



Evaluation of the
EUROPE DIRECT
European Documentation Centres
DG COMMUNICATION

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KEY CONCLUSIONS

This Final Report presents the results of the external evaluation of the network of European Documentation Centres (EDC). The evaluation was conducted by Civic Consulting with support of the GHK¹ in the period December 2006 to October 2007. During the evaluation process, the team collected quantitative data from both EDCs and their institutional users through two large scale surveys, conducted in-depth interviews in seven case-study countries and focus groups in four of the seven case-study countries, and evaluated the data received. The evaluation focuses on the current situation of the EDC network in the year 2006-2007. It also formulates operational recommendations to improve the network and adapt it to evolving information technologies and changing needs of users.

The evaluation covered three themes, namely the enhancement of promotion of studies and research, the achievement of objectives at reasonable costs and the networking synergies and network management.

The evaluation questions, conclusions and recommendations are summarised in the following sections.

Enhancement of promotion and development of studies and research

Evaluation questions

Do the EDCs enhance the promotion and development of studies and research work in the field of European integration? How could these objectives be better achieved?

Is the EDC an effective mean to promote and develop studies and research work? With the evolving information technologies and needs, is the EDC still a valuable tool and offer an added value with regard to other instruments?

Conclusions

- *EDCs contribute to the promotion and development of studies and research work in the field of European integration.* This is the consistent result of surveys, case studies and focus groups. It is, however, not possible to quantify the EDC contribution, due to the fact that EU related publications produced by EDC host structures are not always documented by the EDCs. This limits the extent to which the effectiveness of EDCs can be assessed in quantitative terms.
- *EDCs address the needs of users working on studies and research in the field of European integration.* Institutional users report a high degree of satisfaction with the documentation services provided, with the highest level of satisfaction expressed for the assistance provided by EDC staff. EDCs are for nearly three quarters of institutional EDC users responding to the survey the most or second most important information source on EU relevant issues.

¹ Both companies are part of the Consumer Policy Evaluation Consortium (CPEC). Civic Consulting led the evaluation, while GHK conducted a part of the country studies (Sweden, France, Greece and Cyprus).

- *The EDCs' added value is mostly in the provision of specialised personal assistance.* In comparison with other libraries EDCs have staff that are more aware of EU issues and ways of locating and requesting EU-related documentation. The information base on EU related issues is growing rapidly and EDCs provide important support for students and researchers in order to orientate them and to help them search for documents effectively. Professional advice on databases and documents search appears to be the key asset of EDCs.
- *The number of EDC users seems to be limited, however, many EDCs could not provide sufficient information in this respect.* The median number of users per EDC and year was 616 in 2006 (based on a total of 109 EDCs that provided data). The median number of EDC users assisted by EDC staff in the same year, 18 in an average week (based on 186 responses), supports this relatively low figure.
- *The results of the focus groups indicate that many potential users, and particularly students, do not seem to know or to be fully aware of the services offered by EDCs.* This is in contrast to results of the survey of EDC staff and institutional users, where a majority of respondents assessed the degree to which the EDC is known to potential academic users as very well or fairly well. The apparent contradiction seems to indicate that EDCs and professors are in many cases not aware that students often do not know about the services offered by the EDCs.

Recommendations

- ⇒ *The EDC network will have to change to remain relevant in the age of online databases and increasing Internet usage.* The results of the evaluation indicate that EDCs currently contribute to enhancing the promotion and development of studies and research in the area of EU integration, and also have the potential to remain relevant.
- ⇒ *EDCs should shift in orientation towards providing access to electronic documents, while keeping a core collection of printed documents.* The importance and use of online resources will likely increase, and providing assistance regarding online databases on EU issues will likely be the core activity of EDC staff. Consequently, the amount of paper documents provided to individual EDCs should be reduced while at the same time providing the possibility for EDCs to receive documentation in paper format that are deemed essential.
- ⇒ *The target group of EDCs should be clarified and include only users with "in-depth information demand".* Primary users would therefore be researchers and students at the host structure, secondary EDC users would be specific sub-groups of the general public with in-depth information needs, such as teachers at schools teaching European issue, lawyers etc. Other parts of the general public should be served through Europe Direct information relays and other EU networks.
- ⇒ *To reach users with "in-depth information demand" from outside the host-structures, EDCs will have to become more pro-active and outward oriented.* Due to limited financial and staff resources, communication activities should target only those potential users from the general public that have in-depth information demands through measures that can be implemented even with a very limited communication budget, such as informing newspapers and the bar association on EDC services, etc. The main aim of these activities should be the promotion of

personalised EDC services, such as assistance for document research (including by email) or training courses on EU databases.

- ⇒ *The mandate of the EDCs with respect to communication and promotion activities should be clarified and national EDC communication programmes should be developed.* This would improve synergies between EDCs. Joint information activities could for example include: (1) national internet portals for EDCs; (2) an electronic guide on how to search for EU resources; (3) topical information packages; and (4) an e-newsletter for users on new EU information resources in the national language.
- ⇒ *EDCs should further develop their service orientation and self-evaluate their services.* For this aim a closer relationship with potential users is needed, especially inside the host-structure.

Achievement of objectives at a reasonable cost

Evaluation question

Does the EDC network achieve its objectives at a reasonable cost (global cost of publications disseminated to the EDCs and cost of training provided)?

Conclusions

- *From an EC perspective, the EDCs are an efficient tool for providing personalised services regarding complex questions of researchers and other users regarding EU issues.* The estimated total outreach of EDCs for 2006 was 371,000 users² that benefited from personalised EDC services, such as assistance or the participation in courses, seminars or other EDC communication activities. The average EC direct costs per EDC user receiving a personalised service was 1.74 Euro (not including EC staff costs for managing the network and publication costs). From an EC perspective the EDC network therefore provides for relatively low direct costs personalised services that are relevant to researchers working in the area of European integration and for which a high degree of users satisfaction exists.
- *The main resource input for running the EDC network is provided by the host-structures.* The data received in the framework of this evaluation leaves little doubt that the relation between EC resource input and host-structure input is favourable from an EC perspective.
- *The selection of printed publications distributed to the EDCs cannot be considered to be efficient.* EDCs have very little influence on what publications they receive, except through choosing thematic sectors for those minority of EDCs that have chosen to be specialised EDCs. Other than that, EDCs do not seem to have influence on the publications disseminated by OPOCE. This is especially true for priced publications. Regarding free EU publications a more demand-oriented ap-

² Double counting possible, as it is likely that at least some of the users received several times assistance or were provided assistance and also participated in communication/promotion activities.

proach has reportedly been introduced and the EU Bookshop offers all EDCs similar options to order them “à la carte”.

Recommendations

- ⇒ *There is significant potential to improve the efficiency of the EDC network. Measures that could be considered include: - Increasing the number of EDC users served with the current staff through targeted promotion of their services; - Defining an archiving policy for the network; - Providing more personalised services for users through reducing the staff capacity involved in cataloguing documents; - Increasing the service orientation of EDCs through better monitoring of user satisfaction.*
- ⇒ *The current system of distribution of documents should be developed into a more demand-oriented system. EDCs should only receive core documents in paper format that they have actively requested and not in more copies than the maximum number preferred by them. A more demand-oriented approach could be developed through defining specific categories of documents that EDCs can select from online and/or by actively ordering priced publications through the EU bookshop. For this aim, each EDC could be provided a specific credit for obtaining a selection of priced publications available in the bookshop.*

Network synergies and network management

Evaluation question

Do the EDCs operate in synergy with the other Commission networks at the national/European level?

Conclusions

- *Synergies with other EU information networks are generally less relevant than synergies within the EDC network. Contacts between EDCs and other EU information networks in the same Member State are less frequent than among EDCs and are mainly related to user queries. Contacts hardly occur to information networks in other Member States.*
- *The EDC network as a whole mainly functions as a loose structure of national and sometimes regional networks, that provide significant synergies for EDCs. Networking through mailing lists, emails, fax, phone calls and the annual meetings at the national or at EU level are generally considered by EDC staff to be very efficient tools to exchange information, share best practices and expert knowledge on particular topics, and in enhancing the quality of answers to users' requests. National coordinators seem to have a key role in facilitating the exchange of information and diffusing common standards within the EDCs national network, and the role of the EDC correspondent at the EC Representations in the MS seems also to be important in facilitating and encouraging networking activities and providing a link to Brussels.*
- *A majority of responding EDCs consider that EC services (publications, training, Helpdesk, intranet, and general management) meet their needs either very well*

or fairly well. The highest level of satisfaction relates to the general management provided by the EC. The lowest levels of satisfaction relates to the publications provided by OPOCE and the question-and-answer service of the Helpdesk. A significant number of EDC staff members seem to prefer alternative tools of assistance (such as contact to other EDCs) to the question-and-answer service.

Recommendations

- ⇒ *Synergies with other EU networks can be improved through the clarification of target groups.* Other EU networks and EC Representations should advertise EDCs as a specific source of information for persons with in-depth information demands and refer this type of requests actively towards the next EDC. On the side of the EDCs, this would require the development of assistance to and services for external users, including through email support and training courses on EU databases and the Europa website.
- ⇒ *Synergies within the EDC network could be maximised at EU level through defining an archive strategy for paper documents and through creating an online archive for electronic documents.* An archive strategy would clarify the archive function of the EDCs for paper documents. The development of a European electronic archive would improve the archiving process for electronic documents. This would likely create an added value for research and seems to be a key element to ensure the future relevance of the EDC network.
- ⇒ *Synergies within the EDC network could be maximised at Member State level, including through introducing national portals for EDCs and joint communication programmes.* Such activities would require additional financial resources, which would need to be provided from the EC, either centrally or through the Representations. It should also be considered to designate in each Member State a specific Archive EDC to receive a complete set of relevant EU publications in paper format (including all priced publications and the Official Journal). The role, function and contractual basis of “Archive EDCs” would need to be defined in the context of a future archive strategy of the network.
- ⇒ *There is potential to further improve EC management of the network, including through creating more training opportunities and through better definition of reporting requirements.* Ideally, each EDC staff should receive a special training at the EU or national level regarding the use of EU databases and the Europa website. Improved reporting indicators for EDCs’ annual reports such as the number of users assisted according to level of assistance, the number of participants in courses and seminars, and the number of all publications on EU issues produced by researchers from the host structure would give better insight into the outreach of the EDC network regarding personalised services and also provide an opportunity for EDCs to benchmark their services.

1. INTRODUCTION

This Final Report presents the results of the external evaluation of the network of European Documentation Centres (EDC). The evaluation was conducted by Civic Consulting with support of the GHK³. During the evaluation process, the team collected quantitative data from both EDCs and their institutional users through two large scale surveys, evaluated the data received and conducted case studies and focus groups in selected countries. The evaluation focuses on the current situation of the EDC network in the year 2006-2007. It also formulates operational recommendations to improve the network and adapt it to evolving information technologies and changing needs of users.

1.1. Description of the EDC network

The network of European Documentation Centres has existed for more than 40 years. The first EDCs were set up in 1963 and they are still today located mainly in universities or research centres. The main objectives of the EDCs are to promote and consolidate teaching and research in the field of European integration, to make information on the European Union and its policies available to the public and to participate in the debate on the European Union. Currently there are more than 370 EDCs in the Member States, of which roughly two thirds are located in six Member States, namely, Germany, France, UK, Italy, Spain, and Portugal. The new Member States with the highest number of EDCs are Poland and Hungary.

The 2005 agreement between the EDCs and the Commission distinguishes two types of centres: general EDCs that receive the complete list of documentation provided by the Community institutions, and specialised EDCs that receive a selection of this documentation.

EDCs are part of the Europe Direct network, together with the Relays and Team Europe. Annual network meetings, either for all EU national information networks together or specialised meeting only for the EDCs, are usually organised in most Member States by the EC Representations.

The EDCs receive support from the Commission in a variety of forms, including free supply of selected publications, access to an intranet and a question-and-answer service (both for the Europe Direct network as a whole), free staff training and support in networking, in particular through regular coordination meetings, visits and exchange programmes.

EDCs are operating in a changing environment, where the Internet and other online search tools are becoming increasingly important.

1.2. Scope of the evaluation

This evaluation examines the relevance and effectiveness of the EDCs with regard to the objectives set by the Commission. It also analyses the efficiency of the EDC net-

³ Both companies are part of the Consumer Policy Evaluation Consortium (CPEC). Civic Consulting led the evaluation, while GHK conducted a part of the country studies (Sweden, France, Greece and Cyprus).

work and investigates synergies within the network at national and EU levels and with other EU information networks.

The structure of the report is as follows: Section 2 details the methodology employed for the study and Section 3 presents the evaluation results. Section 3.1 analyses to which extent EDCs enhance the promotion and development of studies and research on EU related topics; Section 3.2 examines if the objectives of the EDC network are achieved at a reasonable cost; and Section 3.3 investigates synergies within the network, at both national and EU levels, and with other EU information networks. The Annexes include the evaluation indicators, the focus group guidelines, the summary of focus group results, a discussion of possible new electronic services for EDCs, the survey questionnaires, and the results of the surveys.

1.3. Objectives of the evaluation

The objective of this evaluation is to supply the Commission with an in-depth analysis of the achievements and potential of the EDCs as part of the Europe Direct network.

The evaluation questions listed in the Terms of Reference are as follows:

- Do the EDC enhance the promotion and development of studies and research work in the field of European integration? How could these objectives be better achieved?
- Is the EDC an effective mean to promote and develop studies and research work? With the evolving information technologies and needs, is the EDC still a valuable tool and offer an added value with regard to other instruments?
- Does the EDC network achieve its objectives at a reasonable cost (global cost of publications disseminated to the EDC and cost of training provided)?
- Do the EDC operate in synergy with the other Commission networks at the national/European level?

The enhancement of promotion and development of studies and research in the field of European integration is the core objective of the EDC network and directly relates to the effectiveness of the network. Also, evaluation results indicated at an early stage that the analysis of the added value of the EDC network could not be separated from how services of the EDC are performed, specifically in the area of assistance to users, which also is key to the effectiveness of the EDC operation. **It was therefore decided to address the first two sets of evaluation questions in one comprehensive section describing EDC services provided to their users and analysing their effectiveness.**

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Overall approach

The main elements of the evaluation methodology are a:

- Functional approach with respect to the level of individual EDCs. Different activities performed by the EDCs that produce a specific output are grouped together and jointly assessed as a “function”.
- Systemic approach with respect to the level of the network as a whole. A multi-country network does not only consist of individual centres, but also requires common rules that define cooperation mechanisms, as well as central support and coordination. Most networks aim at being more than just the sum of their elements, so the evaluation of this dimension of the network has to focus on existing and potential synergies and the degree to which a common network identity is existing/promoted.

In focusing the analysis on both the individual EDCs and the network level this methodology provides the basis for focused recommendations for an evolving network that takes on the challenges of the new information and technology environment as well as new user demands. The systemic approach also indicates the importance of the functions that are performed by the Commission in its management of the network.

The main methodological tools employed during the evaluation were:

- ⇒ Desk research and exploratory interviews
- ⇒ A survey covering all EDCs in the EU
- ⇒ A complementary survey of main institutional users (professors and other academic staff) conducting research and studies in the field of European integration in the EDC host bodies
- ⇒ In depth interviews with selected EDCs in seven MS
- ⇒ Focus groups with EDC users in four MS

The different tools are described in more detail in the following section.

2.2. Main methodological tools

2.2.1. *Desk research and exploratory interviews*

The Contractor reviewed previous evaluations of the EDCs, surveys and other documentation, including on-line material.

Documents analysed include:

- 1997 Arpes Evaluation
- 2003 Stocktaking Evaluation EU Information and Documentation Relays and Networks
- 2004 Evaluation data (excel)

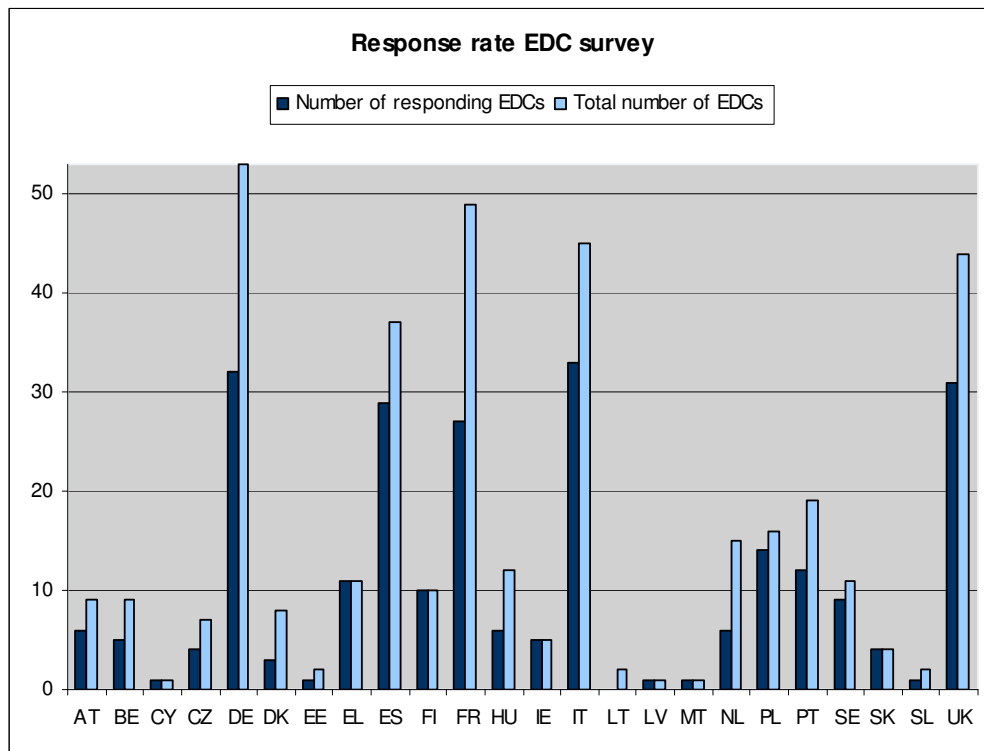
- 2005 Evaluation data (excel)
- 2005 EDC Reports
- 2005 EDC Evaluation Report (by EC)
- 2006 Europe Direct Networks, Survey results; Report on the online survey on the training needs and information services for Europe Direct
- Europe Direct Newsletters

Consequently, nine exploratory interviews with EDCs and EDC correspondents in EC representations were conducted. The interviews were particularly of importance for finalising the methodology and developing the survey questionnaires.

2.2.2. Surveys

Two surveys covering all EDCs in the EU Member States were developed by Civic Consulting according to the evaluation indicators and three different language versions were prepared (French, German, English). The structure of the questionnaire was based on the evaluation questions and the related functions/indicators. Response rates were very satisfactory. In total, 249 of 373 EDCs for which addresses were provided, responded to the main survey, i.e. 67%.

Figure 1: Response rate EDC main survey



Source: EDC survey

As the graph above indicates, response rates were high (more than 80%) for some countries, namely Greece, Finland, Ireland, Malta, Poland, Sweden, and Slovakia. Re-

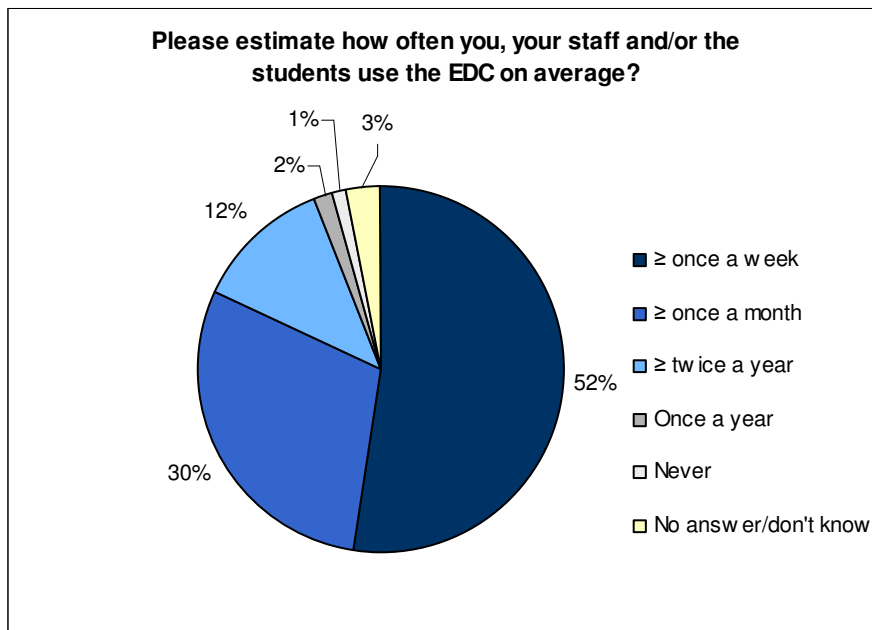
sponse rates were relatively low (less than 50%) for Denmark, Lithuania, and the Netherlands.

A methodological limitation of the main EDC survey relates to some questions that required a self-assessment from EDCs concerning their own activities. It is important to note that a certain positive bias is likely in this type of self-assessments. For this reason, self-assessments were triangulated with results from other sources (user survey, focus groups, country studies).

In addition to the questionnaire for the EDCs, a questionnaire addressed to institutional users e.g. professors of departments for European studies and other academic staff was developed. The survey was targeted at professors or other academic staff conducting study and research in the field of European integration, EU law, etc. This target group was well reached, with 249 professors and 207 other academic staff responding (4 provided no answer on their status).

The user questionnaire was distributed to EDCs and forwarded by them to their main institutional users. The sample of institutional users is therefore composed of researchers being in contact with the EDC, often even being regular users, as is illustrated by the frequency of EDC use by the respondents (see graph below). This is an important methodological limitation regarding the user survey, as the perspective of non-users is not represented in this survey. For this reason, the focus-groups organised in four countries included also non-users of the EDCs (see below).

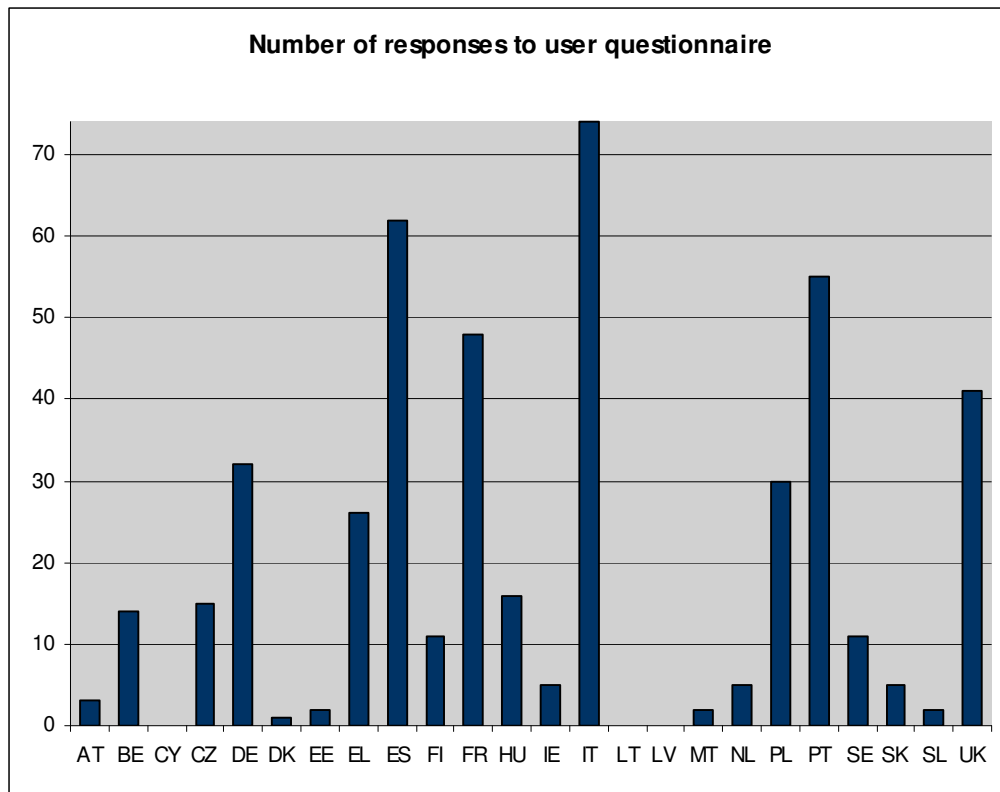
Figure 2: Frequency of EDC use by institutional users responding to the survey



Source: EDC user survey

The number of user questionnaires received by country is presented in the following graph:

Figure 3: Number of responses to user survey



Source: EDC user survey

As indicated by the graphs above, both the EDC main survey and the survey of institutional users covered all regions of the EU, with large and small countries as well as old and new Member States represented.

2.2.3. Case Studies

In-depth interviews with EDCs in seven MS were carried out. The sample of countries comprised the following countries: Poland, Ireland, Sweden, Germany, France and Greece/Cyprus. The selection took into account the criteria large/small countries; North/South; old and new Member States.

Three EDCs per Member State were included in the in-depth analysis.⁴ The country studies took place in September and October 2007.

2.2.4. Focus Group with EDC users

In four of the six countries selected for the case studies (in France, Ireland, Sweden and Germany⁵) the evaluators conducted a focus group of current and potential users of the EDCs e.g. with students working on issues related to European integration. The

⁴ In the case Greece two EDCs and in Cyprus one.

⁵ The focus group at the EDC in Frankfurt/Oder included German and Polish students.

focus groups took place in the selected countries at the premises of one of the EDCs visited. These EDCs cooperated in identifying 8-10 participants,⁶ including both students and institutional users of the EDC and non-users who never or rarely ever used the services of the EDC. The latter group was of specific interest, as a significant amount of data on EDC users was available through the survey of institutional users, whereas little was known about the motives of non-users.

⁶ The focus group in Sweden included 3 participants in one EDC: a senior lecturer, a research assistant and a former student at the university.

3. EVALUATION RESULTS

3.1. Enhancement of promotion and development of studies and research

3.1.1. Evaluation questions

- *Do the EDCs enhance the promotion and development of studies and research work in the field of European integration? How could these objectives be better achieved?*
- *Is the EDC an effective mean to promote and develop studies and research work? With the evolving information technologies and needs, is the EDC still a valuable tool and offer an added value with regard to other instruments?*

3.1.2. Summary reply to the evaluation questions

- ❑ ***EDCs contribute to the promotion and development of studies and research work in the field of European integration.*** This is the consistent result of surveys, case studies and focus groups. It is, however, not possible to quantify the EDC contribution, due to the fact that EU related publications produced by EDC host structures are not always documented by the EDCs. This limits the extent to which the effectiveness of EDCs can be assessed in quantitative terms.
- ❑ ***EDCs address the needs of users working on studies and research in the field of European integration.*** Institutional users report a high degree of satisfaction with the documentation services provided, with the highest level of satisfaction expressed for the assistance provided by EDC staff. EDCs are for nearly three quarters of institutional EDC users responding to the survey the most or second most important information source on EU relevant issues.
- ❑ ***The number of EDC users seems to be limited, however, many EDCs could not provide sufficient information in this respect.*** The median number of users per EDC and year was 616 in 2006 (based on a total of 109 EDCs that provided data). The median number of EDC users assisted by EDC staff in the same year, 18 in an average week (based on 186 responses), supports this relatively low figure.
- ❑ ***The results of the focus groups indicate that many potential users, and particularly students, do not seem to know or to be fully aware of the services offered by EDCs.*** This is in contrast to results of the survey of EDC staff and institutional users, where a majority of respondents assessed the degree to which the EDC is known to potential academic users as very well or fairly well. The apparent contradiction seems to indicate that EDCs and professors are in many cases not aware that students often do not know about the services offered by the EDCs.
- ❑ ***The EDCs' added value is mostly in the provision of specialised personal assistance.*** In comparison with other libraries EDCs have staff that are more aware of EU issues and ways of locating and requesting EU-related documentation. The information base on EU related issues is growing rapidly and EDCs provide important support for students and researchers in order to orientate them and to help them search for documents effectively. Professional advice on databases and documents search appears to be the key asset of EDCs.

These conclusions are further elaborated in the following section.

3.1.3. *Description and analysis*

EDC users and target groups

For any provider of services, the choice of the target group has significant influence on how the needs of potential users are defined and consequently, how a particular service is provided. Before evaluating core activities of the EDCs such as communication and documentation, it therefore seems to be justified to analyse in detail who are currently EDC users and which specific groups are seen as target groups by EDCs.

A main observation emerging from the evaluation is the considerable degree of variation and even confusion that seems to exist as to what is the EDCs' main target group, whether or not EDCs should target the general public, and if so, what precisely is the definition of "general public". The nature of the host structure in which the EDC is located, and the extent to which the users of the EDC are part of the host structure (such as students and staff of a university), seem to impact largely on the choice of the group targeted by EDCs. In addition, there is usually a clear link between the activities of the host structure and the activities and services offered by EDCs.

According to the results of the EDC survey conducted in the framework of this study, universities host more than 80% of the EDCs. The target group of an EDC hosted by a university usually differs from the group targeted by other host structures, e.g. a national library. Generally, the former focuses its activities and services primarily towards researchers (professors, other academic staff) and students, while the latter provides information to both the general public and researchers.

Another factor that may influence the user structure of an EDC is the type of library in which the EDC is hosted. Only 21 % of EDCs are located in a specialised library focusing on EU and international issues and 16% of EDCs have separate premises. In contrast, close to half of the EDCs are located in a general library. This indicates that about one third of EDCs is mainly in contact with library users that are interested in EU and international issues, and most visitors can be assumed to be users or at least potential users of the EDC. This is not the case where the EDC is located in a general library. When the EDC does not have its own premises, the location of the EDC within the host library may also have a significant impact on the number of potential users that the EDC is able to reach. For example the location of the EDC in a small corner of the library may impact negatively on the ability of the EDC to promote its activities. In contrast, the side-by-side location of publications of the EDC and of other national publications may favour and facilitate comparisons between national and EU legislations and attract a larger group of potential users.

This leads to the following conclusion:

1. ***Most EDCs target their activities and services primarily towards a specific group – mainly researchers and students.*** The general public is generally considered only as a secondary target group, if at all. This is especially true for the more than 80% of EDCs hosted by universities.

EDCs and the general public

In some cases, the EDC can constitute an important source of information for external users (i.e. not originating from the host structure). For example, external users may visit an EDC in preparation for a lawsuit or for business motives. However, links with

professional groups seem to be limited. Researchers and students who visit EDCs may also come from other institutions that do not host an EDC, or from higher schools in the region. In general, EDCs consider that secondary level pupils are not necessarily part of the target group as the services and material provided by the EDCs may be too advanced for their needs.

Even if significant increases in the number of users from the general public accessing the EDC have been noted in times of important EU events, such as referenda, or when the MS where the EDC is located is holding the Presidency of the European Union, the number of users from the general public seems to remain limited in most EDCs.

