

The European Union's Technical Assistance Programme for Ukraine

COMMUNICATING WITH THE MEDIA

A Guide for Twinning Project Participants



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FOREWORD

After the rather difficult and disappointing first months of our project in Ukraine, we wanted to ascertain the most important preconditions of a successful Twinning activity in Ukraine; what was lacking and what needed to be done for our aims to be discussed and understood.

We came to the conclusion that many preconditions are necessary for successful Twinning, but one of the most important of them is appropriate professional and public awareness that demands accountability and transparency, and enables effective control of civil servants not only by their superiors, but also by NGOs and the public.

This is impossible without well organised and understandable information and communication activities to ensure that the professional community and public at large feel involved and gradually encouraged to take part in, and ultimately control what is their own public administration system.

This recognition, while as obvious as the idea that «oxygen is necessary for life», encouraged us to step up our information and communication activities. Now we are doing more in this field than originally planned and even more than required by the General Conditions of the EC Contracts. We are convinced that the success of Twinning is based not on the procedures, but on the individuals that participate in it and take care of it. They must be well informed, be offered networking opportunities together with the necessary professional support, training and motivation. Thus, they and their opinions begin to control the behaviour and activities of those institutions that are maintained from public monies.

Ukraine has a long way to go to get to that stage. Too many bad traditions are still alive and too often Information and communication is misused.

With its quickly developing Twinning website, numerous publications, regular Newsletters and other tools, the ITO project has been doing its best to build partnerships and find associates.

Based on the extensive positive feedback, including constructive criticism that we are receiving from ministerial leaders, experts and others from Ukraine and abroad, we believe that we are on the right track.

This small publication is intended to serve and to help – as the ITO project has always done. I offer it to the attention of everybody involved in Twinning, and not only officials, and leaders. You will find it useful not only for official purposes, but also for private endeavours.

I wish to thank Maggie Stanfield for her committed and professional work for the ITO project and on this publication. The guide has been discussed by different groups of people and many interpretations were developed. My favourite is the one that stresses to value of transparency, of being open, of helping others and being ready to listen to the views of others as we work towards changes and improvements.

I am sure this booklet will serve these purposes well.

*Dr Janos Zakonyi
Team Leader, ITO*

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INTRODUCTION

Why bother with media relations?

The media today is all around us. Its channels are our «window on the world».

To get a message out to people within the public sector and beyond to the wider public needs a closer focus upon how to engage with the channels of information. «People power» is there to be harnessed. The most efficient way to send messages to your key audiences is via the media.

Don't leave it to a departmental Press Office, a Chairman or a more senior official in your team. Be proactive and start driving forwards the interests of your project and your organisation. Get involved in promoting aims and objectives, defending them where necessary. Every time you miss a chance to do so, your organisation – and your project – misses out.

We have 24-hour news broadcasting around the world from a range of different organisations – Sky, Bloomberg, Fox, Reuters, BBC World, Al-Jazeera, from Australia to Abu Dhabi and London to Beijing. We have an endless stream of online publications that the public can view for free or by subscription. We have blogs, specialist weekly and monthly publications, and we still have newspapers, daily and weekly, national and international. They need a lot of material to fill their websites and their newspapers. The media needs people to give them stories.

The media's interest is in building and maintaining the loyalty of readers/viewers. Each outlet needs to meet the demands of its audience(s) if it is to survive in a highly competitive environment. All of us are media consumers and providers. We are the channels of communication. We browse the websites, emails, posters, magazines, TV, radio, music options and we filter in what we like and bypass the rest. We are also the source of news and information that appears in the media.

The media does not exist in isolation. We are the media – and we can make our voices heard.

You already communicate – with your friends, your colleagues, people who share your interests. When you go to a concert, listen to music, chat on the Metro, you are in a two-way communication. We communicate from the moment we are born. We cannot avoid it and we do not need to be afraid of it.

Learning how to communicate effectively with the media is a valuable skill and essentially a natural one. Once you have a clearer understanding of what you need to do, you will feel much more confident.

Fear can play a major part in our perception of the media and individual journalists. Fear stems from our inexperience and lack of knowledge of how they operate. Fear can come from the power they seem to have to influence other people's views of us and the work we do.

But the fact is that the media need us as much as we need them. It makes sense to join in the media «game» and build relationships with journalists who could be to your organisation's advantage.

It is not difficult – you simply need to learn the rules of contact and a few tips on making sure you benefit from media relationships.

