YOUTH AMBASSADORS FOR THE EUROPEAN CODE AGAINST CANCER

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

PREPARED BY
Advocacy Working Group
Youth Ambassadors of the
European Code Agains Cancer

POWERED BY
Association of European
Cancer Leagues (ECL)

ECL Association of European Cancer Leagues

12 European Code Against Cancer 12 WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR CANCER RISK

I. INTRODUCTION

- The **Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)** is a non-profit umbrella organisation representing national and regional cancer societies across Europe. ECL is based in Brussels and provides members with an exclusive platform for collaboration with international colleagues, particularly in the fields of cancer prevention, access to medicines and patient support, as well as opportunities to lobby for these issues at the EU level.
- ECL's vision: A Europe free of cancers.
- ECL's mission: To advocate for improved cancer control and care in Europe through facilitating collaboration between cancer leagues , and influencing EU and pan-European policies.
- The **European Code Against Cancer (ECAC)** is an initiative of the European Commission coordinated by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) aimed at informing the general public about actions they can take for themselves or their families to reduce their risk of cancer. The current edition is the 4th one, and it consists of 12 recommendations that most people can follow without any special skills or advice. The more recommendations people follow, the lower their risk of cancer will be. It has been estimated that almost half of all deaths due to cancer in Europe could be avoided if a healthier lifestyle (as its recommendations suggest) were to be adopted.

- The **ECL Youth Ambassadors (YAs) programme** is the first and only European youth-led network of cancer prevention advocates. We are students and young professionals from various backgrounds and different countries interested in cancer prevention and health promotion. We organise a variety of different activities promoting the European Code Against Cancer (ECAC) and represent ECL in their home countries within the WHO European region. A great part of the activities focuses on informing and debunking myths about cancer, as well as promoting an altogether healthier lifestyle at everyone's reach.

- There are 4 **Working Groups** the Youth Ambassadors can partake in: Advocacy, Digital Communication, Events and Education, and Research. Each work stream is led by 2 experienced Youth Ambassadors and follows a bottom-up approach. The Advocacy Working Group has worked hard to develop an advocacy toolkit for cancer prevention advocates and especially for Youth Ambassadors.

- **Acknowledgements**: Beatriz Arranz Alvarez, David Argumosa, Emma Jayne Spiteri, Iuliana Stratan, Jesper Rotvig Jensen, Julia Polanska, Karmen Korda, Krassimira Zaykova, Nadia Majdalani, and Nena Karavasiloglou.

II. GLOSSARY

- ECL - European Cancer Leagues
- ECAC - European Code Against Cancer
- WHO - World Health Organization
- EWAC - European Week Against Cancer
- YA - Youth Ambassadors of the ECAC

III. ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

- **What is Advocacy?**

Advocacy is the activity of an individual or a group of people aiming to influence decision-makers towards implementing policies in a particular case of their interest. Advocacy can include many activities as media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning, and publishing research. In simpler words:

  - Advocacy is a powerful and important catalyst for the change we want to see and it is a great way to get involved;
  - Therefore it is something we can do every day without realizing, advocating for the things we support and believe in.

There are **3 common types of advocacy**:

- Self-Advocacy: A person asserts for his/her own personal interests
- Individual Advocacy: A person or group assert for one or two other individuals
- System Advocacy: A person or group assert in order to change policies and laws thereby affecting all the society (at local, state or national level) - this is the one ECL uses! That is why we will focus more on it.

The final target in System Advocacy is influencing governmental representatives (politicians) with the goal of modifying and/or implementing new laws and regulations. Politicians can be influenced by the **two main Advocacy Methods**:

- **Lobbying**: consists of a private and direct communication with the decision-maker and is used as a powerful cost-effective advocacy tool.
- **Campaigning**: comprise the use of support and awareness of a broad group of people to influence decision-makers. It can be done through:
  - Website Newsletters & Email Campaigns to raise awareness;
  - Media: Radio & TV Conference/ Newspaper article;
    - Instagram Live Session on "Volunteerism & ECAC" (YA Turkey);
    - Promoting the European Code Against Cancer at a meeting of the Parliamentary Healthcare Committee (YA Bulgaria)
  - Workshops & Public Forums;
    - ECL - First Screening Workshop (YA Romania);
    - RCE/ESO/ESMO Training Course for Rare Cancer Patient Advocates (YA The Netherlands)
    - Workshop "Cancer" at the International Biomedical Congress – Sofia
    - „I CAN run against CANcer" (YA Croatia)
  - Advertising campaigns: Posters & Pamphlets;
    - YA joint action: poster "World No Tobacco Day"; on World Cancer day promoting the 12 ECAC messages; "Testicular Cancer Awareness",
    - "Breast Cancer" poster Turkey
    - ECAC leaflets
  - Surveys & Opinion Polls;
  - Public Petitions (ex. change.org);
  - Strikes.

Why Advocate for Cancer Prevention?

We want to raise awareness about the need of introducing/modifying new laws and regulations with the goal of reducing the risk of developing cancer in Europe. In order to achieve it, we target the following areas:

- Tobacco & smoking policies - ex. limiting smoking advertising through certain channels and at certain hours;
- Make your home smoke-free - ex. supporting smoke-free policies in your workplace.
- Take action to be a healthy body weight.
- Physical activity - ex. promoting the use of city bicycles;
- Food policies - ex. introduce special taxes on products that increase the chance of developing cancer in the future like high-calorie foods, processed meat, sugary drinks, and alcohol;
- Limit alcohol intake - ex. banning to sell after 10 p.m.
- Sun - ex. incentivize the use of sun protection;
- Indoor carcinogenic substances - ex. ensuring adequate concentrations of CO2 in working environments;
- Find out if you are exposed to radiation from naturally high radon levels in your home - ex. take action to reduce high radon levels.
- Breastfeeding reduces the mother's cancer risk. If you can, breastfeed your baby. Limit the use of HRT - hormone replacement therapy (HRT) increases the risk of certain cancers.
- Cancer screening - ex. increase the number of cancer screening programs.
- Vaccination programmes - ex. ensure your children take part in vaccination programmes for Hepatitis B (for newborns) Human papillomavirus (HPV) (for girls).

