



## D4.6 – Interim Report on the media outreach campaign and its result across Europe

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European portal [www.topten.eu/hacks](http://www.topten.eu/hacks)

Project partners and websites

Austria, AEA  
[www.topprodukte.at](http://www.topprodukte.at)

Germany, co2online  
[www.co2online.de](http://www.co2online.de)

Norway, Naturvernforbund  
[www.besteprodukter.no](http://www.besteprodukter.no)

Sweden, SSNC  
[www.toptensverige.se](http://www.toptensverige.se)

Belgium, BBL  
[www.topten.be](http://www.topten.be)

Italy, Eliante  
[www.topten.it](http://www.topten.it)

Poland, FEWE  
[www.topten.info.pl](http://www.topten.info.pl)

Switzerland, Bush Energie  
[www.topten.ch](http://www.topten.ch)

Czech Republic, SEVEn  
[www.usporiespotrebice.cz](http://www.usporiespotrebice.cz)

Lithuania, LNCF  
[top-10.lt](http://top-10.lt)

Portugal, Quercus  
[www.topten.pt](http://www.topten.pt)

UK, EST  
[www.toptenuk.org](http://www.toptenuk.org)

France, Guide Topten  
[www.guidetopten.fr](http://www.guidetopten.fr)

Luxembourg, Oeko-Zenter  
[www.oekotopten.lu](http://www.oekotopten.lu)

Spain, ECODES  
[www.topten.wwf.es](http://www.topten.wwf.es)

Politecnico di Milano  
[www.eerq.polimi.it](http://www.eerq.polimi.it)

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## About HACKS

The objective of the Heating and Cooling Knowhow and Solutions (HACKS) project is to achieve market transformation for heating and cooling (HAC) appliances and improve comfort and health of European citizens.

Across the EU almost half of all buildings have individual boilers that were installed before 1992 with efficiency of 60% or less. The expected energy savings from a speedy replacement are immense.

To achieve this goal, 17 HACKS partners in 15 countries are working together, thanks to the financial support of the European Horizon 2020 programme.

After scanning market actors, current policies and most commonly used products in each country, starting from April 2020 the HACKS partners will implement involvement campaigns to raise awareness of the economic and environmental benefits brought by good HAC products and solutions:

- HACKS will motivate households equipped with old and inefficient devices – boilers, water heaters, air conditioners, certain types of boilers and stoves, etc. – to replace them with new super efficient equipment.
- In each country, partners will set-up dedicated on-line platforms to assist consumers in their purchasing process. The platforms will propose: tools to assess households' needs and provide customised information; best product lists with technical specifications; direct links to suppliers of most efficient products; and advice on how to use and maintain equipment.
- For those households who need to improve their situation because they feel too hot, too cold, or too humid but who cannot invest in new equipment or can avoid getting equipped, HACKS will propose simple and low costs solutions. It is possible to reduce energy consumption and energy bills while improving winter and summer comfort, air quality and health conditions through the installation of shading devices, thermostats, water saving taps and showerheads, etc.

Beyond households, HACKS will target all relevant stakeholders (“multipliers”) that participate in the decision-making process of consumers by setting up strategic partnerships to facilitate the purchase of energy efficient appliances. HACKS places a strong emphasis on installers but also retailers and consumer organisations because of their proximity to consumers, their capacity to involve them and bring them guidance on energy efficient equipment.

More information on the HACKS project can be found at [www.topten.eu/hacks](http://www.topten.eu/hacks)

## Executive summary

The document provides an overview of the media outreach campaigns across Europe over the last year and a half of the HACKS project. It reports the main strengths but also barriers partners faced during that period. The document outlines examples of successful activities that have been carried out by partners. The final section of the document provides a snapshot of the approach partners will be undertaking to ensure successful project delivery.

Due to COVID-19, a lot of plans that were made in relation to media activity and outreach had to be put on hold as attention in the press turned to the pandemic. Nonetheless, there are many successes to report on and focus has shifted towards how we address the climate emergency and specific stories around air pollution and energy efficiency, especially within the home. As a result, there will be further opportunities to engage with press across Europe with specific seasonal campaigns.

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## 1 Media Outreach Objectives

The HACKS partners have each elaborated a marketing plan to promote the content they produce on energy efficient heating and cooling products and solutions (see D4.4). The content is available on their national HACKS on-line platform, often hosted on existing Topten platforms, that benefit from an already existing notoriety.