This Guide will help you focus your communication about Twinning so as to direct it to the people most likely to listen and to become familiar with your message.

KEEP THESE KEY POINTS IN YOUR MIND:

- Plan out what you want to do, working with your colleagues and managers so that each of you understands the message clearly. Otherwise, you may start contradicting one another and causing confusion.
- As you look towards the implementation of a new project, concentrate your mind on what is unique and special about it so as to identify what will interest your audiences.
- If you are involved in a project that is already underway, you can still make use of this Guide to consider mid-term events of various kinds.
- A lot of your audience will be within your own ministry or agency, across other government agencies/ministries and among Twinning participants.
- There is a separate but wider audience out in the community. Your channel to them is through the media. They are not interested in the fine detail of what a Twinning project is but they will be interested in an EU-funded initiative that could better the lives of Ukrainian people in the longer term – for example, it makes air travel safer.
- Your channels for both audiences are primarily through clever use of online options, both intranet and internet functions.
- When you talk to that wider audience about Twinning, remember that you then become a vehicle for EU policy, so you need to make sure that what you or your colleagues say is in line with it.
- Keep the Twinning Programme Administration Office and the EC Delegation informed, as well your own managers and ensure that you have essential approvals before you release material to the media.
- Target the right audience(s) for your project sector. As well as colleagues, there will be specialist media throughout the EU as well as in Ukraine who may be interested in projects involving their particular interests (For example, gas/energy correspondents; space/science correspondents; transport/transport correspondents).
- Ensure the information you provide is factually accurate, up-to-date and always provide clear contact details.

QUICK START-UP CHECKLIST

ACTIVITY	WHEN DO I START?	WHEN SHOULD I HAVE FINISHED THE TASK?
<i>PLAN WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY</i>		
Use proposal document and implementation plan to identify story lines to use.	In the project planning phase.	This stage covers the launch stage of any new project.
Form a small group who will take responsibility for information and communication throughout the life of the project.	In the project planning phase.	Aim for continuity so that this small group can maintain its input.
If your project is underway, consider how you could mount a media briefing or another event as you approach the next milestone.	At any point during a project.	You may have several opportunities during the life of your project

ACTIVITY	WHEN DO I START?	WHEN SHOULD I HAVE FINISHED THE TASK?
<i>TARGET THE RIGHT PEOPLE</i>		
<i>Organise your database:</i> Create a database that includes your internal/ministerial/public interests as well as media in Ukraine and Europe. Use your own contacts, search engines, the PAO and the ECD to get information about different media outlets. Set up your classification clearly.	2 months before the project starts, ideally, but you can do this at any time.	Before the launch event. If your project is already in the implementation phase, then try to get these databases in place now.
<i>Build relationships:</i> Establish contacts within relevant outlets and get to know them. Set up meetings and be open to approaches from journalists.	Select names from your database and begin making contact with them as soon as you can.	Get this process underway and keep adding names right from the start.

ACTIVITY	WHEN DO I START?	WHEN SHOULD I HAVE FINISHED THE TASK?
USE EXISTING INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS MATERIALS		
<i>Use the Twinning website:</i> There are extensive resources available online. Make use of the Twinning website where you will find a page of useful links.	Gather and classify these resources as early as you can.	Continue to keep in touch.
<i>Use the Ukrainian Twinning E-Community (UTeC):</i> This online forum is improving public awareness of Twinning and of specific projects. It also enhances co-operation between teams working on different projects.	Get involved with UTeC early on.	Ongoing.
<i>Information folders, booklets, newsletters, video, interviews, photographs, promotional goods – notebooks, pens, magnets, pins – are available from the PAO for your use.</i>	Gather and assess what is relevant for your project.	Have materials available before any event.

ACTIVITY	WHEN DO I START?	WHEN SHOULD I HAVE FINISHED THE TASK?
ORGANISE A MEDIA EVENT		
<i>This event</i> may be a simple 30 minute press conference with as senior a speaker as you can get to address journalists. If you have additional resources, you may be able to have a grander event with drinks/snacks.	6 weeks. Give yourself time to book a room, arrange speakers, invitations, press release, etc.	Once any event is over, you will have some follow-up calls and monitoring work which will take about a week.
<i>Alternatively,</i> it could be a mid-term event to mark a specific achievement, or even a media background opportunity to explain what you are doing.		
<i>Writing a News Release:</i> There is more detailed guidance below. Think about exactly where the strongest media interest line will be for your project, whether at the launch stage or later on.	5 days before your event, email the release to your media database. Remember to allow time for approval.	Bring hard copies to the event. You may need to email further copies as well. Put the Release on the Twinning website, your ministry/agency website and the ECD site if you can.