The 9 Steps for Developing an Advocacy Strategy

1. **Identify the need**

"Identifying the need" means making a decision with regards to which problem(s) or issues the working group wants to implement, address and work on [3][5]. There are various questions one could ask when attempting to identify the need, these include [3]:

a. *Does the issue align with the aim of the working group?*

b. *Are there resources present to work on this issue?*

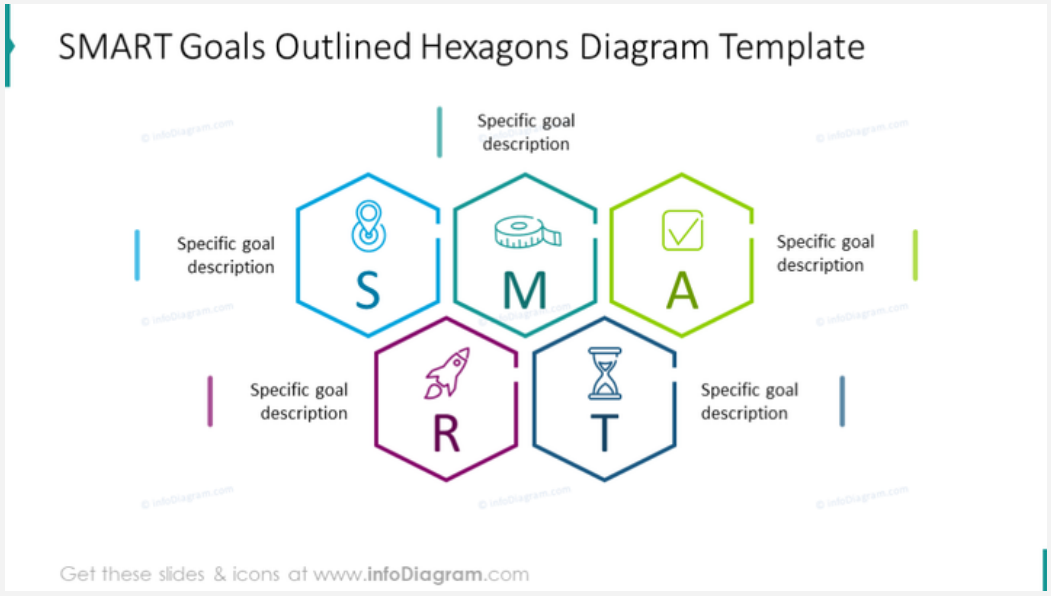
c. *Is this long-term or an issue that can be efficiently resolved?*

d. *Can your vision on the need for this issue to be addressed be expressed clearly and simply?*

During this stage, it would be ideal to think about how this issue also plays out on a local, regional, national, and European level [5]. Additionally, it is best to think critically and prepare a document that generally summarizes and focuses on the concerns brought about by the present issue to be dealt with.

Goals are the execution of the vision and mission of the organization. So, while setting the goal for the working group, we should see the big picture, and express it in terms of the desired result or achievement, not in terms of the activity or what will be done. In this step, it is imperative to be involved. This is the key to generating commitment, trust, and motivation among the group members.

The tricky question is how to choose a good goal? A good method used by many organizations is adapting your goal to a SMART outcome. In detail, the objective should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results-oriented, Time-bound. For a more simplistic approach, a good strategy would be to create a starting line, a finish line, and a deadline. In such a way you will design a goal using the formula: "From X to Y by when". This formula gives you the chance to actually get things done. Firstly, one common error in advocacy is to focus on a very broad topic. When you don't request a specific change, it is easy for decision-makers to agree but not do anything about it. Secondly, trying to achieve many goals at once can also be difficult as it is hard to get a clear message. Finally, when there is no deadline there is no commitment to the work in effective time. So, this vert formula will help in achieving a small, specific task in a definite time-lapse.



Another issue that comes into play is which goal to pick when there are plenty of good ideas? A good solution would be to set a WIG (wildly important goal) that follows 4 rules: (1) have only one wig per person at the same time; (2) make the wig only one aspect of your work; (3) choose a wig that represents the most critical gap; (4) use the formula "From X to Y by when". So, we should keep in mind that an advocacy goal is what the organization hopes to achieve in the long term, but it should be split up into some interim outcomes - shorter-term results, that must be achieved in order to reach the advocacy goal. This means setting a wig and contributing to the interim outcomes, thus being closer to the main goal.

2. **Assign Responsibilities**[8]

Every strategy should include clear advocacy roles for the project. There are many roles that could be assigned to advocacy workers, whether it is leading an advocacy initiative and clearly informing policymakers on the proposed policy change or choosing to support a partnership of other actors to advocate for the policy change desired. Advocacy Tools and Guidelines (CARE 2001) describes the different types of roles, which can be assigned to one or more people, depending on the targeted audience [7].

- **Expert informant:** Provides policymakers with technical advice and information. This role comes in handy when analysis highlights are not understood or there is a lack of information on an issue. This role is low cost and low risk, especially when building an existing relationship. For example, in country X, an expert that already has a relationship with the authorities can provide data and technical assistance to X Ministry about the effects of X.

- **Mediator:** This individual or group of people mediates between the different interests of various groups or individuals. Their role is to facilitate dialogue between actors with outlooks on the basis of objective analysis.
- **Lobbyist:** What a lobbyist does is to directly take part in an advocacy campaign and take concrete steps to influence policy, either alone or in collaboration. This position involves public speaking and meetings with policymakers.

In addition to communicating the proposal to the decision-maker, lobbying allows organizers to fine-tune the power map and evaluate the impact that the initiative's arguments and activities have on key actors. (CEDPA and WOLA, 2005)

Characteristics of a lobbyist - A lobbyist can help to:

- *persuade people with decision-making power to favor the proposal;*
- *motivate allies to take concrete action in support of the initiative;*
- *convince undecided persons;*
- *convince opponents.*

(Based on data obtained from CEDPA and WOLA, 2005)

The chosen role will influence the mix of skills needed for the advocacy initiative. Each role has its own area of focus and in some cases, some roles come with greater importance than others. For example: If opting for an approach that requires negotiations with government officials, lobbying-related skills become more significant.

3. **Gather Information**[9]

Before starting any advocacy campaign, it is crucial to gather background information, which will be a strong basis for developing our campaign purposes, strategies, and communications. Without the right facts and data designing a campaign can be very challenging, if not impossible. Make sure you've researched enough about the issue to know whether policy change can help solve a given problem or move your focus on other types of interventions.

Here are some types of information that are quite useful and can provide a good start for an effective campaign:

- Up-to-date and reliable data about the public health problem you want to address, as well as any evidence-based solutions.

- Potential Sources: recognized and trustworthy bodies such as World Health Organization (WHO), Demographic Health Survey (DHS), Health Management Information System (HMIS) data, Ministries overseeing the issue.
- Existing laws and regulations, related to the public health issue you're addressing.
- Online data sources, legal and parliamentary libraries, connections with decision-makers, legal experts, and technical leaders.
- Previous related campaigns who have addressed the issue in the past- whether being successful or unsuccessful.
- Media reports, interviews with campaign leaders and participants.

4. **Draft the Policy**

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry said it best, "a goal without a plan is just a wish." The earlier steps in creating your advocacy strategy focused on identifying the need of the group, meaning setting a goal that suites the mission and vision of the organization; gathering information in order to gain credibility by being evidence-based, and assigning the responsibilities within the working group. Once that is complete, it is time to move to action. The analysis now must be pulled together in an action plan. The plan should detail the activities that will be carried out, who is responsible for them, the time by when they will be completed, and the resources required to complete them.

