ESIND
Europe's Representations of India

Science Communication Plan of the COST Action ESIND

Europe's Representations of India: Texts, Images, and Encounters

CA23144

VERSIONS AND HISTORY OF CHANGES

Version	Date of adoption by MC	Notes (e.g. changes from previous versions)	Lead author(s)*
1.0	10 July 2025		Jakob De Roover, Martin Fárek

** The Science Communication plan is developed, updated and its implementation monitored under the overall supervision of the Science Communication Coordinator, and in close collaboration with other relevant contributors.*

This document is based upon work from COST Action *Europe's Representations of India: Texts, Images, and Encounters* (ESIND), CA23144, supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology).

COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a funding agency for research and innovation networks. Our Actions help connect research initiatives across Europe and enable scientists to grow their ideas by sharing them with their peers. This boosts their research, career and innovation.

www.cost.eu

1. SUMMARY

At a general level, the COST Action ESIND seeks to (a) understand the nature, development, and tenacity of dominant representations of India in Europe and the surrounding regions and the impact these have had and continue to have on Europe-India interactions, (b) highlight and examine alternative ways of conceptualizing Indian culture and society, which have developed within and beyond Europe, and (c) make the general public and specific groups in society aware of prejudices generated by dominant European representations of India and of ways to move beyond those prejudices. The Science Communication Plan of ESIND will play a central role in working towards these goals and in attaining the Action's more specific objectives:

- to create a pan-European network and research community and formulate a shared research agenda for the study of Europe's representations of, and encounters with, India,
- to train a new generation of scholars working on these themes in research and the systematic analysis and dissemination of ideas,
- to build a digital platform with a set of public resources for research and teaching on Europe-India encounters, including English translations of source material from more than 25 languages,
- to connect its academic network to a set of non-academic organizations and partners involved in Europe-India interactions in education, business, politics, the media, and the cultural sector.

To attain these objectives, the ESIND participants will give as much visibility to the Action as possible and spread its results as widely as possible in the academic world and in relevant sectors of society. The Action's Communication, Dissemination, and Valorisation strategy aims to inform and actively involve representatives from all groups of stakeholders: researchers; teachers and students; diplomats and politicians; journalists and media content creators; businesspeople working in India and Europe; people of Indian origin living in Europe; and other relevant groups.

Key tools and means to implement the ESIND strategy are (a) its general website and its regular updates, calls, and blog posts, (b) the ESIND Digital Platform where new resources for research and teaching on European representations of India will be made publicly available, (c) the Action flyer, (d) its Facebook and Instagram accounts, (e) the scientific publications, including two special journal issues and an edited volume, (f) op-eds, interview, and blog posts in popular media by ESIND participants, (g) participation in international conferences, (h) outreach sessions and public lectures involving non-academic stakeholders, and (i) the ESIND white paper with a research vision statement emerging from the four-year COST Action.

While the strategy will be broadly executed by the Action Core Group and followed up by its Management Committee, its everyday implementation is coordinated by a Science Communication Team (SCT) consisting of the Science Communication Coordinator (SCC), Action Chair, Action Vice-Chair, and the leaders of ESIND's Working Groups 4 and 5. WG4 is responsible for dissemination of ESIND's activities and results to the scientific and academic world, while WG5 is responsible for non-academic dissemination and dialogue; collaboration between their respective leaders and the SCC will be essential to implementing the Communication, Dissemination, and Valorisation strategy of ESIND.

2. GENERAL AIM AND TARGET AUDIENCES

The **specific objectives of the communication, dissemination, and valorisation of the results** of the COST Action ESIND are as follows:

- make academic and scientific communities in relevant domains of study aware of ESIND, its aims, and its results;
- attract more and more academics and potential researchers not only from COST member and partner countries, but also from other countries around the world to participate in ESIND, join its network, and be involved in attaining its goals;
- create general awareness of the nature of European representations of India and the impact they have had and continue to have on European-Indian interactions in politics, trade, diplomacy,
- move beyond the prejudices and stereotypes about India that still prevail in European societies, media, education, business, diplomacy, and other sectors;
- involve non-academic partners from relevant sectors of society in examining European descriptions and depictions of India and their constraints and alternatives, and in the formulation of strategies to move beyond old prejudices and stereotypes.