ACTIVITY	WHEN DO I START?	WHEN SHOULD I HAVE FINISHED THE TASK?
<i>FOLLOW UP AFTER THE EVENT</i>		
<i>Summary:</i> Write a summary of the launch event and put it online. E-mail it to journalists who attended, to those who did not and to colleagues and the stakeholders across the BA and government departments, plus the PAO and ITO, the ECD and . Add pictures if you can.	Within 24 hours of the event ending.	You may find you get follow-up enquiries or requests for interviews now.
<i>Monitoring:</i> Monitor your coverage and collate it.	Start immediately after the event.	Most coverage will be within a week, but monthly publications will take longer.

PLAN WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY

USE THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE

Look carefully at the information you already have available. Use the contents of the Project Proposal and Implementation Plan plus any updates (if your project is already underway). You know what your project wants to achieve (or has already achieved) and how it will seek to do that, but do you know what story-lines might interest the media?

Think about the people involved. You will have met with new people. Do some of them have a story to tell? About Twinning successes in another country? About their specialist knowledge of your particular project? Is there something special to say about how you have worked together to get this project started or move it along towards a significant milestone? About how the EC has helped you? Where most of the work is actually take place? Who is in charge? Think about what might be of interest for TV, radio, newspapers, journals as well as for your internal channels.

Upon whom will the project have an impact? That doesn't mean the outcome has to change the world but perhaps it can have a longer term effect on jobs, on prosperity, on energy security or safety in the air. Brainstorm with your media group partners to get ideas.

IDENTIFYING A STORY

How do you learn how to see a real story? Climate Change isn't a story. We all know it matters but unless there is something new to say, the general theme will not attract much attention.

How do you make climate change into a story? The influential scientific journal, *New Scientist*, ran a story headed: *Even Antarctica is now Feeling the Heat of Climate Change*. The «standfirst», the short introduction, said: *It's official: there is nowhere left to hide from global warming*. The notion that Antarctica is the last continent not to be heating up because of climate change is dead, according to a new study.

The story hit the television headlines across the globe and ran in major newspapers in virtually every country. Why? The general subject matter is topical but the new development makes it suddenly newsworthy. There is a scientific study proving something definitive and it has the backing of a highly influential publication.

You can see the difference between a general theme and a real story. But every general theme, including *Twinning*, has real stories buried underneath. Use the project information as your story source and include the *Twinning* aspects a little further down.

Make the stories specific, target them to the right people and be prepared to change and amend the ideas so as to better fit the outlet you are offering it to.

SET UP A SMALL MEDIA GROUP

Establish a small group of people interested in working in communications and media information. Create for it a list of agreed tasks and decide who will be responsible for what components. You will learn a lot from one another and you will gain a new portfolio of experience that will be useful in any job you undertake in the future.

Make teamwork matter here: if each person has specific tasks to deliver and the others in the group are dependent upon each individual to deliver his/her contribution, then there is a corporate responsibility that will work to your advantage.

The tasks you need to distribute are those detailed in the Checklist above. Some of them will involve all of you; others one individual can carry out alone but keeping the rest of the group fully informed.

TARGET THE RIGHT PEOPLE

CREATE AND MANAGE A DATABASE

Every media outlet knows its own audience(s). Specialist publications for railway enthusiasts and stamp collectors have a very precise audience. Popular TV shows have a much wider one but they know the profile of the people watching and the advertisers know which goods will sell alongside. Programmes about house renovation carry advertising for building and bathroom outlets; those about science and technology know viewers will be interested in the latest phones and gadgets. Newspapers appealing to young working men choose and present their information differently to those for much older and more traditional women.

So it is worth considering your potential audience profile. There will be several classifications – within this ministry or agency; within other government ministries/agencies; in newspapers, TV, radio, magazines; online possibilities; EC Delegation; other Twinning projects; civil society organisations; ITO; PAO.

Create a database, classifying entries in each section, including name, title, email, phone/fax numbers, postal address and a very short description to remind you of where that entry fits into your overall planning.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

It is important to establish and then build upon relationships with the media. This is a process rather than an event that will prove very useful when you have a specific story you want to present. Target who you want to make contact with. Look for news desk editors, specialist reporters relevant to your area of work (for example, an energy or transport writer), staff reporters, features writers, TV and radio producers and editors.