5. **Reach Stakeholders**

Stakeholders can be defined as "an individual or group of individuals with a concern or interest in ensuring the success of an organization, business or system" [4]. Key stakeholders can be divided into two disciplines: primary or secondary stakeholders. Primary stakeholders (or internal stakeholders) are those who hold a direct influence and interest in the business or organization and its dealings [6]. An example of which is the employees (e.g. the advocates themselves). On the other hand, secondary stakeholders (or external stakeholders) [6] are not directly depended upon by an organization for its immediate interests. Examples include trade unions, media groups, or local government organizations [4].

A basic process for engaging stakeholders is shown below (devised by Mike Clayton, 'The Influence Agenda: A Systematic Approach to Aligning Stakeholders in Times of Change [1]'):

a. **Identify**
This initial stage includes identifying who the stakeholders are and the goals for
for engaging with them. It is important to not restrict oneself to a small number of stakeholders as the more widely you spread your net at this stage, the more robust the plan of action will be. Start thinking about how you will influence every individual stakeholder.

b. **Analyze**
Take time to understand every stakeholder, what they have available to support you, and what skills and approaches they can bring to the table.

c. **Plan**
Draw up a campaign plan so as to engage with the stakeholders in question. This can include many aspects such as who tackles each assignment, the message and aims you will disseminate, and the approaches you will take.

d. **Act**
Engage the stakeholders in this stage. Different stakeholders can give different feedback and there might also be resistance at this stage by certain individuals - no matter what, handle this positively. Having powerful insights can help to assess and handle this resistance.

e. **Review**
This is the most critical stage to assess the success of the stakeholder engagement campaign. Make sure to consistently monitor outcomes of stakeholder communication and if need be, reassess or create new plans of action. Also, assess the stakeholders already present and find ways to continue your engagement with them.

6. **Know the political landscape**[20]

An in-depth understanding of how the policy-making process works is crucial no matter whether your campaign is trying to help pass legislation (approve a proposed law), reform a regulation, push for improved implementation, etc. Analyzing the political environment to understand all the important decision-makers, policy processes, and opposition viewpoints related to your issue is called "political mapping".

- Political mapping is a process that takes time and resources, but the more extensive the mapping, the better prepared you will be to execute a strong campaign. Depending on your country's political system, the kind of change you're going after, and the type of information available to the public, the mapping may vary. Always try to include the following points:
  - The different steps a proposed policy must go through in order in order to be approved or implemented.
  - The decision-makers that play an important role in every step of the process, their interests, their concerns, as well as their position on your issue: are they supportive? Are they opposed? Are they neutral?
  - Individuals such as government staff, political party leaders, representatives- who advise or are well-positioned to influence decision-makers throughout the process.

- Don't forget to include any kind of opposition you might face in your political mapping. You will want to take into consideration the following:
  - Any individuals or groups that might oppose you and their reasons for doing so.
  - Your opponents' messages, approaches, and connections with key decision-makers, which can help you develop strategies and counter messages in order to reduce their influence.

7. **Analyze Internal Regulations**[21]

There is a continuous interaction between goals in the 'external world' and being realistic about internal competence to take on major advocacy efforts. This process ensures that goals are clearly communicated, builds responsibility, and brings up a supportive environment.

The ACT-ON model is a long-term strategic planning tool that helps assess internal and external advocacy environments in an organization. This tool was developed by David Cohen, Kathleen Sheekey, and Maureen Burke of the Advocacy Institute and has been used in industrialized and developing countries, urban and rural areas, and even failed states.

- **A - Advantages**

Look into your organization's advantages: defined responsibilities, reputation, strong communications, history of achievements, strong partnerships, etc. Employing these advantages will significantly increase capacity for effective advocacy.

- **C - Challenges**

The major focus of the ACT-ON model is taking action to meet or overcome a challenge. It starts with evaluating the advocacy environment by systemically looking within and externally. This way the organization or group can reach a consensus in taking the necessary steps internally to meet the challenges it has identified.

- **T - Threats**

Turning a threat into an opportunity is key. Opponents may be more powerful, but this can be turned into an advantage by meeting internal challenges and finding the most effective public outlets for the advocacy case.

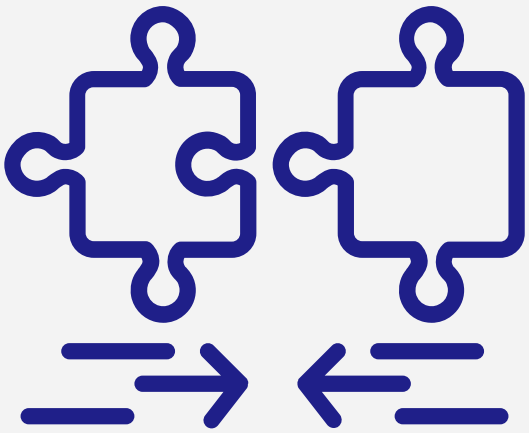
- **O - Opportunities**

Identify opportunities that protect and advance your advocacy agenda. It is crucial to use the given opportunities to minimize and even nullify the threats. This requires an evaluation of the advocacy environment, becoming familiar with the formal and informal elements of a political and policy system, in addition to the cultural freedoms and barriers within society. This will help the organization take advantage of situations that will improve its advocacy efforts.

- **N - Next steps**

Advocacy requires making choices. These identified “next steps” cannot begin at once. Establish what is critical and where support and time are available, which will help you with what steps you need to prioritize first. There is always a next step, which means issues and organizations constantly cycle through phases of renewal. These next steps can connect with any of the **A**dvantages, **C**hallenges, **T**hreats, and **O**pportunities.

8. **Implementation**[7]



“Implementation” is the process of putting a decision or plan into effect, or in other words to execute it. Once there is an advocacy strategy in place, we can start making more detailed decisions about how to achieve our policy goals. When implementing an advocacy strategy, there are a number of things to take into consideration:

- What messages we are putting across to our targeted audience;
- How we will work with others in advocacy;
- How we will apply advocacy tactics (negotiations, writing a letter), in order to achieve our aim.

Messages are a key element to any advocacy strategy. In order to receive effective results from our targeted audience, messages ought to be simple and clear. The following bullet points could help achieve that.

- Develop clear and captivating messages - a message explains what we are proposing, why it is important, and the great influence of our policy proposal.
- Deliver messages effectively - it is of crucial importance for the audience to understand and believe the message and for that to happen, we need to use the appropriate terminology/language. In addition, it is advisable to be as transparent as possible and to provide examples in order to have higher chances for the targeted audience to receive the message.

