested in the topic. OFF had tried to boost the audience by sending out a recommendation to high schools flagging it as something that could be interesting for the students to watch.

Birgitte did see some challenges and room for improvement in the future. The current approach limits the audience to those who are interested in South East Europe and those who seek out the topic. OFF does not allow commercials and it would not be feasible to have EU enlargement clips before each film, because film-goers go to multiple films during the festival and would get annoyed with the clips. It would also not be an option to show short films such as those selected for this campaign before other films as the audience goes to see specific films and would be annoyed if these clips were imposed on them. Whilst grouping the short films into a single section enables the showing of the films and allows for an interesting debate with the film directors (seen as an important added value), the format does not immediately reach a wider audience.

Birgitte suggested that it would be worth considering how the money was best spent to create value. It would be worth considering how to create the interest from groups not already interested in the topic. However, a first step would be to reduce the administrative burden for those who take the projects on and give the organisers more freedom to organise what they think is right and would work. Birgitte suggested that a possible approach (at OFF and perhaps beyond) would be to find a (well-selected) celebrity sponsor whose values are aligned with the message and use this person to promote a full evening event with food, films and debate, targeting the young in particular. This would generate more added value and would get the message out beyond those already interested in the topic or region.

3.3.3. Description / assessment of the Event

The film festival, as mentioned, took place at the centre of the city of Odense, in a location that is well-known for cultural events and is a busy area.

The festival area encompassed ten locations, within a relatively small area:

1. Magasinet (screening venue);
2. Café biografen (three screening venues);
3. Amfiscenen (screening venue);
4. Studenterhuset (screening venue);
5. Brandts (museum and activity area);
6. Kulturmaskinen:
 - a. Pejsestuen (screening venue);
 - b. Videobar (providing ipads for on-demand screening);
 - c. Børnehjørnet (childrens corner);
 - d. Festival headquarters
7. Odense filmværksted (film workshop);
8. Rosenbækhuset (seminars and workshops);
9. Farvergården (outdoor activity area);
10. Teater 95b (screening venue).

The screenings of the five EU films took place at Teater 95b.

Teater 95b

Teater 95b is a venue on the outskirts of the festival area, somewhat off the beaten track. The venue is nevertheless not that far from the main area



limited signage.

The venue itself is a charming little theatre, in a new building, in the courtyard of a residential area.

The entrance to the venue showed no specific EU branding or campaign materials. However, there was an OFF2015 poster and a red carpet to indicate that it was a venue for the festival.



(approximately a 2-3 minute walk), but it is located in a back alley, which is not that easy to find due to very

On entering the venue there was clear EU branding, with the freestanding poster having been given a better placement than the festival equivalent.

Originally, the EU stand was going to be at the venue. But due to limited space at the venue an alternative location was selected. This will be covered later in this report.

The capacity of the venue was between 60 - 70 people.



The venue had a screen, café-style seating and a bar, as well as several tables with various materials. The venue was used for screenings of multiple videos every day of the event and hosted workshops and debates linked to screenings (including the EU films).

The EC presence and stand

The EC presence at the event consisted of several different elements including:

- Three screenings of the five films and debates following each screening;
- A stand, and hand-out materials and 'goodie'-bags;
- Publicity in the festival magazine.

These elements are described below.

The films and debates

The section dedicated to the selected films, colloquially called "So European" by the festival volunteers and officially called "Southeast Europe – So similar, so different, so European", was screened three times over two-hours:

1. 27/08/2015 at 13:00 – 15:00;
2. 28/08/2015 at 17:00 – 19:00; and
3. 29/08/2015 at 10:00 – 12:00.

The format for each screening was as follows:

- A short introduction by a moderator;
- Consecutive screening of the following five films:

1. Heavens;
2. Morning prayers;
3. Agri and the mountain;
4. Sthorzina;
5. Drop by sometime.

- Debates with Directors of three of the films

In addition to this, the Media Consulta quiz (filled-out individually by each participant) was handed out.

The observed screening

Upon entering the venue, the freestanding poster was clearly visible. The brochure, flyer and postcards were placed on several bar tables near the entrance. The quiz was handed out by a volunteer.

A moderator introduced the session, explaining what the movies were and that there would be a debate with the Directors of three of the films. The moderator mentioned that the EC was a partner, but unfortunately no logo was shown.

The lights were dimmed and the screening started. The Hidden Treasure clip was not shown. Nobody was able to inform me whether this was due to a misunderstanding or whether this was linked to the principle of the Festival of not showing “commercials”. The films were screened without a break. Unfortunately, there were technical issues with the projector used for the screening, which meant that for a large part the colours were not quite right.

We estimate that 16 people were present (including the Directors and moderators). One journalist was present.

When the screening was finished, the moderator introduced the three Directors and mentioned that the focus programme (the section) would not have been possible without the support of the European Commission. The mentions of the EC support and of the EU involvement and that it was in the context of EU enlargement were positive.

The debate kicked off with a quick introduction by each of the Directors, who each talked for a couple of minutes about the films and how they came to make the films. The majority of the questions from the audience and from the moderator were about how it was to make the films, the challenges encountered and what kind of collaboration there was with filmmakers from other countries.

However, there were also a few questions and good comments about similarities and differences. What was interesting in this context was that the discussion remained conceptual, with the Directors, saying inspiring things such as “there is diversity and a specific sense of humour” and “forget about borders, we are all human”.

At the end of the session, the audience was reminded to fill out the quiz and hand it in at the EU stand located at the festival headquarters, in return for which they would receive a goodie-bag with a T-shirt and printed materials.

The stand and handouts

The other main part of the presence at the festival (in addition to the films) was the EC stand and the handouts available at it. This essentially consisted of the following elements:

- The stand itself and the people at the stand;
- The brochure, the flyer and the post cards; as well as
- Goodies.

Each of these elements are described below.

