



European Solar Days

For a
bright
Future

The European Solar Days handbook

From 2002 to 2013:
Success-stories, best practices and legacy
of the widest European awareness-
raising campaign on solar energy

Final Report



Europese Zonnedagen
Journées Solaires
European Solar Dage
Evropské Dny Slunce
Día Solar Europeo
Journées Européennes Du Solaire
Napos Napok
Giornate Del Sole
Europese Zonnedagen
Europeiske Soldagene
Europejskie Słoneczne Dni
Dias Europeus Do Sol
Evropski Sončni Dnevi
Európske Solárne Dni

Project Co-ordinator



Project Communicator



The European Solar Days are



Co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme of the European Union

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Introduction

Born as a local grass-root initiative in three regions of Austria in 2002, the concept of “Lass die Sonne rein” has become 10 years later the biggest awareness-raising campaign on solar energy in Europe under the name of “Solar Days”, and in the most recent years has reached out to hundreds of thousands of citizens in more than 20 countries.

For the man-in-the-street, the European Solar Days (“ESD”) are an informative campaign about solar energy, taking place during a few days or weeks each year in his/her country or region, and on the occasion of which one has access to all sorts of knowledge about the countless benefits that solar energy can bring.

From the inside, the European Solar Days campaign represents months of preparation and commitment at national and European level to make the annual few days or weeks of campaign a success at national as well as at European level. In 2013, there were events in more than 20 countries, most of them having national campaign coordinators in charge of organising the campaign among themselves at European level, and with their own network at national level.

Since 2002 and the stand-alone Austrian initiative, the Solar Days have come a long way to become the widest awareness-raising campaign on solar energy in Europe. In the course of a bit more than a decade, a strong experience and know-how have been gathered across the different countries and organisers on how to run a campaign in the best and most efficient way. Said acquired experience is shared on a regular basis inside the ESD network, among the national campaign coordinators, and also made available through different channels so as to ease as much as possible the expansion of the concept to new countries.

This report is designed in a way that will make it easy for any individual or organisation interested in joining the ESD campaign to quickly find the most relevant information he might be looking for: a collection of types of events that can be organised, advice on how to build a network of local organisers, examples of success stories, testimonials, etc. In addition to explaining the philosophy of this one-of-a-kind solar campaign, this report is also the collection of best ideas and practices gathered by 20 national campaign coordinators and hundreds of actors in the course of more than 10 years of existence of the Solar Days.



A few words from Roger Hackstock

In 2002, Roger Hackstock invented the concept of “Lass die Sonne rein” that inspired the Solar Days everywhere in Europe.



“In 2002 we started with some questions: how can we increase the presence of solar energy in the media for a couple of days? How can we raise public awareness on solar energy for as many people as possible all over the country? Can we build up partnerships with other organisations for promoting solar energy? Can we stimulate the solar market positively? The answer was: let’s organise Solar Days!

What at the beginning was just an idea for promoting awareness on solar thermal in Austria resulted in 2013 into over 20 European countries participating in what had since then become the “European Solar Days”, and millions of citizens taking part in the campaign over these past decade.

Because the Solar Days rely on the concept of social marketing – an approach that uses social networks to pass on messages to people – one of the main conditions to the campaign success is the creation of a strong network of organisers who are going to act as motivators and facilitators to inspire other people to run events. This is undoubtedly one of the greatest achievements of the European Solar Days: having created synergies between citizens, industries, local communities, schools, etc. in over 20 countries, working together to raise awareness about solar energy and to contribute, at their own level, to drawing the outline of a bright future.”

A bit of history: the Solar Days year after year

- ★ **2002:** first time an initiative was launched in Austria. On the 24th of May that year, eight events were organised under the name of the “Lass die Sonne rein” initiative led by Austria Solar; since the beginning the initiative relies on social marketing, a cost-efficient way to spread information using existing social networks.
- ★ **2004:** Switzerland organised its first “Tage der Sonne”, importing the concept from Austria; Switzerland has organised “Tage der Sonne” every year since then, in all counties and no less than three languages.
- ★ **2005-2006:** a few isolated events are organised in Germany, inspired from the initiative born in its neighbouring country; in parallel, the campaign grows in Austria and Switzerland.
- ★ **2007:** Germany runs a proper campaign inspired from the Austrian and Swiss example and creates the “Woche der Sonne” that takes place from 27 April to 6 May, with over 1,600 events organised all over the country and more than 200,000 registered visitors. The European Solar Days are granted EU funding by the Intelligence Energy Europe programme for a three-year initiative to launch the campaign in five new countries (France, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain).
- ★ **2008:** the “European Solar Days” umbrella is created and gathers under the same “brand” the different initiatives, while giving them a European dimension. A European central website and visual identity (logo) are developed, and an “[ESD Network](#)” is born, which will enable the [national campaign coordinators](#) to exchange about their experience and share the best practices that they have developed.
That year Solar Days are organised in Austria, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, Switzerland, with single events also taking place in Belgium, Denmark, Norway and the United Kingdom.
- ★ **2009:** the European Solar Days take place in 16 countries (Austria, Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom), attracting more than 700,000 citizens who participate in over 7.700 events organised throughout the continent.
- ★ **2010:** a grant from the Intelligent Energy Europe programme supports the expansion of the ESD into seven new countries? The enlarged ESD Network meets in Brussels and launches its work programme for the following three years: the members of the Network decide to develop further the corporate image of the European Solar Days and to work on the expansion and sustainability of the campaign.
- ★ **2011:** more than 8,000 events are organised in 19 countries across Europe, attracting over half a million people.
- ★ **2012:** 20 countries participate in the European Solar Days, and almost 750,000 visitors take part in the 8,200 events organised from the 1st to the 13th of May.

In Brussels, an event is organised in the European Parliament on the 10th of May to call the attention of policy-makers onto the need to keep on supporting solar energy. A live connection is organised between the Parliament and three European countries where Solar Days events are simultaneously taking place.

★ **2013:** with the first Solar Days events organised in Bosnia, it is 21 countries that participate in the 6th edition of the European Solar Days. In spite of challenging times for the solar industry in Europe, over half a million visitors register to the more than 6,000 events organised in the course of almost three weeks.

★ **2014:** the 7th edition of the European Solar Days will take place from 1st to 18th May 2014.



The Solar Days timeline

2012

Almost **8200 events** are organised throughout Europe. From 1st to 15th May, **21 countries** celebrate the Solar Days, from Lisbon to Kiev, from Oslo to Rome.

2014 edition from 1st to 18th May

730,000 visitors

2009

7700 events take place in **17 countries**, the European Solar Days are the biggest solar campaign ever organised in Europe.

+ 4

2005

The campaign grows in Austria and Switzerland while in **Germany** a few events are organised for the first time.

+ 9

2008

The European Solar Days are officially born!

+ 4

+ 2

2004

Switzerland joins the initiative and organises "Tage der Sonne" for the first time.

+ 1

2002

The "Lass die Sonne rein" initiative takes place in three regions of Austria.

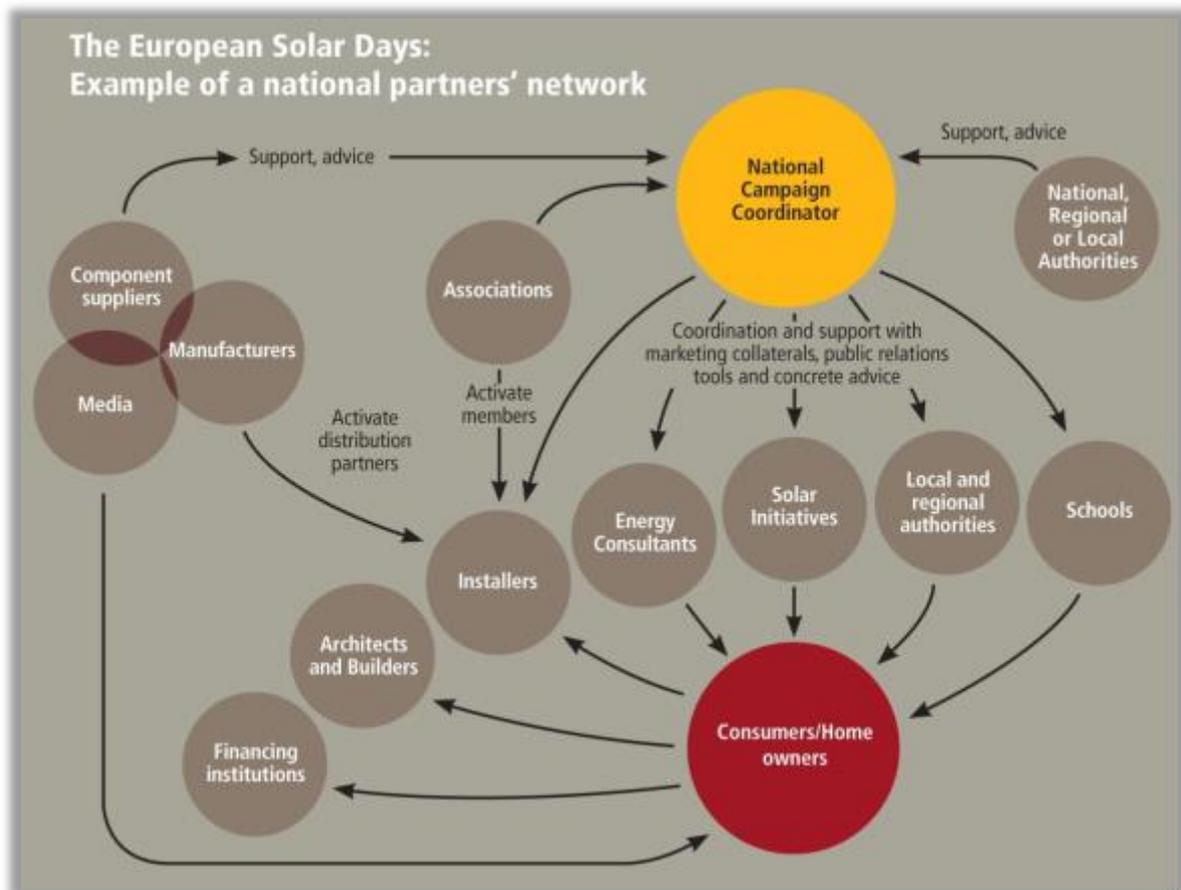
1. European Solar Days structure and philosophy

The social marketing concept and the multi-layer networks approach

Since the beginning in 2002 the European Solar Days campaign relies on the creation of strong national networks of actors involved with solar energy, so as to call attention to the event. From the experience collected in different countries which have been organising ESD for several years, the best results are obtained when the [national campaign coordinator](#) enters into [partnership](#) with **local, regional or even national entities**. This maximises the use of synergies from **trade associations, manufacturers, media, regional or local authorities and environmental networks**. All these stakeholders share the same goal: promote renewable energy sources and bring the energy of the sun to the people.

This can be achieved through different types of awareness-raising actions such as workshops, open-days, exhibitions, public lectures and many others. These events are tailor-made as they are **organised by hundreds of solar companies, installers, schools, local authorities etc.** and provide specific solar information and advice to different target groups such as customers, house-owners, local citizens, visitors, students and children.

Every organisation promotes the European Solar Days through its own channels (newsletters, mailings, events, publications). Thus, the European Solar Days have proven to be an extremely cost-efficient form of campaigning. In fact, with the **social marketing approach**, combined with the involvement of relevant associations and networks, hundreds of events can be organised each year in a very short time and with low budgets.



Composition of the national networks

A national network is composed of the following legs:

- A [national campaign coordinator](#)
- [Campaign partners](#)
- [Sponsors](#)
- [Media partners](#)

National Campaign Coordinators

At national level the ESD campaign is coordinated by one organisation, referred to as the “national campaign coordinator”, in charge of the central promotion of the campaign and coordinating the transmission of information between the different members of the network. The national campaign coordinator acts as a motivator and facilitator for the campaign partners.