- Reinforce messages - delivering a message once is never enough. In order to keep the targeted audience engaged and aware, it is advisable to come up with a strategy to reinforce our message, there are many ways to achieve that, whether it is through us or through others (via social media, different collaborations with other organizations, etc.). Resending a message can be a great opportunity to engage with the audience by responding to any concerns they might have.

9. **Monitoring & Reporting:**

This stage refers to the continuous assessment of the progress of the issue/project/objective at hand over time. This is one of the most critical steps and its importance stems from various reasons including:

a. *To ensure accountability and reliability of the results obtained;*

b. To follow progress towards the objectives at hand;

c. *To make sure that the achievements and goals are reported regularly to all stakeholders and people involved;*

d. To recognize whether the initial strategy would need to be changed or adjusted so as to ensure the implementation of a better strategy for more optimal results.

During this stage, different questions can be asked as an evaluation to take note of the overall advantages and disadvantages of the strategy implemented to apply this to future strategies and ideas put forward (e.g. What factors contributed to your successes and failures? To what extent did you achieve these objectives? Were there any unintended outcomes? [1][2])

It is vital to continuously document any activities at pre-determined time frames (e.g. via reports, meetings, presentations, posters, etc.), and also collect multiple sources of evidence so as to have a credible evidence base supporting the judgment of influence. There are many long-term and intermediate outcomes to monitor for/reporter about in advocacy, some of which are summarized in the table below which has been adapted from Stachowiak, S, 2007, 'Pathways for change: six theories about how policy change happens [2]':

Examples of long and intermediate outcomes to monitor in advocacy	
Long-term outcomes	**Tipping points** • Change in policy • Change in legislation • Budgetary commitments • Implementation of commitments
Intermediate outcomes	**Coalition building** • New or stronger networks • More effective network activities
	Shaping the policy agenda • Changes in oral and written rhetoric • New items appear in political discussions • Items are framed in new ways within policy arguments • Coverage of issue in the media
	Influencing policy maker attitudes and behaviour • Key decision makers change rhetoric in public and in private • Key decision makers change knowledge, attitudes and behaviours
	Building a social movement • Communities acquire new information • Communities change attitudes • Communities change behaviours • Communities acquire a new strength within democratic processes (voting, speaking to their MP, getting involved in decision-making processes)

Table 1. Examples of long and intermediate outcomes to monitor in advocacy

IV. SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

- **Stakeholder Mapping**

Stakeholder Mapping consists in the visual representation of all the physical people and legal entities that can influence in our Policy process measured by their Level of Interest and their Level of Influence. In this task, you identify who can be your ally, but also of those who may stand in your way. Stakeholder mapping identifies four important main targets: policymakers and representatives (main target), allies: actors such as NGOs, who can share with you resources and knowledge), opponents, and influencers (the public opinion and your targets in a formal or non-formal way). In short, the decision-maker is the person with the formal authority to agree to the change that you want.

The **main goal** of the Stakeholder Mapping is having a clear representation on where we should focus our efforts to achieve the desired result. Also, the process of stakeholder mapping is crucial for your coalition building, identification of target audiences and those who influence them.

The stakeholder analysis and mapping can be split in 5 main activities, which can be remembered be the rule of 5 I's:

1. **Identification**
2. **Interests**
3. **Inclination/Interpretation**
4. **Influence**
5. **Importance**

In the first step, your goal is to identify the individuals, groups and institutions that can help and support the issue you are advocating for. This can be done by addressing correct questions, like:

- Who is likely to gain from the proposed changes?
- Who might be adversely affected?
- Who has the power to make the changes happen?
- Who complains about the issue?
- Who are the vulnerable groups that may be affected by the project?

The kinds of organizations/institutions you may want to include are:

- National Government;
- Business and the private sector;
- Non-governmental (Civil society) organizations;
- Professional bodies such as physicians, veterinarians, etc.
- Religious or community leaders;
- Media;
- International donors and international organizations;
- Schools/teachers;
- Young people, pupils, children;
- Community, parents, caretakers.

But, you should keep in mind that you will probably need to do some research in order to identify individuals within organizations as we influence people, not institutions. Once you have identified your target decision-maker(s), you need to find out more about the person(s), about its **interests**, so that you know how to best influence them. Good questions to rely on are:

- What are the stakeholders' expectations of the project?
- What benefits are likely to result from the project for the stakeholders?
- What resources might the stakeholders be able and willing to mobilize?
- What stakeholder interests conflict with project goals?

In addition to understanding the interests, your focus should also be on your person's **interpretation** of the issue and which vector does he follow, support, or opposition to the issue**:**

- Does the stakeholder publicly support or oppose the issue?

- Is public support or opposition different from private support or opposition?
- What has the previous position been on similar issues?
- Has the stakeholder's position changed over time? If yes, how?

The next step is to assess the **influence** of a stakeholder, which literally reflects the direct power of a stakeholder has to determine the change. So you as a group should brainstorm the next questions:

- What is the political, social, and economic power and status of the stakeholder?
- How well is the stakeholder organized?
- What control does the stakeholder have over strategic resources?
- What level of informal influence does the stakeholder have?

The last step is to determine whether the stakeholder's engagement is a necessity or not, in order to achieve sustainable change. That's the point where you assess the **importance** of a particular stakeholder, addressing some questions, like:

- Does the issue compromise the stakeholder's rights, and does the stakeholder have a right to solutions for the issue? Is the stakeholder a rights holder?
- Will stakeholder engagement help address deeper underlying causes to the problem so that solutions can be sustainable in the future?

What you can do further, is to juggle 2 characteristics of the stakeholders, splitting them into 4 categories that will help in determining the next steps to be done concerning each stakeholder in particular. Figure 1 comes into help and shows perfectly the categories based on influence and interest, and the actions to be taken in each of them. In detail, if a stakeholder has *high influence but presents little interest*, then you are on your upper left quadrant in the diagram below, which means that you should reach out to them and try to work with this group over longer term, trying to determine what will attract them and seek for opportunities to build a relationship; if a stakeholder has *high influence and also high interest* (upper right quadrant), that's actually your target group, so focus most of your time and energy on this group; those who have *high interest but low influence*, you should keep as experts that can give you some pieces of advice and could be door-openers to more important targets, so just keep them informed and build a good relationship; finally, if your stakeholder has *low influence and low interest,* forget them for now, but keep monitoring them.