Meet up, face-to-face, at your office or where there is project activity taking place. Let the journalist pick the time and place and make clear that this is a «getting to know you» opportunity. Encourage him/her to develop an interest in what you are doing. Give clear contact information and offer help on the issues within your knowledge area. Explain the structure of the project in broad outline, giving names of appropriate senior officials involved and offer to act as contact point should he/she wish to talk to one of them.

Be proactive. Do not then wait for the journalist to contact you. Instead, offer up potential stories likely to fall within his/her interest area.

Be persistent. Do not feel too disappointed if your first attempts do not succeed in winning the coverage you would like to see. You will need to develop a sense of just what will be most likely to attract your specific contacts and how best to present that information in a positive format.

Co-operate. Be prepared to move quickly if asked for help. If you miss the deadline, you may not get asked again. Journalists work on very tight timelines.

Be honest. If you are asked for a comment or to answer a question to which you do not know the answer, tell the journalist so and that you will call him/her within 20 minutes – or ask a colleague to do so if appropriate – but ensure that you do return with the information within the timeframe.

AVOIDING THE DANGER ZONE

You are sitting in your office and the phone rings. The caller asks if you can give your organisation's response to a new policy announcement about Twinning in Ukraine. He would like to know what this means for your particular project and whether it is a good or bad move. You chat for a few minutes, adding a few views that you have of your own or have heard from colleagues, including those of one senior official who said it might be a bad move.

You add that your boss says «as usual, nobody asked us how we feel about it, even though we are clearly important in the Twinning field. It could be completely useless for all we know.»

The caller takes your name and number and thanks you for your time, saying perhaps he will speak with you again.

You think «Great! This person is really interested in what we're doing here.»

When the newspaper appears two days later, you are «starring» alongside a heading that says: «NEW TWINNING POLICY IS «USELESS» SAYS LEADER. The story goes on to say that there was no consultation with the experts involved prior to the shift in policy.

Where did that come from you wonder, as your organisation spends the day fighting off not only the national media but the Government, and trying to limit the damage.

You were interviewed without understanding what the consequences might be. This is an extreme example to illustrate a point and rarely happens. But you may be asked to do an interview or give a quote and, in the process of doing so, may fail to get your message across or even end up putting the wrong message across without meaning to.

There are ways to make sure this never happens to you.

Know your caller: Identify to whom you are speaking and for what outlet. Find out what the context of the story is and exactly what it is the enquirer wants to know. Is it a quote? Someone senior to speak to? Background information? Ask why they are approaching your organisation/project. Is this a live TV or radio interview or a hard or soft copy report for a publication?

Prepare: Give yourself a little time to answer. Ask the journalist for his deadline. Say you will call back in 10 or 20 minutes after your «meeting» but make sure that you do so. See below for more information on how to prepare.

Starting point: Make sure you know whether you are «on the record» – anything you say can be used as a quotation. A «named source» is when you, as speaker, are named, rather than treated as

a «non-attributable» «spokesperson for the organisation» where your name is not included but general information you provide will be used (not usually in quotation marks). Finally, be careful of «off the record» information. Journalists may promise that they want only a piece of information for background and will not quote you and most will honour this. If you have the slightest doubt, then do not offer any «off the record» material.

If you do not establish these parameters at the start, the journalist is entitled to treat all the material as «on the record» and quote from it accordingly.

USE EXISTING INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS MATERIALS

- Use the Twinning website. Your most important channel for information and communications is online through the Twinning website, UTeC and TWINS.
- Information packs, notepads, pens, lapel pins, magnets, conference bags with the Twinning logo and the EC flag have already been produced by the ITO.
- Films, photography, booklets about Twinning, and a host of nearly 2,000 documents are available on the Twinning website. Much of this information will meet your needs for support materials.
- There are 8 [10] newsletters available in both hard and soft copy, giving a vast amount of background to how Twinning has been operating in Ukraine.
- There are a series of case studies, showing different projects at work, that can also be used for support (available online).

USE THE TWINNING WEBSITE AND UTEC

You are not asked to originate all of your media materials. The ITO has put a lot of information in place already and this is free for you to use. The website has more than 2,000 documents online and also keeps Twinning project activities and events up to date.

It is vital that everyone involved in Twinning projects is committed to playing their part in developing and maintaining the content of the Twinning site. You and your colleagues operating in the communications and information components have responsibility for keeping the site active and up to date so that it continues to be an essential resource for Twinning activists.