In 2013, the members of the [ESD network](#) and national coordinators were the following:



Albania: one of the latest countries having joined the Solar Days campaign, Albania joined the ESD network and hosted its first open days of solar facilities in 2013, with the clear intention to continue in 2014 and beyond. If no national coordinator exists for the time being, the [NGO CeLIM](#) has been committed to the organisation of the Solar Days in 2013.



Austria: first country where Solar Days were organised in 2002, “Tag der Sonne” have been organised in Austria for 12 years now, resulting in a strong network always eager to share its experience with newcomers. The national coordination is ensured by **Austria Solar**. <http://www.tag-der-sonne.at/>



Belgium: Belgium joined the ESD Network officially in 2009, together with six other countries. Advocacy events were also organised by ESTIF and EPIA in Brussels since 2008 in order to reach out to European decision-makers. In Belgium the coordinator of the campaign is ODE-Vlaanderen. <http://www.solardays.be/>



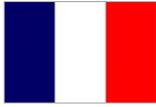
Bosnia and Herzegovina: the first Solar Days events were organised for the first time in 2013 by **CEEE - Center for Energy Efficiency and Applied Ecology**, the NGO that is coordinating the campaign in [Serbia](#).



Czech Republic: it is in 2011 that Czech Republic organised their first European Solar Days campaign, coordinated at national level by the **Czech Renewable Energy Agency** <http://evropskednyslunce.cz/node>



Denmark: although Solar Days events had been organised before that, it is in 2010 that Denmark joined the ESD network, preparing the launch of the first ESD edition in Denmark which happened in 2011, under the leadership of the **Danish Solar Thermal Association** represented by EKOLAB. <http://solardays.dk/>



France: France formally took part in the European Solar Days for the first time in 2008. The campaign has grown tremendously in France, reaching over 1 000 events in 2011, under the coordination of the French Solar energy Association <http://www.journees-du-solaire.fr/>



Germany: second country to follow Austria's move after Switzerland, Germany organised its first solar initiatives in 2005, and in 2007 the first "Solar Week" ("Woche der Sonne") was already taking place in the whole country, triggering the interest of hundreds of thousands of visitors in thousands of events. The German solar association **BSW** is in charge of the national coordination <http://www.woche-der-sonne.de/>



Hungary: in 2009 the first ESD stand-alone event took place in Hungary. The following year the NGO **Kötháló** became the national coordinator, organising the first ESD campaign in Hungary, which happened in 2011 <http://www.naposnapok.hu/>



Italy: Italy joined Austria, Switzerland and Germany in 2008 with six other countries, when for the first year the "European Solar Days" umbrella was given to these national initiatives. It is the Italian consultancy company **Ambiente Italia** that is in charge of the coordination in close collaboration with the environmental association Legambiente <http://www.eusd.it/>



Norway: the first Solar Days events took place in Norway in 2008, but it is in 2011 that the **Norwegian Solar Energy Society** coordinated the first full-blown national campaign <http://www.solenergi.no/arrangementer-2/esd2013/>



Poland: Poland joined the ESD network in 2010, when the **Polish Institute for Renewable Energy EC BREC** took over the national coordination of the campaign, preparing the first edition which took place in 2011 <http://www.slonecznedni.pl/>



Portugal: the national coordinator of the European Solar in Portugal is the solar industry association **APISOLAR**, that has been running the campaign since the first edition of the ESD in 2008 <https://sites.google.com/a/apisolar.pt/diaseuropeusdosol/>



Serbia: the first individual events took place in 2009. Since then the **CEEE - Center for Energy Efficiency and Applied Ecology** has been promoting the Solar Days in Serbia, becoming a member of the ESD Network in 2013 <http://ceee.org.rs/>



Slovakia: Slovakia joined the ESD Network in 2010, together with several other countries, and has ESD campaigns since 2011, thanks to the coordination of the **Slovak Renewable Energy Agency** <http://www.solarnedni.sk/>



Slovenia: Slovenia was the first EU 25 new member state to join the Solar Days back in 2008, under the coordination of the **Agencija za prestrukturiranje energetike (Ape)** <http://www.ape.si/wwwesd/>



Spain: the first "Día solar" was organised in 2008, coordinated by the Solar Thermal Industry Association – **ASIT**, and has been successfully taking place every year since then <http://www.diasolar.es/>



Sweden: the first ESD events in Sweden took place in 2009 but it was in 2011 that Sweden joined the ESD, led by the Energikontoren Sverige. The campaign has been very successful since then, show-casing that even in a country where solar does not appear to be the most evident resource, the interest of citizens is very high
<http://www.solardays.se/>



Switzerland: first country to import the original Austrian concept, Switzerland is also the country that made the Solar Days a multilingual campaign, since as early as 2004. Swissolar, the Swiss solar industry association ensures the national coordination in three languages <http://www.tagedersonne.ch> ; www.journeesdusoleil.ch; www.giornatedelsole.ch



The Netherlands: in the Netherlands, Holland Solar is the coordinator of the campaign since 2009. The “Solar City award” ceremonies in 2012 and 2013 gave a great visibility to the campaign in the whole country www.solardays.nl



Ukraine: in 2011, the NGO “Green Dossier” organised the first solar day in Ukraine, on the 21st of May. In 2012 they have joined the ESD Network and have since 2013 reiterated the experience with even more success
<http://www.dossier.org.ua/ievropeyski-dni-soncya>

Campaign Partners

One organisation could not run a campaign all over a country on its own. For this reason the [national campaign coordinators](#) develop [partnerships](#) at national and regional level. For the campaign coordinators, establishing strong partnerships is the critical point to enable a national campaign to start and grow. Naturally, the best campaign partners are the ones who show commitment (“it’s our campaign”) and really act as **multipliers**. An efficient campaign partner is one that has its own network and promotes the campaign and do special multiplying actions towards their networks, like e.g. regions communicate it to municipalities, solar industry associations inform their members (...who then spread the information to their installers), creating a ripple effect thanks to which a very broad and diverse audience can be reached.

Some national campaign coordinators enriched their experience by working together with other existing campaigns. For example, from 2005 to 2009 a public programme called “klima:aktiv” supported the Solar Days in Austria and was a great help to widen the scope of the activities from originally solar thermal towards climate change mitigation network of stakeholders.

The partners get involved in the campaign, mobilise and incentivise their network, communicate on the campaign to their contacts, and in exchange as official campaign partners they become visible on the campaign communication tools, such as the website and promotional material. This exchange of visibility also reinforces the credibility of the campaign. The national coordinators are in charge of the overall coordination and support their partners e.g. with preparing standard letters that the partners can send out to their networks in order to incite them to join the campaign, special information packages, examples of events that can be organised, etc.

More information and concrete examples can be found in the [Partnership section](#) in Chapter 2.

Sponsors

Some organisations not only spread the word about the European Solar Days to motivate a network and members, but also support the campaign through sponsorship money, which is used to finance the creation of materials and campaign work such as coordination and communication activities. Sponsorship packages are offered and managed at national level, taking into account each country's specificities and preferences. Finding sponsors is essential for a campaign like the Solar Days, since it is thanks to sponsorship funding that material can be developed and sent to event organisers.

Although the current difficult economic climate has strongly influenced sponsors' spending decisions, the ESD campaign was successful in maintaining the momentum. One strategy to overcome the new challenges has been to consider also other resources than money – so called “In-kind resources” like free services, existing supplies (such as leaflets or publication), or free help – that are still available within the community.

More information, tips and best practices are presented in the [Sponsorship section](#) in Chapter 2.

Media partners

Well-timed and coordinated media work needs to be done during the build-up of the campaign in order to ensure maximum visibility at national as well as at local level.



Building media partnerships is a very good way to ensure that information about the campaign is disseminated to the public – although it is not sufficient.

The most evident media partnerships are the ones tied with energy-related media for they have a natural interest in campaigns such as the Solar Days, but other media such as for example consumer-oriented magazines have proven to be good media partners as well.

A media partner generally publishes several articles about the Solar Days before, during and after the campaign, in exchange for visibility on the Solar Days website and on the spot of major Solar Days events.

Although it is essential to build partnerships with national media in order to valorise the national dimension of the campaign, it is acknowledged that building partnerships with local press is also necessary and very efficient to bring attention to the Solar Days events happening in specific areas.

Building media partnerships is the first part of a media work that needs to be thoroughly conducted well ahead of the official kick-off of the campaign, and followed-up step-by-step until after the campaign is officially over.

More information, tips and best practices on [media work](#) is to be found in Chapter 2.

Source picture: <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/eu-media-futures-forum>

The European coordination

The Solar Days are coordinated in each country by a campaign coordinator. At European level the campaign coordinators meet on a regular basis in order to ensure the consistency of the Solar Days campaign Europe-wide.

This is what is called the “[ESD Network](#)” or “ESDN” coordinated by two associations, [ESTIF](#) (European Solar Thermal Industry Federation) and [EPIA](#) (European Photovoltaic Industry Association). The coordination at European level is ensured through the preparation of common messages and the common “branding” of the campaign, the common website (intra- and inter-net), the production of European material for the campaign (messages, press releases, ESD logos, leaflets, etc.), and of course the interaction inside the ESD Network organised through regular meetings. Thanks to annual reports produced by all campaign coordinators, the experience acquired in each country is made available to the complete ESD Network in a constant search for improvement and mutual learning.

A European common identity and messages: the ESD “brand”

If the campaign is run independently in each country that takes part in the Solar Days, a European dimension is given by the European coordinators to the Solar Days campaign, and at national level this European dimension is valued by the campaign coordinators to give more strength and credibility to the national campaign.

All countries have very different marketing cultures and also backgrounds with solar energy therefore no visual identity is imposed to the national campaign. Nevertheless, the national campaigns refer to the European dimension of the Solar Days, for instance displaying the ESD logo and the link to the European website, or through the translation and publication of press releases prepared by the European coordinators, and that contain messages relevant for all campaign partners.



Example: this press release titled “Europeans demand political focus on decentralised solar energy” was distributed to the European media in May 2012 and reused by the national campaign coordinators in their own press activities.

Every year the definition of the official dates of the ESD campaign for the following year is organised by the European coordinators, in consultation with the national campaign coordinators. Said dates are then announced at European level in a press release, and integrated in the common European logo:



Example: the ESD logo on the Italian national website.

Example: here on the event kits materials sent to event organisers in Czech Republic in 2013



A single European platform: www.solardays.eu

EPIA and ESTIF maintain the main website of the campaign and gather data from national coordinators so as to create communication materials that can then be translated into national languages and used at national level by the campaign coordinators, thus highlighting the European dimension of the campaign to empower it at national and local level. For example at the end of the campaign, data on the number of events organised and participants who attended is collected by the European coordinators; the aggregated numbers are then sent to all national coordinators who use them to communicate on the success of the campaign throughout Europe, and press releases are issued at European as well as national level:

Solar days attract half a million Europeans

Thursday, 26 May 2011

European Solar Days 2011 campaign draws to a close in Brussels

Brussels, 26 May 2011 – The 4th edition of the European Solar Days campaign has drawn massive support for solar energy throughout the entire continent. Over the course of two weeks (1-15 May 2011) more than 8,000 events were organized in 18 countries throughout Europe, attracting half a million people in an attempt to demonstrate that solar energy constitutes a viable alternative energy source.

In Brussels, the European Solar Days were marked by a panel debate on solar energy's contribution to Europe's energy independence and security of supply. While Mariusz Kawnik - Energy Attaché in the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland to the EU – confirmed that progress in the area of renewable energy remains one of the key issues in the agenda of the forthcoming Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU), Paolo Frankl – Head of the IEA Renewable Energy Division – stressed that a further push to efficiently deploy solar technology would considerably help the European Union reach its 20/20/20 energy targets.

Louis Palmer's solar taxi test-drive was another highlight of the Brussels event. Global environmental adventurer, Louis Palmer is the first man to have completed a global tour in his solar-powered car. Palmer said: "It gave me real pleasure to see genuine interest in embracing solar-powered technologies, such as the solar taxi. Energy independence remains one of the major challenges of our times, yet my experience demonstrates that it only takes sheer conviction to implement the solar energy solution."