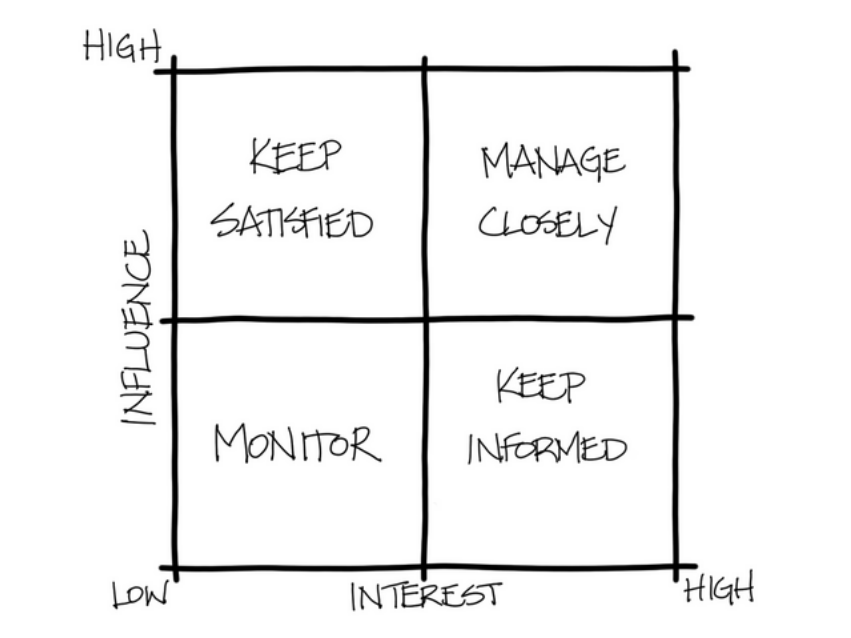


Figure 1. The influence-interest diagram

The thing is, you can't reach everyone. You'll need to decide on two or three who you really think you could influence to achieve your objective. So, to be more specific:

- Pick only a few targets to direct energy and focus.
- Pick ones that might be able to influence each other.
- Pick ones that you have the ability to influence

Once the stakeholder mapping is done, it is important to understand the institutional and decision-making process that requires a working knowledge of the political, cultural, and religious landscape of the country; decision-making cycles (both formal and informal), budget implementation; and how these factors relate to international policies and agreements. The four phases of decision-making usually include: (a) agenda setting, (b) formulation and enactment, (c) implementation and enforcement, and (d) monitoring and evaluation. So, be aware of these steps, and try to understand how things work and how change is done, brainstorm in the group, and prepare an action plan! Good luck!

- **Policy Paper & Policy Making**

What is a policy? It can be defined in several ways, but most of all it is:

- A plan of action or a set of principles that an organization or entity adopts or proposes;
- A collection of ideas or strategies used to make decisions, especially in politics, economics, and business;
- A compilation of guidelines or a strategy for dealing with specific issues that have been formally decided upon by a group of people.

e.g. An ECL Policy Document would describe the ECL's position on an issue on which the organization itself wants to take a stance that is in line with its VISION and MISSION.

Why a policy?

- stance on a certain topic of an organization
- showcase that we want to make a change
- plan of action
- consistency in our opinion
- statement for external purposes
- advocacy efforts
- giving inputs to processes
- external partners, sponsorships

A Policy Paper is a written document outlining the recommendations policy-makers should follow about a specific policy issue.

As researchers and/or professionals we are used to research papers, but if you want to make a policy paper, there are some important differences:

- You're making a document for a non-academic audience. Make it informational.
- It has a prescriptive purpose. It may contain some information about the issue, maybe a diagnosis. But it's mandatory that it contains evidence-based recommendations to address the issue.
- When you're writing a research paper, it's important to be objective and impartial. But a policy paper tries to persuade about what it says.
- As we said, the recommendations should look obviously right, but also be true and have strong evidence.

- There's a Spanish saying that goes "If good and brief, twice as good". Policy papers should be written efficiently. [11]

A policy paper should have the **following structure**:

- Executive summary: Most of the people only read this part so it should sum up the most important ideas.
- Background: Anything you find important to explain to give some context. It's important to synthesize.
- Analysis: This is where you can diagnose why the current legislation it's insufficient and needs some changes.
- Policy recommendations: This is the most important part. We already talked about what happens, now we should advise how to change it. [11][12]

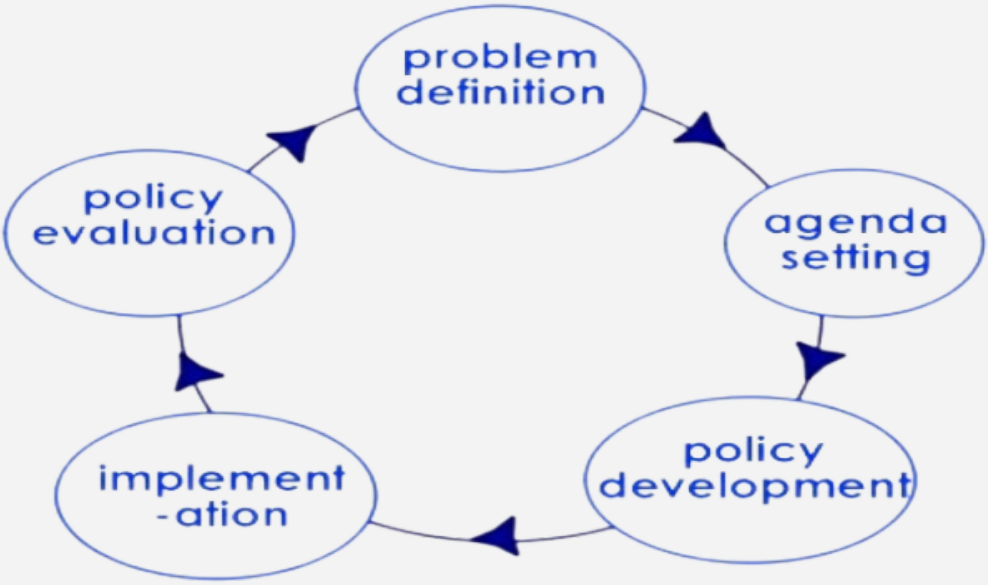
Some examples on policy papers are:

- Tackling NCDs: 'best buys' and other recommended interventions for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases: This document compiles the interventions that are proven to be more cost-effective preventing non-communicable diseases(NCD's), including cancer and their most important risk factors (tobacco, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, and alcohol). Even with such a huge topic as NCDs, it's only 28 pages long. It only includes objectives, actions, and interventions for each item, which makes it very easy to find recommendations. Also, it's written for a non-academic audience.
- WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic 2021: addressing new and emerging products: Every few years, a report on the tobacco epidemic is released. This is a more extensive document but still a very useful document for policymaking. It includes a longer introduction that updates on the newest challenges (in this case, COVID and emerging products). Later, it develops the argument on how to fight tobacco using the acronym MPOWER which is easy to remember and stands for:
    - Monitor tobacco
    - Protect people (from secondhand smoke)

- Offer help (to quit smoking)
- Warn (about the dangers of tobacco)
- Enforce bans (on advertising, promoting, and sponsorship)
- Raise taxes

Healthy environments for healthier populations: Why do they matter, and what can we do?: This is a perfect example of how a policy paper can be as attractive as solid. Most of the information offered is written as an infographic, which makes it easier to read and understand. Also, it provides a large list of sources, so you can be sure it is strong evidence. Also, infographics make it easier to share information.