All partner marketing plans include a strategy on media outreach. Each plan aims to reach online and offline publications across partner countries, informing consumers about the HACKS campaign and that take action from the information they've received.

Partners have been assigned the following objectives in relation to media outreach:

- Each partner to produce one press release per year and use at least one social network to reach consumers.
- Collectively, all Partners to reach 20 million media contacts (listeners, readers and viewers) in the final year of the project (September 2021 – August 2022). Most partners will calculate at the end of the project the equivalent economic value of coverage received in journals, magazines, newspapers and websites, with the objective of reaching a media coverage worth half a million Euro if they had had to pay of it.  
As of February 2021, in a context that saw many HACKS activities delayed because of the Covid pandemic and the media and the public's attention monopolised by the pandemic, 6,614,630 people have been reached with information on HACKS. This number is under-estimated as for some partners it covers only the social medial reach and not yet the on-line and print press reach.
- Reach collectively between 900,000 - 1,750,000 page views in the last year of the project (September 2021 – August 2022).  
As of end of January 2021, HACKS-related content on partner websites reached 898,343 page views.

## 2 Successful activities carried out by partners

This section highlights partner activity in relation to media outreach within press publications and on social media.

### 2.1 Media outreach activity highlights



**Partner:** Bush Energie, Topten.Ch, Switzerland

**Activities:** In June 2020, WWF published a news story on their website titled [Finding the right HACKS for low-carbon heating and cooling](#). The article provided an overview of the HACKS project and confirmed WWF's backing. The website has over 1 million monthly users. A promotional video to accompany the article was also produced and published on WWF's [YouTube channel](#). The article and video have also been shared across partner websites and social media channels.



**Image:** H el ene Rochat, Project Manager for Topten.ch / Topten EU features in the WWF promotional video.

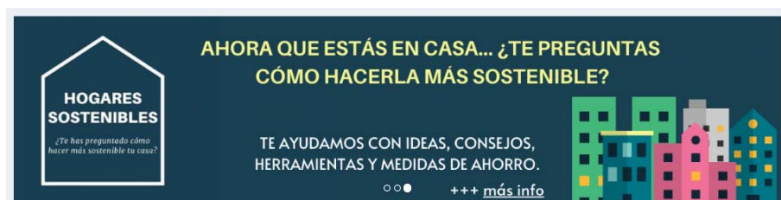
Activities such as raffles, quizzes and articles have been heavily publicised on Topten.ch Facebook page. Posts are shared reciprocally with partners to multiply impact. Four raffles were implemented in combination with quizzes (participants who answered a question about heating or cooling correctly could win comfort fans or humidifiers). Raffles were promoted through a national platform of raffles, reaching visitors who normally don't consider efficiency topics and engaging them through the quiz questions.

**Image:** A screenshot of a promotional Facebook post from Topten.ch



**Partner:** ECODES, Spain

**Activities:** A campaign called Sustainable Homes was launched to promote home improvements during the lockdown period. The campaign used messaging around better energy consumption whilst being at home and tips on improving electricity and water usage. As a result, Topten Spain's average monthly pageviews increased from 1,500 to 5,900.



**Image:** A screenshot of one of the assets used in the Home Improvements campaign from Topten Spain

**Activities:** In August 2020, ECODES launched a prize draw across their social media channels to win a comfort fan. In addition to social media, the prize draw also received coverage on national radio and was promoted on WhatsApp. The prize draw received 267 participants and resulted in a 65% increase in page views for August on Topten Spain compared to the previous month.



**Image:** A promotional image from the comfort fan prize draw delivered by ECODES.



**Partner:** Eliante, Italy

**Activities:** Due to COVID, initial plans were revised adopting a flexible strategy. In a first phase (spring 2020), the activities focused on saving at home and energy efficiency in relation to smart working. A press release was launched highlighting this along with supporting social media posts. In the summer, focus turned to cooling and new incentives from the Italian government related to energy efficiency, many of which link well with the HACKS product offering. During the autumn and winter seasons (2020-2021), work was mainly focussed on website updates (new product lists, page on incentives, deep links and news) and therefore the communication activities were mainly focussed on social media. To date, activity in Italy has reached over 42,000 media contacts.



**Image:** A screenshot of one the carousel images that features on the Topten.It homepage.



**Partner:** Guide Topten, France

**Activities:** Guide Topten has developed a HACKS section on its existing platform. It is called "Heating and cooling" ("Chauffage et climatisation" in French) which was assessed as more meaningful than the HACKS acronym in English.

