Version 3 – 1 July 2011

Thematic evaluation of information and communication activities towards Member States in the area of EU enlargement

Framework Contract SMART 2009/0042 Lot 2

Final report prepared by Technopolis, EUROPE Ltd and Media CG
Thematic evaluation of information and communication activities towards Member States in the area of EU enlargement

Final Report

technopolis [group], July 2011

Isabelle Collins
Rebecca Allinson
Effie Pitsaros
Zsuzsa Javorka
Heloise Fontanel
Judit Mihalyi
Vera Horvath
Peter Futo

This report was written by the above independent consultants. The author’s views expressed in this evaluation report do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission.
Table of Contents

Executive summary

1. Introduction
   1.1 Objectives of the study
   1.2 Scope of the study
   1.3 Users of the evaluation
   1.4 The evaluation questions
   1.5 Methodological approach to the study

2. PRINCE funded information and communication activities
   2.1 Objectives of PRINCE
   2.2 Activities undertaken
   2.3 Management and budget of PRINCE

3. The evaluation findings
   3.1 The assessment of the intervention logic
   3.2 Relevance
   3.3 Efficiency and effectiveness
   3.4 Impact and sustainability

4. Conclusions and recommendations
   4.1 Conclusions
   4.2 Recommendations
# Table of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1</td>
<td>The overall evaluation questions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2</td>
<td>Objectives specified in the financial decisions (2006 - 2009)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3</td>
<td>Intervention logic</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4</td>
<td>Allocated Budget for activities (€)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 5</td>
<td>Allocated Budget for activities through public procurement (€)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 6</td>
<td>Overview of the objectives hierarchy of the PRINCE programme</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 7</td>
<td>Overview of a selection of high level and strategic objectives of PRINCE communication activities and their attributes</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 8</td>
<td>Overall trend in for and against enlargement 2006-2010</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9</td>
<td>Coherence of messages between the MS and the EC</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10</td>
<td>Classification of indicators used for DG ELARG communication activities</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11</td>
<td>Assessment of indicators in the light of SMART criteria</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 12</td>
<td>Target groups activities and messages</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 13</td>
<td>Enlargement as an issue</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 14</td>
<td>Summary of comments</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 15</td>
<td>Specific objective and key activities</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 16</td>
<td>Level of effect on target groups for PRINCE activities</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 17</td>
<td>Main communication channels on enlargement</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 18</td>
<td>Types of messages on enlargement</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 19</td>
<td>Journalists’ opinion on the DG Enlargement organised activities</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 20</td>
<td>Journalists’ nationalities</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 21</td>
<td>Effectiveness of EYJA</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 22</td>
<td>Effectiveness of the Foca Street Football Festival</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 23</td>
<td>Effectiveness of AV products for the 5th Anniversary of the EU enlargement</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 24</td>
<td>Users of the EC Representations’ communication activities</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 25</td>
<td>Links of activity to the citizen</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 26</td>
<td>Overview of factors potentially affecting the impact and sustainability of the PRINCE activities</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 27</td>
<td>Indicative effectiveness of communication channels</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive summary

This report provides the results of the Thematic Evaluation of information and communication activities towards Member States in the area of EU enlargement (the PRINCE programme). The assignment was carried out under the SMART framework contract 2009/0042 Lot 2 between January 2011 and June 2011 and covers activities of the programme between January 2007 and June 2010.

The objective of this evaluation is to support the improvement of the programming of information and communication activities financed under the PRINCE budget as well as improvement of the quality and impact of the activities implemented/carried out in the EU Member States. In particular it assesses the intervention logic, and the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the activities undertaken. It then provides recommendations for the future.

Approach and method

The evaluation questions were set out in the terms of reference and the methodology was developed to reflect these. It included desk research, qualitative consultations with the target audiences of the activities, a journalist survey, consultations within the European Commission and with multipliers as well as activity mapping and media monitoring.

Key findings

Overall the assessment of the programme is positive. However, as an interim evaluation it aims to support improvement of the programming of information, it highlights some of the areas where the processes and procedures can be improved to further enhance its overall effectiveness and impact. With regard to the specific issues, the evaluation finds as follows:

1. The assessment of the intervention logic

There are clear objectives set and reflected across the programme documentation. There are no immediate gaps in the objectives hierarchy and there is also a good fit with the objectives of overall EU communication policy. However the objectives as currently stated do not meet the SMART criteria. While at the high level this is understandable given the nature and resources of the programme, it is an issue at the operational level where better measurement and a more consistent assessment framework could provide more guidance for programming and planning.

The systematic statement of objectives for individual activities is also less well developed and the programme lacks a system of indicators, which can be used to measure progress towards them.

Although messages to be transmitted are present in the objectives hierarchy, they are not consistently defined for the activities.

Better intelligence gathering at the activity level and the systematic use of indicators to feed back into the decision-making process would improve the process of assessing information needs – although this did improve during the reference period of the study.

The selection mechanisms for information and communication activities are largely appropriate but again, with better-defined indicators and evidence from the activities, the process could be improved.

At present Member States are not particularly active in the communication of EU enlargement. This low level of activity limits the extent to which account can be taken of other activities and strategies in the programming process. Where evidence of events and activities has been found, DG ELARG has mainly been present and active.
2. Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability

The programme focus is relevant – the activities are linked to the priorities outlined in the key programme documents. The important stakeholders are all addressed through the communication activities. Stakeholders consider the most significant messages received on EU enlargement relate to information on the situation (legal, economic) and the progress towards accession and status of the CC and PCC. The cultural messages are best delivered in combination with more factual information or messages.

Activities are directed to the right target groups, in particular the media and civil society.

- The media and therefore its associated activities are a central effective channel for the proliferation of information on EU enlargement.
- Civil society is a much broader target; it needs to be broken down into subgroups, and needs more targeted activities.

The activities are clearly linked to the priorities identified but it is not possible to make judgements on how effectively this has been done due to the lack of indicators.

The budget of the programme is very small in comparison to its high level objectives, and it therefore is highly dependent on both efficient implementation and the use of these multipliers. Although there are no consistent indicators, the evidence from the study suggests that the programme is implemented efficiently, with sufficient administrative and organisational resources to run the programme at its current level.

There are good links with immediate partners (contractors and other units in DG ELARG), but there is potential for better use of multipliers – both the EC Representations where the links are generally weak, and the other European networks who would be in a position to spread enlargement messages.

Messages are reaching the appropriate audiences, with the activities aimed at journalists being effective in generating press coverage. However, stakeholders reported that the main issues of concern are the harder topics of economy, security, crime and employment and the softer messages need to be linked to information on these harder issues.

The programme is not in a position to have a significant immediate impact on public opinion and the lack of impact indicators at activity level makes it difficult to demonstrate the actual impacts that may be produced. However, the consultation exercise showed that the audiences of the activities were better informed and had more access to knowledge on enlargement issues following the activities.

Sustainability of the results depends on the partners used in the activities and continued relationships with them would contribute to the overall sustainability of the programme.

3. Recommendations

The report contains both high-level recommendations and the operational recommendations that complete them. This section sets out the high level.

DG ELARG need to take a more systematic approach to objectives setting, articulation of messages, target audiences and assessment at the activity level.

Clear guidelines should be provided to contractors/grant holders on the requirements of final report.

The new information derived from the final reports of activities should be used in the future needs assessment and planning activities within DG ELARG.

Further define sub groups of civil society to better target this audience when planning activities.
Combine cultural messages with factual messages on the situation of the country in relation to accession and the challenges.

Improve links to other EC networks for partnership.

Revisit the activities aimed at business.

Enable the longer-term impact of the effect of the press trips through regular contact with the journalists and facilitating networking.

Increase the levels of contact and improve the systematic working relationship between DG ELARG and the EC Representations.

Improve communication between the Permanent Representations of the Member States to the EU and DG ELARG.

Invest in the partnerships developed during activities so they can be maintained and be built on for future activities.
1. Introduction

This is the final report of the “Thematic evaluation of information and communication activities towards Member States in the area of EU Enlargement”. The information and communication activities towards Member States are funded under PRINCE programmes (Programme Prioritaire d’Information au Citoyen Européen). This study was carried out under the Framework Contract SMART 2009/0042 Lot 2, by Technopolis, in collaboration with EUROPE Ltd and Media CG for the Information and Communication Unit of DG Enlargement (DG ELARG).

The final report is structured as follows:

- The remaining part of this section presents the objectives and scope of the evaluation.
- Section 2 presents the PRINCE programme including its objectives and activities
- Section 3 presents the evaluation results
- Section 4 presents the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation.

Separate appendices are presented and referenced throughout this report and include the full intervention logic, individual objectives hierarchies, the composition analysis, and the case studies. The terms of reference for the study are also appended. A separate inception report and a first findings report have also been submitted.

1.1 Objectives of the study

This evaluation of PRINCE-funded information and communication activities in the EU Member States is intended to support DG ELARG in the preparation and further development of information and communication activities in the Member States with the aim of sustaining the enlargement process.

The three specific objectives of the evaluation are

- To assess the overall intervention logic of the PRINCE programme
- To provide evidence of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the activities undertaken
- To provide relevant lessons learned and recommendations constructed into feasible recommendations for future programming

1.2 Scope of the study

This evaluation covers information and communication programmes and activities in the EU Member States funded under PRINCE and undertaken during the period January 2007 – June 2010. The evaluation also covers the following four main areas of communication activities as specified in the Terms of Reference for the evaluation:

- Production and dissemination of information products (including web, publications, and audiovisual tools)
- Visibility tools (i.e., events and conferences)
- Media relations (including press trips)

The legal basis for the evaluation of the programmes is set out in Article 21 of the Implementing rules of the EC Financial Regulation, which states that all “proposals for programmes or activities occasioning budget expenditures shall be subject of an ex ante evaluation” furthermore Article 21 specifies that all programmes where the resources mobilised exceed EUR 5 million shall be the subject of an interim or ex post evaluation.
1.3 Users of the evaluation

The primary users and stakeholders in the evaluation are internal to DG ELARG: Unit A-2 - Information and Communication, Unit E-4 – Operational Audit and Evaluation of the Commission and the Directorate-General at large. The secondary users of the evaluation are the strategic multipliers in the EU Member States, many of whom have been consulted as part of this evaluation process.

1.4 The evaluation questions

The key evaluation questions for the assignment form part of the terms of reference, and are grouped around specific issues. Figure 1 gives the overview of the questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intervention logic</strong></td>
<td>To what extent are objectives at different levels clear measurable and realistic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To what extent planning and programming provide adequate assessment of needs to meet the strategic communication objectives?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To what extent is the selection mechanism of information and communication activities appropriate in the sense of selecting the most relevant, efficient and effective projects to achieve the strategic communication objectives?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To what extent programming takes adequate and relevant account of Member States communication activities and strategies regarding enlargement, if any?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To what extent programming takes adequate and relevant account of information and communication activities deployed by other key stakeholder (EU Member States, European Union Representatives, IFIs) where applicable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To what extent programming and monitoring mechanisms include SMART (Specific, Measurable, Available, Relevant and Time-bound) indicators to measure progress towards achievement of objectives?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Which are the main gaps/weaknesses of the current programming framework?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do the communication activities reach out to relevant stakeholders and multipliers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relevance</strong></td>
<td>To what extent have communication activities followed the priorities outlined in key strategic documents (e.g. EU communication strategy)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has the programming process been based on a proper identification of the needs to be addressed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Efficiency and effectiveness (at programme level)</strong></td>
<td>How effectively have priorities been translated into programming of information and communication activities? Could the same results and impacts have been achieved more effectively and efficiently?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At the institutional level, are there sufficient administrative and organizational structures to ensure efficient and effective implementation of information and communication activities? To what extent are the monitoring mechanisms and structures appropriate and correctly functioning?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are the human and financial resources deployed in an efficient manner and are they commensurate to results achieved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is the effectiveness of information and communication activities in Member States?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact and sustainability</td>
<td>Which are the prospects for immediate and long-term impact and sustainability of information and communication activities? Are there any elements which are/could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of the activities implemented in this area?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Were the implementation periods of the activities sufficient to generate relevant results?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To what extent have the outputs of information activities been disseminated or built upon after the end of a particular activity? Are the results sustainable/likely to be sustainable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What have been the impacts so far and what are the likely impacts of ongoing/ future communication activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there any elements which are/could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of communication activities?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lessons learned and recommendations</th>
<th>How can the programming of information and communication activities be improved so as to reflect real policy needs?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How can programming be enhanced to more efficiently and effectively reach strategic objectives?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How can programming be enhanced to improve the impact and sustainability of the information and communication actions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there any examples of political communication activities successfully implemented on behalf of public bodies that could serve as best practices?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there any benchmarks that could be used or developed in order to assess the impact of information and communication activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there any potential actions which would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of ongoing information and communication activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there any actions which would improve prospects for impact and sustainability of ongoing information and communication activities?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5 Methodological approach to the study

The methodology for the study was developed in light of the evaluation questions and the types of stakeholders to whom the PRINCE activities are directly addressed. The evaluation took a mixed methods approach with the intention of allowing the views of the stakeholders to come through. The work of DG ELARG is well documented and therefore a good proportion of the evidence could be found in the literature. A full overview of the evaluation questions and the methods of enquiry can be found in the appendices². The main elements of the work are set out in the following sections.

