Eurodiaconia Advocacy Toolkit Hand-Out

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Eurodiaconia

www.eurodiaconia.org





Contents

Eurodiaconia's vision and mission	3
Session I advocacy and Diaconia	4
What is advocacy?	4
Why advocate?	8
Session II The advocacy strategy	
Introduction: the advocacy cycle: presentation of the main stages	
Step 1: Developing a vision for change: issue identification	
Step 2: Understanding the root causes: research and analysis	
Step 3: Building a strategy: goals, objectives, indicators, allies and targets	
Step 4: Action planning: Identify resources (time, money, people)	
Session III: incorporating communications into your advocacy plan	
Direct and indirect advocacy	
How to build a strong message	
How to know which communication tools to use	
Working with the media and building up contacts	
Session IV: case study: fighting for the rights of migrants in France	24
Session V: Learning from experience	25
Eurochild's 'End Poverty Now' online campaign	25
European Disability Forum's '1MILLION4DISABILITY.eu' online campaign	25
References	27
Annex	27



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EURODIACONIA'S VISION AND MISSION

Eurodiaconia and advocacy

Advocacy is a core pillar of Eurodiaconia's work and is a fundamental part of our vision and mission.

Mission statement: Eurodiaconia represents a dynamic, Europe wide community of organisations founded in the Christian faith and working in the tradition of Diaconia, who are <u>committed to a Europe of solidarity</u>, equality and justice.

Vision statement: As the leading network for diaconal work in Europe, we look to develop dialogue and partnership between members and <u>influence and engage the wider society</u>. We do this <u>to enable</u> <u>inclusion</u>, <u>care and empowerment</u> of the most vulnerable and excluded and ensure dignity for all.



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SESSION I ADVOCACY AND DIACONIA

Proverbs 31:8-9 (New International Version-NIV)

⁸ Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. ⁹ Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.

Aims:

- To clarify what advocacy is and its main components, to help members to identify their potential for advocacy action and recognise advocacy activities they are already working on.
- □ To help participants to identify the Christian basis for advocacy, face their concerns about Christian involvement in advocacy and motivate them to engage in advocacy

What is advocacy?

The word 'advocacy' comes from the Latin advocatus "one called to aid; a pleader, advocate" (also used in English as "one who intercedes for another"), and "advocare" 'to call out for support'.

It is generally used to describe the process of mobilisation, either of one organisation or person, or of a broader group, to influence a decision-making process or change a decision.

Advocacy is the second pillar of Eurodiaconia's strategic plan, which **aims to enable members to bring about positive change on a greater scale, to impact relevant social policies at national and European level.**

Some definitions of advocacy include:

- "A strategic set of actions designed to persuade someone else that what you want is what they want." DanChurchAid¹

4

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¹ DanChurchAid, the ABC of advocacy, January 2010 www.danchurchaid.org





-"Advocacy is a people's driven and organized political process through which ordinary citizens, especially the disadvantaged and marginalised, realize their rights and power and use them to effectively and equally participate in the decision making process at all levels with the purpose of institutionalizing systemic equity and justice and positively impacting people's quality of life". Unicef²

-"Advocacy is taking action by speaking out against injustice and the abuse of rights, with and on behalf of the poor and the oppressed. It aims to influence decision makers and to challenge policies that cause inequality and suffering." World Vision Canada

- 1. Advocacy can be done using different methods, the most well known forms of advocacy are:
- <u>Networking</u>: building alliances for change.
- <u>Raising-awareness</u>: informing and educating a group of people about a certain issue. This is often the first step in the advocacy process, done before lobbying or campaigning.
- <u>Lobbying</u>: influence decision-makers directly, speaking to them to explain the problem and proposed solution.
- <u>Campaigning/mobilising</u>: using the pressure of public opinion to persuade decision-makers. This can be seen as indirect lobbying.
- <u>Using the media</u>: to reinforce pressure on decision maker or when access to decision makers is not possible.
- <u>Inform:</u> Advocacy can also be the simple fact of informing the right people about the actions you are already doing. "Actions speak louder than word".
- 2. The change advocacy is aiming for can be fought for at different levels:
 - <u>Micro level</u>: advocating for/with an individual (e.g. arranging a meeting with a debt counsellor and a lawyer to support a person in debt)
 - <u>Meso level</u>: advocating for/with a group (e.g. writing a letter to the Minister of Social Affairs to explain the need for more palliative care homes)
 - <u>Macro level</u>: advocating at societal level (e.g. raising awareness about HIV through national broadcasting)

