European Documentation Centres

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Role of the EDCs?

- Changes in working environment:
  - There is no more "privileged access" to Community databases as they are mainly open to the public, but everyone does not know how to use them.
  - The EDCs receive less printed publications and books are less important for the students and researchers
- The role of EDCs as centres of guidance on how to find and use EU information becoming increasingly important
- Many of the EDC staff members have a long experience on finding the EU information and documents and that's a great asset

Question marks about EDCs' possibilities to reach out to the general public:

- Should EDCs reach the general public?
- Are EDCs ready to reach the general public?
- Who could help EDCs to reach the general public?
- What about EDCs' usual users? If the EDCs reach out to the general public do they in the same time neglect the students and academia?
- Many EDCs are interested in reaching out to the general public, but lack of funding limits the possibilities

Should EDCs reach the general public?

•YES : as part of Commission's "public information activities known collectively as EUROPE *DIRECT* "

•NO : if people are interested in our knowledge and resources they will come / contact EDCs without promotion work. Host structure objections

Are EDCs ready to reach the general public?

•YES : EDCs have a long experience in reference services and can easily reach another target group

•NO : EDCs are not ready and it is not our task - local EUROPE *DIRECT* information points should do this

•Need to be clear about target group first
•Supportive structure needed
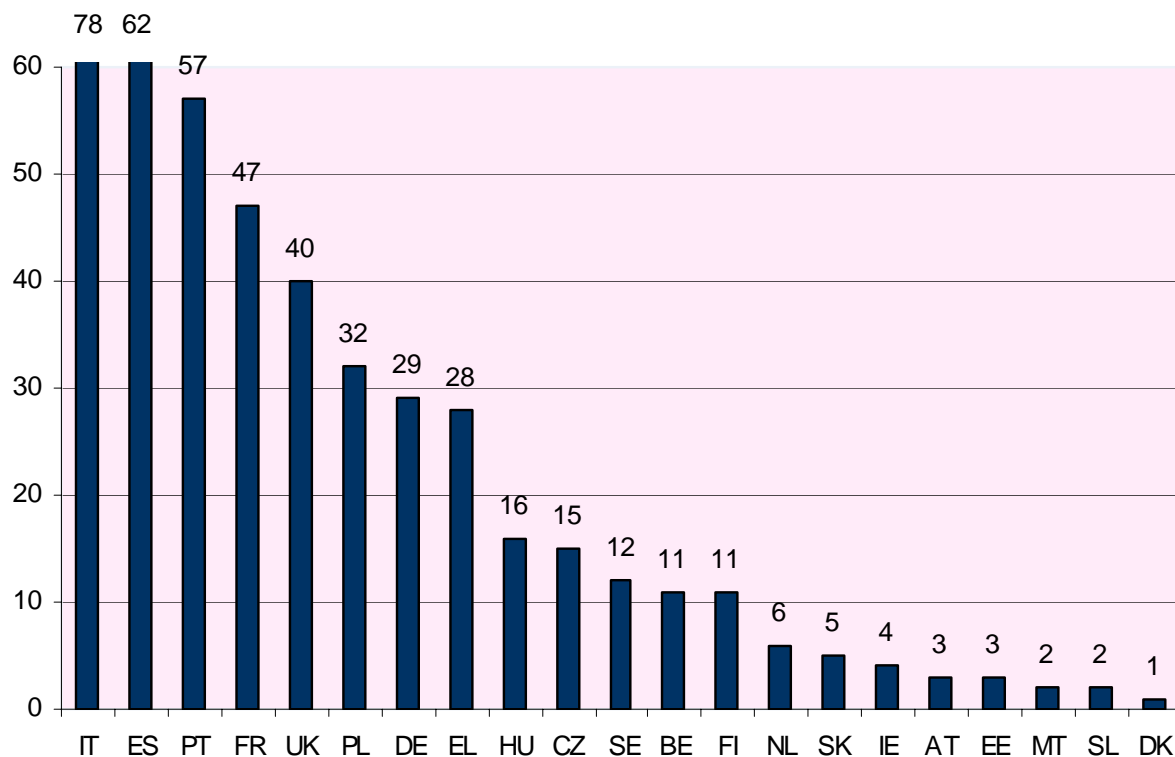
EDC Evaluation

Surveys March-May:

      • Good response rate for EDC survey (approx. 250 responses). The results not yet available