"Embracing solar as a viable energy alternative remains key to building a sustainable Europe and achieving the EU's climate targets" said Reinhold Buttgereit, Secretary General of the European Photovoltaic Industry Association (EPIA). "Today, it is even more evident that the EU needs to increase its share of renewables. We need to reassess our energy choices immediately or else we risk jeopardizing Europe's future energy independence and security of supply" added Xavier Noyon, Secretary General of the European Solar Thermal Industry Federation (ESTIF).

"The technology exists and, as the Solar Days campaign shows, consumers increasingly understand the benefits. But without the wholehearted support of policy-makers we will still face challenges in increasing solar energy's share in the EU energy mix" the two representatives concluded.

In the context of the EU's pledge to increase the share of renewables in its overall energy mix, solar energy can contribute in an essential way towards reaching this ambitious goal. Capitalizing on its characteristics – free, clean and, above all, infinite energy source – solar can ensure energy independence at local, regional and individual levels. Recent research reveals that solar thermal can meet up to 3.6% of the low temperature demand in the EU and solar photovoltaic electricity could account for up to 12% of the EU's electricity demand by 2020 assuming that the right political framework is in place.

– ENDS –

Example: this press release issued on 26 May 2011 reports that over half-a-million Europeans took part in the Solar Days, based on the data collected from all the campaign coordinators.

The European coordinators also work on the creation of European-wide materials, like videos that can be embedded on the national websites, or simply literature for the website that can be translated and reused on the national websites:

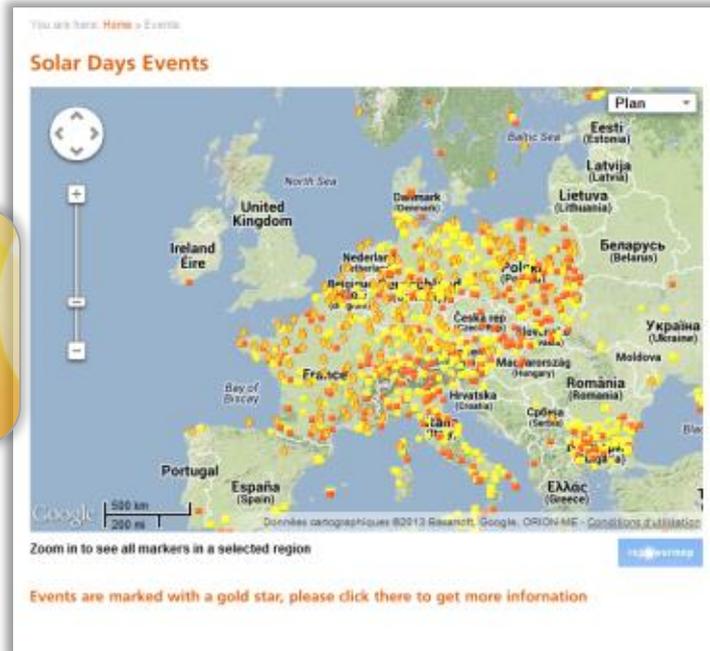


Example: this video sums-up the evolution of the Solar Days since the beginning in Austria in 2002, and is visible from the homepage of the European Solar Days website.

The ESD website also hosts an interactive map called "Repowermap" that features all the events taking place in all participating countries during the time of the Solar Days. First the national campaign coordinators organise the collection of data from the different events due to be organised throughout their country, and feature them on an interactive map visible on the national website of the campaign. The data from all participating countries are then automatically transferred to the European map on the ESD website, thus showing at a glance the European dimension of the campaign and allowing visitors to zoom in and have a closer look at what is happening where and when. This cooperation with the

[Repowermap project](#) is a very good example of a fruitful cooperation between the Solar Days and a not-for-profit initiative sharing similar goals.

At a glance, all events registered for the campaign are displayed on the Solar Days Events map on the ESD website.



The central website allows visitors to easily find the link to the website of the Solar Days in their country, and provides general information and highlights about the Solar Days as a European-wide campaign.



An interactive platform for exchange: the Intranet

In order to facilitate the exchange of material and experience, a coordinators area has been developed on the intranet of the ESD website and filled with common material, tools and documents on the campaign, so that newcomers to the ESD can directly find a specific piece of information without the need for a direct communication. In the course of the years, this platform has been optimised, and now gathers a wide range of useful materials:

- materials for event organisers
- template for press releases or other media materials
- examples of sponsorship materials
- pictures
- template documents such as Power Point slides about the Solar Days
- documents relating to the meetings of the ESD network
- ESD presentations with useful information and tips on various topics (fund-raising, partnerships, communication, etc.)

Choose your country :
Choose

Solar energy can be used in different forms, be it to produce electricity or to produce heating & cooling.

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You are here: Home » Partner intranet home

Welcome to the Partners Intranet

Dear Partners

We are pleased to provide you with this exchange platform.

Now you can:

- contribute by posting documents which will only be viewed by the partners.
- access progress reports and other important documents.
- get information on previous and forthcoming meetings.
- easily amend or update your country homepage and media contact.

[\(instructions\)](#)

This is a great opportunity to get informed as well as share information with other partners.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any question or suggestion for improvement.

Solar days questionnaire
Please take the time to fill in this short survey about solar systems.

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05-AST-PromotionMaterial.it			79.23 KB	19072011	
07-APSOLAR-PromotionMaterial.it			166.44 KB	19072011	
03-AP-E-PromotionMaterial.it			1.04 MB	19072011	
05-ODE-PressReleaseFR.it			555.98 KB	19072011	
05-ODE-PressReleaseNL.it			650 KB	19072011	
05-ODE-PromotionMaterialFR.it			1.16 MB	19072011	
05-ODE-PromotionMaterialNL.it			992.02 KB	19072011	

Start Prev 1 2 Next End Page 1 of 2

In addition, ESTIF and EPIA organise the meetings of the ESD Network, the moment when all national campaign coordinators meet and share their experience, lessons learnt and best practices to as to enrich each other's ways of doing.

Meetings of the ESD Network: to teach and to be taught

Several meetings were held between 2010 and 2013, in different cities and countries of Europe¹.

There were three main objectives behind these meetings:

- **Transfer** the know-how from the most experienced campaign coordinators to newcomers as the ESD campaign was expanding to new countries, and support the kick-off of the campaign in said new countries.
- **Define** together new evaluation standards and use the results of the evaluation of the previous edition so as to improve the ESD in all countries.
- **Continue** the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the following editions of the campaign and work on its sustainability and further expansion.

The meetings of the ESD Network were the occasion for the most experienced ESD campaign coordinators to share their experience with and provide guidelines to the national solar associations, energy agencies or other institutions from countries where the Solar Days did not exist yet, and who wanted to import the concept there. The meetings were also the main forum where evaluation results, common evaluation standards, joint actions at European level and time-periods for future European Solar Days were discussed and determined.



*ESD Network meeting in
Marseille, France, July 2013*

The interaction in the meetings was a crucial moment to give coordinators increased confidence to carry on their campaigns at national level. Rapidly though, it turned out that these meetings were as profitable for the older members of the Network as they were for the newcomers in terms of learning. Indeed, the newcomers generally came from countries where the solar market was not as developed as it was in the oldest countries and the resources available to establish a national network and campaign

¹ In the framework of the IEE-funded project "ESD II", three additional meetings were organised during this time period. See [paragraph on EC funding](#) in the "Sponsorship and fund-raising" section, p. 41.

different from those known by the most experienced coordinators coming from countries where solar energy was already well-known and established. The latter therefore found in these interactions ideas to renew their own network and practices.

In order to provide opportunities for more interaction and contact with interesting examples in the hosting country, specific sessions were organised along these meetings: a solar tour in the Netherlands, a debate with Vienna Energy Department or a visit to solar thermal installation in a hotel in Vienna, or a presentation by a professional fund-raiser in Marseille. These elements of the meetings were unanimously acknowledged to be an important moment in the building-up of the ESD Network.

Visit of a solar thermal installation on the roof of a hotel in Vienna, Austria, November 2012



Mentorship groups

Given the high number of organisations involved in the ESD network, an extensive use of working groups proved to be effective during the meetings. Since the very beginning three “**mentorship groups**” were created, mixing the most experienced campaign coordinators and the newest ones, in order to facilitate the exchanges and increase efficiency of the working process.

The logic behind was that the exchange of experiences and ideas does not occur only from experienced to newer countries, but also the other way around. This means that everyone is simultaneously a mentor and an apprentice and it is each other’s responsibility to explore synergies, to share experiences, to provide/request support to/from other campaign coordinators.

As a matter of fact, it is clear and has been verified over the period, that all campaign coordinators could learn equally from each other. Newcomers provided a “fresh vision” and new ideas to improve the campaign, even towards the older coordinators.

The regular exchanges between the meetings have permitted to better understand the situation of each country involved in each mentorship group and made more natural the reflex to ask for advice. The communication has been realised differently inside each mentorship group (e-mail exchanges, “skype”, phone calls), but multimedia web-meeting were always used successfully for more in-depth information exchanges and discussion sessions.



Mentorship group at work, ESD Network meeting in Marseille, July 2013

Web-meetings

The web-meetings were used by the three mentorship groups to discuss the status of the national campaign preparation, by the management group (ESTIF, EPIA, and some of the most experienced “countries”) to prepare the upcoming physical meetings and by specific “task forces” to discuss a topic which needed special attention. They proved to be especially efficient when focusing on a precise topic that required input from a dedicated task force, and turned out to be an acceptable solution to fill in the gaps in-between two physical meetings.

Reporting

A regular reporting on the Solar Days campaigns was essential to be able to analyse and improve the results of the campaign year after year in each country. These reports contain data as regards to the quantitative results of the campaign (number of events effectively organised, number of visitors, press coverage etc.) and also assess in a more qualitative way the unfolding of the campaign: What went well? What could have gone better? What are the lessons learnt? These results are collected and compiled every year since 2008 and in the following documents:

- National Evaluation Reports showing the results of the national campaign in the different countries;
- European Summary Report giving an overview of the campaign in all the countries (facts, figures, selected examples and pictures), summarised by the European coordinators;

The annual reports can be downloaded here: www.solardays.eu/about-the-solar-days

They provide a very good summary of the national campaigns and good examples of successful actions and events organised, of materials created and used during the campaign, etc.



Expansion of the campaign to new countries

One aim of the ESD campaign is to promote the initiative and concept to other European countries in order to expand the ESD-campaign gradually in Europe. In 2013, Solar Days events were organised in 21 countries, and over the decade of existence of the Solar Days, events have been organised in total in 26.

Thanks to the ESD Network, the process to join the Solar Days has been made easy. Everyone that shares the same values and respects the principles adjacent to the European Solar Days Campaign can join the Network. A simple Memorandum of Understanding will clarify what is the support provided by the ESD Network and what is expected from the organisation interested in launching the campaign in a “new” country.

Any interested organisation can find on the ESD website the contact details of the European coordinators. These will be in contact with the interested party, exchanging information. One of the points to clarify is what the cooperation possibilities are, i.e. how an organisation can get involved with the European Solar Days:

- **event organiser:** the interested entity organises some events in their country. These events, if respecting the ESD principles, will be included as "stand-alone" ESD events, mentioned also on the ESD website and list of events. It can also be agreed that these initiatives can include the ESD logo.
- **national coordinator:** this means that a national organisation joins the ESD network and becomes responsible for the ESD in their country. Their focus should not be on organising events (though this is also possible) but rather in providing a good framework for individuals, companies, organisations, municipalities, etc. to organise their own ESD events, which includes looking for campaign partners, deal with national media, register and promote the events, etc. This requires more work and coordination with us and also more support (logistical: website, materials) from the ESD Network.