It is important to note that decisions made at one level can affect people at other levels. For example, decisions made at European level (by the European institutions) will impact national and often local level. Therefore, there is legitimacy for actors at all these different levels to be active in shaping these legislations. Christians are present at all levels and are

5

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² Unicef People's power and participation guide <u>http://www.advocate-for-</u> children.org/advocacy/laying_a_conceptual_foundation/what_is_advocacy

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therefore in a strategic position to bring about change.

3. In preparing draft legislation, **different stakeholders** are involved, and this creates diverse opportunities for action. For example, in their decision making procedure the European institutions consult representatives of the different stakeholders and try to balance the different interests. Therefore, there are therefore several ways to advocate and different people to influence.

> Key points³:

* Advocacy is a dynamic process which involves identification of a problem, formulating a solution, identifying those in a position to realize the solution, communication with these actors and strategically influencing their decisions.

- * Advocacy takes place at all levels of decision-making
- * Advocacy may be undertaken for, with and by those directly affected.
- * The audience or targets of advocacy may be those in positions of authority, affected groups or those who can contribute.
- * Advocacy work encompasses a wide spectrum of approaches and actions.
- * Networking with key actors and stakeholders is a crucial element of effective advocacy.

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³ DanChurchAld: report advocacy by the Six Agency Group Ethiopia (SAG) and CRDA. http://www.danchurchaid.org/news/news/advocacy-in-ethiopia

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Three approaches to advocacy

APPROACH TO Advocacy	ADVOCACY <i>FOR</i> THOSE AFFECTED BY A SITUATION	ADVOCACY WITH THOSE AFFECTED BY A SITUATION	ADVOCACY BY THOSE AFFECTED BY A SITUATION
Advocacy work done by	Professionals, NGOs, church leaders	A mixture of professionals, NGOs and local community groups	Local community, workers
Main objectives for intervention	Change in law, policy or practice	Increased access to decision-making Change in law, policy or practice Build advocacy capacity of those affected by situation	Increase in awareness of advocacy possibilities and capacity to do advocacy
Characteristics	Issues often identified by outsiders Usually targeted at official decision-makers	Issues identified by community Shared planning, resources and action Outside organisers mobilise capacity	Issues identified by community Learning by involvement May have significant outside input at start
Advantages	Quick access to decision- makers Good access to information about wider context	Increase access of poor to decision-makers Advocacy skills and capacity developed	Empowering – poor see themselves as agents of change Sustainable Can correct power imbalance
Disadvantages	Could strengthen existing power structures May not increase the capacity of local groups to act	NGO often in control and sets agenda Slower due to need for agreement between all parties	Access to fewer resources and information Risk of revenge Policy change may take longer



Possible advocate roles	ROLE	CHARACTERISTIC	
	Represent	Speak for people	$\bigcirc \odot \longrightarrow \bigcirc$
	Accompany	Speak with people	
	Empower	Enable people to speak for themselves	$ \bigcirc \bigcirc$
	Mediate	Facilitate communication between people	◯←☺→◯
	Model	Demonstrate the practice to people or policy makers	
Кеу	Negotiate	Bargain for something	
advocate 💿	Network	Build coalitions	
those affected by a situation			$\bigcirc \longleftrightarrow \bigcirc$

Source: Tearfund roots resources: Advocacy toolkit, understanding advocacy 2002, pages 24 and 32





Why advocate?