1.5.1 Desk research

The evaluation team reviewed relevant documentary evidence encompassing, at the top level, developments of the EU’s enlargement and communication policies, which establish the context and content of communication activities and contribute to the reconstruction and analysis of the intervention logic. Further documentation review included: developments related to the communications programme and relevant individual activities; monitoring and evaluation of progress in communications on enlargement; reviewing programme monitoring data, mapping and monitoring a

² Appendix A
selection of articles from the “Spotter”\textsuperscript{3} project provided by the EC, and mapping of the EC Representations’ websites. A full list of documents can be found in the appendices to this report.

1.5.2 Indicator assessment

For the assessment of the intervention logic indicators for the programme were extracted from the Annual Management Reports and the Annual Activity Reports. The indicators were classified by criteria (output, outcome, result and impact) and assessed in relation to the objectives and the frequency of use.

1.5.3 Activity mapping

The team undertook a mapping exercise of some 50 communication activities targeting the EU Member States on EU enlargement, in order to obtain a comprehensive overview of the activities carried out during the period covered in this evaluation. The activities mapped covered the three main areas of activities – visibility tools, media relations and information products.

1.5.4 Stakeholder consultation interviews

The team conducted a wide-ranging programme of interviews with representatives of key stakeholder groups involved in communication activities and/or with an interest in the EU’s enlargement policy. The following groups of stakeholders were covered in this consultation programme.

\textit{European Commission:} This category includes EC officials in the Enlargement Policy and Communication Directorate of DG ELARG and officials from the EC Representations responsible primarily for press, information and communications issues. The team approached 21 Representations.

\textit{Member States:} Representatives from selected Member States: Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland and the UK. This sample covered EU Member States with considerable differences in terms of public support for enlargement as well as large and small, old and new Members. The representatives approached were officials from the national Foreign Ministries with responsibilities in the area of enlargement.

\textit{Other EU institutional actors:} A small number of contacts from this group were approached, including officials from the Council and the European Parliament with responsibilities in the areas of communications and press as well as some Members of the European Parliament with an interest in issues related to enlargement.

\textit{General stakeholders,} a category including representatives from a broad range of national and EU-level stakeholder groups that have been involved in PRINCE-supported communication activities and/or having an interest in enlargement. The types of organisations approached include: civil society organisations, publicly funded research organisations and think tanks, businesses and their professional associations, international, regional/cross-border organisations as well as a small sample of the organisations contracted to implement information and communication activities.

A total of 140 named contacts from the above stakeholder groups were approached with a written invitation to contribute to the evaluation. Overall 78 interviews, covering all stakeholder groups, took place. Most stakeholders contributed via telephone interviews. A small number of face-to-face interviews were undertaken with DG ELARG officials\textsuperscript{4}.

\textsuperscript{3} The “Spotter Project” provides the media monitoring for DG Enlargement

\textsuperscript{4} The composition analysis is presented in the appendices

Thematic evaluation of information and communication activities towards Member States in the area of EU enlargement
1.5.5 Journalist online survey

A journalist survey was set up to assess whether the journalist-targeted activities met their needs. DG ELARG holds a database of journalists with whom it has had contact. The survey was sent by DG ELARG to the whole database, and a total of 26 responses were received\(^5\). These covered 16 Member States and four accession countries.

1.5.6 Case studies

For the evaluation, the team prepared 7 case studies covering the 4 key areas of communications identified in the ToR. Each case study involved a mini evaluation of an activity, or group of activities, using desk research and interviews. The following cases were chosen:

- The ‘5th Anniversary of Enlargement’ communications campaign;
- The ‘Southeast Europe: People and Culture’ communications campaign;
- Audio-visual products;
- A communication project targeting SMEs in the Member States;
- The European Young Journalist Award;
- Media relations;
- European Street Football Festival.

The case studies are presented in the appendices.

1.5.7 Key issues and challenges related to the assignment

The following issues or methodological constraints were encountered in the assignment:

- The lack of a data set for the stakeholder consultation exercise: there was no existing data set for the consultation, which meant reconstructing contacts, primarily from the list of civil society actors on the DG ELARG website. This did not give access to specific names, and in addition the majority of the organisations contacted had no knowledge of having attended any civil society conference. Other contacts data were taken from the project reports supplied by the European Commission.

- The lack of control over data sources: With regard to the journalist survey, the European Commission expressed reservations over handing over their journalist database. Therefore it was decided that the EC would send out the email to the journalists. Consequently there was little control over follow up and country coverage. However the for the purposes of this study the country coverage was adequate and the results are rich in information.

- The timing of the study: The short time for the study was challenging, in addition, the late Easter in 2011 coincided with the main fieldwork phase.

- The final issue is the lack of systematic indicators used to measure any of the objectives or the activities. This leads to a key recommendation for this study.

\(^5\) The study team did not have access to the database and therefore cannot comment on the rate of response or the overall composition of the population.

Thematic evaluation of information and communication activities towards Member States in the area of EU enlargement
2. PRINCE funded information and communication activities

2.1 Objectives of PRINCE

The overall objectives of the PRINCE programme are to increase public understanding and support for the EU enlargement process by stimulating an informed public debate. These main objectives of communication under PRINCE are set out in the Annual Financial Decisions. Figure 2 summarises the objectives as stated across the 2006-2009 Financial Decisions.

Figure 2: Objectives specified in the financial decisions (2006 - 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Level</th>
<th>Specific</th>
<th>Operational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public support for enlargement (implicit objective)</td>
<td>Enhance public awareness</td>
<td>Provide relevant &amp; consistent information about:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public understanding of enlargement</td>
<td>Enhance social &amp; cultural dialogue between societies</td>
<td>Enlargement, the rationale, challenges and likely impact of future EU Member States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stimulate an informed public debate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improve mutual understanding and address citizens concerns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhance the visibility of Commission’s activities regarding CC/PCC in the MSs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase public awareness of the positive effects of EU assistance on CC and PCCs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Build a positive image of the CC and PCCs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information and communication on enlargement emerged as an issue on the EU policy agenda in the context of the 5th round of enlargement. Since 2006, it has gained prominence as a result of initiatives for the development of an EU communication policy by the European Commission, notably the Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate and the White Paper on a European Communication Policy. The prominence of communication on EU enlargement increased further following the emphasis placed by the European Council on communications initiatives, and on European citizens’ perception of enlargement and awareness of the process as key aspects of further enlargements of the EU during the June 2006 summit.

Recent enlargement strategy papers by the Commission (2006-2007, 2008-2009 and 2009-2010) reaffirm communication as a key principle of the renewed consensus on enlargement. According to the 2009-2010 Strategy paper,

“Ensuring public support remains a crucial goal for the EU’s enlargement policy and the Commission will continue to implement an active communication policy in this regard. In particular, it will support and supplement efforts by Member States, which have a key responsibility in this regard, as well as partner countries and it will target communication activities at opinion formers, in particular civil society organizations and journalists, as well as at youth. Particular efforts will be undertaken to foster awareness in the EU about the cultures and ways of life of the enlargement partners.”


---

6 This is set out in the Annual Financial Decisions
9 Council of the European Union, 2006, Brussels European Council – Presidency Conclusions, 15-16 June,
The following diagram sets out the intervention logic for PRINCE over the period of the evaluation, based on the documentation review. It includes the problem statements, objectives (high level, specific and operational), audiences, messages and other considerations.

Figure 3 Intervention logic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem statements</th>
<th>Specific objectives</th>
<th>High level objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A lack of citizens awareness about the issues of enlargement and support for the process (Eurobarometer)</td>
<td>To familiarise the general public with the CC/PCCs’ situation including the richness of their cultural heritage as well as their contemporary reality</td>
<td>To increase public support for the EU enlargement process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A growing negative trend of (informed) opinion towards future enlargement (Eurobarometer)</td>
<td>To enhance public awareness of the positive effects of the EU assistance to the CC/PCC</td>
<td>To promote tolerance and understanding between citizens of the EU and of CC and potential CC countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a clear correlation between lack of information on enlargement and scepticism or even rejection of future enlargement.</td>
<td>To project a positive image of the CC/PCCs to the EU public</td>
<td>To increase public understanding of the enlargement process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens need to be better informed on enlargement</td>
<td>To raise awareness of the positive effects (benefits) and challenges of enlargement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public support is essential to sustain the enlargement process</td>
<td>To stimulate an informed public debate about EU enlargement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision makers need to extend the consensus about enlargement policy towards their electorate</td>
<td>To improve understanding of the EU’s enlargement policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To improve the political communication on EU enlargement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To highlight the extent of the reform process each CC/PCC has to undergo in order to join the EU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thematic evaluation of information and communication activities towards Member States in the area of EU enlargement

Target audiences:
Opinion formers, civil society, journalists,
Other Multipliers: e.g., youth

Main activities:
Production and dissemination of information products: Case studies, publication understanding enlargement, photos, AV material, websites
Visibility: Conferences, including high-level conferences, Street football, Bike ride, Seminars for businesses
Media relations: Press trips, European Young Journalists Competition, training journalists
Strategy support: Studies on the impact of enlargement, opinion surveys by Eurobarometer, evaluation
Other: working with multipliers

Key messages:
• The benefits of the 5th enlargement as well as the challenges of the next enlargement,
• The prospect of accession can work as an important catalyst for reform in the countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey,
• The EU is prepared to listen to its citizens and to address their concerns

Considerations
• There are limited resources for the PRINCE activities and therefore there is a need for:
• Sharing of responsibility for information and communication between the Commission and the Member States
• Opinion leaders’ interest and active participation in the public debate on enlargement

Source: Constructed with reference to the main programming documents

2.2 Activities undertaken
There are four main areas of communication activities around which the programming is prepared:
• Production and dissemination of information products (web, publication, audiovisual, etc)
• Visibility (conference, events, etc)
• Media relations (journalist trips, seminars, study visits etc)
• Strategy support (opinion polls, surveys, studies)\(^{10}\)

\(^{10}\) Further information on the budget distributions across these activities can be found in figure 4 below.
2.2.1 Production and dissemination of information products (audiovisual, publications and the web)

Several products have been developed to communicate factual information on enlargement and on the candidate, and potential candidate, countries. This is with a view to increasing awareness about the policies on enlargement and to projecting a positive image of the aspirant countries. Thus, a series of audiovisual tools was primarily produced during 2008-2009, while other products, for instance publications, were developed throughout the period covered in this evaluation. Examples of audiovisual products include the “Focus on Southeast Europe” series of thematic videos, and the “Focus on Iceland” video clips, presenting key policy areas and themes important in Iceland’s EU accession negotiations, notably fisheries, geothermal energy and science. The “Discover Southeast Europe” series of videos presented the capitals, or main cities of candidate, and potential candidate, countries in Southeast Europe through the eyes of well-known local artists (including, musicians, film directors, authors and designers). Twenty thousand DVDs of the video clip “Southeast Europe – on the path towards the EU”, were intended to enhance awareness about these countries’ progress toward meeting the accession criteria, the EU’s support for these countries and the related benefits for both parties.

In addition, a number of brochures were produced providing factual information on the EU’s enlargement policy and policy developments concerning the candidate, and potential candidate, countries in order to address European citizens’ concerns and to remove prejudices and misconceptions. Examples of such products include

- ‘Understanding Enlargement’, reviewing the EU’s enlargement process in layman terms. This was translated into 22 languages and aimed at raising public awareness about the enlargement process and the countries involved
- ‘Visa Leaflet’, providing information on EU measures regarding visa facilitation for the Western Balkan countries

2.2.2 Visibility tools (events, conferences)

The visibility tools focus on high-profile events that are the most likely to directly touch the EU citizen. Examples include:

- Southeast Europe: A Cultural Tour: In March and June 2010, a series of events, organised by the Commission, brought people and culture of Southeast Europe live to eight cities in four enlargement-sceptical countries: Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and Belgium. The programmes included film screenings, literary events, readings and concerts with some of the most renowned artists as well as best-kept secrets and traditions from the Western Balkans and Turkey.
- Danube by bike tour: During the summer 2009, 2 international teams of cyclists followed the Danube River for 5 days along the 300 km route from Budapest to Belgrade and along the 350 km from Bucharest to Belgrade. Organised by the European Commission and the European Cyclists Federation, this tour was a symbol of European integration becoming a reality. It gathered 200 cyclists in each departure capital from Turkey, Czech Republic, the UK, and France and with final destination Belgrade.
- Street football festival 2008 and 2009 (2 editions): 240 young players, making 24 teams, from all over Europe; mostly the Balkans, gathered in Foca, Bosnia Herzegovina to play street football during a one week tournament. As well as football matches, workshops were organised addressing themes such as respect and intercultural understanding. The event was organised in cooperation with European NGOs to promote fair play sports (eg Kickfair, Germany) and had two targets: mixing cultures together; and, managing/mastering emotions and how to resolve conflicts.
• Other examples include a series of Businesses seminars and a conference on Citizenship in Turkey in 2008.

2.2.3 Media relations
A series of press visits to key candidate, and potential candidate, countries, notably Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey, have taken place to enable representatives from leading print media in certain EU Member States, particularly enlargement sceptical countries, to obtain information and insights about the CCs and PCCs. The visits involved meetings with opinion leaders/mobilisers from politics and administration, the media, the business community and the civil society. They were intended to

• Raise journalists’ awareness of these countries’ development and progress achieved toward meeting the EU membership criteria as well as of the challenges they faced on their road to eventual accession
• Enhance the visibility of the EU’s support to these countries efforts for stability, development and eventual accession
• Generate media coverage on these countries as potential EU members

2.2.4 Strategy support tools
In addition to the Eurobarometer surveys commissioned by DG Enlargement in order to inform its communication activities, two important studies were carried out regarding the impact of the previous round of enlargement. One was an economic impact study undertaken by the Commission in the light of the 5th anniversary of the 2004 enlargement. The other study, contracted by DG Enlargement to the Sussex European Institute (UK), focused on the institutional and cultural impacts of the recent enlargement on the EU as well as its impact on the EU’s role in the world.