UTeC is the online Twinning community. Joining its members is an excellent way to keep in touch with other people who are involved in Twinning. You can share your experience with them and learn from what they have discovered already.

USE INFORMATION PACKS, NOTEPADS, ETC.

The ITO has also produced a range of publications that are available for your use. You can get Information Pack folders to distribute with relevant documentation to hand out at a Press Conference (see below), use for seminars and conferences and to provide information to interested stakeholders. You can make use of small promotional items such as notepads, pens, lapel pins for visiting media and conference attendees. There is also an extensive range of Twinning Newsletters which provide both background information and detailed histories of the entire programme and the projects already started and implemented since 2006.

There are Progress Reports, a Questions and Answers Guide to Twinning in Ukraine, Implementation Plans, Proposals, a Welcome Pack for Resident Twinning Advisors and a host of other useful documents all readily available in both hard copy and online within TWINs, most of them in both English and Ukrainian. Some time spent studying these materials and familiarising yourself with their contents will prove invaluable to you as your own project unfolds.

You can also find hundreds of photographs of Twinning in action; film; shorter updating newsletters with a host of background information and case studies. Film and photography is always a useful addition for media and for Newsletter contributions. Start building your own library of pictures early on and make sure you have a collection of pictures of the leading figures in your own project. These are very useful for sending out along with your News Releases.

The PAO will also be able to help source materials for you.

If you can secure the resources, pay a professional photographer to set up dynamic, interesting pictures taken out of doors. One clever picture will probably win you more visibility than anything other single action.

ORGANISE A MEDIA EVENT

PRESS CONFERENCE

Whether you are concentrating on a new project launch or seeking to create media interest in a mid-way milestone or event, a Press Conference is the classic way to get journalists together. There are variations on exactly what kind of event you can organise.

You might select an early evening «cocktail hour» event where your senior representative(s) can mingle informally with the media over refreshments from 5.30 to 7pm. This solution can work well – timing is often suitable for both your speakers/officials and the media and the style of event allows for some informal networking.

Alternatively, you might prefer a more formal presentation event where your main speaker addresses the media from a podium and probably takes some questions. These events are normally arranged in the morning between 10am and noon and will last around one hour.

Whichever model you chose, you will need to arrange:

- A room large enough to accommodate your likely attendance (which you will be able to assess from the response to your invitation, see below).
- Tables and chairs (at a formal presentation attendees will appreciate having a table or desk to make note-taking easier).
- A podium, lectern or tables from which your speakers can address the media or in an informal setting, a clear centre point for a short introduction from the appropriate official or guest.
- A background Exhibition Stand to place behind your speaker, promoting the visibility of Twinning, is useful. The PAO has one available. You can also add any relevant print materials from your project here.
- Some refreshments (dependent on your time of day and budget) – tea, coffee, snacks, drinks.
- Copies of your News Release and/or Information Pack with any promotional gifts you may have on offer.
- Radio microphones and speakers (in a large room with many guests).
- Recording equipment and possibly simultaneous translation for formal presentations.
- You may require a computer and monitor to play a film or show presentations.
- Space for photographers/film crews to operate from.
- A photographer of your own so that you have a pictorial record of the event.
- You may need a registration desk. This provides useful information on who attends (so that you can follow up later) and will be expected if you have a high level guest.
- Identification badges/lanyards.
- A defined area where interviews can take place once the Press Conference is over.

Make sure you book a room well in advance and, as far as is possible, try to make sure your chosen time and date is not going to clash with a competing event.

A useful addition is to organise an Editors' Lunch event where you field perhaps three speakers among a dozen or so journalists over a networking lunch. This can be done any time, but if you want to connect it to a specific project launch, then try to do it about one week beforehand. Compose an invitation to the event and email it 5 days in advance along with your Press Release. Follow up with phone calls and a reminder two days later.

HOW TO WRITE AND DISTRIBUTE A NEWS RELEASE

Members of the media get a lot of News Releases! You need to try to make yours stand out to get noticed.

Keep it as short as you can, preferably on one page of A4. You can add additional pages of information under the heading Notes for Editors but do not offer more than the essentials. Journalists will ask for any additional information they require.

Shape your information like a pyramid. Keep the most important information at the top and gradually expand. This way, you will have succeeded in getting your main points across even if the Release is not read through to the end.