"We are not to simply bandage the wounds of victims beneath the wheels of injustice, we are to drive a spoke into the wheel itself." Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Introduction

The Greek verb "diakonein" means to serve. If we see this as being a strong, Christ-like approach to our world then how do we see Diaconia fitting toward the prevailing logic of power as an instrument of dominance? What does this mean in the social, economic and political realms?

To what extent can structures of power be transformed by the spirit of service?

Is our focus to care or to cure, or both? Do we hope for change? And if so, can we be an active part of bringing about positive change?

Prophetic Diaconia (to be completed with input from Jean Fontanieu and external speaker)

How does advocacy contribute to our diaconal objectives?

Should Christians be involved in advocacy work?

Conclusion: our challenges are no longer about simply delivering services to people in need of care but also challenging and transforming the systems and policies that cause injustice

Page 8 of 27

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"You'll use the old rubble of past lives to build a new, rebuild the foundations from out of your past. You'll be known as those who can fix anything, restore old ruins, rebuild and renovate, make the community liveable again." Isaiah 58: 12

- Responding to our context are we quick enough and flexible enough to respond?
- Pro-active versus re-active being preventative?
- What is the relationship between church, diaconia and society in our current context?
- Do we reach out or wait for people to come to us concept of service?
- Do we listen to the voice of the marginalised
- How can we be the entry point for the Church in communities
- Develop the relationship between advocacy and praxis
- 're-imagine' Diaconia from the perspective of the marginalised
- Bring about new models of relationship
- Promote our Christian identity

What we can bring:

With Political Actors

- We are experts in our field and know the reality at grassroots level
- We know and see the impact of policy
- We have alternatives that move us away from the dominant power discourse and the crisis paradigm
- We enable individuals and communities to be empowered and take control of their own lives and transform and reconcile their situations.
- We can work in partnership but we can also work in opposition





SESSION II THE ADVOCACY STRATEGY

"When you see something that's wrong, no matter how big the problem is, think "Who else would like to change this? How can we work together?"

Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan

Aims:

- □ Help participants to clarify the key stages in the an advocacy strategy
- Provide the participants with the basic tools to be able to plan an advocacy strategy
- □ Help participants to think about the issues that need to be addressed and how to identify, amongst them, the priorities to be tackled.
- Participants are reminded about the importance and method of establishing clear objectives for their advocacy work
- Participants are reminded of the importance of setting indicators to measure the success of their advocacy work
- □ Help participants to look at the implications of all the different actors and in particular people affected by the situation and potential partners NGOs.
- □ Help participants to determine the target audience and actors to be involved.

Introduction: the advocacy cycle: presentation of the main stages

There are many different ways to build an advocacy strategy, different steps to take, different ordering possible. Amongst them, Eurodiaconia recommends to include the following key steps:

- 1. Issue identification
- 2. Research and analysis on the issue
- 4. Planning of the strategy: goals, objectives, indicators, allies, targets, etc
- 5. Take action
- 6. Evaluation





Step 1: Developing a vision for change: issue identification

Sometimes the issue to address is obvious. Sometimes, more thinking might be necessary to clarify which issue needs to be addressed or at least to figure out which issue needs to be prioritised. The following questions might help. Discussing these questions with other stakeholders (other members of staff, a parish congregation, coalition partners, etc.) can help you to see the issue from different points of view and figure out which priorities appear to be shared.

- What is the problem you want to address?
- Why is it a problem?
- Who is affected by the problem?
- What do you want to achieve in tackling this issue?
- What needs to take place to find a solution to the problem?

Step 2: Understanding the root causes: research and analysis

Once the issue to be addressed has been identified, the next stage in preparing the advocacy strategy is doing research on the issue at hand. The objective is to analysis the root cause(s) of a problem, in order to respond to it efficiently.

