



EAPN: Fighting for a Social Europe Free of Poverty

# Getting heard in the media

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Technologies**

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**EUROPEAN ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK  
RÉSEAU EUROPÉEN DES ASSOCIATIONS  
DE LUTTE CONTRE LA PAUVRETÉ ET L'EXCLUSION SOCIALE**





## Overview of European media

- Reality and Panorama
- How they work
- Getting your message across
- Practical work

## Press releases

## Interview techniques





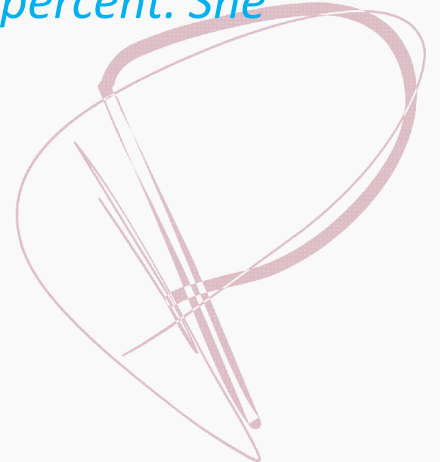
# Overview of European media

## *Reality and Panorama*

- **Brussels press corps has been shrinking**  
(1200 => +/- 900)
  - Economic crisis
  - Internet revolution

### The last Latvian

*“Ina Strazdina, the last remaining Latvian journalist in the E.U. press corps, accepted a pay cut of more than 50 percent. She now does three jobs to make ends meet”.*





# Overview of European media

## *Reality and Panorama*

- **EU institutions broadcast themselves**

Risk: only official information

*“The idea of communicating from the institutions to the people directly is the totalitarian dream,”* Lorenzo Consoli – API/IPA

- [European Broadcasting Service](#) (EC Audiovisual Services)

- [EuroparlTV](#)

- [NATOTV](#)

- The EC on Youtube

<http://www.youtube.com/user/eutube>





# Overview of European media

## *Reality and Panorama*

- **Diversity of Brussels correspondents**

132 Germans

99 Brits

56 French

86 Belgians

- **Press agencies**

[Reuters](#) (many journalists in Bxl and very specialised)

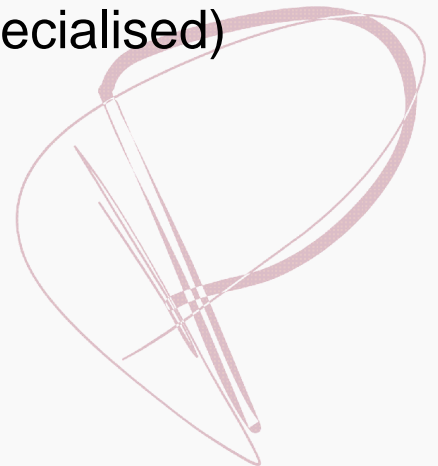
[Associated Press](#)

[Agence France Presse](#)

[Bloomberg](#) (not only business)

[National Agencies](#)

[Xinhua](#)





# Overview of European media

## *Reality and Panorama*

### ■ Printed Press

[Kiosko](#) (.net - front page all newspapers in the world)

[European Voice](#)

Europolitics (daily, EN+FR)

[Euobserver](#)

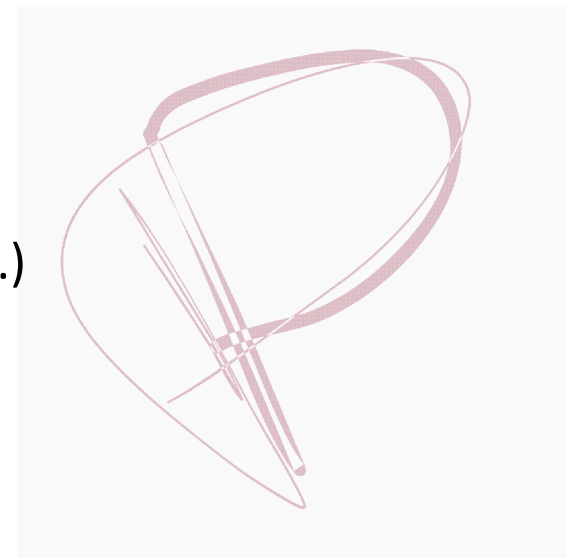
[Agence Europe](#)

### ■ Radio/TV

Agencies (Reuters,...)

International broadcasters (Euronews, ...)