The stand itself and the people at the stand

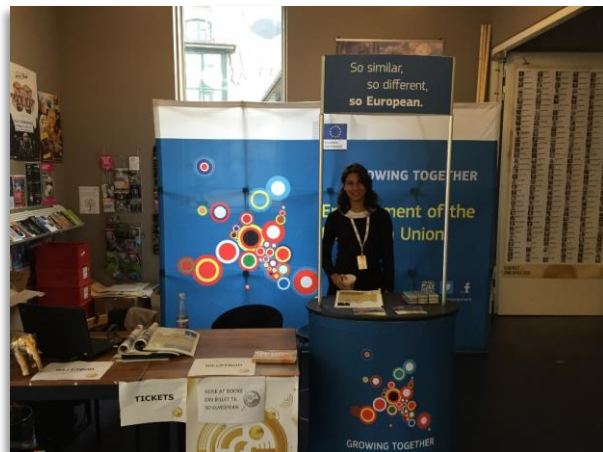
Originally the stand was going to be located at the venue where the films were screened (Teater 95b). However due to space limitations this was not possible.

The final location of the stand was at the festival headquarters, a central location right next to the ticket and information counter. The location was much more central and exposed than Teater 95b. Although, that did not mean that it was constantly crowded. As the screenings of all films at the festival were free, the only need for tickets was to reserve a spot at popular screenings and this could also be done online. (Most services are offered online in Denmark and the public is used to doing things online as it is more convenient).

It is hard to judge the final impact of the placement of the stand. The central location of the final placement possibly meant that it was in a more prominent and visible place. However, having next to the screenings would possibly have made it more accessible to those audiences.

The stand was well presented, with the background clear and readable, so that it was quite imposing in the entrance area, very visible.

The stand itself, though rather small, was large enough to display the slogan “So similar, so different, so European” clearly displayed (as can be seen in the picture).



The stand was staffed by volunteers (and Media Consulta, but not on the first day), who were very welcoming, friendly and proactive in talking to people. They were quite knowledgeable about the materials, having read them and having researched the topic further online. They were eager for people to ask questions and take materials.

In an effort to further encourage people to attend the screenings, the organisers had printed and posted an A4 on the ticket stand, adjacent to the EC stand, saying “Husk at booke din billet til *So European*”, which means “Remember to book your ticket for *So European*”. However, the effect was limited according to a volunteer, as very few people came to book.



The stand had a number of different kinds of materials available. Due to the limited space on the stand, the materials were rotated and what could not be placed on the stand was put on

a table at the information desk. Furthermore, the volunteers informed me that materials had also been placed at different venues.

The brochure, the flyer and the post cards

The most extensive piece of material that was available was the blue brochure saying “Enlargement of the European Union” on the front, but no mention of the slogan “So similar, so different, so European”.

In addition, the campaign flyer was available, having both the “Enlargement of the European Union” and the campaign slogan on it. This flyer provides tips for the quiz.

The volunteers found that the flyer was better than the brochure because the brochure was too large and people would be unlikely to read it. They said that the flyer was taken by more people.

In addition to the brochure, the flyer and the quiz, there was also a selection of post cards showing images from the different countries, with the name of the country and the campaign slogan. Finally, there was a postcard with a mosaic of all the different postcards.

Goodies

Different goodies were also distributed, first a keychain and a T-shirt in a carrier bag. These items included EC and EU enlargement branding.

Publicity in the festival magazine

In addition to the stand and the materials made available at the stand and venue, there were also several other informational ads and mentions of the campaign and European Commission in the magazine:

- a full page ad in the festival magazine (page 77);
- 2/3 of a page description of the film section (page 120); and
- European Commission logo to indicate they were a partner for the event (page 7).

The festival magazine was widely available and clearly much used people carried it around. The magazine was slightly larger than A4, had 142 pages.

The ad was the same as for other countries, but with text in English and in Danish, in that order.

The ad for the section of films was clear and very visible when flipping through the pages. As the picture shows, the title was clear and had the EC logo and enlargement logo on the right side, clearly displayed.

The text introduces the films and the enlargement context as well as the moderated debate. It also gives the time and location of the screenings.

Lastly, the EC logo as well as the enlargement logo was also present on the page dedicated to the organiser, sponsors, media partners and collaborators/business partners at the beginning of the magazine.

Visitors to the stand/passers-by

We observed that there were few visitors to the stand the night it was first set up. However, interest picked up the next day (the day of the first screening), and continued until the end of the fieldwork (the second day of screening).

Some visitors came by themselves to look at the stand, although the majority of the visitors came because the staff in charge of the stand engaged with them.

Most visitors that came to the stand without any encouragement were adults aged 40 to 60. However, they did not stay long and were merely looked at the stand, browsed the materials a little and then left, taking different materials with them. By contrast, the younger audience were engaged by the staff and stayed longer, talking with the staff, asking questions. Some took materials when they left, most commonly the postcards, some took pictures of the URL before leaving.

The gender distribution was rather even. It was however interesting to note that there was quite a mix of nationalities, a majority of Danes naturally, but also several other nationalities, happily engaging with the staff.

I took the opportunity to talk to a number of visitors to the stand as well as people passing by to get their views and opinions on the idea of the campaign, the stand itself and the materials that were available at the stand.

In general people were very positive about the idea of an information campaign by the Commission and specifically about enlargement. However, there were different views, one visitor stated that “my money should not be spent on this kind of thing, promoting the Commission”. Conversely, another visitor noted that it was great to have a campaign like this, especially at a cultural event “it is the right place to share cultures and learn from and about each other”. This visitor was not alone in this view. With a few exceptions, nearly everybody thought that it was a good idea to have information campaigns and that it was the right place to do it because of the cultural aspects. Interestingly, a young (university) student who liked the campaign said that although it was a good idea and the information was certainly appreciated and was a good match with the culture, it was probably not reaching the right people as the people attending cultural events like these are generally open-minded and pro-EU. If you wanted to get people “on-board” then you had to reach out to those who are not pro-EU. This naturally led to a conversation about the objectives of the campaign, which he perceived as being to inform individuals attending the festival. When asked who he thought the target group was, he said 35-50 year olds.

Most of the young people interviewed stated that they thought the campaign was aimed at people older than them, typically ranges around 35-60 (35-50, 40-60, etc.). When asked why they thought that the target audience was that, they made statements like “well, it’s the Commission, it’s dry and boring”, “only my parents are interested in what the Commission does” and “it’s not exactly presented in a way that appeals to young people”.