EDCs' staff members were asked to assess the degree to which their EDC is known to the general public. According to their subjective assessment, a majority (55%) believed that their EDC was hardly or not known at all to the general public. The relatively low median⁷ number of page visits of EDC websites and the limited media coverage supports this view. The number of page visits in 2006 was 6,740 per EDC (median) for the 60 EDCs that provided data. The minimum figure was 100 and the maximum was 4.48 million. There were, however, only four EDCs reporting more than 300,000 page visits (one from Italy, one from Denmark and two from Spain). Reportedly about one quarter of EDCs was covered by an external media report in 2006. Only 26 EDCs provided details and listed a total of 83 media reports, mainly in the local press, radio or TV.

The reasons mentioned by EDC staff for the limited number of EDC users from the general public in university EDCs are the lack of demand, the difficulty to accommodate a larger number of users from the general public, and, in many cases, the general public is simply not considered by EDCs to be their target group.⁸

In addition, accessibility barriers exist for the general public in some universities due to specific requirements, such as that access is motivated by a "justified demand"⁹ or the need to obtain a 'visitor' card to access the EDC.¹⁰ In some cases the university campus is located in distance to the city centre, which may reduce the accessibility of EDCs to the general public.

These barriers may not be underestimated when considering, on the other hand, the very good accessibility of EDCs in terms of opening hours: 86% are open 30 hours per week or more, including 30% of EDCs which are open even 60 hours and more.

In addition, approximately 80% of EDCs have a website, which partly also provides access to databases. Users are often able to access a number of EDC services, such as an online catalogue and links to full text documents. In other EDCs, such services may not be available yet but a number of EDCs plan to develop systems of distance access for their users. In addition, most EDCs that were interviewed have observed an increase in online/email requests in the last few years. The number of queries by emails

⁷ The median is that value that separates the highest half of the sample from the lowest half. To find the median, all the observations are arranged from lowest value to highest value. Then the middle one is picked. The median is primarily used for skewed distributions, which it represents more accurately than the arithmetic mean. Consider the set {1, 2, 2, 2, 3, 9}. The median is 2 in this case, and it might be seen as a better indication of central tendency than the arithmetic mean of 3.16. The median is also the central point, which minimises the average of the absolute deviations.

⁸ This is illustrated, for example, by the following individual statements of an EDC staff: *"We are a university library [with very limited staff resources] and have in the first line to fulfil the needs of the university members. The time for broad public work is simply not given!"*

⁹ Case study France

¹⁰ Case study Ireland

compared to in-person requests differs largely between EDCs, for example, from 5% for an EDC located in Ireland to 50% for a German EDC. A Swedish EDC also provides a 'chat' possibility. The increasing use of electronic media may in the medium term reduce "physical accessibility barriers" for the general public, where they currently exist.

It also has to be underlined that in cases where the host structure itself actively targets the general public, the EDC is considered to be a major tool in the host structure's work in enhancing the awareness-raising on EU policies and on the EU in general, as well as in offering the possibility to ordinary citizens to get first-hand knowledge of EU policies.¹¹

EDCs and host structure staff and students

In this evaluation a special focus was given to institutional users of the EDC, being mainly professors and academic staff, that either use the EDC themselves or have staff and/or students that use the EDC. A large majority of the institutional users (76%) and also of the EDCs (89%) responding to the surveys are of the opinion that the EDC is well or fairly well known among host structure staff and students. However, nearly 20% of institutional users disagreed and stated that their EDC is hardly known or even not known at all to colleagues and students. For example, one user stated that "*too few students and professors [were] aware of the existence of the EDC*" and another underlined that "*the EDC [was] hardly known among the student community*". All focus groups conducted with host structure staff and students in France, Germany, Ireland and Sweden revealed that students often do not know about the existence of an EDC in their own university and/or about the services provided by the EDC. This is illustrated by a statement of a professor during the focus group in France:

- "*The EDC is not very well known to other students. We do tell them at the beginning of the year, but they forget.*"
- "*Sometimes they write their Master thesis [on EU topics] without ever going to the EDC and we can see that the quality is therefore decreasing.*"

A lack of awareness of the EDC and the services it provides was also noted by focus group participants, who attended the general introduction to the library when they started at the university; but as the EDC was not relevant at the outset of their studies, they forgot about it. A Swedish non-user added that she had not 'rediscovered' the EDC as no one had since mentioned that it existed (see also the box on the perspective of non-users on the next page). In addition, during the Irish focus group, it was mentioned that the EDC was not adequately promoted to students and staff, and that there seemed to be a certain lack of awareness of the resources available for research. Therefore, the users suggested that more information needs to be given about what is actually available to them within the EDC.

¹¹ Case study Cyprus

This leads to the following conclusions:

2. **A majority of EDC staff believes that the general public does not know the EDC.** This possibly reflects a significant lack of communication activities directed to the general public, as it is not always perceived as target group by EDCs.
3. **The results of the focus groups indicate that many potential users, and particularly students, do not seem to know or to be fully aware of the services offered by EDCs.** This is in contrast to results of the survey of EDC staff and institutional users, where a majority of respondents assessed the degree to which the EDC is known to potential academic users as very well or fairly well. The apparent contradiction seems to indicate that EDCs and professors are in many cases not aware that students often do not know about the services offered by the EDC.

Why non-users don't use the EDC

The main factor cited by non-users during the focus groups to explain why they did not use the EDCs was that they generally felt that the documents they could get from the Internet were sufficient. This is clearly illustrated by the following comments:

- *"When I am looking for European literature, I use the Internet"*
- *"I use the Internet for most of my research"*
- *"I would say only a small percentage of my classmates use the EDC; most use the electronic journals."*

The participating students in the focus group in Ireland, for example, were also not aware that there were instruments such as Eur-lex that could be very helpful, therefore basically being not aware of what they were missing.

Therefore, the evaluation concludes that the role of the teaching staff in encouraging their students to use the services of EDCs is particularly important. This is illustrated by the following statement made by a non-user during the focus group in Ireland and confirmed by other focus groups: *"I think you need the lecturer to give the recommendations to use [the EDC] and to tell you that it is relevant to your courses. Otherwise you won't go looking for it".*

Communication and promotion activities

The median value of the total weekly staff time used by the EDC for the communication function is 20%.¹² In 2006 only slightly more than half of the responding EDCs organised communication and promotion activities (53%) themselves.¹³ However, 85% noted that their host structure organises communication or promotion activities related to EU

¹² EDC survey Q4d (N=219), based on the estimation of EDC staff.

¹³ EDC survey Q14

integration or other EU issues. This may partly explain the relatively high number of EDCs (45%) that do not organise activities themselves.

Types of activities and restraints

The most frequent activities organised by EDCs were courses and seminars. Also relatively common was the organisation of conferences. EDCs organised 167 conferences in 2006 reaching an estimated total of nearly 15,000 participants. A rare activity was organising competitions. Only 10 EDCs reported a total number of 15 competitions. Other activities reported by EDCs include:

- Exhibitions, e.g. on the enlargement of the EU and on the 50th celebration of the Treaty of Rome;
- EDC tour provided to schools, including an introduction to EU information sources and networks (such as Europe Direct information relays, EDCs, and Euro Info Centres);
- Distribution of leaflets/posters within the university hosting the EDC and to higher schools, public libraries and academic libraries in the region of the EDC;
- Organisation of a yearly “Europa Week” (presentation and guided tour of the library and the EDC);
- ‘EU at libraries’, organised together with Europe Direct and targeting librarians.

The following table gives an overview of the number of communication and promotion activities and the number of participants as reported by the EDCs.

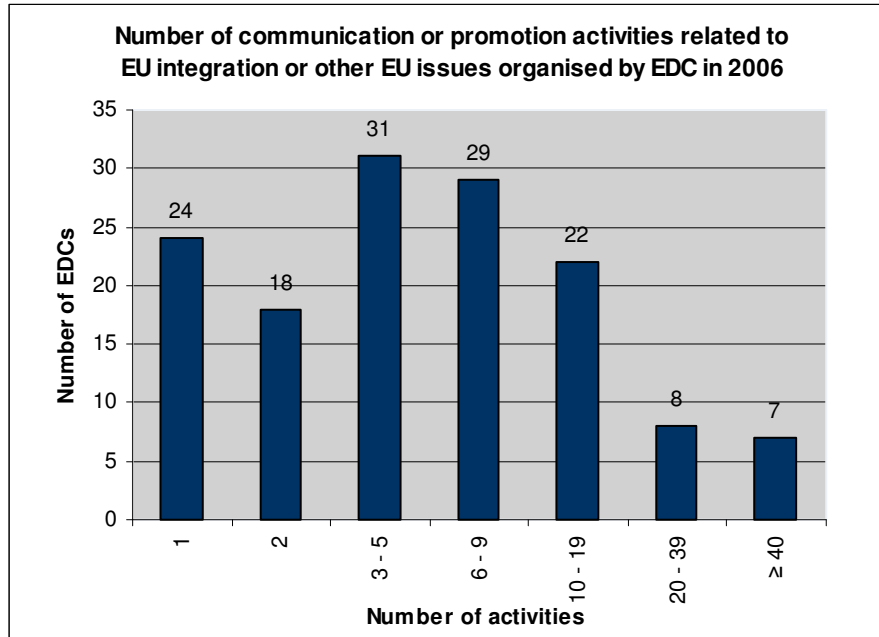
Table 1: Overview of communication and promotion activities reported in detail by EDCs for 2006

Activity	Course	Seminar	Conference	Competition	Book Presentation	Other
Number of EDCs that reported at least one activity	76	60	53	10	29	67
Total number of EDC activities reported	477	300	167	15	85	182
Total number of participants	13,744	9,374	14,919	4,503	3,655	14,221

Source: EDC survey Q14. Data included from 139 EDCs that provided detailed information on their communication and promotion activities.

The frequency of communication and promotion activities in 2006 as reported by those EDCs that organised such activities and provided detailed information is illustrated in the following graph. The median number of activities was 5. Roughly 53% percent of the 139 EDCs providing detailed data organised between 1 and 5 activities per year, and about 21% organised 6 to 9 activities. A relatively small number of EDCs (7) was very active, organising 40 or more activities.

Figure 4: Number of communication and promotion activities organised



Source: EDC survey (N=139 EDCs that provided detailed information on their communication and promotion activities)

The number of communication and promotion activities is constrained by the limited financial and staff resources of EDCs, as illustrated by the following comments, which reflect similar views expressed by many EDCs during the case studies:

- *“We could do leaflets and ideally, if we had the resources, we would have one of our staff be responsible for that. The reason we don’t do more is that we just don’t have the [financial] resources”;*¹⁴
- *“The EDC cannot really launch a proper communication strategy because of [...] limited staff and financial means. We would need a full time communication officer to do so.”*¹⁵

Staff limitation, and limited financial sources may be the main obstacles in conducting promotion activities to user groups outside of the host structure on a regular basis. This limitation of resources is typical for most EDCs: According to survey results, the EDCs reported for 2006 a median total budget of 5,000 Euro (except staff costs), of which according to the median value only 10% was spent on communication activities.

Because of the limited financial resources, EDCs may try to obtain support from outside of their host structure to organise exhibitions and conferences. For example, a German EDC found outside sponsors for an exhibition on EU issues.

In spite of financial restraints and other limitations there seems, however, to be a significant awareness amongst EDC staff for the need to promote their activities both within and outside the host structure. Several EDCs have tried to attract more users by developing new Internet tools targeted at institutional users and/or at the general public. For example, an Irish EDC is working on the development of blogs, instant messag-

¹⁴ Case study Ireland

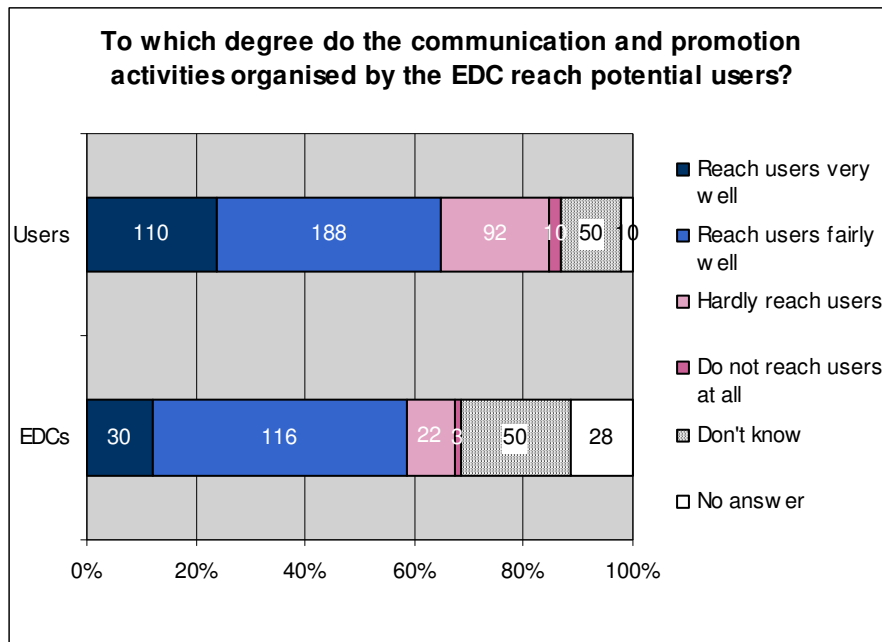
¹⁵ Case study Cyprus

ing tools on the university website, and on the use of a digital screen on the university premises to promote the activities of the EDC. An EDC in Cyprus, targeting the general public, has developed a system of alerts (on mobile phones and emails) on programmes or issues in which the user expressed a special interest when registering. One library that hosts a Swedish EDC has developed a newflash on its website, which highlights, for example, access to new databases.

Assessment of communication activities

The majority of both institutional users and of EDCs responding to the surveys believe that communication and promotion activities reach potential users very or fairly well (see graph below). A significant minority of institutional users disagree, with 22% stating that activities do hardly reach users or even reach them not at all. The number of EDCs that marked “don’t know” or did not provide an answer is relatively high (roughly one third).

Figure 5: Assessment of EDC communication and promotion activities



Source: EDC main and user survey (EDC N=249, Users N=460)

Similarly, a strong majority of institutional users (73%) and of EDCs (57%) believe that communication and promotion activities organised by the EDC meet users’ needs very or fairly well. The number of EDCs that marked “don’t know” or did not provide an answer is again roughly one third.

When interpreting these assessments, it is important to recall what already was stated above, namely that a certain positive bias of survey answers is likely. EDCs possibly tend to overestimate the reach of their communication activities, as they may mainly note that part of their target group that they actually communicate with. Similarly, the sample of institutional users is recruited from researchers that are in contact with the EDC, who are more likely to know about any communication activity. The fact that there are only little more than half of the EDCs that actually organise communication activities, the consistent picture emerging from the focus groups indicating that stu-

dents may not always be aware of EDC services, the relatively low number of page hits on EDC websites for many EDCs and the very limited external media coverage of most EDC indicates that communication activities of EDCs often seem to only have a limited outreach both inside and outside the host structure.

This leads to the following conclusion:

4. **Communication activities of EDCs often seem to only have a limited outreach both inside and outside the host structure.** Many of those EDCs that do only seem to reach a limited number of potential users. Nearly half of EDCs do not organise any communication activity. On the other hand, there also seems to be a small number of EDCs that have a strong focus on communication activities.

Documentation and related services

Number of EDC users

The number of EDC users is a critical indicator. Unfortunately, it is very difficult for EDCs to provide figures, as many of them are based in a general library and it is not always possible to differentiate between EDC users and other library visitors. It was therefore a surprise that 109 EDCs could provide either exact numbers or at least estimates in this respect. According to this data, the number of EDC users varied extremely between less than 100 and more than 10,000 in 2006 (see graph on the next page). The median number of users per EDC was 616 or about 3 users per working day.¹⁶

Several EDCs in Germany and in Ireland affirmed that the exact number of total users may be difficult to assess as users no longer have to physically enter the library but can access the resources they need from the EDC over the Internet from home.

A number of EDC librarians noted that the number of in-person visits decreased during the last few years, possibly due to the increasing use of the Internet. Others felt that the number of personal visits remained unchanged. One factor that could explain the differences in user patterns to some degree may be disparities in the number of citizens having access to an Internet connection in the different MS.¹⁷

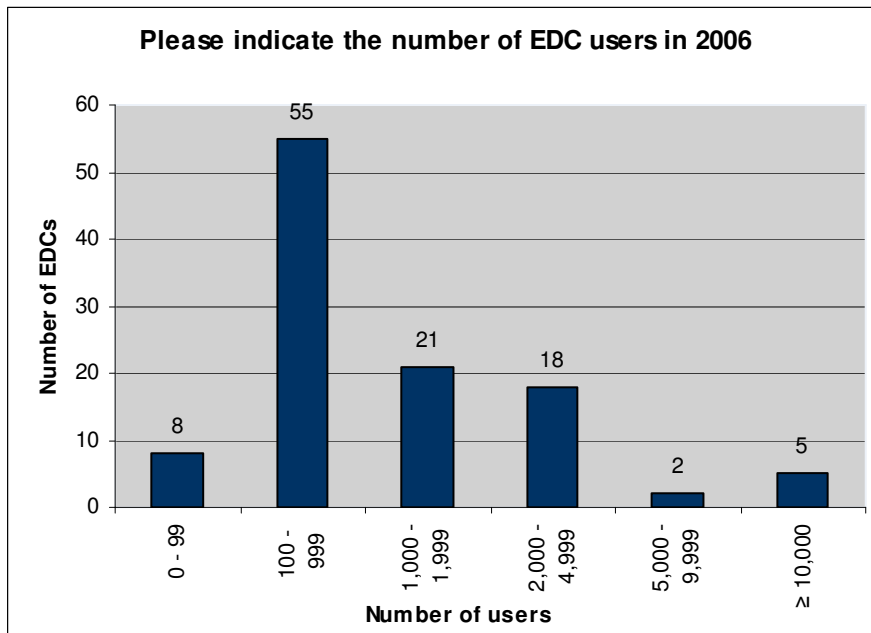
This leads to the following conclusion:

5. **The number of EDC users seems to be limited, however, many EDCs could not provide sufficient information in this respect.** The median number of users per EDC and year was 616 in 2006 (based on a total of 109 EDCs that provided data). The median number of EDC users assisted by EDC staff in the same year, 18 in an average week (based on 186 responses), supports this relatively low figure.

¹⁶ Assuming the EDC is open on 220 working days a year. Please note that data regarding the number of users has to be interpreted with caution, as the definition of "user" may not be uniform among EDCs and the large number of EDCs that could not provide data may lead to distortions.

¹⁷ This was highlighted during the case study by a Greek EDC staff who stated that "Internet [had] not yet reached [the] big mass".

Figure 6: Number of EDC users



Source: EDC survey Q4b (N=109)

Documents processed and available at EDCs

The median number of EU publications processed, catalogued and indexed by EDCs in 2006 was 341. However, the figures given by the EDCs varied extremely: the minimum number indicated was 13 and the maximum number 8,000. The EDC that gave this very high figure also indicated that this was exceptional and due to retrospective cataloguing (including serials). Also the second highest number reported (4,755) was much lower if only monographs catalogued and indexed were counted (513).¹⁸ The figures given have to be interpreted with great care, as there are possibly significant differences in the responses concerning what type of publication is included, and not all answers were sufficiently clear in this respect.

Additionally, the variation observed in the number of EU publications processed, catalogued and indexed by EDCs may also be the result from the different degree of specialisation of the EDCs, with about 76% being general EDCs and more than 20% being specialised EDCs.¹⁹

As highlighted by the French case study, EDCs may also purchase other literature than the publications received from OPOCE. The type of literature purchased differs very much – from general publications on EU issues, to highly specialised publications, or specialised journals/reviews. This literature may constitute an important part of EDC collections.

¹⁸ According to the response of this particular EDC the figure of 4,755 resulted from 513 monographs catalogued & indexed; 640 periodical issues checked-in; 1,492 official journals, 255 CD/DVDs and 1,855 recent judgements processed.

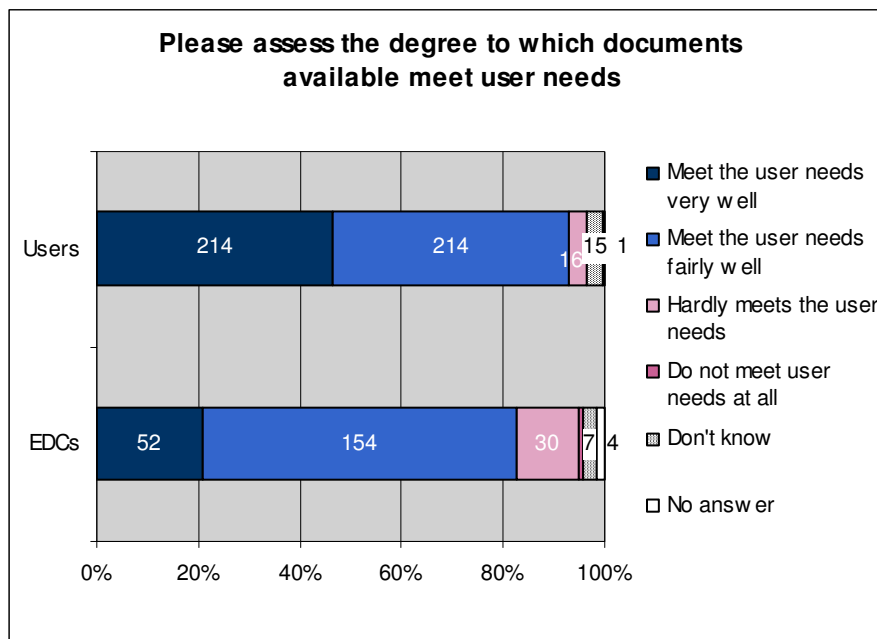
¹⁹ EDC survey Q4a

EU related publications produced by EDC host structure are only documented to a limited extent by EDCs. The median number of EU related publications produced by the host structure and documented by the EDC in 2006 was 3 (based on 145 EDC respondents). EU related publications produced by EDC host structures may include, for example, quarterlies, yearbooks and books, dissertations, theses and research papers. About one third of the responding EDCs have not documented any EU related publication produced by the host structure. On the other hand, nearly as many (28%) reported documenting 10 or more EU related publications of the host structure.

Assessment of documentation available

Both institutional users and EDCs themselves were asked to assess the documentation available at their EDC. 93% of the responding institutional users state that the documentation meets their needs very well or fairly well and 83% of EDCs staff provided a similarly positive assessment. Nearly half of the responding institutional users (47%) even state that the documentation available at EDCs meet their needs very well. 47% of EDCs (47%) even state that the documentation available at EDCs meet their needs very well.

Figure 7: Assessment of user satisfaction with documents available



Source: EDC main and users survey (EDC N=249, Users N=460)

Surprisingly, EDCs themselves tend to be less enthusiastic, with a small minority of 32 EDCs (13%) even being of the opinion that documents available at their EDC do not at all or hardly meet the needs of the users. Negative assessments mainly related to the types of documents provided to the EDCs. Evidence from the case studies/focus groups supports this picture: Users are generally content with the documents provided by EDCs, but also perceive some limitations. The issue of available documents is further explored in section 3.3.3 of this report.

This leads to the following conclusions:

6. **The figures of documents processed and available at EDCs varied extremely.** The median number of EU publications processed, catalogued and indexed by EDCs in 2006 was 341. The type of literature purchased differs very much – from general publications on EU issues, to highly specialised publications, or specialised journals/reviews. This may be a result of the different degree of specialisation of the EDCs.
7. **EU related publications produced by EDC host structure are only documented to a limited extent by EDCs.** The number of EU related publications produced by EDC host structures and documented by the EDC can therefore not be used as indicator of the research done on EU issues within the host structure.
8. **Users are generally satisfied with the documents provided by EDCs, but also perceive some limitations.** Perceived limitations mainly relate to the availability of core paper documents (Official Journal, statistical yearbooks, etc).

Online databases provided by EDCs

Complementary to the documents available in paper format in EDCs are online databases that are available in most EDCs. Nearly all EDCs (92%) provide access to publicly accessible Internet databases. More than two third of EDCs (69%) also provide free access to paid databases. The median number of users per week that access EU relevant databases through EDC computers is 13.²⁰

The databases provided by EDCs contribute significantly to the services offered to their users. For example, the increase in the amount of the electronic/online material available was perceived as a huge improvement in accessibility during the Irish focus group.²¹ The possibility to have remote access to online databases appears also to be increasingly important. One EDC staff stated even that “most queries [they received were] about how to access the online databases from home”.²²

Institutional users responding to the survey are very satisfied with the databases accessible (85% assess databases as meeting their needs fairly or very well), EDCs themselves have even a slightly better assessment (92%).

Online databases may be complex to use, and therefore training of users and assistance by EDC staff is often needed (see sections on training and assistance below). However, the evaluation also provided indications that users perceive the main online information source on EU issues, the Europa website, as overly complicated (see box on the next page).

²⁰ EDC survey Q9b (N=109)

²¹ Focus group Ireland

²² Case study Ireland

This leads to the following conclusion:

9. **Users are satisfied with the databases accessible at the EDCs.** Nearly all EDCs provide (in addition to their processing publications and offering assistance) access to publicly accessible databases. Two third of EDCs surveyed even provide free access to paid Internet databases. The possibility to have remote access to online databases appears to be increasingly important for users.

The Europa website in the user's perspective

Results from the case studies/focus groups indicate that the Europa website (www.europa.eu), which is one of the main information sources for researchers on EU issues, is often considered to be complicated and not user-friendly. Several EDC focus group participants from the university community expressed their discontent with the Europa website, as illustrated by the following comments, which arose during the focus group in Ireland and are also exemplary for statements from participants in focus groups in other countries:

"It can be very hard to find a specific document";

"General information is rather easy to find on Europe resources but Europa is not so targeted to help with complicated, specific research needs";

"Looking for a primary document [...] is harder on European online websites. More and more, if you are looking for a Commission Decision on something, if you have the name of the parties involved then you can find the document on the national site rather than the Europa website";

"Information isn't always logically categorised on the Europa online resources whereas the private subscriptions are extremely good".

On the other hand it was also stated in one of the focus groups that EU databases and sites have improved in the past few years (e.g. Eur-lex), although deficits in the search engine remained and still a lot of patience was required to locate relevant documents. Some EDC staff also reported to prefer the use of Google (with the search code *site:europa.eu*) rather than the search function of the Europa website.

The Commission also recently concluded that there is a need *"to facilitate navigation [on the Europa website] and operate with state of the art technology, including a powerful search engine"*.²³

Preferences of users and non-users related to electronic and paper documents

In general, the choice between accessing the resources of the EDCs in-person or remotely through websites, online databases and emails, seem to a certain degree depend on the age of the users. While most young students are IT-literate and are more accustomed to working with the Internet as the primary source of documents, senior users may not be as used to the Internet and are more accustomed to paper docu-

²³ Action Plan to Improve Communicating Europe by the Commission, Communication to the Commission, p.12, 20.7.2005

ments for their research. During the focus group in Ireland, a lecturer also noted that teaching methods were evolving towards online resources (with the use of Blackboard²⁴, for example), and that students were more and more familiar with using online resources.²⁵ As has been underlined above (see box *“Why non-users don’t use the EDC”*), non-users, and especially students, may prefer to use the Internet for their research.

However, IT-competency is not be the only factor influencing decisions of users whether to use online-resources or not, and the respective practicalities of e-documents and paper documents seem to be important in determining the choice. Paper documents may also be easier and quicker to access, compared to the time spent in searching appropriate documents on the Internet.²⁶ For example, a study carried out in the humanities department of an Irish university hosting one of the EDCs showed that more than 50% of the students still preferred printed documents.²⁷ Preferences of a number of users and non-users for printed documents can be explained by the following practical advantages of paper documents:²⁸

- Comparisons were considered easier between printed documents than between electronic documents, especially when going back and forwards between pages is needed. This advantage of paper documents over e-documents is illustrated by the following statement of an Irish focus group participant, which was also raised by participants of other focus groups: *“It’s easier to ‘flick’ through hard documents to find information whereas on the Internet you have to target that information and the document you are working in to find that information”*.
- Participants in the focus groups noted that they usually printed out e-documents to be able to take notes on them.
- Users in general prefer to read long monographs in paper form.
- In addition, the relevance of printed documents for law students and lawyers was mentioned in some countries, as the print form was considered as *“quotable and legally binding”*.²⁹

Participants in the German focus group even stated that providing access to paper documents was the main strength of the EDC and suggested a system where the EDC would provide both paper and electronic versions of the same documents, indexed through the same catalogue, as paper documents were advantageous for reading, whereas e-documents were very practical in terms of quickly searching for a specific term.

²⁴ Blackboard is software to manage e-learning

²⁵ Focus group Ireland

²⁶ Case study Ireland

²⁷ Case study Ireland

²⁸ Focus groups and case studies

²⁹ Case study Germany

This leads to the following conclusion:

10. **Users often favour that EDCs provide access to both e-documents and selected paper documents.** Relevant for the decision of users whether to use online-resources or paper documents are IT-competency and the respective practicalities of e-documents and paper documents.

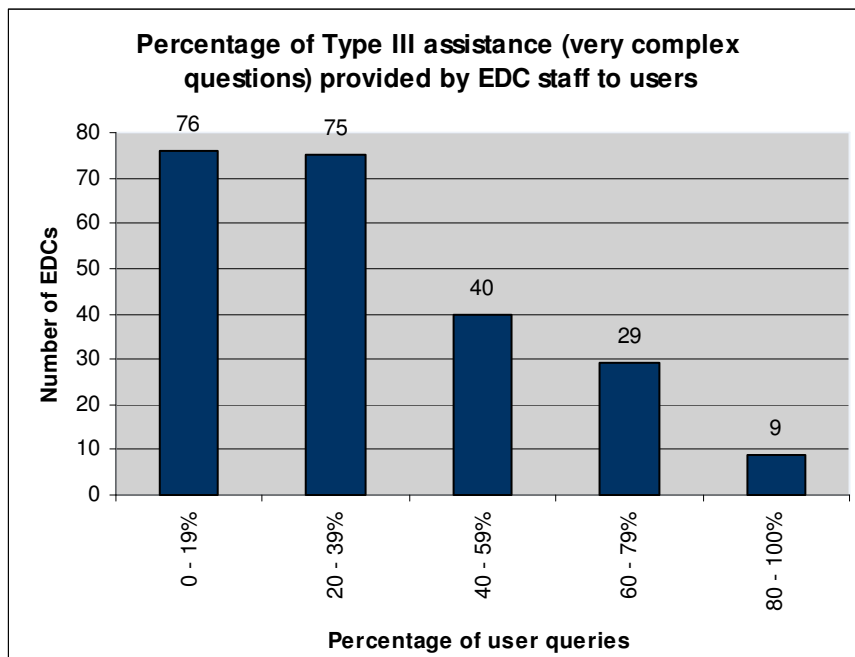
Assistance provided by EDC staff

The level of assistance provided by EDC staff to users is, according to median values, equally distributed between the three categories:

- Type I: Provision of general information (simple questions)
- Type II: Provision of detailed information (fairly complex questions)
- Type III: Expert assistance (very complex questions/guided database access)

However, very significant differences between EDCs were found, and there were some EDCs among the 229 answering this question that mainly provided only one type of assistance. This is illustrated with the example of Type III assistance (see graph below).