In several cases, the interested organisations opted to start as an event organiser, setting up a reduced number of events and then explore the possibility of becoming campaign partners. Depending on timing, funding and other factors, interested organisations have been invited to join one of the meetings of the ESD network, facilitating exchanges and experience sharing. This has proven to be very useful for newcomers to get inspiration and advice on how to establish the campaign in their country.

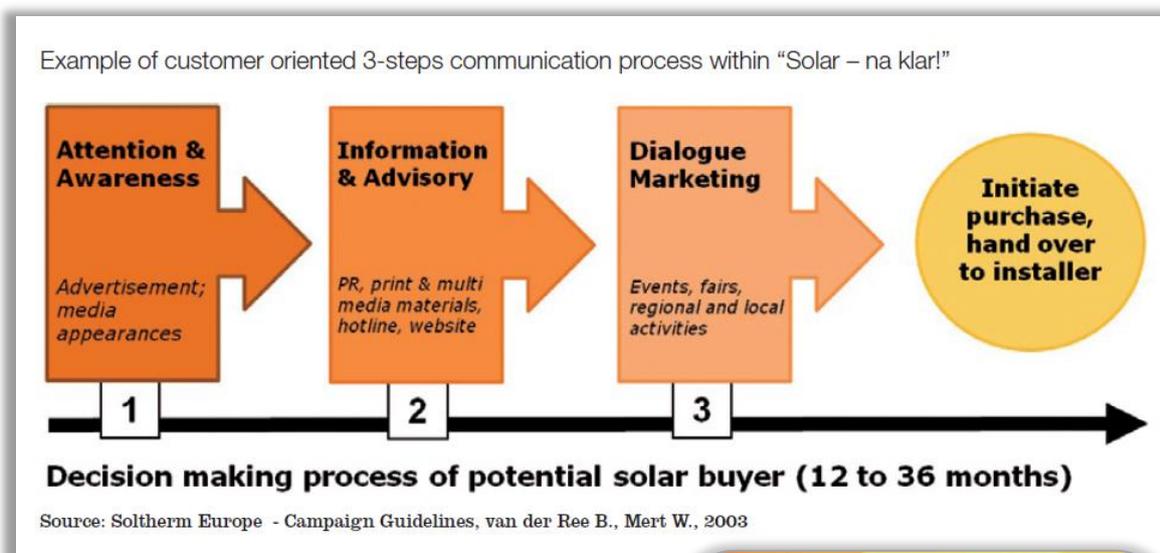
If you are interested in joining the European Solar Days team, visit us at www.solardays.eu



**2- European
Solar Days
Campaigns:
achievements,
lessons learnt,
best practices**

Communication and media work: achievements, success stories and lessons learnt

A good communication is essential to bring visibility to the campaign, be it at regional, national or European level. The more the campaign is visible in the media and in public spaces in general, the more attention the campaign will draw and the more attended the Solar Days events will be. The key to the success of a communication campaign is timing and anticipation. It is therefore very important to **prepare a solid communication work plan well ahead** of the official kick-off of the campaign, to follow-up regularly until the campaign is actually running, and to assess the results of the action after the campaign has ended in order to prepare the field for the following edition.



Each stage of the decision-making process of a potential solar buyer corresponds to a specific type of communication matching the evolution of the needs of the potential buyer in the course of the process.

Communication tools and media work at National level

The communication tools available for national campaigns can be divided into four categories:

- Tools produced by the campaign coordinators: newsletters, website, social media;
- Communication tools and resources of the campaign partners;
- A dedicated media work.

➤ Campaign coordinator's tools

The Solar Days **websites** are the most evident platforms to give visibility to the campaign. Over the course of the years they have been filled with all sorts of informative content about the Solar Days and solar energy in general, in addition to containing a certain number of interactive tools such as the European map featuring all the events that are due to take place during the Solar Days, picture galleries of past editions of the campaign, plus all the communication tools created in the frame of the campaign such as press releases, newsletters, leaflets, etc.

It is extremely important to **keep the website alive throughout the whole campaign**. In the preparatory phase of the campaign, it is the platform where information about the concept of Solar Days and existing possibilities to get involved are easily retrievable by potential campaign partners. During the campaign, the website must be kept alive in order to encourage participation and build enthusiasm around the momentum. Finally, when the campaign is over, the website should still be used as a tool to disseminate the results of the campaign, to collect feedback from the participants of the finishing edition, and to announce the dates of the following one.

Campaign coordinators who do not have the resources to create a website dedicated to the Solar Days can also create a special section on an already existing website.

Another tool that can be used to communicate about the Solar Days is a newsletter sent regularly to build-up the interest for the Solar Days.

Lessons learnt by campaign organisers:

- the website is an essential tool to build the image of the Solar Days and to communicate about the campaign to the general audience, it is therefore **necessary to spend a lot of time maintaining it live and updated throughout the year**;
- it is also important to **make sure that all communication tools and materials are uploaded onto the website** and made available for downloading.
- in order to have new content to upload onto the website on a regular basis, it is important to **collect material during the campaign**, for example incite partners/event organisers to take pictures of their event and to send their pictures to the coordinator in charge of the website.



Even more than for the websites, these tools are only efficient if an effort is made to keep them live and to update them with new content on a regular basis, all year long, even after the campaign is over. They present the advantage of being free and easy to set up while allowing to reach out to large groups of people, but they are also more time-consuming than other communication tools such as press activities. It is generally acknowledged that if human resources are low, priority should not be given to social media.

➤ **Communication tools and resources of the network of partners**

The best campaign partners are the ones who can give visibility to the campaign on their own channels and platforms of communication, as well as mobilise their own networks and convince them to take part in the Solar Days.

In order to incite campaign partners to communicate about the campaign to their contacts, it is important to **provide them with ready-made communication material** that they can quickly integrate to their communication tools (such as web-banners, logos of the Solar Days, etc. for their websites), or

again press releases, flyers or letters that they can send to their contacts to incite them to get involved with the Solar Days.



Screenshot of a press release made available on the Belgian Solar Days website for the 2012 campaign, ready to be circulated by the partners to their press contacts.

*The **media kit** for the Belgian Solar Days campaign in 2012 was composed of:*

- 3 press releases to draw attention to the Solar Days, with different focuses to fit the different profiles of the partners;*
- a web banner*
- the logo of the Solar Days 2012.*

Lessons learnt by campaign organisers:

- It is important to activate the network of campaign partners to have the greatest communication possible;
- The best way to make sure that campaign partners communicate about the Solar Days is to provide them with ready-to-use materials than they can disseminate as such to their press contacts or network, e.g.:
 - To an association representing solar installers: Provide a press release that underlines the grass-root nature of the campaign and the importance of having such initiatives to create links between installers and end-users;
 - To a network of municipalities: Provide an article about the Solar Days in general with information about regional events, so that said article can be published in the local bulletin or on the websites of the different municipalities.

Media work

In addition to signing up media partnerships and in order to ensure the success of the campaign, it is absolutely necessary to dedicate time to press activities, and to follow-up with this press work once the campaign is over (collect clippings and stay in touch with press contacts).

Different tools have been used over the years and across the participating countries to get attention from the media. The most commonly used have been press releases, press conferences as well as organisation of press interviews. Below some examples of successful outcomes of press work and tips from the campaign coordinators:

Lessons learnt by campaign organisers:

★ Press releases:

- It is highly recommended to issue **several press releases** in the course of one campaign: in 2012 in Poland for example, five press releases were issued before, during and after the campaign and resulted in 72 media appearances.
- Press releases should be sent out **before** the campaign starts (to announce the official dates and if possible already some major events), **during** the campaign to incite people to participate in the numerous events taking place, and also **after** the campaign is officially over to announce the results.
- **Engaging with local media** is a good way to ensure that visibility is given to the campaign at local level: in 2013 in France for example, 22 press releases were sent to local media from the 22 administrative regions, each one highlighting events in the region in question; this resulted in 15 media appearances in the regional press, a much higher rate than the coverage gained from national media.

★ Press conferences:

- Organising a press conference at the beginning of the campaign with a “celebrity” such as a **local or national politician** is a very good way to attract attention from the media and therefore give visibility to the Solar Days in general.
- The Solar Days initiative in itself is not enough of a “hot topic” to trigger attention from the press and/or political figures. It is therefore important to be able to link the press conference to an **issue that is high on the political and media agendas** and related to solar energy.
- The link to a hot topic also has to be made in the frame of the organisation of press interviews. See section on [European communication](#).

Communication tools and media work at European level

ESTIF and EPIA have been organising since 2008 special communication activities for the Solar Days in Brussels, with two main goals: incentivising new organisations to join the Solar Days on the one hand, and advocate for solar energy to European decision-makers on the other.

➤ Communication tools at European level

The communication tools of the Solar Days at European level in addition to the central website are press releases, newsletters, a leaflet, and social media channels such as Facebook page and videos uploaded onto YouTube.

Get free energy from the sun!
Join the European Solar Days and promote solar energy in your country

Why join in
The sun uses all over Europe. Solar energy already contributes significantly to reducing CO₂ emissions, replacing millions of European households with green electricity, domestic, hot water and renewable heating and cooling.
In 2009 the EU adopted a wide-ranging package on climate change including the famous "20-20-20" targets: a 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (relative to 1990 levels), a 20% increase in the renewable share in the energy mix, and a 20% cut in energy consumption.
By increasing the use of solar energy, we can build together a more sustainable energy supply for Europe!

Who participates
If you are organising events to raise awareness about the potential and benefits of solar energy, you are welcome to join the European Solar Days campaign. This involves a wide range of stakeholders and events, such as:
Municipalities
Fairs and craft programmes for children; Solar awards; Solar Fairs, Conferences and seminars; Photo contests.
Schools
Solar message on balloons, cards; Projects to explain use of the sun; "Dance of the sun"; Climate and solar quizzes.
Installers and manufacturers
Open days; Guided tour of installations; Open doors at manufacturing plants; Information and sales stands for solar systems; Solar training for company staff.

What you can do
Become your country's national campaign leader!
coordinate solar events!

For a bright Future

We help you:
National Campaign leaders support event organisers with practical advice, communication and promotion material, e.g. posters, balloons, badges, flyers, press information, etc.

Let's celebrate the sun!
Join the European Solar Days - put your campaign in the spotlight, share your story and promote your events!
National campaign coordinators need strong partnerships at local, regional and national level to make use of synergies with trade associations, manufacturers, media, regional or local authorities and environmental networks sharing the same goal: promoting renewable energy sources and bringing the energy of the sun to the people.

The European Solar Days: Example of a national partners' network

At European level, the Coordinator, ESTIF and EPIA, and the more experienced partners involved in the European Solar Days Network, support the national campaign leaders; they regularly get together for coordination meetings, exchange their experience on the organisation of the annual Solar Days campaigns at national level, share materials and concepts among other things.

You want to boost the uptake of solar energy and contribute to the reduction of CO₂ emissions?
Join the European Solar Days Campaign!
The European Solar Days partners are ready to welcome you in their Europe-wide network, sharing their know-how and their experiences with you, as well as answering your questions! An information kit for new partners is available at: www.solaradays.eu

For more information, contact:

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EPIA
European Photovoltaic Industry Association
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Email: coordination@epia.org
Web: www.epia.org

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The European Solar Days leaflet has been developed in 2010 and is distributed by EPIA and ESTIF in all events, fairs and conferences attended by institutions potentially interested in joining the Solar Days.

Several newsletters were issued between 2011 and 2013, announcing the Solar Days a few months or weeks before the kick-off of the campaign, sharing the results once it was over, and announcing the dates of the following edition. Every edition of the newsletter is realised thanks to the contribution of the campaign coordinators so as to cover the activities foreseen or realised in as many countries as possible.



➤ Media work

Since 2008, several press releases have been issued and disseminated to the Brussels-based journalists including EU correspondents from the main national and regional newspapers as well as the energy-specialised journalists of the European press (Euractiv, European Voice, Europolitics, European Energy Review, the Parliament Magazine, etc.).