2.3 Management and budget of PRINCE
The Information and Communication Unit (A2) in DG ELARG is responsible for the planning and management of PRINCE communications activities. Unit A2 has 14 managerial and professional staff plus a secretariat of 3, of which 3 staff members plus 1 FTE involved in media relations projects are dedicated to PRINCE. The staff are also responsible for communications covering the candidate, and potential candidate, countries. Around half of the staff are permanent Commission officials while the remaining are contracted personnel. PRINCE activities are managed in a centralised manner. From 2006 – 2008 of the reference period, the activities were carried out under the framework contract by Media Consulta. In 2009, the €5 million budget was divided between contracted activities and grant projects. The contract with Media Consulta expired in December 2009 (it was then renewed for one more year to allow for project completion).
Figure 4 shows the allocation of budgets per main category of activity from 2006-2010 (from the Financial Decisions, 2005-2009)

Figure 4 Allocated Budget for activities (€)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of activities</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>Category of activities</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training of journalists</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>600,000</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>Production and dissemination of information products</td>
<td>2 million</td>
<td>1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of public opinion</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>450,000</td>
<td>*included in strategic support</td>
<td>Visibility (conference/event s)</td>
<td>1.5 million</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and maintenance of website</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>Media relations</td>
<td>1 million</td>
<td>600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic support on communication</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>330,000</td>
<td>350,000</td>
<td>Strategy support</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AV products and broadcasting</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production of publications, including translations</td>
<td>600,000</td>
<td>* included in website category</td>
<td>* included in website category</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of communication activities</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>*included in strategic support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation of seminars and events</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>* included in Strategic support on communication</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5 Allocated Budget for activities through public procurement (€)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Through public procurement</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009 (grants based)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of information and communication strategy</td>
<td>3 million</td>
<td>3 million</td>
<td>3 million</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Production and dissemination of information products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AV productions as well as multilingual broadcasting</td>
<td>2 million</td>
<td>2 million</td>
<td>1 million</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Awareness raising events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total amount</td>
<td>8 million</td>
<td>7 million</td>
<td>4.8 million</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


For each activity there is a specific contract under the framework contract. These contracts contain the overall activity description and detailed tasks and the corresponding budgets. There are no objectives or indicators set out in the contracts. There is a reference to the objectives of the framework contract.
3. The evaluation findings

This section is structured according to the first two evaluation objectives:

- To provide an assessment of the intervention logic
- To provide a judgement on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact and sustainability of the information and communication activities

The evaluation questions, set out in the terms of reference, are integrated under these headings and sub headings. The lessons learned and the recommendations are addressed in the following section (Section 4) on conclusions and recommendations.

3.1 The assessment of the intervention logic

The intervention logic is a structured representation of the underlying assumptions of the programme and the associated theory of change. This has been set out schematically in Figure 3 above. A number of the main evaluation questions set out in the terms of reference refer to the underlying logic of the programme.

This section analyses the intervention logic, drawing on official documents and interviews with DG ELARG.

3.1.1 Programme objectives

The evaluation finds that the objectives set out in all the documentation (in particular the annual management plans and financial decisions) are clear and consistent across documents over time. The hierarchy of objectives (high level, specific and operational) are coherent internally and link to each other. There are no immediate gaps in objectives at different level. There is also a good fit with the objectives of the overall EU communication policy. Figure 6 gives an overview of the three levels of the objectives hierarchy as derived from the main programming documents.

---

11 A full list can be accessed in the appendices.
12 A more detailed overview of the intervention logic and logics underpinning communications targeting specific audiences can be found in the appendices.
The analysis of the documents shows that the high level and specific objectives as stated are not measurable. There are no quantifiable targets set, there are no baselines in evidence or expectations of new targets over time. Although at the top level the Eurobarometer polls are used to measure support for enlargement, this is not for the purpose of communication activities. Furthermore, the objective ‘public support for enlargement’ is not time-limited. The EU has granted the CC/PCC prospective conditional membership but at present no accession date has been set. This makes the objective more difficult to achieve.

The high level objectives are ambitious in relation to the resources allocated for communication activities on enlargement toward the MSs and it is therefore not realistic to expect the activities to have a major impact on these objectives. The PRINCE activities are more closely linked to the high level objective “increasing understanding of the enlargement process”, on which there may be the potential to measure effects, rather than on “increasing support”. There are objectives at the strategic level on which communication activities may have a measurable effect such as “enhancing familiarity with the current situation”. The review of the case studies shows good coherence of the studied activities with the objectives set out in the EC documentation (See section 3.1.2 on the discussion of activities and objectives).

The following table summarises the extent to which the objectives are clear, measurable or realistic.
Figure 7 Overview of a selection of high level and strategic objectives of PRINCE communication activities and their attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Clear</th>
<th>Measurable</th>
<th>Realistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase public support for the EU enlargement process</td>
<td>This is a clear statement of an objective</td>
<td>This could be measurable if there is a target set</td>
<td>With no measures or targets in place it cannot be said to be realistic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote tolerance and understanding between citizens of the EU and CC and</td>
<td>This is quite clear but could be split</td>
<td>This is very difficult to measure as it is subjective; there are no targets</td>
<td>With no measures or targets in place this cannot be said to be realistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potential CC countries</td>
<td>into two objectives. One of tolerance and</td>
<td>in evidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>one of understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase public understanding of the enlargement process</td>
<td>This is a clear statement of an objective</td>
<td>This is difficult to measure as it is subjective; there are no targets in</td>
<td>With no measures or targets in place this cannot be said to be realistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>evidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarise the general public with the candidate countries including the</td>
<td>Less clear, more descriptive</td>
<td>This is very difficult to measure as it is subjective; there are no targets</td>
<td>This could be realistic at the activity level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>richness of their cultural heritage as well as their contemporary reality</td>
<td></td>
<td>in evidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise awareness of the positive effects (benefits) and challenges of</td>
<td>This is a clear statement of an objective</td>
<td>This is very difficult to measure as it is subjective; there are no targets</td>
<td>It may be realistic for certain target groups, but these are not defined.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enlargement</td>
<td></td>
<td>in evidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulate an informed public debate about EU enlargement</td>
<td>This is a clear statement of an objective</td>
<td>This is very difficult to measure. It could be measurable at the output/</td>
<td>The objective is realistic if defined in terms of individual activities but</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>activity level</td>
<td>not at a global level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlight the extent of the reform process each CC has to undergo in order</td>
<td>This is a clear statement of an objective</td>
<td>This is very difficult to measure. It could be measurable at the output/</td>
<td>It may be realistic if defined at the activity level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to join the EU</td>
<td></td>
<td>activity level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Evaluators analysis of the objectives against the criteria clear, measurable, realistic

The activities undertaken under PRINCE link to the operational objectives. This link means they are the most measurable of the objectives. The analysis of the intervention logic has also included the construction of sub-logic models focusing on the main audiences of the PRINCE activities (civil society, journalists and businesses for

---

15 An overview of the sub logic models can be found in the appendices
example). In all cases there are activities that focus on the intended audience and link into the objectives hierarchy. There are also defined costs at the activity level and the costs are broken down by tasks.

The intervention logic sets out the context in which each communication activity takes place. The objectives stated in the intervention logic correspond to the problems identified and the assumptions made. Unit A-2 within DG ELARG has a number of internal documents, which explore the strengths and weaknesses of approaches towards communicating enlargement and explicitly identify and explore the context as well and assumptions and risks. Further, contextual changes and risks also inform debate within and decisions taken by the Unit in relation to activities and target countries and audiences, as in the case of the press trip to Iceland, for instance.

Messages are also important in communication activities. A message is defined in accordance to the objectives, from the strategic to the operational and are then realised through the various activities\textsuperscript{16}. In the case of communications on enlargement, there is ample evidence of messages being present in the objectives hierarchy and in some of the activities undertaken. The specific objectives in particular include the main messages about reform and richness of cultural heritage in CC/PCC or the benefits resulting from the EU enlargement. However, evidence shows messages are not consistently defined at the activities level.

The following are examples of key messages set out in the 2007 and 2008 Annual Management Plans

- The benefits of the 5th enlargement as well as the challenges of the next enlargement,
- The prospect of accession can work as an important catalyst for reform in the countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey,
- The EU is prepared to listen to its citizens and to address their concerns.

The evaluation found that overall the objectives set at the activity level are almost identical to, or correspond with, the objectives of the programme at different levels, including specific, strategic and high-level. Furthermore, most activities contain objectives specifically related to enlargement (the policy or the process) or to the individual activity. In the latter case, objectives concern specific themes (i.e., cultural diversity), or specific audiences. The contracts for the activities and the final reports do not consistently set out objectives for the activities. However, the case studies provide evidence that the objectives of individual activities, or groups of activities, fit with those of the programme.

### 3.1.2 Planning and programming

The planning and programming in relation to the assessment of needs is good in terms of central information collection and has improved during the reference period of the evaluation. The evidence used derives mainly from centralised sources (Eurobarometer surveys, media monitoring, own strategy support tools).

The data from Eurobarometer provides an important insight into the swings in public opinion on enlargement from the 2006-2010 period and therefore where activity should be concentrated. The overall trends are negative over time since 2006 with the EU 15 showing the most negative opinions\textsuperscript{17}.

\textsuperscript{16} This is set out in DG Communication’s toolkit for evaluating communication activities – April 2009

\textsuperscript{17} For more detailed charts, refer to appendix J
This poses a challenge for the programming of PRINCE, which may need to extend coverage to cover a growing number of eurosceptic Member States.

The media monitoring (the Spotter project) provides DG ELARG with qualitative and quantitative assessment on the level of quality and coverage of enlargement related issues in media debate in 11 Member States. These, in turn, give the communications team an indication of the issues that need to be addressed and the journalists contributing to the debate. They also provide some insights about the media positions on the potential accession of the candidate and potential candidate countries, useful to both the policy component and the political leadership of the DG. Our interviews provided evidence of the media monitoring and analysis reports circulating widely in DG ELARG.

The needs assessment is hampered by the lack of activity in the Member States in relation to their own enlargement related activities and current priorities. It is more difficult to take into account the needs of the Member States during a period of low interest on EU issues. The EC Representations were asked to comment on whether the activities of the EC fit with national needs and there were no strong views, again, mainly due to this not being a national priority at the present time.

In addition, as discussed in section 3.1.5 the needs assessment could be better informed if there was more systematic collection of evidence of the effectiveness of the activities.

3.1.3 Selection mechanisms

The selection mechanisms for information and communication activities are largely appropriate but with better-defined indicators and evidence from the activities, the process could be improved (see section 3.1.5). Decisions concerning the selection of activities and the messages to be communicated are mainly taken within the Communications Unit in DG ELARG with contributions from the team members. As with the needs assessment, Eurobarometer, media monitoring and studies undertaken under the strategy support activities are used in routine day-to-day activities and to inform future selection of activities, planning and programming.

At the beginning of the evaluation reference period the mechanisms for selecting activities was based on a “trial and improvement” approach. This created an initial body of evidence for subsequent selection and also to feed back into the needs assessment for further programming. This approach worked well as an initial approach to building up evidence on the types of activities, which were most
appropriate for continuation. An analysis of the documentation\(^{18}\) and the interviews with DG ELARG highlight the move from this first approach to a much more systematic selection of activities and messages as the evidence base increased. The selection mechanisms are now more formal and could be more so if the collection of evidence from the activities is formalised.

Considerations of information needs of the audiences targeted have informed the selection of communication activities, the focus of the activities and the messages communicated. This was done through feedback at events and activities as well as from the contractor Media Consulta. The findings of Eurobarometer surveys over time were used as the basis to make choices regarding focus on specific themes, or countries, particularly countries where there was opposition and scepticism.

Evidence from the case studies suggests that the selection mechanisms used differ. The selection of some activities, notably press trips and other types of media relations, are set out in key documents on communicating enlargement. Other activities recur because they proved to be successful (e.g., the European Street Football Festival) and because they also involve important mobilisers (e.g., the European Young Journalists Award). Finally, the launching of a package of activities in the context of the 5th anniversary of enlargement was possible because the double anniversary provided an excellent opportunity to communicate enlargement-related issues, notably benefits and impacts of the recent round, and future prospects in relation to the CC/PCC. The planning for this package of activities was detailed and preparation done a year earlier – it also involved collaboration with others, e.g., DG Comms and the introduction of AV products that were broadcast through TV5 Monde and RFI.

There is also evidence that the identification and selection of themes covered in the 10 videos on the Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance to support reforms in the Western Balkan countries and Turkey by Unit A-2 (presented in the case study on Audio-visual products) benefited from inputs from the country desk officers in DG ELARG and the EC delegations in the CC/PCC, in addition to feedback from the contractor.

Finally, there is evidence of the Media Spotter project being used to shape the media-related activities and also more widely in DG ELARG.

The contractor (Media Consulta) has used the feedback from the activities to design and deliver subsequent activities. The contractor has also worked closely with the DG to develop and deliver activities that are appropriate for the main messages. An example of this was the European Young Journalist of the Year Competition, which was adapted in light of views from the participants.