The **target audiences** that we need to reach to work towards realizing the objectives are varied and we will take specific actions to involve these stakeholders. Specifically, we identify the following target audiences and steps to **invite and involve these stakeholders** in the COST Action ESIND and the communication, dissemination, and valorisation of its results:

1. **Researchers from relevant domains and disciplines:** they will be proactively invited to join the network and its WGs, and participate in WG Meetings and Training Schools. This will happen by means of the following steps:

(a) Targeted invitation emails to academics with relevant research interests: throughout the first two years of the Action, CG members will regularly send such invitation emails and report on the results in the bi-monthly CG meetings.

(b) Regular postings about ESIND and its activities on academic forums such as mailing lists, H-Commons sites, and other similar academic online channels: the SCT will post messages throughout the four years of the Action whenever specific activities and grants and major news items are announced.

(c) Dissemination of the Action flyer with a link to its website on online academic forums and at international conferences relevant to its thematic scope.

(d) Initiating co-organized conferences, workshops, or panels with active participation of ESIND members where they will explicitly represent and advertise the COST Action and its network and spread awareness of the Action by means of the flyer and posters.

2. **Young Researchers and Innovators, especially PhD and MA students from relevant disciplines**, studying Europe-India encounters: they will (a) be invited and selected to participate in the Training Schools and in the activities of the WGs and (b) made aware of relevant grants. At each of the institutions of the ESIND members, we will identify ways to make relevant student bodies aware of ESIND, its goals, and its activities.

3. **Policymakers & diplomats** involved in Europe-India relations at the national, EU, and international levels: by means of targeted emails within the countries of ESIND participants and at the EU-level, representatives from these groups will be (a) made aware of ESIND and its

website, (b) invited to join MC and/ or WG 5, (c) participate in the Action's outreach sessions and public lectures and debates, and (d) invited to co-organize joint workshops and other events.

- The CG will make this a recurring agenda point in its bi-monthly meetings, from the last quarter of Action year 1 onwards, and propose specific actions to reach this group.
- The SCT will compose the invitation emails and other messages after those meetings; the MC representatives of the specific COST member states will be asked to send them to relevant people in their respective countries; the Action Chair will send them to EU-level and international policymakers and diplomats.
- The SCT will strive to organize at least one joint workshop or other similar large-impact event together with policymakers and diplomats during the life-cycle of the Action.

4. **Secondary school teachers and curricula creators** in history, cultural sciences, geography, religion, and other relevant subjects: schools, teacher associations, and other educational institutions will (a) be made aware of ESIND and its website, (b) be invited to join WG5 and help develop the multimedia modules, and (c) participate in the Action's outreach sessions and public lectures and debates.

- The CG and WG5 will make this a recurring agenda point in their regular meetings, from the last quarter of Action year 1 onwards, and propose specific initiatives to reach this target group.
- The SCT will compose model invitations and ask MC representatives of specific countries to translate them and send them to relevant organizations and institutions in their countries.
- From Action year 2 onwards, two WG5 meetings per year will involve representatives from this group to work towards the multimedia modules for teaching about Europe-India relations.
- The SCT will strive to organize at least one joint workshop or other similar large-impact event together with secondary school teachers and curricula creators during the life-cycle of the Action.

5. **Journalists and other media content creators**: media organizations and representatives will (a) be made aware of the Action and invited to contribute to its multimedia modules, (b) be invited to join MC and/ or WG 5, and (c) actively participate in the ESIND outreach sessions and public lectures and debates.