The first product list for air conditioners was launched in the summer and a second one for heat pumps in December when some COVID lockdown measures were lifted. Two specificities were taken into account according to the French context and partners' positions (notably ADEME's). For both lists, the wish to offer advice first on ways to reduce energy

needs by working on the building's envelope. For cooling, the wish to offer advice on measures at the household's level to avoid installing cooling equipment while improving comfort – and then direct to identified best products if the installation of a product is still deemed needed. For heat-pumps for heating purposes, the wish to address separately the use through heating floors (at 35°C) and the use through radiators (at 55°C). The launch of the heat pump Topten list was accompanied by a Twitter campaign over a week, explaining what a heat-pump is, providing advice, tagging manufacturers and installers' association, etc. This campaign had a relatively good reach

**Image:** A Twitter infographic from Guide Topten France



**Partner:** Austria Energy Agency (AEA)

**Activities:** Main media activities have been conducted with a seasonal approach through the AEA website (topprodukte.at), newsletter articles, social media posts and blogs on partner institutions. The biggest success for AEA has been an article entitled 'Mit einfachen Tipps die Heizkosten drücken' (Reduce Heating costs with simple tips) which was published in Kronen Zeitung, Austria's largest newspaper. A new topprodukte.at website is being launched in March 2021. To date, AEA activity has resulted in 693,117 media contacts reached.

**Image:** A screenshot from topprodukte.at promoting HACKS.



**Partner:** SSNC, Sweden

**Activities:** Development of a new website has been a major point of work for SSNC. Focus has been to create a better visitor experience and ensuring energy efficient heating and cooling products are most prominent on the homepage. One press release was sent to journalists across Sweden focusing on energy efficiency and home improvement during the winter season.

**Image:** A screenshot of the heating product categories on the https://www.toptensverige.se/ homepage

Effektiva och vackra braskaminer

Se alla produkter



SCANSPIS  
Scanspis 80



MORSÖ  
Morsö 2B



TERMATECH  
TT60



JÖTUL  
F 400



TERMATECH  
TT20/21





**Partner:** LNCF, Lithuania

**Activities:** In February 2020, LNCF colleagues in Lithuania met with Elvinas Jankevičius, Minister of Justice, to discuss the quality of electrotechnical goods. Concerns were raised if the country's market for these goods might represent devices of poorer quality and lower energy efficiency as compared to those in the corresponding markets in western Europe. It was decided to conduct a special investigation of the local market with a focus on device quality and energy efficiency. LNCF and other consumer organisations were asked to assist the ministry in this. A report on the meeting was broadcast on the main daily TV news channel, Panorama with interviews featuring LNCF colleagues.



**Image:** Partners from LNCF Lithuania with Elvinas Jankevičius, Minister of Justice



**Partner:** Quercus, Portugal

**Activities:** In July 2020, Quercus featured on Minuto Verde (Green Minutes), discussing the benefits of comfort fans along with promotion of the TopTen.pt website. The broadcast reaches an average 400,000 viewers and in total, activity from Quercus has reached 1,600,000 media contacts.



**Image:** Sara Campos, Quercus, discussing comfort fan technology on Green Minutes.



**Partner:** Oeko-Zenter, Luxembourg

**Activities:** Two press articles were written and sent to media outlets in Luxembourg. An article was published in a thematic newspaper of the partner organization Fédération des Artisans as well as an article in De Kéisecker. At the beginning of the project, Oeko-Zenter focused reporting on describing the HACKS programme in its entirety. In subsequent articles, more focus was put on consumer awareness. Nine pieces of press coverage have been secured since the start of the HACKS programme.



**Partner:** FEWE, Poland

**Activities:** Press releases have been sent to a number of different media outlets in Poland, resulting in five news stories being published online, including this piece from brager.com. FEWE have also created a series of comic strips that have been published on their Twitter and Facebook platforms. The comic strips provide information on how to keep your home cool in a heatwave, how to heat a house more efficiently and how to co-finance energy-saving investments. FEWE and HACKS also joined the ECOS campaign in July 2020, aligning with HACKS project objectives to promote only the most energy efficient heating and cooling equipment. Information was published on both the TopTen.pl and FEWE websites, as well as social media channels including Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