### 3.1.4 Consistency with Member State and stakeholder strategies

As highlighted in section 3.1.2, there is a low level of activity in the Member States in relation to the communication of EU enlargement. This low level of activity hampers the extent to which relevant account can be taken of other activities and strategies in the programming process. However in the events/activities which have been cited in our consultations with stakeholders, DG ELARG has mainly been present and active.

The evaluation consultations (with civil society and the EC Representations) are not able to show evidence of coherence in messages or approaches between the EC and the MSs, since, as the following pie chart shows, over 60% of those consulted in the main consultation exercise had no opinion on the coherence of messages and under 20% thought the messages were coherent.

---

\(^{18}\) Internal SWOT analyses, for example, and the project reports

\(^{19}\) eg EC Representations
Figure 9 Coherence of messages between the MS and the EC

Source: Analysis of stakeholder consultation exercise question on whether the messages presented on EU enlargement are coherent with those, which are portrayed in the MSs.

One of the main reasons given as to why coherence of messages is difficult to achieve is the widely different political views on EU enlargement, not just across Member States but also within countries. This makes the issue of coherence somewhat subjective and very difficult to control.

The documentary evidence consulted shows the clear responsibility for sharing communication on EU enlargement issues. For example, as set out in the 2006 financial decision “...However, the main responsibility for communicating enlargement falls onto the Member States, as the Commission can only provide complementary actions, initiate or stimulate this communication. The need for ‘going local’ through representations in Member States is particularly important.”

Although the documentary evidence highlights the assumption of shared responsibility, it does not clarify the extent of actual sharing. Our interviews with both DG ELARG and the stakeholder groups consulted suggest that the burden of communication on EU enlargement is left almost entirely to the Commission.

Our consultations with the Permanent Representations from the Member States and the Council suggest that overall Member States appear to favour communication through the public diplomacy channels at this stage of the enlargement process. There is, however, some evidence of activities taking place in the Member States. In France, for instance, several events were organised during the Year of Turkey in 2009, an awareness- and image-raising initiative launched in the context of France’s bilateral relations with that country. In addition, a conference on the European perspective of the Balkans was organised under the auspices of the Senate. Finally, the question on communicating future enlargement has recently been discussed in the context of the Club of Venice initiative. DG ELARG was present in this activity and therefore took the opportunity to feed back into their future programming.

The European Parliament, traditionally supportive of enlargement and active in communications on this policy during the 5th round of enlargement, does not appear to be particularly active in communicating future enlargement. Reportedly, some

---

20 The Annual Management Plans and the PRINCE financial decisions, for example
activities have been carried out by the EP offices in some EU Member States but on a rather ad hoc basis.

3.1.5 Indicators

DG ELARG does not have a well-developed system of indicators that can be used to monitor the programme. However, there has been progress in this area. Unit A-2 does, however, monitor individual activities through final reports and ongoing discussion with the contractor. In addition, project officers (and the unit management on some occasions) are present at events and therefore they monitor the performance of the activity. These reports (by the project officers within Unit A-2) feed into future planning. The final reports state how the activity was done and give a descriptive overview of issues and lessons learnt. There are no monitoring requirements evident in the individual contracts.

An analysis of the indicators set out in the Annual Management Plans (AMPs) and Annual Activity Reports (AARs) covering the period 2004-2009 shows the indicator system in relation to outputs and results has been upgraded since the launching of PRINCE activities in 2004. Broadly speaking, there is a progressive shift from a set of unclear and repetitive indicators in the 2004 AAR to a more comprehensive system by 2009 where specific output and results indicators are determined and linked to the objectives and activities. However, input indicators are available and coherent over the successive annual reports.

Thirty-five defined indicators of outputs and results have been extracted from the AMPs and AARs over the reference period. Of the 35 indicators, few of them are SMART. About one third of these indicators could formally be assessed as SMART and they are all output indicators - not result indicators. In practical terms, even if indicators are linked to the objectives of the PRINCE programme, few indicators can be methodologically assessed as SMART, since many of them are not formulated as indicators entailing a unit, a success criterion and a quantifiable target. Moreover, five of the indicators listed as result indicators in the documents reviewed are, in fact, output indicators since they measure the level of activity and not the outcomes/impacts.

Figure 10 provides an overview of the types of indicators used in the monitoring of PRINCE communication activities.

| Figure 10 Classification of indicators used for DG ELARG communication activities |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                   | 2004  | 2005  | 2006  | 2007  | 2008  | 2009  |
| Total number of indicators expressly listed as indicators (number) | 11    | 6     | 2     | 1     | 13    | 8     |
| Output indicators  | 4/11  |       |       |       | 7/13  | 8/8   |
| Results (outcomes and impacts) indicators | 7/11  | 6/6   | 2/2   | 1/1   | 6/13  |       |
| Qualitative indicators | 5/11  | 4/6   | 1/2   | 1/1   | 4/13  | 1/8   |
| Quantitative indicators | 4/11\(^{23}\) |       |       |       | 4/13  | 7/8   |

Technopolis analysis of AMPs and AARs 2004-2009

\(^{21}\) Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timebound

\(^{22}\) Given the small number of indicators, the table does not refer to percentages but numbers

\(^{23}\) Some indicators were expressed in a way that made it impossible to judge whether they were meant to be about quantities or qualitative elements (or both)
Figure 10 shows that the number of indicators varies every year, this may be due to the different levels of detail shown in the documents (which also varies yearly).

There is a range of positive features in the use of indicators by DG ELARG for its PRINCE communication activities:

- There is a limited number of indicators every year (from 6 to 13), rather than a wide set of numerous and repetitive indicators;
- There is a good mix of outputs and results indicators, which are able to inform both progress of the activities conducted and progress towards expected outcomes and impacts;
- The collection of data relies on a mix of qualitative and quantitative indicators, even though in 2009 there is a preponderance of quantitative indicators (the indicators were mainly output-oriented and measure the number of activities/events and the number of participants in the events organised);
- Several indicators are associated with specific targets in the different reports, even if few of these targets are actually clear, realisable and measurable.

Figure 11 below presents examples of good practice and issues in using indicators in the monitoring of DG ELARG PRINCE communication activities. It focuses especially on result indicators, which are the most problematic and difficult to implement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for assessment</th>
<th>Example of good practices</th>
<th>Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>Example of an output indicator which is specific:</td>
<td>Example of result indicators which are not specific:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Number of study trips for journalists from the enlargement countries (AMP 2009)</td>
<td>- Level of public support for EU enlargement, as measured by surveys and other means (AMP 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Effectiveness in providing multipliers with information material on enlargement (AMP 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Level of knowledge/transparency of and support for EU enlargement policy among target groups (AMP 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Increased coverage in the media of enlargement-related issues and positive content and projects among civil society/NGOs on these issues (AMP 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable</td>
<td>Example of output indicators which are measurable:</td>
<td>Example of result indicators which are not measurable as such and should be further specified:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Delivery of printed and AV information material in MS (AMP 2009)</td>
<td>- Increased public knowledge of enlargement and involvement by the general public and business sector in the new MS (AAR 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- DG ELARG website kept up to date (AMP 2009)</td>
<td>- Increase in knowledge among the general public and opinion leaders of enlargement (AAR 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example of a results indicator which is measurable:</td>
<td>- Increased ownership of communication action on the SAP by local players and increased regional communication synergies (AAR 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Increased coverage in the media of EU related issues and the Europa integration process, as measured by reports and media monitoring (AAR 2005)</td>
<td>- Quality of work programmes agreed with delegations and Representations (AAR 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievable</td>
<td>Broadly speaking, all output indicators are achievable since they relate to the activities organised</td>
<td>Example of result indicators which are not achievable:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example of a result indicator which is</td>
<td>- Increase in knowledge among the general public and opinion leaders of enlargement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thematic evaluation of information and communication activities towards Member States in the area of EU enlargement
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for assessment</th>
<th>Example of good practices</th>
<th>Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>measurable:</td>
<td></td>
<td>(AAR 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Increased coverage in the media of EU related issues and the Europa integration process, as measured by reports and media monitoring (AAR 2005)</td>
<td></td>
<td>− Effectiveness in proving civil society development/dialogue (AMP 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Quality of work programmes agreed with delegations and Representations (AAR 2004)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Realistic**

- Broadly speaking, all output indicators are realistic since they relate to the activities organised
- Example of a results indicator which is realistic:
  - Effectiveness in making journalists from the enlargement countries familiar with available tools and techniques (AMP 2008)
- Example of result indicators which are not realistic:
  - Increase in knowledge among the general public and opinion leaders of enlargement (AAR 2004)
  - Increased awareness of the SAP policy vis-à-vis the Western Balkans (AAR 2005)

**Time-bound**

- Broadly speaking, all output indicators are time-bound, since they relate to the activities organised within the year
- Broadly speaking, no result indicators are time-bound, in the sense that they do not entail the time scale for expected impacts

**SMART**

- Example of an output indicator which respect all the SMART criteria:
  - Number of MS journalists’ visits to enlargement countries, as measured by the attendance of at least 100 participants as well as visits to the EU12 and the 200 edition of the young journalists competition (AMP 2009)
- Example of a result indicator which do not respect any of the SMART criteria:
  - Level of knowledge of and support for EU Enlargement policy among general public in the MS and the enlargement countries (AMP 2008)
  - Example of an output indicator which is not an indicator at all:
    - Future of the Communication strategy for enlargement after May 2004 (AAR 2004)

Technopolis: extract and analysis from AMPs and AAR

Most of the indicators used in the monitoring of communication and information activities are associated with a measurement tool in the reports (i.e. reporting data such as the number of participants to the different activities; surveys including the Eurobarometer).

However, many of them are not actually measurable in the sense that they do not concern a unit that is measurable (e.g. the “level of knowledge of enlargement among the general public” is not measurable as such, but the accessibility of EU citizens to DG ELARG publications on enlargement policy is and could be measured through specific surveys with a question such as “how often do you receive publications on enlargement?”).

It is also important to highlight the methodological difficulties encountered when building impact indicators, since by definition impacts are less time bound and more difficult to assess. One of the methodological ways of avoiding this kind of problem is to rely on a number of qualitative and quantitative indicators put together (composite indicators). In conclusion, it is important for a more robust set of indicators to be developed and information on the indicators collected to feed back into the planning and needs assessment exercises.

There is no difference between the issues identified with indicators above and those, which are identified in the case studies. Case studies concerning media relations show that:

- In the case of press trips, there is reference to maximum number of journalist but there are no references to the number of articles expected to be published, for
instance; in the case of media relations during events there is no reference to expected participants at all

- With regard to the European Young Journalists award, there is also reference to numbers of participants in the competition and the winners – nothing on results. The specific contract, for instance, set performance targets, i.e. increase the number of participants, improve the quality of articles (written by young journalists), and increase the number of media clippings reporting on the Award – but does not specify the indicators – nor does it set any criteria for quality.

3.1.6 Programming Framework

The analysis of the intervention logic and the activity mapping exercise concludes that at the top level there are no particular gaps in relation to the objectives, which are not covered by activities, or activities, which do not relate to an objective of the programme.

The main gaps and weaknesses of the current programming framework include:

- A lack of measurable and realistic objectives (as evidenced in section 3.1.1)
- A lack of systematically defined and integrated indicators (as evidenced in section 3.1.5)
- The systematic use of the EC Representations as multipliers and informants for future needs assessment (as evidenced in section 3.1.7)

3.1.7 Stakeholders and multipliers

The relevant stakeholders and multipliers are all addressed through the communication activities to varying degrees.

The media is a well-defined and supported target for the PRINCE activities. They are targeted through media relations, involving press trips to CC/PCC and participation in visibility events, and through information products. The journalists’ survey supports the fact that these are the right types of journalists to be contacted. All respondents of the journalist survey agreed that they are the right audience to be targeted with enlargement related information; 20 out of the 24 respondents stating ‘Yes, definitely’ and the remaining four respondents selecting ‘Yes, possibly’ from the answer options. In their comments respondents highlighted that most of them are engaged generally with EU issues therefore most of the respondents cover enlargement issues regularly.

Journalists also emphasised enlargement as having key importance for the future development of the EU. The case study on press trips shows that journalists appreciate the opportunities for information and exchanges available through PRINCE communications on enlargement.

The least well-defined group is civil society. It is therefore more difficult to make a judgement on how well civil society is reached due to the wide definition of the type of organisations, which are included.

The least well-connected target group in the intervention logic is youth (this is an issue of needing to define objectives and the outcomes expected in respect of youth and appropriate messages) – although there are specifically designed activities for youth.

Businesses are not currently targeted, but have been in the past through one discrete activity, covered in the Chambers of Commerce Roadshow case study. This case study shows that the target audience was well defined and felt well targeted. The evaluation found that there is interest in the role for businesses as a multiplier. In a number of stakeholder consultations, businesses were identified as an important

---

24 The activity is discussed in the Appendix on the case studies.
channel to improve the understanding of enlargement issues and potentially the support for future enlargement. The importance and benefits of business activities (including trade and joint ventures) across borders was highlighted in the consultations. The Enterprise Europe Network is considered an interested and under-exploited multiplier for businesses (it was already involved but could be more so).

Figure 12 gives an overview of the audiences highlighted, the activities associated with the audience and the main messages.