- The CG and WG5 will make involvement of the media a fixed agenda point in their regular meetings, from the last quarter of Action year 1 onwards, to formulate the required steps to involve media representatives in relevant ESIND activities.
- The SCT will compose model invitations and ask MC representatives of specific countries to translate them and send them to relevant organizations and institutions in their countries.
- From Action year 2 onwards, two WG5 meetings per year will involve media content creators to work towards the multimedia modules for teaching about Europe-India relations.
- The SCT will strive to organize at least one joint workshop or other similar large-impact event together with Journalists and other media content creators during the life-cycle of the Action.

6. **Business world**: European Chambers of Commerce and Industry, especially those focussing on cooperation with India, and Indian companies active in Europe and European companies active in India will (a) be made aware of ESIND, (b) invited to join its MC and WG5,

and (c) actively participate in its public lectures and debates. The CG will make this a recurring agenda point in their quarterly meetings from Action year 2 onwards. The SCT will compose model invitations and ask MC representatives of specific countries to send them to relevant organizations and institutions in their countries.

- The CG and WG5 will make ESIND's exchange with the business world a recurring agenda point in their regular meetings, from Action year 2 onwards, and propose specific actions.
- WG5 will identify the relevant organizations in the different countries with the help of their representatives in the MC and their participants in the ESIND WGs.
- The SCT will compose model invitations and ask MC representatives of specific countries to send them to relevant organizations and institutions in their countries.
- The Action Chair will address representatives of relevant EU-level and international organizations.
- The SCT will strive to organize at least one joint workshop or other similar large-impact event together with relevant players from business world during the life-cycle of the Action.

7. **People of Indian origin living and working in different European countries:** associations of Indian students and professionals will be (a) made aware of ESIND and its aims, (b) invited to actively participate in its WG5 and outreach sessions and public lectures and debates, and (c) involved to share their experiences with European prejudices and stereotypes about Indians and their ideas about strategies to move beyond these prejudices and stereotypes.

- The involvement of people of Indian origin living in Europe in ESIND's outreach activities will be a priority for WG5, which proposes specific actions to the CG. Its first step during the MC and WG meetings in July 2025 will be to identify associations and organizations that bring together people of Indian origin in the different countries of Europe and the neighbouring regions.
- By September 2025, the SCT will compose model invitations and request MC representatives and WG participants from specific countries to send them to relevant associations and individuals in their respective countries.

8. To reach the 5 non-academic target groups, WG5 will plan **outreach sessions** involving representatives from the target groups during the annual MC and WG meetings that take place in the summer of every Action year. The CG will ask all ESIND members to take initiatives to organize outreach actions in their respective countries, either online or as physical meetings.

3. PLAN FOR THE COMMUNICATION OF ACTION RESULTS

The action results will be communicated to its target groups by means of **specific tools and steps**, which will be **implemented in different phases**.

Initiation and design phase (month 1-12): creating all the preconditions for using the tools and steps necessary for communicating the Action results to the target audiences: developing of the ESIND website and Digital Platform; creating social media accounts for ESIND; planning a first set of ESIND conferences and participation in third-party organized conferences; agreeing on the nature of the outreach sessions and the framework within which policy makers, diplomats, and businesspeople will be involved. (Responsibility: Core Group)

Implementation phase (month 12-24): the second Action year will focus on the expansion of communication concerning the ESIND Cost Action and its results. The SCT will involve all the MC members and all other ESIND participants in the usage of the different communication tools and the realizing of the envisioned steps (see table below).

Consolidation phase (month 24-36): after evaluating the results of the implementation phase, the tools and steps will be revised and/or strengthened to maximize the impact of the ESIND Action and involve as many active stakeholders as possible. (Responsibility: SCT and CG)

Sustainability phase (month 36-48): ESIND is explicitly planned as a network that will not cease to exist with the ending of the four-year period of COST funding. We plan to continue its main activities and keep working towards the objectives in the years following the Action. Therefore, the last Action year will focus on devising a strategy to make the realization and communication of its results sustainable even without the COST funding. This will involve (a) establishing the conditions for a continuation of minimal functioning of the network, independent of any external funding, and (b) communicating the Action results towards funding agencies and donors in new applications for funding by the ESIND network. (Resp.: MC)