- **Headline:** The headline should be short and should concentrate on the news value of what you are doing. You should also use it in the subject box of your e-mail version, so it needs to catch attention quickly. Twinning Project Launched is not very exciting, while Safer Skies for Ukraine's Air Travellers suggests a story that will matter to ordinary people.
- **«Chapeau» or Introduction:** The summary of your key points is placed immediately below the headline in bold italics. This is the place for the two most important elements that you will expand further on. This is where you need to capture interest to keep your audience reading.
- **The quote:** If you have a high-level speaker attending, get his voice in just after the introduction. Here, you are providing the news aspect of why the story you are telling is important and significant in Ukraine.
- **Body text:** Now you can start to explain the context of your Twinning project a little more, but keep your sentences short and start new paragraphs frequently. Spell out in full any acronyms with the first usage and avoid too many.
- **Notes to editors:** Keep background information out of the main press release and include it instead on a backsheet headed «Notes for Editors.» This is where to provide graphs/data, statistics on Twinning in Ukraine, the EC's financial contribution and any important web links.
- **Contact/Invitation:** The vital information on who to talk to for more information plus the invitation to the Press Conference with clear venue, date, time and registration details. Include a clear deadline for acceptances.
- **Photo opportunity:** Provide a photo opportunity to the media – especially worthwhile if you have someone important speaking – and add this information here. Have your own photographer as well. You will need a record of the event so that you have pictures for future use.
- **Interview requests:** You can invite media (including TV/radio) to conduct a one-to-one interview with your lead speaker providing you have that individual's permission to do so. You can add alongside the Contact information: «Specific requests for interviews will be considered on application»

The Release Date is normally the day of dispatch but could be under embargo until, for example, a speech is delivered. In this event, mark clearly: EMBARGO: NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL [time/date]. If you are sending out a speech, mark it: CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY since speakers often include newsworthy elements at the event that are not detailed in the speech sent out.

Give yourself enough time to get approvals and be careful about how you present the EU or the European Commission who have fixed rules about how News Releases should be presented. The PAO will advise you. Useful guidance on the EC rules are available in the Communications and Visibility Handbook available at: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm

Any additional photography background – for example, other Twinning projects – can be mentioned at the end of your Press Release as being available on request or from a website address.

Remember to have hard copies of your News Release at the Press Conference.

DISTRIBUTION

Do not send out a Press Release too early. Five days before the event is sufficient. Newsdesks operate day to day and, online especially, hour to hour in deciding what to reject and what to include.

If you have a major event coming up in several weeks time, then you can send a Calendar Note containing minimum details – title, date and time, venue, registration information.

Distribute not only to the media but also to the PAO, the ECD and the ministerial/agency/government sites (including your own) who may be interested. Include your Twinning colleagues and other stakeholders.

When e-mailing a News Release, it is worthwhile pasting it into the covering email as well as sending an attachment since different software programmes may present compatibility problems.

E-mail a photograph of your lead speaker with the Press Release.

HOW TO BOOK THE RIGHT PEOPLE TO TALK TO THE MEDIA

Your main speaker will attract most media attention, especially if this is someone prominent in public life. You may be able to arrange for two or three more leading figures to be available for interview.

If you can pick interviewees, ensure they are well informed about Twinning in Ukraine generally and that they will be able to answer any difficult questions. These people need to have an assured, confident style of speech that will project their credibility and will mean they deliver well on camera (they look at the interviewer, don't wave their hands around too much, stick to the point and do not pepper their speech with «Ummm...» and «Er...».).

Here is some guidance for your interviewees:

- Start with a goal: Approach interviews with a clear sense of three or four messages that you want to put across.
- Take control of the interview: Work your key messages into the interview early on so that what follows will take the route you want. Answer questions but keep steering the interview back to the messages you want to project.
- Understand the media outlet: Educate yourself in advance about the outlet conducting the interview. Know the kind of stance they tend to follow by reading the publication or watching/listening to programmes.
- Anticipate questions and prepare answers in advance: Compile a list of the areas most likely to surface and develop your responses. You can also use this list as a «tip sheet» for the interviewer – it saves them research effort and helps you to get the questions you want. Do not ignore any difficult or challenging issues that could arise.
- Be a credible spokesperson: Don't be led into giving opinions about areas that are not within your expertise. Talk about what you've experienced firsthand through Twinning and give the facts that prove what you're saying. Have a few key statistics ready but don't overwhelm with information. Talk and present yourself positively.
- Illustrate: Where you can, give specific illustrations that endorse your claims. If you can relate a concrete way in which a project is helping or can help in the future, then that will present very well.
- Believe in yourself: Once you give an answer, resist the temptation to expand on it or put it another way if the journalist appears to hesitate. If they are unclear, they can ask you another question for clarification. Don't be flippant, off-hand or over-casual in your manner.
- Real people: The interviewer is speaking on behalf of your wider audience so you should speak directly to him/her. Avoid jargon and acronyms and never read from a document during an interview. Keep good eye contact and listen carefully to the questions, ensuring there is no danger of misunderstanding.
- Presentation: For TV, keep your clothing simple. Avoid pure black and white on camera. Very bright or fluorescent colours, too much decoration or over-bright contrasts, stripes and spots are not a good choice either. Men are best in plain, dark suits with a pastel coloured shirt and muted tie (a white shirt can be too harsh). Look at the interviewer or the camera lens (you will be guided on where to direct your eyes) as you would look at a friend to whom you were speaking.
- Biographical support: It can be helpful to provide a brief CV for your interviewer detailing your name, your designation and your background in Twinning.