Figure 8: Percentage of Type III assistance provided by EDC staff



Source: EDC survey Q8b (N=229)

The level of assistance required seems to depend on the category of the users. The general public tends to be less trained, less IT-literate and less familiar with online information services and sources than the university community, and needs personalised assistance.³⁰ On the other hand, institutional users may only come when they cannot

³⁰ Case study Ireland

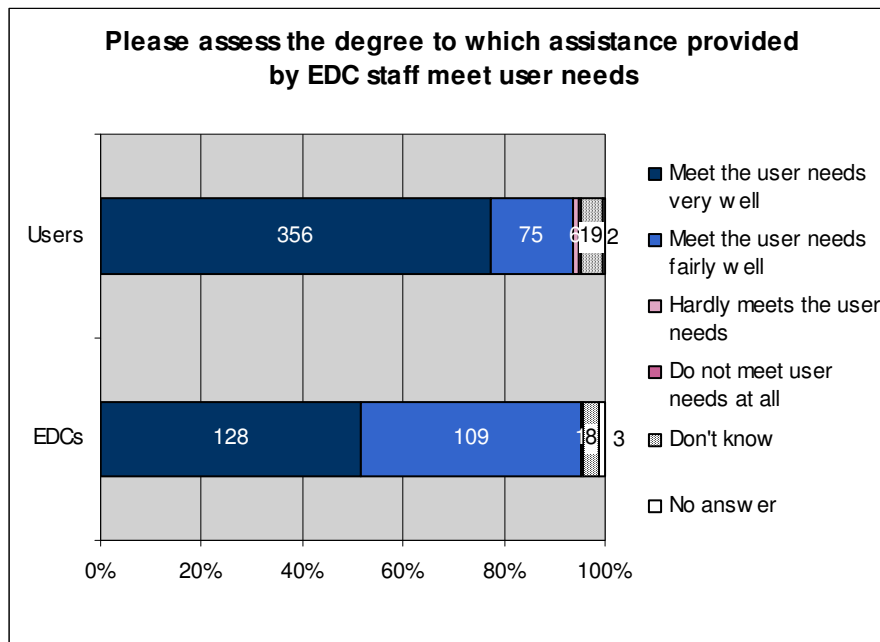
find the sources initially themselves. Therefore the material needed by institutional users is often more difficult to find, locate, or to access and their requests usually require assistance with expert knowledge. A number of EDCs work very closely with the academic staff on their research. For example, research projects may be supported with provision of legislation and decisions of the European Court of Justice or with the general provision of helpful links as well as bibliographic lists relevant to the topic. More generally, academics may be supported in finding their way around the EU information network. The support given by EDC staff was considered to be crucial by EDCs users in the focus groups.³¹ This is also highlighted by the following statements from the case study in Ireland:

- *“There is a value from the physical location of the EDC where the documents and the expertise are side-by-side and highly complementary to one another. The personal contact is “invaluable”. [EDC staff] also build their own expertise and it is continual, rather than via a distance service where they just answer the question, but you can come back continually to this person who learns your research and can continually offer more and developed help”;*
- *“The EDC is no good without the staff...the Internet and information sources provide too much data and an inexperienced person needs help sorting which data is relevant; this is the added-value of the staff.”;*
- *“I needed guidance because there is so much information (and acronyms)”;*
- *“The librarians have a positive attitude towards service and that is useful”;*
- *“The [EDC] librarian was a tremendous help”.*

The high appreciation of users for the assistance provided by EDCs is also underlined by the results of the institutional user survey. More than three quarter of respondents (77%) stated that assistance provided by EDC staff meets their needs very well (see graph below), and with hardly anybody contradicting this (only 8 users out of 460 disagreed), it is the best overall assessment of services provided by EDCs.

³¹ e.g. focus group in France, Ireland.

Figure 9: Assessment of user satisfaction with assistance provided by EDC staff



Source: EDC main and users survey (EDC N=249, Users N=460)

Institutional users also provided written comments expressing this view and underlining the relevance of the support received.

This leads to the following conclusion:

11. **The EDCs' added value is mostly in the provision of specialised personal assistance.** In comparison with other libraries EDCs have staff that are more aware of EU issues and ways of locating and requesting EU-related documentation. The information base on EU related issues is growing rapidly and EDCs provide important support for students and researchers in order to orientate them and to help them search for documents effectively. Professional advice on databases and documents search appears to be the key asset of EDCs.

Training offered by EDCs

More than two thirds of responding EDCs (68%) are offering courses on EU databases or other services to train the users in research on European issues. In contrast one third of EDCs do not offer this type of service.³² The principal aim of the training is usually that users become self-sufficient and can easily access the resources of the EDC whenever they need them.

Training offered by EDCs hosted by universities include, for example:

- Courses on databases/European information sources such as Europa.eu, Eurlex, Curia;

³² EDC survey Q10 (N=245)

- Courses on search techniques;
- Introductions to the EDC for students (tour of the library, presentation of EDC collection in paper version and of the website).

A number of EDC staff considers that the more digitised the library becomes, the more training and usable interfaces they have to provide. Such training helps users to be more self-sufficient in conducting their own research and to develop useful skills for their professional life.³³ As highlighted by the case studies, training activities may be delivered not directly by the EDC staff but by the person responsible for training within the host library.³⁴

However, group training is labour intensive. That is why, as suggested by an Irish EDC, online training modules, such as pod-casts or other e-Learning tools, could be developed.³⁵

The opinions of EDC users/non-users on courses vary largely, as illustrated by the following statements from the Irish focus group:

- *“Learning is doing, the courses will not be useful when someone is walking you through it unless you actually have a need to find the information itself”.* (EDC user)
- *“Most users are sporadic users whereas the regular users will learn it fast enough. Sporadic users will not get any use from the course because they won’t know what they can use it for”.* (EDC non-user)
- *“I feel comfortable with the resources I have but probably I would be interested to take the courses. For example, the electronic journals that I use the most are the ones that were briefly introduced to me one time in one of my courses”.* (EDC non-user)

Both EDC staff and students usually recognise the importance of being introduced to the services offered by the EDCs. Because of the multitude of databases and sites and the time it takes to become familiar with these sources, training on how to conduct research on EU material and on how to use relevant databases was considered to be very important for inexperienced users by focus group participants.³⁶ In addition, courses offered by EDCs can constitute an effective way for EDCs to promote themselves while giving the opportunity to students to know what EDCs offer to them. Courses might also represent a networking opportunity for participants interested in the same issues.

An issue that regularly appeared in focus groups was the timing and the profile of the trainings provided, with users pointing out that the need to consult databases was not arising in the first year of the study, but rather when in-depth research has to be conducted, e.g. for a master’s thesis. EDC staff emphasised the need to integrate training of EU databases in the curriculum, which was often not the case. The approach reported from one French EDC seems to address this aspect, namely to provide compulsory courses for students in the second year of their masters study. Users often em-

³³ Case studies Ireland and Sweden

³⁴ Case studies Greece and France

³⁵ Case study Ireland

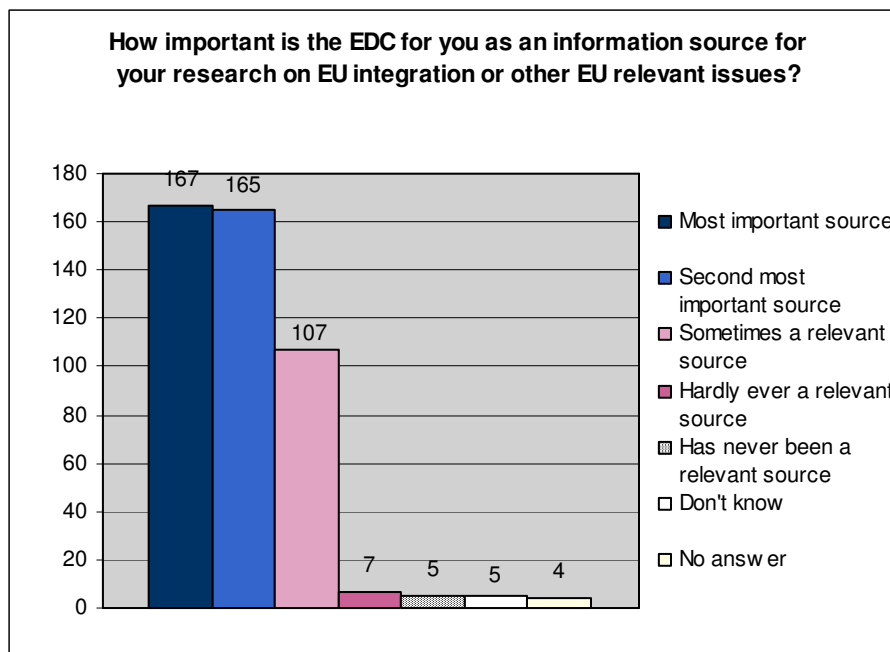
³⁶ Focus groups in France and Sweden

phasised the need for targeted training, such as training in legal databases for law students.

Assessment of contribution of EDCs to the promotion and development of studies and research

When the services of EDCs are used, institutional users usually consider that EDCs constitute key information sources for research on EU issues. Indeed, for nearly three quarters (72%) of institutional EDC users responding to the survey the EDC is the most or second most important information source on EU integration or other EU relevant issues (see graph below).

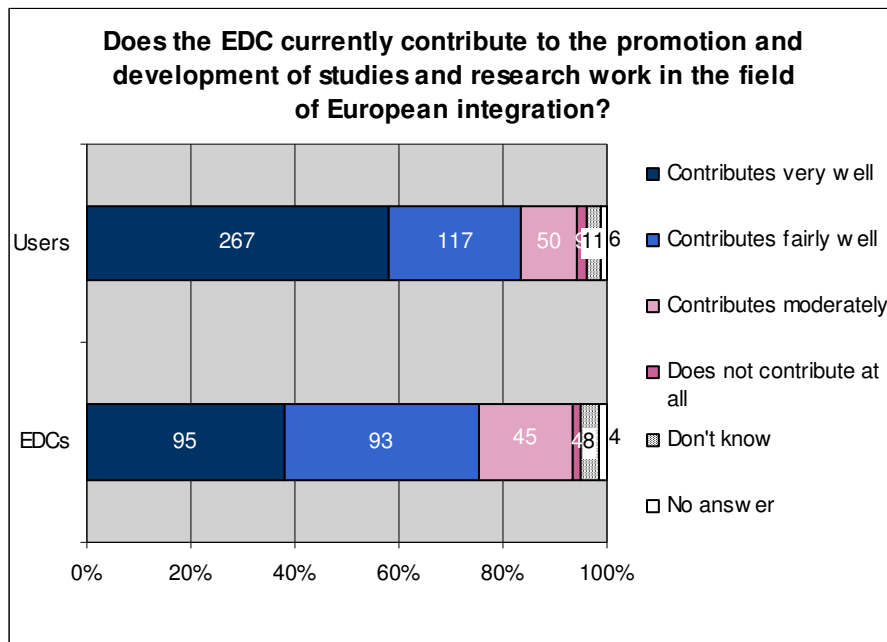
Figure 10: Assessment of importance of EDC as information source



Source: EDC user survey (N=460)

In addition, 84% of institutional users are of the opinion that the EDC contributes very or fairly well to the promotion and development of studies and research in the field of European integration, a view that is shared by a large majority of EDCs (see graph below).

Figure 11: Assessment of contribution of EDC to promotion and development of studies and research work in the field of European integration



Source: EDC main and user survey (EDC N=249, Users N=460)

The evaluation highlighted that the use of the services provided by EDCs may have a significant positive impact on the quality of the documents used by students and on the quality of the subsequent research. This is illustrated by the following statement made by a professor during the focus group in Ireland: *“the value and quality of the documents [the students] get on the Internet is not of the same calibre that what can be found in the EDCs”*.³⁷

The picture emerging from the self-assessment of EDCs, from the institutional user survey and from the focus groups conducted is rather consistent and indicates that EDCs contribute to the research on EU-related topics conducted by their users. However, a problem identified during the evaluation is that EDCs currently are not always able to provide a complete list of all publications on EU issues prepared by the host structure.³⁸ This seems to be an important shortcoming, as it limits the possibility to quantify the research done at a host structure. The lack of documenting research results on EU issues produced by the host structure also indicates a lack of integration between the EDCs and the researchers conducting EU research at the host structure. An EDC at a large university reported that the only source of information on potential institutional users was (in theory) to be deducted from the list of lectures and courses, and the EDC would not know how to identify publications on EU issues produced by those researchers – although another department of the library was indexing and cataloguing their work. In other cases, it was reported from EDCs that there was no formal information channel between EDC staff and potential EDC institutional users, such as professors. For example, an EDC located in a university library reported that although the administrative level of the library was involved in the dialogue with specific facul-

³⁷ Case study Ireland

³⁸ Reasons stated for this include that in some cases other parts of the host structure library are responsible for this task.

ties, the EDC as such was not, therefore limiting the possibility to make professors aware of the existence of the EDC and the services it could provide to them and their students. This also reduces the possibility for feedback from these potential users on the research conducted.

This leads to the following conclusions:

12. ***EDCs address the needs of users working on studies and research in the field of European integration.*** Institutional users report a high degree of satisfaction with the documentation services provided, with the highest level of satisfaction expressed for the assistance provided by EDC staff. EDCs are for nearly three quarters of institutional EDC users responding to the survey the most or second most important information source on EU relevant issues.
13. ***EDCs contribute to the promotion and development of studies and research work in the field of European integration.*** This is the consistent result of surveys, case studies and focus groups. It is, however, not possible to quantify the EDC contribution, due to the fact that EU related publications produced by EDC host structures are not always documented by the EDCs and that EDCs do not conduct surveys among their users to assess satisfaction with their services. This limits the extent to which the effectiveness of EDCs can be assessed in quantitative terms.

3.1.4. **Operational recommendations**

Clarification of EDC target groups

As described above there seems to be a certain lack of clarity concerning the target groups of the EDC network. Undisputed seems to be that the primary target group of the EDCs are researchers and students of the host-institutions, especially with the large majority of EDCs located within a university. However, the mandate of EDCs in respect to their roles towards the general public does not seem to be sufficiently clear. Currently, most EDCs only receive few personal visits or requests from the general public. EDCs are split regarding the questions whether at all and to which degree EDCs should open up to the general public, with some stating that resources are not sufficient to have a general outreach, and others even explicitly rejecting the idea. In contrast, there are a few EDCs that actively target the general public, mainly in line with the general approach of the host structure.

A clarification of the EDC target groups would not only contribute to settling this dispute, but would also be an important clarification with respect to the delimitation regarding other EU networks and the Europe Direct information relays. Notably, there seems to be some confusion between the role of the libraries of the Europe Direct information relays and the role of EDCs in providing information to the general public. It was therefore suggested during the evaluation that EDCs could focus on targeting primarily university students and researchers, whereas Europe Direct relays would target other groups outside of the university community.³⁹ In contrast, the evaluation team comes to the conclusion that a more appropriate definition of the target group of the EDC network would be to focus on users with “in-depth information demand”. These would, of course, include the staff and students of the host structure, but would also include other groups such as teachers at schools teaching European issues, lawyers, journalists etc.

Improved communication and promotion activities

Joint communication activities

Currently, only slightly more than half of the EDCs responding to the survey conduct communication and promotion activities, partly caused by the fact that not all EDCs see these activities as part of their mandate, as revealed by the case studies. A common approach by all EDC staff to communication and promotion activities does not seem to exist, and efforts in promoting the activities of EDCs appear to depend largely on the individual capacities of EDC staff to develop such activities. It is therefore also necessary to clarify the mandate of the EDCs with respect to communication and promotion activities, and to develop joint EDC communication programmes, especially at the MS level, to reach more synergies between EDCs. Several suggestions for joint communication activities of EDCs at the MS level arose during the evaluation, including:

- A national Internet portal for EDCs, providing the most important resources and links;

³⁹ E.g. case study Sweden

- Development of an electronic guide on how to search for EU resources for those who have not received any introduction;
- Development of topical information packages for display in the EDC related to specific and/or current issues, such as on EU activities regarding climate change and on the new Treaty to reform the EU's institutions;
- Centralised preparation of an e-newsletter in the national language for EDC users, referring to new electronic resources for researchers on EU issues, new documents etc.

Targeting external users with in-depth information demand

To reach users with “in-depth information demand” from outside the host-structures better than is currently being done, EDCs will have to become more pro-active and outward oriented. Many EDCs reported that they cannot develop communication and promotional activities on their own due to limited financial and staff resources and when such activities are implemented they are often limited to the primary target group, namely, the university community. The current median annual budget of an EDC for communication activities of roughly 500 Euro (not including staff costs) does not seem to allow for significant communication and promotion activities targeted at the broader public. Communication activities should therefore target only those potential users from the public that have in-depth information demands through measures that can be implemented even with a very limited communication budget, such as sending letters to teachers at relevant schools, informing newspapers and the bar association on EDC services, etc. The main aim of these activities should be the promotion of the personalised services of the EDC, such as assistance for document research or training courses on EU databases. In this context, it could be of importance that EDCs also promote the possibility of assistance by email, as this is requested increasingly by users and currently already offered by some of the EDCs interviewed during the country studies, as external users are less likely to physically visit the EDC. In case that other communication activities targeted at the broader public would be expected from EDCs, such activities would likely depend on the provision of additional financial resources, either from the Commission or the host-structure budget. It is recommended that any support the Commission may intend to provide for such activities should be mainly targeted at joint communication activities at the national network level, with a possible exchange of best practices between national EDC networks.

A new service orientation of EDCs

A critical issue also seems to be the internal communication towards potential users inside the host-structure, such as researchers and students. The evaluation has shown significant problems to create awareness on EDC services among this group.

A possible approach to reach a better awareness of EDC services inside the host structure seems to be to further develop a pro-active service orientation of EDCs, that advertises the main strength of the EDCs (high quality assistance) and improves the client-service provider relationship between EDCs and potential users.

For this aim, the following steps could be considered:

- (1) The high level of assistance provided by EDC staff needs to be kept and further developed. The recent training of EDC staff in Brussels was perceived by EDC staff as very helpful in this respect and could be continued and supplemented at the national level (as already happens in some countries). Because of the importance of online resources, a main focus of training needs to be targeted at further developing expertise in EU databases and the Europa website.
- (2) EDC staff has to actively advertise the possibility of providing assistance to potential users. Although this was already a common feature in most EDCs, participants of one focus group saw the EDC rather as location for obtaining paper documents than as a place for obtaining advice on document search and EU databases, indicating significant deficits in promoting assistance.
- (3) A prime possibility to get in contact with potential users are training courses for users. The evaluation indicates the need for improved and better targeted training of EDC users in the use of EU databases and Europa website, with the timing and profile of courses in university EDCs being better aligned to the needs of students and preferably integrated into the curriculum.
- (4) EDCs need to improve the linkages to potential users through pro-active information services, such as e-newsletters, that could also be prepared at the national level (see above).
- (5) EDCs need to be more visible. An essential element of visibility is not only the use of logos and boards, which many EDCs use, but also the presentation of up-to date information on EU issues. This cannot be burdened on individual EDCs and underlines the need for national coordination on communication issues, including the possibility to create topical information packages to be displayed on EDC premises (see above).
- (6) Finally, EDCs could improve monitoring of user numbers and user satisfaction. All EDCs should register the number of cases of assistance per week (as many EDCs already do). EDCs themselves should compile a list of all publications and studies on EU issues produced by the host structure to be able to self-evaluate EDC services on an annual basis. This self-evaluation could be conducted by sending all researchers of the host structure that have produced a publication on EU issues in a specific year a short questionnaire to assess the quality of the support they have received from their EDC. This would improve accountability of EDCs, would improve the contact with potential users and would allow the EDC to understand user demands better (see section 3.3.4.2 below).

Defining future documentation needs

There is no doubt that the importance and use of online resources will likely increase, and that assistance for EDC users to navigate online databases on EU issues will likely be the core activity of EDC staff. Already today the vast majority of EU related documents is accessed electronically, with the notable exception of older documents. For a full access to electronic documents for research on EU integration the following issues emerged as results of the evaluation:

- EDCs and users would consider it as helpful to have older EU documents available online at EU level as soon as possible;

- There seems to be a need for a reliable online archive of EU documents that provides links remaining valid over a long period and that are indexed and catalogued according to best library practices (similar to the aims of the ArchiDok project, see also section 3.3.4.1).

EU documentation strategies were not in the scope of this evaluation. Further research seems to be justified on how synergies could be created between the implementation of EU documentation/archive strategies and the functioning of the EDC network.

On the other hand, a fully online EDC was generally not seen as desirable by EDC staff and users and non-users (see box below). The evaluation results indicate the relevance of a continued provision of paper documents to the EDCs. However, the results also indicate the need to reconsider the types of documents to be provided to EDCs, to reduce the overall number of paper documents provided to each EDCs while at the same time allowing EDCs to continue to receive core documentation in paper format according to their preferences. This issue is discussed in more detail in section 3.2.4 of this report.

A fully online EDC?

EDC staff generally sees the increase in the proportion of online documents and the digitalisation trend as complementing the existence of a “physical” library and consider that digitalisation is not meant to replace paper documents. In particular, a collection of paper documents may, according to EDC staff, need to be maintained for technical reasons, including:

Non-availability of electronic versions of older documents: Collections of the earlier documents need to be maintained simply because electronic versions do not exist (especially for older EU legislation dating from the 1970s and before).

Lack of a reliable online archive: Documents on the Internet may disappear and, as a result, EDC staff may prefer the solution of cataloguing paper documents. This issue is further explored in section 3.3.4.1 below.

Concerns electronic document formats: Some electronic documents may need to be reconverted after several years because the old format is no longer supported by newer versions of reading software.

Copyrights issues: It may be only possible to maintain a collection of hard copies rather than an electronic database due to potential copyright issues.

Access to the Internet/IT literacy: In some countries students do not have sufficient access to Internet outside university. In a new MS an EDC stated that “libraries are not ready [for electronic documents]”.

In addition to technical concerns, the lack of visibility of an online EDC was seen as problematic, with a “real” EDC having also a symbolic ‘physical’ importance, especially in regions where no other EU bodies or information centres are located. The EDC was seen as a symbol of the “Europe of the regions”. The evaluation therefore concludes that, although electronic documents are likely to be the main information source of EDCs users in the future, a core set of paper documents should be continued to be provided by EDCs.

Future relevance of the EDC network

The results of the evaluation have indicated several strengths of EDCs, but also identified a number of weaknesses in some areas. In balance, the EDC network has been shown to contribute to enhancing the promotion and development of studies and research work in the area of European integration. However, as it was pointedly formulated during a case-study, while in the past EDCs used to provide a real added value in having information which was not available elsewhere or was payable, this is less and less the case nowadays. EDCs therefore have to evolve from their depository function to a more active role. The EDC themselves are best suited to define this role in more detail. The evaluation brought forward a number of innovative ideas on how EDCs could provide new services and bring more added value, including:

- EDCs could have a more important role in issuing EU related bibliographies or inventories of links which could be made available online;
- EDCs could develop push services and present recent publications to potentially interested groups;
- EDCs could prepare selections of related literature for interested professionals outside of their host structure (e.g. lawyers);
- EDCs could monitor research activities at national level. Within the network EDCs could specialise on particular topics and exchange information on current developments. In this way the network would bring a real added value.

Some possibilities for new electronic services of EDCs are summarised in Annex 4.

The analysis in the previous section leads to the following operational recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the EDC network:

- ⇒ **The EDC network will have to change to remain relevant in the age of online databases and increasing Internet usage.** The results of the evaluation indicate that EDCs currently contribute to enhancing the promotion and development of studies and research in the area of EU integration, and also have the potential to remain relevant.
- ⇒ **EDCs should shift in orientation towards providing access to electronic documents, while keeping a core collection of printed documents.** The importance and use of online resources will likely increase, and providing assistance regarding online databases on EU issues will likely be the core activity of EDC staff. Consequently, the amount of paper documents provided to individual EDCs should be reduced while at the same time providing the possibility for EDCs to receive documentation in paper format that are deemed essential.
- ⇒ **The target group of EDCs should be clarified and include only users with “in-depth information demand”.** Primary users would therefore be researchers and students at the host structure, secondary EDC users would be specific sub-groups of the general public with in-depth information needs, such as teachers at schools teaching European issue, lawyers etc. Other parts of the general public should be served through Europe Direct information relays and other EU networks.
- ⇒ **To reach users with “in-depth information demand” from outside the host-structures, EDCs will have to become more pro-active and outward oriented.** Due to limited financial and staff resources, communication activities should target only those potential users from the general public that have in-depth information demands through measures that can be implemented even with a very limited communication budget, such as informing newspapers and the bar association on EDC services, etc. The main aim of these activities should be the promotion of personalised EDC services, such as assistance for document research (including by e-mail) or training courses on EU databases.
- ⇒ **The mandate of the EDCs with respect to communication and promotion activities should be clarified and national EDC communication programmes should be developed.** This would improve synergies between EDCs. Joint information activities could for example include: (1) national internet portals for EDCs; (2) an electronic guide on how to search for EU resources; (3) topical information packages; and (4) an e-newsletter for users on new EU information resources in the national language.
- ⇒ **EDCs should further develop their service orientation and self-evaluate their services.** For this aim a closer relationship with potential users is needed, especially inside the host-structure.

3.2. Achievement of objectives at a reasonable cost

3.2.1. Evaluation question

- *Does the EDC network achieve its objectives at a reasonable cost (global cost of publications disseminated to the EDCs and cost of training provided)?*

3.2.2. Summary reply to the evaluation question

- ***From an EC perspective, the EDCs are an efficient tool for providing personalised services regarding complex questions of researchers and other users regarding EU issues.*** The estimated total outreach of EDCs for 2006 was 371,000 users⁴⁰ that benefited from personalised EDC services, such as assistance or the participation in courses, seminars or other EDC communication activities. The average EC direct costs per EDC user receiving a personalised service was 1.74 Euro (not including EC staff costs for managing the network and publication costs). From an EC perspective the EDC network therefore provides for relatively low direct costs personalised services that are relevant to researchers working in the area of European integration and for which a high degree of users satisfaction exists.
- ***The main resource input for running the EDC network is provided by the host-structures.*** The data received in the framework of this evaluation leaves little doubt that the relation between EC resource input and host-structure input is favourable from an EC perspective.
- ***The selection of printed publications distributed to the EDCs cannot be considered to be efficient.*** EDCs have very little influence on what publications they receive, except through choosing thematic sectors for those minority of EDCs that have chosen to be specialised EDCs. Other than that, EDCs do not seem to have influence on the publications disseminated by OPOCE. This is especially true for priced publications. Regarding free EU publications a more demand-oriented approach has reportedly been introduced and the EU Bookshop offers all EDCs similar options to order them "à la carte".

These conclusions are further elaborated in the following section.

⁴⁰ Double counting possible, as it is likely that at least some of the users received several times assistance or were provided assistance and also participated in communication/promotion activities.

3.2.3. Description and analysis

To assess whether or not the EDC network achieves its objectives at a reasonable cost, several factors have to be considered. Of major importance are the costs of running the network, that consist of several components:

- The costs of running the network for the EC, including costs for distribution of publications, trainings etc.;
- The costs of running the individual EDCs for the host-structures;

The costs of running the network have then to be related to the effects obtained to determine the efficiency of the network. Efficiency can relate to outputs, results/impacts and processes involved. The following analysis will address all three levels, whereby in line with the Terms of Reference the main aim will be to relate the costs of running the network from an EC perspective to the effects obtained.

The evaluation covered a total of 373 EU EDCs, of which 220 EDCs provided data on staff capacity and 129 EDCs provided data on their budget. **Because of this relatively low number, estimates regarding the EDC budget have to be interpreted with care.**

Costs of running the EDC network

EC resources used for the EDC network

The European Commission does not contribute to EDC staff costs, but mainly provides management services, a Helpdesk and other communication services such as an intranet. In addition, costs to the Commission include the printing costs of the publications disseminated to the EDCs, the costs of dissemination and the costs of training provided. The available data on these cost factors is provided in the following table:

Table 2: EC direct costs for the EDC network (in EUR, 2006)

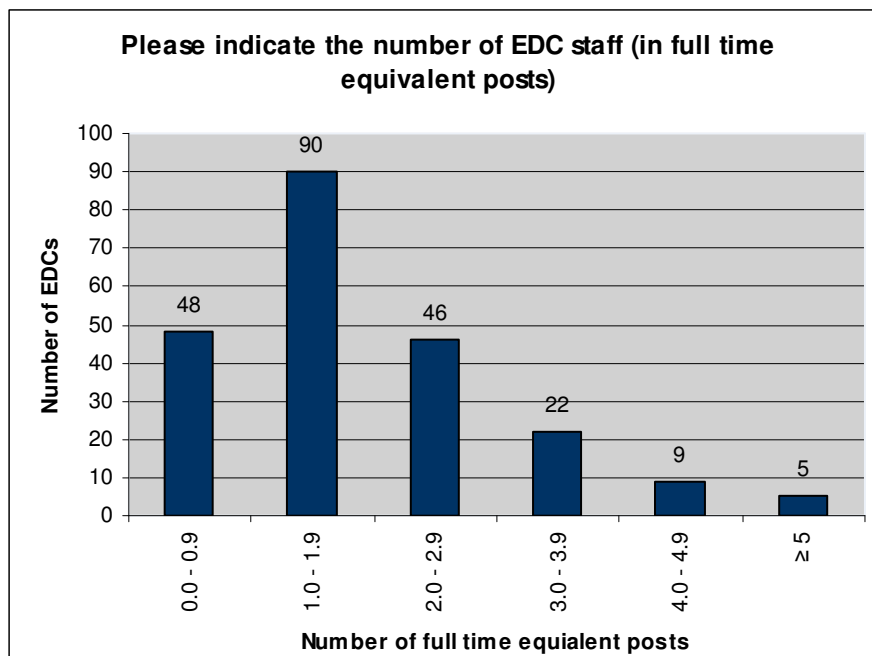
Direct costs (DG COMM and EC Representations)	
Helpdesk services	
Training seminars	0
Newsletters and information dossiers	40,500
General management of the network ¹	36,000
Intranet	16,800
Total publication dissemination costs to EDCs	
Total distribution costs of DG COMM publications to the EDC network ² (payments to the Publication Office)	393,326
Printing costs	no data
Other expenses	
Annual meetings (AGM) ³	146,400
Exchange projects	11,200
TOTAL	644,226
¹ The figure includes management, Q&A service, feeding the intranet with information, organisation of exchange programme, etc ² Majority of publications that EDCs receive are coming from OPOCE as most DGs work with OPOCE for the publication of their products. Includes costs also for non-EU EDCs. ³ The figure includes logistics and related helpdesk costs Note: Costs of human resources for EC management not included Source: EC data	

The table does not include costs for EC human resources, which are estimated to be approx. 0.7 full time equivalent posts at Commission level and approx. 4.8 full time equivalent posts for the EDC correspondents at EC Representations (in 2006). The table above does not include printing and other production costs for the publications provided to EDCs, for which no data was available, which may be a significant cost factor.

Host-structure resources used for the EDC network

Main costs for running an EDC for a host structure are human resources, library/archive space⁴¹ and, where applicable, the additional budget provided to the EDC, e.g. for publications, communication activities etc. According to survey results the total number of EDC staff is most often between 1 and 1.9 full time equivalent posts⁴², as is illustrated in the graph below. The median staff per EDC consists of one full time equivalent post.

