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COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES



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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ATN	Antenna
CP	Communication Plan
EC	European Commission
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ETCP	European Territorial Cooperation Programme
EU	European Union
EUR	Euro
IB	Intermediate Body
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
JTS	Joint Technical Secretariat
NIS	National Institute for Statistics
MA	Managing Authority
MC	Monitoring Committee
MDPWH	Ministry of Development, Public Works and Housing
NASMEC	National Agency for Small and Medium Enterprises and Co-operatives
NAC	National Audiovisual Council
NCRD	National Council for Regional Development
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSA	National Study of Audience
OP	Operational Programme
R&D	Research and Development
RBCA	Romanian Bureau for Circulation Audit
RCSAC	Regional Council for Strategic Assessment and Correlation
RDA	Regional Development Agency
RDP	Regional Development Plan
ROP	Regional Operational Programme
ROCBC	Regional Offices for Cross Border Cooperation
SF	Structural Funds
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SOP	Sectoral Operational Programme
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats



INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the European Commission acknowledged the major importance of communicating with the citizens, especially at local level. The need for developing information and communication activities is as important for raising the awareness on the assistance offered by the EU and the Member States and their positive impact on people's lives, as it is to raising the absorption level of community funds.

The EC has set the tone for an ambitious approach to the communication and promotion of the programmes and projects financed from European budget. Communication, information dissemination and advertisement are going beyond the limits of a simple advertising action and are becoming the necessary and integrated elements of every operational programme and ongoing projects. The obligations concerning information that lay upon programme Managing Authorities as well as upon beneficiaries, are mentioned in the EC Regulation on Structural Funds, no 1826/2006, Chapter II, Section I - Information and Publicity (see Annex).

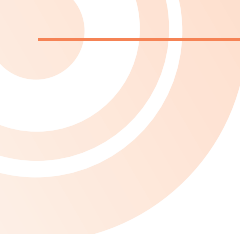
Guidance is given also in this direction for the ENPI programmes, in article 42 of the Regulation (EC) No 951/2007 of August 9th 2007 laying down implementing rules for the cross-border cooperation programmes financed in the framework of the Regulation no 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument.

Commission Regulation (EC) no 718/ 2007 of June 12th 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) no 1085/2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) has a distinct chapter (chapter VI Publicity, Visibility) regulating the obligation of the operating structures and final beneficiaries to make available a set of activities to publicise, in the beneficiary countries, information about assistance under the IPA Regulation (art 62 and 63).

Information is an essential element in planning and implementing the Structural Funds. Managing the Operational Programmes is a complex activity and organizations and people involved in developing them are constantly changing. Therefore, a communication strategy and an information flow are mandatory for enabling people involved in the implementation process, and the public in general, to receive the right information at the right time.

This manual hopes to contribute to a successful design and implementation of the communication activities that will be implemented by the Managing Authorities, Intermediate Bodies and the beneficiaries. This communication guideline lays down the compulsory provisions for those who have to perform communication activities, but also ideas and examples for those who want to perform communication activities over and above the regulation and their contractual obligations. This Guideline aims to be an easy-to-use, customized instrument for programme and project managers that wish to develop their communication strategies with an aim to making the campaign messages clear and targeted, for budgets to be more efficiently spent and for the campaign results to be clearly assessed and easily monitored.

The projects co-financed by the EU and the Member States combined with the financial contribution of the beneficiaries can, on a local and regional level, lead to actions such as improving the infrastructure, promoting innovation, protecting the environment and responding to the needs of employment



and training. The whole community benefits from these activities and these achievements must be communicated broadly and effectively in order to encourage the community to get involved and acknowledge the role of European financing.

An efficient communication must include the following general objectives:

- To inform all potential applicants on the existence of funding Programmes (Regio and European Territorial Cooperation Programmes - ETCPs) and how they can be accessed, in order to ensure the elaboration of good quality applications in a sufficient number, for ensuring absorption of funds and enhance local development
- To ensure the transparency of using the funds.
- To explain the EU policies and to increase awareness among the general public about the actions carried out by the European Union in partnership with the Member States, as well as the results of these actions.

This Guide comprises a series of basic descriptions of key concepts, instruments and activities that can be included in the communication plans concerning this issue.

HOW COMMUNICATION WORKS

We all take in huge amounts of information every day. Promotional communication is just one type of information we receive, therefore it must work very hard to draw our attention.

Good and appropriate communication can be defined as follows:

- It has multiple influences on the audience: it delivers the right/ necessary information, it makes people aware/ it draws attention to an important aspect or idea, even entertains them in the process.
- It is seen by the target audience, during receptive moments.
- The message has to be easy to notice and understand, attractive, credible and repeated in order to reach a sufficient number of individuals from the target audience.
- The communication has to tell people what to do next: the 'call to action' or just the contact information is part of any well-designed message delivery.

Communication takes on completely different shapes, from making a phone call, to broadcasting a memorable idea that captures the essence of what you want your target group to remember.

Good communication works because it makes people remember the advertiser and its product i.e. it makes the product relevant and distinct.

Good communication gets the job done. A good communication strategy will convince a large proportion of the audience to which it is directed that the communicated object (product, service, idea) is valuable to them and worth having.

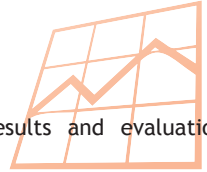
A good communication changes behaviour and attitudes.

THE PURPOSE OF COMMUNICATION PLANNING

The purpose of communication planning is to define strategic goals with actions as well as methods for implementing them. Its aim is to guide the communicators in designing, preparing and executing strategic communications.

Within the framework of this Guide the communication plans are to be designed for the management of the information and publicity measures of Regio and European Territorial Cooperation Programmes (ETCPs). At a higher level, these topic-oriented plans should become part of a general communication strategy that covers all aspects of communication and publicity, in relation to EU Funds operation in Romania (Structural Funds, European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI) and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)).

1. THE STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNICATION PLAN (CP)



A Communication Plan comprises:

- the **General framework**: objectives, target audiences, estimated results and evaluation criteria;
- the **Communication strategy**: operational priorities and approaches defined;
- **Management**: managing the programme and the established resources for implementing the strategy;
- **Components**: communication activities.

An effective plan takes into account the following:

1.1 ANALYSING THE CURRENT SITUATION

The current situation regarding the level of awareness of the programme/project should be examined on both national and regional level. The following two methods can be applied:

- If available, data from previous related activities should be reviewed. Such data may include:
 - ▶ Quantitative and qualitative research reports, analytical studies, and authorised investigations showing attitudes and behaviour in the larger economical and social context as well as the target group's potential to relate to the communication;
 - ▶ Communication performance indicators surveying awareness, perceived quality, associations (recognition of key messages and key visual elements, etc.), emotional links;
 - ▶ The 'sales figures': the number and quality of project applications and problems in project implementation.
- Profiling the performance of previous communication can be done using a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis. The results will provide an evaluation of the consistency of the campaign via communication, the campaigns impact and perspectives.

Reviewing the problems of previous communication plans should lead to improvements in the next Communication Plan.

It is important to monitor problems arising in the provision and receipt of information. Problems are evaluated by the following criteria:

- quality, amount, accessibility, simplicity and practicality of the information provided;
- the interest of applicants;
- the suitability of tools to specific target groups;
- the estimated impact of the information provided on the target groups;
- the awareness of the programme/project;
- the awareness of the possibility of implementing various types of projects;
- the number and quality of project applications;
- problems in projects' implementation.

It is also important to have an overall picture of the regional particularities, as well as ensuring the consistency and correlating the plan with the national level developed programmes (activities developed at a national level).

1.2 DEFINING THE GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The general principles guiding the communication objectives for Regio/European Territorial Cooperation Programmes (ETCPs) are:

- **Transparency** - informing potential beneficiaries of the opportunities available to them and making the procedures accessible and also, during the programmes/projects implementation, communicating the programmes/projects implementation activities.
- **Increasing public awareness** - to highlight:
 - ▶ Joint action by the European Union and the Member States and the results achieved;
 - ▶ The objectives of the Structural Funds/programme/project;
 - ▶ The European Union's financial participation.