**Figure 12** Target groups activities and messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target groups</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Messages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civil society</td>
<td>Civil society is a difficult categorisation. There is a wide variety of opinions on enlargement and its importance to this group. They will not necessarily be reliable multipliers.</td>
<td>Significant level of activity towards civil society. Mainly visibility and information products. A mixture of active and passive activities.</td>
<td>They receive all messages and this is due to the composition of the group. This could be better delineated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalists</td>
<td>This is a very well defined target group with a group of journalists who are interested in enlargement issues.</td>
<td>The most specific set of activities are the journalist trips and participation in events. This is supported by information products. This is an active set of activities and also two-way.</td>
<td>There is a mixture of messages which help promote cultural understanding, country developments, understand the progression of enlargement and inform the overall debate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>This is well defined in terms of young journalists and those targeted by the street football (disaffected youth).</td>
<td>There are specific activities defined for youth.</td>
<td>The messages for youth are softer which makes it difficult to set specific expected outcomes from the activities. For the young journalists it is better defined.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businesses</td>
<td>The businesses covered by the “chambers of commerce roadshow” were well defined</td>
<td>The one activity was well defined.</td>
<td>The messages are clear. The benefits of the market and economic opportunities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on analysis of intervention logic, activity mapping and case studies

The evaluation also found that enlargement issues need to be more widely understood in the Member States, and, by specific audiences, in particular. The following Figure 13 presents the views of contributors from the main stakeholder consultation exercise with regard to the need for enhanced understanding per stakeholder group. Citizens are perceived to be a target audience for enlargement issues but they should be reached through the immediate target audiences (media, civil society etc) acting as multipliers. Media are also an important target group.
Thematic evaluation of information and communication activities towards Member States in the area of EU enlargement

Figure 13 Enlargement as an issue

![Bar chart showing percentage of respondents]

Do you think that enlargement is an issue, which needs to be more widely understood in the Member States? (n=37)

Source: Technopolis based on the Stakeholder consultations (percentage scale)

A number of comments was received in relation to this question which are summarised with respect to the different target audiences referenced.

Figure 14 Summary of comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Summary of comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy makers/governments</td>
<td>Concern was expressed around the myths being proliferated by national parliamentarians and the level to which MPs understand the issues. Governments need support for development and cooperation with the EC on this matter. There are different political priorities at present which affect the level of interest/exposure to EU enlargement. Policy makers should ensure information and communication on EU enlargement is delivered through the media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General citizens</td>
<td>Citizens currently have other concerns, such as the euro and the economic crisis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalists</td>
<td>There was a good level of support for the increased use of the media and the recognition that they need to be even better informed. The EC Representations may also want to have EU enlargement issues in their portfolio as something to liaise with journalists over. When there are critical dates coming up journalists need to be informed. Journalists are an important central informer/multiplier – especially the central national media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society</td>
<td>It would be of interest to have a contact person in charge of communicating enlargement and providing specific information. DG ELARG studies are very good and making more use of this to provide further material on the impact of enlargement would be useful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General citizen</td>
<td>It is important to ensure that publications/leaflets/websites are free of EU jargon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: (NGOs, Youth)</td>
<td>There is a need to get these targets involved locally and regionally. People feel more strongly at the local/regional level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Consultations with stakeholders - Technopolis (comments in relation to the target audiences)
Partnership also came up as a key issue to tackle the need to find appropriate methods to transmit messages to the general citizen. In addition, there was a general consensus that the debates in the Member States relate more to fear than to the positive benefits of enlargement.

The consultation exercise selected those stakeholders who were involved in PRINCE communication activities by being at an event or listed on their website (this sample excludes the EC Representations and the journalists). The analysis of the consultation exercise shows the group of stakeholders selected are important recipients of information and communication on EU enlargement. Over 70% of those consulted have been personally interested in enlargement related issues for over 5 years, over 85% indicated either they or their organisation was affected by EU enlargement and around 75% considered they had a good or excellent knowledge of enlargement issues.

Although the EC Representations are not a target audience of the PRINCE programme activities they are a key multiplier and receive information and products. As such, in the consultation exercise of the evaluation the EC Representations have presented a number of opinions on the communication of EU enlargement issues in the Member States. The evaluation interviews\textsuperscript{25} show that there is a willingness from both DG ELARG and the EC Representations to exchange more information but this is a challenging task. Not least because:

\begin{itemize}
  \item EC Representations have their own agenda covering the entire scope of the EU’s policies, including enlargement.
  \item Enlargement is a longer-term development and no date has been set for the accession of new Member States, which does not make it a current priority
\end{itemize}

The discussions as part of the evaluation also show that in practice, the DG tends to consult EC Representations when they plan communication and information products targeting a particular country, or group of countries. The DG, however, does not consult the EC Representations systematically on details of communication activities, such as communication channels to be employed, or location of activities. This depends on the audience(s) targeted. DG ELARG has been more proactive in recent times in relation to sending information on activities to the EC Representations particularly in relation to, for example, the enlargement package. Enlargement weeks and events for the press have been organised by the EC Representations in some Member States, and as highlighted in section 3.1.4 DG ELARG officials, including Directors, have attended the events (depending on the country and the visibility of the event). The extent of involvement of the EC Representation in the activities varies. In some activities, e.g. cultural ambassador tours and the press trips, they are more involved and the Head of Representation participates. In others, e.g. chambers of commerce road show, many EC Representations were not involved.

Another potential multiplier is the permanent representations of the Member States to the EU. At the moment cooperation is considered to be quite low, according to the analysis of the consultations with them. The DG ELARG communications unit does however invite the permanent representations of the Member States to events in Brussels and provide them with promotional material on enlargement\textsuperscript{26}.

\textsuperscript{25} Interviews internally in the EC, DG ELARG and in the EC Representations
\textsuperscript{26} i.e., Photo books and calendars have been sent to Foreign Affairs Committee in the European Parliament, the ECSC and the Committee of the Regions.
3.2 Relevance

3.2.1 Link between activities and priorities

The evaluation has found that all four activity areas are linked to the priorities outlined in the key strategic documents. The activities are well supported both financially (in relation to the budget allocated and the activities undertaken) and in relation to the strategic objectives.

The four activity areas being:

- Production and dissemination of information products
- Visibility (conferences and events etc)
- Media relations
- Strategy support (including opinion polls)

All activity areas receive budgets ranging from €400,000 to €1 million in internally allocated activities in 2009 (see Figure 4). The activity mapping exercise shows that the first three main areas of communications are the best resourced. The strategy support is less costly and does not require the same level of input as the other three areas.

Figure 15 links the specific objectives set out in the programming documentation to the key activity types illustrating the full coverage of the programme priorities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific objectives</th>
<th>Key activities (types)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stimulating an informed public debate in the EU Member States about the EU enlargement; and, related to this, improving the political communication of enlargement.</td>
<td>This is largely covered by the activities promoted under “visibility” including activities undertaken in the context of the 5th Anniversary of the EU’s enlargement and of the integrated campaign on Southeast Europe. It is also complemented by media targeting activities that seek to encourage media debate, which, in turn, contributes to informed public debate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving public understanding of the EU’s enlargement policy via raising awareness about the successes of earlier successful enlargements and their benefits as well as the benefits and challenges of future enlargement. Benefits identified include economic growth/prosperity, security and stability</td>
<td>This is covered by the production and dissemination of information produced and the media relations. The objective was well promoted through a bundle of activities prepared for the celebrations of the 5th Anniversary of the EU’s enlargement, including, for instance, the Prague Conference (which attracted representatives from the political and academic communities and other key opinion mobilisers from the EU and the candidate, potential candidate, countries) and AV products that reached TV and internet audiences in the EU and beyond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing European citizens’ familiarity with the current situation in candidate, and potential candidate, countries, including economic, political and cultural to dispel misapprehensions and prejudices</td>
<td>This is covered by all of the above activity types with a particular focus on information products and the media as well as events, most notably those undertaken in the context of the ‘Southeast Europe: People and Culture’ campaign.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27 Annual Management Plans and the Financial Decisions
Specific objectives | Key activities (types)
--- | ---
Enhancing European citizens' awareness of progress in reforms undertaken in each country in the context of the 'pre-accession' and association processes to alleviate concerns and fears stemming from misinformation or lack of information | This objective is mainly addressed through information products, notably thematic videos on the candidate, and potential candidate, countries and EU support for their reforms, and is also supported through media relations, particularly press trips to the region and visibility activities, for instance, the Cultural Ambassadors tour.

Source: Analysis from the programme documentation

As highlighted in the section 3.1.3 (the selection of the activities), the selection mechanisms for information and communication activities could be improved through collecting information on the outcomes and results of previous activities in a more systematic way, in particular through the use of well defined indicators at the activity level.

### 3.2.2 Needs assessment

The planning and programming in relation to the assessment of needs has been discussed in 3.1.4 (To what extent does programming take adequate and relevant account of Member States communication activities and other key stakeholder and strategies regarding enlargement?). The key information used for needs assessment is:

- Eurobarometer
- Media monitoring
- Own strategy support tools
- Systematic feedback from the contractor (Media Consulta)
- Firsthand knowledge through attendance and involvement in activities
- Personal relations with the other key multipliers (EC Representations)

One of the key weaknesses highlighted is the lack of systematic intelligence from the final activity reports due to the lack of standard outputs, outcomes and results indicators.

This evaluation has also tested the needs and opinions of the main stakeholders consulted to see if they are aligned with the needs assessed through the main sources of information used by DG ELARG. The consultation exercise highlighted the breadth of messages expected to be communicated, all of which can be found in the current activities undertaken through DG ELARG and reflected in the overarching objectives of the PRINCE programme.

This evidence shows that there is a clear need for communication activities to increase public support for enlargement, particularly in enlargement sceptical countries. The results of the stakeholder consultation exercise mirrored the results of Eurobarometer with 35% of the stakeholders indicating that their country viewed enlargement in a positive way and 44% in a negative way.

In the main consultation exercise, stakeholders were asked to comment on what areas they thought the EC DG ELARG should be communicating on. There were a number of comments on the realities of enlargement and a need for the EC to challenge some of the more negative issues which were portrayed such as the opening of borders leading to more crime, abuse of benefits, cheap labour, spreading of grants and funding and further economic pressures.

---

28 Open ended question
Turkey was consistently highlighted as a country where the fears need to be addressed. There were comments from the stakeholders consulted on the size of Turkey and also its attitude towards human rights.

There were also suggestions for focusing on the benefits of increasing stability and prosperity through EU Enlargement, making the whole political process of accession more transparent.

The majority of these messages are those which are most frequently addressed through DG ELARG PRINCE communication activities with the exception of some of the softer messages addressing culture and people, however a small number of the consultations did call for more “examples from everyday life”. There was a call for the “basics” – what the countries are and what they are doing, what it means for the individual (eg farmers).

On more than one occasion, the results of the consultation exercise pointed to a need for the EC to adapt its language in communication, through its publications and through the stories it presents. One example was on the issue of trade liberalisation where if the benefits for the Member States were more prominent, it would make businesses more receptive to trade with CC and PCC as they could see the potential for new jobs in their own countries as well as the new trading opportunities.

One immediate issue for the relevance of the programme is the low priority of EU enlargement issues at present time. EC Representations are not working on EU Enlargement issues. The EU has granted the prospect of future, conditional membership to the Western Balkan countries, Turkey and Iceland but there is no commitment by the EU and its Member States on the timing of accession. This is explored in more detail in section 3.4.2 on factors hampering the sustainability of impacts.

3.3 Efficiency and effectiveness

3.3.1 Translation of priorities into programming

As outlined in section 3.2.1 “to what extent have the communication activities followed the priorities”, there are clear activities related to the objectives set out in the documentation. However, without clearly defined indicators it is not possible to judge how effectively the priorities have been translated into activities.

3.3.2 Administrative and organisational structures

At the institutional level are there sufficient administrative and organisational structures to ensure efficient and effective implementation of communication activities?

The evaluation finds that DG ELARG has the administrative and organisational structures required to manage the existing level of activity of the PRINCE programme internally. There are good working arrangements at the service level within DG ELARG (both formal and informal cooperation mechanisms) and also with the main contractor Media Consulta. As already highlighted there is a weaker link between DG ELARG and the EC Representations. The collaboration with other DGs such as DG Communications is on a more ad-hoc basis.

The Information and Communication Unit (A2) in DG ELARG is responsible for the central planning and management of PRINCE communications activities. The staff are also responsible for communications covering the CC and PCCs.

The objectives/responsibilities of the Unit relate to the following elements of the communication strategy:

- Garnering public support for future enlargements of the EU
- Promoting an informed debate
• Increasing public awareness of the objectives, benefits and challenges of enlargement

However, their key role, in practice, is:

• To promote an informed debate (media and public debate) about enlargement policy aspects as well as the CC/PCCs and their issues [which would in turn reach the public]

• To raise awareness of several audiences (stakeholders, multipliers and the public) about enlargement related issues, objectives, benefits, challenges and the process

• To raise awareness of the above audiences about the SEE countries as prospective EU Members

The Unit also carried out activities targeting a rather limited audience, Commission staff. This is not related to the evaluation. These tasks require:

• Clear identification of key beneficiaries of communication activities and their needs

• Development of communication messages and information products appropriate to stakeholder needs

• Good/close collaboration/partnership with other EU institutions, the Member States and the EC Representations

The Unit is not responsible for communication regarding day-to-day policy issues. This is the responsibility of the DG Enlargement spokesperson’s office.