The message was if you want young people to talk about it, then “get me interested now, get me hungry for more and I will go search for the information myself”. “If I find it interesting I will share the information and discuss it with my parents at dinner and friends in school”. A 17-year old boy said that “he was all for the EU, but this was just wrong – you can’t feed people propaganda this way”. He thought the format was wrong and suggested that a better approach would be to create a debate with both sides of the argument, have people “talk about it, over a beer, with people who know what they are talking about”. A young volunteer overheard the conversation and jumped into the conversation and added, “feeding propaganda was indeed wrong – we have the internet, we will research topics we are interested in ourselves, it is the only way to form our own opinion”.

Broadly, there was agreement that it was a good idea for the Commission to inform people and engage with them, but it was the wrong format. The visitors were asked why it was the wrong format, what they thought of the stand and of the materials.

About the stand it was noted that it was “far too Commission”, several people, both young and old thought that it should be more about the content – more about the culture – rather than lots of EC logos. “Make it look less Commission – it will scare less people off” a 26 year old recent university graduate said. “Make the stand more interactive” another girl said (approximately 20-22 years old). An elderly gentleman said that it was “too blue”.

The blue brochure

There were mixed opinions about the blue brochure. A middle-aged couple both thought that the brochure was good because it looked nice and modern, and it had introductory information. They said that it would help them know what to look for if they wanted more information. Conversely, two high-school students objected strongly to it saying that it looked boring, “the colours were boring and cold; the people in the pictures looked uninteresting and far too serious”. A man approximately 30 years old noted that it was definitely aimed at people older than him as it was “old-fashioned, but not in the good way. Besides who reads brochures nowadays?” For the brochure, there was agreement (with a couple of exceptions), that the format was wrong, too long, not interesting and not something that looked interesting at a glance.

The flyer

The flyer was seen somewhat more positively by the visitors. Although an elderly lady noted that the writing was too small for her to read. The two high-school students found the pictures and colours

were a lot better than in the brochure. People were more convinced by both the format, layout and content than they were with the brochure. The 17-year-old boy said that it was more likely to get him interested than the big brochure. On the other hand, the language was a little too “fancy” (the way he expressed it suggested that he wanted simpler language as it was in English). One girl did however take the flyer, flip it around and look at the back where she noted that it was copyrighted in 2013 and was probably “out-dated information” and asked why it had taken so long to get it to Denmark. She did however find it positive that but she did point out that there were URLs to Facebook, twitter and Pinterest, where she could probably find more up-to-date information. When challenged about what information would be out of date, she pointed out that Iceland was no longer a candidate country although the flyer said it was.

In addition to the feedback from the interviews with visitors, it was also noted that several people looked at the materials and took the flyer and stuck it in their pocket (mainly men) – the flyer format is also more suitable for this purpose.

The post cards

After the interviewees were asked about their thoughts about the flyers, they were presented with the postcards. Here there was a very clear divide between the opinions of younger (under 35-40) and the slightly older (over 35-40). The younger thought that they were nice, whereas the older did not really see the point in them. A middle-aged couple thought that they were nice to look at, but that they served no purpose “I would not send them to someone or hang them up on the notice board – so what do I do with them? ...I can look at them now, but I will not take them home”. An elderly lady did not understand what to do with them either and asked if the purpose was to “collect them?”. Conversely, the younger interviewees found them to be more appealing than the other materials:

“They are visually much more appealing”

“They are simple yet appealing and it’s not completely clear what it is about at first glance so I would pick them up and find out”

“They are really nice, but why only here, why not in bars and cafes with all the other post cards?”

It was clear that the simple format appealed to the younger interviewees, but it was not clear what they would do with them, when asked they responded quite diversely:

“I would write a nice message and give it to a friend”

“I would hang them on my wall”

“I don’t know, look at them to try to figure out what they are about”.

What kind of information would you like and how?

The final question asked to the interviewees was how they would like to receive information from the European Commission and what kind of information. Again, the younger were (nearly all) in agreement, but the slightly older were not.

The younger interviewees wanted information to pique their interest so that they could go and find more information for themselves. For example, a young lady (20-22) said that she would like a website or Facebook page to “go get some information first” and then she would find more herself to see if it was fair information or not.

There was less agreement amongst the older group: Some thought that it was best to use the kind of format like at the festival, but to do it more often. Others thought that it was more interesting just to have informational sessions. An elderly lady thought that “there should be a documentary on TV about it”.

The consensus across the groups was that it was interesting to hear about and that they did want more information, they agree that they want to know where to find more information – they just did not agree on the format.

3.3.4. Interviews with cinema-goers

Sixteen people attended the observed screening including the three Directors²⁹. The gender mix was more or less even. There was a wide range of ages from approximately 18 to 65. People were very focused during the screening and although the start to the debate after the films took a while to get going, it did pick up.

Six people were asked for their views and opinions after the screening. The six people were selected at random. They were asked to provide some feedback on different aspects of the films and the debate, namely:

- What they thought about the films;
- Who they thought the target group was;
- Whether they saw a connection between the section and the EC;
- Whether they saw a link with the campaign message (“So similar, so different, so European”); and
- What kind of information they would like from the EC and in what format.

Each of these questions are covered below.

What they thought about the films

The interviewees generally agreed that the films were interesting, scoring them an average of 4 out of 5 as overall score. However, due to the previously mentioned issue with the projector, some said that it was hard to judge production quality.

Also on a highly positive note, all the interviewees but one found the films to have excellent storylines that they were easy to understand. The person who found the films less easy to understand and the storylines somewhat confusing was highly critical about European Commission-sponsored activities at a cultural event, thinking that it was “taking advantage of culture to promote itself”. Thus, this view may have biased the interviewee against the films.

Who they thought the target group was

The interviewees were asked who they thought the target group of the films and the section in general was, giving them a (multiple) choice of:

- 1-16 years of age;
- 17-25 years of age
- 26-35 years of age
- 36-55 years of age
- 56+ years of age
- All ages

The table below illustrates their answers

Interviewee	1-16	17-25	26-35	35-55	56+
#1 – Male, 32y		x	x		

²⁹ A number of people walked in and out during the screening.

#2 – Male, 29y			x	x	
#3 – Male, 38y		x	x	x	x
#4 – Female, 24y		x	x		
#5 – Female, 36y		x	x	x	
#6 – Female, retired – approx. 65-70y		x	x	x	x
TOTAL	0	5	6	4	2

No particular type of background or area of employment was deemed to have been targeted. But that it would have to be culturally interested people.