Policy Making consists of the activity of deciding on new policies.



Problem definition: priorities/ needs, work of ECL, experience and capacity of YAs
Agenda setting: what's going on, establish who will lead responsibility, gather information (previous efforts, guidance, stakeholder mapping)
Policy development:

- Policy statement. Short and concise document highlighting the position of ECL for a specific field(s), including introduction and background, ECL position, call to action.
- Position paper. A detailed document, supporting the related policy statement that contains background and discussion, includes data, resources, references, bibliography

Implementation: enforce and implement policy.
Policy evaluation: Different matrices and approaches: 5E analysis - Effectiveness, Efficiency, Ethical considerations, Evaluations of alternatives, Establishment of recommendations for positive change

- **Press Release**

What is a press release?

A press release, also called a media statement, news release, or media release is an official statement delivered to members of the news media to provide public knowledge. This knowledge could include product launches and updates, new partnerships, and collaborations, awards or achievements, grand openings of new locations, rebranding, results from a survey or study, issuing a letter to shareholders, offering a resource, and promoting an upcoming event, amongst others. Press releases are therefore used as a tool for direct communication, where companies, groups, or organizations can easily deliver messages to the public and are an effective way to spark conversation around important events or topics.

Before and after writing a press release

Before writing an effective press release, it is critical to gain an understanding of 'The W's of a Press Release' - the who, what, when, where, and why.

- The 'Who' of a Press Release. Who is going to read this, or who is it aimed towards?

The first step before writing a press release is to consider who the message needs to reach. Create a picture of your reader in your head and make sure to use the appropriate vocabulary to match the target audience, especially with regard to whether you need to use formal or informal language. For example, if you want to promote a new scientific discovery to the general public, it does not make sense to use highly scientific vocabulary that the general public would not be able to understand. Conversely, if the press release is aimed at scientific professionals who might be potential stakeholders, more professional and formal text is used.

- The 'What of a Press Release'. What should you include in a press release?

Remember that the main aim of a press release is to share newsworthy information. There is a fine line however between releasing adequate information which will be

easily read and understood by the public, and either giving too much or too little information which will cause confusion. There is a writing technique most journalists use called the 'inverted pyramid technique' – in which the information should be read from most important to the least important. An example of this technique applied to press releases specifically can be observed in Figure Z.

Figure Z: The Inverted Pyramid Scheme for Press Release

- The 'When' of a Press Release. When is the best time to send a press release?

Although the press release is about newsworthy information, it is also important for it to be timely. No one wants to read about a product launch if the product has already been released a year ago.

A press release needs to be released with enough time for people to plan ahead, especially if you are writing about an event or show (if something is coming up soon, most individuals use the term 'for immediate release' when submitting their press release). There is no 'best' day to submit a press release but a study by Prowly analyzed more than 55,000 press releases to find press release distribution tips for the best days and times to send one, and their study revealed that Thursdays have the highest average open rates of 26%, Wednesdays and Fridays are the worst days to send your release, and most emails are opened between the hours of 10 am and 2 pm. Remember that in the world we live in, if the information isn't timely, it isn't newsworthy.

- The 'Where' of a Press Release. Where to share your Press Release?

Sending your press release to different news media isn't as easy as it appears to be at first glance. However, nowadays it is easier to share the press release as most businesses have numerous media platforms available, email, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, the company website, and online magazines amongst others. It is important to figure out which one (or ones) to use to be able to reach the required audience whilst considering the time and cost constraints.

- The 'Why' of a Press Release. Why are you writing this press release?

  There are three main reasons to consider a press release:

  1. Press releases allow you to reach different audiences at a much faster pace.

  2. Press releases lead to results that would otherwise not be reachable.

3. You get to control the message, something that you would not be able to do if you simply pay a reporter to advertise the product or event in question

Elements of a press release

As stated before, writing a press release is not an easy task. It is therefore ideal to follow a checklist to ensure that the key elements are included to increase the chances of your press release being read, accepted, and shared by the media. The key elements which have been recommended to be added to a press release by numerous different literature sources are the letterhead, dateline, headline, body of the text, and concluding symbols.

BUSINESS NEWS PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT INFORMATION:
[Company Name]
[Contact Name]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

YOUR LOGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Headline: {Name} Appointed as {Name of Company/Position}
or
{Company Name} Announces Merger with {Company Name}]

{City, State, Date} – {Company} has announced {the appointment of {Name} as their new {Role}/a merger with {Company Name}. [Information about the role and/or purpose of the merger.]

[Background information on the new appointee, the reasons for their appointment, and their new duties. For a merger or other piece of business news, explain the purpose, background info, and consequences.]

{Quote from appointed employee or merging company executives.}

{Brief bio covering the new hire's personal background, education and previous work experience and/or additional background information on the merging companies.}

{Boilerplate}

###

Figure A: A Press Release Template Example

- **Letterhead** →An effective press release should contain all the important information including the name, contact number, and email address of the person (or company) who is distributing the press releases.

- **Dateline / Heading** → The press release must contain the data of the press release under the letterhead or in the first line of the paragraph of the content. When something needs to be released as soon as possible write 'for immediate release' whereas if something needs to be released after a specific deadline write 'hold for release until…'

- **Headline** → The headline is the first thing that most people look at. Therefore, the effective press release must have a short, catchy headline which is written in **bold** and CAPITAL LETTERS. Well-articulated headlines will surely want to make the user read more.

- **Content of the text** → The length of the press release should be around one page, it can be elongated to two pages, but this is an absolute maximum as it will otherwise lose the readers' interest. The writing style should be in third person AP format including punctuation and spelling. Abbreviations can be included, but it would be best to use the full words to avoid confusion.
    - Introduction - This contains a summary of the press release. It should state what is happening (including the 'what', 'where', 'why', 'who', and 'when' very briefly).
    - Body - This consists of two to several paragraphs explaining every detail of information you want to share. Make it interesting by including statistics, quotes, and high value.
    - Boilerplate - This is the short paragraph in which you can provide independent information about the company you are referring to, like when it was founded, its impact, and its vision (not obligatory to add this section).

- **Concluding remarks** - For press releases submitted to print news outlets, it is important to indicate the ending with the symbol - ### - which is to be centered at the bottom of the page and thus ensure that no extra text can be mistakenly published as part of an official company announcement.

Targeting the right audience, announcing newsworthy and timely information, including how the information affects your readers, and learning the key elements involved in a press release are important factors when writing a press release. Whether you're announcing the launch of a product, sharing news about an event, or documenting novel research, it is always the case that a press release is a key tool in efficiently getting the news in front of the media, and more importantly, the general public.