TRANSPORT AND ACCOMMODATION

Where resources allow it, provision of transport to/from a press event may encourage media interest – as will hospitality.

HOW TO GET THE WIDER AUDIENCE INTERESTED

If you have limited experience in attracting an audience outside your own department or agency, you may feel nervous or intimidated by the prospect of drawing wider media attention.

But as already outlined above, the media does not exist in isolation. What you are seeking to do is make your project relevant to that wider public to whom the media directs itself.

Are you interested in what you are doing? Do you think that it matters to other people? Then it does. You are a consumer of the media too.

Look for answers within your project plans and activities to the question: Why should I be interested in this?

Convert that information into enthusiastic, lively presentation and you will capture that wider audience interest.

FOLLOW-UP AFTER THE EVENT

SUMMARY/FINAL NEWS RELEASE

As an event ends, write a Final News Release that summarises the speeches/questions and answers raised at the launch or other event. It is worthwhile e-mailing this to the list of people you originally invited. Some may have been unable to attend and those who did will value such a summary. It also acts as a reminder and an opportunity to send a photograph.

Send it to your colleagues, appropriate senior officials and other stakeholders as well.

Make sure that all your News Releases, photographs and support materials are uploaded to the Twinning website and offered to the ECD who may elect to add such information to their own website.

WRITE A MORE DETAILED AND EXTENSIVE PIECE FOR THE TWINNING NEWSLETTER.

Here, you will be able to include more photographs and to explain to others involved in Twinning how what you are doing fits into the wider Twinning Programme. You can also set out some of the challenges and offer your project leaders' experience of how they are meeting those challenges.

Once published, ensure that the Newsletter is sent to interested parties and ensure that copies are readily available in your department/agency lobby area.

MONITORING

Finding out what you have achieved is gratifying if also sometimes frustrating!

Measuring the column inches/centimetres and the broadcast time gives you some kind of indication about how much coverage you have managed to persuade the media to deliver.

It is no easy task. The demands on the media are constant and huge. Anything you win is an achievement so do not feel discouraged if you think your event should have won more coverage than it did.

You will need to draw together a file that reflects your coverage in newspaper, journal, online and broadcast exposure.

This is a task best allocated to one of your Media Group and will need to be continued throughout the life of your project.

KNOWING WHAT JOURNALISTS WANT: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Most of us have little contact with journalists. We are more likely to be passive recipients of the media we follow.

We asked one experienced UK journalist about how he sees himself and his job on a leading daily national newspaper. Although the UK has a different demographic from Ukraine and there are different constraints on the media in various countries, most of what he says remains true anywhere in the world.

Q. Why should we bother talking to the press?

No reason at all, providing that the only people you need to talk to are those in your organisation. For a variety of reasons, most organisations with a public face need to convince key audiences that their aims (those of the organisation) are good for the audience to know about.

Talking directly to the media is a lot easier – and cheaper – than knocking on every single door or standing in the street with a megaphone. Whether we are talking about local press, national or international news on paper, TV, radio or online, it would be impossible to purchase advertising that would have anything like the same impact. Editorial control in the outlet adds credibility to your story that advertising can never achieve.

Q. So what exactly do journalists want from the people they talk to?

A. Stories we can use. You will need to work hard to persuade us that there is a story in what you want to tell us that goes beyond what you and your colleagues may find interesting. We don't want great ideas or wonderful concepts. We want real stories that concern real people.

Q. What is the role of the journalist?

To find the stories and present them in a way that our readers find interesting. Beyond that, people argue all the time about the «proper» role of the journalist. How should they behave where violence is being reported? Should they ever air their own views or stick to reporting the facts? What is the journalist's responsibility to the different governments he writes about?