National Broadcasters





# Overview of European media

## *Reality and Panorama*

- **Other online media**

Euractiv

National only-online media

### **Social media profiles** (Commissioners, journalists...)

Facebook

Twitter

Journalists' blog (J.Quatremer, N. Gros...)





# Overview of European media

## *Reality and Panorama*

### ■ European media circulation

Bild - 3.5 million

The Sun

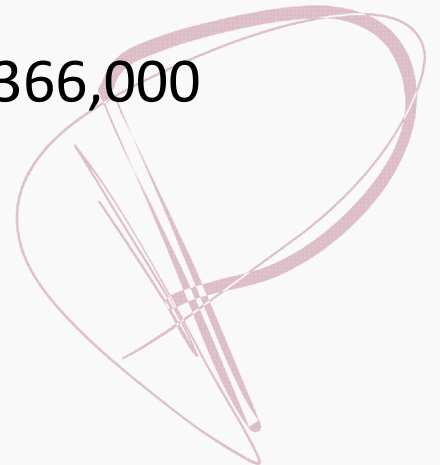
The Daily Mail

The Daily Mirror

Le Monde – 300,000

FAZ (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung) – 366,000

Ouest France – 780,000







# Overview of European media

## *Reality and Panorama*

- **media in trouble, quality going down**

*“British newspapers have spent the last five years or so chasing each other downmarket, leaving little room for foreign news that might require readers to engage their brains and think about stories that are important but unsexy, or require empathising with foreigners (as opposed to gawking at them or gossiping about them). In fact, I think the true situation of British foreign reporting is even worse than it looks: there are still lots of correspondents in all sorts of posts, like Brussels, Paris or Rome, so it all looks reasonably healthy. But ask those same correspondents what sort of political stories they get to write: too often they most easily make the paper with stories about Nicolas Sarkozy's height, Silvio Berlusconi's love life, or how much Catherine Ashton is paid.”*

The Economist, Journalists deserting Brussels, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2010.



# Overview of European media

## *Reality and Panorama*

- **Getting journalists' contact details**
  - **National representations' websites**
  - **API (International Press association)**
  - **Public Affairs Directory**
  - **Brussels media blogs**





# Overview of European media

## *How they work*

- **Daily routine**

- Noon briefing

<http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/ebs/schedule.cfm>

- Deadlines

- Shorter // new technologies
- Best before 10
- At least before 12

- Go Early

- No free lunch?

- Embargoes

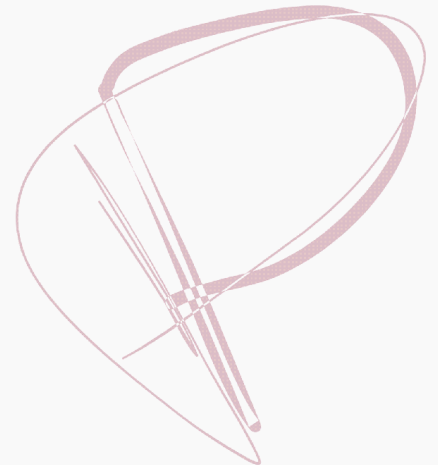




# Overview of European media

## *How they work*

- **When to send press releases (Bxl)?**
  - Mondays
  - Fridays (as less happening at EU level)
  - Avoid Wednesdays (EC meeting)
  - Keep eye on EU agenda!
    - Strasbourg weeks – journalists there
    - Informal Councils
    - Summits
    - August holiday, Christmas
    - June/December to avoid



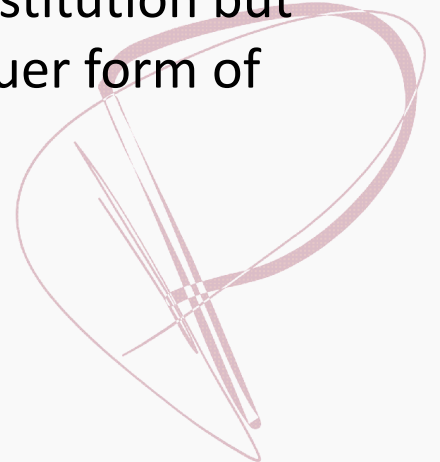


# Overview of European media

## *How they work*

### ■ Pooling

- Target one journalist first to avoid 40 journalists at same time. The one chosen is the “pool”.
- Make it clear if “on” or “off” the record
  - On record: the person is quotable.
  - Off record: you can quote the institution but not the person or use some vaguer form of attribution.
  - Provide background





# Overview of European media

## *How they work*

- **Media use each other**
  - Press agencies - 74 %
  - FT - 64 %
  - Economist - 41 %
  - Le Monde - 36 %
  - Der Spiegel - 22 % (English editions - NRC, Politiken, etc)
  - Wall Street Journal Europe - 12 %
  - Google news 1 % ! (reliability)





# Overview of European media

## *How they work*

- **Priorities/constraints for journalists**
  - Money
  - Ethics
  - Time
  - Space
  - Interest





# Overview of European media

*TO SUM UP...*

- Shrinking media corps competing for shrinking space.
- Bombarded by information
- How to make yours stand out .....