The European media work is more specific compared to the media work realised in the country, for there is no proper “campaign” taking place in Brussels every year, but instead an advocacy event is organised in Brussels with European decision-makers during the timeframe of the European campaign in order to call for support to solar energy. Therefore the media work is two-fold: give visibility to the Solar Days campaign in general, and to the Brussels-based advocacy event in particular.

In addition to the press releases issued (one ahead of the campaign, to announce the dates and build-up the interest, one after to announce the results and spread a political message about the need to support solar energy), several interviews have been conducted with specialised journalists in order to pass on political messages thanks to the hook created by the Solar Days. These interviews were arranged with the representatives of EPIA and ESTIF, in the light of the current political context. Between 2008 and 2013, said political context has changed a lot, from growth of the solar markets in Europe due to voluntary policies to a considerable slow-down due to difficult economic times, and consequently the possible topics of the press interviews have varied according to these changes. Thanks to adapting to

the current market and political situations, it has always been possible to get the attention of media and to give visibility to the Solar Days:



Article in Euractiv in May 2013:
Building on the situation of the Solar Thermal market, the promotion of the Solar Days campaign is made and the dates of the advocacy event announced in the article.

Lessons learnt from the communication and media work at European level:

- Press work:
 - organising interviews with solar “ambassadors” is a good way to attract coverage for the whole campaign;
 - it is sometimes easier to attract the attention of media on one single “prestigious” event than on a whole campaign;
 - it is important to make the link between the Solar Days and the topics that are occupying the public space at the moment when the campaign takes place.
 - in the specific Brussels case, the press is extremely specialised and there is then a danger that specific issues overtake the topic of the Solar Days: if a topic is high on the agenda and is not aligned with the messages born by the campaign, it is better not to dedicate too much time to the media work and instead focus on other aspects of the campaign such as building partnerships and/or raising funds.

Partnerships and fund-raising: achievements, success stories and lessons learnt

The Solar Days rely on the existence of a network of partners who get involved and organise events themselves as well as mobilise their own networks and incite them to take part. It is therefore very important to find the right partners to benefit from a multiplying effect.

In addition, some budget is needed to produce materials that are then distributed to participants on the spot. The fund-raising part of the campaign preparation is therefore crucial, especially in difficult economic and financial times.

Partnerships

There are many different types of possible partners for a campaign such as the Solar Days.

Below a list of existing examples, that is in no way exhaustive and can always be completed:

- Local Administrations
- Associations of Local Administrations (Municipalities, Provinces, Regions)
- Industry associations: solar sector, building industry, architects, etc.
- Environmental associations (WWF, Greenpeace, national or local environmental NGOs)
- Consumer associations
- Local energy agencies
- Networks of local energy agencies
- Schools
- Networks of schools
- Universities
- Network of universities
- Research centres
- Management bodies of park areas (protected areas)
- Solar/renewable energy fair
- Financial institutions involved with renewable energy projects financing
- Another campaign with similar and/or compatible objectives

Just like there many different kinds of partners, there are many different kinds of partnership agreements, and different ways for partners to support the campaign itself in addition to promoting the campaign on their communication channels and to their network, for example:

- **Local administrations** such as town councils, may not have the resources to organise an event themselves, but can definitely be partners thanks to **in-kind contributions** such as spaces made available to campaign organisers (meeting rooms for a conference, public square for an exhibition, etc.) or again simply spreading information about the Solar Days on their website or bulletin if they have any.

- **An industry association**, in addition to sending information to its network about the campaign, can also contribute with **materials** that it has developed for its own activities. For example a solar industry association may have developed leaflets on how a solar energy system works.

- **Research centres** can lend rooms or even **organise regular workshops** to welcome citizens interested in solar energy and share their expertise with them. They are also likely to have informative materials that can be disseminated to participants of the whole campaign.

- **Financial institutions** investing in renewable energy projects are more likely to contribute with **goodies** that can be distributed to events participants.

In exchange for the involvement of partners, the campaign coordinators have to think of what they can offer to their partners. This has been a real challenge for the national campaign coordinators, for these organisations are generally not business-oriented organisations. Just as the involvement of the campaign partners will differ per type of partner, the benefits that campaign partners may seek to get from their involvement in the campaign can also differ, for example:

- **Local administrations** are likely to be more interested in being visible as partners at local level than at national level, therefore having their name mentioned on the campaign website is less interesting for them than having their name mentioned on the material that will be distributed at local events;

- **An industry association** may be more interested in partnering with the ESD campaign if a national debate is organised with decision-makers which can give them a hook to convey political messages, or if a press conference can be organised with one of its representatives;

- **Research centres** will most likely be interested in opportunities to talk about the scope of their research activities and networking opportunities with manufacturers.

- **Financial institutions** will probably be interested in nation-wide visibility as well as opportunities to network with solar project developers, more than in activities with schools.

It is therefore very important that campaign coordinators adapt the terms of the partnerships that they offer to potentially interested organisations, anticipating the needs of their potential partners.

In Hungary different materials were developed to incite organisations to become partners of the campaign, with different arguments for different targets:

- for experts
- for educational institutions
- for municipalities
- for sponsors



It is especially important to dedicate time to the preparation of the partnerships, since having **strong and diverse partners** is the only way to ensure a smooth roll-out of the campaign and the guarantee to see a positive outcome at the end of it.

In the course of the past ten years, experience has been gained and lessons learnt on the matter:

Lessons learnt on partnerships:

- It is essential to build **strong partnerships** with organisations that pursue the same goal as the Solar Days i.e. spreading information about renewable energy to citizens; these partnerships are the ones that create the greatest ripple effect;
- The **broader the network**, the wider the outreach: in addition to having one or several strong partners, it is important to partner with other organisations that have different contacts and networks from the ones that the campaign coordinators naturally have;
- In addition to a standard partnership agreement, always think of **adapting** the terms of the partnership to the interests of the potential partners;
- **Provide partners with materials** that they can use directly to disseminate information about the Solar Days to their contacts to incite them to get involved with the Solar Days, e.g.:
 - To a network of schools: Send a letter containing examples of activities that can be organised by a class and have this letter sent out to schools and/or teachers directly by the administrator of the network;
 - To an installers association: Provide a flyer show-casing what kind of activities can be organised by an installer and what they have to gain in terms of visibility;
 - To a fair/conference about renewable energy: Provide a general leaflet explaining what the Solar Days are and how to get involved;
- **Join forces**: It may be that another initiative or campaign is organised with similar objectives as to the ones of the Solar Days: find a way to become partners and to benefit from each other's presence and activities.
- **Start early**: The earlier the partnership agreement is signed, the more visibility you will be able to give to the partner and therefore the more arguments you have in your hands to convince him.
- **Follow-up** with your partners at the end of each campaign to improve processes and ensure partners' participation in the next edition.

Sponsorship and fund-raising

Next to the partners are the sponsors of the campaign, who contribute financially to the creation of materials and other expenses that may be incurred by some specific activities. The tradition when it comes to sponsorship is very different depending on the countries: some campaigns can count on faithful sponsors when others have to rely on other sources of funding.

➤ Sponsors

Sponsors of the campaign can be public or private; they can be associations as well as companies. If originally the sponsors' contribution was financial, in the course of the years this has evolved and in-kind contributions have been used more and more often – for example own work or use of own resources. The “event sponsorship” has also proven to be a valuable solution to overcome the lack of financial resources. For example in France in 2012, the launch event of the campaign in Marseilles was sponsored by organisations that had no interest in sponsoring the whole campaign, such as the city of Marseilles.

Sponsors have different interests in funding the Solar Days, and it is very important that campaign coordinators target the right potential organisation as well as adapt the sponsorship offer to the kind of organisation that they are contacting: just like for the search of partners, different organisations will be receptive to different rationales, e.g. municipalities will be more sensitive to the argument that the Solar Days have an informative nature directed to the community, while companies will be more interested in the possibility to meet potential business partners.

At all times the balance need to be kept between the necessary contribution and participation of private companies, and the fact that the vocation of the Solar Days is informational and not commercial.



Opening event of the Solar Days in Denmark in 2012:

Arranged by Solar city Copenhagen acting as an official sponsor of the 2012 edition, it took place in the House of Architects in Copenhagen.

Lessons learnt on sponsorship:

- Think of **different forms of sponsoring** than financial sponsorship for the whole campaign in exchange for visibility on the communication materials. Below are some examples of other kinds of sponsorship:
 - Organisation of a Solar Days event with sponsor's own resources
 - Contribution of the sponsor through man-hours spent on different aspects of the campaign (promotion, coordination, general support, etc.)
 - Sponsorship of an event with a special scope more interesting for the sponsor than the overall campaign

- **Start early**: the earlier you get a sponsor, the more visibility you will be able to give him. For a campaign starting on 1st of May, the first meetings with potential sponsors should occur in January already;

- Try to **adapt your rationale** to the different types of potential sponsors;

- Do not hesitate in the first phase to send the sponsorship offer to a broad network of contacts, for some organisations that you would not have thought of could turn out to be interested;

- A sponsor might be more interested in **sponsoring one major event** rather than the whole campaign, therefore when planning the activities for the upcoming campaign, try to design the concept of a big major event, e.g. the opening event.

➤ Fund-raising

With the end of the funding of the ESD project through the IEE programme and the difficult economic situation in Europe, new resources must be explored to keep the campaign running, in addition to the in-kind contributions of partners and sponsors. Some partners have experienced successful operations with cooperation programmes of the European Union with neighbouring countries for example. In addition, a training session on fund-raising has been organised during the meeting of the ESD network in Marseilles in July 2013 in order to give arguments to Solar Days representatives to raise funds from private or public donators.

Example of a Solar Days network: The Netherlands, ESD 2013

In 2013 in the Netherlands, 17 partners joined forces to organise the campaign, coordinated by the **solar trade association Holland Solar**. All partners had complementary value to bring to the project and could be divided into three categories:

- **7 core partners**, who were mostly national associations: the association of the Dutch solar industry, of installers, of consumers, of homeowners, etc.; together the core partners covered the **entire chain of actors directly involved with solar energy**, from manufacturing to actually consuming solar energy.

- **6 supporting partners** provided support to the core partners on specific events content-wise, thanks to an expertise that core partners do not have: for example the Utrecht University supported the organisation of the national solar debate and helped to reach the target group of educational institutions.

- **4 media partners** spread the information regarding the Solar Days in the press, to promote the Solar Days activities.

The coordinator Holland Solar organised the cooperation between the partners, developing the general project plan for the campaign and ensuring the smooth roll-out of each partner's project plan. In addition, Holland Solar organised four meetings between 2012 and March 2013 with all the partners so as to coordinate joint aspects and share experience and best practices.

➤ The European Commission (EC) funding

Since 2008 the European Solar Days have been supported by the Intelligence Europe Energy fund through two EC projects: ESD I from 2008 to 2010, and ESD II from 2010 to 2013.

The objective of the first project was to extend the "European Solar Day" campaign from Austria, Switzerland and Germany to other European countries. In 2008, five additional countries had joined the campaign's efforts: France, Italy, Slovenia, Spain and Portugal thanks to the EU-funded project.

In 2010 the ESD II project proposal was accepted by the European Commission, with the goal to expand the concept of European Solar Days to Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Slovakia thanks to an exchange of knowledge and experience between the experienced and new partners. It was also decided that from 2012 onwards every year at least two new interested countries would be attracted to join the initiative. This also was also successfully achieved thanks to the project.