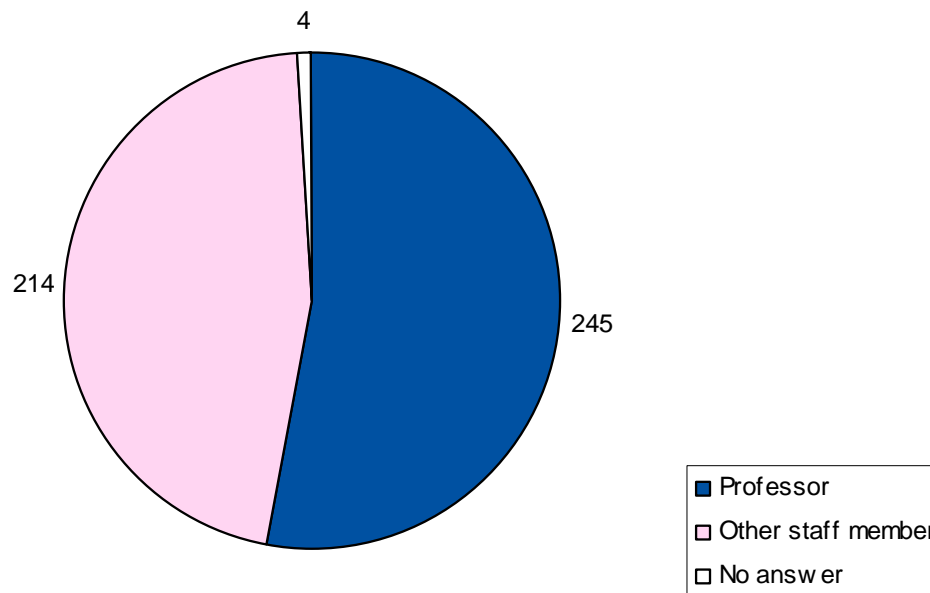   • Very good response rate for EDC user survey (approx. 460 responses)

EDC Evaluation

EDC user questionnaires received as of 21.05.2007

Country	Value
IT	78
ES	62
PT	57
FR	47
UK	40
PL	32
DE	29
EL	28
HU	16
CZ	15
SE	12
BE	11
FI	11
NL	6
SK	5
IE	4
AT	3
EE	3
MT	2
SL	2
DK	1