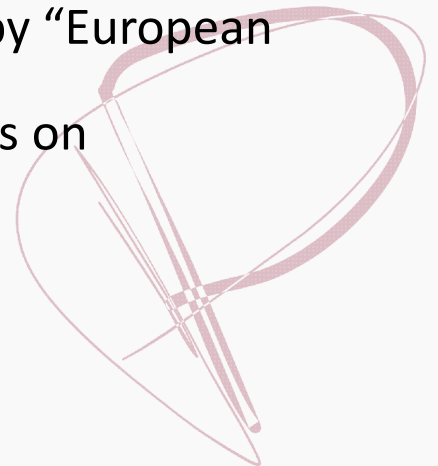




# Overview of European media

## *Contact with journalists - Rules*

- Be Realistic, Honest, Reliable, Accessible
  - Answer as fast as possible
  - Call back if you promised to
- Call them
- Email title stands out – Don't start by “European Council...” or anything they hundreds of emails on
- Avoid attachments to email

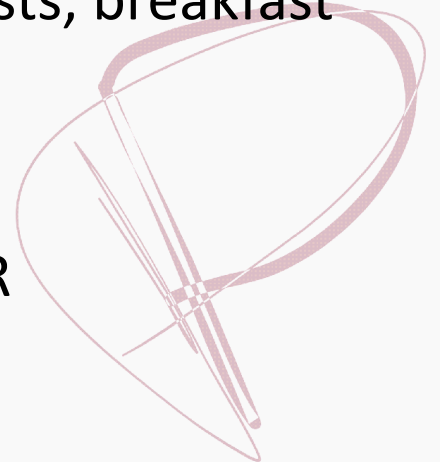




# Overview of European media

## *Tools for journalists*

- Press release
- Press kit (images > documents)
- Website (up to date!)
- Media conference / briefing
  - only for big events
  - To reach small group of journalists, breakfast briefing
- Phone / direct contact
  - Call journalist before sending PR





# Overview of European media

## *Getting your message across*

- **Working on the message - *fundamentals***
  - Defensive
  - Reactive (quickly!)
  - Pro-active
  - Importance of timing
  - Avoid Clashes
  - Piggy-backing - You have a big story – you issue a PR, using that story to give your position on it

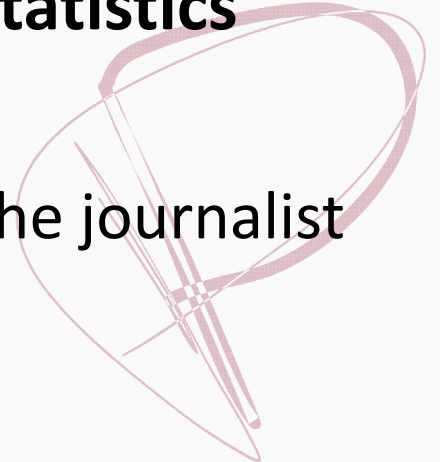




# Overview of European media

## *Getting your message across*

- Working on the message - *What holds people up?*
    - Tell a **story!**
    - **News, events**
    - **emotion, controversy**
    - **Figures, concrete info, statistics**
    - **background, context**
- = make everything easy for the journalist





# Overview of European media

## *Getting your message across*

- Write **useful info**:

Don't say "we protect the environment" but show what your NGO does to protect the environment.

- Avoid cliches, hyperbole

- Stick to **facts**

- Always in **3<sup>rd</sup> person**, like newspaper report

- Active, not passive voice

- **Simple, direct language; short** sentences; one idea per sentence / quote

- Paragraph – 2-3 lines





# Overview of European media

## *The Press Release*

- Content
- Structure
- Delivery
- Follow - up





# Overview of European media

## *The Press Release*

- Think of a press release like a **news story**
- **Short, sharp, strong angle, attractively packaged, attention grabbing.**
- **News** – something is happening, just happened, about to happen.
- **Human interest**
- **Controversy / Scandal / Conflict**
- Quirky / **Unusual** / Off beat
- Celebs
- **Useful** – News you can use