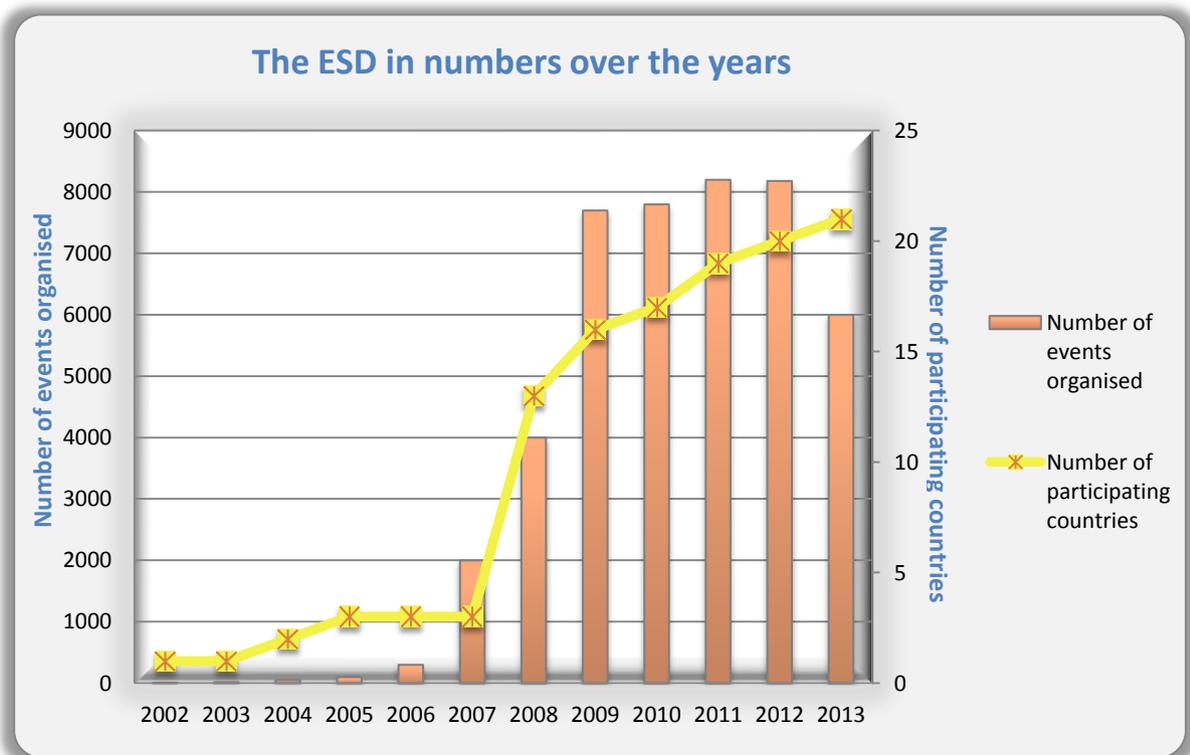
This funding by the European Commission has played a crucial role to enable new countries to engage in the European Solar Days campaign: to physically take part in the meetings of the ESD Network or again to finance the production of material for the national campaigns. With the end of the EC-funded project in 2013, new sources of financing will have to be explored such as fund-raising and sponsorship, or other EC funds. See chapter on the [Future of the European Solar Days](#).

Organisation of a campaign: achievements, success stories and lessons learnt

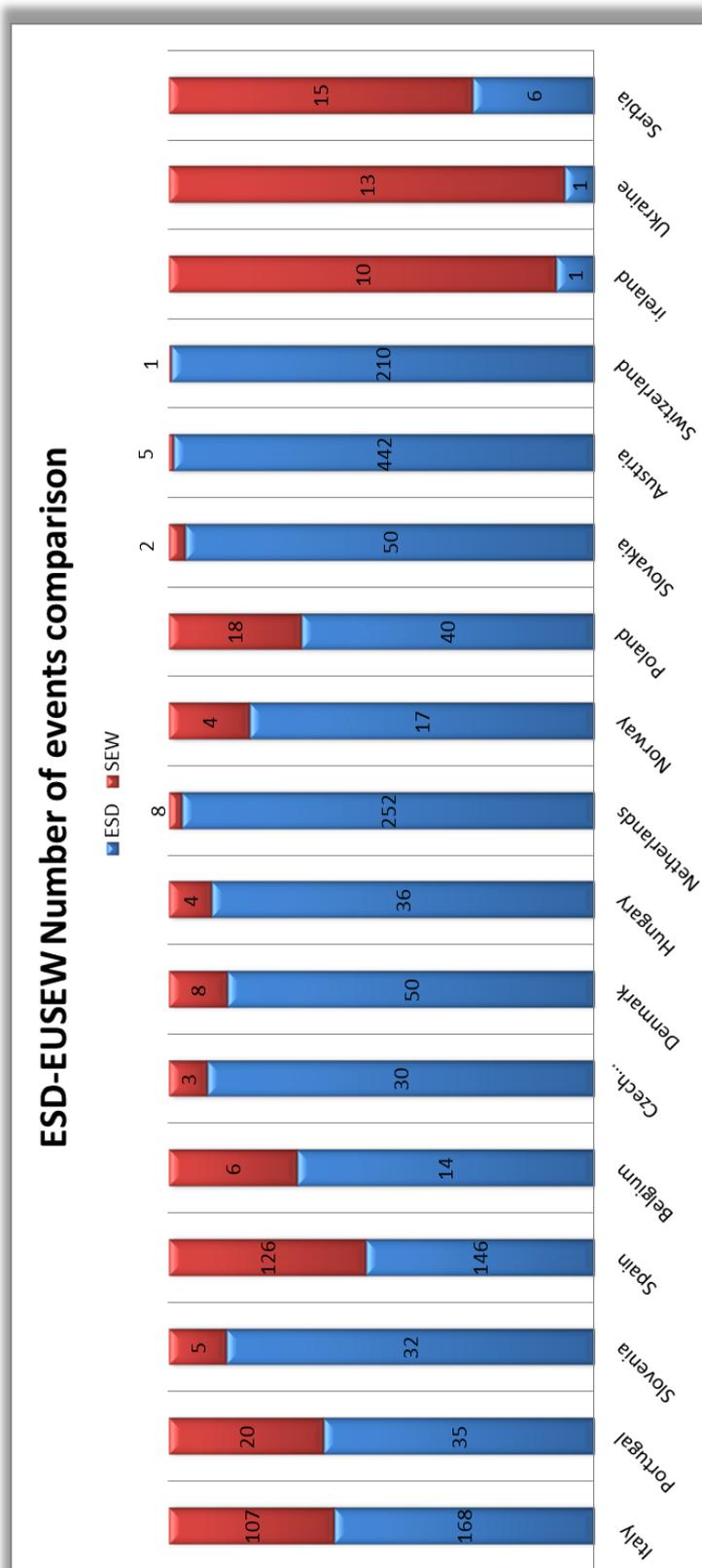
During a few weeks, thousands of events take place all over Europe, and are attended by hundreds of thousands of citizens eager to learn more about solar energy. These events are the key indicator of the success of the ESD. The more attended the events are, the bigger the outreach and the better the achievement of the ultimate goal of the campaign: promote solar energy. This requires a strong organisation in order to create and then mobilise broad networks of stakeholders. In order to ensure the success of the Solar Days events, a promotion work is needed ahead of the launch of the campaign, in the course of the campaign and after it is over. It is also needed to have strong partners involved with the campaign, and finally it is crucial to time and organise well the whole roll-out of activities.

ESD Events

The number of events has shown impressive growth since 2002, from eight in Austria in the first year up to 8,000 events organised in 20 European countries in 2012.



Just to give an idea, on the next page is a comparative graph between European Solar Days and European Sustainable Energy Week, showing the number of events organised in the frame of each campaign:



Many different kinds of events can be organised, and the list will never be exhaustive for there are infinite ways to talk about solar. Below an overview of events is provided, sorted in four different categories, i.e. whether the events have an informative nature, whether they are interactive activities, whether they are company activities or whether their primary target group is children.

Examples of informative community activities:

- Exhibition of solar collectors and solar storage devices
- Solar information kiosks with solar brochures and consultation
- Information and sales stands for solar systems
- Information concerning solar support schemes at national and local level
- Solar information kiosks with solar brochures and consultation
- Community energy display (“Our route to energy independence”)
- Solar Architecture Exhibition
- Consultation and information concerning solar energy, new/old house construction
- Solar system exhibitions
- Community energy displays
- Conferences and speeches
- Information stands on solar energy, energy conservation in new and old buildings.



Demonstration of solar systems, Hungary, 2013

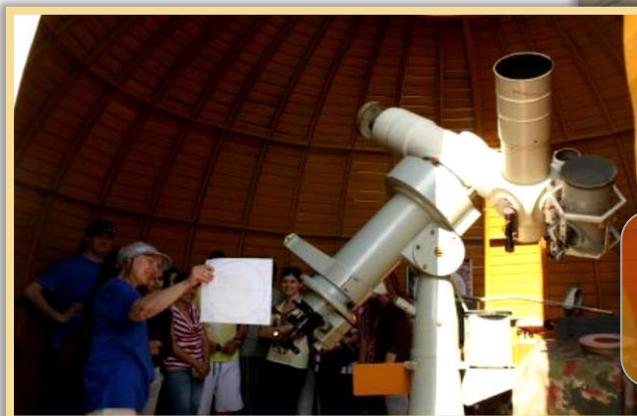


Info stand, Spain, 2012

Examples of interactive community activities:

- Climate and solar quiz in the community
- Open houses at homes with solar installations
- Opening of publicly owned solar and biomass systems
- Demonstration of solar cars
- Solar-cocktails, solar-coffee, and solar-cooker demonstration in the market place
- Film or photo presentations of various types of systems
- Guided tours of installations
- Solar party with open-house and opportunities for showroom consultations
- Solar photography contests
- Solar prize awards
- Census of solar systems numbers in the community
- Construction of a display board to show pictures of locally existing solar systems
- Construction of a sun dial and a model of solar system
- Construction of block and card games with environmental themes
- Guided tours of solar energy installations
- Solar boat race
- Bicycle excursions to solar systems and wind farms
- Promotion information in co-operation with local banks
- Energy consultation days

Solar cooking demonstration, Spain, 2013



Visit of the Observatory Rimavska Sobota, Slovakia, 2013

Examples of company activities:

- Display by local solar heating and photovoltaic companies
- Guided tours of installations
 - Companies factory tours
- Exhibition of solar collectors and solar storage devices
- Film or photo presentations of various types of systems
- Open day
- Conference from professionals
- Solar training for company staff
- Webinars moderated by professionals
- Energy consultation days concerning solar heating, solar permits, climate protection, passive housing, etc.
- Free tests of frost protection of solar antifreeze and maintenance information
- Individual advice on solar energy, buildings, renovations, and energy savings.
- Information stands on solar energy, energy conservation in new and old buildings.

Guided tour of a solar plant, Portugal, 2013



Conference from a solar company, Austria, 2013



Display by a solar installer, Poland, 2011

Examples of children-focused activities:

- Arts and crafts programmes for children including sun-mask, sun face-painting, etc.
- Balloons launch with solar message cards in cooperation with schools
- Displays of student work for “Solar Day”
- Parade of „Solarkids“
- Sidewalk chalk with students inside or outside the school building
- Solar boat race
- Solar photography contests
- Solarcooker
- Climate and solar quiz
- Construction of a display board to show pictures of locally existing solar systems
- Construction of block and card games with environmental themes
- Solar photography contests
- Sun songs, poems, and dances for city people
- Models, for example solar boats, solar helicopters, and solar collector
- Solar school tours in the information centre

Solar schools project,
France, 2013



Crafting solar cars,
Asker miljøfestival,
Norway, 2013

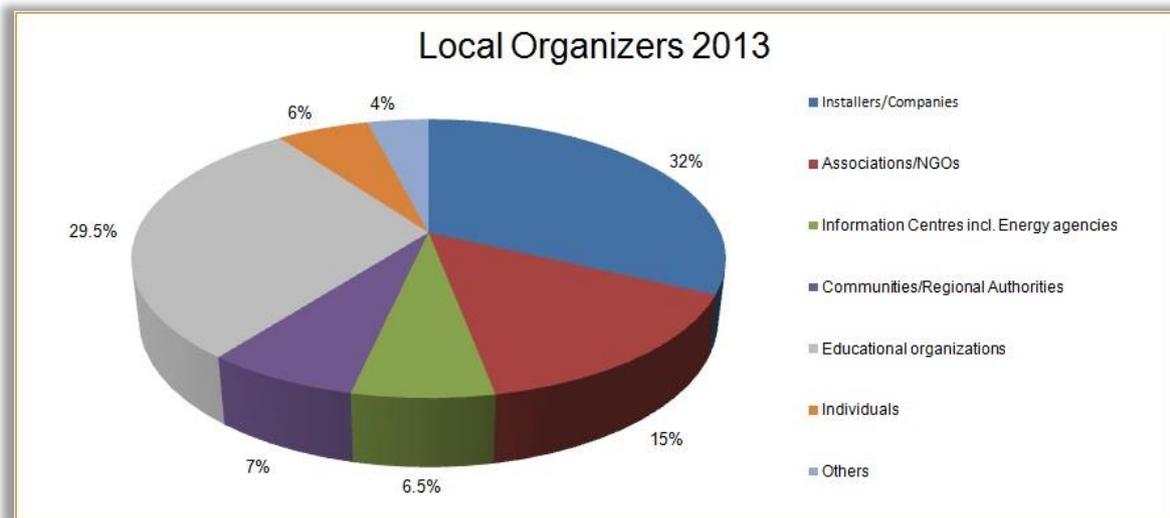


Solar week at
school, Slovakia,
2012



Event organisers

As there are many different types of events, there are also many different types of organisers: communities, municipalities, administrations, schools, information centres, installers, architects, training centres, universities, research centres, individuals, companies, etc.