Our loyalty is to the people who buy our papers or listen to the broadcast media for their information and education. We want to make them think for themselves and make fully informed choices. Throughout history, journalists have struggled – and been imprisoned, tortured, even shot – to get the facts to people, whether or not powerful interests in business or politics want them to. Only then can people be equipped to make those choices.

Q. What do journalists look for in an interview?

Whether it is face-to-face or on the phone, for a newspaper or broadcasting, I want to talk to someone who knows what they are talking about. If you agree to speak to a journalist, it can be very dangerous if you get things wrong. Practice in advance the story you want to tell.

Your approach may not fit with the one a journalist sees as the best story so be prepared for awkward questions and be ready with a response if necessary. Never let fear show. If we feel your fear, we will close in on it. Don't lie and don't evade; don't wander off in long tangents that aren't relevant and don't ever say «no comment»!

Q. What makes a good story?

Good stories may be strong business stories – expansion, new jobs, major improvements – they may be political where individual politicians are involved in scandal for example, or «wider political» such as new policy announcements, relationships in the EU or a fresh foreign policy in the US that could have global impact. We are interested in stories that will effect our readers' own lives, whether in the immediate or longer term. We need to be able to convey to ordinary people the impact of changes in government tactics and policy in a way that highlights what this may mean for them.

We have a campaigning stand so we want stories that expose the flaws in public administration and government, especially those that have a strong human interest. And of course we need topicality. You need to focus your story for the outlet you approach with it. A very localised story is not going to make the national newspapers but a national story might well be refocused for a much more local audience.

Q. What should I do if I get an unexpected call from a journalist asking for a quote or an interview?

A. Talk to him or her! We will both want to get something good out of a conversation but we do recognise that you will probably need to think about it or consult with colleagues before you respond. What we hate is when you say you'll phone back in 10/20/30 minutes and you don't do it within our tight deadlines.

Q. What annoys journalists most?

Apart from not getting back to us when you've said you will, it is being pestered with calls that have no merit or promise. If you want to build good relationships with journalists who can help you, then contact them only when you have a genuine story that you know will be relevant for that reporter and that outlet. It is important that you know and understand the range of outlets and their staff writers/editors so that you can target your story properly.

Reporters are children. Be kind to them. Be generous with your information. Be reliable. Meet our deadlines. Do what you say you will do and within the timescale you agree. This is a two-way relationship. We can only help you if you help us.

Q. Why trust any journalist?

A. Because it gives you the stronger position. Journalists are cynics. They expect to get lies and evasion. If you have some useful material to give the press, then we need you. If your trust is abused, cut that person off. Find someone else. Every reporter, even within the same organisation, is a rival. Nobody wants to miss out on a source of information, especially one who is known to them as honest and reliable, and every journalist depends upon his or her personal contacts.

Q. What should I do if I am misquoted or misrepresented?

Protect yourself by recording the interview so that if you want to complain, you have evidence. Tell the journalist that you are recording everything that is said. It is useful to offer your availability when the story is written up so that the journalist can check the accuracy of specific quotes but don't expect or ask to see the copy before it goes to print. Unless you have paid for the space within an advertisement, then journalists will always protect absolutely their right to compose the story as they see appropriate and without your editorial interference. If someone gets a quote wrong, then complain first of all to the journalist before going to his/her superiors.

Misinterpretation is another matter. You are entitled to complain about matters of fact but matters of emphasis belong to the reporter. Again, if the matter is serious enough, complain. But bear in mind that you will still probably need some kind of relationship with the news outlet after you have made your complaint.

Q. With News Releases, what is the key to success?

A. Keep it short, preferably on one A4 page. If you need to add statistics or background, summarise this in Notes to Editors. Learn to write your story in six paragraphs. If a journalist wants more, he'll ask you for it.

Q. What is the best way to build a successful relationships with the media?

A. We want to report with authority and credibility. We don't want to get it wrong. You need to target and cultivate journalists who write on your subject. Be open about it. Talk to them informally about why your organisation should be of interest to them. Invite them for a «get to know you» meeting or coffee. If you can pay them for that, they will certainly be delighted to come! Give your contact details, including out of normal office hours, and find out what it is they can gain from you, but do not stop there. Follow up, keep in touch and start delivering useful material. Be prepared for disappointments but at some stage you will start getting positive results. Do not give up. Perseverance pays – so long as you keep your stories relevant and real.