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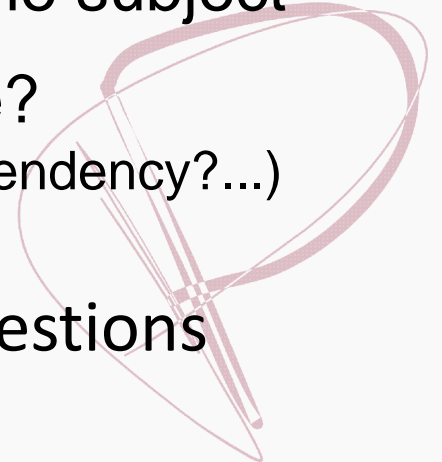




# Overview of European media

## *The Press Release*

- Useful **distance**:
  - Put some distance between yourself and your subject (no personal emotion)
  - Avoid jargon
  - Look at the press release like an outsider, who does not know the subject
  - What is your target audience?  
(Specialised/general, national, local, tendency?...)
- **Reaction** – be prepared for questions





# Overview of European media

## *The Press Release*

- Limit PR to 500 words, 3,000 characters
- All on one page  
including logo, contact details, headline, boilerplate,  
etc.
- **Headlines**
  - Short and snappy (80 characters max)
  - Grab attention
  - Nothing superfluous
  - Write it at the end





# Overview of European media

## *The Press Release*

- **Subheader**, useful:
  - enables to flesh out your angle
  - Additional hook to pull the reader into the story
  
- **Lead paragraph**
  - **Dateline** (Where it's happening, date)
  - The **most important paragraph**
    - Peg to grab the reader
    - What, why, where, who
    - Short – 30 words
    - Start with the news, not the organization





# Overview of European media

## *The Press Release*

- **Bulk of the text** : Backs up the lead and the headline
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph: A quote
    - Short, simple, punchy, straightforward, no jargon, dramatic s – short, stand alone
    - Biggest name available (Director, Sec Gen...)

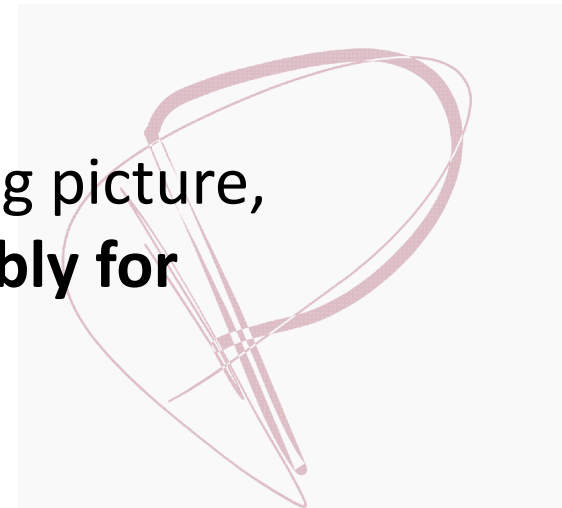




# Overview of European media

## *The Press Release*

- **3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph: nut graf**
  - Hard facts and figures
  - Develop: Context, what it means, why it matters
  
- **4<sup>th</sup>: Another quote** from same or other person
  
- **5<sup>th</sup>: put into wider context, big picture, impact. Human interest (notably for potential readers)**





# Overview of European media

## *The Press Release*

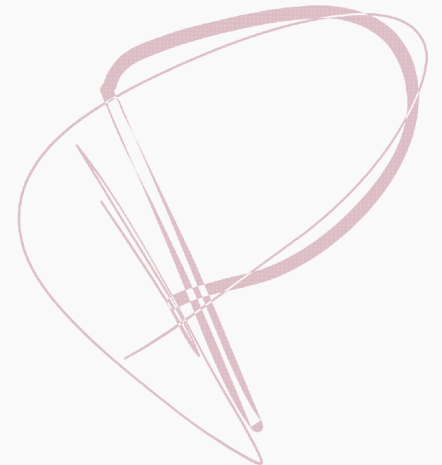
- **Boilerplate**

= Background on your organization, hard facts, who you are

### **1) Description**

The European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN) is an independent network of 29 national networks of voluntary organisations and grassroots groups and 18 European organisations.non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and groups involved in the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the Member States of the European Union, established in 1990.