Whether they saw a connection between the section and the EC

All the interviewees said that they knew that there was a connection because the moderator had mentioned it and asked questions about it. Furthermore, two of them mentioned that it was obvious with the big pull-up at the entrance (#3 and 5#).

One interviewee (#6) mentioned that she had seen it in the festival magazine and had seen all the brochures lying around.

However, there was a consensus that if they had not been told and if there had been no free standing poster and printed materials, then they would not have known about the link. But as noted by an interviewee (#1), it was not seen as a bad thing “because it should be about the culture and the sharing, not about the Commission”.

Another interviewee (#4) said that she had “no idea that the Commission supported those kind of projects, but that it was cool”.

Whether they saw a link with “So similar, so different, so European”

When asked the question, three of the interviewees made it clear that they thought it was just the name of the film section at the festival, they had not understood that it was part of a campaign.

The other three interviewees were aware of the link because they had seen the full-page ad in the magazine (2) or been at the stand before the screening (1).

However, once the campaign was explained, there was agreement that it was very fitting and that it was great to see aspects of life in the countries depicted in the films and that there were both similarities and differences. An interviewee (#4) said that she had felt a particular link with the girl in Agri and the mountain because “although her life is so different, she still had the same sort of concerns, like ours”. Another interviewee (#2) stated that the filmmakers in other countries face the same challenges.

What kind of information they would like from the EC and in what format

It was interesting to see that five of the six interviewees thought that it was an excellent format to share information through and to bring “us” closer to each other. An interviewee (#2) noted that the EC should inform people more about what they support; it might change many people’s views about the EU. Another interviewee (#6) said that what she found most interesting was the debate and that it would be very interesting to extend the debate and bring in more people.

Two interviewees (#3 and #5) would have liked to have information about what kind of EU funding was available for filmmakers and how to get this funding.

3.3.5. Main findings

Goals and objectives

The objectives were clear for the parties involved. In short, to make people understand that we are “So similar, so different, so European”: Reaching people of all ages and walks of life, but with a specific focus on youth as information multipliers.

Description/assessment of the event

Location wise, the venue (for the film screenings) could have been more central, as it was not that easy to find, but this was not a major issue. The branding of the venue was good and the venue was very welcoming.

The EC presence in general

The EC presence in general consisted of three elements:

1. three screenings of the section dedicated to the films and to moderated debates linked to these;
2. a stand with hand-outs and staff to explain and encourage interest;
3. publicity in the festival magazine.

The EC presence was considered as positive by the majority of the people that were interviewed and people were generally interested in getting more information about EU enlargement. But some questioned whether the approach and channels were the most appropriate.

The stand

The stand had to be moved to the festival headquarters due to lack of space at the venue. This gave the stand wider exposure, but did not necessarily enable people who attended the screenings to obtain any more information they wanted. On the other hand, the central location at the festival headquarters it is likely to have attracted more visitors than it otherwise would have. The stand was well visited, the staff were welcoming and engaging and happy to provide the various materials available. A screen on the stand would have been likely to have increased the level of interest.

Generally people were positive about the stand, although there was comments about too much EC branding.

The materials

The materials available at the festival included a brochure, a flyer, postcards and a goodie-bag. There were mixed opinions about the materials. However, in general there was agreement that the brochure could be improved as the majority of people did not find it interesting. The flyer on the other hand was more popular and seen as a more fitting format. However, it was noted that the flyer was out-dated. The postcards were regarded highly by the younger visitors, who would like to see them available in bars and cafes as well. Conversely, the older interviewees could not see the purpose of the post cards.

Another important finding was the willingness of the younger generation to look for additional information once their interest is piqued.

The films and debate

The screening we observed was a success despite a technical issue, and the ensuing debate was ultimately lively. Unfortunately the Hidden Treasure clip was not shown.

3.4. Key findings

Together the two film festivals confirm the relevance of DG NEAR presence at cultural events. These festivals provide an important opportunity to reach the public with one of the key messages of the campaign: “So similar, so different, so European”. Although, some of those interviewed regarded this activity as Commission ‘propaganda’, most were positive about the experience.

However, it is always important to assess the strategic objectives of a festival on a case-by-case basis and whether the messages / agenda of the festival organisers are in sync with the campaign.

There were mixed findings regarding the objective of stimulating debate and dialogue. The Edinburgh International Film Festival missed the opportunity to generate and stimulate debate. By contrast, debate was built in to the design of the Odense Film Festival and was a successful element of the format.

In both cases the stand was welcoming and well-manned by individuals who were enthusiastic and proactive. This was a success factor in both cases. In terms of value for money, however, there is scope to improve the efficiency of passing on the information / training necessary. In addition, the nature of the festivals is such that it is not easy to ensure high footfall.

Another key finding, which came out of the Odense Film Festival in particular, was that there is an interest in being informed about enlargement, and that younger audiences are willing to look for additional information themselves once their interest is piqued.

In terms of the material available, in general the flyer was regarded as a more suitable format for written materials than the brochure by the film festival goers. Not all of the give-aways were viewed as appealing.

4. Annex 5: Visibility Events B

4.1. Overview - information talks

This evaluation is focussed on the communication activities of DG NEAR in the period 2011 to date. Events provide a key opportunity for DG NEAR to communicate to specific target audiences. Over the timeframe of this evaluation, DG NEAR has funded many events in different Member States and pre-accession countries.

As part of the evaluation, it was agreed that we should attend a small number of events with a view to understanding the role that they play as a key component of the DG's communication approach. This chapter provides a description of the following three events supported under the budget of the communication campaign on pre-accession support (IPA), as follows:

1. Fighting organised crime and corruption in the Western Balkans held on 5 June 2015 at Queen Mary College in London.
2. Public Administration Reform in the Balkans held on 16 June at the European Policy Centre in Brussels.
3. EU enlargement: comparing perspectives on the integration of Roma in Germany and the Western Balkans held on 30 June 2015 in Stuttgart in Germany

4.2. Fighting organised crime in the Western Balkans, Queen Mary University, 5 June 2015

4.2.1. Introduction

This event around the theme of "Fighting organised crime and corruption in the Western Balkans" was organised in partnership with Queen Mary University at the Centre for commercial Law Studies in London and managed by the Media Consulta Group as part of the campaign to increase the visibility and understanding of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). It took place on 5th June, 2015. The European Commission sent an observer from DG NEAR (unit A2) to the event.