Exercise:

- Identify what areas should be looked at in more depth to clarify the root causes of this situation
- Is this issue related to legislation (absence of legislation, bad or unclear legislation?), to structure (process and institutions that enforce the law) or public opinion (culture)?⁴

You can use the PESTLE framework analysis, looking at the Political, Economic, Social, Technical, Legal and Environmental context of the issue.

Once the issue has been established and the root causes identified, it is time to reflect on whether to advocate or not: **can advocacy be a tool to change this situation?** If so, the next step is to clarify the different actors involved.

⁴ Unicef in People's power and participation guide





Step 3: Building a strategy: goals, objectives, indicators, allies and targets

The building of the strategy is the core step in establishing what has to be done. It starts with goal and objectives setting.

→ Goal setting

It is important to distinguish between the **overarching purpose of the project** (the goal) which gives long term direction and the specific objectives which are milestones on how to get there.

The goal is the overall purpose of the project. It should be big enough to make a difference but focused enough to see results.

➔ Objectives setting

The objectives are the steps leading on to the achievement of the goal. It is often said that objectives are to be "SMART" that is to say:

S PECIFIC M EASURABLE A CHIEVABLE R EALISTIC T IMED

➔ Indicators setting

It is important to set the indicators needed to establish if the advocacy work has been a success (has it matched its objectives?). In order to do so, it is recommended to establish from the start what kind of information is needed to monitor and evaluate the advocacy initiative.

If the objectives are SMART, then the indicator of success will sometimes simply be that the objective has been met.

Despite the indicator of *success* it can be significant to also develop indicators to *measure* the advocacy success or impact. For instance, these can be communication related (e.g. the number of hits on a website) or policy orientated (legislation has changed).

The result might be a complete success or a success in part, for instance if the initial objective is to get 40% more Roma children into education, and actually 20% more children have accessed education after the advocacy campaign has ended.

→ Identify the actors involved: Who is active on this issue? Who should be targeted?





Advocacy, as we have seen, covers a variety of definitions with different possible methods, activities (ranging from a direct meeting with governmental decision-makers to influencing the wider public through a campaign or media stunt) and people doing the actual advocacy work (advocacy for, with or by people affected by a situation).

Different objectives will mean different stakeholders. It is important to develop a relationship with them and to understand their position as well as their degree of influence and legitimacy.

The key is to build relationships with both potential allies and supporters as well as passive, active and leading opponents.

✓ Those directly affected

The first decisive step is to shed light on the relationship with the people affected by the situation:

- Does your organisation have legitimacy to advocate on the issue that affect them?
- Is your organisation accountable to them or others? How?
- How is their voice really being heard?
- Do they actually need you?
- How are they involved in the shaping of the strategy?
- Do you share their aim and values?
- Are they happy with the actions you propose?
- Are they informed about the progress of your advocacy work?

<u>Example of good practice</u>: Diaconia Austria, Martin Schenk, New Models of Social Advocacy, Active Agents: Participation and Self-organisation of People Experiencing Poverty

✓ Policy makers and public opinion

The second step is to understand who is influential in shaping or making the decisions that needs to be made to achieve your targeted objectives.

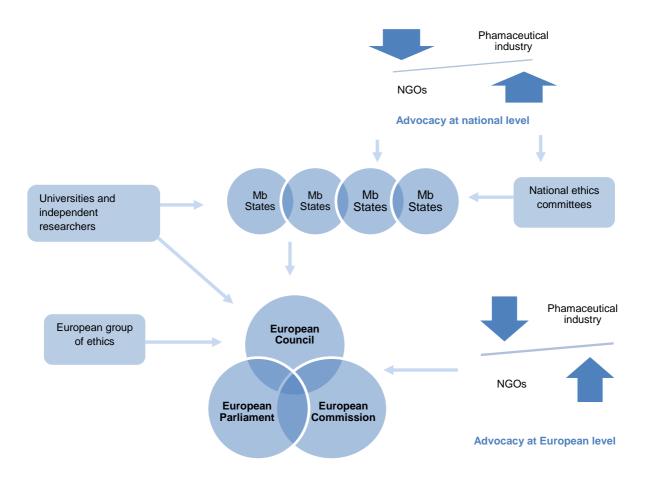
Another step is to understand how the relevant policies are formulated and how the decision makers can be reached: can we influence them directly or do we have the capacity to influence people or organisations who can influence them?