EDC Evaluation

Q1b: Please identify your position

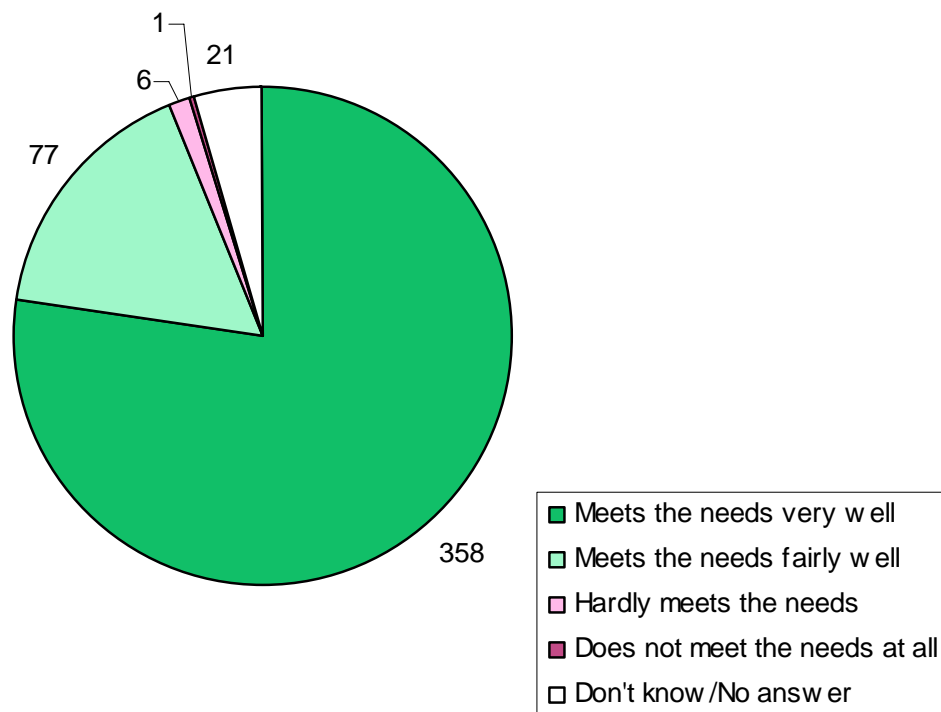4

214

245

- Professor
- Other staff member
- No answer

• Targeted at institutional users (*"meaning either you yourself, your staff and/or your students are potentially involved in research or studies on European issues"*)
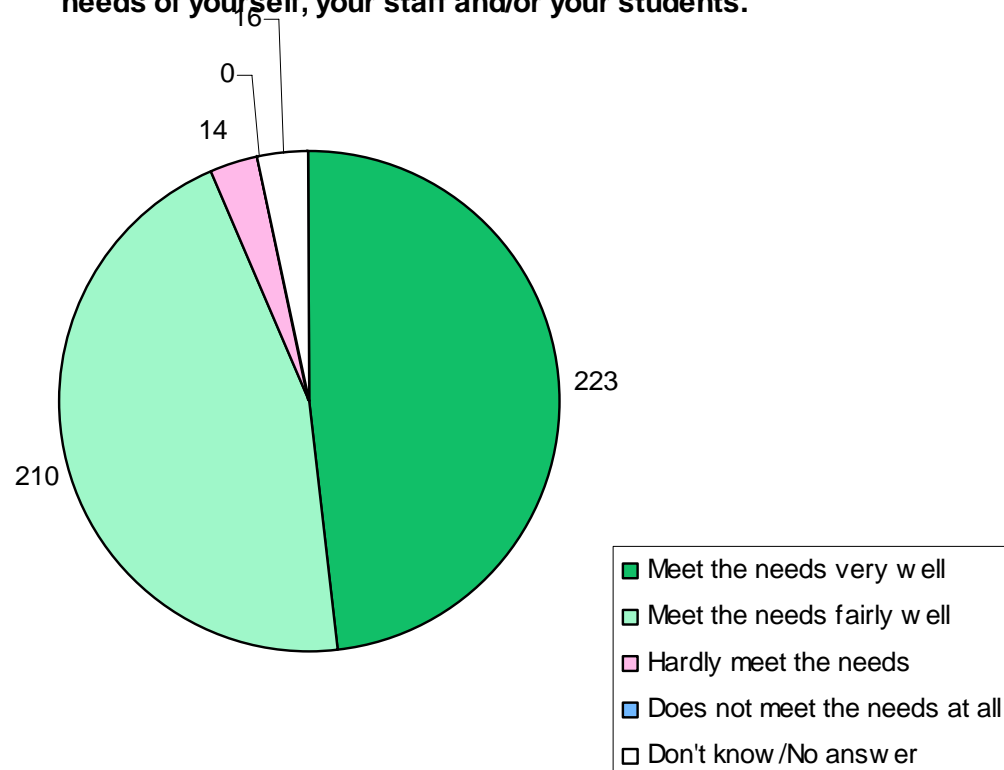
• Majority of respondents professors

EDC Evaluation

Q3c. Please assess the degree to which assistance provided by EDC staff meets the needs of yourself, your staff and/or your students

- Meets the needs very well
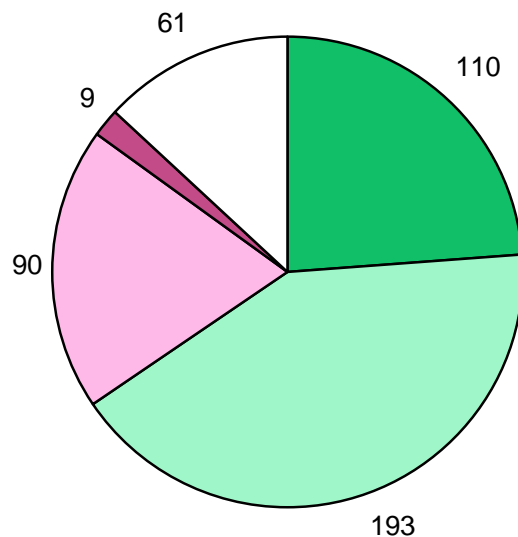- Meets the needs fairly well
- Hardly meets the needs
- Does not meet the needs at all
- Don't know /No answer

EDC Evaluation

Q3a. Please assess the degree to which documents available meet the needs of yourself, your staff and/or your students.

16

0

14

223

210

- ■ Meet the needs very well
- □ Meet the needs fairly well
- □ Hardly meet the needs
- ■ Does not meet the needs at all
- □ Don't know /No answer

EDC Evaluation

- General comments on the evaluation results:
    - Survey answered by persons that actually use EDCs. Impossible to contact potential users that do not use the EDCs at all
    - Overall very positive assessments. Main strength is the assistance provided.
    - Indicates the complexity of data research and the need for personalised services
- Weaker points:
    - Degree to which EDCs are known to potential users
    - Reach of communication/promotion activities

EDC Evaluation

- Next steps of the EDC evaluation
  - Case studies in six MS (Sweden, Poland, Greece, France, Ireland, Germany):
    - To get a better insight and gather additional views
    - To understand better how EDCs cooperate with each other
    - To establish better the role of host structures
    - To identify best practices
    - To test hypotheses of the interim report

  - Send your comments to edc@civic-consulting.de

The Future of the EDCs/ What next?

- A note by DG COMM to the host structures regarding the May meeting/training seminar
- A reflection paper after the final report of the external evaluation
- 2008 coordination meeting
  - Discussion on evaluation results
- Practical issues (databases, cataloguing, etc)
  - In coordination meeting (small audience) OR
  - In training seminar (new participants every time)

Helpdesk

- There was an EDC Training seminar in May; next one in 2008
- Survey on training needs after the summer brake
- Training material published on-line (also the May EDC seminar presentations and hand-outs)
- Meetings
    - Annual General meetings: Three in 2007 (Poland (114), Spain (200), Ireland (200))
    - Coordination meeting once/year

- Exchange Programme 2007 (one EDC project):
    - Building a European Electronic Repository (Mannheim hosting, e.g. Sassari)

    - Database of all the Commission networks under design as part of streamlining of the networks. Will be published on Europa-website

Questions?
Please send them to relays@ec.europa.eu

Thanks for your attention!