Figure 12: Number of EDC staff



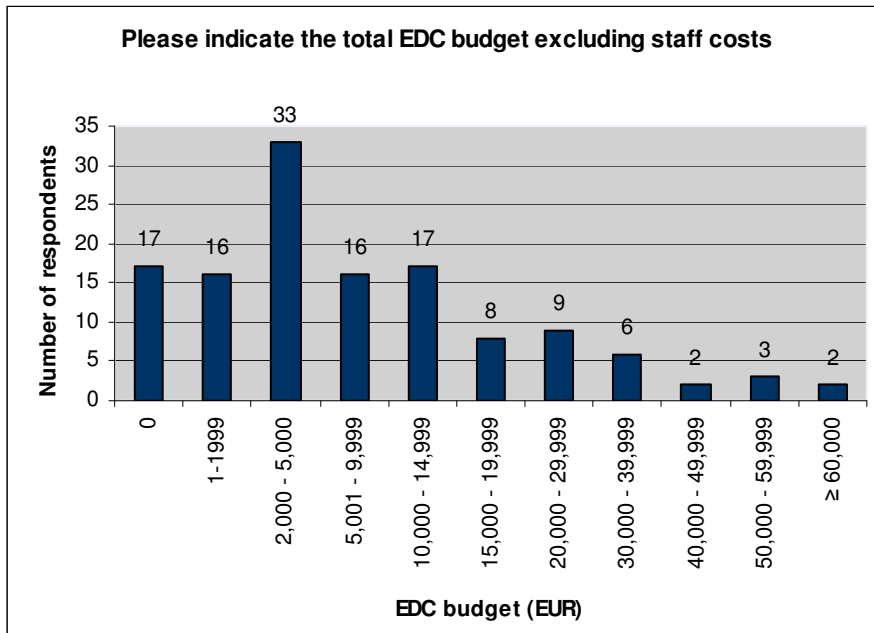
Source: EDC survey Q4c (N=220)

The median EDC budget excluding staff costs in 2006 for documentation and communication purposes etc. was 5,000 Euro, according to 129 EDCs providing data in this respect; 63 EDCs had a higher budget, with the maximum being more than 63,000 Euro. This is illustrated in the following graph.

⁴¹ The costs of library/archive space are not considered in this evaluation.

⁴² The number of full time equivalent posts per EDC was calculated by dividing the total weekly working hours of all EDC staff by 40.

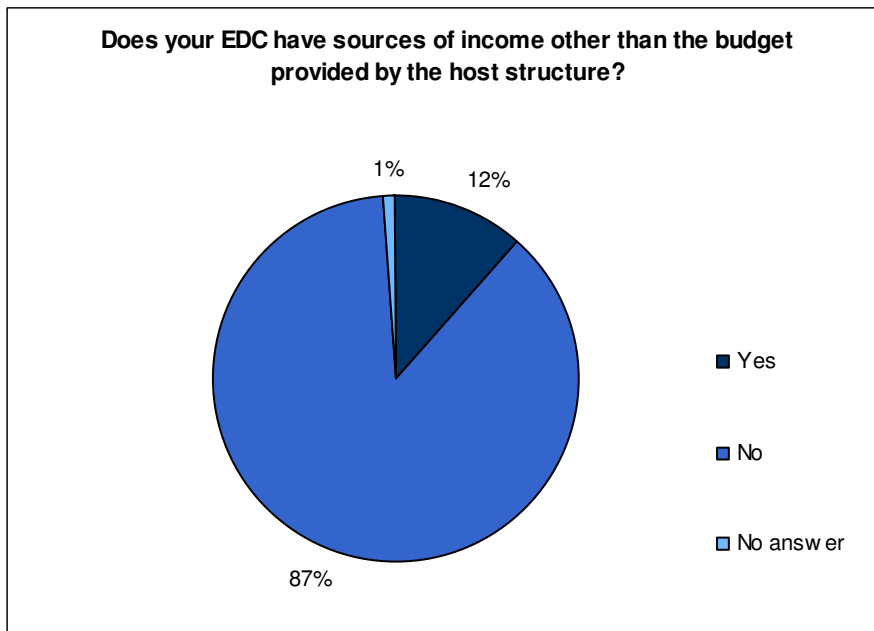
Figure 13: EDC budget excluding staff costs (2006)



Source: EDC survey Q6a (N=129)

The vast majority of EDCs do not have any other sources of income other than the budget provided by the host structure (see graph below). However, a small group of EDCs did raise funds in 2006 from various sources, e.g. from European sources and from regional governments.

Figure 14: Sources of income of EDCs



Source: EDC survey Q6c (N=249)

Based on average values from those EDCs that provided data, the 373 EU EDCs covered by the evaluation⁴³ could be expected to represent a total staff capacity of 535 full time equivalent posts (based on the adjusted average).⁴⁴ The total non-EU budget available for documentation and communication purposes etc. of all 373 EDCs (not including staff costs) could be expected to be approximately 2.95 million Euro (based on the adjusted average).

Relation between EC and host-structure resources used for the EDC network

From the data provided above the following picture emerges:

- For 1 full time equivalent post that the EC dedicates to the network, host-structures dedicate approximately 97 full time equivalent posts⁴⁵ of EDC staff. This comparison does, of course, not reflect differences in staff costs between countries and between staff categories involved.
- For 1 Euro of direct costs that the EC invests in activities related to the EDC network, EDC host-structures invest approximately 4.60 Euro⁴⁶ for EDC documentation and communication activities etc. This figure does not include host structure costs for EDC staff and the use of library/archive space. On the other hand, it also does not include EC costs for printing and other production costs for the publications disseminated as well as related staff costs.

When interpreting these figures, the above-mentioned data limitations have to be taken into account. It is also important to mention that EDCs are generally an integral part of the host structure and not independent entities. EDC staff resources and budget for activities are therefore in most cases part of the overall staff and budget of the host structure and a differentiation between the two is to some extent artificial. This is also reflected in the fact that most EDC librarians have also other tasks and it is often difficult to determine which part of the time is dedicated to the EDC and which part to other library activities.

The following conclusion can be drawn:

14. ***The main resource input for running the EDC network is provided by the host-structures.*** The data received in the framework of this evaluation leaves little doubt that the relation between EC resource input and host-structure input is favourable from an EC perspective.

⁴³ There are also EDCs and depository libraries outside the European Union which are outside the scope of this study.

⁴⁴ Data collected from the questionnaires exhibited significant variation. To counteract bias from outliers and unrepresentative data points, the data set was constricted to analysis of the middle 80-percentile range of data points. To such end, the top 10% and bottom 10% of data points were removed. This, in all cases, does not affect the median of the original data set (as the median is by definition not influenced by outliers) but tends to remove the bias of the arithmetic mean towards the extremes. The arithmetic mean obtained from the 80-percentile range will hereafter be referred to as the "adjusted average".

⁴⁵ Based on median value and adjusted average of responding EDCs.

⁴⁶ Based on adjusted average of responding EDCs.

Relation between resources used for running the EDC network and effects obtained

Resources used in relation to outputs of EDCs

Measuring the effects of EDCs in quantitative terms is problematic as even basic data on user numbers is not consistently available. However, a number of output indicators could be identified for which sufficient data seems to be available from EDCs. Of specific interest are indicators that provide some insight into the outreach of EDCs. These include:

- *The number of EDC users assisted by EDC staff:* Based on average values from those EDCs that provided estimates, the 373 EU EDCs covered by the evaluation could be expected to have provided assistance to approximately 312,000 users in 2006.⁴⁷
- *Number of participants reached by communication or promotion activities related to EU integration or other EU issues (e.g. courses, debates, conferences, seminars, presentations etc.):* Only 53% of the EDCs reported such activities. Based on that share and average values from those EDCs that provided data, the 373 EU EDCs covered by the evaluation could be expected to have reached approximately 59,000 users in 2006 with their communication and promotion activities.⁴⁸

From this data it is possible to estimate the total outreach of EDCs for 2006 as being in approximately 371,000 users that benefited from the above listed personalised EDC services. It is likely that at least some of those persons were regular EDC users that received several times assistance in that year or were provided assistance and also participated in communication/promotion activities. Therefore the number of different persons reached can be substantially lower and the numbers of persons served as estimated above have to be seen as upper limits of the possible outreach of the EDC network for personalised services. On the other hand, the above estimates do not include users that use EDC documentation without asking for assistance or access databases and EDC website online, for which no comprehensive data was available (users of non-personalised EDC services). It seems, however, fair to mainly focus on the personalised services of EDCs, as the evaluation has shown that these are the greatest strengths of the EDCs and also are likely to be a crucial EDC contribution to promoting studies and research in EU issues.

When related to the direct costs of the EC for managing the EDC network, **the average EC direct costs per EDC user receiving a personalised service was 1.74 Euro**. This figure, however, does not include EC staff costs and also not the costs of the host-structures for running the EDC and can therefore not be compared with figures from other EU networks that have very different cost structures and co-financing requirements. In addition, possible distorting effects may exist.⁴⁹ The total costs of a personalised service provided by an individual EDC (including host-structure costs)

⁴⁷ Based on data provided from 186 responding EDCs. The adjusted average number of users assisted in an average week is 21, calculated on the assumption of 40 working weeks per year.

⁴⁸ In total, 134 EDCs of the 252 EDCs responding to the survey reported communication and promotion activities. All of these EDCs provided detailed data on the total number of participants. The adjusted average number of participants in all activities organised was 298 per EDC in 2006.

⁴⁹ These results may underestimate the average number of EDC users receiving personalised services, as it is plausible that those EDCs that did not provide data are the EDCs that are located in a general library with many users, therefore making it more difficult to systematically record all users assisted.

can be expected to be significantly higher, depending on local circumstances (such as salary level) and have not been assessed in this evaluation.

Finally, an important limitation of this type of quantification is that it does not reflect the quality of the personalised service provided. According to survey results, approximately one third of the assistance cases relate to expert assistance (very complex questions/guided access to databases), and another third to the provision of detailed information (fairly complex questions). From an EC perspective the EDC network therefore provides for relatively low direct EC costs personalised services, that:

- ⇒ Consist to a significant part of assistance regarding fairly and very complex questions; and
- ⇒ Are relevant to researchers working in the area of European integration, as has been illustrated by the high degree of user satisfactions concerning the assistance provided.

This leads to the following conclusion:

15. ***From an EC perspective, the EDCs are an efficient tool for providing personalised services regarding complex questions of researchers and other users regarding EU issues.*** The estimated total outreach of EDCs for 2006 was 371,000 users⁵⁰ that benefited from *personalised EDC services*, such as assistance or the participation in courses, seminars or other EDC communication activities. The average EC direct costs per EDC user receiving a personalised service was 1.74 Euro (not including EC staff costs for managing the network and publication costs). From an EC perspective the EDC network therefore provides for relatively low direct costs personalised services that are relevant to researchers working in the area of European integration and for which a high degree of users satisfaction exists.

Resources used in relation to results/impacts of EDCs

In the answer to the first evaluation questions it already was stated that EDCs currently are not always able to provide a complete list of all publications on EU issues prepared by the host structure and feedback from researchers is mostly informal in nature. The user survey and the focus groups conducted in the frameworks of this study are therefore the only evidence available to establish the effects of EDC support on research conducted (see detailed description in section 3.1.3 above).

With data obtained directly from the EDCs it currently only seems possible to quantify the relation of resources used for the EDC network to the outputs produced, as has been presented in the previous section. This illustrates the need that EDCs monitor the research work at the host-structure more completely and conduct self-evaluation exercises, e.g. by sending all researchers that have produced a publication/study on EU issues in a specific year at the host structure a short questionnaire to assess the quality of the support they have received from their EDC. With this data it would be possible to relate the resources used to the number of publications/studies to which EDCs contributed by providing support.

⁵⁰ Double counting possible, as it is likely that at least some of the users received several times assistance or were provided assistance and also participated in communication/promotion activities.

Resources used in relation to processes involved

The EC contribution to the network mainly relates to the following processes:

- Provision of training to EDC staff;
- Promotion of information exchange and networking, e.g. through annual meetings;
- Distribution of publications to the EDCs, which are then catalogued and archived at the EDC.

No major efficiency issues were identified with respect to the first two processes. They are therefore only discussed in the section on network management (see section 3.3 below).

A major efficiency issue, however, emerged during the evaluation regarding the distribution of publications to the EDCs and the related resource input for cataloguing and archiving.

From the evidence collected during the evaluation it emerged that the **current process of providing EU publications to the EDCs is not sufficiently demand-oriented. Currently, EDCs only have very little influence on what publications they receive, except through choosing thematic sectors for those minority of EDCs that have chosen to be specialised EDCs** (according to survey results 22% of responding EDCs). Other than that, EDCs do not seem to have influence on the publications disseminated by OPOCE. This is especially true for priced publications. Regarding free EU publications a more demand-oriented approach has reportedly been introduced and the EU Bookshop offers all EDCs similar options to order them “à la carte”.

With respect to the efficiency criteria, it is sufficient to note the problems that EDCs report when they receive publications not considered to be relevant for the collection regarding the level of information (e.g. a children’s book on the 27 MS may not be considered as relevant for a university library) or the topic (e.g. general publications on agriculture may not fit into a specialised law library). According to the interviewed EDCs they have two main approaches in case they receive printed materials that are of little relevance to them:

- They present them on a tray for users to take them away;
- They catalogue them although they are not considered relevant for their users.

Both choices seem to occur regularly in practice, and both ways to handle the publications cannot be considered as being efficient. In case the publications are presented to users to take them away, there is at least a chance that the publication may find its target group. However, this could not be considered a particularly efficient way of distribution, as the risk is high that a large percentage of material distributed this way may not reach the user best suited for it. The other way, namely cataloguing publications although they are not considered relevant for EDC users, seems to be more problematic, because it uses substantial staff capacity that could be used more efficiently for other purposes. In practice, this seems to happen fairly often, as the country studies revealed. There seem to be two reasons for this:

Firstly, there is a lack of clarity regarding the types of documents that EDCs are expected to archive and include in their collection. In the absence of a clear policy on this issue, many EDCs tend to take a cautious approach and catalogue whatever is sent to them;

Secondly, at least a number of EDCs do not have an institutional mechanism to exclude documents sent to them from the cataloguing process. For example, the documents may be received and catalogued by a different library department than the EDC, which does not dare to intervene in the EDC collection. However, once the EDC receives the documents, they are already catalogued and the EDC can no longer decide that this document does not suit its collection. Also, some EDCs indicated that it is quite common to have an internal library policy to keep all documents received, which yields consequential storage costs.

This leads to the following conclusion:

16. ***The selection of printed publications distributed to the EDCs cannot be considered to be efficient.*** EDCs have very little influence on what publications they receive, except through choosing thematic sectors for those minority of EDCs that have chosen to be specialised EDCs. Other than that, EDCs do not seem to have influence on the publications disseminated by OPOCE. This is especially true for priced publications. Regarding free EU publications a more demand-oriented approach has reportedly been introduced and the EU Bookshop offers all EDCs similar options to order them “à la carte”.

3.2.4. Operational recommendations

From the results of the evaluation it can be concluded that the level of efficiency at which the EDC network operates can be improved through appropriate measures. These include the following areas:

- Increasing the number of EDC users served with the current staff through targeted promotion;
- Defining an archiving policy for the network;
- Providing more personalised services for users through reducing the staff capacity involved in cataloguing documents;
- Increasing the service orientation of EDCs through better monitoring of user satisfaction.
- Changing to a more demand-oriented approach for documents provided by OPOCE to EDCs;

Measures that may be considered concerning the five areas are described in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Increasing the number of EDC users per resource unit involved

As has been stated above, the evaluation results suggest to define the EDC target group as users with “in-depth information demand”, and to increase the number of such users through targeted promotion of EDC services inside and outside the host-structure. Considering the relatively limited median values for the number of assistance cases provided per EDC, it seems possible for a significant number of EDCs to serve more users with the current staff capacities, especially if resources are shifted from cataloguing of documents to assistance and other services to users.

Defining an archive strategy for the network

Currently, there seems to exist a certain degree of confusion regarding the responsibility of EDCs concerning archiving of documents. Defining an archive strategy for the network would allow EDCs to better define what documents need to be archived and improve work-sharing arrangements between EDCs, therefore reducing the cataloguing efforts per EDC (see section 3.3.4.1).

Providing more personalised services for users through reducing the staff capacity involved in cataloguing documents

The number of documents provided from OPOCE to the EDCs has been reportedly decreasing since some time. This is in line with the shift in orientation towards electronic documents that has been suggested before. Most EDCs would in the future only collect a core set of printed publications depending on their collection focus. A more demand-oriented supply of documents would reduce the staff capacities currently involved in cataloguing publications and, depending on the internal organisation of the

host library, this capacity could in the future be used to provide more assistance to users and improved services and courses regarding EU databases.

Increasing the service orientation of EDCs through better monitoring of user satisfaction.

It has already stated above that an improved service orientation of EDCs is necessary. To reach this, there is a need for a better monitoring of user satisfaction, which is currently only done informally. Formal feedback from users through annual user surveys conducted by each EDC has the potential to improve services in line with user demands, and is therefore also relevant under the efficiency criteria.

Changing to a demand-oriented approach for documents

The specific needs in documentation of the different EDCs would need to be reflected in an improved distribution mechanism for printed EC publications. An improved demand orientation would ensure that information is received by EDCs that they consider relevant, which is not the perception of many EDCs currently. A better characterization of the specific needs in documentation for each EDC could reduce EC printing costs and increase the efficiency of the EDC network. A better differentiation of the needs of individual EDCs would likely also enhance the quality of the collections of EDCs, which in turn could improve the quality of the EDC services for users. A demand-oriented approach could result in increased specialisation of EDCs and collectively within a national EDC network, users would have better access to physical documents.

Based on the results of the evaluation it is therefore recommended to introduce a more demand-oriented approach for the distribution of documents. EDCs should be able to freely select specific categories of documents such as treaties, yearbooks etc. they wish to receive in paper format, and the number of copies they require.

A specific issue are priced publications produced by EU institutions. Currently, the institution producing the publication decides whether or not a specific priced publication is sent to the EDCs, with EDCs therefore having no influence on this process. The evaluation revealed that the primary target group, namely persons with in-depth information needs, are likely to have a specific interest in high quality monographs, that are often priced publications. It is therefore recommended to also introduce a demand-oriented order process for priced publications. The best platform for this seems to be the online EU bookshop. It is therefore suggested that each EDC should be provided a specific "credit"⁵¹ for obtaining priced publications available in the bookshop. This more demand-oriented approach would allow EDCs to select the publications that are the most relevant for their users, and would, in turn, ensure the future relevance of the EDC network.

⁵¹ To organise this "credit" the EC would need to allocate budget for it and at the same time respect the public procurement legislation.

The analysis in the previous section leads to the following operational recommendations for improving the efficiency of the EDC network:

- ⇒ ***There is significant potential to improve the efficiency of the EDC network.*** Measures that could be considered include:
 - Increasing the number of EDC users served with the current staff through targeted promotion of their services;
 - Defining an archiving policy for the network;
 - Providing more personalised services for users through reducing the staff capacity involved in cataloguing documents;
 - Increasing the service orientation of EDCs through better monitoring of user satisfaction.

- ⇒ ***The current system of distribution of documents should be developed into a more demand-oriented system.*** EDCs should only receive core documents in paper format that they have actively requested and not in more copies than the maximum number preferred by them. A more demand-oriented approach could be developed through defining specific categories of documents that EDCs can select from online and/or by actively ordering priced publications through the EU bookshop. For this aim, each EDC could be provided a specific credit for obtaining a selection of priced publications available in the bookshop.

3.3. Network synergies and network management

3.3.1. Evaluation question

- *Do the EDCs operate in synergy with the other Commission networks at the national/European level?*

In the inception phase of the study it was decided to also include the issue of the management of the network by the European Commission as an additional item.

3.3.2. Summary reply to the evaluation question

- ❑ ***Synergies with other EU information networks are generally less relevant than synergies within the EDC network.*** Contacts between EDCs and other EU information networks in the same Member State are less frequent than among EDCs and are mainly related to user queries. Contacts hardly occur to information networks in other Member States.
- ❑ ***The EDC network as a whole mainly functions as a loose structure of national and sometimes regional networks, that provide significant synergies for EDCs.*** Networking through mailing lists, emails, fax, phone calls and the annual meetings at the national or at EU level are generally considered by EDC staff to be very efficient tools to exchange information, share best practices and expert knowledge on particular topics, and in enhancing the quality of answers to users' requests. National coordinators seem to have a key role in facilitating the exchange of information and diffusing common standards within the EDCs national network, and the role of the EDC correspondent at the EC Representations in the MS seems also to be important in facilitating and encouraging networking activities and providing a link to Brussels.
- ❑ ***A majority of responding EDCs consider that EC services (publications, training, Helpdesk, intranet, and general management) meet their needs either very well or fairly well.*** The highest level of satisfaction relates to the general management provided by the EC. The lowest levels of satisfaction relates to the publications provided by OPOCE and the question-and-answer service of the Helpdesk. A significant number of EDC staff members seem to prefer alternative tools of assistance (such as contact to other EDCs) to the question-and-answer service.

These conclusions are further elaborated in the following section.

3.3.3. Description and analysis

3.3.3.1. EDC networking and synergies with other EU networks

Overview of networking activities within the EDC network

The following table indicates that a “typical EDC” is mainly networking related to user queries with EDCs in the same Member State. In total, the responding EDCs reported nearly 5,000 cases of such contacts. Networking with EDCs in other MS is not very common, with a median of just 1.5 cases per EDC in 2006 and the total number of such contacts of all responding EDCs being about 1,360. Networking for other reasons than user queries is significantly less frequent, with contacts because of general networking activities being slightly more common than contacts for the joint organisation of promotion/information activities or training activities.

Table 3: Median number of contacts of an individual EDC with other EDCs in the same MS and in other MS (in 2006)

Contact related to...	User query	Joint organisation of promotion / information activities	Joint organisation of training activities	General networking activities
Number of contacts to EDCs in the <u>same MS</u>	10	1	1	2
Number of contacts to EDCs in <u>other MS</u>	1	0	0	1

Source: EDC survey Q19a. Data included from up to 200 EDCs that provided detailed information on their networking activities.

This leads to the following conclusion:

17. **Networking within the EDC network is mainly related to user queries with EDCs in the same MS, and networking with EDCs in other MS seems to be rare.** Currently, the joint organisation of promotion/information activities, training activities and general networking activities appear to be limited.

Coordination mechanisms within the EDC network

Generally, EDC staff regards the national network as an effective tool enabling EDC staff to complement each other’s expertise and to share best practices. As highlighted by survey results and the case studies, coordination mechanisms at the national level may involve e-mails, phone calls, fax contacts, contacts through the national mailing list, and the annual network meetings. In particular, the national EDCs mailing list was considered by EDC staff to be a very useful networking tool to exchange information on any relevant issues, such as new directories on EU issues and new websites. EDC national networks may meet up to two times per year. In some cases, meetings may also happen at the local level (e.g. in the case of a large city) and at a regional level.

National meetings are considered by EDC staff to be useful to share information, to meet colleagues from other EDCs, and consequently, to improve networking in general. In this respect, the national network may be developed in an informal way, on the

basis of a “network of friends”.⁵² EDC staff members may also attend one another’s libraries to learn best practices and to observe the collections available in other EDCs, as explained by an Irish EDC staff.

The role of the national coordinator seems to be important in supporting the exchange of information within the national network. The role of the national coordinator is also often considered to be important to circulate information about EC policies and to disseminate relevant information from exchanges through the European mailing list to national EDCs.⁵³ The national coordinator often organises exchange of information between all EDCs within the MS, and, in some cases, also make available a vade-mecum for new EDC managers describing the role of EDCs and listing useful information sources.

In general, the case studies confirmed that there was relatively little communication with EDCs located in different MS, although in some cases EDC staff emphasised that there was good networking between EDCs at the EU level and that in case of a difficult user query, an EU email list of EDCs was used. The AGM meetings at EU level were regarded as an effective tool to build contacts with the EC and with EDC staff from other MS, and also to develop a stronger sense of involvement in the EU integration process among national coordinators.⁵⁴ In addition, study visits in EDCs located in other MS were considered to be very useful.

This leads to the following conclusion:

18. ***The EDC network as a whole mainly functions as a loose structure of national and sometimes regional networks, that provide significant synergies for EDCs.*** Networking through mailing lists, emails, fax, phone calls and the annual meetings at the national or at EU level are generally considered by EDC staff to be very efficient tools to exchange information, share best practices and expert knowledge on particular topics, and in enhancing the quality of answers to users’ requests. National coordinators seem to have a key role in facilitating the exchange of information and diffusing common standards within the EDCs national network, and the role of the EDC correspondent at the EC Representations in the MS seems also to be important in facilitating and encouraging networking activities and providing a link to Brussels.

Networking with other EU information networks

A “typical EDC” described by median values is networking with other EU information networks in the same MS regarding user queries, with roughly half the number of such contacts compared to the networking with other EDCs in the same MS. Slightly more than 3,000 contacts with other EU information networks in the same MS regarding user queries were reported from the responding EDCs in 2006. EDCs rarely contact other EU information networks in other MS. Contacted networks listed by the EDCs include the Europe Direct information relays, TEAM Europe, Euro Info Centres, EU-CONSENT Network and several regional networks.

⁵² Case study Germany

⁵³ Case studies France and Germany

⁵⁴ Case study Poland

Table 4: Median number of contacts of an individual EDC with other EU information networks in the same MS and in other MS (2006)

Contact related to...	User query	Joint organisation of promotion / information activities	Joint organisation of training activities	General networking activities
Number of contacts to information networks <u>in the same MS</u>	5	1	0	2
Number of contacts to information networks in <u>other MS</u>	0	0	0	0

Source: EDC survey Q20. Data included from up to 171 EDCs that provided detailed information on their networking activities.

Coordination mechanisms with other EU information networks

The case studies conducted revealed that EDC staff generally seemed to have very few contacts with other EU information networks other than regarding user queries. For example, a French EDC staff mentioned that contacts with other EU information networks occurred when users' requests were related to specific issues, such as questions on structural funds, for which other EU information networks may be better qualified. Several EDC staff affirmed cooperation with other EU networks at the local level that were rather informal in nature.

This leads to the following conclusion:

19. **Synergies with other EU information networks are generally less relevant than synergies within the EDC network.** Contacts between EDCs and other EU information networks in the same Member State are less frequent than among EDCs and are mainly related to user queries. Contacts hardly occur to information networks in other Member States.

3.3.3.2. Commission management and support of the EDC network

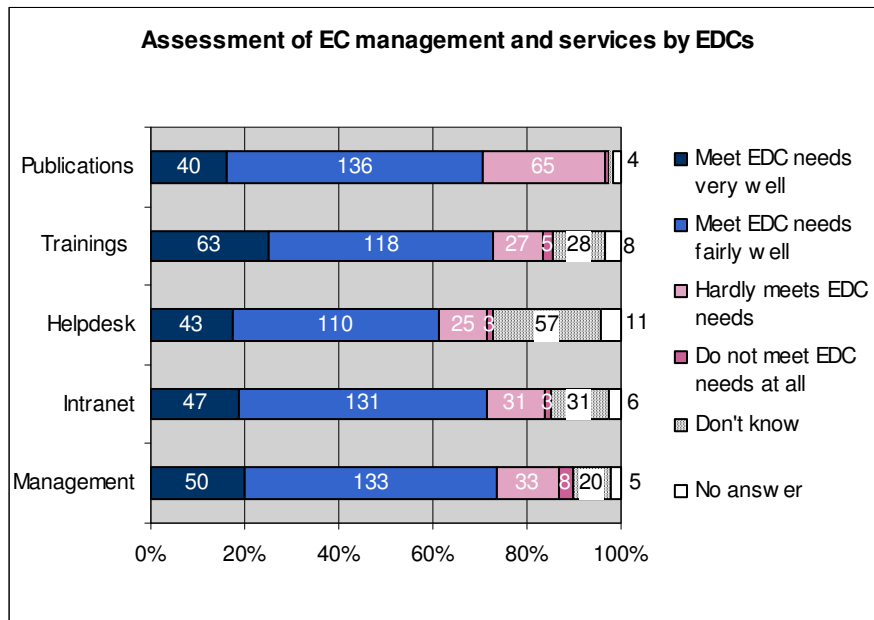
Most networks require some central coordination mechanism, and in the case of the EDC network this role is taken on by the Commission. The Commission services to the network include:

- Provision of publications;
- Provision of training;
- Provision of a question-and-answer service of the Helpdesk;
- Provision of an intranet;
- General management services.

The graph below shows how the EDCs responding to the survey assess the management and services provided by the EC. Generally the EDCs have a common understanding that EC services (publications, training, Helpdesk, intranet and general management) meet their needs either very well or fairly well. The largest group of positive

assessments are related to EC general management: almost 75% of EDCs responding to the survey consider that EC management meets their needs very well or fairly well. The following sections explore EDC views on the Commission management and services in more details.

Figure 15: EC management and services assessed by EDCs



Source: EDC survey (N=238 to 245, depending on item)

Provision of publications

A large majority of EDCs provided an overall positive assessment with regard to the publications provided by OPOCE. However, for this question also the highest number of negative assessments was received. More than a quarter of EDCs are of the opinion that these publications hardly meet their needs. This partly relates to the efficiency of the process to determine the publications sent to the EDCs (see section 3.2). Another source of discontent concerned the types of documents that are usually not provided. Publications considered to be needed by EDCs and currently not available included:

- Eurostat Import – Export;
- Yearbooks;
- Additional copies of the European Union treaties, as well as green papers and white papers in paper form;
- Other priced monographs available in the EU bookshop and not distributed.

During the case studies conducted, a number of EDC staff from several countries mentioned that more documents in their respective official national languages would be needed. The availability of documents in national languages may be particularly important where users – mainly outside the university – are not fluent in English.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ E.g. case studies Greece, Poland

Provision of training

In 2006, no training measures took place at EU level. In 2007, such training was provided, and the evaluation highlighted that this was appreciated by EDCs. The need for continuing training activities is indicated by the following exemplary statements of EDC staff:

- *“There is much more need to receive a specific training, for example, take part in the European Information Association (EIA) training Tracking EU Documents.”*
- *“What is needed is expert staff rather than lots of documents. If there is any financial assistance it should go towards supporting EDC staff and their training.”*
- *“I think I need more preparation or courses to work in the EDC. Sometimes I find it difficult to answer the user’s request because I don’t know how I can find the correct information.”*

Provision of a question-and-answer service

According to the survey, more than a quarter of EDCs either marked “don’t know” or provided no answer, when asked to assess Helpdesk services, here referring to the question-and-answer service offered.⁵⁶ An additional 11% of EDC staff members consider that this service hardly meets their needs or does not meet their needs at all. In contrast, slightly more than 60% of EDC staff consider that this service meets their needs very or fairly well.

Many EDC staff members favour other sources of support when requiring help. These other sources of assistance may include:

- Emails to communicate with other national EDCs;
- Use of the international mailing list or the national mailing list;
- Emails to communicate directly with the Commission services;
- Contacts to other EU related networks;
- Support from scientific researchers of the host structure.