<u>Exercise: Power mapping:</u> who holds the power both formally and informally and who can influence the implementation of your objectives?





Example of a power mapping on legislation on "Advanced therapy medicinal products" at EU level



Other potential influence groups can include the media, citizens, local authorities, foreign countries, other industries, environmental groups, religious groups, companies, etc.

Some things to remember:

- Organisations and people can change their position with time and can be your opponent on one issue and your ally on another.
- You are dealing with individuals: one institution might have a position different from the position of some of its individuals. There might be potential allies in institution officially disagreeing with your objectives.





✓ Network and alliance building

Eurodiaconia would recommend advocating with partners (other organisations, churches, people who share the same goals). Working on the power mapping can help clarify who the key partners are.

Once identified, it is important to try and evaluate the level of trust between the organisations and individuals by seeing how much objectives and values are shared and checking if there is a hidden agenda or a common vision, etc.

Example of good practice: Kerk in Actie, Carla van der Vlist, Alliance building and working in partnership, the Social Alliance in the Netherlands

Step 4: Action planning: Identify resources (time, money, people...)

Once you know precisely *what* you are advocating for, you will need to know how to do it. Many project management tools such as a Gantt or PERT chart can help you to develop and clarify the way forward as well as facilitate the coordination of the plan while it takes place.

For you to be able to put your plan into action, you will need to look at the different resources you will need. Depending on the scope and aim of your advocacy, you will have to look at the following resources: funding, in-kind support, people available (and their skills), people who could potentially become available (e.g. volunteers), contacts (with decision makers or the medias), facilities, time frame etc.

Exercise: summary Advocacy Strategy Table (from Tearfund toolkit): An advocacy strategy needs time to be prepared. It requires input from different people, time to process ideas, to think, etc. The exercise proposed below is therefore to be seen as a first step in the identification of key elements for the strategy. It aims to help participants to start thinking about what they want to achieve what are the important elements to keep in mind.

RESPONSIBILITY		
TIME-SCALE		
RISKS AND Assumptions		
METHODS AND Activities		
ALLIES AND Opportunities		
TARGETS		
MEANS OF Measurement		
SUCCESS MDICATORS		
OBJECTIVES		
(DAL		





Conclusion:

There is not one way of conducing advocacy, but many. However, some steps are commonly agreed upon as essential in building a strategy for advocacy.

Establishing a clear advocacy strategy, with clearly identified stages and indicators, will help making sure the objectives to reach are clear (and therefore more easily communicable) and attainable. It will also facilitate the evaluation of the strategy, and help clarifying key actors to influence and involve.

SESSION III: INCORPORATING COMMUNICATIONS INTO YOUR ADVOCACY PLAN

Direct and indirect advocacy

Because there are many different ways of doing advocacy, we find it useful to distinguish between direct and indirect advocacy. Direct advocacy is an advocacy method where you approach your target audience directly. Indirect advocacy is advocacy methods to reach your primary target audience in an indirect manner using a mediating group (or secondary target audience) to influence your primary target audience.

Say that you would like to show your local government that investing in an elderly care home is a good idea; you could do so by writing a letter to your local government or by trying to meet with them face-to-face (direct advocacy). You could also choose to mobilise your local community to put pressure on your local government. You would then need to communicate your cause effectively to your local community and organise an activity with them to put pressure on your primary target audience namely your local government, who might be more willing to listen to you when you have a whole crowd behind you. In this case you would have gone through the local community in order to reach your local government (primary target audience).

If your aim is to raise public awareness, you could use certain media channels as a mediating group helping you to target your primary target audience, which in this case would be the local community/general public.