These general objectives will be added up with specific objectives adapted to each target group, to each region and to the level of development of the programme/project. The objectives must be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART). Depending on the quality of the objectives formulation, a clear evaluation of the results may be carried out.

The Regio (funded projects) Communication Plan will have at least two levels:

- **The national communication** of Regio brand, which will concentrate on the key messages of the brand (ref. Brand Communication Strategy) and on the general information that must be apprehended: what is Regio, whom it addresses to, which are the eligibility criteria, time frame, desired impact;
- **Regional communication** and direct contact with target groups, through which these messages will be individualized and the brand will be activated, the specific technical messages will be communicated: how are the funds distributed regionally, what are the deadlines, local contacts to inform, documentaries, other resources and institutions involved etc.

Concerning the European Territorial Cooperation Programmes, an additional level should also be considered:

- **Cross border communication** - the communication plans elaborated by the Managing Authorities must include actions in all the partner states of each programme; also, the beneficiaries must implement activities in all the states of the project partners.

1.3 IDENTIFYING TARGET GROUPS

Target groups refer to all the people/organizations that are potentially interested in the message about the programme/project. Generally, the segmentation of the audience is based on demographical, geographical, psycho-graphical and behavioural criteria; the communication with the target group depends on the main media channels that each group is exposed to. In order to find out the needs

of information of each group, sociological surveys are carried out. They bring out the interest and expectations of these people concerning the structural funds.

For Regio/ European Territorial Cooperation Programmes (ECTPs), the main target groups are:

1) The bodies involved in managing the programme

- The Managing Authorities;
- The Intermediate Bodies - the eight Regional Development Agencies, and the Ministry for SMEs, Trade, Tourism and Liberal Professions;
- The Regional Offices for Cross Border Cooperation;
- The committees for monitoring and for strategic assessment and correlation etc.

2) Potential applicants and beneficiaries

- Local and central public administration authorities;
- NGOs;
- Private entities;
- Universities and research institutions;
- Other entities eligible for applying under Regio/ECTPs.



3) General public & media

The general public can be split into two sub-categories:

- **Opinion leaders:** Educated active economic actors in connection to potential applicants, such as engineers, consultants, entrepreneurs, chambers, institutes, politicians and others with indirect interest and involvement in the development of the local communities;
- **All other members of the local community** and who are more passive in the development process of the local community.

The two categories are not mutually excluded. An actor could be part of one, or even both categories.

Therefore, some communication tools can be employed to serve multiple purposes, conveying different types of messages to different target audiences.

Mass-media is a very important target group, since it acts as an intermediate and multiplier of information on Regio/ ECTPs.

1.4 BRAND IMAGE

Programmes can become more visible by developing a specific visual identity and slogans, which are commonly referred to as branding. This makes a programme more memorable, and enables fragments of related information from different sources to be more easily connected to each other as they all fit under the same brand name. Examples of branding include: a simple logo on a website or a logo that is applied to all materials and outputs of a given programme, a graphic identity etc.

When promoting a brand it is important that all communication products relate to the image of the brand. Brands have an image and personality and the more they can be reinforced through consistent reference, the more effective the overall communication efforts will become over time.

This is why, once the identity of a programme is established, it must be promoted to enable the enforcement of strong image and personality. To this end, both for Regio and for the European Territorial Cooperation Programme visual identity manuals, brand communication strategies and brand management plans were defined and must be put into practice and followed as closely as possible.

1.5 ESTABLISHING THE KEY MESSAGES

Defining the messages is a key part of the communication plan. The slogan captures the brand essence. It must be easy to recall, pleasant to hear, it must have rhythm and multiple meaning. The slogans for the five programmes have been established and must be promoted as part of each programme's brand:

Regio: *Local initiative. Regional development*
ETCPs: *Common borders. Common solutions.*

In line with them, more detailed messages will be developed, focused on the various target groups. The message has to direct the target audience, to guide them, indicating how to act. Rules for message conception:

1. appropriate to both target group and communication channel;
2. comprehensible;
3. credible;
4. brief;
5. convincing;
6. memorable.

The communication strategies for Regio and the European Territorial Cooperation Programmes (ETCPs) suggest messages such as:

- *Try Regio/ETCPs; Suggestions: It could be better, it really works.*
- *Regio/European Territorial Cooperation Programmes (ETCPs) is for those who care about the people around them, who make things happen and are not afraid to take responsibility.*
- *You can count on Regio/European Territorial Cooperation Programmes (ETCPs) to help you.*

From the moment the messages have been established, the visual elements that most efficiently portray them must be decided. It is essential to use images with which the public can identify: emotional, representative for them, strong.

1.6 SELECTING THE COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND CHANNELS

Once the target groups are identified and messages established, communication with them is made either directly (verbally or in writing) or indirectly through a **communication channel**.

Designing a communication mix is a difficult task, especially when involving a complex plan, with a large budget behind, multiple targets and an array of objectives to hit.

There is a wide range of means and techniques available, including:

A. Public Relations techniques:

Mass-media relations: press releases, press conferences, press events.

Editing publications: brochures, guides, flyers, newsletters, reports.

Direct communication

- Infocenters;
- Call centers;
- Direct mailing;
- E-mail listings.

Internet and digital media

- Websites;
- Intranet, dedicated communication interfaces;
- Portals, databases;
- Blogs, forums and other interactive forms of expression, constantly evolving;
- Banners and pop-ups, paid links, theme games;
- Multimedia presentations and other tools.

Events management

- Conferences, seminars, fairs;
- Competitions (for target groups, young people, etc.);
- Open days;
- Presentation trips;
- Visits;
- Internships.

B. Advertising techniques:

Buying advertising space

- Television (commercials, promotional films, television programmes, talk shows, teletext, sponsoring, pop ups);
- Radio (radio commercials, talk shows, sponsorship, reading promotional material, special programmes, etc.);
- Press (newspapers, magazines, other printed publications).

Outdoor and indoor advertising

- Billboards, bigboards, citylights;
- Advertising in public areas, in the public transportation system etc.;
- Posters;
- Temporary stalls.

Promotional items (3D advertising)

The following table contains the most used communication tools on structural funds as well as a short description of the advantages and disadvantages of each item, plus success indicators. The main categories of target groups that can be reached using a specific tool are also mentioned.

TOOL	TARGET GROUPS	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	EFFECTIVENESS INDICATORS
TV spot	General public	Comes into homes; can initiate family discussions; Reaches a large percentage of the intended audience; Delivers the maximum impact; Cost effective.	Expensive shooting/ production costs; May be too costly at certain times of the year; Prime time may be prohibitive; other time slots may not reach many audience members.	Number of spots broadcast; Audience numbers;
TV programme	General public, potential applicants, specialised audience			Number of programmes broadcast; Audience numbers - measured by people-meters (www.arma.org.ro).
Promotional film	General public, applicants, beneficiaries			Number of broadcasts; Audience numbers.
Cinema ads	General public	Attentive audience; Time can be purchased locally.	Only general messages fit; Targeted to larger urban areas.	Audience data (number of tickets sold).
Radio spot	General public	Local radio stations are very popular in local communities; Memorability/creativity of message is essential; Flexible, easy to produce.	Fragmented; Costly to reach when there are many different stations covering the area; No visuals; Not always easy to buy in all parts of a country.	Number of spots broadcast; Audience numbers.
Radio talk shows	General public, potential applicants			Number of shows; Audience numbers; Number of questions from the audience.