4.2.2. Background

As per Media Consulta, partners are approached based on their ability to target certain groups.

Media Consulta approached Adam Fagan from the Queen Mary University of London due to his involvement in an EU research project which looks at the impacts of enlargement as a way to reach target audiences. The project, which is called "MAXCAP" (Maximising the integration capacity of the European Union³⁰) has its headquarters in Berlin where Media Consulta are based.

Following an agreement to organise an event around the themes covered by IPA; the final concept was drawn up collaboratively by Media Consulta and Queen Mary University of London based on exchanges and a conference call. It was the University which proposed the most salient theme: "rule of law".

³⁰ <http://www.maxcap-project.eu/about>

The promotion was the responsibility of Queen Mary University of London. They used existing university mailing lists with support from the media officer to get the word out. The representative from the university highlighted: “*on the organisational side, the lead time was short in terms of publicity, though we were able to get the word out to potential attendees before the event.*” Accordingly, certain target groups who could / should have been present (e.g. domestic political parties) were not; possibly because they were not reached or their calendars were already booked up.

4.2.3. Description / assessment of event

The entrance was arranged so that registered participants could “sign in”. Approximately 40 people signed up for the event, but 24 attended (not including the 4 speakers). A list of the participants, seen by evaluators showed that half of the participants were probably academics³¹. There were no journalists present, however among those present were writers and authors specialised in the region.

There were information leaflets (for the 5 areas covered by IPA) and the 2013 Annual Report. However, few participants appeared to have taken materials. The representative from Media Consulta explained that it was up to the partner whether or not they wished to provide a “goodie” bag, or leave materials on the chairs for participants. For the event, the University preferred to leave the materials around for participants to pick up at their own discretion. As shown in the images below, there was a large banner introducing IPA “An Investment in Europe” on entrance and behind the speakers’ table.



The Commission’s involvement was very obvious to those present.

The session was introduced and moderated by Professor **Adam Fagan** (Professor of European Politics, Head School of Politics and International Relations, Queen Mary University of London). The speakers – listed below – presented on the following topics using power points as aids:

- **Henk Visser**, Programme manager, Justice and Home Affairs – Western Balkans and Turkey; DG NEAR

Overview: Introduction to the EU Enlargement process – the role of IPA and, specifically, how to understand the “rule of law” under IPA. The meaning of corruption and results from an evaluation of IPA2 (need for more prioritisation of funds and better coordination). Understanding of Enlargement “not as **more** Europe, but **better** Europe”

- This speaker had long experience in the region, and was described as the “*go-to expert for people interested in the topic/ field*” by the representative of Queen Mary University of London.

³¹ This is an estimation based on the email addresses of participants received by the evaluation team (i.e. where this was a university email, they were assumed to be academics)

- **Christopher Will**, Manager, Open Regional Fund for Legal Reforms, GIZ
Implementation of IPA funds in the region

*Over view of region and how it fits into a wider network of organised crime; types of crime
Purpose of funds –bring expertise into region, work with partners (e.g. Eurojust, Europol).*

- This speaker read from notes but was well prepared and detail-focused. The presentation could have been snappier but was informative and linked very clearly with the campaign objective, namely to give visibility to the use of IPA funds.

- **Dr Jan Meyer-Sahling**, Associate Professor of European Politics, School of Politics and International Relations, University of Nottingham

Presentation of study on impact of EU exposure (i.e. working with EU institutions and the role of “silent” purification or changes in culture and attitudes); the study is not finished but evidence seems to be suggesting that the tickle down impact of EU exposure occurs in the rule of law.

- This speaker is the leading academic dealing with corruption in Western Balkans. His presentation was largely theoretical, but explored the impact of EU funding / exposure to EU institutions / practice and progress in moving away from corrupt practices.

The presentations went slightly over the envisaged time, but the chair suggested we use some of the time allocated for lunch to have a longer Q&A. Questions from (and discussions with) the audience revealed that they had expertise / interest in the region and /or corruption. Those who asked questions introduced themselves and were exclusively academics. Their interest was less in the IPA, and more in the cultural, institutional reasons for corruption and how this can be combatted.

4.2.4. Feedback

Following the event, participants were asked to explain the reasons for their participation, how they had come across it, their views on the event and how (if at all) they would have improved the event³². Those participants who responded to questions had heard about the event through word of mouth via colleagues, or fellow researchers. The participants were **planning to share their experiences informally with colleagues or would integrate it into their work**. Asked how the event might be improved, the following suggestions highlight a desire for more discussion:

- “*Sharper, focussed presentations to allow more time for Q&A*” (Female participant, government professional)
- “*Further discussions similar to the one given by the Professor from Nottingham University would have been helpful. It was useful to see work reviewing the impact of IPA programme interventions.*” (Male participant, government professional)

In terms of the format, a representative from the Queen Mary University of London suggested that, in his view: “*For the purposes of communicating / publicising the work of IPA and the EU, it would be preferable to have a smaller roundtable event with experts for a 90-minute session, followed by lunch.*”

³² A short email survey was sent to all participants. Responses were received from five participants.

4.2.5. Summary of findings

The quality of the event (the speakers and organisation) was very high. The audience clearly appreciated the content and were made up of members of the target group (academics, UK and foreign civil servants, and researchers). Although those present left the event better informed, the impact of the event was limited by the absence of domestic politicians and / or media professionals.

Although not expressed mentioned by participants, the networking lunch which followed the presentation was a good opportunity for those present to discuss the subject, and to make contacts. It is one of the less tangible, but positive dimension of these events.

Discussions with the co-organisers of the event emphasised the added-value of the Commission's "branding and blessing" for the event, which made it possible and more credible. In addition, the funding for the event meant that the most appropriate speakers could be flown in to present at the event.

4.3. Public Administration Reform in the Balkans, European Policy Centre, 16 June 2015

4.3.1. Introduction

This policy dialogue event was jointly branded as an event supported by the European Policy Centre (EPC) and the European Commission, Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations. The dialogue session was essentially a panel session, which involved three key note speakers and was moderated by the EPC, as follows:

- **Kori Udovički**, Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia and Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government
- **Simon Mordue**: Director for Strategy and Turkey, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, European Commission
- **Milena Lazarevic**, Senior Programme Manager, European Policy Centre Belgrade

One member of our evaluation team attended this event in an observer capacity and took the opportunity to discuss reactions to the event with participants. In addition, an interview was conducted with Corina Stratulat after the event to enable us to gather more insights from the EPC perspective.