Table with tools and steps to reach specific target groups:

Target group	Channel	Tools and steps
Researchers and students	Online	• **ESIND website, including ESIND Digital Platform:** regular updates, blog posts, announcements of activities, calls for grant applications. (month 4-48; responsible: SCT and WG3) • **ESIND Facebook account:** regular Facebook posts to present ESIND participants, announce activities, report on progress. (month 6-48; responsible: SCC)
	Events	• **Annual ESIND conferences**: from year 2, at least 1 ESIND conference organised annually, with a general call for papers addressing the academic community. • **Conference panels and workshops**: annually, ESIND participants will organise at least 3 relevant panels and/or workshops at 3rd party conferences.
	Publications	• **ESIND Flyer:** a flyer will be created announcing and explaining ESIND and its objectives**,** which can be printed as a poster, brochure, and banner, to promote the Action at conferences and other such events (month 6-12; responsible: WG4 and participants attending conference or other events)

Policymakers & diplomats / school teachers / journalists / business world	Online	• **ESIND website** • **ESIND Facebook and Instagram**
	Events	• **Outreach sessions:** during these sessions targeting representatives from these non-academic target groups, ESIND's relevant results will be communicated to them.
People of Indian origin (PIO) in Europe	Online	• **ESIND website + invitations to contribute blog posts for the website** • **ESIND Facebook and Instagram**
	Events	• **Interactive meetings:** ESIND researchers and PIO in participating countries

4. PLAN FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF ACTION RESULTS

The COST Action ESIND will disseminate its results to its specific academic and non-academic target groups and the general audience through **a range of dissemination products**: publications, a substantial digital platform, and events such as conferences, workshops, and public lectures. The participants commit themselves to making all of ESIND's reproducible outputs such as its publications, digital platform, and multimedia modules or online exhibits **publicly and freely accessible** following FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Re-usable) Open Access principles.

Target group	Channel	Dissemination tools and products
Researchers and students: academic target groups	Publications	• **2 special journal issues** dedicated to sharing ESIND's results, bringing together scientific articles on the development and dissemination of representations of India in Europe and beyond, and on alternative accounts of India, written by ESIND members. (First drafts: month 30; submission: month 36-40; responsibility: WG4) • **Multi-volume book (digital open access edition):** a collection of chapters on European representations of India will be elaborated with annotated selections from translated textual excepts and illustrated with visual images. Given the nature of the book and the required illustrations, we aim for a digital open access edition, rather than a printed volume (which would be prohibitively expensive). (First drafts: month 40; creation of book: month 48; responsibility: WG4) • **White paper with ESIND research vision statement:** a joint network statement containing a vision for future research into European representations of India and their impact on Europe-India encounters and current challenges and obstacles in the relations between the two regions. (month 48; responsibility: CG and MC)
	Online	• **ESIND Digital Platform:** regular publication of ESIND translations and images, accompanied by annotations and introductory blog posts. This will form a body of resources for research and teaching on Europe-India encounters through the ages. (month 7-48; WG3 is responsible for the growth and maintenance of the DP.)

	Events	• ESIND annual conferences and closing conference • Panels, roundtables, and workshops in other conferences, co-organized or organized by third parties.
General audience: non-academic target groups	Events	• **Public lectures:** to reach all Action target groups, ESIND participants will organize public lectures in their respective countries and at their institutions concerning the goals of ESIND and issues relevant to the encounters between Europe and India. These lectures will be given in a language accessible to a lay audience and will not presuppose any special expertise. The leaders of WG1 and WG2 will make this a recurring agenda point in their regular WG meetings and discuss plans and themes for potential public lectures. (months 12-48; responsible: WG1, 2 and 5 leaders)
	Publications	• **Op-eds, interviews, and popular media texts:** to reach a general audience, ESIND participants will write short accessible texts and do interviews about issues and themes relevant to the Action's goals, intended for publication in newspapers, magazines, blogs, etc. WG4 and 5 will be responsible for inviting and stimulating ESIND participants to work on op-eds and similar publications. (months
School teachers and media representatives	Online	• **Multimedia modules / online exhibits**: on the ESIND Digital Platform, modules and exhibits that disseminate the Action's results in a visually attractive, accessible, and concise form will be published and made available for use in teaching. (month 36 & month 48; responsible: WG3 and 5)
People of Indian origin (PIO) in Europe	Events	• **Interactive sessions** to discuss the results of ESIND with PIO and to devise strategies to move beyond prejudices about Indian culture, society, and people.