Direct advocacy



Direct advocacy







How to build a strong message

Advocacy and communication go hand in hand. In order to be a good advocate, you need to be able listen, learn and understand your stakeholder's context and background, his/her constraints and motives. Building a strong message has a lot to do with understanding which audience you're speaking to. Your message will be more effective when you can convey it using their language/vocabulary being sensitive to their socio-cultural background so that they can understand what you are trying to say.

Just walking down the street, you are (un)consciously bombarded with messages to buy this and do that. Decision-makers are often bombarded with messages too, surrounded by people making demands and calling for a certain cause. For your message to get through to your target audience, you need to know how to best shape your message and when the best time is send your message. First you can try and figure out some key things about your target audience: what is their knowledge about the issue? What kind of vocabulary do they use? What are their values? Once you know a bit more about who you are talking with, you can use this to shape your message in a way that will be clear and understandable to them. Here are some tips that can help you get your message across more effectively:

- 'KISS' principle: 'Keep It Simple Stupid' try and keep your message clear and to the point.
- Try to use positive words. When you point out an issue, try and propose a constructive solution. This will give your more legitimacy
- Use the TEA test (Touch Ethuse and Act) you can make your message stand out by formulating it in a way that it
 Touches your target audience by addressing the values of your audience
 Enthuses/persuade them besides touching your target audience about the issue at hand, you want to enthuse and persuade them, showing them that there is a remedy to the issue that has touched them. You will need to try and overcome any perceived barriers of your audience
 Act show your target group how they can act to find a remedy for the issue that has touched them

If you have the time and resources to do so, you can test how your message comes across by surveying a sample of your target audience. Otherwise ask a friend, a family member a colleague if they understand when they read/hear your message.

Elevator exercise





Imagine that you are in an elevator with someone who is a key decision-maker regarding your advocacy cause. You have the time it takes to get from the top floor to the bottom floor to convince this person of your cause. What would you say?

Whilst preparing for this exercise, try and incorporate the four following elements in your message using no more than 2 sentences per component: Problem + Evidence + Example + Action required. Once you have finished, do the **TEA** test to see if your message Touches, Enthuses and encourages your target audience to Act. Remember to keep the background/knowledge of your target audience in your mind whilst preparing your message:

Problem statement:

Evidence:

Example:

Action required:





How to know which communication tools to use



Choosing which communication tools you want to use depends heavily on which kind of advocacy method you opted for, which kind of resources you have at your disposal and what kind of communication tools your audience uses to gain information and be enticed into action.

External Communications Mix

- **Press** (press release, radio interview, opinion piece, a feature/focus in a magazine, press conference, twitter, infographic)
- Online communication tools (website, social networking sites, e-newsletters)
- **TV** (local, regional and national TV channels, non-commercial and commercial TV channels, cinema advertisement time..)





- Print (brochures, reports, posters, letters, briefings, position papers, banners, leaflets..)
- **Public Relations** (public stunt/event, high-level conference..)

(please not that this list is not exhaustive)

Communication channels

News media	Public service	Public affairs and	Social media
	advertising	special events	
The news media will be your top choice if you are doing a media advocacy campaign, or if you are trying to affect the behaviour or opinions of individuals who rely on the news media for their information	Public service advertising will be your top choice if you are doing social marketing. Public service advertising involves developing print, radio, or TV ads or billboards/bus boards.	Public affairs and special events involve face-to-face communication with the target audience. This category might include giving speeches, meeting with legislators, writing articles, and hosting workshops.	Social media will be your top choice if you are doing online social marketing or if you are trying to raise social awareness online. Social media are also often used together with other media channels e.g. <u>AVAAZ</u> helps mobilize online campaigns
Which news media has the biggest impact on your target audience? Which newspapers do they read? Which news radio stations do they listen to?	Which public service stations are used most by my target audience? Where can I have the biggest impact?	Which kind of special event would your target audience go to?	Which social media channels do your target audience use? For what do they use it and when do they use it?