4.3.2. Description of the event

At registration, there were several leaflets available for participants to pick up. As the event was supported under the IPA II budget, available documentation related to this programme, including from the '*Investment in Europe: investment in people*' leaflet series. The session lasted for an hour and a half running from late morning until lunch time (11.00 until 12.30). The EPC has a long experience of running these sessions and it was explained by their representative that the duration is considered to be optimal. Less than an hour and a half is considered to not be sufficient, yet over this duration may start to limit participation. An obvious question to ask is whether such an event would have greater participation after office hours, yet given the niche topic area, it may be unlikely to generate more physical participation. Nonetheless, the seminar room was full with the 50 or so individuals who did participate and it seems that it would not have been physically possible to include more participants. The event was filmed and photos of speakers were also taken.

The combination of speakers, with a senior politician from Serbia and a senior official from the European Commission seemed to strike a good and interesting balance in terms of offering participants different perspectives from individuals who are well placed to give interesting and new insights. Each presentation followed a relatively traditional format with a Powerpoint Presentation given by each key note speaker. There were some issues with the Deputy Prime Minister's presentation and she suggested that the version to hand was not the latest version. In addition, some slides contained a large amount of data that was too small to be read. Nonetheless, the Deputy Prime Minister was adept at presenting and these issues did not detract significantly from her overall presentation. Simon Mordue's presentation was very clear and well-structured and together with the programme manager from the EPC centre in Belgrade, this made for a well-balanced programme on a technical topic.

At the end of the session, there was an opportunity for members of the audience to pose questions to the speakers. It was noted that the people asking questions were either from the European Parliament or from the European Commission and Simon Mordue made a comment to this effect. Only three questions were actually posed by the audience and one question was asked by the moderator. The general impression was that because the session had come to an end there was no more time for questions, which from an event management perspective probably made sense so that the event and the ensuing lunch kept to the time allotted. However, there may have been other questions that did not get asked and there was no real debate as such. (It is noted from the interview with the EPC representative that the EPC is considering changing the format of its sessions to facilitate more debate.) At the same time the EPC, which runs circa 200 such events per year, suggested that it would be limiting to be too prescriptive about formats for events as it is necessary to tailor event formats to the topics under discussion.

The session was followed by a gourmet buffet lunch, which was appreciated by participants reflected by the fact that many decided to stay after the session for at least half an hour. This can be considered to be an effective formula to facilitate networking between participants and provided our observer with opportunities to gather feedback. The networking lunch gave participants an opportunity to freely network with the key note speakers, who made themselves available and appeared to be more than happy to answer questions and join in discussions. This provided a rare opportunity for this type of interaction with these individuals and it is likely that questions that had not been asked during the session were asked more informally during the lunch.

The technical nature of the topics being discussed 'administrative reform in the Balkans' means that participation at this seminar was relevant to a niche audience, which includes those working on this or similar dossiers within the EU institutions. The fact that the EPC is located in Brussels also enabled staff from the institutions to take part. It is understood that there was no web-streaming of the event to bring it to a wider audience. Following the event, our observer spoke to five members of the audience, picked at random to find out their thoughts on the session. The individuals interviewed indicated were attending the session either due to potential direct relevance to their work, because they were themselves from the region, and / or because they had a strong personal interest in the topic area. The interviewees worked for think tanks, the Commission and representation offices.

4.3.3. Feedback

All participants were extremely satisfied that they had attended the event. One participant explained that the event had been '*inspiring*'. There was no negative or more critical feedback given. The session was considered to be very interesting if not immediately relevant to the work of participants and there were no real suggestions for changes. The perceived importance of the key note speakers particularly the Deputy Prime Minister and the Director from the Commission seemed to give clear signal of the significance and value of the event. Participants appeared to get what they came for and from the small number of individuals that we spoke to there were no unmet expectations. The opportunity to hear clearly steps taken by the European Commission in this area was considered to be of great value given the limited opportunities for this type of exposure to senior Commission officials. At the same time, the Deputy Prime Minister gave a lot of facts and figures and her

interpretation of these, which gave a sense that the information provided insights that might otherwise be difficult to find.

The EPC were very appreciative of the support provided by DG NEAR highlighting that the support helped to ensure that progress on very technical topics could be discussed, which might not otherwise be brought into public discussion. With Commission support the EPC is more able to attract high level speakers and the support generally helps to pitch the event as a meeting of some significance. The support was suggested to be 'indispensable'.

4.3.4. Key observations

The EPC discussion was a very well organised and well attended event. The event can be commended because it brought together key players in relevant to the topic area and made their thoughts and work open for discussion. From the evidence gathered, participants were very satisfied that they had attended and all found the discussions to be interesting.

The topic of the session is highly specialist, in-line with the IPA programme on pre accession assistance, and relevant to a niche audience, which included those from the EU institutions particularly as the event was held in Brussels. Primary target groups for this type of activity are likely to include academics, researchers and think tanks, as well as government officials working on dossiers related to the region.

This event focussed on a very specialist area, yet there is scope for wider dissemination to allow those not physically present in Brussels to listen into or watch the session, for example if streamed over the internet. This would imply promotion beyond, in this case, EPC mailing lists and potential for using social media, academic networks / platforms to make discussions more available to specialists working in relevant fields.

4.4. Comparing perspectives on the integration of Roma in Germany & the Western Balkans, 30 June 2015

4.4.1. Introduction

This event around the theme of integration of Roma in Germany and the Western Balkans was organised in partnership with the Young European Federalists of Baden-Wuerttemberg and managed by the Media Consulta Group, as part of the campaign to increase the visibility and understanding of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). It took place on 30th June, 2015 in Stuttgart. The European Commission sent a speaker from DG NEAR to this event.

4.4.2. Background

As per Media Consulta, partners are approached based on their ability to target certain groups.