Different organisers are prone to organise different kinds of events, therefore the broader the network of events organisers, the more diverse the types of events, and the bigger the outreach.

Successful example: **Solar Tours 2013**, The Netherlands

Organiser: *Agentschap NL, with SEAC (Solar Energy Application Centre) as a supporting partner.*

Dates: *14, 15, 16 May (two others were organised in August and September)*

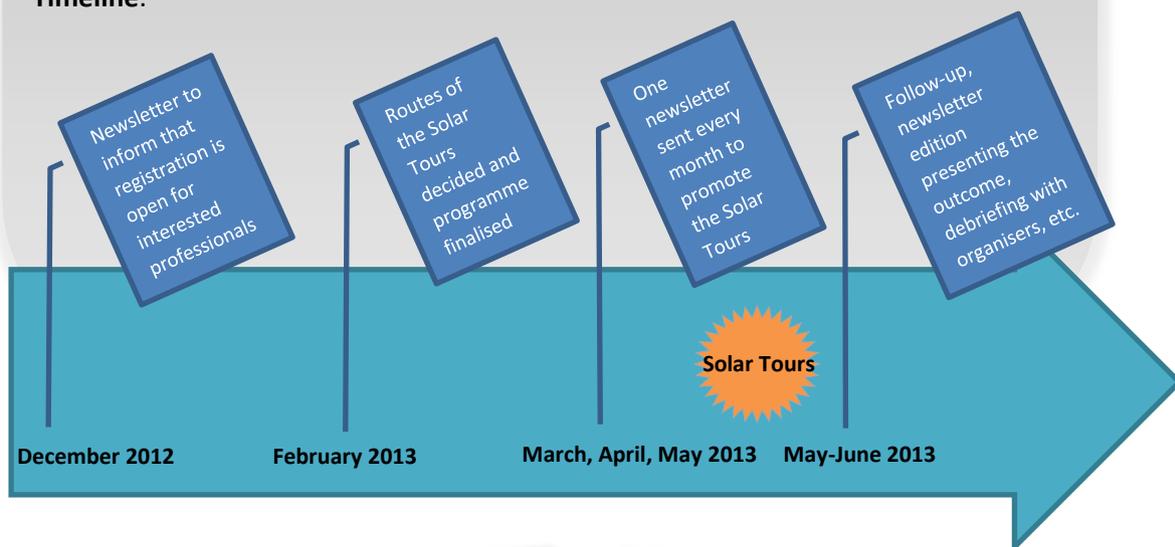
Concept: *bus tours organised along projects and points of interest for solar energy. On a voluntary basis, professionals are invited to register their solar activity/plant/company/project through a dedicated website. Based on the projects registered, three bus routes were established and bus tours arranged, with a view to providing information to the participants on specific following questions and subjects relating to the installation of solar panels on a home.*

Preparation duration: *Six months.*

Follow-up: *One month.*

Website: <http://www.solartours2013.nl/>

Timeline:



The event kits

The key to the success of the Solar Days is the organisation of as many events as possible in a limited amount of time. A very efficient way to **support the event organisers is to provide them with materials** that they can use on the spot and distribute to their visitors. The satisfaction surveys conducted at the end of each campaign among the event organisers have shown the importance of these materials to ensure the success of the events and the enthusiasm of the participants. In addition, some of these materials such as the European Solar Days leaflets or the balloons are used in all countries and therefore nicely contribute to giving a European visual unity to the campaign.

The question of funding is essential when it comes to materials, and is addressed in the "[Partnership and fund-raising](#)" section.

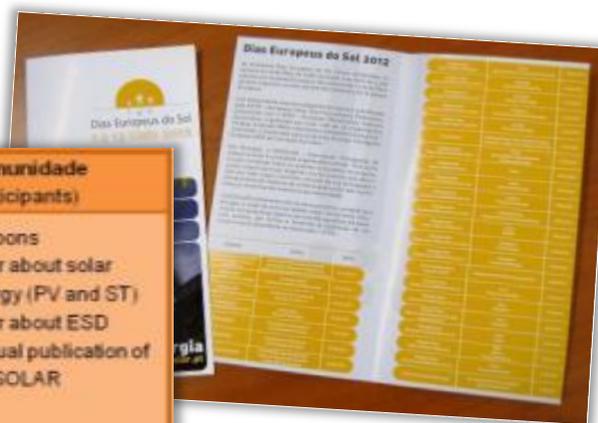
Some examples of events kits developed over the years in the different countries:

In **Poland**, before the start of the campaign in 2012, each local organiser received a short guide entitled "How to organise the European Solar Days?" This guide contained useful instructions for organising campaign's events and a set of promotional material: posters, flyers, balloons, neck key holders, pens, T-shirts for adults and children. After the end of the campaign, each local organiser received a special diploma together with a letter of appreciation inviting him to participate in the next edition.



Portugal offers a communication kit for organisers as well as for participants.

Kit Standard (for organizers)	Kit Escola (for participants)	Kit Comunidade (for participants)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logos (APISOLAR, ESTIF, EPIA, IEE) Power point about solar energy Questionnaire for final evaluation Solar Dancing Flower Kit Right Light (ADENE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balloons Flyer about solar energy (PN and ST) Flyer about ESD Book "Agarra o Sol" (ADENE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balloons Flyer about solar energy (PV and ST) Flyer about ESD Annual publication of APISOLAR



In Czech Republic in 2013, the promotional material consisted of printed t-shirts, badges, pens, key rings, balloons, rulers, cotton printed bags and polypropylene printed bags.



Sweden provides an "information box" for all the organisers with the following materials: brochures on Solar Heating, brochures on Solar Electricity, brochures with best practices (Solar Energy installations, posters, folders, information sheet from Svensk Solenergi folder, balloons, handbook, a checklist and examples in order to help organising events, a PowerPoint presentation, samples of press releases, graphic materials (logos, pictures..) to guarantee a unique format to the invitations.



In 2013 in **Norway**, prior to the events, the organisers received a Solar Day Material Package with promotional and information material for visitors. The contents of this package included, amongst other things, bicycle clips, printed t-shirts, printed cotton bags and tags.



Posters, caps, pens, notebooks, pins, balloons and leaflets for Spanish organisers in 2011:



3. Future of the European Solar Days

The European Solar Days are an inspirational initiative that has grown in Europe over more than a decade. ESD events have been organised in 25 countries over this period and within the framework of organised campaigns in most of these countries.

The European Solar Days grew in a period of economic growth and great concern about climate change and energy security in Europe. This helped to put renewable energy sources on European citizens' radar and high on the political agenda, with strong support policies in several EU member-states. Many people wanted to share their belief in renewable energy. Many more wanted to know more about it, its potential, what could be done, what they could do...

At the end of the last decade, the financial crisis completely changed the situation around Europe. It led to other problems, triggering also an economic crisis throughout Europe. Some countries were particularly affected, as austerity measures resulted in drastic budget cuts. Even countries where the situation was not so dramatic revised their support policies in an attempt to reduce national budgets.

This situation created new challenges for the organisation of the ESD campaigns in several countries: it became harder to obtain private or public funding; the enthusiasm from media, public authorities and some organisations was much lower than before. On the other hand, in other countries citizens are now becoming more aware about environmental concerns, about energy security and energy independence. Hence, one could say that feelings about renewables are somewhat similar to those about the European Union: while some get more sceptical, others get more enthusiastic.

In this scenario, one question arises:

What future for the European Solar Days?



Source picture: <http://tinyurl.com/o298z2l>

ESD Sustainability

The European Solar Days Network was obviously very interested in debating the future of the European Solar Days. Therefore the main issues related to the campaign sustainability were subjected to careful consideration.

Raising awareness about solar energy

➤ The question: “Is there a need to raise awareness about solar energy?”

The European Solar Days are an awareness raising campaign that aims at raising public awareness for intelligent energy solutions, especially solar thermal heating and cooling and for photovoltaic electricity production. In some European countries there is a rather high level of awareness about renewable energy. Therefore one of the questions was related to the initial purpose of the campaign: are people indeed aware and if so, is it necessary to continue promoting awareness-raising activities?

➤ The ESD Network joint opinion:

The ESD network believes that there is still a need to raise awareness about solar energy. There has been a major increase in awareness about renewable energy sources (RES). Nevertheless some gaps need to be filled, such as the need to inform people about the difference between RES for electricity and RES for heating, as well as providing better information to tackle some « myths » created around solar energy.

Firstly, in some countries the awareness about RES is not so developed. These have turned out to be some of the countries quite interested in starting the ESD campaign, for instance in eastern European countries or south-eastern European countries.

There is still a need to raise awareness in countries where its level is quite high. As examples, we can mention the difference between the different solar energy solutions. A large percentage of the population in these countries cannot differentiate solar photovoltaic from solar thermal energy. On the other hand, the campaign can evolve towards more informative aspects, for instance refuting some myths created around solar energy. These myths should be addressed in a campaign such as the ESD.

European dimension of the Solar Days

- **The question: “Is there a need for the Solar Days to have a European dimension? Would the national dimension not be enough?”**

The European Solar Days is a grassroots’ campaign. It builds on the involvement of individuals, organisations, public authorities, schools and many others, that organise thousands of events around Europe. Nevertheless, these events are organised locally by local actors. Considering that the strength of the European Solar Days is the grassroots’ dynamic, does the campaign need a European dimension?

➤ The ESD Network joint opinion:

The ESD network believes that the ESD, being primarily a grass root initiative, can continue at national level only. Nevertheless, the European dimension is extremely important and an invaluable added value, given the great synergies that are created.

The European dimension is relevant for the synergies it creates. The Solar Days started as a national initiative in Austria and then sprung in Switzerland and Germany as national initiatives. Yet the expansion of the ESD to 20 countries was only possible because it is a Europe-wide campaign. On the one hand, the different national organisers rely on each other’s support, share experiences, new concepts and ideas, materials and even motivation. This is particularly relevant for new countries, where the campaign is being launched. On the other hand, to engage new partners at national level, the fact that this is a European-wide campaign is also relevant, as it shows that the national campaign is built on a successful concept and part of a very large initiative with thousands of events around Europe.

Stable co-funding

- **The question: “Will it be possible to keep on running ESD campaigns without co-funding from the European Union?”**

The first edition of the European Solar Days occurred in 2008, building on the experience from countries that had already been organising it at national level for several years, starting with Austria in 2002. The European Solar Days have been co-financed by the European Union, via the Intelligent Energy Europe programme. This support facilitated the implementation of the ESD in France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Slovenia at a first stage and then in the Netherlands, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Norway, Poland and Slovakia. It also helped towards the creation of a Network and a structure that allowed the expansion of the concept to other countries. Taking into account the economic context, will it be feasible to keep the campaign running in the different countries and to expand it to new countries without EC funding?