[www.eapn.eu](http://www.eapn.eu)





# Overview of European media

## *The Press Release*

**2) For more information**, please contact (name and position) on: +32 2 226 58 50; (mobile) ; (email)

- Make sure those people are available.
- Offer interview with people quoted.
- **Website link** up to date with more info to support release – **photo, video, background**





# Overview of European media

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## Tips for Interviews

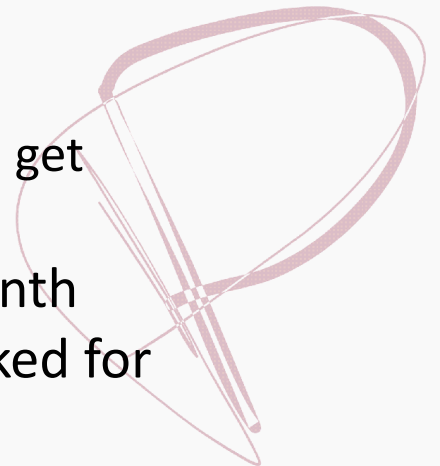
- Stick to KEY MESSAGES
- Support key messages by STATEMENTS/FACTS/FIGURES
- Keep FOCUSED
- Start with most important
  - Be concise, start with a short hook – key messages
  - Back up with key facts
  - Then supplementary messages
- Turn questions BACK TO YOUR POINT
- Use WIDER CONTEXT – why it's important





## Tips for Interviews

- Clarify ON / OFF record – attribution
- AVOID:
  - negative statements
  - “no comment”
  - answering hypothetical questions
  - yes or no – use questions to get point across
  - Jargon
  - long complex answers
- DON'T:
  - Don't guess – if you don't know, say so, get back to them.
  - Don't let them put words in your mouth
  - Don't give information you're not asked for or want to give

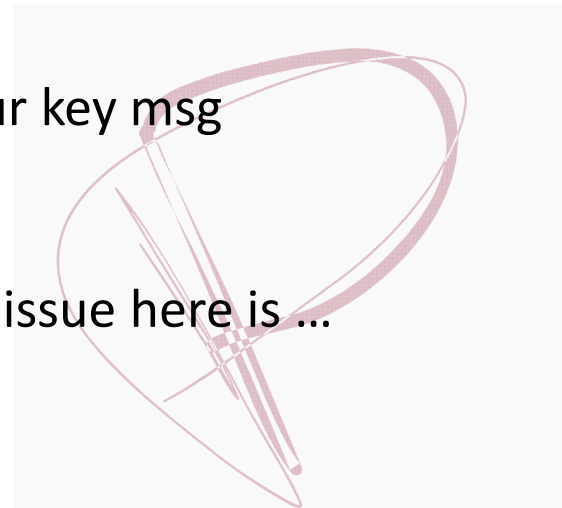




# Tips for Interviews

## *Focus/Stick to your key messages by:*

- FLAGGING UP YOUR KEY MESSAGES
  - The most important thing here is ... (key msg)
  - The best part is ...
  - The three most significant areas are ...
  - Let me put that into perspective ...
  - Let's take a closer look ...
  
- BRIDGING
  - Making the link from question to your key msg
  - That may be the case, but ....
  - That's a good point, but ...
  - We all agree with that, but what's at issue here is ...
  - That's certainly
  - important, but don't forget that ...





# Tips for Interviews

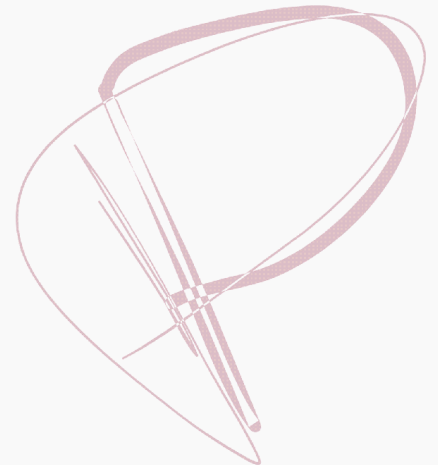
*Focus/Stick to your key messages by:*

## ■ STEERING

- The real issue is ...
- In all of this the thing that really stands out is ...
- So, in a nutshell ...
- The end result is ...
- The bottom line is ...

*Sticking to key messages:*

- ✓ *Ensures consistency*
- ✓ *Provides control*
- ✓ *Keeps you focused*
- ✓ *Avoids risk of misquotes*





# Thank you for your attention

For more information, please contact :

**Nellie Epinat**

**Communications officer**

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A photograph of a young boy with dark hair, wearing a blue hoodie. His mouth is covered with pieces of silver duct tape. He is holding a yellow and white megaphone to his mouth, as if he is about to shout or speak. The background is a plain, light color.

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