TOOL	TARGET GROUPS	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	EFFECTIVENESS INDICATORS
Newspapers: national/ regional free and non-free distribution	General public, potential applicants	Flexibility of targeting; Customized formats; Special placements; Very precise information; Cost effective; Coupons for response can be included;	For literates only; Reproduction quality; Short lifespan; May not be cost-effective.	Number of ads/articles published; Audience number; Circulation; Readership.
Magazines: articles and advertisements	General public, applicants	Clear segmentation of targets; Reproduction value/ colour; Pass-along readership; Prestigious.	Long lead time; Low frequency; For literates only; More upscale.	
Outdoor/indoor materials	General public, applicants, professional public	Locally/regionally focused; Effective if used in relevant areas; Good for raising awareness; Exposed to high traffic areas; Very brief message; Reinforcement of other media messages.	Limited time of exposure; Limited message content.	Opportunity to see (OTS); Number of posters.
Media relations (press releases, conferences)	Media representatives, general public, applicants, beneficiaries, professional public	Flexibility; Message customisation; Two-way communication; Quick implementation; Low costs.	Better fit for start ups; Low control of outcomes.	Number of press reports issued; Number of press conferences organised; Press conference attendance.
Web pages		High customer involvement; Easy to create; Internet search engine; Allows interaction with customers; Direct links; Promotes company identity.	Hard to maintain; The company's name is associated with the content of the site; Must be careful with the appearance of the site.	Number of visitors; Number of downloads.
Internet advertising	General public, applicants, beneficiaries			Number of banners shown; Number of visits; Number of viewers (www.traffic.ro).
Direct mailing	Applicants, beneficiaries, professional public	Effective targeting; Cost effective; Detailed information.	Low response rate; Most consumers refer to direct mail as "junk mail" ; Difficult for direct mail companies to identify and maintain accurate databases; Costs are on the rise.	Rate of response; Number of mailed targets.

TOOL	TARGET GROUPS	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	EFFECTIVENESS INDICATORS
Publications	Applicants, beneficiaries, professional public	High degree of acceptance, credibility and prestige; Can be passed from person to person; The editor has the entire control of the information; Offer complete information; Promote the image of the organisation; Can be reread.	Impersonal, one-way communication; Moderate involvement of the target group; Medium costs; Medium degree of reaching the target group; Not created regularly; Literates only; Require logistic support for management; May be over-produced; Require creative personnel; Require more time to be observed than the other media.	Number of copies; Number of reprints; Circulation numbers; Number of publications distributed/ downloaded from the website; Number of requests for publication; Number of feedbacks/ comments; Number of positive/negative feedbacks/ comments; Number of Internet sightings.
Digital media (CD, PowerPoint presentations, etc.)	General public, applicants, beneficiaries, internal target groups, professional public	Wider choice of communication media; A greater volume of information; Increased speed.	Complex applications require design and programming services.	Number of products created; Number of products distributed.
Events: seminars, conferences, fairs	General public, potential applicants	Direct contact with audience; Interactivity.	High costs for large scale events; Lack of control on participation.	Number of attendees; Level of involvement in debates; Number of articles/news generated; Participants' evaluation based on questionnaires.

2. USING COMMUNICATION TOOLS

2.1 MASS-MEDIA RELATIONS

The EC regulations regarding the information and publicity measures in relation to Structural Funds stress the importance of involving the media as a means of boosting the visibility of the Union's action and thus increase public awareness of it.

There must be a permanent contact with the media throughout the duration of the programme (launch, implementation, closure). This is essential even more if the media is showing a continuous interest in the Structural Funds topic.

Rules for managing relations with mass-media

Stay informed

Be well informed about what people are talking about - often driven by subjects raised or discussed in the mass-media. Know in time the hot issues and local controversies and consider them when you are issuing information. It is good to know the journalists who are writing about your issues, and make a close monitoring of the coverage received by your issues.

Collect data

Mass-media is not obliged to write good about you. Be proactive and shape the news by playing an active role in making them. Collect all your local newspapers and magazines that are relevant to your issues and keep a folder of clipping stories related to your subjects.

Build a database containing the names and contact information of the journalists covering your issues. Track the frequency with which these journalists write about your issues and their positive/negative/neutral attitude.

Think locally

Timing is one of the most important elements when working with the media. The information you sent to them has to have substance and to be “fresh”, “latest news”. It has to retain also a human element that the readers will find interesting, and can relate to. Reporters are writing about “good stories” always placing them in a specific environment, with a local touch. So retain their attention by placing the message or information in the context of a local story.

Choose the right tool

In order to make an efficient communication with the mass-media, you have to choose the right tool. Some of these tools could be: press releases, media advisories, letters to the editors, video news releases, public service announcements, print advertisements, flyer campaigns, press conferences and events. When selecting the most feasible tool, consider first the nature of your message, the level of urgency expressed, the “news” value, the budgetary constraints, and the target audience.

Approach different tactics

Press releases are one of the easiest and useful ways to win journalists interest. But when you have so many ways to approach them, you have to combine these tactics and be creative in your attempts to approach the public. According to the target audience that you want to reach and also depending

on the budget, a special event could be created in a unique setting. In case of a smaller budget, be selective about the publications reaching your target audience.

Provide extra information

Besides the main message, provide further information for journalists to enhance the story. Assist them by providing accompaniments such as photos, fact sheets, contact and biographical information for specific “experts” or useful website addresses. It is very useful if your information can be found online and has assigned a contact person/ email address for more details. Collateral research info are also very useful for journalists. For TV news, it is helpful to provide Beta footage in addition to these resources.

Respect the rules of the “game”

As in any profession, the practice has established some unwritten rules for handling media relations. In order to perform properly in the media relations game, you have to know and respect these rules, if you want to be respected by the media. Some of the very basic ones are:

- When sending information to the mass-media, indicate whether this is free for “immediate” use or if it is “embargoed” for a later date and time.
- If you include a quote from an unofficial source, obtain permission from your source before releasing.
- Mass-media advisories should include only the most basic details (who, what, where, when, why and how).
- Be prompt when responding to media inquiries; return media calls promptly.
- Don’t ignore a question.
- Don’t promise exclusiveness to anyone unless you intend to give one.
- Don’t treat the journalists as your enemies – if you need to disagree, do it firmly and with professional belief.

Be available!

Journalists have their deadlines for specific subjects. When a journalist is seeking information, he wants to obtain it quickly, sometimes for the next day’s article or programme. Hence this rule: never leave a question unanswered, always be available.

“Press file”

Every time an article appears or a programme is broadcast on Regio/ETCPs, it is worth keeping a record of it by compiling a “press file”. This will ease a quantitative and qualitative follow-up.

2.1.1 HANDLING AN INTERVIEW

- Prepare, prepare, prepare.
- Rehearse talking in a conversational manner.
- Speak clearly and concisely.
- Prepare a short list of 2-3 key points of the speech, in a logical order. Don’t tackle a lot of topics in the same interview, you will lose the audience and the ideas you wanted to send to them will be lost.

- For live/recorded shows on radio or TV, when you are invited to talk about a certain topic, ask who are the other guests. It is very important to know if they support your statements or would say the opposite.
- Support your speech with background information. Because reporters change frequently, you may come across one that needs information.
- Anticipate questions and reporter's needs from you.
- Try to offer explicit simple answers for the ordinary citizen because that is the point of reference for most of the reporters.
- Be friendly and sincere. Don't avoid questions and keep focused on the answers, with short sentences; answer as directly and honestly as possible, avoiding jargon.
- The voice tonality has to be convincing. Again, rehearsal helps you not to sound unsure.
- Don't use "No comment" - it makes you look arrogant and hostile. It is not necessary to answer every question, but either admit that you are not the right source for that information, and direct them to the correct source, or offer to get that information immediately following the interview.
- Try to be memorable by preparing good quotes; give local quotes (these are the best).
- Stay on track with your message and don't go off the record. Never say anything that you do not want on the record. It is hard for reporters to ignore what is written on their notepad when writing their story.
- Don't elongate the interview. Your ultimate goal is to send your message as you prepared it and not lose the subject on long discussions with the reporters.
- Body language and dress code, as well as voice tonality count a lot, especially on TV. The way you look and talk is very important.
- For TV interviews or shows - be careful at your appearance; be confident and express this by a straight body position, do not adopt a defensive attitude. Do not wear big jewelleryes, do not wear stripes, they are tiresome for the eye.

2.1.2 ORGANIZING PRESS CONFERENCES

Press conferences are held to mark an important event and enable journalists to be the first to receive information on a particular subject. A press conference provides an opportunity for the organizer to inform journalists on a given subject, while making their job easier in terms of information processing.

A successful press conference requires the mobilization of substantial resources. To get 10 journalists to come to a press conference you generally have to invite around 20. Careful preparation of a press conference takes between 4 and 8 days full-time work, plus being present on the day and follow-up.

It is vitally important to hold press conferences only for "important" events and not to abuse the method to announce details.

Here are some points, which ask for particular attention:

The invitations

Send out the invitations two or three weeks in advance. Send two copies of the invitation to the editorial office: one for the journalist and one for the editor-in-chief.