➤ **The ESD Network joint opinion:**

The ESD network believes that, in today's context, the lack of financial support at European level will affect the work at national level, due to reduced capacity of national coordinators. Still, the ESD being a grassroots initiative, we believe it will continue at local level in most countries, even if likely to have less events and impact.

The sustainability of the campaign requires that stable sources of income are found at national level. The European co-funding has been crucial up to now as it enabled several countries to join the ESD thanks to this stable source. New countries getting involved in the ESD have also shown that it is possible to start a campaign without this EU co-funding. National sources have to be found and in countries where the interest for renewable energy is growing the chances are clearly higher than in countries where there is a decrease in political support.

Financing staff of national coordinators

➤ The question: “Do national coordinators need funding for staff costs?”

The initiators of the European Solar Days were trade associations representing the solar sector in their countries². These organisations believed that the awareness-raising work was one of their priorities. Therefore they initiated the campaigns allocating their own human resources to the campaign. As the campaign consolidated, they also aimed at getting the work time covered (partially or integrally, depending on the countries) by getting sponsors for the Solar Days campaign. With the expansion of the Solar Days, the type of national coordinators became more diverse: some were trade associations, others NGOs, or energy agencies. Their capacity to allocate internal resources to the campaign kick-off or the preparations for the following campaign (including fund-raising) is now very different from one another.

➤ The ESD Network joint opinion:

The ESD Network agrees that, in many countries, the lack of funding for staff costs would affect greatly, if not completely, the capacity of national coordinators to dedicate the required time to the Solar Days campaign. ESD is an important initiative, although, the wide range of challenges faced by these organisations means that they dedicate time to the activities they are better equipped to deal with.

The organisation of the Solar Days in one country requires the availability of human resources that can dedicate time to organise the campaign at national level. The intensity of these efforts depends on the countries and the intended dimension of the campaign in that country. Other resources are required, such as the production of materials but the component that is harder to finance are the working hours of the people working on the campaign. Some of the organisations running the campaign at national level are able to cover from their own budgets some of this work. But for others, it is essential to find a stable source of income to finance the on-going campaign but also the preparation of the following one, including the fund-raising efforts.

² Austria Solar represented the solar thermal sector in Austria. Swissolar (CH) and BSW (DE) represented both the solar thermal and the solar photovoltaic sectors’.

Focus in terms of partnerships

- **The question: “Should the ESD national coordinators work more with municipalities or with installers?”**

In different countries there is a different approach to the organisation of the European Solar Days. The concept is shared but the implementation varies from country to country. This depends on the specificities of the country (for instance, support to renewable energy, existence of a developed solar energy sector) but also on the characteristics of the organisation running the ESD at national level. Some organisations tend to work more with the industry and for instance with installers, who are more active at local level than larger companies. Other entities tend to work more with local authorities, trying to get their support for the dissemination and the activities at local level³. This question puts into focus two different approaches, trying to understand the merits of each of them.

➤ The ESD Network joint opinion:

The ESD Network believes that there is a need to work with municipalities, installers, as well as with other important stakeholders. Nevertheless, the partnership with municipalities is still not up to its full potential and should be explored further.

The multiplying effect is essential when it comes to the organisation of the ESD campaign in a country. It clearly results in more effective work done: trying to reach the right target groups with the minimum effort (time) from the campaign coordinator. In this sense, there is not ONE right approach. It is important to identify in each country, or even in different regions, which options would be best. Taking this into consideration, the opinion of the ESD Network is that the work with municipalities can bring big rewards (multiplying effect) but is also more time-consuming and with more unpredictable results. Bearing in mind this aspect, it was considered that it could be better exploited in some of the countries in the network.

³ National coordinators do not work exclusively one way or the other. Some work both options quite well. But there is usually a stronger focus on one approach or the other.

Media scope aimed

- **The question: “Should the ESD focus on reaching local or national media?”**

The impact of ESD in the media is a critical success factor of the campaign. The approach to the media is also quite different depending on the countries. The media strategy includes media partnerships but is mainly done through direct contacts, press releases or media events. The different approach also depends on the media landscape in the country. Again, this is a topic where countries used different strategies; hence the discussion came up on which media strategy to use in the future.

- **The ESD Network joint opinion:**

The ESD Network needs to work with different types of media, according to the goal of that cooperation and to the target group envisaged.

Each country must identify the best strategy. This may depend on the country and also on the timing. For instance, in some countries there is strong local/regional media, while in other countries national media are predominant. On the other hand, local initiatives are likely to get more coverage on the run-up to local elections. Some countries have decided to have large events that could be extremely attractive to the media (including TVs) and then, this also resulted in local coverage. Other countries prefer to provide targeted information to local media (such as list and dates of local events), to get significant local coverage. There are no magic solutions but we can strive towards creative and consistent ones.

Raising awareness about all RES

- **The question: “Should ESD raise awareness about all renewable energy sources and energy efficiency measures?”**

Different circumstances have led to this question. National campaign coordinators are facing situations where events are proposed for the ESD campaign where solar is only a part and when it covers mainly other technologies. On the other hand, entities partnering have also a particular interest in promoting other technologies. Furthermore, the maturity reached by the Solar Days campaign in some countries led to speculate as to what other areas could be covered by the campaign. This invited a question on the possibility to be more than just ‘Solar’ Days.

- **The ESD Network joint opinion:**

The ESD Network acknowledges that ESD should promote mainly solar energy, opening the door to events linked to other RES or energy efficiency, AS LONG AS they are related to solar and respecting sustainability criteria.

The spirit behind the Solar Days is to promote sustainable solutions, with a focus on the use of solar energy. The campaign should be consistent with its distinctive factor: solar! Though, this does not mean that events promoting other sustainable options should not be considered. They can, as long as they also involve solar energy, in particular considering that there are interesting options in the market combining technologies.

Lessons learnt by campaign coordinators:

➤ **Mentorship: we can all teach and learn simultaneously**

One of the lessons learned by the ESD Network is that all partners can learn equally from each other. This means that the most experienced ones also learn from the new countries in the project and it is up to everyone to explore project synergies, share their experiences, provide/request support to/from other partners. This means that everyone is simultaneously both a mentor and an apprentice. In order to be effective, the mentorship process should be constantly involving all participants, thus avoiding that each partner focuses only on its national campaign.

➤ **“ESD” stands also for “European Synergies in Diversity”**

The ESD experience made it clear that there are no blanket solutions for all the countries and for all times. Different options may work differently in different countries. Furthermore, solutions need to be re-designed/developed over time, adapting to new realities, such as the financial crisis or degrees of enthusiasm towards renewable energy in a given country. Also from this point of view, the continuous interaction and exchange of experience among partners is a key component of the European collaboration.

➤ **Multiplying effects: a key work for effectiveness in ESD**

Partnerships with potential multipliers (industry associations, network of municipalities, etc.) are crucial for the long-term sustainability of the action; furthermore they should be really strongly involved in and committed to the campaign.

➤ **Nurturing the media: permanently keeping them interested**

Media work needs constant “nurturing”. Interest from the media decreases over time; therefore a careful fine-tuning of the main campaign message and creative ways on how to attract the general media should be a key element of the campaign planning. Involving and attracting already existing information campaigns on solar or on sustainability, at both national and European levels, is possible and fruitful, since it strengthens the ESD campaign.

Conclusion

A few words from Pedro Dias, coordinator of the two EC projects ESD I and II:

“It has been a privilege to work on the European Solar Days and to have been involved in this outstanding campaign over the past five years. And I look forward to the years to come.

I am originally from a small town and I have always tremendously valued the capacity of individuals, neighbours, local organisations (sport clubs, leisure associations and even religious organisations) to engage in events that, based on a communal spirit, try to promote local development. And coming from Portugal I cherish the sun. Few countries are as privileged when it comes to enjoying the sun, its beauty, its strength, its benefits. And I remember, as a child, the buzz from the solar panels to warm water. We even had them at my school. By that time, solar collectors and satellite dishes were the best signs that the future was coming to our small town.

I believe that being involved with the Solar Days is like being a child again, having the opportunity to share passion and fascination for this amazing resource and the technologies that allow us to produce our own energy. And today we can produce not only hot water but also electricity. And if this was not fascinating enough, while producing our energy, we are saving money, protecting the environment and building a sustainable future. And by building a sustainable future in thousands of communities at the same time, we are building a sustainable future for our countries, for our Europe.

The Solar Days are also about building a sustainable future starting from the grassroots, bottom-up, exploring the potential of solar energy in our homes, our neighbourhoods, our towns, our cities, our regions. It is about taking responsibility in our own hands, develop a feeling of ownership and duty to share this knowledge, this belief we have, with others.

In the 1970s, citizens in Germany took the future in their own hands and protested against the construction of a nuclear power station of Wyhl, in Baden-Württemberg. These citizens did not only protest, they addressed the question: if not nuclear, what then?

This led to new initiatives supported by citizens that were willing to pay what was a considerable amount to start using hot water heated by the sun, and electricity produced by the sun, this “NEW old” energy source, AND renewable.

Today solar energy is a success story in Europe and worldwide. And it can be produced by the consumers, creating a new category, the prosumers. And it can be produced everywhere, in houses, in hotels, in hospitals, in factories, in large plants.

Why shall we import pears when we can grow apples on our roofs? Particularly when those pears, i.e., fossil fuels, are not only imported energy, they are imported pollution.

Fortunately we have many European citizens cultivating apples during the European Solar Days: in average 6 000 events were held across 20 European countries.

In a period of growing euro scepticism, the European Solar Days show how Europe can grow stronger: as it is a grassroots initiative striving on European synergies. For a bright future...”

Pedro Dias





For a bright
future...

European Solar Days glossary

- **European Solar Days Network (“ESD Network”, or “ESDN”)**

The European Solar Days Network is composed of the coordinators of the national campaigns plus the representatives of the European solar associations ESTIF and EPIA. The members of the ESD Network meet on a regular basis to discuss the transversal issues that concern all the different countries and the general identity of the European Solar Days.

- **National (campaign) coordinator**

The national campaign coordinators are the organisations that coordinate the campaign at national level; the situation varies in the different countries, but in most cases the national coordinators are in charge of the national website when there is one. They organise the promotion of the Solar Days at national level, develop a local network of campaign partners and act as facilitators for the concrete organisation of the campaign (provide campaign partners with materials, give tips to event organisers, etc.). They also participate in the ESD Network so as to make the link between the national campaign and its European dimension. See [above](#) the list of national campaign coordinators.

- **Campaign partner**

The campaign partners are the organisations, companies, local communities, etc. that the national coordinators solicit to support the organisation and promotion of the Solar Days, and that share similar goals such as the one of the ESD. These partners activate their own network of contacts and therefore act as multipliers to give visibility and coverage to the Solar Days.

- **Sponsor**

Sponsors support the campaign through sponsorship money, which allows the creation of materials or booking of advertising spaces etc. In the course of the years, in-kind sponsorship has become more and more important since financial resources of many long-standing sponsors have seen their financial resources decrease.

- **Event organiser**

The ultimate goal of the ESD is to raise awareness about solar energy to the consumer, the man-in-the-street. A very efficient way to achieve this is to organise as many solar-related events as possible across the whole country, giving everyone the opportunity to learn more about solar and get acquainted with this technology. Everyone can become an event organiser: a school can prepare an exhibition of drawings made by the pupils for example, a solar company can organise open-door days, a municipality can organise an award-giving ceremony, an individual can also decide to open the doors of his/her house to show his/her solar installation. The procedure to register an event is very simple through the national campaign website. The event organisers are supported by the national coordinator.

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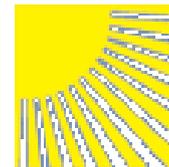
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Co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe
Programme of the European Union