At the service level, the DG ELARG Internal Communication Group brings together officials from the DG ELARG teams dealing with policy aspects concerning the CC, the PCCs and the EU’s support mechanisms and programmes on enlargement as well as enlargement strategy and communications. In principle, the Group meet around 6 times per year but in practice it meets when needs arise. There are also informal meetings between the communications staff and officials from ‘country units’, depending on the needs and policy developments. At the management level, there are exchanges and discussion at the Heads of Unit and Director levels mostly in relation to the communications programme. Contacts and collaboration between the communications and strategy staff are regular as the communications staff contribute to the preparation of the enlargement strategy documents. Currently, the unit A-2 fits well in the DG structure and their work and contribution is appreciated by other parts of the DG.

The cooperation between the EC and the contractor involved daily contact during various stages of the programme. Each communication measure has been submitted to Unit A-2 for approval before implementation; in turn the Unit staff have provided guidance, support and clear ideas on their requirements. For each activity, Media Consulta provides A-2 with final reports on the implementation of the activity. As stated in earlier sections, these reports also contain beneficiary input on the performance of the activity and its relevance, which in turn feeds into future planning and programming.

Collaboration with other DGs, including DG Communication, is done on a more ad hoc basis, particularly during key events related to enlargement. Given the sensitivity of the issues related to the EU’s enlargement policy, however, the Unit seeks, in general, to communicate and maintain the ownership of information. Collaboration with the European Council and European Parliament and other EU institutions is less frequent. Collaboration with the Council and Parliament takes place through the Inter-institutional Information Group where the EC, and communication units in individual DGs, are represented by DG Communications. This channel, however, has not been particularly helpful as individual communication units rarely receive feedback. The A-2 team participated in a recent meeting of the Club of Venice on communicating enlargement. Reportedly, this platform may be useful for additional exchanges with
high-level management in communications in the EU Member States and this might lead to collaboration as the enlargement process progresses.

3.3.3 Human and financial resources

The PRINCE funds have been deployed in an efficient manner. The staffing levels are sufficient for the purpose of carrying out the current planned level of activity. The cost per activity differs depending on the type of activity but overall at around 1 euro cent per European citizen, for efficiency the programme has to rely on the use of multipliers and smart messages through well-developed channels. This is an area, which could improve, through maximising existing relationships with key multipliers. As highlighted in the analysis of the intervention logic, the budget and scale of the PRINCE activities are small in relation to the high level objective “increasing public support for EU enlargement”. Therefore the current level of budget and human resources is insufficient to directly impact on this high level objective. The budget is however maximised in its effect through being concentrated on activities focusing on the most eurosceptic countries. This is informed through the existing needs analysis.

The intensity of the work varies: staff report that a recurrent event takes up 30 percent of an official’s time for around 4-5 months.

Overall, most staff in the Communications Unit have a suitable background and sufficient experience in the communications field. Consultations within the Commission reported that the capacity and performance of the Unit has improved considerably in recent years. The latter was partly attributed to the enhanced awareness of the staff of the political aspect of communications and the sensitivities of enlargement. The staff are knowledgeable, committed and enthusiastic about communicating on enlargement issues. Staff turnover however is quite high, although this is standard in the European Commission with a change in post almost every 3 ½ years being the norm.

The contractor, Media Consulta reported that the resources allocated to each project were sufficient to achieve their respective aims. However, the efficiency of the actual implementation was diminished somewhat by the amount of time consumed by the high level of financial reporting requirements.

Evidence from the case studies shows that PRINCE funding has been deployed in an efficient manner. For instance, communication activities focusing on promoting culture in Southeast Europe not only attracted a good number of participants but also created a ‘buzz’. These enhanced the visibility of the event, and therefore its cost effectiveness. Another example is the audio-visual products produced and broadcast by TV5Monde and RFI which reached around 2.5 million people. Finally, press trips are a highly cost-effective activity. Each trip costs around 40,000 Euro on average and results in the generation of around 15-20 articles published at a cost of around 2,600 euro each. This cost is low when compared to the minimum cost of an advertisement placed in a major European newspaper.

The overall efficiency – the relationship between inputs and outputs is not possible to assess. The measures are not in place. If a better understanding of the efficiency in relation to input/output is required, each activity needs to have defined output indicators.
3.3.4 Effectiveness in Member States

The evidence collected shows that:

- The media and therefore its associated activities are a central effective channel for the proliferation of information on EU enlargement.

- The most important messages received on EU enlargement relate to information on the situation (legal, economic) and the progress towards accession and status of the CC and PCC. There was less of a focus on cultural or soft messages. Cultural messages are best delivered in combination with more factual information or messages.

- The effectiveness of the activities is seen to be greater where multipliers have been used or partnerships have been formed. There is also more potential to exploit multipliers and potential partners in the future.

There is a good level of exposure to information and communication activities on enlargement issues in the stakeholders consulted (60% are exposed to information and communication activities more than every three months and another 20% more than once a year).

The following table gives an overview of the level of effects on the target groups and the main successes in terms of activities from the case studies.

Figure 16 Level of effect on target groups for PRINCE activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Direct effect</th>
<th>Main successes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journalists</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Press trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society</td>
<td>Low/Medium</td>
<td>Special events (when combined with other target groups such as youth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>EYJA (hard messages)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Street football (soft messages)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businesses</td>
<td>High (potential)</td>
<td>Chamber of Commerce Road Show</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Analysis from the programme reports, consultations and case studies

3.3.4.1 Communication channels for enlargement

The main channel by which the consulted stakeholders received information is through the national and regional media. This supports the need to provide information to journalists (media activities) in order to spread the messages. Figure 17 shows the main communication channels by which the stakeholders consulted receive information on EU enlargement issues.
Other important communication channels highlighted include think tanks, the TRIALOG network, academic works, the Europe Enterprise Networks, email lists and regional development agencies. The stakeholders with the highest level of interest in enlargement issues tended to use the following communication channels most regularly:

- Websites, including DG Enlargement
- Newsletters, such as EurActiv

The EC Representations agreed that their own websites are a key channel to disseminate information on enlargement. There is also support for Web 2.0 type activities, especially for the young. The following quote from an EC Representation also highlights the importance of using more social media approaches towards the young.

“There are many channels to choose from but it always depends on the information – on what we are communicating – on the messages and on the audiences. The Representation has used Twitter and Facebook to communicate messages to younger audience.”

The EC Representations mentioned in particular the SEE photo competition as an interesting way to engage people. Broadcasting on various TV channels and in the mass media has the potential to reach the most people and more direct contact with journalists was also a key suggestion improving awareness. Press trips to the acceding countries seem to be a useful way to increase the level of awareness and visibility on enlargement and the press coverage is favourable to the EC Representation’s communication activities. Furthermore, press trips have an immediate impact, according to another EC Representation.

3.3.4.2 The messages received

The key messages in relation to information on the enlargement process and on the situation in the CC and PCC are well known and understood by the stakeholders consulted in the evaluation. Far fewer indicate receiving information on reasons for enlargement or information on culture and people, in spite of this being a focus of PRINCE activities. The stakeholders were in favour of the position the EC has taken in terms of messages and the neutral way in which it informs the audiences of the issues and information on EU enlargement. The following figure shows the types of...
messages received on enlargement by the stakeholders consulted and also separately, the EC Representations.

Figure 18 Types of messages on enlargement

![Figure 18](image)

Source: Technopolis, based on the Stakeholder and EC Rep consultations

Other messages which stakeholders would like to receive included: messages on the potential for business/commercial investment opportunities and interaction in South East Europe, and messages on the overall benefits (through impact studies), and information on what enlargement means in everyday life. The EC Representations indicated their users were more interested in the messages relating to the situation the CC and PCC is in, and where it is in relation to the actual process of enlargement. There is a particular interest in Turkey and the various uses of EU instruments. Communication on Turkey focusing on its geostrategic importance and potential as a mediator in the region/geopolitical role would be welcome by ‘active’ citizens in several EU Member States (in particular in Germany and the UK). The views on promoting messages on cultural tolerance were mixed.

“Culture is not an issue - obviously there are differences but there are no communities from the acceding countries in the country so culture-related messages are not really needed, besides the nation is open, receptive to other cultures”

Another EC Representation, located in a much more multicultural country, emphasised the need to increase communication activities regarding cultural issues:

“Culture is an important aspect and the Representation have done some work to promote culture and to tie things with events inside Europe, e.g. the Rotating Presidency; that's one way that you can softly portray the other side of Europe”

Analysis of the stakeholder consultations in relation to messages concludes that culture–focused messages could be better promoted and be more lasting if combined with factual information on the situation in the CC and PCC and the key challenges they face. The EC Representations in particular highlighted what would induce them to communicate more on EU enlargement issues. Suggestions from the representations included:

• Providing the EC Representations with information which gives them a better understanding of how to respond to the negative comments and criticisms of
future enlargement (especially in relation to Turkey and low wage economies). Providing information on the benefits in relation to the high level objectives, such as unification of the continent and visa liberalisation.

- Providing regular information on facts such as start dates for negotiations, progress and improvements
- Providing assessments of the economic implications and the impact on the MSs.
- Providing information on the views of citizens and the youth in the CC and PCC on their countries’ relations with the EU, on prospective accession and their expectations.
- Other thematic areas of interest of the stakeholders consulted include: EU grants; negotiation progress and procedures; environmental issues; culture, history and traditions, ‘things that unite people’.

3.3.4.3 Effectiveness of activities targeted at journalists

This section is mainly derived from the evidence from the journalist survey which covered journalists who had participated in press trips. The activities directed towards journalists are well designed and effective. All respondents of the journalist survey agreed that they are the right audience to be targeted with EU enlargement related information. Most of them are engaged generally with EU issues and can cover enlargement issues regularly. Journalists also emphasised EU enlargement as being of key importance to the future development of the EU.

Figure 19 shows that journalists agreed or strongly agreed that the activities they have been involved in were well tailored to their needs, the information made them feel more informed regarding EU enlargement issues, while participation in enlargement related activities also provided respondents with incentive to write articles or reports on enlargement. Almost all of the journalists submitted articles or links to articles that have been reviewed as part of this evaluation.

Figure 19 Journalists’ opinion on the DG Enlargement organised activities

Source: Technopolis, based on the Journalist survey

Press trips were undertaken to Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Iceland, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The average cost of each press trip was €40–50,000. Ten to fifteen journalists attended each trip and each wrote at least one article. Taking into consideration that a one page advertisement in a

---

29 Undertaken as part of this evaluation
major European newspaper costs anything between €20,000-50,000 and 15-20 articles were generated by every press trip this represents a significant return on investment. Some of the comments from the journalists are presented below.

“Visiting a country is obviously an essential element to raise attention on it. Media trips allow to establish direct contacts with relevant sources of information and have an impact on immediate and future coverage.”

“I would report on similar issues anyway, but taking part in DG Enlargement-funded activities with visiting EU-based journalists has given me additional insights and helped with access for some stories.”

“Media trips are a powerful tool to increase coverage immediately and in the long-term”

“Within these trips we get better information about these countries, we create a personal opinion, valuable contacts and we are in a better position to understand the problems and the special conditions for each country”

The journalists attending the press trips were mainly from the Eurosceptic countries, thus generating the most articles in these countries.

Figure 20  Journalists’ nationalities

The main success factors highlighted from the press trips in particular was the excellent quality of the speakers who agreed to address the group of journalists. Journalists met high level figures (eg Prime Minister of Montenegro, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Serbia, the Deputy Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina, MK’s Minister for the Interior etc.) and this was extremely important in generating articles about EU Enlargement in the EU press.

Analysing the media coverage, which derives from these trips (and articles subsequently submitted as part of this evaluation) shows that around half of the articles take a neutral tone, 18% a positive tone and around 31% a negative tone. The articles touch upon some of the real issues for people living in CC and PCCs and often link the issues to becoming a Member State in the future. As highlighted, a significant
number of articles are being published in the more enlargement sceptic countries. An overview of the articles analysed can be found in the appendices.

3.3.4.4 Effectiveness of activities targeted at youth

There are two specific activities targeted at youth, which have been looked at in detail in the case studies: the European Young Journalists Awards and the Foca Street Football Festival.

The European Young Journalists Awards (EYJA), was a recurrent communication activity (2008-2010) targeting young journalists from the EU Member States and the CC and PCCs, seeking to promote reflection and debate on EU enlargement primarily amongst the target audience.

The activity can be judged to have been effective overall in terms of the channels employed, i.e. the competition, the website and the award conference. The mapping exercise undertaken as part of the evaluation, shows that a good number of young journalists involved in the competition have been exposed to several other activities related to the initiative, including follow-up visits to Brussels. Furthermore, a small number of young people have benefited from attending the Youth Conference in Turkey and from exchanges with their counterparts.

In 2008, the EYJA had attracted 400 articles from young journalists in 35 countries, rising to 600 articles by 2009. The 2010 edition continued this significant growth by attracting 1002 entries from 36 countries, with the addition of Iceland as a participant.

Therefore, in terms of the measurable performance objectives, the exercise proved effective. Over the three editions of the EYJA, the contractor Media Consulta developed close partnerships with various companies and organisations active in the field of media and journalism. As well as spreading information on the competition, the winners, the enlargement process and the EU itself, the EYJA website also built on the promotional potential of social media platforms Facebook and Twitter, whose popularity continues to increase, connecting to the personal and professional networks of their users. The website was updated each year to give the latest information of the upcoming or last competition. The current main theme of the site is EYJA 2010.