Timing

Timing of other announced events should be verified when planning the press conference date, in order to ensure the maximum interest of the targeted journalists.

The place

Choose a central location with easy access; attach a map with the invitation and make arrangements for parking.

Reception

Set aside a reception desk at the entrance to the press room. Journalists will be requested to leave information about them, which can then be usefully included in the journalists file.

Prepare for journalists a media kit containing the speeches and the press release for the conference, as well as any other background information.

Place speakers together, so as they enter the same photo frame, and place behind them banners with the subject of the conference. In this way, the photos or the material filmed will bear the mark of the event.

Provide water and coffee for everybody present. Still water is recommended for the speakers.

Introduction

It is important to have a moderator that will welcome everyone and briefly introduce the speaker(s) to the reporters.

Also, during the conference, the moderator can pass the floor and direct the questions of the reporters to the person who has the answer.

Briefing

There should be one main spokesperson (master of the event) able to run the conference and answer to all questions. Prior to the event, the spokesperson should be briefed in detail around all subjects on the agenda and possible questions of journalists.

Remember that statements shouldn't be longer than 10-15 minutes. After the speakers have finished, ask for questions. This session should not be longer than 20 min.

De-briefing

After the conference, organizers including the spokesperson should have a meeting to draw actionable conclusions about the event, in order to learn where (if) to improve for the next one.

The follow-up

The press conference must enable the management to establish direct and reliable contacts with the mass-media. These contact points must, in turn, be able to "feed" the curiosity and interest of the journalists. There may not always be a major event but that is no reason not to prepare the field so



that when something important does come up the journalist will be ready to talk about it, thanks to the continuous information flow from which he/she has benefited.

Different formats of the event

Press conferences take various forms. Depending on the circumstances, it may be planned a long time in advance or set up at the last moment. It can be open to all journalists, be addressed at a targeted panel in line with the subject and geographical area, or be reserved to a limited circle of journalists seen as opinion leaders.

Press conferences are usually held in late morning at a fixed place. They can also be held earlier in the morning (press breakfast) or around noon (press lunch). Other press events can take half a day or even a whole day (don't forget that time is valuable to journalists): for example a visit for journalists to projects completed. A number of elements can be combined, such as a field trip followed by a press lunch.

Below you can find a checklist for the organisation of a press conference that one may find useful.

Details related to organising a press conference	Notes
1. Setting the date and hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No other events are anticipated to take place at the same time with the press conference, that could compete with it for news attention;• From Tuesday to Thursday, in the morning (10-13hrs).
2. Deciding upon the location and arranging it	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Location: easily accessible by public transport;• The room should not be very spacious, in order to create the impression that it is crowded and thus emphasize the event's importance;• The room should be properly equipped (microphones, telephones, sufficient lighting, stage, presidium table, registration desk and a space designated for serving coffee and water);• The speakers should be placed in the middle of the room.
3. The agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It includes the time slots allocated to each speaker or agenda point.
4. Listing the potential guest speakers; sending out the invitations to the speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The speakers' participation has to be confirmed;• Include a maximum of 3 speakers;• The name tags should state the speaker's name and the institution s/he represents (her/his position should not be written down, it will be announced by the moderator);• Make sure you have all the speeches and that these cover topics related to the conference, without repeating the same information;• Ask the speakers whether they would like their presentation to be included in the press kit; if they do not, just include the most important parts (3-4 sentences) in the press release.

Details related to organising a press conference	Notes
5. Putting together a list of the journalists interested in the topic of the conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put together a list of the journalists you would like to invite.
6. Press invitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The invitations should be sent out 3 to 4 days before the conference (not earlier because they might forget about it); The invitations should not be very long; The invitations should name the speakers; The invitation should shortly present the aim of the conference (maximum 3 paragraphs); 1 or 2 days before the conference, the journalists should be phoned, reminded of the conference and asked to confirm their participation.
7. Inviting other guests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These invitations should be sent out at least 2 weeks before the conference
8. The moderator of the press conference is available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must confirm her/his availability The moderator is informed about the topic of the conference and about all the moments of the event (including announcements that s/he must make during the conference: administrative aspects; where will coffee be served etc.).
9. The press kit is ready	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The press kit contains the support materials: the press release, a copy of the speeches. You can also include information about a certain topic, graphs, tables, maps.
10. Preparing auxiliary information and visual instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual elements that need to be prepared: banners, posters, graphs, big maps, photos or other representations that could convey the message of the conference.
11. Preparing a list of presence for the press	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A person should be appointed to welcome and to guide the reporters and to ask them to sign the participant's list. These reporters will later be included on a list of media contacts to which information (press releases, notes etc.) will be distributed.
12. Checking the conference room	

2.1.3 PREPARING A PRESS RELEASE

- Be careful at the title of the press release, it is important to use “catching” words. Try to use one line for the title, not more.
- The first paragraph of the release must contain all the important information: work out the message you are trying to convey together with the most important part of the story.
- Use quotes making sure it is clear who made them: try to use a quote in the first paragraph or second paragraph of the article to “hook” the reader.
- Use simple plain language.
- Type-write using double line spacing and wide margins in order to allow journalist to make their own notes.



- It may be necessary to give additional background information at the end of the release.
- Always include the date and time of release.
- A contact name and a phone number should always appear on the press release in case the journalist assigned to the story needs further information.
- Don't include your personal opinions in the press release, do not use words like "very good", "extremely important" etc. Be objective.
- The headline of the press release must be captivating and original: a good headline should persuade the recipient to actually read it.
- Distribute press releases by fax/e-mail.
- The layout must be in accordance with the visual identity manuals for Regio/ETCPs.

If producing a photo to accompany a press release the following points should be considered:

- Enhance the message of the press release;
- The subject of the picture is interesting and relevant;
- Clear photos with one or two smiling faces are more effective than a crowd of distant dots;
- Photos should ideally be provided in both black and white and colour formats;
- Send a range of photos which allows the recipients to choose the picture that in their opinion best illustrates the story and fits the available space;
- Always accompany photos with a short description together with a list of the names and positions of all those included in the shot (after asking them for permission).

2.1.4 CRISIS MANAGEMENT

A crisis is defined as an unforeseeable situation representing an immediate and serious threat to an organisation, its operations, image and interests as well as those of its personnel, clients and stakeholders.

Crisis management is a proactive exercise aimed at protecting an organisation's image and reputation when these are under threat.

The role of the spokesperson

- The spokesperson is a PR professional used to communicate with mass-media.
- During a crisis, the spokesperson has the role to get the right message in the right way, thus acting as a back up to the top management. They assess the situation in the mass-media and handle public and media inquires or needs for information, address other requests for information, monitor what the news media, public officials, and other important players were saying and contribute to the transition from the crisis stage to resolution and recovery.
- It is recommended that all information be passed to and filtered through a spokesperson. Both for media and the public, they are the face of the organisation and no other person from the organisation should release information or statements without the involvement of the spokesperson.

Effective emergency communication practices

- Say it first; the first who speaks is more credible. Don't wait for others to give information to the press.
- Be sure about the facts and gather all details you can to clarify them.
- Be sincere to admit what aspects are not known or cannot be shared.
- Indicate to the journalists that you will come back with more information as soon as it is available.
- Display control and confidence, without showing off.
- Express empathy.
- Do not trivialize the worries of the public and do not over-reassure.
- Acknowledge uncertainty and other normal reactions.
- The voice tonality is important as in any communication. Show commitment and competence.
- Consider the "what if" questions (i.e. worst case scenarios).

2.2 PUBLICATIONS

- Can be information materials (on a specific matter) or promo materials (promoting the organization);
- They are a relatively expensive tool, therefore the content must be chosen in such a way to enable a long use of the publication;
- Enable the presentation of more complex and detailed information;
- They represent a visit card that can be offered to a range of influencing readers: politicians, national and local authorities, potential partners, investors, mass media etc.