Letter to the Editor

A Letter to the Editor (LTE) is a type of short written communication sent to any media (commonly newspapers or magazines, but also radios or televisions) in order to be published or broadcasted. The goal of the letter is to compliment, critique, inform, or communicate any issue of concern to the reader (listener or viewer in the case of radios and televisions respectively).

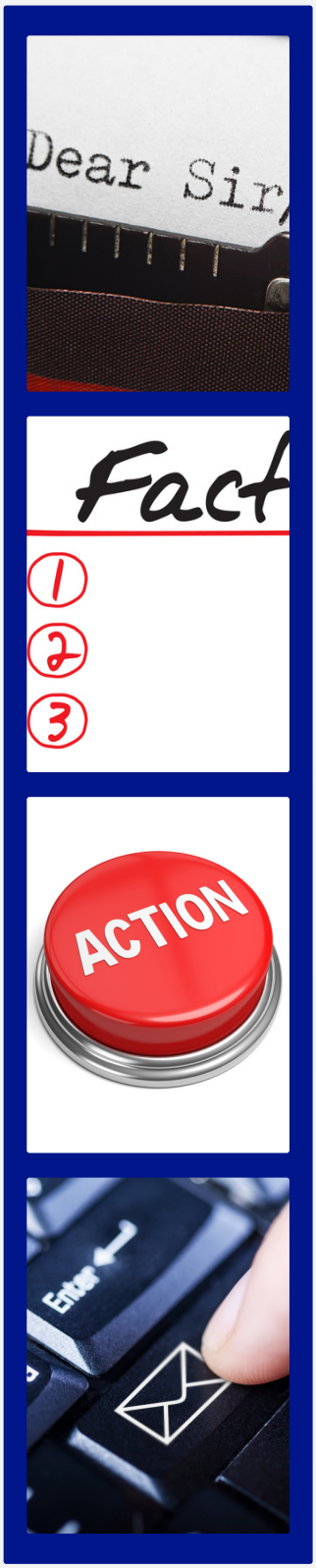
According to the Natural Resources Defense Council advocacy group, an ideal LTE should have less than 300 words, with some publications having guidelines limiting letters to 150 words, and follow the next four tips:

- **Personalize the Letter.** Newspaper editors tend to select letters that look "authentic". Making personal statements helps to gain credibility, providing valuable firsthand knowledge of the given issue, thereby grabbing the reader's attention.

- **Stay authoritative by sticking to facts.** Try to avoid giving opinions as they make stating the case less convincing. It is even better to mention our expertise and provide an unbiased view from the point of our occupation or experience in the given topic.

- **End with a Call to Action.** Let readers know how to get involved or learn more about the issue, concluding the letter with a bold final statement.

- **Submit the letter.** Draw up a list of target newspapers and look online for each publication's instructions on how to reach their editors, but keeping every letter unique. It is best not to submit the same piece to multiple papers. Instead, select one newspaper to contact, and if the letter does not get accepted by the first outlet, continue to move down your list. Instead, select one newspaper to contact, and if the letter does not get accepted by the first outlet, continue to move down your list.



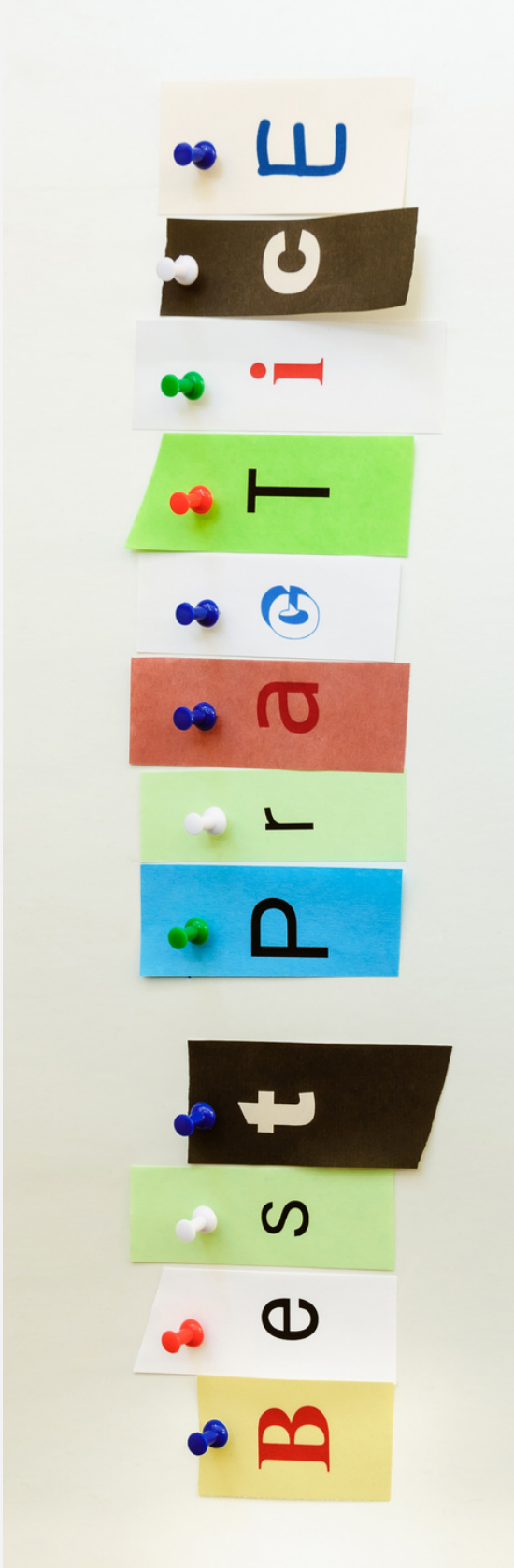
Collaboration with NGOs (ex. Student Organizations) and **Public Institutions**. For advocacy purposes, collaborating with organizations and/or public institutions is a wise choice. You can pool your resources and work together to solve cancer prevention issues, thereby forming invaluable and sustainable partnerships. One of the ways to solder the collaboration between two parties is through a:

- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). A memorandum of understanding is an agreement between two or more parties outlined in a formal document. It is not legally binding. It should contain:
  - Identification of parties - formal identification of the parties to the agreement and a broad description of their relationship.
  - Purpose - specify the purpose and the goals for which the memorandum is being signed.
  - Responsibilities of each party and Collaborations - statements describing the responsibilities and actions of each Party
  - Duration - specify the duration of such an agreement between the parties i.e. the beginning and the ending dates of the memorandum. Also, it should provide for the circumstances in which such a memorandum will be terminated.
  - Signed with dates - signed and dated by the authorized individuals representing each party or organization.

