

Project report – Media engagement 2014-15

Summary

The engagement of Champollion has enabled a greater focus on and more systematic approach to obtaining media coverage.

Background

The UK media reports on population when official population estimates and projections are released. Otherwise, coverage is limited and is often the result of the personal interest of a particular journalist. Press releases by Population Matters can result in interviews, particularly at local level.

Timing

Jan – Jun 2015

Location

UK

Partners

Champollion

Methodology

For the past 6 months, Champollion has been working with Population Matters primarily to conduct an in-depth strategic review of your communications work. This focused principally on agreeing key objectives, messages and audience for the organisation, with a view to facilitating media coverage beyond this period of time. This work included:

- A strategy session - Champollion conducted a session with a number of board members, staff and members, helping to identify key communications objectives, the audiences you are looking to target, and the messages you should be focusing on in the media. This resulted in a decision to focus on three key areas: environment, housing and public services, which are likely to resonate with politicians and the public.
- Storymining - Champollion conducted a number of storymining calls and meetings to help build out each of the above messaging areas into tangible story ideas to present to journalists.
- Journalist mapping - Champollion conducted extensive research into the journalists we would recommend Population Matters engages with, producing a media map containing over 300 journalists with direct or tangential interests in the areas you are focusing on. So far we have organised and facilitated four briefings with senior journalists at the national newspapers, two of whom have since included Population Matters in their articles.
- Reactive coverage - When relevant news stories or reactive opportunities arise in the media, we support Population Matters in identifying those opportunities and capitalising on the opportunity to raise awareness of your own issues in these arenas. A highly successful example of this has been the recent release of ONS population estimates, for which we secured 140 pieces of coverage in the national and local media, including broadcast interviews, online articles and print articles.

Outputs

Outputs have generally been internal, as the basis for media engagement. They include:

- Messaging strategy
- Communications plan
- Journalist long list and short list
- Messaging for key themes
- Storymining
- Defensive messaging
- Press releases

Beneficiaries

The principal beneficiaries are the media and their users, who are becoming more informed about population related issues and solutions. To the extent that this results in behavioural and policy change, this will provide further beneficiaries as the birth rate falls.

Impact

A highly successful example of impact has been the recent release of ONS population estimates, for which we secured 140 pieces of coverage in the national and local media, including broadcast interviews, online articles and print articles.