Advice on preparing publications:

- Offer your readers the possibility to react by including contact reference or even detachable coupons meant for suggestions/comments.
- Develop an electronic version of the publication to upload on the website of the institution so that it can be multiplied by other members of the network.
- Try to avoid duplicating the effort by conceiving publications similar to the ones already on the market; in exchange you can credit or multiply them.
- Choose wisely your photographs; they must be of good quality. Pay attention to the copyright. For information purposes, photographs from the Audiovisual Service of the European Commission may be used, but remember to mention your source: http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/photo/index_en.cfm.
- Take into account that when printing, the cost decreases with the number of copies.
- Essential elements for the publication's success are design and distribution.
- A dissemination strategy must be conceived. For the printed publications the mailing costs can be quite high, this is why you can choose to distribute them directly at events or through partners/networks.

2.2.1 DEVELOPING A NEWSLETTER

The newsletter is a very practical tool for communicating concise information to various target groups. It can be sent electronically, in which case the following tips should be considered:

- The newsletter is structured with regular columns and concise information. The reader is looking to rapidly take in essential information, possibly activating links to obtain additional information;
- The newsletter is usually sent out proactively to its readers on a flexible basis. It is not just a source of information but an instrument to increase awareness, to generate interest in a particular call for proposals, new information sources or particularly innovative experiences.
- It highlights the human dimension and provides project examples;
- Its style comes from the awareness of the communication needs of the target-audiences;
- It must be easy to read - 4-8 pages are easily read and require a small amount of resources.

Questions to answer when composing a newsletter:

- Is it directed to the right medium?
- How should it look like?
- How frequently should it be issued and how long should it be?
- What style is most appropriate?
- Will it be produced in-house or outsourced?
- How should it be distributed (hard copy or e-mail)?
- How will the mailing list be managed?

Examples: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/commu/document/fiche/fr_npcal_mag_en.pdf

2.3 SETTING UP AND MANAGING INFOCENTERS/HELP-DESKS

The help desk is an information-providing office, developed in response to the need for information and advice of potential applicants and of the general public.

Recommended tasks for the help desk

A. Informing, awareness raising

- Distribution of documentation (forms, guidelines, manuals etc.);
- Circulate general and specific documentation on the Regio/ETCPs, including conditions for participation, and possibilities and conditions for submission of applications;
- Organise promotional activities in liaison with the Managing Authority (MA) (e.g. info-days, seminars, conferences, newsletters, web sites, fairs, etc.).

B. Advising, assisting and training

- Training and assistance on drafting applications (advise on “how to” for specific chapters and paragraphs of the application form);
- Advise on administrative procedures and contractual issues (e.g. role and responsibilities of beneficiaries/partners, eligible expenditures, rights and obligations of contractors, observe ethics rules etc.);

- Organize training seminars for specific target groups (NGOs, local authorities, professional organizations, etc.) on specific topics (contractual aspects, modalities for participation, areas covered by specific programme, eligibility criteria, etc.);
- Assist organizations with a view to increasing their participation in Regio/ETCPs.

C. Organization of the help-desk

- The help-desk should have a visual identity, easily recognized, and should be equipped with the necessary communication equipment (PCs, phones, fax, internet connection).
- According to the resources available, the help desk can operate continuously during the open call or in certain days of the week. In case they run only during the open call, their activity should be advertised together with the launch of the programme. For time management and efficiency of operation, it is advisable that certain hours per day (or certain days per week) the regional office staff will be available for meetings with potential applicants.
- The advisory function of the help-desk should cease 21 days before the deadline for submitting an application.
- The activity of the help-desk should be monitored.

Example:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/commu/document/fiche/fr_npcal_mag_en.pdf

2.4 MANAGING A CALL CENTER

A call centre is an area staffed and equipped for taking [phone] calls from the public and answering the questions received. From a call centre, the messages can be also sent by fax, mail, email.

Generally, the phone calls are requests concerning the institution activities or a programme (Regio, ETCPs). The staff receives the questions and answers them right away, or manages the elaboration of a general answer to the target audience, according to the legislation in force (Law 544/2001, in Romania).

Steps for setting-up a call centre - similar to the ones for preparing a business plan:

- Evaluate the need for a call centre: number of phone calls and of inquiries received on land lines, website, email, fax, etc; reports (from credible sources) on the level of public satisfaction regarding the communication with the institution;
- Evaluate the size of the project: estimate the investment, in-house or outsourced;
- Prepare the investment project and obtain the approvals on: the project amplitude, expected benefits, evaluation indicators, calendar of implementation; this stage includes also obtaining the approvals from the authorities in telecommunications;
- Prepare the databases for starting up: public contacts, demographic and qualitative information available on the target segments, available/non-available permission for contact for each contact;
- Prepare the communication plan and the messages that will be used by the call centre, independently or together with other communication vehicles;
- Logistics:
 - ▶ choose the office building that can adequately host the staff and the equipment;
 - ▶ obtain the broadband internet connection and the phone lines (including toll free numbers 0800 or easy to remember regular numbers);

- ▶ acquisition of hardware and database management software;
- ▶ staff selection and training;
- ▶ make realistic simulations of call centre activities;
- ▶ official launch of the call centre, press announcement of its scope and contact data.

2.5 ORGANIZING EVENTS: CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, FAIRS

Conferences, seminars and fairs can be used to provide general information on the content and objectives of EU policies and on the possibilities of submitting projects for Structural Funds co-financing to programme target groups, or programme partners (professional associations, NGOs, public administration bodies, etc.) and media representatives. They may include references to completed projects in the subject region.

Main objectives:

- To provide information on the estimated outcomes of programme/project implementation;
- To present more specific information on planned and announced calls, conditions governing the preparation and selection of projects, for potential applicants, beneficiaries, chambers of commerce, professional associations, the media.

The specific focus of **conferences and seminars** should be directed to an actual target group and this should dictate the content and form of the event.

It is relevant to involve beneficiaries who can discuss the problems they encountered when preparing and implementing their projects, enabling them to pass on their experience of dealing with these problems to the current applicants. Representatives of the implementing bodies should also be invited to take part in seminars and conferences as they can respond to any questions raised. Organising this type of focused events allows a large number of applicants to have their problems solved and means that they do not have to ask for advising on an individual basis.

Large-scale events are used to disseminate standard messages to a large number of people. They are often associated with the programme development stage, when consultation on potential strategic options may be very wide, and with the programme launch.

Seminars or workshops are the best choice when more specific messages need to be conveyed to a smaller and/or more targeted group. They are especially helpful where a process of active group learning is being encouraged.

One-to-one meetings are meant for more intensive, time-critical or applicant-specific work. This might encompass helping an applicant to design his/her project or to present his/her case. One-to-one contact is also valuable for initial enquiries. In many cases, contact is made directly with the relevant programme management unit, by phone, visit, letter or e-mail.

What makes a successful event?

- Has clear aims and a carefully selected audience;
- Is organized to maximize participation and impact;

- Involves the audience;
- Does not neglect post-event activities (conference materials, follow-up);
- Is evaluated (the general reactions following the event are monitored and conclusions are drawn; these can be useful in organising future events).

2.6 DEVELOPING INTERNET BASED CAMPAIGNS

Internet is a fast growing means of communication. Over 6 million people are accessing monthly at least one Romanian site (source: www.traffic.ro). According to the Romanian National Study of Audience (SNA), 43% of urban population accessed the internet in the last year, and over 20% is doing it daily. The online Romanian communities have increased lately, as a result of broadband replacing more and more the dial-up connections.

The online communities allow a segmented targeting, thousands of members having high affinities for different areas, linked to the sites dealing with these communities (e.g. business communities: doctors, lawyers, real estate, brokers; hobby communities: yachting, fishing, off-road, gadgets; lifestyle communities: clubbing, cinema fans, mothers etc).

For example, in Romania, over 10 providers are sharing the online communication market (AdEvolution, Netbridge, Arbomedia, MPInteractive, SMInteractive, Rol Network, Neogen Network, Beyond Media, Media Café, Clir Media etc). Over 500 sites are included in these publicity networks, communicators being able to exploit general audiences on portal sites or extremely targeted audiences on specialized sites.

Most used online formats are:

- Banners (rectangle, top boards, full banners); a banner is a publicity image (that may include text), which is either periodically or permanently inserted into the advertising area. It provides a link to an internet site which it promotes;
- “Intrusive” formats - although they have some negative perception consequences, they are used by some communicators in the form of: over-layers, rollovers, interstitials, videos;
- E-newsletters;
- Advertorials;
- Site and section sponsoring;
- Site branding;
- Online contests/games;
- Blogging, which has increased too lately (especially with the support of journalists actively writing).