The following figure presents key elements of the effectiveness of the EYJA activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Outcomes</th>
<th>Indirect outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Increased awareness of enlargement-related issues amongst the young journalists through participation in the competition and award related activities</td>
<td>• Increased coverage of enlargement issues through articles provided during the competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More effective provision of information through the website and the promotional potential of the social media</td>
<td>• Some networking of, and exchanges between, beneficiaries through the online initiative ‘European Young Journalists Connected’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased levels of debate in the countries where the beneficiaries of the activities are active</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Foca Street Football Festival of 2009, also primarily targeted youth, through ‘soft’ messages and themes (e.g. fair play, dialogue) and also general citizens through media coverage.

The Street Football event was highlighted as an effective activity to bring youth into contact with the acceding countries (and their youth counterparts). The following figure suggests that the activity was more successful in terms of indirect impacts rather than the direct results. The activity and its messages also reached the direct target group – young people – and the local public (as well as the participants and guests, the local attendance was high and there were a number of side activities which involved them more actively). By contrast, the broader outreach of the event and related messages was rather limited.
According to the final report, meeting people from other countries was an important part of the event. The evidence does not go as far to say that any particular political messages have been communicated.

Figure 22 Effectiveness of the Foca Street Football Festival

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Outcomes</th>
<th>Indirect outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Enhanced awareness of intercultural dialogue and its importance</td>
<td>• Increased motivation to contribute to social development – in the short term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Coverage by the EU media rather limited in terms of quantity but good and positive in terms of substance</td>
<td>• Increased motivation in more active participation in their respective organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong partnerships formed</td>
<td>• High visibility of the event and its messages to the local public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rather limited visibility of the event and its messages to the general public in SEE and the EU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3.4.5 Effectiveness of activities targeted at civil society and European citizens

There are three types of activities targeted more broadly at civil society and European citizens which can be considered effective according to the analysis in the case studies: the integrated communications campaigns on the 5th Anniversary of Enlargement and on ‘Southeast Europe: People and Culture’ and the AV products.

The 5th Anniversary of Enlargement was topical, and, therefore, provided the opportunity to communicate key messages in relation both to the EU’s enlargement policy (i.e., the ‘win/win’ message and the positive impact of enlargement) and to the CCs and PCCS. The activities were undertaken in collaboration with DG Education and Culture with the presence of political leadership, including from the European Commission. These attracted sufficient participation in the events and debate on enlargement thereby increasing attention to, and the visibility of, enlargement messages.

The ‘Southeast Europe: People and Culture’ enhanced the visibility of the region amongst local audiences in a rather unusual way focusing on what the general public is interested in, for example stories, aspects of culture and tradition as well as the modern face of the candidate/potential candidate countries. The SEE Cultural Ambassador Tour was well publicised – 130 press clippings were recorded by the media monitoring service.

The “Southeast Europe: People and Culture Website” is indicated in the reports to have reached approximately a quarter of million persons:

- March-Dec 2009: 175,145 unique visitors,

Partnerships formed with organisations included in the SEE activities include Nuremberg City Government, the Amsterdam based cultural institution Balkan Buro (SEE Cultural Journey), and Beta Press Agency, based in Belgrade (SEE website).

A series of audiovisual products was developed in 2008-2009 to introduce another communication tool that would enable the European Commission to broaden the reach of the enlargement message with the use of images. Media Consulta entrusted TV5 Monde and RFI with the production and broadcast of a series of audiovisual products regarding the International conference of the European Commission: From

\[\text{[Media Consulta Final AR 2006-2009]} \text{ p. 58}\]

The AV products developed to communicate messages were effective in terms of reaching the mobilisers, ie the broadcasters, and the general public. Figure 23 below presents some evidence of the effectiveness of the AV products in terms of direct and indirect outcomes.

Figure 23 Effectiveness of AV products for the 5th Anniversary of the EU enlargement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Outcomes</th>
<th>Indirect outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Increased awareness of, and interest in, enlargement-related issues of some multipliers across 26 European countries</td>
<td>• Increased coverage of enlargement issues across Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased engagement of multipliers in communicating enlargement messages</td>
<td>• Increased visibility of messages related to the successful 5th round of EU enlargement amongst the EU public (and beyond)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the effect of the international conference in terms of audience reached is not possible to gauge accurately\(^3\)\(^1\), a number of TV channels demonstrated interest in the videos, and 54 broadcasters from 26 countries (from Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Bulgaria or Slovenia to BiH, Montenegro and Turkey) and broadcast the material. So a start in introducing European content, which has the reputation of being “niche and difficult”, has been clearly made by some broadcasters.

TV5 Monde broadcast the audiovisual productions related to the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall through their international networks. According to the Final Report, the TV reports were potentially seen by nearly 55 million people in 20 countries throughout Europe, and 34 broadcasters aired the offered TV material\(^3\)\(^2\).

Effectiveness overall on Civil Society is difficult to gauge. Civil society as highlighted is not an homogenous group of stakeholders. It encompasses a broad range of organisations with different focuses and needs, including academia and think tanks, activist groups (including environmental groups), civic organisations, political parties, professional organisations, social enterprises and trade unions, as well as sports and social clubs. Our findings show that some civil society organisations are better targeted than others. For example, academia and think tanks appear to have benefited most from communications on enlargement through, for instance, attendance in various events, particularly conferences, and the DG’s newsletter on enlargement, in addition to obtaining information on their own initiative posted on the DG’s website.

3.3.4.6 Effectiveness of the relationship with EC Representations

The EC Representations’ level of interaction and involvement with the PRINCE activities is mixed, which makes it difficult to judge effectiveness. The representations are not direct recipients of “activities” but rather recipients of information while also potential partners. There are some EC Representations, which have worked closely with DG Enlargement on the execution of PRINCE activities in their Member States.

“... enlargement is not like the single market area .....EC Reps are as active as they possibly can be”

\(^3\)\(^1\) However the audience of TV5 Monde and RFI for the international conference is reported to be 2.5 million viewers/listeners

\(^3\)\(^2\) This 55 million figure corresponds in reality to the number of households receiving TV5 Monde, the real audience in terms of viewing the TV channel is much lower. TV5 Monde is not a so much popular TV channel. The figures were based on information given by each TV station.

Thematic evaluation of information and communication activities towards Member States in the area of EU enlargement
Source: EC Representation consultation

All of the EC Representations covered in the consultation primarily gain their information directly from DG Enlargement (mostly the Spokesperson). Currently only some of the EC Representations indicate that they followed up on information received from DG Enlargement. The lack of follow up could be attributed to the low level of interest in enlargement in these countries and the workload of the EC Representations. EC Representations located in countries in close geographical proximity to the acceding countries and in countries where PRINCE communication activities have been undertaken are more proactive and carry out a broader range of communication activities regarding enlargement issues (for example, Slovenia and Austria). Finally, the EC Representation in Germany is very active in carrying out political events on enlargement for a number of reasons, including the ‘weight’ of Germany within the EU, the expertise in Germany on the policy and the aspirants and the personal interest and good links with DG Enlargement of the communications staff.

The EC Representations were also asked if they had firsthand experience of any activities funded under PRINCE. Eight EC Representations indicated direct involvement in the Danube cycling trip, the European Young Journalist Award, the press trip to Croatia and the conference in Slovenia. Other visible activities are the press trips to the different countries, the EYJA, the photo competition and the ‘SEE people and culture’ website.

Ideally, the EC Representations would harmonise related communication activities with enlargement events but this was rarely reported to happen (except in relation to the enlargement package) due to a lack of activity in most Representations consulted. The German EC Representation is an exception. It has organised several events, including panel discussions and conferences focusing on specific individual countries (i.e., Croatia, Iceland and Serbia) and journalists’ trips to Iceland, Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (MK). DG ELARG officials from the policy units and the Director General have attended such events. These activities are supported through the German Representation’s budget and are not linked to those of DG ELARG (except for the events on the 2010 enlargement package in which the Commissioner for Enlargement was present).

There is therefore more potential for the EC Representatives to be central multipliers, particularly in relation to further work with their own groups of journalists. The EC Representations clearly identify the general public and journalists as key users of their communication activities, out of which journalists are the most frequent users (see Figure 24). Therefore although it is difficult to judge their current effectiveness, their potential effectiveness is high.

33 Under UNSCR 1244
3.4 Impact and sustainability

3.4.1 Immediate and long term impact

The extent to which the PRINCE programme activities can actually impact on public opinion and support for enlargement at the EU level is negligible, both due to the limited budget and other external factors. There are a number of known externalities which possibly contribute to increasing the negative opinions towards EU enlargement and these are outlined in section 3.4.2. The trends in Eurobarometer have been highlighted a number of times in this evaluation. The measurement of impact at the activity level is further hindered by the lack of indicators and also by the types of activities; some are very broad and targeted at the general public. Some evidence on the impact on immediate target groups is presented in section 3.4.4.

The overall sustainability of activities (and outputs) without funding is low. There is currently a very low level of Member State activity in the area of communication on EU enlargement. This further affects the possible sustainability.

The outcomes are more sustainable as the outcomes of communication activities are about increasing awareness in the direct beneficiaries. The consultation exercise for this evaluation indicates that this audience has more access and knowledge about enlargement issues. There is little evidence of this awareness being passed down the chain to the general citizen at present.

Figure 25 indicates the nature of the links from the different target groups through to the citizen as evidenced from the consultation exercise, the interviews with the EC Representations and the journalist survey and case study. It shows the potential for each activity to reach the general citizen.
Journalists have the potential to have the biggest impact on the general citizen as the messages and the medium are direct to readers. This also makes these activities the easiest to measure in terms of outcome and impact, once indicators are in place.

The focus of activities on civil society is somewhat hampered by the broad definition of civil society as a target group. Measurement of outcomes and impacts is difficult due to the lack of definition of sub groups, with specific messages and channels, permitting the measurement of whether the message is being passed on to their own target audiences.

The EC Representations are a key multiplier, which is not currently exploited in a systematic way by DG ELARG. The audience of the representations includes a wider variety of EU-interested journalists and citizens than currently reached through the programme.

Young people are important and young journalists in particular as they have the capacity to reach out to the public and also engage with other young people through a variety of media channels, including new media. As multipliers, young people have a greater capacity to spread messages decentrally through new media than the European Commission (centrally). In some instances the benefits of Web 2.0 approaches are highlighted in this evaluation. There is scope within the limited budget to create a ripple effect. If there is a need to target a larger immediate group of stakeholders as scepticism increases, the online environment could be better exploited, allowing real time access to activities taking place elsewhere and publicity and promotional events on line.

34 This diagram excludes businesses as a target audience since only one activity has taken place in the period under consideration.
Long-term impacts are best sustained by long term partnerships with other actors. The findings of the evaluation highlight the need for the multiplier effect across all target groups to be better exploited. By doing this, the effect of the activities will be greater as they are tailored to the needs of the national and regional audiences. As already highlighted this is difficult due to the lack of activity in the Member States, but this can change as progress in the process of enlargement may be prioritised.

The partners involved in the streetfootballworld, Balkan Buro and Café Babel were clearly very motivated to achieve results. On the other hand, some of the other stakeholders consulted did mention the additional costs of being in partnership and the supporting activities, which needs to be taken into consideration.

There are also potential synergies for example with youth and programmes such as Erasmus Mundus (DG EAC) with business support and DG Regio activities. The EURANET funded by DG Comms is subject to a current evaluation and the radio stations involved are interested in more information on EU issues for example.

### 3.4.2 Factors affecting impact and sustainability

The following table presents some of the possible factors, which can positively or negatively affecting the impact and sustainability of the PRINCE activities.

**Figure 26 Overview of factors potentially affecting the impact and sustainability of the PRINCE activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall factor</th>
<th>Factors positively affecting the impact and sustainability of the PRINCE activities</th>
<th>Factors negatively affecting the impact and sustainability of the PRINCE activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timing</td>
<td>When there is an immediate need for a message to be broadcast or a country is about to change its status.</td>
<td>No date has been set for the accession of New MSs (thus general lack of interest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timing</td>
<td>During economically stable periods</td>
<td>The economic crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration</td>
<td>When the activities are concentrated in a few countries to maximise effect (the eurosceptics)</td>
<td>Increasing euroscepticism which means that activities need to cover a large number of countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>A sufficient budget in relation to the objectives of the activities.</td>
<td>A low budget in relation to the size of the problem and increasing eurosceptism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Support from the policy leadership and senior management in DG ELARG at events</td>
<td>A lack of presence of the policy leadership and senior/middle management in visibility events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>The involvement of external high profile people in activities</td>
<td>A lack of presence of the policy leadership and senior/middle management in visibility events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>National politics supportive of EU enlargement</td>
<td>National politics using EU issues for own political gains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Joining of PRINCE activities with other ongoing cultural or enlargement related activities - Synergistic events</td>
<td>Ad-hoc use of main multipliers/potential partners (external to journalists) creation of sustainable local interest on the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Strong sustainable partnerships with key organisations</td>
<td>Not nurturing the relationships with national, regional and local organisations after activities have finished</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are there any elements which are/could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of the activities implemented in this area?
3.4.3 Timescales

The timescales of individual activities are very different and set according to the nature of the activity. Adequacy of duration is not an issue that has emerged as problematic. However, the potential for linking activities (different generations of the same activity) to generate a longer-term impact, or of follow-up activities (for example follow-up of press trips with additional contacts/information) have emerged as areas with potential for further development.

3.4.4 Current and future impacts

There is very little evidence on the impacts of the activities, for all of the above reasons (measurement systems, external constraints etc). The following sections present some of the specific impacts on target groups in more detail with reference to the prospects for immediate and long term impacts and the sustainability of activity.