Reasons why the question-and-answer service is not always appreciated include the following:

- The answers provided are sometimes considered to be not detailed enough to satisfy the needs of researchers and students. For example, an EDC staff reported that she had to try several times in order to get better quality and more in-depth answers. Other EDCs characterised the *“response ...[as] rather su-*

⁵⁶ Separate questions referred to the other elements of the Helpdesk services provided by the EC, namely trainings provided, Intranet and general management.

*perfidial and unhelpful*⁵⁷ and commented “*the ... [service is] oriented towards relays other than EDCs*”.

- The time response is often considered to be too long.
- Finally, there also seems to be a certain lack of awareness concerning the existence of the question-and-answer service. During the country studies it was reported from two EDCs that the staff interviewed had never heard of the service.

Although some EDC staff interviewed during the case studies seemed to be satisfied with the question-and-answer services provided, the general picture that emerged, however, was that EDCs prefer to contact another EDC for advice, rather than the question-and-answer services, underlining the advantages of internal networking of the EDC network.

Provision of an intranet

According to the survey results, more than 70% of EDC staff members consider that the Intranet provided by the EC meets their needs either very or fairly well. In contrast, more than a quarter of EDC staff do not know about the Intranet or consider that these services hardly or do not meet their need at all. The evaluation did not identify major issues regarding the intranet.

General management

Nearly three quarters of EDCs responding to the survey assessed EC general management as meeting their needs either very or fairly well. Despite this positive assessment issues of concern were identified during the evaluation regarding the annual reporting requirements:

- A significant group of EDCs does not provide an annual report to the EC representations. 70% of EDCs reportedly delivered an annual report to the EC Representation in their country in 2005, and 51% in 2006. Reasons for not reporting included:
 - *Representation does not require annual reports; and*
 - *EDC too recently established.*
- Some EDCs complaint about the absence of standards for reporting.
- The reporting process was often seen as a purely administrative issue, without receiving feedback from the Commission.

Other aspects of general management were appreciated, such as having national coordinators for EDCs and conducting regular meetings.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Case study Germany

⁵⁸ Case study Poland

This leads to the following conclusions:

20. ***A majority of responding EDCs consider that EC services (publications, training, Helpdesk, intranet, and general management) meet their needs either very well or fairly well.*** The highest level of satisfaction relates to the general management provided by the EC. The lowest levels of satisfaction relates to the publications provided by OPOCE and the question-and-answer service of the Helpdesk. A significant number of EDC staff members seem to prefer alternative tools of assistance (such as contact to other EDCs) to the question-and-answer service.

3.3.4. Operational recommendations

3.3.4.1. EDC networking and synergies with other EU networks

Increasing synergies within the EDC network

Networking seems to have a positive impact on the added-value of the EDC network. For example, networking tools may enhance significantly the quality of the assistance that EDC staff offers to the users. The meetings at both national and EU levels could continue to promote such synergies within the EDC network and facilitate exchange of information and best practices. The information provided during these meetings could focus on presenting relevant information for EDCs (e.g. information on new data-bases).

Whereas the infrastructure for meetings and information exchange seem to be already in place in most national networks and also at the EU level, other improvements concerning the network infrastructure of the EDCs seem to be feasible to increase potential synergies. The improvements relate to both the EU and the Member State level.

Increasing EDC network synergies at EU level

Evaluation results indicate that synergies at the EU level could be mainly increased through the following measures:

- Defining an archive strategy of the network;
- Creating an online archive for electronic documents;

The lack of a *consistent archive strategy* seems to be a problem for the network, as currently EDCs do not seem to have criteria for deciding which documents to archive and which not. A new archive strategy at EU level could clarify which are (1) the core documents that all EDCs should archive and – with a more demand-oriented approach to publication distribution – which (2) relevant documents could be archived by only some or even one of the EDCs in a country (see below). For the remaining (3) other documents EDCs would be fully free to decide whether to order/archive them or not. At the same time, other issues related to archiving could be specified (such as the minimum duration for which specific groups of documents should be kept and procedures for exchanges of documents between EDCs).

In addition, there seems to be a need for a central archive for electronic documents at EU level that would make all EU documents easily available, including “grey literature” published on the Europa website (such as reports, impact assessments etc.). Such an electronic archive would provide links to documents that are not subject to regular change and remaining valid over a long period. In the absence of such enduring links, some EDCs print out large numbers of EU documents to archive a paper copy, which might not be considered a very efficient way to deal with this problem.

An electronic online archive would index and catalogue electronic documents according to best library practices. With similar aims, the EDC network has already started initiatives such as the ArchiDok project. Since 2003, a group of German and Austrian EDCs have developed an online catalogue, known as ArchiDok, which registers electronic full text documents related to all fields of the Community policy. Project participants also include EDCs in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Slovakia. ArchiDok involves a systematic cataloguing of relevant, electronic texts published on the web sites of the institutions of the EU. Relevant full text publications published since 2000 are in-

cluded in the database as well as key documents published before that date.⁵⁹ Seen the complexity and importance of the issue, it seems, however, necessary to conduct such an activity at the EU level, either through an EU-initiative or through integrating and financially supporting EDC network initiatives such as ArchiDok, which would then need to be further developed and expanded to provide services relevant to all EDCs.

Increasing EDC network synergies at Member State level

Evaluation results indicate that synergies at the Member State level could be mainly increased through the following measures:

- The introduction of a designated “Archive EDC” for paper documents in each Member State;
- The introduction of EDC Internet portals for each Member State;
- The improvement of networking for joint activities, including in the area of communication.

Based on the new archive strategy of the network, a special role could be foreseen for one EDC in each Member State, the so-called *Archive EDC*. This EDC would volunteer and be agreed to by the national network to receive a complete set of relevant publications of the EC (including all priced publications and the paper version of the Official Journal) for archiving. This would safeguard that at least one paper copy of each publication would be available in each Member State and would then be accessible to other EDCs in that Member State through ordinary exchange procedures. It would also be possible to split the function of archive EDC and define two or three EDCs that together fulfil the *Archive EDC*-function and have complementary collections. However, it has to be emphasised that creating an “Archive EDC” may imply a number of questions, that need to be clarified: If the role of the “Archive EDC” were to be a voluntary one, the main incentive would be that the selected EDC receives a full set of printed publications. If additional funding would be required for this task, this would complicate the process, as a new contractual basis and additional funding sources would be needed. In any case, a selection process at the national level would have to take place and the duties of the “Archive EDC” would have to be defined in more detail in the new archive strategy.

As has been stated in previous sections, the introduction of national portals for EDCs and the improvement of networking towards the organisation of joint activities and communication programmes could also be expected to provide additional synergies. This, however, would require financial resources for related network projects, which would need to be provided from the EC, either centrally or through the representations.

Enhancement of synergies with other EU information networks

Collaboration between EDCs and Europe Direct information relays and Team Europe seems to remain limited and synergies between these networks could be improved. For example, other EU information networks could inform potential users about the EDC’s existence and mission. More specifically, as the services offered by EDCs appear to be particularly relevant for persons with in-depth information demands, as described above, other EU information networks as well as the communication depart-

⁵⁹ EDZ ArchiDok, *About the EDZ - ArchiDok project*. Referenced from: <http://archidok.uni-mannheim.de/en/>

ments of the EC Representations could develop PR strategies that would guide this specific group towards the EDCs.

3.3.4.2. Commission management and support of the EDC network

More demand-oriented distribution of publications

A recommendation concerning a more demand-oriented distribution of publications to the EDCs has already been presented above.

Focusing training activities

As the quality of the assistance provided by staff members of the EDCs seems to be the main asset of the EDC network, training opportunities for EDC staff in this respect seems to be particularly relevant, especially regarding EU databases and the Europa website. Ideally, each EDC staff should receive a special training at the EU or national level.

Defining EDC reporting requirements

Currently, there seems to be a lack of clarity and continuity concerning EDC reporting requirements. It is suggested to develop a set of reporting indicators that should be part of the reporting process each year. These reporting indicators, which would aim at providing insights in the personalised services provided by the EDC, could include:

- The number of users assisted per type of assistance (differentiated for internal and external users, i.e. users from outside the host structure):
 - Type I: Provision of general information (simple questions);
 - Type II: Provision of detailed information (fairly complex questions);
 - Type III: Expert assistance (very complex questions/guided database access);
- The number of participants in courses and seminars (differentiated for internal and external users);
- The number of all publications on EU issues produced by researchers from the host structure;
- The results of an annual user-satisfaction-survey conducted by each EDC among those researchers of the host structure that published research on EU issues. For this aim, EDCs should use a standardised user questionnaire;
- An assessment of the quality of EC management.

To increase the transparency of the process, the Commission could publish in the intranet summaries of the reports to allow EDCs to benchmark their services, both inside the Member State and across the EU.

The analysis in the previous sections leads to the following operational recommendations concerning synergies with other networks and EC management:

- ⇒ ***Synergies with other EU networks can be improved through the clarification of target groups.*** Other EU networks and EC Representations should advertise EDCs as a specific source of information for persons with in-depth information demands and refer this type of requests actively towards the next EDC. On the side of the EDCs, this would require the development of assistance to and services for external users, including through email support and training courses on EU databases and the Europa website.
- ⇒ ***Synergies within the EDC network could be maximised at EU level through defining an archive strategy for paper documents and through creating an online archive for electronic documents.*** An archive strategy would clarify the archive function of the EDCs for paper documents. The development of a European electronic archive would improve the archiving process for electronic documents. This would likely create an added value for research and seems to be a key element to ensure the future relevance of the EDC network.
- ⇒ ***Synergies within the EDC network could be maximised at Member State level, including through introducing national portals for EDCs and joint communication programmes.*** Such activities would require additional financial resources, which would need to be provided from the EC, either centrally or through the Representations. It should also be considered to designate in each Member State a specific Archive EDC to receive a complete set of relevant EU publications in paper format (including all priced publications and the Official Journal). The role, function and contractual basis of “Archive EDCs” would need to be defined in the context of a future archive strategy of the network.
- ⇒ ***There is potential to further improve EC management of the network, including through creating more training opportunities and through better definition of reporting requirements.*** Ideally, each EDC staff should receive a special training at the EU or national level regarding the use of EU databases and the Europa website. Improved reporting indicators for EDCs’ annual reports such as the number of users assisted according to level of assistance, the number of participants in courses and seminars, and the number of all publications on EU issues produced by researchers from the host structure would give better insight into the outreach of the EDC network regarding personalised services and also provide an opportunity for EDCs to benchmark their services.

ANNEX 1: EVALUATION INDICATORS

Enhancement of promotion and development of studies and research

3.3.4.3. Evaluation questions

Do the EDCs enhance the promotion and development of studies and research work in the field of European integration? How could these objectives be better achieved?

Is the EDC an effective mean to promote and develop studies and research work? With the evolving information technologies and needs, is the EDC still a valuable tool and offer an added value with regard to other instruments?

3.3.4.4. Evaluation indicators

3.3.4.5. Documentation function:

- Thematic profile of library in which the EDC is integrated (specialised library focusing on EU related issues or general library);⁶⁰
- Hours per week that the EDC provides access to public (university-based and other);
- Number of EDC users;
- Number of EDC users assisted by EDC staff in an average week;
- Number of EU publications processed catalogued, and indexed per year;
- Number of EU related publications produced by the host structure and documented by the EDC per year;
- Levels of assistance provided by EDC staff to the users (from simple queries to expert assistance);
- Type of access to EU relevant databases that the EDC provides;
- Additional services provided by the EDC to the users relevant to the documentation function such as seminars on EU databases etc. (types of services and total number of hours/users per year);
- User satisfaction with EDC services: a) with documents available and b) with databases accessible at EDC computers and c) with assistance provided by EDC staff;
- Importance of EDC as information source for users compared to other information sources;
- Assessment of EDC contribution to promoting and developing study and research in the field of European integration.

⁶⁰ Gives an indication whether or not all library users are EDC target group.

3.3.4.6. Communication function:

- Number of communication and promotion activities of EDC and average number of participants;
- Number of visitors of EDC website;
- Media coverage of EDC;
- Degree to which EDC is known to potential users (as assessed by main institutional users);
- Degree to which communication and information activities organised by the EDC are meeting user needs (as assessed by main institutional users).

Achievement of objectives at a reasonable cost

3.3.4.7. Evaluation question

Does the EDC network achieve its objectives at a reasonable cost (global cost of publications disseminated to the EDCs and cost of training provided)?

3.3.4.8. Indicators

3.3.4.9. All functions:

- EC financial resources used for the EDC network;
- Other financial resources used for the EDC network.

3.3.4.10. Documentation function:

- Number of EDC staff (in full time equivalent posts) and percentage of total weekly staff time used for documentation function;
- Financial resources available for documentation function of EDC (not including EDC staff costs).

3.3.4.11. Communication function:

- Percentage of total weekly EDC staff time used for communication function;
- Financial resources available for promotion/information activities of EDC.

3.3.4.12. Networking function:

- Percentage of total weekly staff time used for networking and reporting function;
- Financial resources available for networking activities of EDC.

Synergy with other networks

3.3.4.13. Evaluation question:

Do the EDCs operate in synergy with the other Commission networks at the national/European level?

3.3.4.14. Indicators

3.3.4.15. Networking function:

- Number of contacts with other EDCs within the MS and with EDCs in other MS;
- Coordination mechanisms (intra EDC);
- Number of contacts with other EU information networks within the MS and in other MS;
- Coordination mechanisms (with other EU information networks).

3.3.4.16. Management and support function:

- Extent to which the publications provided by OPOCE meet the needs of EDCs;
- Extent to which trainings provided by the EC (i.e. both by the EC Representation in the country and the EC in Brussels) meet the need of EDCs;
- Extent to which the Helpdesk provided by the EC meet the needs of EDCs;
- Extent to which the Intranet provided by the EC meet the needs of EDCs;
- Extent to which the general management of the EC (e.g. the annual evaluation, the annual national meeting) meet the needs of EDCs.

ANNEX 2: FOCUS GROUP GUIDELINE

<p>Warm up</p>	<p>Participant introductions</p> <p>Name</p> <p>Home, area and year of study, specific research issue (if relevant)</p>
<p>Introduction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Standard introduction ▪ We are conducting this research to supply the European Commission with in-depth analysis of the achievements and potential of the EDCs as part of the Europe Direct network. ▪ Today we're going to be talking with you - as current users and non-users of EDCs working on issues related to the EU - about your experiences with EDCs and the services of the EDCs within the context of developments in internet and electronic documentation, and the changing needs of users.
<p>General questions (all participants)</p>	<p><i>Ask participants to share with the group the experiences they have had in researching EU issues</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How do you go about finding a document/piece of information that you want to find concerning EU issues? For example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General Internet research? ○ Specific databases? ○ Visit to the library? Other? ▪ How easy is it to find relevant documents concerning the EU? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are the main barriers you came up against in finding the documents? ○ Do you need assistance for your search/research? The degree of the assistance? ▪ What do you think: is there a need for organised courses, seminars, and conferences on how to conduct research on EU issues or how to use the relevant databases? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have you ever participated in this kind of course? ○ If yes, who offered this service and where? ▪ Do you prefer printed documents or e-documents for your research work? ▪ How often are you using your library in general? Mainly online or by personal visits? ▪ Have you ever used EDC resources or been assisted by its staff for your research on EU issues? <p><i>If answer is <u>no</u> (this is a specific question to <u>non-users</u> only):</i></p> <p>What are the reasons that you do not use the EDC?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Other research priorities/sources? ○ EDC not known? Other reasons? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to your experience, to which degree is the EDC

	known to other potential users (e.g. colleagues, students)?
Experiences of using EDC (only participants that have used EDC in the past)	<p><i>Experiences with EDC regarding research on EU relevant issues</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How have you heard about the existence of the EDC? ▪ How often do you use the EDC? If you only use it rarely: Why? <p><i>Please describe your experience with EDC services that you have had so far:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do the <u>documents</u> available at the EDC meet your needs? If not, please explain. ▪ Do the <u>databases</u> available at the EDC meet your needs? If not, please explain. ▪ Does the <u>assistance</u> of the EDC staff available meet your needs? If not, please explain. ▪ Do the other <u>activities</u> organised by the EDC (such as courses, seminars, conferences, competitions, book presentations) meet your needs? If not, please explain. ▪ What is the most important EDC service for you? ▪ Based on your experience: How would you describe the overall contribution of the EDC to your studies and research work on EU issues?
Issues for the future (all participants)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will the EDC remain relevant to you with more and more publications available on the Internet? What is its added value for you? ▪ How could the EDC provide more effective support to your studies and research work on EU issues? What additional tools or services currently not offered by the EDC would be helpful for your research?
Group task (all participants)	<p><i>Participant group task – break the group into two sub-groups of 4 to work together on the following task, then present back their findings to each other</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ From your personal experience and taking into consideration the issues we’ve just discussed, I’d like you to work together to build the ideal EDC that would encourage students and researchers conducting studies and research on EU issues: <i>(facilitator to refer back to the previously identified issues for the future)</i> ▪ How would it work? ▪ What would make it a more effective tool than today? ▪ How would it reach students and researchers better? <p>Each group to present back their conclusions to the group</p>
Thanks & close	

ANNEX 3: SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUPS

Focus group results – France

Date of focus group: 4 October 2007

Number of persons that attended: 8

Profile of participants (age, profession/research interest):

Four participants were PhD students currently working on theses related to EU issues. Some of them were also giving lectures within the host institution. The subjects they were working on were:

- Competition law
- Community law
- Comparative law (EU/Turkey)

The other four participants were both professors and researchers within the host structure. Some of them were initially the founders of the EDC within the host university. Their main working areas were:

- EU competition policy
- Community law
- Public law
- Fiscal and budgetary policies

The age of participants within the target group varied. While the PhD students were mostly below 30 years old, the researchers were aged between 40 and 60.

Summary

When searching for documents related to EU issues most users start by a search on the Europa website. If they need paper documents they would go the EDC. In addition, if they search for a theory, an analysis or a comment on a piece of legislation they would turn towards specialised reviews (online or paper ones). Most users would do a double or triple search using all the above possibilities and using different databases (EU, French).

There was an agreement in the group that searching for EU related documents is not easy and requires some experience. On the other hand most EU databases and sites have improved a lot in the past few years (e.g. Eur-lex). However, the Europa website still remains not “user-friendly”. The search engine is not very good and it requires a lot of patience to locate really relevant documents.

For people outside the EU circle it is very difficult to find information, said one of the participants. The search requires familiarity with the tools such as Eur-lex. The group also confirmed that the EU databases and sites are difficult for inexperienced users, such as students at the beginning of their studies. They do not know where or how to look. There is a multitude of databases and sites and it takes some time to become familiar with these. Therefore the EDC and the training on EU databases are important for this type of users.

Most participants in the group agreed that as they already had a good knowledge of these databases and websites when they required assistance, it concerned rather specialised issues. *Sometimes I try to find a document which was cited in the literature and I do not manage. I would then go to the EDC and ask the staff to help me. They would either help me to locate it or order it if it is not available.*

In order to facilitate the search of databases (including EU databases) the university Toulouse 1 and its library services provide students with training every year. These courses are compulsory for students in their second year of their Masters' degree. The courses were considered to be very useful, mostly by the PhD students who remember participating in this course not such a long time ago. They said: *Our university subscribes to a lot of databases, this training is essential for us.* However it was also said that the training could be further improved and better targeted if the trainer had some legal background.

When it comes to the preference for paper or electronic documents the opinions were divided. While there was an agreement that electronic documents offered advantages such as being able to skim the document or to copy directly, paper seems necessary for some type of use:

- *Judgements and jurisdiction – in order to annotate them we need a paper form;*
- *To compare documents it is still more handy to have the print out;*
- *We have to translate a lot of documents internally as these are only available in English from the Commission. For their translation we need them in paper version in order to annotate them.*

However, the participants were happy with printing the electronic documents if the facilities in the library allowed so.

All the participants were frequent library users. Though they would search for documents online they would also frequently go to the library physically.

All the participants have already used the EDC, though some were more frequent users than others. One participant noted that she could find a lot of information on her topic (community law) also in the other libraries within the university. To this other participants responded that in other fields (e.g. competition) EDC is the only library to have a good collection.

When it comes to the degree to which EDC is known to the other students, participants responded:

The EDC is not very well known to other students. We do tell them at the beginning of the year, but they forget. This is mostly the case of Masters students. However there is unfortunately an overall reduction in library frequentation of Masters students who find more and more documents online.

Sometimes they write their Masters thesis [on EU topics] without ever going to the EDC and we can see that the quality is therefore decreasing. Students who do not go to the library do not refer to the legislative analysis, comments and explanations and hence the quality of their work suffers, commented the professors present in the group. These types of documents are usually available only through payable databases which are only wholly accessible when one is physically on the university site. However this is a wider problem not only related to EU issues.

All the participants were EDC users and most of them were frequent users.

Overall there was an agreement that the EDC does have the required documents most of the time. Nevertheless some weaknesses in the EDC collection were noted:

- The EDC has a lot of specialised literature but there is a gap in updated general publications. *Recently there were many new general publications on EU issues and I would expect the EDC to have them;*
- There is very little information on Community budget and the budgeting procedure;
- There is also a gap in the availability of reports from the Court of Auditors;
- The EDC only has publications in French and English but there is hardly anything in the other EU languages.

In terms of assistance all participants strongly appreciated the support given by EDC staff. Especially for PhD students this was seen as crucial. *The staff here knows us and they know on which themes we are working therefore we receive personalised advice.*

In addition it was underlined that the EDC is very reactive when they need to provide users with missing documents. These are ordered in a vast majority of cases even if they are payable.

There was an overall agreement that the existence of the EDC is an important support for researchers.

There was also an agreement that even if more and more documents are becoming available online EDCs remain relevant. First of all they offer personalised assistance and secondly, paper documents are still required for some kinds of work.

The ideal EDC

The participants were divided into two groups of four people (PhD students & professors). The following summarises the responses of both groups:

- The ideal EDC would have longer opening hours (it currently closes earlier than the host library);
- It would use better, more logical, classification of publications;
- It would be better equipped in terms of computers and software but also other facilities such as printers, etc.;
- It would have a stronger core collection of general EU law publications; and
- More foreign literature – mostly when it comes to articles, comments and interpretation of legislation.

Focus group results – Ireland

Date of focus group: 25 September 2007

Number of persons that attended: 10

Profile of participants (age, profession/research interest):

The age of the participants varied between approximately 20 to 50 years and the participants were a mix of genders. There were five lecturers, one research officer, and four students. There were several non-users in the group discussion. All had an expressed interest in EU affairs in their work/studies with the exception of one student (Mathematics). The participants had the following profiles:

- 1 Senior lecturer (department of government) with a specialist interest in the EU. Non-user of the EDC;
- 1 Senior lecturer (gender studies and history). Occasional user of the EDC;
- 1 Senior lecturer (public health and epidemiology). Non-user of the EDC;
- 1 Senior lecturer of law (environmental and natural resources law). Sporadic user of the EDC;
- 1 Department head and senior lecturer (sociology). Regular user of the EDC;
- 1 Research Officer of the University (involved in research funding opportunities and tender opportunities). Non-user of the EDC;
- 1 third-year student (economics). Non-user of the EDC;
- 1 third-year student (geography and English). Non-user of the EDC;
- 1 third-year student (social science). Occasional user of the EDC;
- 1 post-graduate student (mathematics). Non-user of the EDC.

Summary

General questions

Most participants expressed that they employed the Internet first when commencing a research project. For one lecturer, the general library catalogue was the preferred information source. No participants used the EDC as their first resource. Participants said that electronic research was faster/easier than with paper documents and that it was also an easier way to develop a general understanding of the background of a research topic.

Generally speaking, there was a general dissatisfaction with the ease of finding relevant documents concerning the EU. Most participants agreed that Internet searches and the Europa website is fine for finding general knowledge but when more specific information is required, the resources are insufficient. Reasons for this are due to an overabundance of available information and the fact that websites/search tools are not intuitive and require a special knowledge to find the data for which someone is looking. For the focus group participants the information tools are not straightforward, and this was identified by participants as one of the biggest barriers when searching for relevant EU-related documents.

Regarding the need for courses, seminars, and/or conferences on how to conduct research on EU issues or operation of relevant databases; participants generally agreed that there were two issues: (1) knowing what research tools exist; and (2) knowing how to use these tools. Participants generally concurred that short introductory courses are useful but that the best way to learn the operation of these research tools is by means of practice. Most participants agreed that it would be useful to have librarians/professors briefly introduce which search tools are available and what these tools can achieve and then the responsibility to learn these tools would lie with the student/researcher themselves. In other words, long courses are generally considered useless as many students/researchers will not make use of the tools later on. For example, one student expressed: "I generally avoid the courses because I know how to get the information I need." Many participants agreed that the problem lies not with training of the students but with the complexity of the research tools.

Regarding the use of printed documents or electronic documents for research purposes, most participants use electronic resources first. However, they were in agreement that use of electronic versus printed documents varies depending on the research needs and the availability of online documents. The Law Professor emphasised the legal importance of paper documents as the only way to ensure that one has the most correct document. One user expressed that paper documents are easier to search for general information as opposed to online documents when one has to have a higher awareness of what exactly they are looking for. Several participants expressed that though they prefer the Internet as a research source, they will still print the documents out to read and take notes. Other participants expressed that if one actually wants to read the document, they prefer the paper version as opposed to electronic documents, which are considered to be more useful to just find a piece of information.

Comments on European Documentation Centres

Regarding the use of the EDC, as mentioned before only one participant was a regular user of the EDC, 2 were occasional users of the EDC and one participant has used it only on sporadic occasions. All of the participants who had used the EDC were pleased with their experience and expressed that it had been useful and valuable for their research purposes. They also emphasised the symbolic importance of a physical presence of the EU via the EDCs. They expressed that the value of the EDC had been in: (1) the paper copy of the official journal for legal purposes; (2) extra guidance from the librarians on the research tools and research assistance (especially when information was unavailable on the internet from initial research); and (3) that it is also relatively easier to do historical research in the EDC than online. The only problems expressed by users of the EDC were: (1) due to space limitations, sometimes it was difficult to find immediately documents that they needed; and (2) the EDC was not so easily navigable alone - help from the librarians was necessary.

The non-users expressed various reasons for not using the EDCs, among them were:

- Inconvenience: opening hours are not convenient; materials cannot be removed from the EDC; and a swipe card is necessary to enter the Library (and therefore the EDC). Also the use of the internet is faster (and therefore more convenient) than going physically into the EDC;
- Increasing use of online materials: students are increasingly using the Internet for their studies and provision of online materials is increasing. In fact, most professors

and universities use of the Internet as a primary source of educational tools (e.g. Blackboard). Additionally, most participants have the general impression that they can satisfactorily and thoroughly conduct their research with the tools that are available on the Internet.

- Lack of awareness of the EDC: some users expressed that they don't actually even know what the EDC has to offer; and
- Intimidation: The EDC is an intimidating place to enter for novice users.

The students in the group estimated that "only a very small percentage" of their classmates probably use the EDC; in general they had the impression that most students use the Internet and the electronic journals for their research purposes. Lecturers agreed that most of their students are also only using online resources.

The future of EDC

What should happen to the EDC in the future? The participants universally supported the continuation of the EDCs as a physical body within the university. Both groups emphasised that the biggest challenge the EDC (and its usage) faces is that it is not adequately promoted to the students and the staff. Participants also emphasised the importance of promoting the EDC to the general public. The following summarises the participant responses regarding the "ideal EDC":

- More information needs to be readily available about what is physically available within the EDC (ie, what is the added-value over Internet/catalogue research?);
- Development of a user friendly step-by-step guide of the EDC;
- Increased promotion of the EDC to students/researchers and to the general public; and

Increased accessibility of the EDC - especially for the public (e.g. via a separate entrance which does not require the key card access, longer hours).

Focus group results – Sweden

Date of focus group: 27 September 2007

Number of persons that attended: 3

Profile of participants (age, profession/research interest):

1 Senior Lecturer (law / civil rights)

1 research assistant (EC law) and former student at the university

1 law student (bachelor's thesis in EU law)

General questions

All three participants had a legal background and were mainly interested in EC legislation and relevant (preparatory) acts. They generally start their research projects by identifying relevant material on the Commission's Europa website or other online databases,⁶¹ e.g. by searching by subject, institution, or open search. The main reason for this is that the most recent sources are usually available online faster than in the university library.

Most databases are structured in different ways, and it often takes quite some time to understand how to search in various databases. All three focus group participants indicated that currently they use only a limited number of databases with which they become familiar.

The focus group participants agreed that it is not always straightforward to find relevant documentation online, in particular older material, including case law, which is only rarely available electronically. Key word searches often result in too broad literature lists, or too narrow ones. The three participants agreed that very specific search terms are needed in order to be able to search in most databases. Also, judgements are difficult to find in full text, as well as opinions by the Advocate General. Old White Papers were also indicated as difficult to obtain online.

In such cases, when material cannot be found online, the participants often first ask their colleagues or other students for advice on where to obtain sources. Two of the three participants indicated that they then turn to the 'physical' EDC or the library. Participants may also turn to the EDC when they need long reference material (e.g. monographs which can be 400 pages long). One participant was unaware that the EDC existed.

All three also agreed that sometimes it can be helpful to go to the library to check what is on the shelves. For example, in some cases, this can enable users to find additional key words and sources that at a glance do not seem relevant but can turn out to contain relevant information. Furthermore, additional literature, which does not appear in databases when searching for particular terms, is sometimes available on the shelves. The main disadvantage with literature that is available in the library is that often material in very specific fields is necessary for research projects, and that, in many cases, the literature in the library is too general.

⁶¹ The library card gives access also to paid databases by logging in from home.

In relation to the degree of assistance needed, the reason for turning to colleagues or other students before going to the library is that this is usually more efficient time-wise: often, issues can be resolved faster by asking other peers than going to the library, as several colleagues are dealing with the same topics and are well informed on the specific issues and relevant material, and may even have it on their desk.

The focus group participants agreed that introductory courses on how to conduct research on EU material and how to use relevant databases would be very useful. One of the students had participated in an introductory course when she started at the university, but she considered that it was too general and that it would have been better to link it to a course or specific research work. The Senior Lecturer who participated in the focus group had attended an information search course at the EUI in Florence, which she found very useful. The course had been specifically aimed at EC legislation research and relevant search tools. The Senior Lecturer pointed out that the lecturers at the university probably needed to take more responsibility for incorporating information searches in the general courses.

All participants agreed that the most relevant point in time to organise courses on information searches is in fact in relation to a specific subject. This was preferred to arranging a general course. One way of doing this could be to put aside a certain number of hours in the curriculum for teaching information search.

Comments on the European Documentation Centre

The Senior Lecturer had only spent two semesters working at the university where the focus group was arranged. Previously she had worked at another university, which also had an EDC. The Senior Lecturer indicated that she had visited the EDC at the other university frequently, that she had not needed much assistance and that it 'worked'. Sometimes she did not find the material she needed.

The research assistant had been a student at the university before getting an employment there, and therefore had experiences both as a student and as a lecturer. She highlighted that the department for EC law was quite small at the university, and that when she was doing her master's theses, she had had a mentor at another university (also EDC). Therefore, she had often searched for material at the other university library, which had a much larger collection of material.