Programme / Project Website

A website has become an essential tool for any communication strategy and it must be promoted on every press material, brochure, flyer, newsletter as well as other public-oriented materials. Here are a few simple rules to ensure its effectiveness:

- Provide a well-structured content - the structure must enable visitors to obtain the information quickly.
- Allow the site to grow and develop - unlike a publication, a website offers unlimited opportunities to improve content.
- Its success will depend on:
 - The frequency with which it is updated;
 - The level of accessibility, especially for people with a slow connection or older computers.

Example:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/commu/outils_en.htm

Recommended website structure for Regio/ETCPs

- Calls: divided into active and archive of closed calls (see for example www.esfcr.cz), as well as the complete documentation for the calls (procedures, guides, etc.)
- Documentation
 - Programme documentation: Regio/ETCPs
 - **Information for applicants:** documents needed for the successful completion of a project application
 - **Information for beneficiaries:** documents needed for the successful implementation and administration of the completed project
 - National and community legislation
 - Guides, brochures, leaflets, etc.
 - **Miscellaneous documentation** (European Commission documents, strategic documents, reports on the programme implementation, studies, analyses, public opinion polls, etc.)
- **Events** (conferences, seminars, trainings, fairs) organized by the various bodies involved in the implementation of the programme, divided into **planned events** and **the archive of past events**. All the supporting material presented at these events should be available for downloading.
- **Projects:** a summary of submitted applications and lists of selected projects - archive broken down by specific calls and examples of successful and completed projects.
- **Implementation structure:** basic chart with a description of the role of individual bodies, including information on meetings of the monitoring committees, etc.
- **Contacts:** list of contact persons at the MA, the IB / Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS), per region, etc.
- **Questions and answers:** constantly updated section containing general and specific questions and relevant answers
- **Links:** links to websites of the other implementing bodies
- **Registration:** many portals already offer as standard the option of receiving news by email, which is an extremely useful tool for the target groups.
- **Miscellaneous** - in response to the needs and nature of the programme
- **All campaign materials in electronic form**, in order to ensure the best possible access.
- **Section for the press:** press releases, press events etc.

It is also important to assure adequate presentation of the website in widely used browsers. Most users use these applications to locate sources of information on the internet.

In the case of projects, a dedicated website or a section on an existing Internet page should include at least the following:

- Overview of the project;
- Beneficiary and partners (if relevant);
- Timetable of implementation;
- Outcomes;
- Information materials: leaflets, brochures, newsletters;
- Press;
- Events;
- Photo gallery;
- Contacts.

2.7 ADVERTISING - MEDIA STRATEGIES

Depending on the communication plan's objectives, on the target groups identified and on the budget, a media component can be included in the communication strategy. This consists in setting up a media plan and acquiring advertising space in the most adequate media for the target group's profile (see table pg. 11-12-13).

Media planning has numerous technical aspects; it is based on specific knowledge, media observation, and can not be performed without software license. For this reason, although the communicator may be involved in choosing one channel and not the other, a newspaper or a radio station, media strategy should be fully conceived by a specialist, a media agency, or a media freelancer specialist.

Choosing the right channels (media planning) starts by answering common sense questions:

- Who are the target audiences that are most influential and help me to support my position?
- Who is the narrowest target group that is interested or affected by this issue?
- Where do those people get their information?
- What organization or media channel (newspaper/ TV etc) do they trust? Who do they listen to?
- Who are our allies?
- Who needs information from us? Who do we have to talk to?
- Which is the best media coverage that will help me achieve my goals?
- What do we want to accomplish through media outreach?

The media planning follows additional criteria, such as:

- Choosing a channel that is appropriate to the message;
- Choosing a channel that is appropriate to the creative concept (although an excellent communication concept easily declines in execution for every medium) - make best use of the idea/ message packaging;
- Making a detailed planning; the communicator should rely on **media agency knowledge, creativity and tools**, to make the most of the allocated budget;



- Use the communication industry figures on audiences, penetration, affinity, costs by medium, by programme, by hour interval - increase the chance to find the right audience.

2.7.1 PRESS ADVERTISEMENTS

In Romania, the print market is divided among international publishers such as Ringier, Edipresse, Sanoma Hearst, WAZ and local publishers such as Media Pro Group (Mediafax, Gândul, Clujeanul Business Magazin), Intact (Săptămâna Financiară, Jurnalul Național), Realitatea Media - Cașavencu (Cotidianul, Money Express), Satirikon (Adevărul, Click), Global Media (Ziua) etc.

Major publishing groups have a wide range of categories in their portfolio: TV guides, lifestyle titles, business & economic titles, sports, top rated newspapers both national and local. Other publishers are specialized on categories: Edipresse - women lifestyle magazines, Business Media Group - business magazines.

In terms of audience, among the top 5 scoring periodicals are: do it yourself titles (cooking, home and garden), IT, computers, telecom, men titles and lifestyles.

There are also distributors of media space in local publications (ex. ARBOmedia), with a significant geographical covering.

Press ads

- If used properly this medium is really valuable. Based on the communication objectives, an effective media plan should be developed starting from an analysis of available titles, their readership and related content. If the right titles are identified, press is a highly efficient medium for reaching the audience at a relatively low cost per insertion.
- One of the key considerations when using press is the measurement of readership as well as of circulation. Readership (number of people who read the publication) is usually higher than circulation (the number of copies bought). The national bodies for circulation auditing (in Romania BRAT- www.brat.ro) can provide accurate data on this.
- Advertisements can be booked to appear in a specific page or section of a particular publication. Special positions, bigger formats or full colour insertions are more expensive, but also considered more effective in passing the message. The press offers such variety that it is possible to target specific groups of readers on a national, local or special interest basis.
- A good print advertisement should have an interesting headline, a clear and influential design and a well-written text. It is possible to use colour, illustrations or photographs to enhance the message. In the daily press, an advertisement can be even related to a current news story.

Advertorial

Is an advertisement written in the form of an editorial, designed to look like independent news story. The tone is usually close to that of a press release, but they are paid for.

2.7.2 TV EXPOSURE

Television is a medium that delivers the highest and the quickest reach at national as well as local level, its penetration being close to 100%. It is the main source of information for the overwhelming majority of population.

Following the particularities and needs of regional information, local TV stations play an important role within the overall TV media planning. Exposure should be optimised through qualitative placements.

TV Commercials

- Commercials are used to promote new programmes/projects, to draw attention (e.g. informing on calls for proposals, subsidies, tenders and events to which companies can apply, or a newly opened advisory centre, etc.) as well as for image creation (e.g. to reinforce the image of an institution as trustworthy by presenting previous, successful projects), or to remind people about brands that have already been introduced.
- The speed of access to the general public is relatively fast and flexible. However, it does depend on the type of television company (national, regional or local). The speed and form of cooperation will depend on the conditions laid down by the company, by the broadcasting time and the type of programme alongside which the commercial will be broadcast (consider also existing regulations of National Audiovisual Council on www.cna.ro).
- Depending on the message and TV spot impact, an efficient broadcasting means that the desired target audience has been exposed to it at least 3 times.
- Commercials are generally suitable to the general public, and less to the professional, specialized public. Improved targeting of a specific group of people can be achieved by selecting the channel, the TV programmes and the broadcasting time.
The following forms of television advertising can also be used:
- Sponsoring a programme/TV show
 Sponsoring represents an insertion before and after the programme broadcast (called also billboard in & billboard out), containing an image bearing the logo and a message related to the programme sponsor. The advantage of this form of advertising is that it is placed immediately before and after the relevant sponsored programme, which means it is separated from the advertising block, therefore more visible to the target.

- **Pop ups** - insertion of the sponsor's logo during the programme transmission. The logo appears unexpectedly during the programme, at a moment when viewers are fully concentrated on the screen and cannot overlook the pop up.