3.4.4.1 Impacts on the journalists

The clearest impact is seen on journalists involved in journalist trips. All the journalists who have been involved in the various enlargement related activities write regularly on European Union enlargement related issues. However, the frequency of the publications on enlargement related issues is highly dependent on actual events. As a consequence of the involvement in the various activities all journalists but one agreed that they are more likely to report on enlargement issues.

As highlighted from the press trips 15-20 articles were generated from each trip (most journalists published at least one article after a trip), which signifies a significant impact on the readership on enlargement issues as well as a return on investment. Therefore the journalist press trips increase the visibility of enlargement issues. There

Were the implementation periods of the activities sufficient to generate relevant results?

What have been the impacts so far and what are the likely impacts of on-going communication activities?
is more coverage in the press and there will continue to be so if the press trips continue.

The most sustainable part of any the communication activity is the message. The clearest messages are presented through the media trips and therefore the most pronounced impact is on the journalists who publish more articles as a result of the activity.

However it is easier to send clear messages to journalists, in comparison with other broader stakeholder groups. Journalists want access to information on the process of accession and the issues affecting the countries. The activities targeted towards the journalists appear to produce the greatest likelihood of sustainable results. As a target their knowledge and contacts are increased. They have formed new networks and in the case of the EYJA, there is an alumni network\textsuperscript{35}. There is more potential to support the journalists after a press trip to encourage further impact.

3.4.4.2 Impacts on the general stakeholders, civil society

The stakeholder consultation exercise explored the messages civil society organisations received and what changes these brought about. The results are, as expected, not clear-cut. There is little evidence of impact on the general stakeholders (NGOs and Civil Society) unless they took part in a direct PRINCE activity.

A few stakeholders consulted indicated that the activities have changed his/her perception in a positive way.

“It might have had a positive impact since the young that participate to the Street Football event would never have been to Serbia for instance.”

“Our organisation is a very strong supporter of enlargement. But saying that, the more you work here, the more you see the drawbacks. Our main mission is to assist post-conFLICT countries. European integration will contribute to their society”

Among those who reported no change in perception, increased level of knowledge was however an important benefit of engagement with enlargement related activities.

“I would say they have added to my knowledge, yes, but not really changed my perception.”

“It didn’t change my opinion, but revealed a lot more about the debate in Turkey and divisions in Turkish society”

“... these activities have a huge added value and resources should be allocated to carry out such activities. They have the potential to help society/businesses to familiarise themselves with the countries and demonstrate the potential of these countries. These meetings give the motivation to many businesses to become more active in searching and exploring possibilities to invest; around six businesses that attended both seminars – moved to the next phase – got in touch with other business in Balkans and struck agreements. Externalities – spillover effects.”

A third of the general stakeholders consulted mentioned follow-up activities as a consequence of information gained on EU enlargement.

With respect to the case studies there are some data collected on Southeast Europe : People and Culture which indicate a positive if limited effect. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that the cooperation with civil society organisations has created synergies with other ongoing projects. A major survey would be needed to access

\textsuperscript{35} However at the time of the evaluation the EYJA site is inactive.
direct impacts on the target group. The road shows were organised in medium sized cities and these types of events are important in bringing together local and regional actors including the press, which creates some sustainability of impact. It is difficult to see if there would be any evidence of spillover effect.

The SEE photo competition was important in generating interest for the wider Southeast Europe: People and Culture project. Of 3,200 photos submitted, just over 3,900 people voted online and 65 articles were published about the project. Moreover, there were impressive synergy effects at the competition’s peak in March 2010: 70,000 unique visitors were coming to the SEE website, which further generated interest in other projects which were about to start, such as the SEE Cultural Journey. Synergies are extremely important. The fact that the SEE Photo Competition and the SEE Cultural Journey were taking place at the same time generated publicity for both.

The sustainability of the website primarily depends on the willingness of DG Enlargement to finance further editorial activities of the portal. Other donor or market-oriented financing mechanisms do not appear to be relevant for these activities.
4. Conclusions and recommendations

The conclusions of the evaluation of the PRINCE programme are broadly positive. As interim evaluations aim to support the improvement of the programming of information, this evaluation highlights some of the areas where the processes and procedures of the PRINCE programme can be improved in order to further enhance its overall effectiveness and impact.

4.1 Conclusions

4.1.1 Assessment of the intervention logic

There are clear objectives set across the programme documentation, particularly at the strategic and operational level. The operational objectives are also clearly linked to the activities and the chosen target audiences.

However the objectives as currently stated do not meet the SMART criteria. This is a particular issue at the operational level where better measurements could provide more guidance for future programming and planning.

The systematic statement of objectives at the activity level is less well developed and the programme lacks a system of indicators, which can be used to measure progress towards the objectives.

There are statements of messages present in the objectives hierarchy. The specific objectives in particular include the main messages about reform and richness of cultural heritage in acceding countries. However they are not consistently defined at the activities level.

The relationship between planning and programming and the assessment of needs improved during the reference period of the evaluation but could be further improved through better intelligence gathering at the activity level and the systematic use of indicators to feed back into the decision making process.

The selection mechanisms for information and communication activities are largely appropriate but again, with better-defined indicators and evidence from the activities, the process could be improved.

There is a low level of activity in the Member States in relation to the communication of EU enlargement. This low level of activity hampers the extent to which relevant account can be taken of their activities and strategies in the programming process. Where evidence of events and activities has been found, DG ELARG have mainly been present and active.

The relevant stakeholders and multipliers are all addressed through the communication activities.

Indicators must be linked to specific activities and therefore can only be prescribed at the planning stage of each activity. There is however a clear process for setting these indicators. In the appendices to this evaluation report, there is an overview of how best to approach measuring objectives at the high level and message setting. Examples of indicators setting for specific activity types (press trips and AV) are also provided.

36 Appendix L
4.1.2 Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the activities

4.1.2.1 Relevance

The programme focus is relevant. The evaluation has found that all four activity areas are linked to the priorities outlined in the key strategic documents. The activities are well supported both financially (with respect to the budget allocated and the activities undertaken) and in relation to the strategic objectives.

According to the stakeholders consulted, the most important messages on EU enlargement relate to information on the situation (legal, economic) and the progress towards accession and status of the CC and PCC. There is therefore a need to ensure that some of these harder messages are tackled in terms of the realities of enlargement. There is also a need for the programme messages to challenge some of the negative perceptions, which arise such as the opening of borders leading to more crime, abuse of benefits, cheap labour, spreading of grants and funding and further economic pressures. The cultural messages are best delivered in combination with more factual information or messages.

According to the various groups consulted as part of this evaluation, DG Enlargement is targeting the right target groups, in particular the media and civil society. The media and therefore its associated activities are a central effective channel for the proliferation of information on EU enlargement.

Civil society is more challenging due to its broad definition. Businesses have been included in the PRINCE activities in the past and those consulted felt there are further significant opportunities for targeting and engaging business communities and networks.

4.1.2.2 Effectiveness

The budget and scale of the PRINCE activities are small in relation to the high level objective “increasing public support for EU enlargement”. The budget is however maximised in its effect through being concentrated on activities focusing on the most Eurosceptic countries.

The case studies show that on the ground most of the activities have been effective and are well received.

The activities are considered to be more effective where multipliers have been used or partnerships have been formed. There is also more potential to exploit multipliers and other potential partners in the future.

The EC Representations have a unique role in the communication channel in both directions. They can gather intelligence, work in partnership on events, promote activities and use their own multipliers in the Member States.

The main channel by which information on enlargement is received is through the national and regional media – this is a priority focus.

The use of multiple channels and messages for targeting civil society and the general citizen is a more effective approach. There is a need for more clarity on the objectives of the larger activities targeting civil society; messages need to be set out for the sub activities to ensure that the outputs are captured more systematically.

There is scope within the limited budget to create a ripple effect. The online environment, social networking and new media could be better exploited, allowing real time access to activities taking place elsewhere or publicity and promotional events on line.

The following table gives an indication of possibilities for new communication channels and where they may be most effective.
Figure 27 Indicative effectiveness of communication channels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target audience (example)</th>
<th>General awareness raising</th>
<th>Hard messages such as Enlargement process</th>
<th>Soft messages such as cultural awareness</th>
<th>Intelligence gathering and information exchange</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>★★</td>
<td>★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Websites/Web 2.0</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special events</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional networks</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>★★</td>
<td>★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional development networks</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★★</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC Representations</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>★★</td>
<td>★★</td>
<td>★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>★★</td>
<td>★★</td>
<td>★★</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.2.3 Efficiency

DG ELARG has adequate administrative and organisational structures required to manage the existing level of activity of the PRINCE programme internally.

The PRINCE funds have been deployed in an efficient manner. The staffing levels are sufficient for the purpose of carrying out the current planned level of activity.

The cost per activity differs depending on the type of activity but overall at around 1 euro cent per European citizen, for efficiency the programme has to rely on the use of multipliers and smart messages through well-developed channels.

The links between DG ELARG and the EC Representations are not strong; better collaboration would permit more efficient and effective implementation of communication activities. There is collaboration with other DGs but this is not particularly consistent, and opportunities to exchange ideas and best practice in communication activities may be missed.

4.1.2.4 Impact and sustainability

The extent to which the PRINCE programme activities can actually make an impact on public opinion and support for enlargement at the EU level is negligible. It is further hampered by a number of external forces, which are increasing the negative opinions towards EU enlargement.

The general sustainability of the activities without continued funding is low. The most sustainable part of the communication activity is the message. The clearest messages are presented through the media trips and therefore the most pronounced effect is on the journalists who publish more articles as a result of the activity.

There are a number of factors, which positively and negatively affect the sustainability of PRINCE activities, many of which are external to the programme. It is important these factors are identified and revisited in order to ensure the activities are as sustainable as possible.

The most likely ways of sustaining impact are through:

- Enduring partnerships (and including objectives for this in the programme) and more joint activities
- A consistent image
- Better intelligence on the external environment positively or negatively effecting the programme objectives
A clearer measurement system at the activity level, which will enhance the collection of information on outcomes and potential impacts.

### 4.2 Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main recommendation</th>
<th>Operational recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. DG ELARG need to take a more systematic approach to objectives setting, articulation of messages, target audiences and assessment at the activity level | 1.a To enhance programming each information and communication activity should start with:  
- Explicitly set SMART objectives for activities (not just high level objectives)  
- Explicitly articulated messages for each activity  
- Explicitly articulated channels for the activity  
- Explicitly segmented target audiences  
- Provision of an outline of how the success of the activity is going to be measured (with properly defined indicators and goals)  
- Any key assumptions on external and internal factors affecting the activity  
1.b. In the final report, the success of the activities should be measured against the indicators and ultimately the objectives. |
| 2. Clear guidelines should be provided to contractors/grant holders on the requirements of final report | 2.a. DG ELARG should provide templates and guidelines for the contractors/grant holders and an overview of the expectations of what will be covered in the final reports. |
| 3. The new information derived from the final reports of activities should be used in the future needs assessment and planning activities within DG ELARG | 3.a. There should be a member of staff responsible for the collation of evidence from the final activity reports.  
3.b. The results from the collation exercise should be presented to the team internally and used for decision making on:  
- Annual planning  
- Resource allocation  
- Selection of activities |
| 4. Further define sub groups of civil society to better target this audience when planning activities | 4.a. The following types of sub groups of civil society could be used for example, but depending on the activity.  
- Academia  
- Political organizations/Policy institutions  
- Charities  
- Foundations  
- Trade unions  
- Professional organizations  
- Social enterprises  
- Environmental groups  
- Consumer organizations  
- Sports organizations  
- Religious/Cultural/ Women’s groups |
<p>| 5. Combine cultural messages with factual messages on the situation of the country in relation to accession and the challenges | 5.a. In programming, planning and assessment, ensure that activities consider both types of messages and that they are specifically stated at the outset. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main recommendation</th>
<th>Operational recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 6. Improve links to other EC networks for partnership                              | 6.a. Explore the potential for collaboration with other EC Networks (those run by the European Commission) through dialogue with the other DGs and the EC Representations, for example.  
6.b. Establish a plan of action for engaging with other EC networks where appropriate and the types of cooperation mechanisms which would be mutually beneficial. |
| 7. Revisit the activities aimed at business                                          | 7.a. Consider a new pilot activity aimed directly at business and review its success not only at the end of the activity but after a further period once there has been time for the effects to develop.  
7.b. Develop links specifically with the EC networks that concern themselves with business (exploring possibilities for information exchange and joint activities in the future – see recommendation 6) |
| 8. Enable the longer term impact of the effect of the press trips through regular contact with the journalists and facilitating networking | 8.a. Ensure the journalists database is kept up to date and has adequate coverage \  
8.b. Debrief journalists after trips as part of the evaluation of the activity \  
8.c. Send journalists information updates on other trips (both forthcoming trips and the results of trips undertaken) \  
8.d. Liaise with the spokesperson on the best way to maintain these relationships |
| 9. Increase the levels of contact and improve the systematic working relationship between DG ELARG and the EC Representations | 9.a Maintain and actively use contacts with the EC Representations. For example through specific workshops or information events, and regular email updates \  
9.b. Provide debriefing sessions or updates after joint activities |
| 10. Improve communication between the Permanent Representations of the Member States to the EU and DG ELARG | 10.a. Provide a regular information feed to the permanent representations through a newsletter or email mail out in addition to the continued invitations to events in Brussels, to stimulate a more proactive relationship. |
| 11. Invest in the partnerships developed during activities so they can be maintained and be built on for future activities | 11.a. Simple mechanisms should be used to maintain relationships during periods where no specific activities are under way. |