



*European Economic and Social Committee*

**PRESS OFFICERS' SEMINAR – Stockholm 26-27 November 2009**

**DRAFT**

**Venue:** European House – Stockholm, Regeringsgatan 65, 111 56 Stockholm.

**Concept:** The seminar aims to examine the broad and challenging issue of how to involve the specialist media in communicating Europe and its added-value by making it a partner in the communications process. Thanks to its wide ranging and proven expertise related to its advisory role, the European Economic and Social Committee can build on and reflect its specialized interests and act as an important partner for the specialist media.

While it is far from easy to define what we mean by the specialist media, it is much simpler to define what it is not. The specialist media may be understood to encompass everything apart from instant news media and the mainstream media. In most cases, specialist media focuses on one area of interest only and is often defined by a particular topic or interest, e.g. the science media, art media, medical media etc. Its audience is highly targeted and, in many respects, homogenous.

The seminar will explore how the specialist media can help shape and influence the public debate. To what extent, with what tools and – most importantly – at what level can the specialist media play a role in agenda-setting? What are the key differences between relations with the general media and those with the specialist media?

Secondly, the seminar will discuss the role which the specialist media can play in bringing Europe closer to the citizen and in creating a European public sphere. Although the focused nature of the specialist media does mean that it can contribute to the further fragmentation of the public sphere or to the emergence of multiple public spheres, the question remains whether it can or indeed should be used to improve communication on Europe. If the answer is yes, then we need to ask ourselves how we can involve them in this process.

The seminar will also look at the intrinsic nature of the specialist media: does it provide "expert", balanced and impartial information, or does it follow its own agenda? In the case of media which implements advocacy and communications strategies, what is the relationship between the specialist media and civil society organizations? What role can the specialist media play in the policy-making process and how can we make use of the civil society organisations to reach out to the specialist media?

**Format:** Panel discussions followed by Q&A session

Languages: EN DE FR SE

## **DRAFT PROGRAMME**

26/11/09

### **Networking dinner – 7-9 p.m**

**Welcome speech:** Staffan Nilsson, President of Group III, EESC

**Guest speaker:** Rolf Gustavsson, Svenska Dagbladet

27/11/09

### **Opening session – 8:45-9.30 a.m.**

**Maria ASENIUS** – State Secretary to the Minister of EU Affairs in Sweden

"EU Presidency's communications strategy – communication or propaganda?"

**Rodi KRATSA-TSAGAROPOULOU** – EP Vice-President for communication and information policy  
(tbc)

**Irini PARI** – Vice-President of the European Economic and Social Committee

"EESC – a privileged partner for the specialist media?"

### **Panel discussion I – 9.30-10.45 a.m.**

#### **Communicating the European Union together: civil society and the specialist media**

**The discussion will look at the relationship between civil society organisations and the specialist media. Are single-issue activism and the specialist media natural partners? Can they mutually reinforce each other's credibility?**

**Is civil society a privileged partner for the specialist media? Can the specialist media be considered to be part of the civic sector? Are the specialist media and single-issue civil society organisations able to contribute to creating and upholding a European public space? To what extent can they have a positive impact on mobilisation/participation in democracy?**

**Julian VAN TURNHOUT**, EESC member, Chief Executive, Children's Rights Alliance/National Youth Council of Ireland

**Jean-Marc ROIRANT**, co-president of the Liaison Group, EESC

**Francisco ACHOA LOPEZ** – Director of Communications Department of Confederación Española de organizaciones empresariales

Moderator: a young journalist from the "Young Reporters" programme run by the Swedish Presidency (name to be determined)

**10.45-11 a.m. – Coffee break hosted by the EC Representation in Stockholm**

**Panel discussion II – 11 a.m. -12.15 p.m.**

**What role can the specialist media play in improving communication on Europe?**

**The discussion will look at how the specialist media can contribute to bringing Europe closer to its citizens. Can the specialist media communicate Europe more effectively? What can Europe do for them? What *kind of* information does the specialist media need on Europe and from the European Union institutions?**

**Is it conceivable that the specialist media can bring Europe closer to its citizens? If so, how can it be involved?**

**Tomasz JASINSKI**, EESC member, Senior Specialist in International Cooperation and European Integration, All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions

**Rory WATSON**, Brussels correspondent of the British Medical Journal/The Times (tbc)

**Prof. Monika DJERF-PIERRE**, media researcher, University of Gothenburg (tbc)

Moderator: **Madi SHARMA**, EESC Member

**12.15 p.m. – Buffet lunch hosted by the EC Representation in Sweden**

**Panel discussion III – 1.45-3 p.m.**

**Communicating climate change with and through the specialist media**

**This topic was chosen in view of the forthcoming COP 15 UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, which will be accompanied by a major communications campaign by all relevant stakeholders, and because climate change is among the EU's inter-institutional communication priorities for 2009. Climate change is also covered in the EESC's strategic document "A Programme for Europe: proposals of civil society".**

**The discussion will examine examples of successful communication on climate change with the specialist media. It will focus on exchanging best practices for successful cooperation with the specialist media. It will also look at how organisations' agenda-setting needs can be achieved through the specialised media.**

**In a broader context, the discussion will look at the general role which the specialist media plays in the NGOs' communication strategies aimed at attracting the attention of the public.**

**Pierre SCHELLEKENS** – Head of the European Commission Representation in Sweden

**Karen CRANE** – Communication adviser, Green Alliance (tbc)

**Dan JORGENSEN**, MEP, Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (rapporteur on the EP's resolution – "COP 15 UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen") (tbc)

Moderator: a young journalist from Café Babel or from European Youth Press (name to be determined)

**3-3.15 p.m. Closing remarks**

**Irini PARI** – EESC Vice-President

**Pierre SCHELLEKENS** – Head of the European Commission Representation in Sweden