Examples of other EU countries on TV communication related to Structural Funds:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/commu/outils_en.htm

2.7.3 RADIO BROADCAST

The commercial radio stations have a well-defined position in urban areas (targeting usually young people and adults with medium to high educational backgrounds and income) and continuously attempt to consolidate their position in the rural area by enlarging technical coverage, attracting new listeners, organizing promotions etc. Commercial radio stations cover around 95% of total urban areas. They are either part of a national/regional network or independent stations. The public station Radio România Actualităţi (RRA) has nearly 100% national coverage.

Radio spots

- A radio advertising spot lasts generally between 10 and 30 seconds, they are ideal for the fast transmission of facts (e.g. events such as open days, the start of a new programme/project etc). The objective may be to increase awareness of a certain institution, programme/project. Radio commercials are flexible and easy to be produced.
- Compared to other media, this type of communication requires frequent repetition of the message content as radio is very often treated as background noise. Just as in television advertising, radio commercials have to be repeated (at least 7 -10 times).
- Could be used for general public or for potential applicants. Local radio not only allows residents to receive information, but also private entrepreneurs, workers, civil servants, employees, etc.

Radio talk shows

- They are particularly advantageous for the presentation of specific events (calls, presentations of successful projects) or to present or explain issues currently arising in individual programmes. Telephone questions from listeners can be included. The radio station should be selected having regard to the target groups it addresses.
- It is a form of communication which can work on ad hoc basis; in cases where parties collaborate repeatedly and systematically, they generally sign a media agreement. The time needed to organise this type of shows may vary depending on the individual stations.

Sponsored programmes or series of programmes

Communicators can choose whether to sponsor programmes or series of programmes or off-air events with the participation of the radio station.

Read advertisement

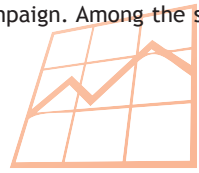
These simply contain textual information, read out loudly by radio speakers, without using sound effects and editing.

Examples: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/commu/outils_en.htm

2.7.4 BILLBOARD PLACEMENT

Billboards are very useful in delivering recall for the key visual of a campaign. Among the specific advantages, we can count:

- Long exposure of visuals that delivers recall;
- Cost effectiveness;
- Permanent visibility during campaign;
- Large sizes, strong impact;
- Possibility of easy changing the message;
- Selective addressing the public in transit (seaside roads, customs, targeted cities, etc).



Current available outdoor support formats:

Unipoles	8x3 m, 10x4 m, 14x4 m
Bus-shelters /Citylights	1.1x1.6 m, 1.2x1.8 m
Backlits	3.2x2.4 m, 3.5x2.5 m, 4x3 m, 6x3 m
Rolling masters	3.2x2.4 m
Subway (Bucharest)	3x2 m, 3x1.5 m, 4x1.5 m, 2x1.5 m

Other types of outdoor: directional, flags, banners, rooftops, TV screens, meshes, urban furniture (prisms, cubes, circular poster supports).

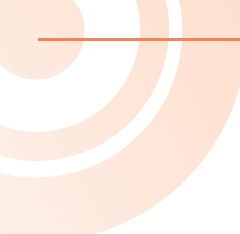
Billboards. They are printed on a variety of materials (self-adhesive PVC, backlit, front lit, blue-black paper, canvas etc.) generally with regard to their location (interior or exterior). They must have concise, clear and memorable text, prominent titles and images (photographs) to attract attention.

Public transport advertising. This form is mainly found in larger cities where a municipal public transport system is in operation. Besides the outside printing of public transport vehicles with different layouts and messages, a service that places posters within the vehicles exists in large cities.

Place-based media/Indoor

An interesting segment of indoor media with distribution mainly in large retails, major hypermarkets, supermarkets, pharmacies and gas stations, schools, universities/campuses, medical centres, fitness and cosmetic centres, business centres (inside elevators) and even pubs restrooms.

In order to better reach the target audience, the places where the public frequently goes or looks for information on funding opportunities should be used (eg. banks, public institutions etc.).

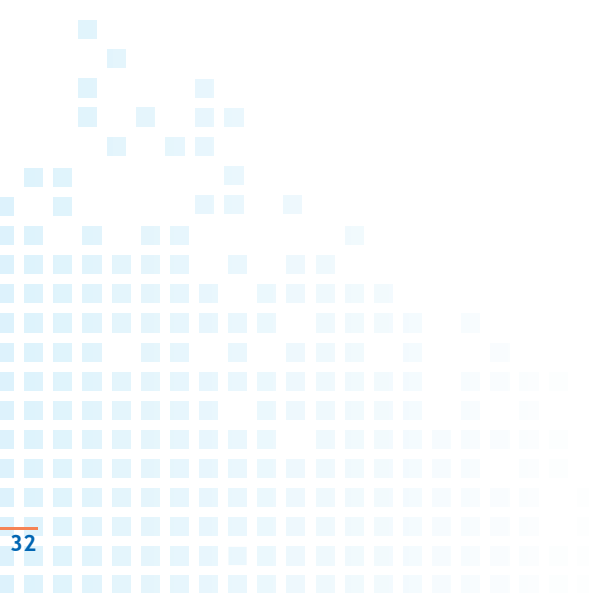


According to the European regulations (EC Regulation no. 1828/2006) beneficiaries have the contractual obligation to place temporary billboards and permanent plaques according to the Visual Identity Manual of each programme.

Examples:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/commu/outils_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/commu/document/fiche/sv_train_en.pdf (public transport advertising)





3. MANAGEMENT OF THE COMMUNICATION PLAN

3.1 THE BUDGET

Legislative requirements have to be taken into account when making the calculations, such as the relevant regulation concerning eligible expenditure under each programme. The calculations must provide for a basic breakdown of items into the following categories:

1) Internal costs (associated with the administration and steering of the CP and with activities directly implemented using the internal resources), such as:

- staffing costs;
- equipment acquisition and replacement costs;
- administrative costs.

2) External costs - directly related to the information and promotional activities, generally for sub-contractors selected through a call for tenders, such as:

- costs of the information and promotional activities themselves: printing, audiovisual production, media buying;
- costs of services: advisory, assessment, PR, creative, and other external services.

Cost is critical in prioritising channels, both as an indicator of efficiency or as absolute value.

Drawing up the budget is a two step process: a top-down approach, in order to determine a general, estimated budget to achieve the planned results, followed by a bottom-up budgeting of each component activity.

The top-down approach implies a management decision on the budget that is to be spent, based on the prior analysis and on the overall available budget. This limits known, for every action, the project manager estimates the execution costs, and the budget that results bottom-up must fit into the overall budget.

In this process, a set of common sense questions needs answer, like:

- Which is the appropriate budget?
- What is the most that can be spent?
- What are the actual needs?
- How much is worth paying?

The next step consists in segmentation of the available budget in time units. At the same time, the budget allocation can be related to the activity timetable to make sure that the allocated funds are adequate for each programme/project stage (at first there will be higher expenses for launching the information and promotion campaigns etc.)

Monitoring spending throughout implementation is based on four principles:

- Economy;

- Effectiveness;
- Efficiency;
- Sustainability.

Monitoring is to be carried out constantly, monthly, quarterly or yearly, for each individual activity, based on the set budget. In the end, drawdown of funds can be combined at the programme level, by priorities and objectives, thereby facilitating the monitoring of the delivery costs against the expected results.

3.2 THE TIMETABLE

To ensure the successful implementation of the communication plan **the deadlines for delivering the content of the plan** must be defined. From the point of view of the effectiveness and efficiency of financial outlay, the timing of the individual activities is crucial; activities cannot be implemented at random but must take place when their potential impact is at a maximum.

Each activity undergoes various precise stages of preparation, which have to be included in the timetable, along with activity accounting and the various calls for tenders for service providers, etc.

Although the timetable in the Communication Plan document is really only indicative, it should be based on realistic foundations and should respect the following principles:

- For the programme/project launch the campaign exposure should generally be large; the programme/project is new and unknown and the most effective possible media mix should be made in order to achieve maximum awareness;
- The timetable should take into account the preparation stages; those responsible for the implementation should be aware of the time required to prepare the application of certain tools;
- The timetable must reflect the available funding for individual periods (allocations);
- The timetable must take account of the fact that the programme funds will continue to be drawn down over 6 years, and that despite this information and publicity actions will have to continue as well as monitoring and evaluation activities assessing the implementation of the Communication Plan as a whole.