The student who participated in the focus group had not used the EDC at all. She did have the general introduction to the library when she started at the university, but as the EDC was not relevant at the outset of her studies, she had forgotten about it and not 'rediscovered' it as no one had mentioned that it existed.

In terms of the awareness of the existence of the EDC, the focus group participants agreed that the general awareness amongst students probably is low, despite that many are probably doing research for which EU material is needed. The Senior Lecturer indicated that it is likely that most lecturers are aware of the material, however, as indicated above, that they are not doing enough to spread the information to students.

At the library, there is a specific section for EDC material, whilst other literature is organised by subject. All three focus group participants agreed that it would be beneficial to continue this way of organising material, and that it would not increase the visibility of EDC to spread the material according to subject. Instead, this would make it harder to find relevant sources, as often the EU literature concern more than one subject area.

The future of EDC

What should happen to the EDC in the future? The focus group participants all commented that the EDC should remain and not be discontinued. The participants pointed out that up-to-date information is often available on Internet, whereas older material is taken away (or never put online). For researchers, it is crucial to have access to older material also, as many times the purpose is to follow developments and analyse both old and new information. Therefore, all three considered important that older information is archived somewhere, e.g. in the EDC libraries. It can also be difficult to find documentation on the Europa website, as sometimes the most relevant information has been placed where it might not be most logic to search. Free and full access to material is important. EDC would be a suitable instrument to collect and organise information in a more logic way.

Literature does not always have to be provided in paper format. It would also be useful if documents could be scanned to be made available online.

The most crucial aspects of EDC

- Make information available online in a user-friendly format (e.g. scan documents);
- Make cross-references in documents;
- Provide a guide on how to search for those who have not received any introduction. This 'EDC for dummies' would best be placed on the EDC website.
- Prompt update of documentation;
- Provide EDC courses where the value of the collection of documentation is emphasised and the added value is clearly explained, as well as (1) what documentation is available; (2) this is the way to find the information. Introduction to the EDC should be provided as part of the curriculum and linked to relevant courses instead of being provided as a general course at the beginning of the first year to students.

PhD students should receive information about the EDC when they apply, and a course on EDC should be provided to them as part of an information research course.

ANNEX 4: POSSIBLE NEW ELECTRONIC SERVICES FOR EDCS

In order to reach new clients and strengthen the relations with them, new electronic services could complement the current profile of EDCs. Possibilities for new services, that would possibly have to be funded through EDC host-structures or in the framework of EDCs projects at the national level, include:

Personalised services (text-alerts, SDI services or current-awareness-services): Text-alerting service, selective dissemination of information (SDI) or current-awareness-services may be obtained after logging in to a publish-subscribe-programme and depositing requests, the answers to which may be sent to the customer electronically. In general, *current-awareness-services* consist of news in regular intervals (e.g. monthly) whereas *text-alerts* are sent as soon as information is available. Within the framework of current-awareness-services, the contents pages of the major EU journals for various user groups (researchers, lawyers, journalists etc.) could be compiled and distributed by email. Users would thereby be kept up to date with the latest studies and could subsequently request full-text copies from their EDC. *SDI products* relate to the compilation of relevant articles of interest from the latest journal editions. They also deliver further information on various topics, which may be of interest to EDC customers.

RSS-feeds and email-newsletters: RSS (Really Simple Syndication) is an electronic news format that allows the user to subscribe to websites. An RSS document, which is called a "feed," "web feed," or "channel," would contain either a summary of content from the associated EDC web site or the full text. The EDCs could thereby inform their users on the latest developments regarding research and sources on EU issues.

Dissemination of information literacy and media skills / e-learning: The dissemination of information literacy and media skills can hardly be achieved via library introduction and training sessions, which are normally 'one-off' selective introductions to the use of the EDCs. It rather refers to the long-term proficiency in the use of scientific material with regards to Europe. To complement personal training sessions, e-learning programmes regarding "EU research competence" could be developed. In producing the e-learning modules, it would be important to consider the content as well as the didactic methods.

Digital Reference Service (DRS) is an addition to the direct, personal information-dissemination of the EDCs. Characteristic of all forms of DRS is that EDC clients can use the service without needing to visit the premises or taking notice of opening times. The EDC on the other hand has the opportunity to gain new users, who may previously never have even considered using their services.

If these kind of services are provided they must be organised and financed by the hosting Universities

ANNEX 5: EDC MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE

EVALUATION OF THE EDC NETWORK
*
SURVEY OF
EUROPEAN DOCUMENTATION CENTRES

Please return filled questionnaire by email to edc@civic-consulting.de no later than

16 April 2007

(please return in Word format and do not convert to a pdf document)

INTRODUCTION

DG Communication of the European Commission has launched an external evaluation of the EDC network. The evaluation will examine the effectiveness of European Documentation Centres with regard to the objectives set by the Commission in the EDC agreement. The evaluation shall also examine if this service offers an added value with regard to other EU or national services and to what extent it contributes to synergies between information tools set up at EU, national or regional level.

This evaluation, awarded to the Civic Consulting and GHK of the Consumer Policy Evaluation Consortium (CPEC), has started in December 2006 and is expected to be finalised by December 2007.

The information you will provide through this questionnaire will be crucial in evaluating the different functions of the EDC. We therefore greatly appreciate your contribution.

Please note that all data required in the questions below refer to the year 2006, if not stated otherwise.

If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact:

Merle Achten (edc@civic-consulting.de) Phone: +49-30-2196-2295 Fax: +49-30-2196-2298

IDENTIFICATION DATA

1. Please identify your EDC:

- a. Name, country and, if applicable, website of EDC:

Please specify

- b. Questionnaire completed by (name of person, position, contact details):

Please specify

I) GENERAL DATA

2. Please provide the following general data regarding your host structure.

a. Please indicate the type of the host structure.

- University
- Research institute
- Other

If other, please specify

b. Does your host structure organise communication or promotion activities related to EU integration or other EU issues (e.g. debates, conferences, seminars, presentations etc.)?

Yes No

If yes, please estimate the number of relevant communication/promotion activities in 2006

3. If your EDC is part of a library (e.g. university main library, faculty library, research centre library) please provide the following general data regarding the library in which your EDC is located.

a. Please indicate the thematic profile of the library.

- Focusing exclusively on EU issues
- Focusing on international issues including EU issues
- General library
- EDC is not hosted by a library but has separate premises
- Other

b. Please indicate the number of library users in 2006 if applicable.

Please specify

c. Please indicate the number of library users assisted by library staff in an average week (all requests for assistance including EDC related requests and other requests).

Please specify

4. Please provide the following general data regarding your EDC.

a. Please indicate the type of the EDC.

- General EDC
- Specialised EDC
- Other (e.g. EDC coordinating other EDCs in the same region or country)

Please specify your field of specialisation, if applicable

b. Please indicate the number of EDC users in 2006 (if available).

Please specify number and method of data gathering

c. Please indicate the number of EDC staff (in full time equivalent posts¹).

Please specify

d. Please indicate the percentage of total weekly EDC staff time used for different functions.

EDC Function	Documentation function	Communication function	Networking and reporting function
Percentage of EDC staff time used for function (total should be 100%)	...%	...%	...%

Note: For the definition of functions please refer to the introduction of sections II, III, IV of this questionnaire (see below).

Comments

5. How many hours a week is your EDC accessible to the public (university-based and other)?

Please select from dropdown menu

Comments

¹ The number of full time equivalent posts is calculated by dividing the total weekly working hours of all EDC staff by 40.

6. Please indicate the financial resources available for your EDC (excluding staff costs) in Euro.

a. Please indicate the total EDC budget excluding staff costs in 2006.

Please specify

b. Please indicate the allocation of the EDC budget according to functions if applicable (in percentage of the total budget excluding the staff costs).

EDC Function	Documentation function	Communication function	Networking and reporting function
Percentage of EDC budget used for function (total should be 100%)	...%	...%	...%

Note: For the definition of functions please refer to the introduction of sections II, III, IV of this questionnaire (see below).

Comments

c. Does your EDC have sources of income other than the budget provided by the host structure?

Yes

No

If yes, please specify the sources and amounts in 2006

7. Please provide the contact details of institutional users of your EDC.

Note: Institutional users are for example individual professors or faculties conducting study and research in the field of European integration, EU law, etc. inside or outside of your host structure.

Contact person	Institutional unit	E-mail	Phone
<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>
<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>
<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>
<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>
<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>
<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>	<i>Please specify</i>

Note: Please forward the separately provided questionnaire for institutional users to all contact persons listed above. The contact data provided by you will only be used for further follow up and will not be provided to anybody except Commission officials involved in managing the EDC network.

II) DOCUMENTATION FUNCTION

Definition: Promote and develop study and research in the field of European integration by processing, cataloguing and indexing all the Community publications; providing professional support to search for information; serving as a central point for all Community-related information produced by the host structure; providing access to publications and other material to the public.

8. Please describe the assistance provided by your EDC staff to users.

- a. Please indicate the number of users assisted by EDC staff in an average week (only EDC related requests, i.e. all requests regarding European/EU issues).

Please specify

- b. Please estimate the level of assistance provided by EDC staff to the users (from simple queries to expert assistance).

Level of assistance	Type I: Provision of general information (simple questions)	Type II: Provision of detailed information (fairly complex questions)	Type III: Expert assistance (very complex questions/ guided access to databases)
Percentage of user queries (total should be 100%)	...%	...%	...%

Comments

9. Please describe the access to EU relevant databases that your EDC provides to users.

- a. Please indicate the type of access that you provide to users.

- Provision of links (e.g. on EDC website)
 Free access for users to publicly accessible Internet databases (e.g. Eurolex) through EDC computers
 Free access for users to paid Internet databases (e.g. newspapers/periodicals) through EDC computers
 Other

If other, please specify

- b. Please indicate the average number of users per week that access EU relevant databases through your EDC computers.

Please specify

10. Does your EDC offer courses on EU databases or other services to train users in research on European issues?

Yes

No

If yes, please specify type and number of courses, seminars etc. in 2006

11. Please indicate the number of EU publications processed, catalogued, and indexed by your EDC in 2006.

Please specify

12. Please indicate the number of EU related publications produced by your host structure and documented by your EDC in 2006.

Please specify

13. Please assess the degree to which the documentation services provided by your EDC meet user needs.

- a. Please assess the degree to which documents available (disseminated by the Publications Office or obtained by other means) meet user needs.

Please select from dropdown menu

- b. Please assess the degree to which databases accessible at EDC computers meet user needs.

Please select from dropdown menu

- c. Please assess the degree to which assistance provided by EDC staff meets user needs, i.e. have you been generally able to satisfy users' requests for information.

Please select from dropdown menu

- d. Please justify your assessment and specify reasons in case you do not meet specific user needs.

Comments

III) COMMUNICATION FUNCTION

Definition: Promotion of the EDC; participating in the debate on the European Union (e.g. by organizing information activities/events); taking part in the Commission's general information activities.

14. Have you organised in 2006 communication or promotion activities related to EU integration or other EU issues (e.g. debates, conferences, seminars, presentations etc.)?

Yes No

- If yes:

Please indicate in the table below the number of EU related communication and promotion activities organised by your EDC and estimate the total number of participants.

Activity	Course	Seminar	Conference	Competition	Book Presentation	Other	Total
Number of <u>EDC activities</u> in 2006
Total <u>number of participants</u> in 2006

15. Does your EDC have a website?

Yes No

If yes, please specify the number of page visits in 2006

16. Has your EDC been covered by an external media report in 2006 (radio, newspaper, TV etc.)?

Yes No

If yes, please specify the type and number of media reports

17. Please indicate the type of media that your EDC uses to promote the services of your EDC.

Please specify

18. Please assess the degree to which your EDC and your activities are known to potential users.

a. Please assess the degree to which your EDC is known to host structure staff and students.

Please select from dropdown menu

- b. Please assess the degree to which your EDC is known to the general public.

Please select from dropdown menu

- c. Please assess the degree to which the communication and promotion activities organised by your EDC reach users.

Please select from dropdown menu

- d. Please assess the degree to which the activities (such as courses, seminars, conferences, competitions, book presentations related to the debate on the EU) organised by your EDC meet user needs.

Please select from dropdown menu

- e. Please justify your assessment.

Comments

IV) NETWORKING AND REPORTING FUNCTION

Definition: Establishing relations with other European information relays and networks and cooperating with them at all levels (including with other EDCs); informing the Commission of the events in which it participates (debates, conferences, seminars and the like); reporting annually to the Commission Representation.

19. Please describe your networking activities with other EDCs in 2006.

- a. Please specify the type and number of contacts your EDC had with other EDCs in your country and in other Member States.

Contact related to...	User query	Joint organisation of promotion / information activities	Joint organisation of training activities	General networking activities	Total
Number of contacts to EDCs <u>in your country</u>
Number of contacts to EDCs in <u>other Member States</u>

- b. Please describe coordination structures in place for networking with other EDCs (e.g. are there EDCs that have a coordinating role?).

Please specify

- c. Please describe the networking tools used by your EDC (e.g. intranet, mailing lists).

Please specify

20. Please describe your networking activities with other EU information networks in 2006.

Please specify the type and number of contacts your EDC had with other EU information networks in your country and in other Member States.

Contact related to...	User query	Joint organisation of promotion / information activities	Joint organisation of training activities	General networking activities	Total
Number of contacts to information networks <u>in your country</u>
Number of contacts to information networks in <u>other Member States</u>

Please specify the networks you were in contact with

21. Has your EDC provided annual reports to the EC Representation in your country?

- In 2005 Yes No

- In 2006 Yes No

Comments

22. Please assess the management of the EDC network by the European Commission. *Please note that data from this question will only be provided to the Commission in aggregated form, individual EDCs will not be identifiable.*

a. Please assess to what extent the publications provided by OPOCE meet the needs of your EDC.

Please select from dropdown menu

b. Please assess to what extent the trainings provided by the EC (i.e. both by the Representation in your country and the EC in Brussels) meet the needs of your EDC.

Please select from dropdown menu

c. Please assess to what extent the helpdesk provided by the EC meets the needs of your EDC.

Please select from dropdown menu

d. Please assess to what extent the Intranet provided by the EC meets the needs of your EDC.

Please select from dropdown menu

e. Please assess to what extent the general management of the EC (e.g. the annual evaluation, the annual national meeting) meets the needs of your EDC.

Please select from dropdown menu

f. Please justify your assessment and specify reasons in case specific EC activities do not meet your needs.

Comments

V) GENERAL ASSESSMENT

23. What type of services does your EDC currently provide that would not be provided by your host structure, if the EDC had not been established?

Please specify

24. Does your EDC currently – in your view – contribute to the promotion and development of studies and research work in the field of European integration?

Please select from dropdown menu

25. How could, with the evolving information technologies and needs, your EDC remain a valuable tool and offer an added value to users?

Please specify

26. Is there, according to your opinion, a need for additional financial resources?

Yes

No

If yes, please specify for which aims and the suggested source of financing

ANNEX 6: EDC INSTITUTIONAL USER QUESTIONNAIRE

EVALUATION OF THE EDC NETWORK
*
SURVEY OF INSTITUTIONAL USERS OF THE EUROPEAN DOCUMENTATION CENTRES¹

**Please return filled questionnaire by email to edc@civic-consulting.de no later than
16 April 2007**

(please return in Word format and do not convert to a pdf document)

DG Communication of the European Commission has launched an external evaluation of the network of European Documentation Centres. You have been identified by the EDC at your university or institution to be one of the institutional users of the EDC, meaning that either you yourself, your staff and/or your students are potentially involved in research or studies on European issues. The evaluation will examine the effectiveness of European Documentation Centres and will assess how the network could provide better services to users in the future.

The information you will provide through this questionnaire will be crucial in assessing whether the EDC meets the needs of the users. We therefore greatly appreciate your contribution. The data obtained through this questionnaire will not be used to assess the performance of the individual EDC you use, but will rather provide the user perspective regarding the services of the network as whole.

If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact:

Merle Achten (edc@civic-consulting.de)

Phone: +49-30-2196-2295

Fax: +49-30-2196-2298

1. Please identify yourself:

a. Country:

Please specify

b. Please identify your position:

Please select from the dropdown menu

c. Questionnaire completed by (*optional*):

Name, position, contact details

2. Please estimate how often you, your staff and/or the students that are conducting research on EU integration or other EU relevant issues use the EDC on average? Note: If possible, discuss this question with your staff and/or students.

Please select from dropdown menu

¹ E.g. faculty members, staff of research institutes dealing with European issues.

3. Do the documentation services of the EDC meet your needs?

- a. Please assess the degree to which documents available meet the needs of yourself, your staff and/or your students.

Please select from dropdown menu

- b. Please assess the degree to which databases accessible at EDC computers meet the needs of yourself, your staff and/or your students.

Please select from dropdown menu

- c. Please assess the degree to which assistance provided by EDC staff meets the needs of yourself, your staff and/or your students.

Please select from dropdown menu

4. Please assess the strengths and weaknesses of the documentation services provided by the EDC.

- a. If you think that the documentation services meet needs well, what do you consider to be the main strengths of the EDC in this respect?

Please specify

- b. If you think that the documentation services are insufficient, what do you consider to be the main weaknesses of the EDC in this respect?

Please specify

5. Please assess the communication activities of the EDC.

- a. According to your experience, to which degree is the EDC known to potential users (e.g. colleagues, students)?

Please select from dropdown menu

- b. According to your experience, to which degree do the communication and promotion activities organised by the EDC (such as courses, seminars, conferences, competitions, book presentations related to the debate on the EU) reach potential users (e.g. colleagues, students)?

Please select from dropdown menu

- c. Please assess the degree to which the activities (such as courses, seminars, conferences, competitions, book presentations related to the debate on the EU) organised by the EDC meet the needs of yourself, your staff and/or your students.

Please select from dropdown menu

- 6. How important is the EDC for you as an information source for your research on EU integration or other EU relevant issues?**

Please select from dropdown menu

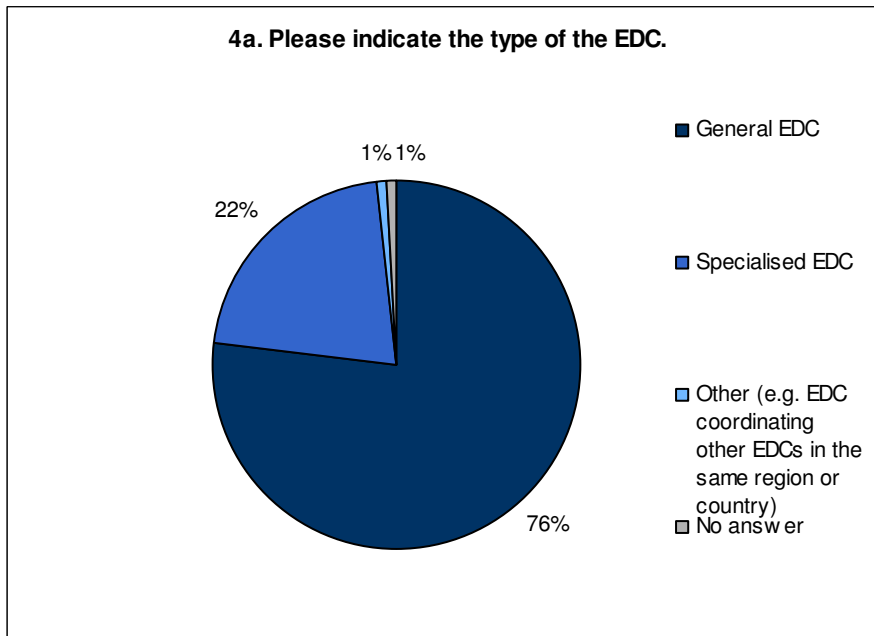
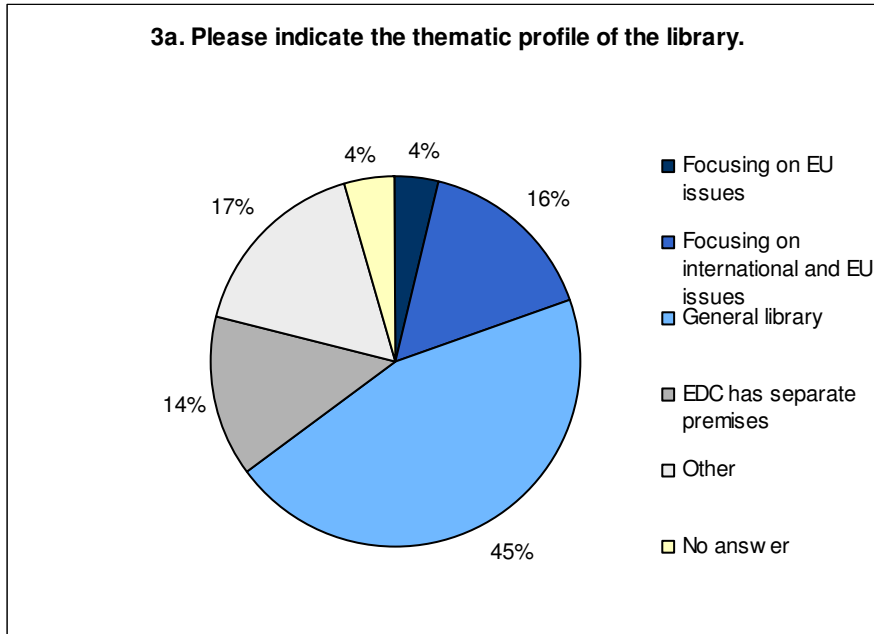
- 7. Does the EDC currently – in your view – contribute to the promotion and development of studies and research work in the field of European integration?**

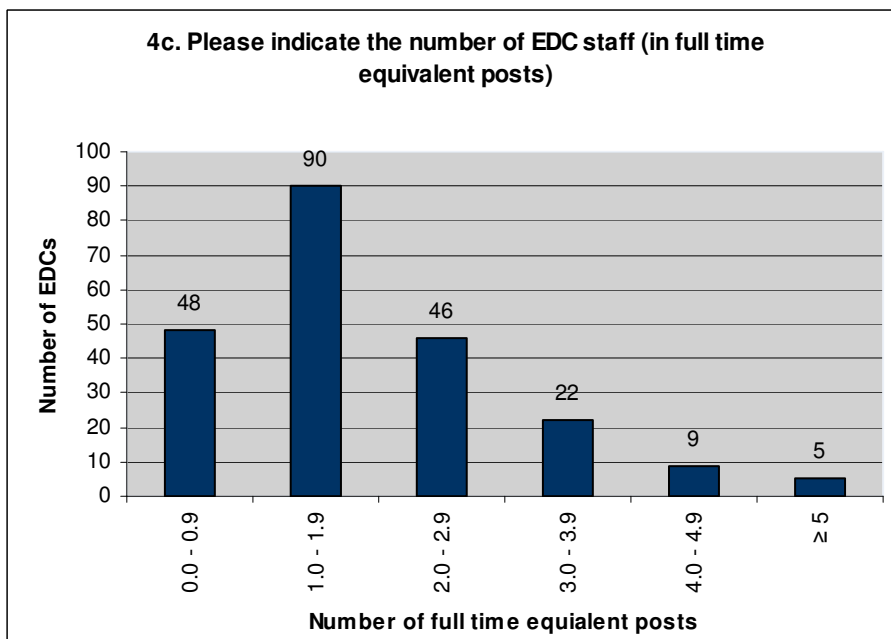
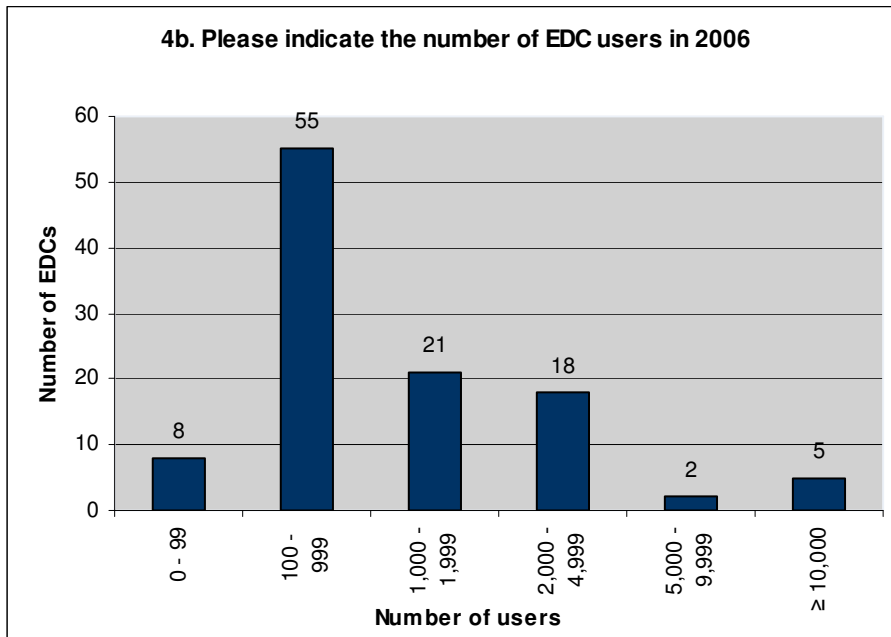
Please select from dropdown menu

- 8. With the evolving information technologies and needs, how could the EDC remain a valuable tool and offer an added value to you?**

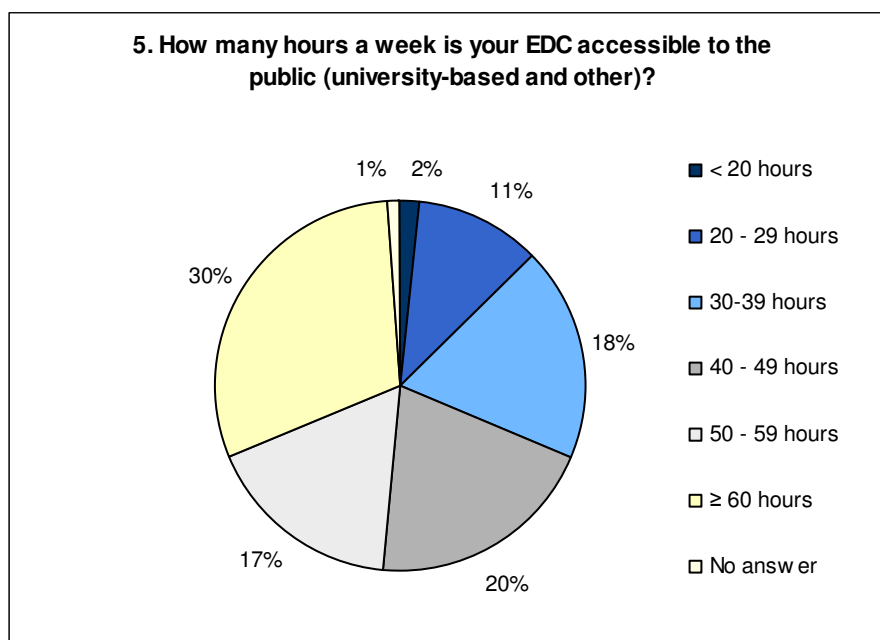
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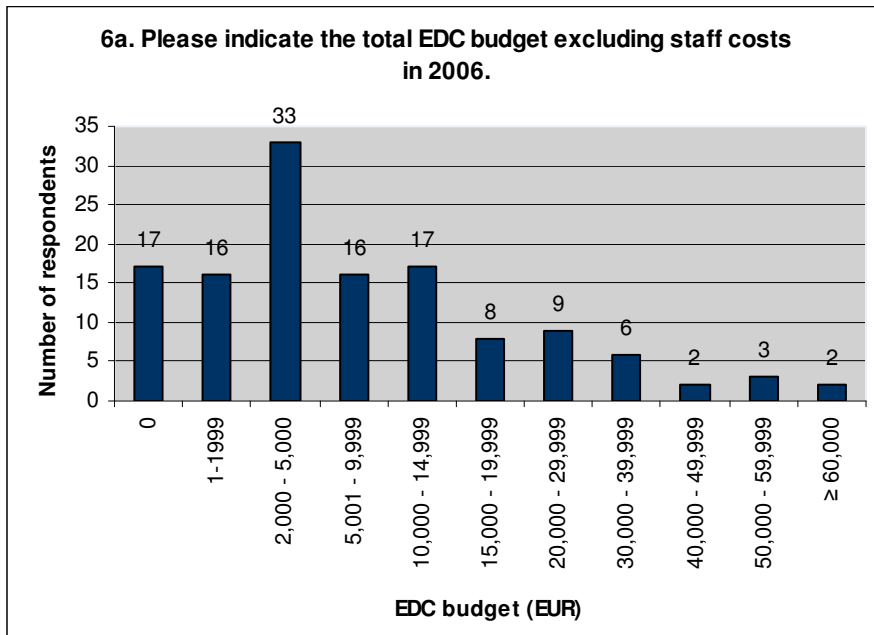
ANNEX 7: RESULTS OF EDC MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE



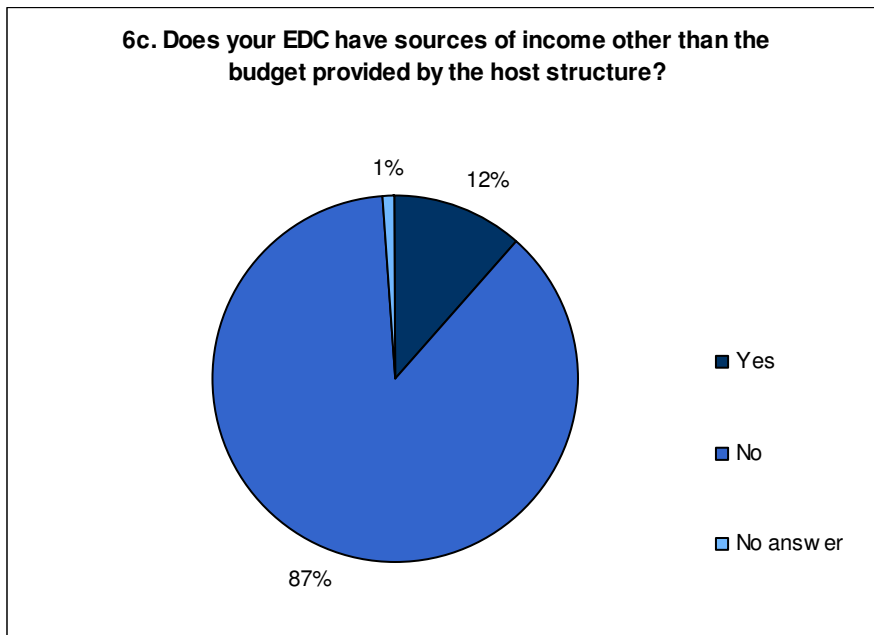


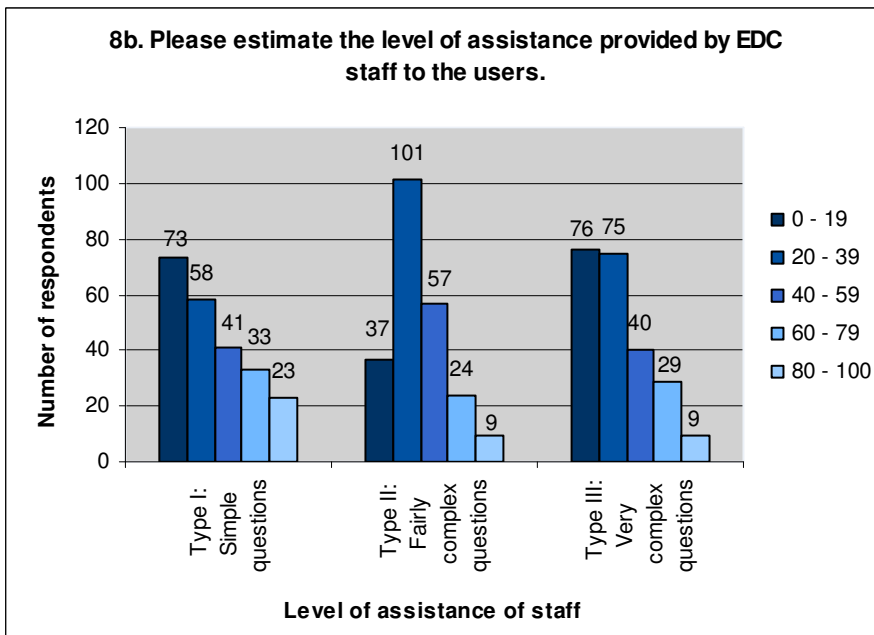
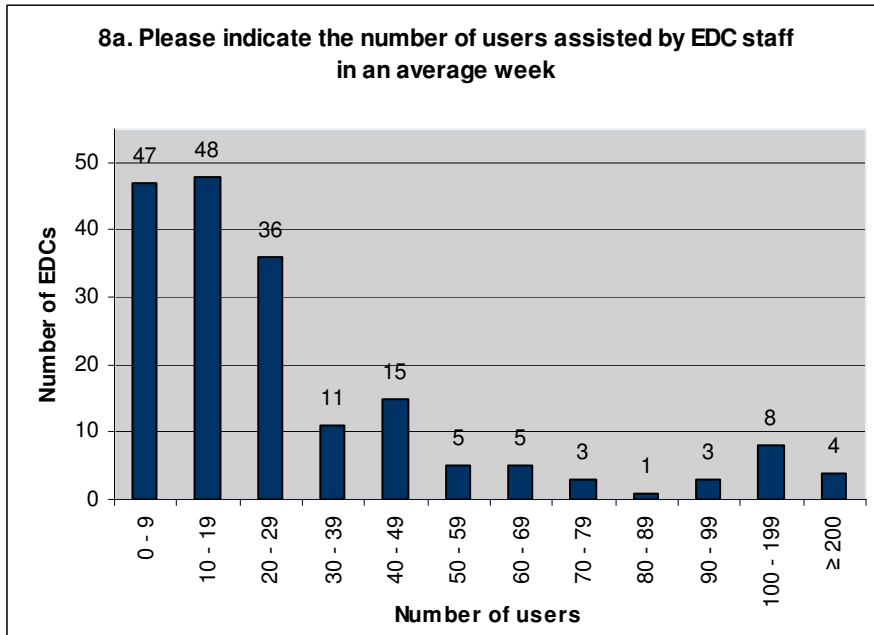
4d. Please indicate the percentage of total weekly EDC staff time used for different functions.			
	Min	Max	Median
Documentation function	10%	100%	65%
Communication function	0%	100%	20%
Networking and reporting function	0%	80%	10%

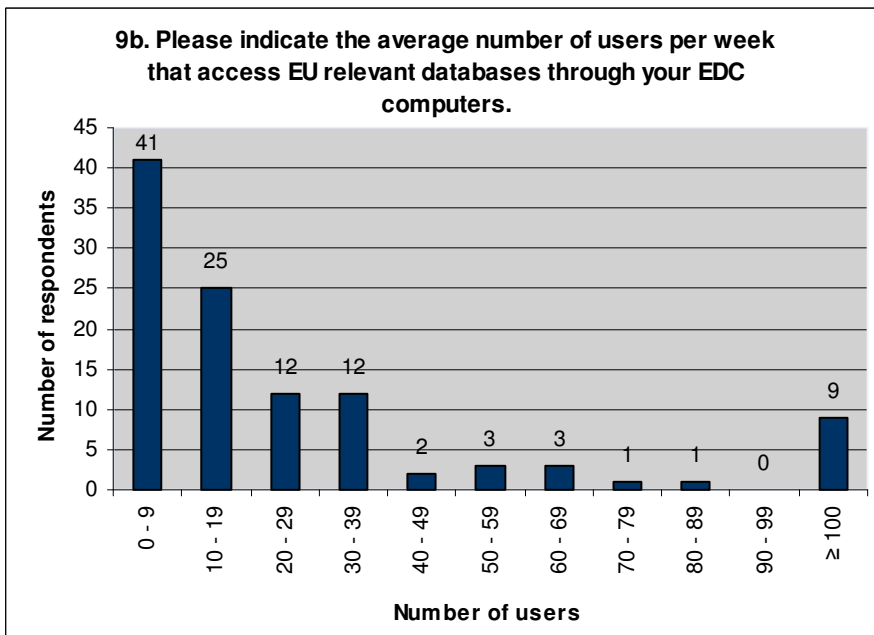
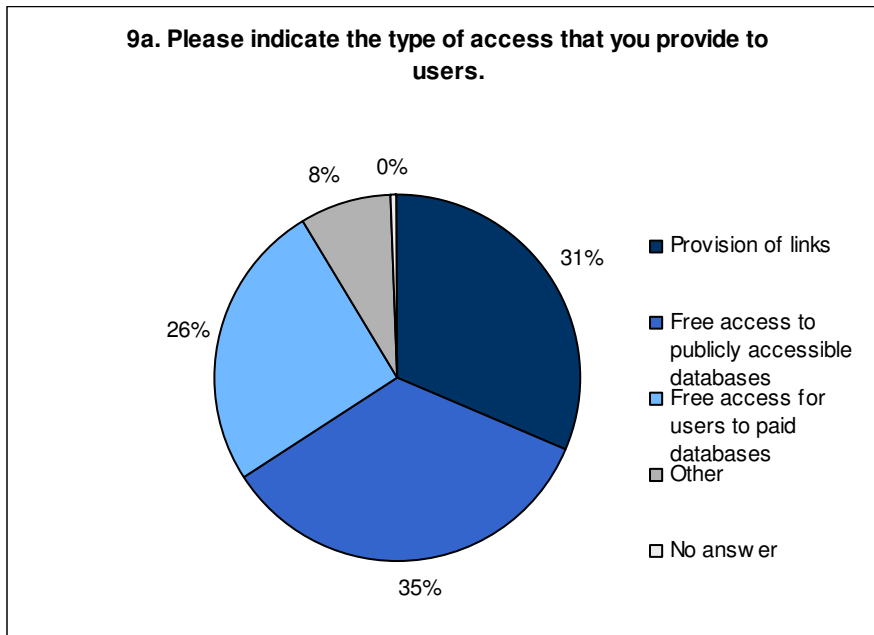


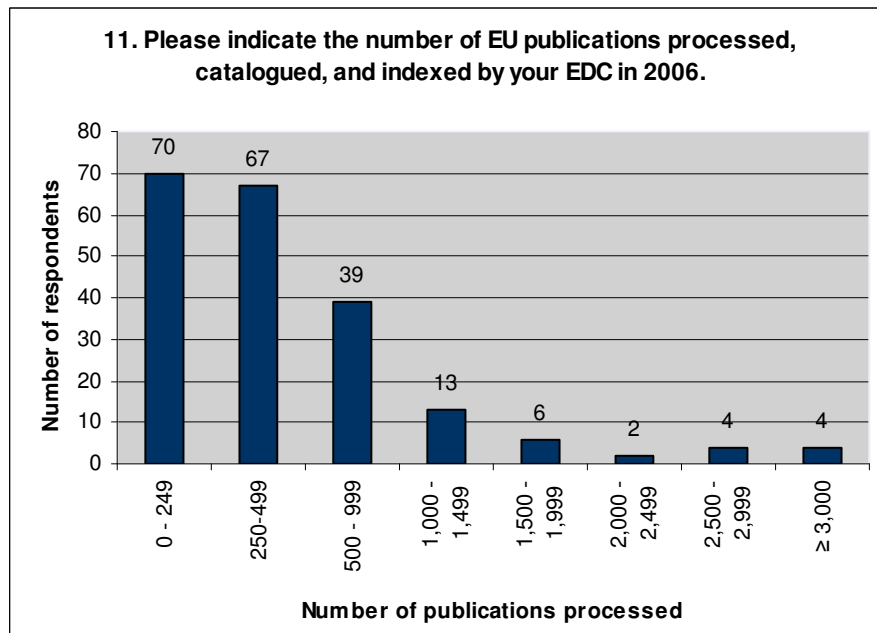
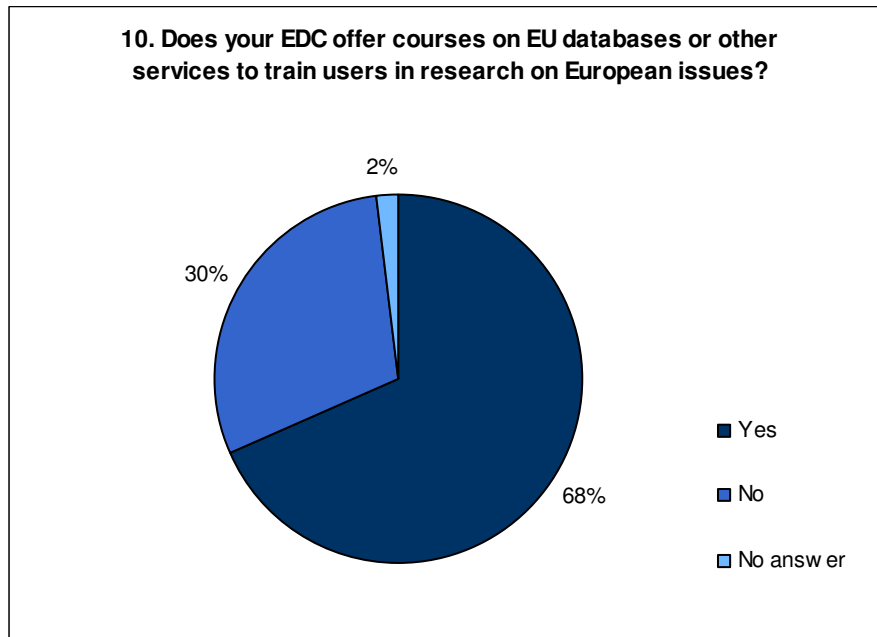


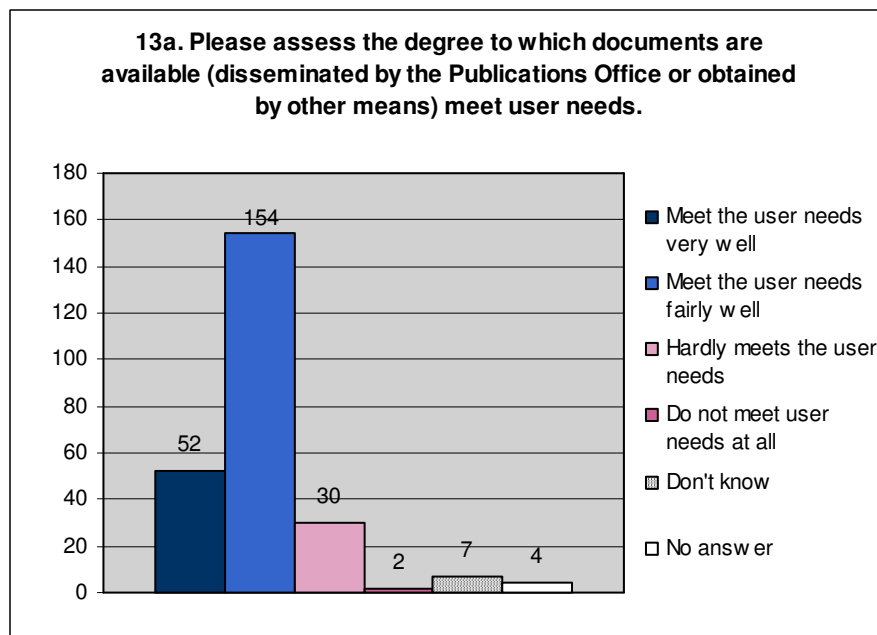
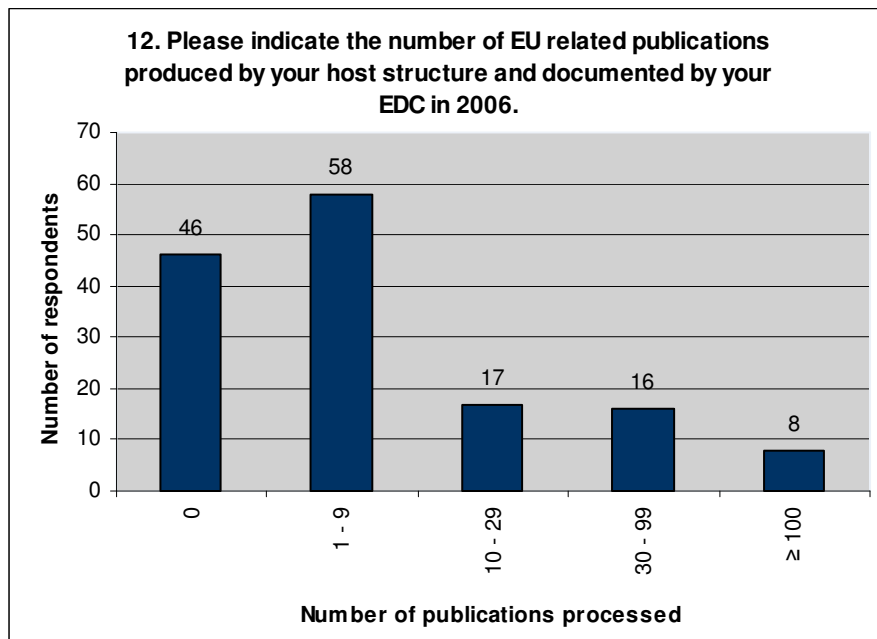
6b. Please indicate the allocation of the EDC budget according to functions if applicable (in percentage of the total budget excluding the staff cost).			
	Min	Max	Median
Documentation function	0.0%	100.0%	80.0%
Communication function	0.0%	84.4%	10.0%
Networking and reporting function	0.0%	50.0%	10.0%

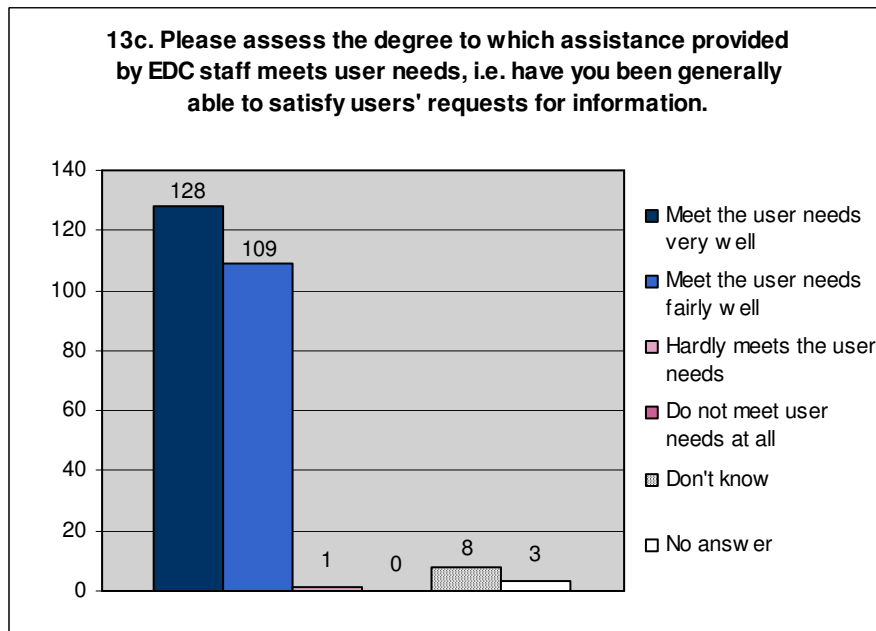
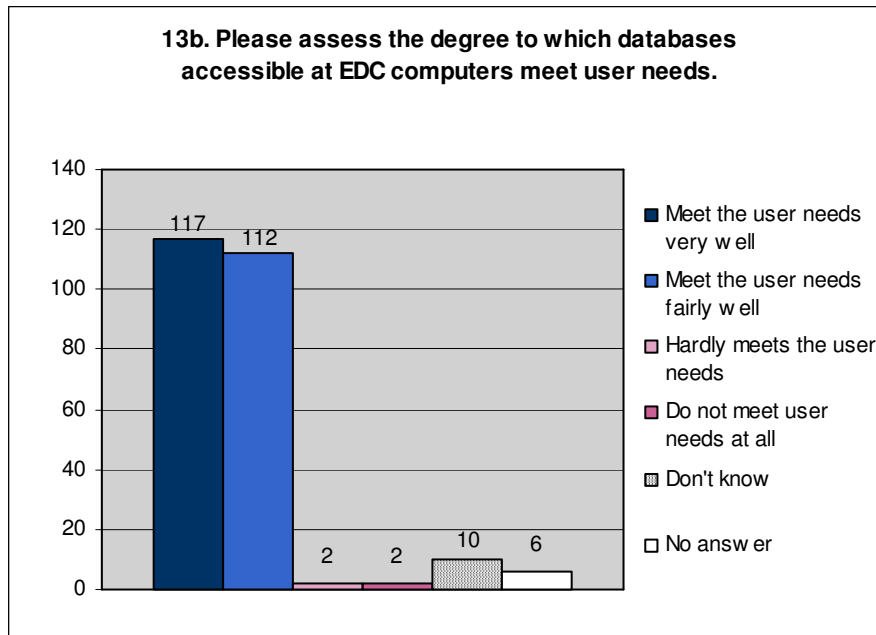




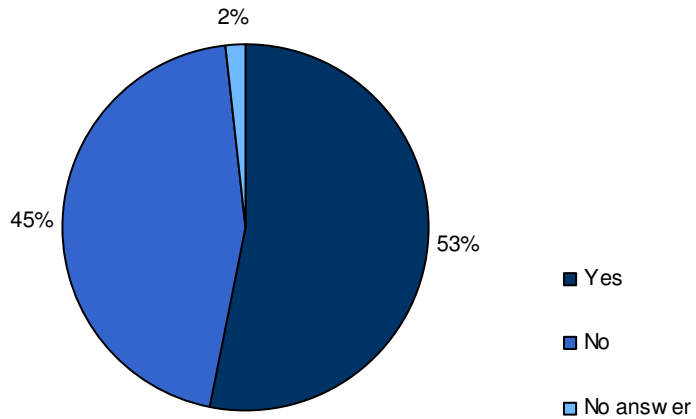




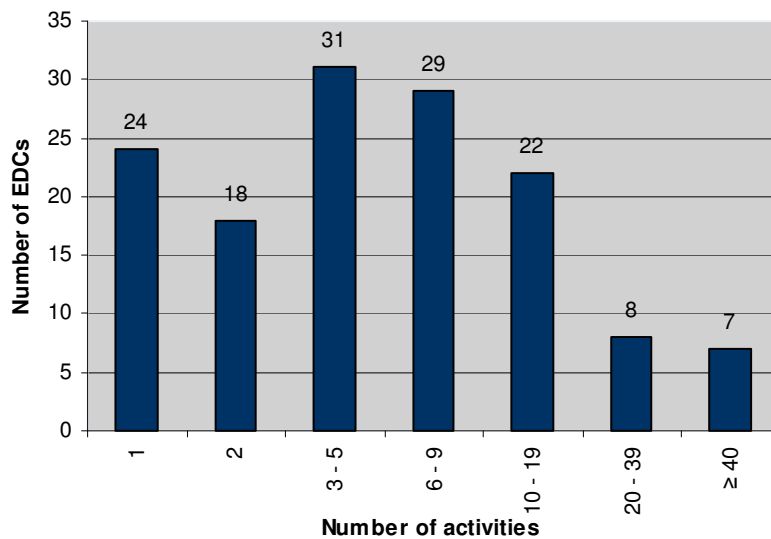


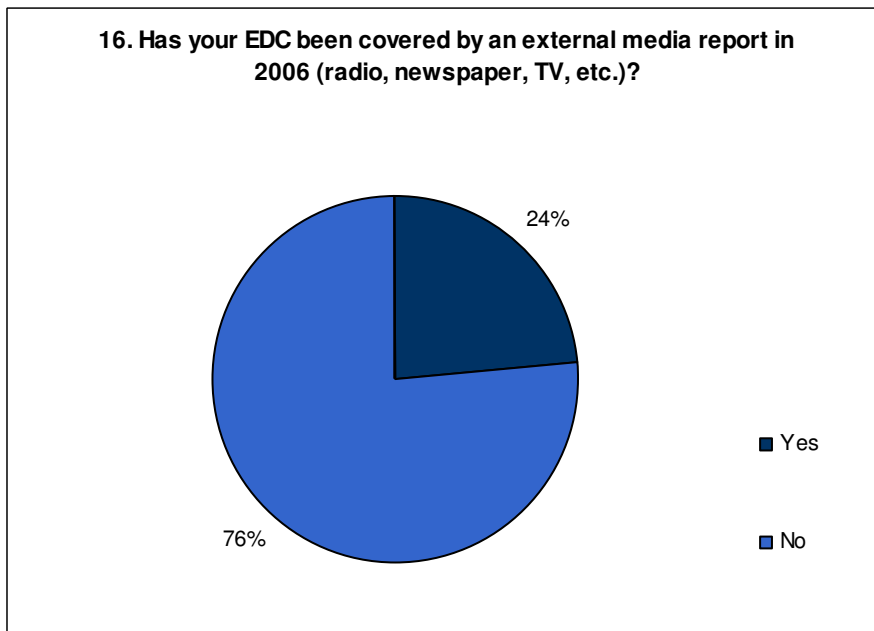
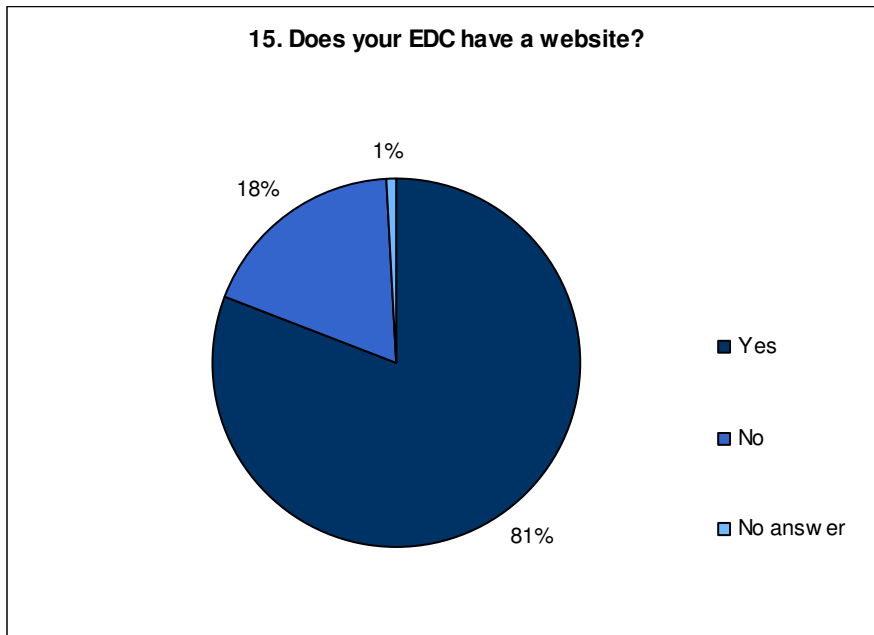


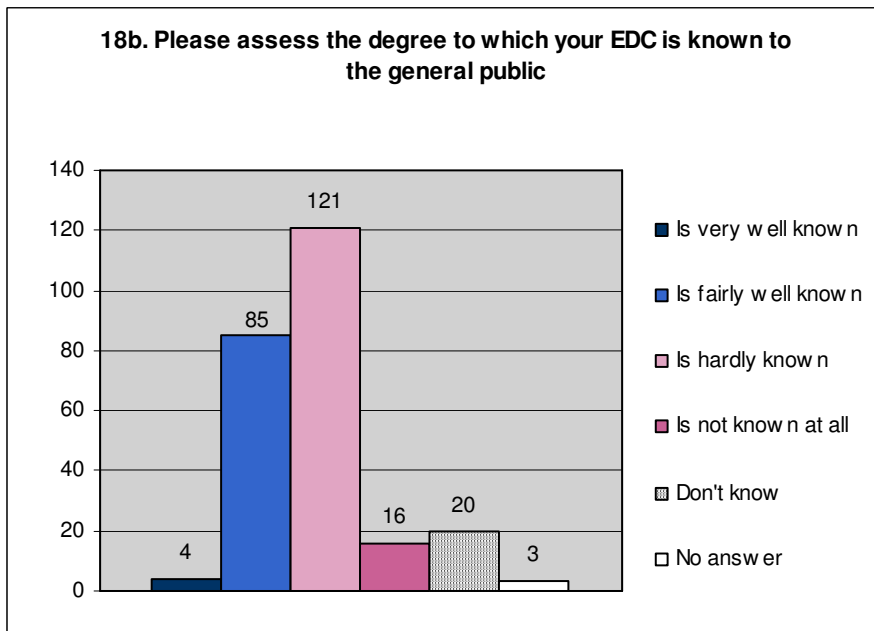
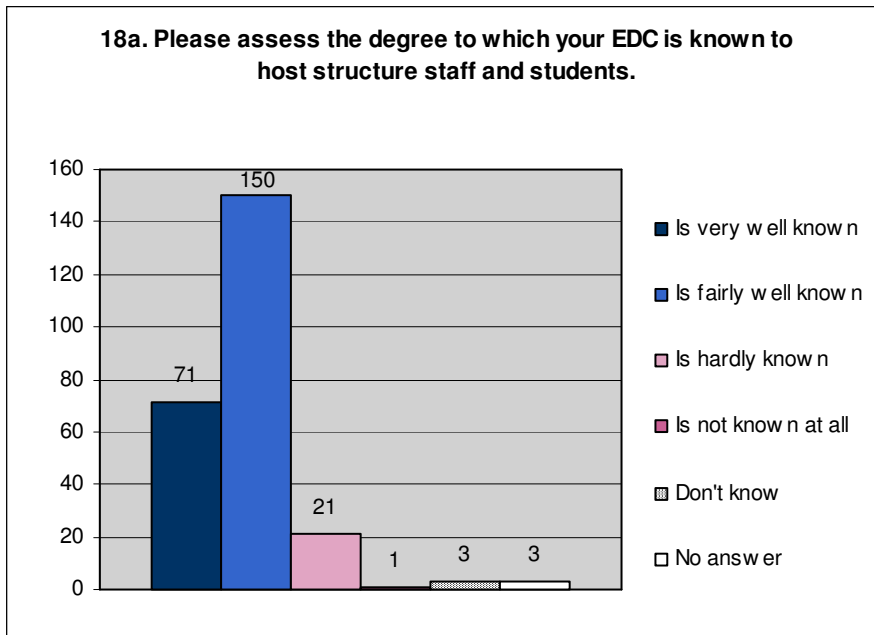
14. Have you organised in 2006 communication or promotion activities related to EU integration or other EU issues (e.g. debates, conferences, seminars, presentations etc.)?