- **Terms of Reference (ToR)** specify the goals and structures of a project, meeting, or working group. This also applies to any other group of people who have agreed to collaborate to achieve a common goal in cancer prevention. ToR demonstrates how a project, meeting, or group should be defined, developed, and validated. In that sense, it contains detailed definitions. How to draft a ToR:
  - Make sure you have the right people in the room. Include all key stakeholders.
  - Make a list of common goals. Agree on common objectives and how the working group will contribute to achieving them.
  - Discuss the use of a working group. Discuss the people who will be involved and the work that needs to be done.
  - Assemble a list of milestones. Plan out what the working group will need to accomplish long term.
  - Write it down, then put it to assessment in a discussion of outcomes.

We, the Youth Ambassadors, once again have a good example from ECL, namely the ToR, renewed in January 2019 for the Advisory Group.

V. BEST PRACTICES



Actions truly speak louder than words! To support the theoretical pillars provided in this toolkit, let us now take you on a journey through some of the real actions, taken by Youth Ambassadors. Let these Best Practices be the sources for your own inspiration, motivation, and encouragement to act and let the ambassadors show you how diverse, simple, or complex your actions can be, depending only on your sincere aspiration to deliver the message. In the process of creating of this toolkit, a survey was launched among YAs on their successful moments, which enabled us to gather some of the examples showcasing the capabilities of the YAs to contribute to and promote cancer prevention through a variety of prisms. The following are the responses of the participants in our survey based on 3 questions:

- ***How did you plan your action? Tell us a little more about where you got your inspiration from.***

1) On many occasions, planning is adjusted to a specific occasion (e.g. World Cancer Day or an invitation to deliver a workshop at a specific conference).

The specifics of an activity depend greatly on the time and resources (collaborators, media partners, funding etc) available. It is important to set a day and time for the activity as soon as possible and put together a realistic timeline of action and deliverables

2) Firstly, I search for the target groups, like university student clubs, youth NGOs, local cancer societies, etc.

Then I create content in the concept of the target groups' needs. For example, if the group consists of cancer survivors, my plan will go differently, or if the target group is young people my workshop contents will be different. My inspiration is the extensive need of young people on cancer prevention topics because I know that the best treatment is prevention. If we teach them, we will have fewer cancer cases in the future.

3) Exchange with colleagues within the team.

4) In collaboration with the National league against cancer and YA's group I define aims and then think about the target groups and brainstorm about a specific event.

5) As a young LGBTI+ activist and working on social problems within the community and outside of it on a daily basis, I thought why not shed a light on struggles in the community when it comes to cancer and cancer prevention. The focus was on trans and non-binary people.
6) In cooperation with medical students. They had a similar proposal so we joined our forces and came up with a project/action.

- ***How did you proceed after that? Tell us a little more about the logistics around the action.***

1) The first step is to decide whether the event will be conducted online, with the physical presence or as a hybrid. Based on this, I check whether a virtual platform or a physical venue is available and accessible. In both cases, this may require asking an organization with a premium zoom/google meet account or with a venue to act as an organizing partner. It is important to keep this communication and its terms in written forms - many conferences or scientific organizations may have an agreement form of their own for this purpose.
The second step is to organize the resources and equipment necessary for the event. This varies from a camera and a microphone to chairs, tables, boards etc.
The third step is to proceed with consolidating the content of the event (speakers, an interviewee, an interactive presentation) and start communicating about it with potential participants.
It is important to make a reality check a few days or hours before the event and have a plan-b wherever possible. Being transparent about challenges and problems with the co-organizers is crucial.

2) I think transparency and accessibility are two essential factors for the actions. We need to explain ourselves clearly at the beginning. I am using a document that describes the ECL, YA program and the ECAC in the local language. I am sharing some scientific data and background information if the contact person/NGO is not familiar with the health issues. I am sharing at the beginning; I will report this action to the ECL and use the metrics and photos here. I am trying to be reachable during the process and answer all their questions.

3) Suggestion sent to the headquarter, cooperation and collaboration with fellow teammates.

4) Every logistic goes in a direction depending on the collaboration with other institutions or NGOs. Sometimes we have a PR agency, but mostly, I sit and make an action plan.

5) With some help from Krassimira, we managed to gather an audience of medical students and LGBTI+ people by sending out private invitations for the webinar. We had prepared a presentation, which was interactive since we had a trans person talk about their perspective and struggles with cancer screenings.

6) A lot of meetings, contacting various stakeholders/parties, brainstorming, and a lot of work.

- ***What obstacles did you encounter and did you manage to overcome them? For example, finances, target groups, partner organizations, policymakers...) If yes, please tell us briefly how.***

1) Policymakers or experts that are not reachable. This can be solved by reaching out to other policymakers or experts until one responds. It is important to make sure that the same person is not emailed twice by two different co-organizers. It can be considered a lack of good coordination.

Finance: Even if a micro-grant is obtained, the sum is usually provided after the event. Therefore, realistic financial planning that can be covered from your side before the event is important.

Partner organizations: They can become unresponsive or deliver less than agreed. While there is not much to do for the first, the second can be prevented through a detailed written agreement. Certainly, with time you should focus on collaborating with motivated and professionally - acting partners

2) Sometimes participants may ask more challenging questions like one specific cancer treatment. By that point, I say, "I need to read about it, please share with me your email address, and I will inform you later." On the other hand, because of my younger age, sometimes people don't believe my "theory of change" and are trying to block my ideas. My strategy is to try to change what can be changed. Otherwise, go and find another stakeholder.

3) Strict bureaucracy (permissions), online marketing (due to Covid), focus on other stakeholders (instead of lobbying in front of policymakers).

4) Very often finances are a problem, especially travel expenses because no one wants to cover that.
Policymakers are often included in PR service so that is not a problem.

5) For the safety of our attendees, we had to make the webinar a private event with invitations only. We didn't go public on social media, due to the fact that in the past couple of months the LGBTI+ community has been put at risk not once and has been a target of excessive hate. Thus, the number of attendees did not exceed 15 people.

6) Obstacles are usually financial, but, luckily, there's ECL with its support and some other donors. For us it was really beneficial that the student association is well-known, so basically all the relevant stakeholders were familiar with their work.
This part of the toolkit aimed to demonstrate the recipe of the successfully implemented actions and as we have just learned the recipe is different in each case. However, there are universal ingredients such as well planned structure of the action, good and effective communication with partners, acknowledging the risks, difficulties, and ways of coping with them.

In any case, the Youth Ambassadors for the ECAC stand as an inclusive platform for the exchange of our youthful experience and knowledge, meaning that there is no need to reinvent the wheel and you are always encouraged to ask for advice, recommendations and support from your peers and the ECL Secretariat. The only components you need for your action are passion to prevent cancer, enthusiasm to lead the change, and energy to convey your message.

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Good luck with your advocacy activities!