Media Consulta approached the Young European Federalists of Baden-Wuerttemberg since they had a positive experience of having worked with a similar organisation of young people in France where they had organised a common event. Therefore, Media Consulta decided to contact the Young European Federalists in Germany. They considered Munich and Stuttgart as cities for the event, but in Munich they had already worked with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. To ensure the right balance, the Young European Federalists of Baden-Wuerttemberg were selected as a partner. The event fitted in the concept of information and communication events related to IPA. For this particular event, however, more emphasis was put on social inclusion. The Young European Federalists could choose the exact topic and format of the event. Media Consulta proposed one or two speakers and the Young

European Federalists another one or two speakers. The communication with the European Commission (EC) took place via Media Consulta.

Information about the event was disseminated via a mailing list of the Young European Federalists. The Federalists informed associations of young people. University of Stuttgart was informed about the event, but no poster highlighting the event was prepared. No journalists were invited.

4.4.3. Description / assessment of event

The entrance was arranged so that registered participants could “sign in”. Twenty potential participants had registered for the event. Thirty-four seating places were provided, but only 13 participants were present at the event; mostly the Young European Federalists Baden-Wuerttemberg. Only one attendee was not a member of the organisation. Some of the registered participants might not have arrived due to very hot weather. According to the Federalists, it is more difficult to ensure participants for an external event (outside their organisation). No journalists were present.



Five IPA thematic leaflets were made available for participants at the event (both in German and English): Public Administration Reform, Rule of Law, Sustainable Economy, People, Agriculture and Rural Development. In addition, the 2013 Annual Report on Financial Assistance for Enlargement was provided and a brochure on the enlargement of the EU (see pictures below).

From the side of the German partners, leaflets of the Young European Federalists and of citizens' movement dealing with EU-related aspects were also available.

All in all, the participants expressed positive opinions about the communication materials of the European Commission. They liked the examples highlighted in the leaflets. They took the brochures from the table where the material was displayed. Certain participants emphasised that the information in the brochures was too basic for people acquainted with the topic. In their opinion, it would have been useful to provide links to more information in the material.

Take up of materials was good; everyone took some brochures / leaflets.



The **Commission's involvement was very obvious** to those present. Three banners of the EC were on display: one in the conference room, one in front of the door to the conference room and one in the foyer. In the conference room a banner of the 'Netzwerk Europäische Bewegung' (www.europaeische-bewegung.de) was also displayed. There was a small EU flag on the table of the panellists. Name tags of the speakers on the table had the EU logo, logo of the Federalists and the 'Growing together' motto. European Commission's logo was also included on the agenda on the event.

Mr Fritjof Rindermann, Young European Federalists, welcomed the participants and introduced the event. He indicated the problem of Roma integration, mentioned a project conducted by Baden-Wuerttemberg and shared personal experience with Roma camps in Macedonia.



The following speakers were to present on the topic of the event as indicated in the agenda:

- **Mr Jiri Hladik, European Commission, DG NEAR**

The speaker explained the EU framework and how 'acquis communautaire' (AC) deals with the Roma issues ('acquis' is very weak and not legally binding). Lack of coordination with the civil society, and with the representatives of the Roma are two main critical points. The speaker mentioned the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015, which is an unprecedented political commitment by European governments to eliminate discrimination against Roma and close the unacceptable gaps between Roma and the rest of society. In addition to describing Roma problems in the Western Balkans and in the EU and their negative image in the media, the speaker elaborated how IPA was used to improve the Roma situation in the Western Balkan (IPA evaluation reports were mentioned). IPA II is less project oriented than IPA and is rather more strategic oriented. Mr Hladik explained that reporting takes place via conferences in the Western Balkan countries with representatives of the EU and the governments of countries (the progress is discussed, conclusions are reached on what is still to be done). The conferences and seminars are not enough; involvement of political level is needed which is aimed in the Stabilisation and Association Agreements with candidate and potential candidate countries.

- **Dr Christian West**, Church and Religion, Integration and Values, Foreign and Asylum Rights, State Ministry of Baden-Württemberg

Mr West explained that the relation to minorities in Germany is regulated via a state treaty and the main minority groups in Germany and some historical perspective on the situation. Mr West elaborated on activities directed towards Roma in Baden-Wuerttemberg aiming at their integration. The presentation of Dr West did not mention EU policies and the enlargement topic.

- **Ardian Ajeti**, Community Liaison Officer, the European Union-Mitrovica/a RAE Support Initiative (EU-MRSI II), Mercy Corps Kosovo (absent). This speaker cancelled his participation.



The speakers used Power Point presentations as aids. Eight questions were asked by the audience after the presentations of the speakers. The speakers made a good impression, were perceived as competent and answered the questions in a professional way. Their presentations were good and so was the ensuing discussion. There was enough time for the audience to ask questions. All of this was also confirmed by the interviewed members from the audience (please see the section below).

English – German interpretation was provided but not needed; interpreters were working despite the fact that nobody needed the interpretation (apart from maybe the MC employee).

4.4.4. Feedback

Direct **feedback from five participants** (face-to-face) was collected just after the event. Participants were asked to explain the reasons for their participation, how they had come across it, their views on the event and how (if at all) they would have improved the event.

Participants got to know about the event from the Facebook page of the Young European Federalists. They found the Roma-related topic interesting. It is a topic which is not so often discussed.

The participants found the topic of the event well chosen. According to them, it was a good idea to compare and discuss the EU and regional level. The presentations of the speakers were seen as good, as well as the discussion. The speakers made a good impression on the audience, they were perceived as competent and answered the questions in a professional way. There was enough time for the audience to ask questions. Some participants, however, indicated that the topic of the event was very broad. A couple of more specific discussion points at the beginning of the event could have been proposed. Presence of an NGO representative could have brought an added value to the discussion. Another participant proposed that there could have been an additional discussion in between the presentations of the speakers to engage the audience in a better way.

The participants were asked to rate the event on the scale out of 10. The participants gave the event from 7 to 9 points; the average rate being 8.2. Overall, participants found the event as informative. The critical points related to the fact that the intended third speaker was eventually not present and they wished for the discussion to have a bit more critical debate. The participants also indicated that the English – German interpretation was carried out in vain, since everyone was speaking German and it was not necessary to translate into English; the organisers should have cancelled the interpretation knowing that no English speakers would be present. Also, the programme of the event was available only in English (no German version was provided), which seemed to be an oversight given that the event was held in Germany.