**Image:** A Facebook post featuring FEWE’s HACKS super hero.



**Partner:** Naturvernforbund, Norway

**Activities:** Media activities have focussed on the Norwegian ban on fossil oil heating, getting information across to relevant target groups through the Norwegian municipalities’ websites and other official channels. When COVID hit, the HACKS-related potential for media reach became limited. The strategic approach became to focus on energy efficiency as a recession mitigation strategy for the Norwegian government, and the need for better rebate programmes in the media coverage of HACKS. Social media activity has also been successful, with a focus on efficient wood stoves. A local campaign in collaboration with Bergen municipality was published, highlighting their decision to ban non clean burning wood stoves to decrease air pollution. There was also a special focus on social media on the Norwegian day of wood heating. To date, Norwegian activity has resulted in reaching 1,785.049 media contacts.

**Image:** A screenshot of a news article from the website nrk.no



Enova har varslet at de fra 1. juli 2021 reduserer støtten til solfangere som utnytter solstrålene til å produsere varmtvann, som på dette taket i Bodø.  
FOTO: KARI SKEIE / NRK



**Partner:** SEVEN, Czech Republic

**Activities:** Media activity undertaken by SEVEN has resulted in the publication of nine separate articles online, including an article the Czech News Agency website, CTK Protext. The website reaches an average 6,996 readers. SEVEN has also run an influencer campaign on Instagram and paid adverts on Facebook.

#### Tisková zpráva projektu HACKS

Průběh 25. srpna 2020 (PROTEXT)



Důležitý článek: Klimatizace nebo třeba ventilátor? Jednoduchý výběr na [www.ctk.cz/seznamove-stranky/2020/08/25/klimatizace-ventilator](https://www.ctk.cz/seznamove-stranky/2020/08/25/klimatizace-ventilator)

Klima, klimatizace, ventilace či oběhová šperádka patří do nutných součástí domu, které jsou v praxi vzájemně často a výhledově hodně spojeny. Klima a k tomu navíc produkují lokální emise skleníkových plynů. Jaké řešení pro vás může být nejlepší? Zjistěte, jaké možnosti máte, a zvyšte kvalitu ovzduší.

Na webu [www.ctk.cz/seznamove-stranky/2020/08/25/klimatizace-ventilator](https://www.ctk.cz/seznamove-stranky/2020/08/25/klimatizace-ventilator) je v sekci Dům můžete nově prohlédnout tyto kategorie výsledků:

- Ventilátory

- Klimatizace (včetně a spíše)



**Partner:** Energy Saving Trust (EST), United Kingdom

**Activities:** EST is currently in discussions with Triton, Britain's leading electric shower manufacturer, on producing a piece of research on the increased use of water and energy during the COVID pandemic. A cross-section of 2,000 UK residents will be surveyed on their water and energy usage during the pandemic, with the results set to be released in April 2021. The survey will be summarised in a press release, sent to UK journalists, and also promoted via EST and Triton social media channels.



**See you first thing Britain**

**Image:** The logo for Triton, Britain's leading electric shower manufacturer.

### 3 Discussion and Conclusions

Despite the obvious challenges of COVID delaying initial media outreach, several effective media activities were undertaken in the first half of the HACKS project.

In terms of media outreach, HACKS partners will ensure that press communications are sent at times when they will be most impactful. For example, any government initiatives that can be coordinated within our HACKS press for each country (for example, the [Green Homes Grant](#) initiative for residents in England) or opportunities where collaborative press releases can be sent between partners / manufacturers. Coverage will be closely monitored to ensure the most relevant audiences are being reached.

Social media will continue to be an effective platform to promote the HACKS project, but more thought will be given to the social media strategy. An analysis on the best times to post content will be taken into consideration, along with opportunities to produce more collaborative content between partners and other stakeholders to further amplify messaging. The central competition, due for launch in spring season 2021, will provide the first opportunity to analyse performance across all partners sharing the same messaging.

Now all partner websites have been updated with the relevant product lists and selection criteria, the emphasis is on building quality content on each partner website to ensure a good user experience. Partners will look to build this through blogs and news stories, but also conduct keyword analysis, through tools such as Google Trends and Google Search Console, to ensure Topten websites are ranking high for relevant search terms. A paid approach to search engine marketing could help to increase page views further in the final year of the project.

Finally, in relation to other activity, the focus will continue to be on building partner relationships virtually through education with webinars and training sessions for multipliers. Continuing to build this trust will provide more opportunities to engage with the media.