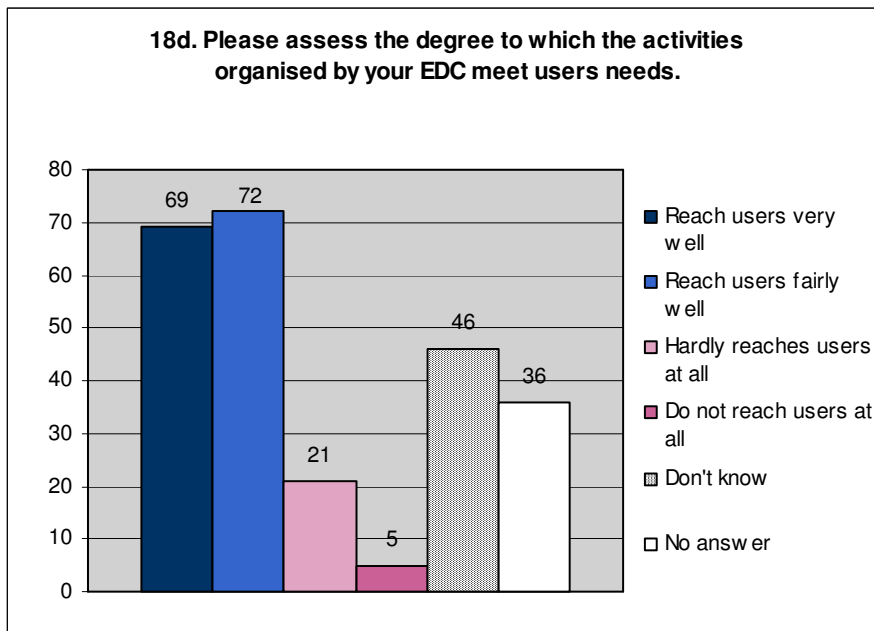
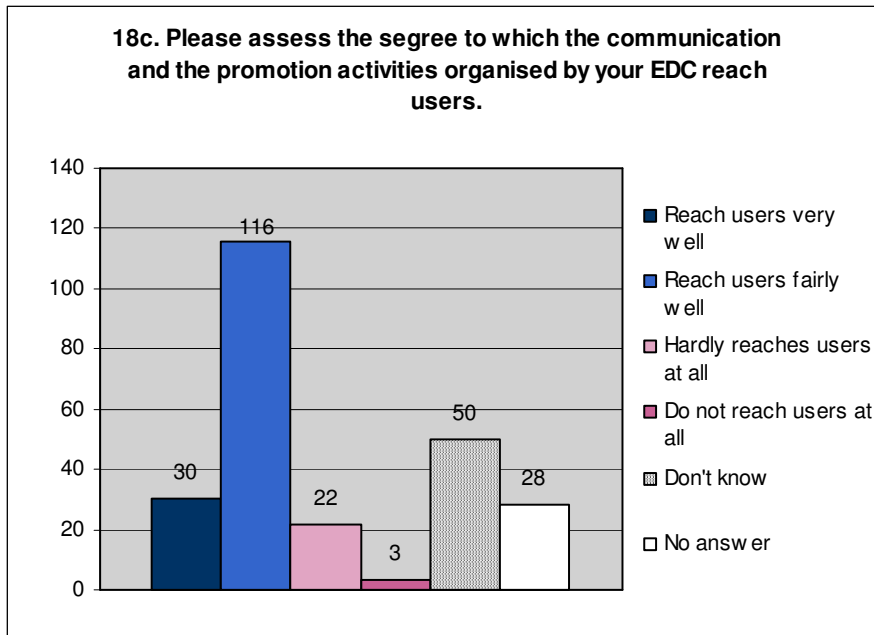


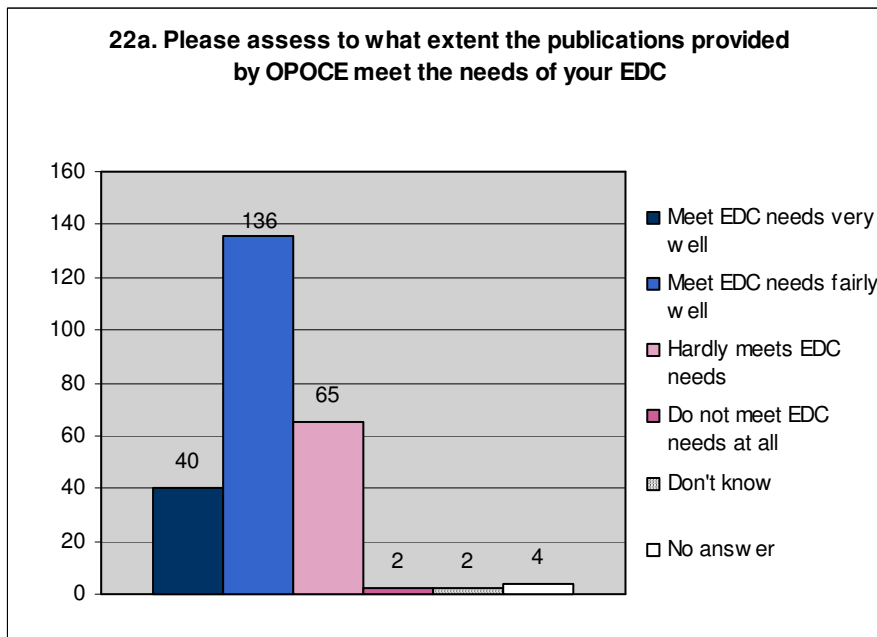
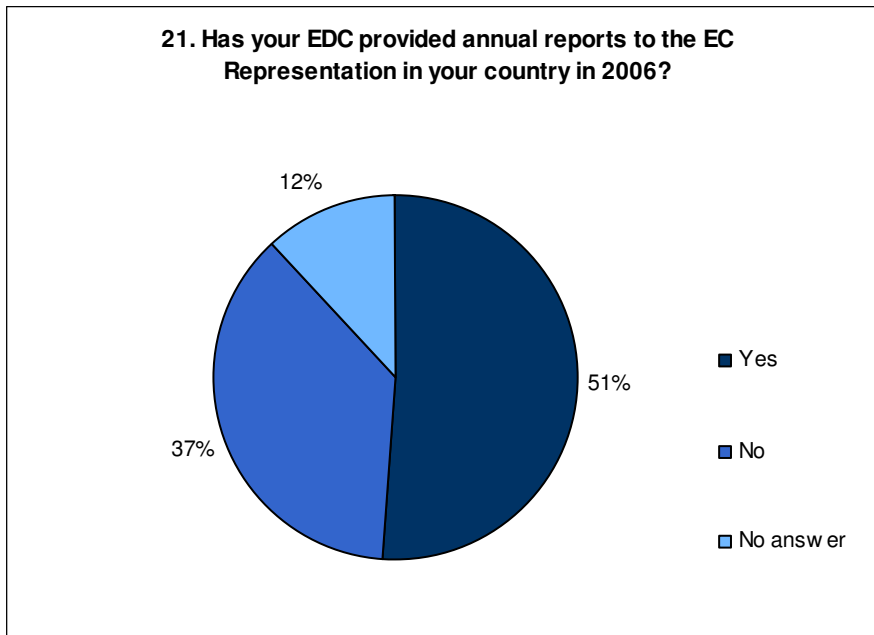
Number of communication or promotion activities related to EU integration or other EU issues organised by EDC in 2006

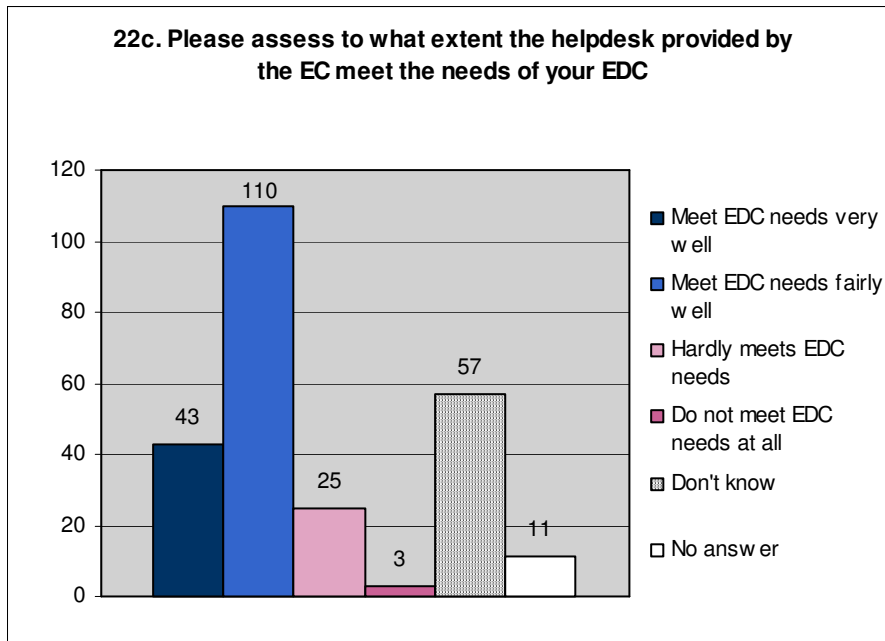
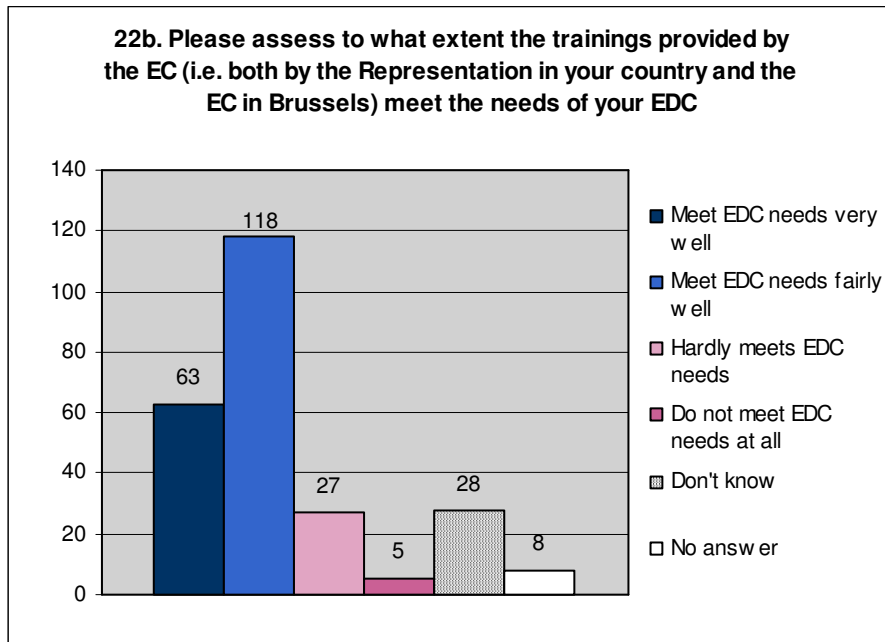


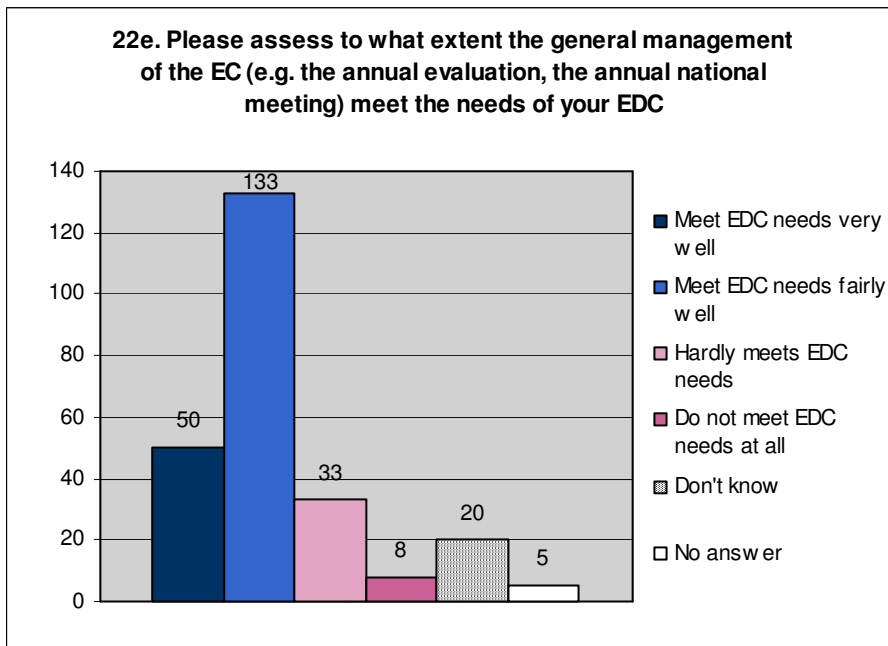
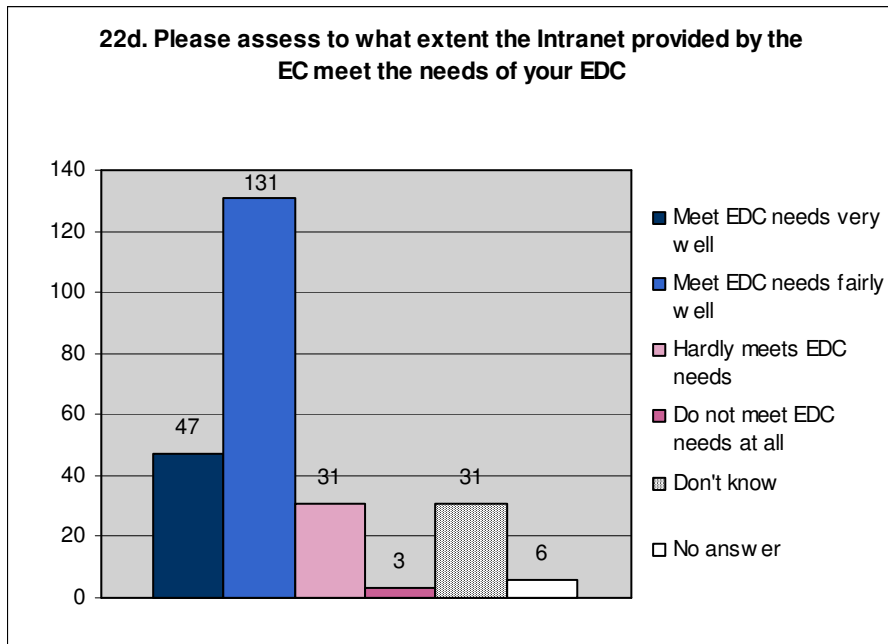


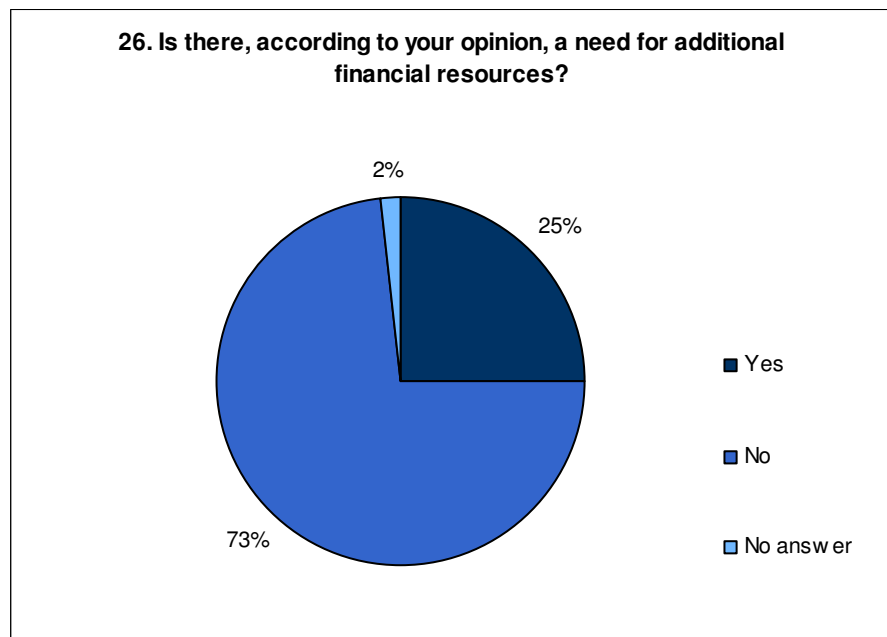
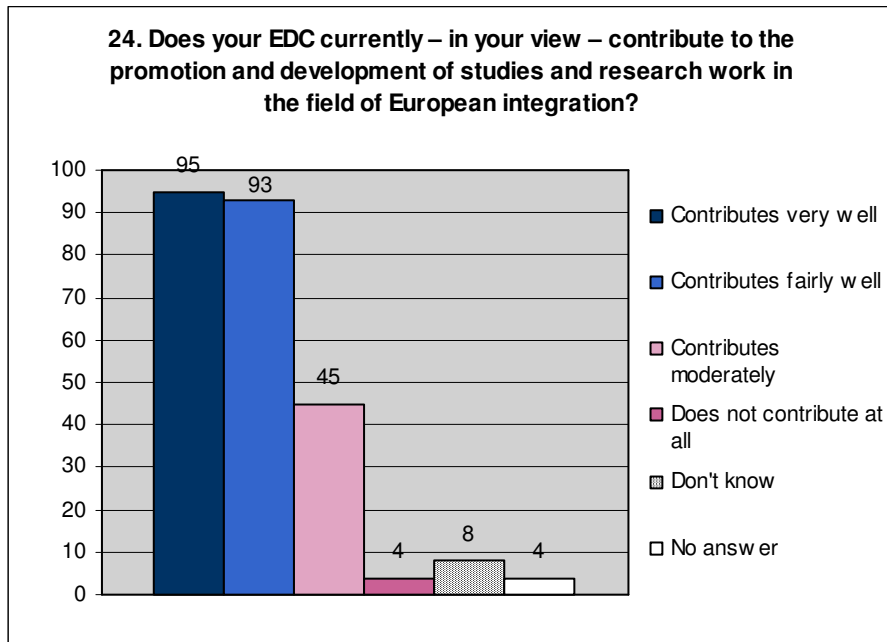




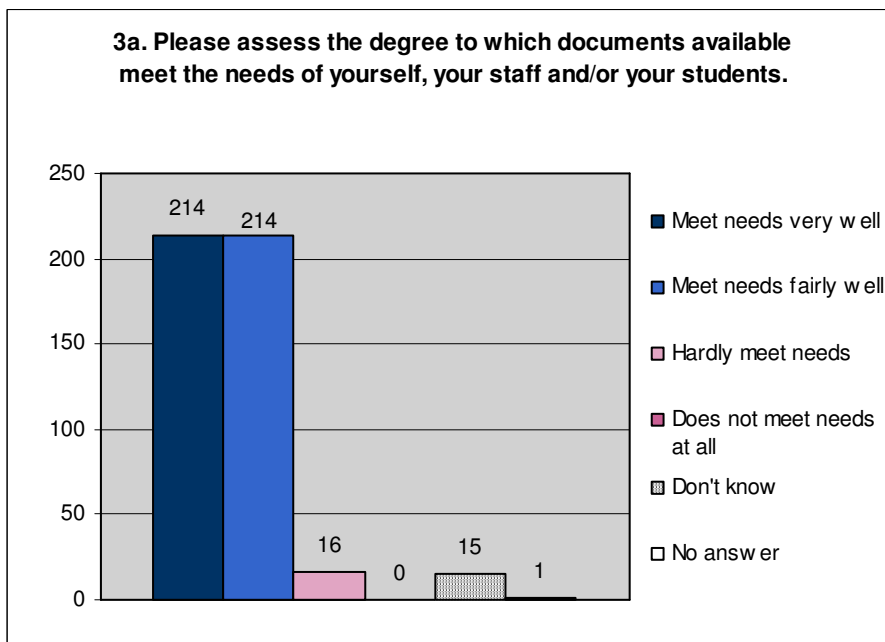
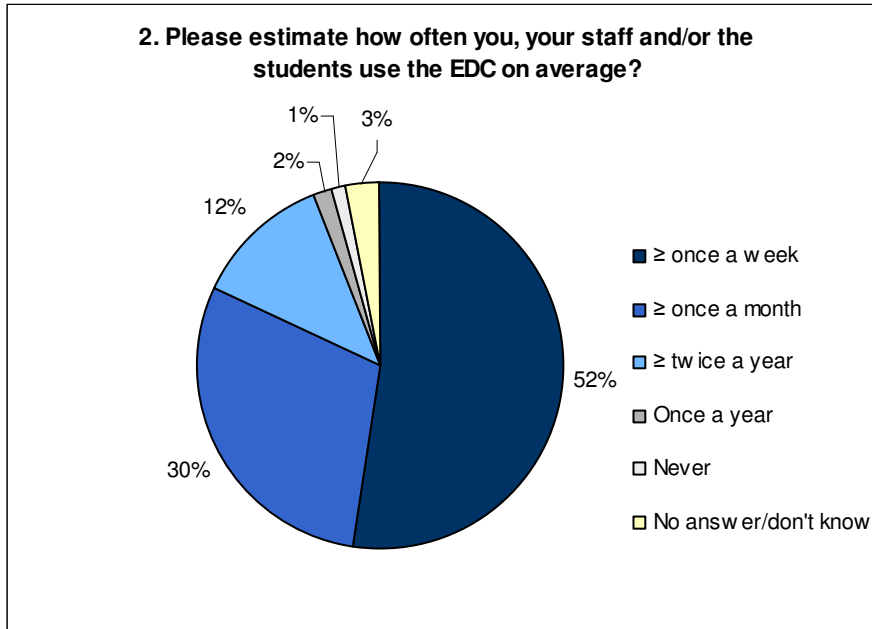


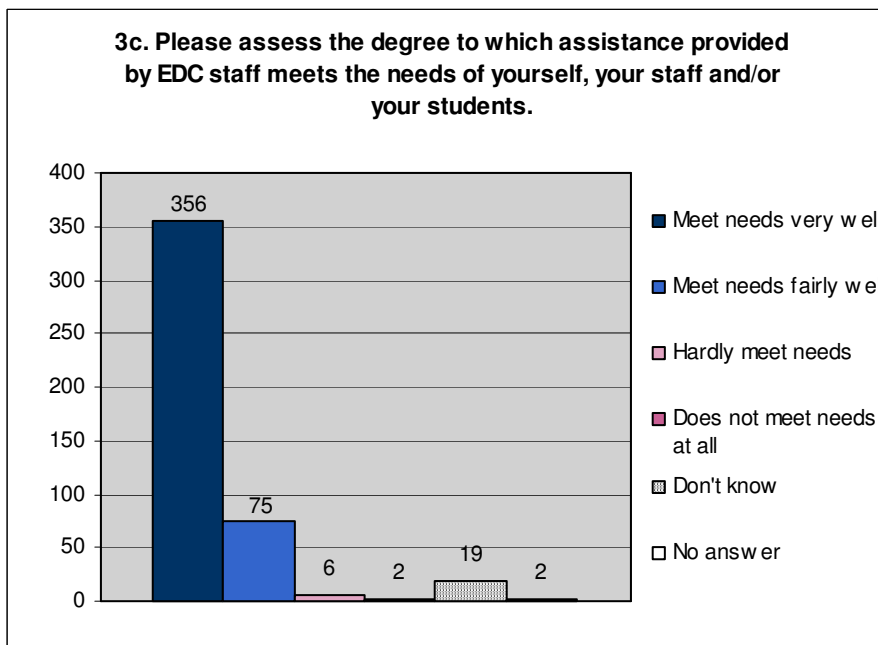
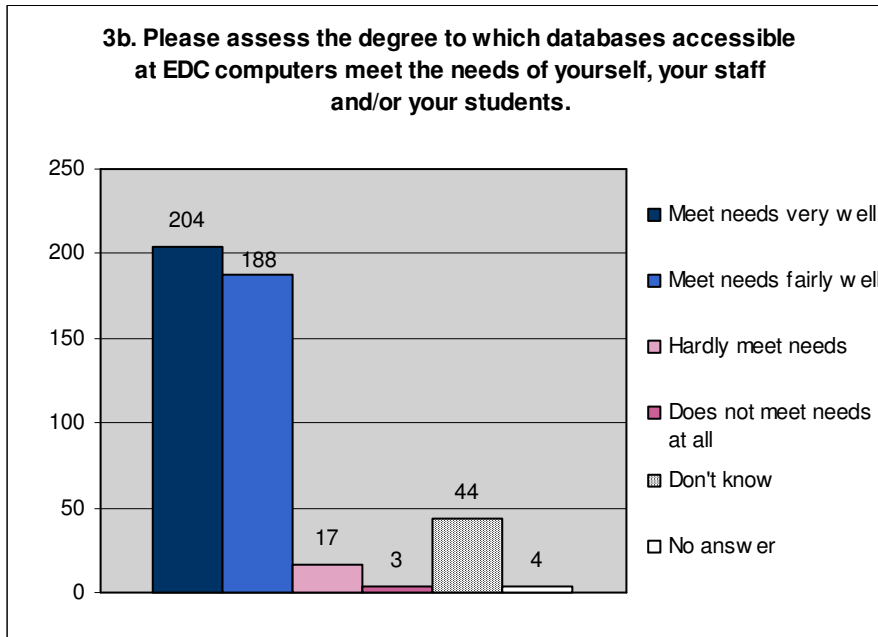


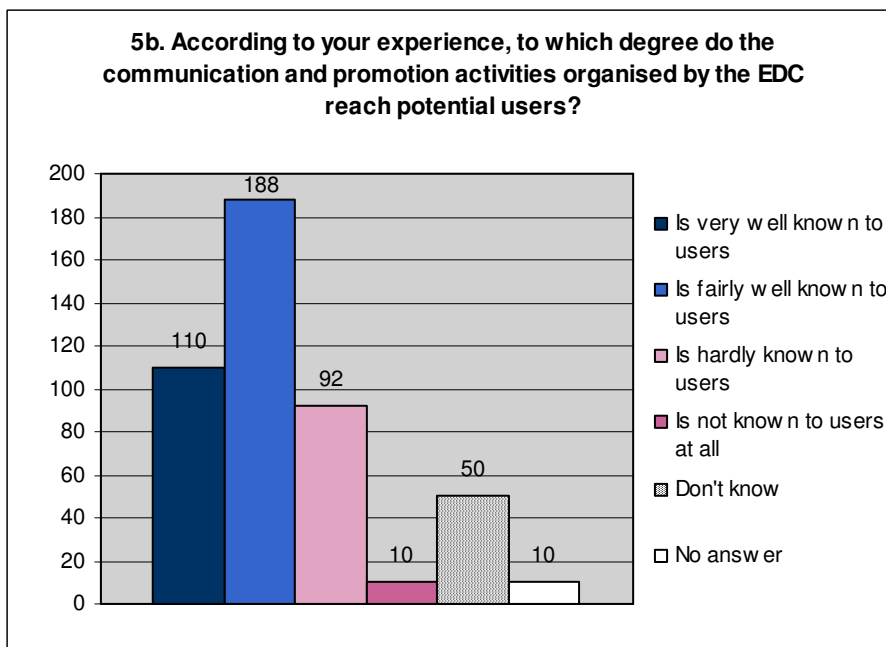
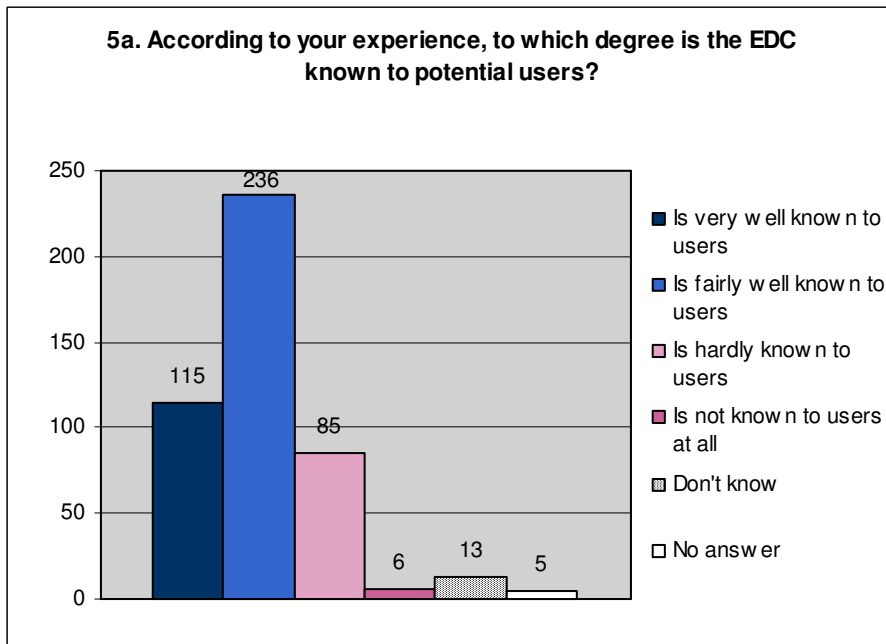


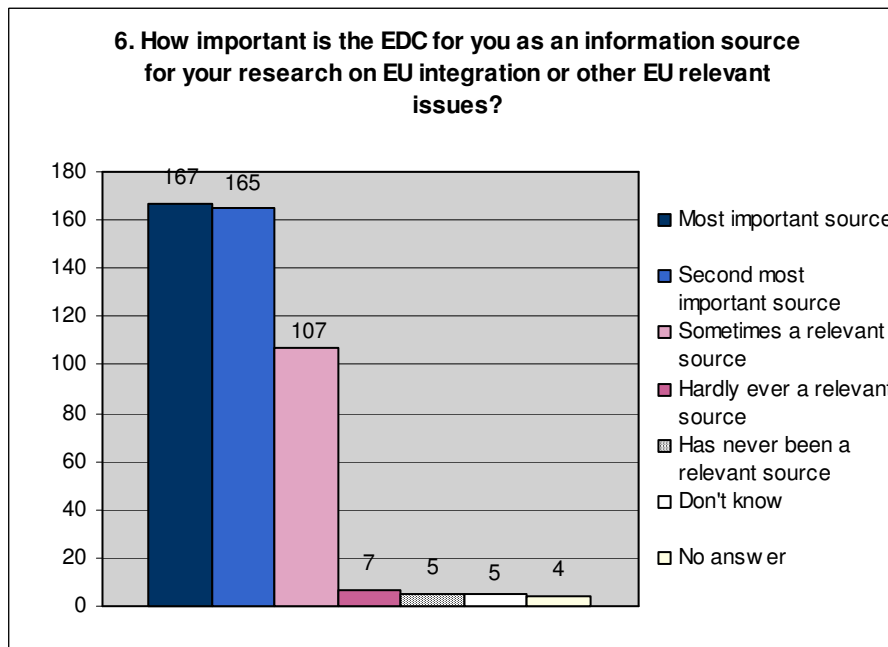
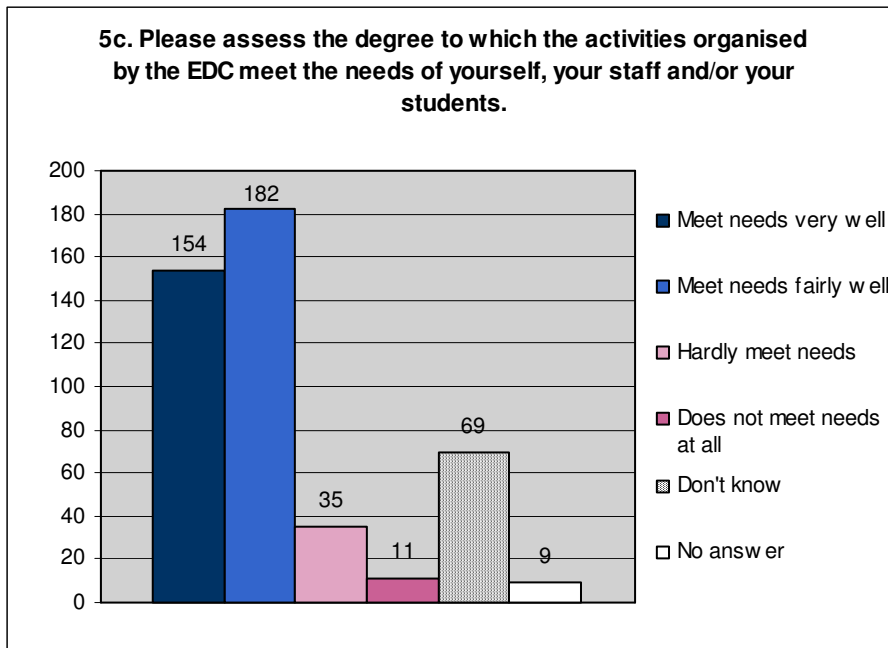


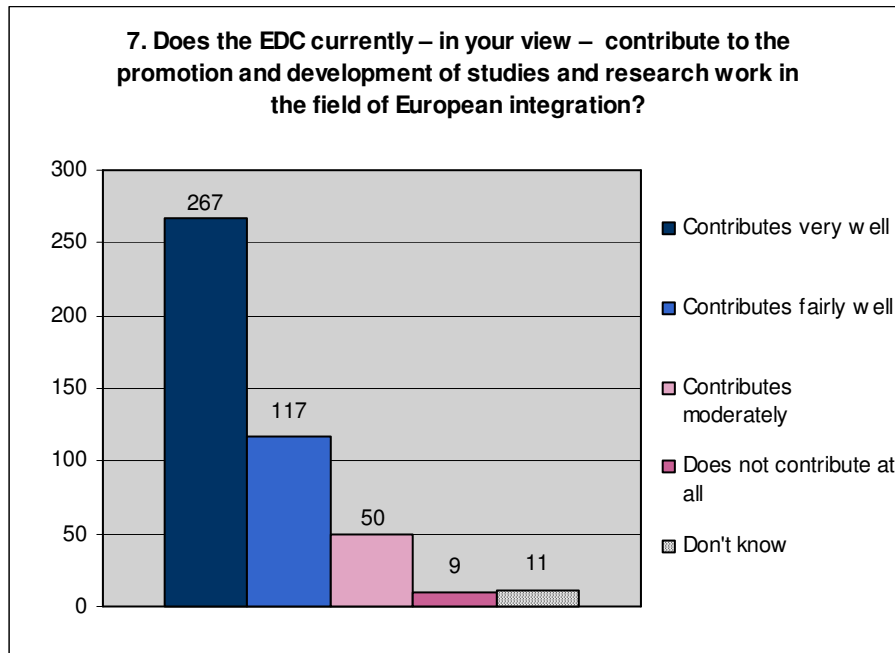
ANNEX 8: RESULTS OF INSTITUTIONAL USER QUESTIONNAIRE











ANNEX 9: COMPILED GRAPHS (USERS AND EDCs)