5. PLAN FOR THE VALORISATION OF ACTION RESULTS

The valorisation of the results of the COST Action ESIND will revolve around **a set of tools and outcomes** that can be used by several groups of beneficiaries and that **will continue to be accessible to the public** after the end of the COST funding for the ESIND network. **Academic valorisation** will primarily consist of the continued availability of a new and growing body of resources for comparative research on the development and dissemination of certain representations of India and on their impact on encounters between Europeans and Indians. **Societal valorisation** will consist of providing (a) lasting tools for creating awareness concerning prejudices and stereotypes about Indian culture, society, and people and (b) strategies to move beyond those prejudices and offer alternative ways of thinking that can nourish viable and lasting partnerships between nation-states, organizations, business companies, and individual stakeholders in Europe and India.

Tools & Outcomes	Description	Beneficiaries & responsibility
ESIND Digital Platform	This Omeka-S platform shall consist of **a digital collection of translated excerpts from sources about India** originally written in different European and non-European languages at different times from the early modern era until today. These are published with annotations, metadata, and visual illustrations; they can be browsed and searched in terms of keywords, author, date, country of origin, source language, etc. The platform aims to serve as a sustainable reservoir of resources and information on Europe-India encounters and representations of India from many different parts of Europe and the surrounding regions.	• **Researchers**: beyond the duration of the Action, the ESIND Digital Platform will remain available and accessible as a set of resources and data for comparative research on Europe-India encounters and representations. The platform will continue to expand as researchers contribute translations and illustrations. • **Academic teaching faculty**: the material on the ESIND Digital Platform will be useful for teaching on relevant themes, especially to give textual and visual illustrations of specific hypotheses and ideas.
ESIND Research Vision Statement	The Action will result in a joint network statement containing a vision for future research into European representations of India and their impact on Europe-India encounters and current challenges and obstacles in the relations between the two regions; this will be published as a white paper	• **Researchers:** the vision will offer questions, heuristics, and routes for future research on Europe-India encounters and relations.

	and made available on the website	
Multimedia Modules & Online Exhibits	From the ESIND Digital Platforms and its online exhibits, discrete modules will be extracted consisting of textual material and visual illustrations, meant for teaching about Europe-India relations at the level of secondary education and for creating awareness of prejudices about India that continue to prevail in Europe and surrounding regions and of strategies to surmount these prejudices. These modules will be translated from English into the respective languages of the ESIND participants' countries.	• **General audience:** the online exhibits aim to be appealing to interested people from all sectors of society, especially those who care about the future relations between Europe and India. • **School teachers in secondary education:** the modules will be very accessible and useful for teaching in history and culture at this level. • **Journalists and media content creators:** the modules and online exhibits will make media content creators aware of the prejudices and clichés that may shape their reporting about India and of ways to go beyond those prejudices and clichés.
Media Contributions	During and after the COST Action, ESIND participants will aim to make contributions to the media in their respective countries in relation to relevant current events, based on the results of the Action and its joint research: articles and interviews in newspapers, magazines, and online media; interviews and comments on radio and television.	• **General audience; policy makers and diplomats; journalists; businesspeople:** the media contributions by ESIND participants will aim to provide new perspectives on current events and problems relevant to the relations between Europe and India.

IPR: For translations, annotations, and other texts published on the ESIND Digital Platform, the copyright is with the translator(s) or creator(s) mentioned in the data for each item, unless indicated otherwise, under a Creative Commons CC BY-NC copyright license.