Presentations were perceived by the participants as **credible**. Certain participants indicated that the EC's presentation was visually more interesting than the one of the representative of Baden – Wuerttemberg. A presentation from civil society of from a Roma representative would have brought

an added value to the event. Another participant proposed that there could be an additional discussion in between the presentations of the speakers to engage the audience.

All in all, the participants expressed **positive opinions** about the communication materials. They liked the examples highlighted in the leaflets. They took the brochures from the table where the material was displayed. Certain participants emphasised that the information in the brochures was too basic for persons acquainted with the topic. In their opinion it would be useful to provide links to more information in the material.

Participants explained that they would use the information received during the event either for personal purposes or within their organisation (the Young European Federalists). The event provided information which could be a starting point for further research in this area. One of the participants could discuss the topic at school with pupils.

When asked what could have been changed to make the event more useful, interviewed participants indicated that there should have been **more participants to the event**. The event should have been **promoted in a better way**. Reception after the event was prepared for many more persons and it could have been mentioned in the invitation to attract more people. There are quite a few universities in the region where information about the event should have been disseminated, for example. The University of Tuebingen and the University of Karlsruhe.

Apart from collecting feedback from the audience, a short interview was also carried out with the representative of the Young European Federalists. The interviewee was asked about the benefits of EU support to hold events such as this one and prospects for future collaboration. The interviewee was also requested to explain how feedback to evaluate the event would be collected.

According to the federalists, the event is perceived as **more professional if the EU is mentioned as partner; the status of the event is higher**. In addition to that, the EC financed the room and catering for the event; the Federalists themselves would never be able to rent such a venue for their discussions / events. The EC is seen as good partner for cooperation. If possible, the Federalists would be willing to organise further events with the EC in the future.

The speaker perceived the event as informative. The participants had positive perceptions about it. Nevertheless, more energy could have been devoted to reach the audience (more participants). The EC should make more efforts to reach people with less positive attitude towards the EU, EU enlargements and Roma issues.

4.4.5. Summary of findings

The quality of the event in terms of speakers was good. However, it seems that there were several points in the organisation that could have been improved. Whilst, the audience clearly appreciated the content and discussion, the audience would have liked to see the presentations and the discussion being **more focused**. As suggested, a couple of more specific discussion points at the beginning of the event could have been proposed or there could have been an additional discussion in between the presentations of the speakers to engage the audience in a better way.

The fact that the intended third speaker was absent left a gap in the event. Presence of a speaker with an experience on the ground in the Western Balkans or an NGO representative could have brought an added value to the discussion.

The clear drawback in the organisation of the event was the **limited number of participants** and raises questions as to whether this event should have gone ahead as planned, particularly as one of the speakers was absent and there were only 13 people. The venue could accommodate more people. The event should have been **promoted in a better way**. At the same time, we question

whether the Young Federalists were the right choice for this event, particularly given their own feedback that it can be difficult to attract people to external events. Reception after the event was prepared for many more persons and it could have been mentioned in the invitation to attract more people. There are quite some universities in the region where information about the event should have been disseminated, e.g. University of Tuebingen, University of Karlsruhe.

Finally, since everyone was speaking German and it was not necessary to translate into English, the organisers should have cancelled the interpretation knowing that no English speakers would be present. Also, the programme of the event was available only in English (no German version was provided).

4.5. Key findings

DG NEAR has organised a wide range of events over the past few years, using events as a vehicle to reach its target audiences. On the basis of our attendance at the events in London, Brussels and Stuttgart, we find that these events can indeed be considered as opportunities to raise awareness of EU policies in the area of enlargement.

In each case the events were clearly branded as supported by the European Commission. Having clear EU branding is a must for these events, particularly given low levels of awareness of what the EU does, even within specialist circles. The DG has made sure that it has met this important criterion.

In all cases, the events can be considered to have been of high quality because of the level of the speakers that were made available for debate. Although in Stuttgart there was a call for a more focussed debate, in London and Brussels participants were extremely satisfied with the topics under the spotlight.

The criteria for selection of topics for DG NEAR events appear to be flexible, but at the same time this allows a focus on areas that multiplier organisations confirm are likely to be of interest. This means that there is an attempt to reach a win/win in terms of relevance to the EU policy area and the interests of target audiences.

The criteria for selecting host organisations are also flexible and in some cases draw from existing knowledge/ contacts of the agency. This has pros and cons. The concept of using host organisations works because it allows the DG to get outside Brussels, to take its communication to different countries and to benefit from the organisational experience, networks and promotion available to the host.

The formula of events, which involve panel discussions, time for questions and answers and a networking lunch seems to work. This approach allows questions not posed during the main session to be discussed over lunch and participants to network with speakers and other participants. There may be other event formats that could be considered, for example allowing participants to pose questions in advance and/or facilitating greater debate, but the current approach can be considered to work.

Deciding which groups to focus on and how to reach them are key questions in the design of any communication programme. The nature of the topics discussed means that these events are not relevant to general public audiences and nor are they intended to be. From the events that we witnessed, academics, think tanks and those responsible for relevant policy areas in national and local government seem to be key target groups for this type of event. With this in mind, there is more potential to explore ways to reach these groups, so that discussions are not limited to those who are physically able to attend. Moreover, in terms of physical presence at these events, the direct organisational costs and the indirect costs of EC staff time are such that an event that in the end only attracts 13 individuals, however worthy, is surely hard to justify.

There may be also more scope to involve the media – not necessarily to obtain immediate coverage, but to bring in respected thought leaders.

It can be difficult to quantify the tangible benefits of supporting these types of events, but from our own observations and from the feedback of participants and organisers it seems that the events are ensuring that specialist topics are brought to the table for discussion with specialist audiences. In addition, they show the contribution of the Commission to the policy area.

Moreover, this type of communication has longer term benefits, which cannot necessarily be quantified in the short term, but ensuring that the EC is present in discussions with specialists on enlargement topics can be considered to be an appropriate goal whether or not there are imminent enlargement negotiations on the table.

However, from our limited sample one of the events was less successful at generating a high number of participants and it may be that this experience is replicated in other events, although no systematic records appear to be kept by the contractor.

This raises the question as to whether there are more effective ways to select host organisations and also whether more attention should be paid to organisations' promotional competence and also the extent that there is scope for greater promotion via the internet to allow virtual presence/views of the discussion after the event, which would certainly be relevant for specialist audiences.