Tips⁵:

• Encourage people who are well-known (in a positive way!) by your target audience to endorse your message. Many NGOs ask popular people to become an ambassador for their organisation (e.g.

⁵ Tips and example based on *A Toolkit on Advocacy, supporting and encouraging you people to speak out, educate and take action*. Pp 33 – 39. WAGGGS





princess Diana, princess of Wales, was the Special Ambassador of the British red Cross which gave a great boost to their external profile)

- 'Actions speak louder than words': if you provide services or organise activities related to your cause, you will have more legitimacy and credibility to speak about your cause. When the Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation advocates for Roma rights in Novi Sad or when DW der EKD advocates for the rights of volunteers, people are more inclined to respect and listen to their advocacy cause because it is backed up by their day-to-day work on this issue. So if you provide services or organise activities, do inform your target audience about it.
- Get the media on your side develop a media strategy to support your cause. Map out the media
 that your target audience reads/listens to, contact them briefly explaining who you are and your
 cause and send them a media package (fact sheets, press release, position statement, case studies,
 testimonies...). Be sure that you do some research on the value behind the media you are
 contacting to make sure that your values and their values are not in conflict with each other.
 Remember, there is no such thing as unbiased news.

<u>Example</u> of how your message channel changes according to the audience with whom you are communicating:

Imagine that you want to inform your local government about the need for a sports hall for the youth living in the community.

Target audience 1: Mayor

You could use research and analysis on the topic and present it to him in a face-to-face meeting.

Target audience 2: Parents: You could organise discussion group on the topic and invite parents' input as well as encouraging them to write a letter to key decision makers

Target audience 3: Teenagers: you could use social media to try and reach youth and ask your local school if you can come by to present your plan. You could also decide to help organise some keen teenagers to advocate for a sport building themselves or invite them to give input at different stages of your advocacy plan

Working with the media and building up contacts

Example from DECCB Old age is worth more..., presented by Pavel Hanych





If you would like to raise public awareness or, if you choose indirect advocacy, you will have to think whether or not you would like to use the media to get your message across. Working with the media can boost your campaign enormously if you find the right media channels to voice your concerns.

Working with the media can cost quite a lot of money especially if you show your ad on popular channels and/or at popular watching times.

In order to have effective reach of your message, you will likely have to pay for some or all of the advertising space.

Free ad space is generally placed in undesirable time slots or locations but if you are able to build up good relations with the media, you might be able to get a lot done on a limited budget...







SESSION IV: CASE STUDY: FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS IN FRANCE

Overview of an advocacy campaign of Eurodiaconia's French Member (FEP) on migrants' rights, presented by Nicholas Derobert

- 1) Issue identification
- 2) Objective setting
- 3) Strategy planning
- 4) Working as a coalition
- 5) Political action
- 6) Communication campaign
- 7) Evaluation









SESSION V: LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

"Success is a journey, not a destination" Ben Sweetland

Achieving your advocacy goal can take years. Therefore, being attentive along the way and learning how to adapt your advocacy strategy to changing circumstances is key to being as effective as you can be. Making mistakes along the way is human and, if we learn from them, they are worthwhile.

After listening to the short presentation on the two campaigns below, try and compare them using the steps in the strategy plan that you find in this hand-out.

Eurochild's 'End Poverty Now' online campaign



European Disability Forum's '1MILLION4DISABILITY.eu' online campaign







<u>Exercise</u>: Once you have compared them, you can also make a SWOT and BEEM analysis of both and see what you can learn from them for your own campaigns.

Strengths	How to B uild on them
Weaknesses	How to Eliminate them
O pportunities	How to Exploit them
Threats	How to M inimize them





REFERENCES

The content of the training is based on Eurodiaconia members' experience. This toolkit is largely based on both, Eurodiaconia's experience and on existing material available online and especially:

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ANNEX

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