Annual operational plans can then be organised on a monthly or even weekly basis, which provide more detailed and realistic activity planning.

Pre-announcements should be organized to make people aware prior to the actual launch of the programme about what it is planned to happen in the coming period.

3.3 HUMAN RESOURCES

Before delegating communication actions to external service providers it is advisable to first take a look at the human resources available internally.

Usually, a dedicated team is set up to conceive, implement and evaluate the information and publicity measures. In this case it is important for the team to remain in close communication with the Managing Authority.

The communication team is also responsible for relating to all entities involved in the programme management. This department will have the role of coordinating the internal and external communication.

Basic personnel of a communication team

The **Communication Manager** has the overall responsibility for the communication activity of the organization, he manages the communication of all information and the information flow. The Communication Manager will elaborate, implement and oversee communication plans that promote the organization and its programmes.

Essential duties and responsibilities include the following:

- contributes to the development and execution of communication plans to achieve stated objectives;
- incorporates strategic development and successful execution of written and spoken communications activities;
- maintains coordination of communication plans;
- approves purchase of media, logistic of events;
- manages the organisation/programme identity, name and reputation;
- supervises the production of publicity brochures, handouts, direct mail leaflets, promotional videos, photographs, films and multimedia programmes;
- supervises that websites are timely updated to reflect progress and image;
- coordinates various internal and external activities, including:
 - ▶ fairs;
 - ▶ public events;
 - ▶ shows.

PR Officer (can also act as spokesperson)

A public relations (PR) officer uses all forms of media and communication to build, maintain and manage the reputation of organisations ranging from public bodies or services to businesses and voluntary organisations. PR aims to manage reputation in order to gain understanding and support, and influence opinion and behaviour.

Whilst it is generally acknowledged that there is no such thing as a typical day in public relations (PR), the following activities make up a PR role:

- research and analysis followed by continuous evaluation of the organisation or campaign strategy by: conducting focus groups; co-ordinating surveys; researching recent reports and articles;
- initiating and planning PR campaigns: defining goals; analysing problems and opportunities; liaising with management and clients (internal and external);

- writing and editing press releases, in-house newsletters, speeches, articles and annual reports;
- maintaining and updating information on the organisation's website;
- answering enquiries from individuals, journalists and other organisations;
- speaking in public at presentations, press conferences, radio and TV interviews, meetings;
- developing and maintaining good working relations with the media, including local and national newspapers, magazines, radio and television;
- organising special events, such as press conferences, exhibitions, open days, tours, competitions and sponsorship;

Spokesperson: has the authority to speak on behalf of the represented organisation. He is the first point of contact for the media and is responsible for providing information to the media that can be disseminated onwards.

Communication Advisors: communication experts, media agencies. They have very good grasp of the subject, often a background in research, develop high profile networks.

The job description of both public relation officer and communication manager should be put down and circulated within the organization in order for all to know their roles and responsibilities.

3.4 EVALUATION

This is the last stage of the communication plan, where experts measure the results of the plan, in order to decide a follow-up in the same shape or different changes that must be made.

The plan is considered as effective when the activities have been adequately planned, the receivers have understood the message, primary and secondary groups have been reached, the participation of the audiences in the events has been satisfying, the media impressions are positive, and, last but not least, the goals have been achieved.

Evaluation establishes the quality and effectiveness of the measures. This is why first of all, it is important to define the criteria for quality and effectiveness.

To evaluate means to measure. For this, we need to establish the specific indicators.

A. Quantitative indicators:

Indicators of impact:

- change (increase/decrease) of the level of transparency ('people know more' about accessing funding programmes);
- change (increase/decrease) of the degree of awareness/ knowledge ('people know more' about the EU actions through the Structural Funds).

Indicators of result: they evaluate the direct and immediate effects of the communication tools used, on the target groups:

- number of visits on a website;

- number of participants at the event, compared to the number of invited ones;
- number of financing applications compared to the number of informed prospective beneficiaries;
- number of press articles or TV / radio news following a press conference or a major event.

Indicators of implementation: they evaluate the effectiveness of various actions/tools of the Communication Plan compared to the planned ones; example:

- number of actions/tools implemented compared to the planned ones.

Budget indicators: they evaluate the communication expenditures compared to the available budget.

- expenditure compared to estimated costs.

B. Qualitative indicators: they are specific to each activity/product delivered.

Examples:

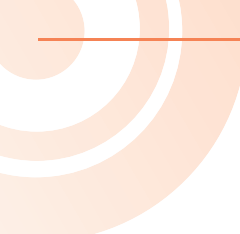
- For events: quality of organization (punctuality, service delivery, staff attitude), level of involvement in debates, professional standard, clarity and length of speeches, quality of reference materials.
- For publications: attractive looks, language comprehension, balance between text and visuals, user-friendliness, accessibility.

3.5 THE COMMUNICATION/AGENCY BRIEF

The brief is a key document that conveys in a compact and standardized way requests for services to the specialized third part consultants: advertising and media agencies, PR companies, on-line communicators. Besides the general content described below, the brief becomes specific when talking about creative strategy, media planning, or on-line campaign support by adding the pertinent details, without overloading the document with irrelevant data. Besides being compact and standardized in format, this document should be simple in expression and inspiring for the partners' minds. But this comes with experience.

The communication brief worksheet

- **Project Summary:** states general project information, goals, and relevant background information. This paragraph should be a statement overview of the project as a whole.
- **Audience Profile:** profiles the target audience. Provide enough detail to enhance everyone's understanding of who the audience is. Include audience demographic information. Break down the audience into all the groups that will be reached by the communication tools. Use these questions as a guide.
 - ▶ Who is your target audience? Include occupation, age range, gender, activities, and any other relevant information.
 - ▶ What is a typical task the target should perform?
 - ▶ What do these people care about? Why are they interested in what your "product" will be

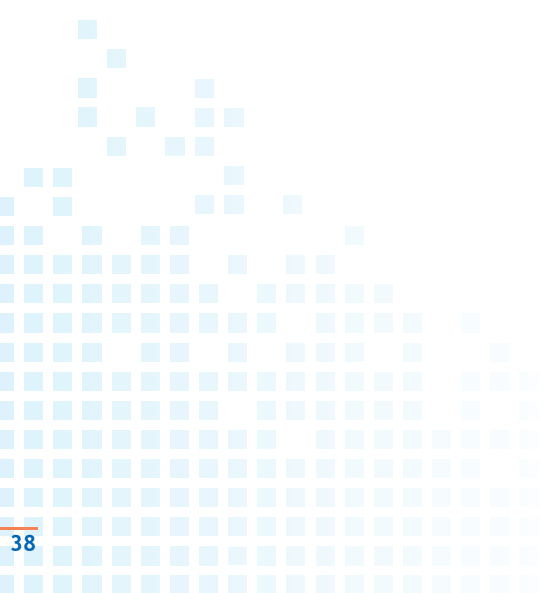


offering? What trigger would prompt them to get interested?

- **Perception/Tone/Guidelines:** How should your target audience respond to your communication?
 - What does the target audience think and feel about the programme/project and the current communication activities?
 - What do we want them to think and feel?
 - How will this new communication help achieve this goal?
 - What words can be used to describe the way the communication and the programme/project should be perceived by the target audience?
 - Are there some specific visual references the communication should follow?
- **Communication Strategy:** How will we meet our measurable goals?
 - What is the overall message you are trying to convey to your target audience?
 - Identify stages of development (if appropriate) used to execute goals.
 - How will you measure the success?

- **Budget**

How much money is available for the communication? If the budget has not been set, what is a reasonable minimum and maximum? There are two approaches to setting budgets. One is to define the parameters and then ask for a quote. The other is to share the budget and work collaboratively to use the resources in the most effective ways.



ANNEX I

Extract from

the COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) NO. 1828/2006

of 8th December 2006 setting out rules for the implementation of the Council Regulation (EC) no. 1883/2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and of Regulation (EC) no. 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Regional Development Fund.

CHAPTER II

PROVISIONS IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EC) NO 1083/2006

Section 1

Information and publicity

*Article 2**Preparation of the communication plan*

1. A communication plan, as well as any major amendments to it, shall be drawn up by the managing authority for the operational programme for which it is responsible or by the Member State to cover several or all operational programmes co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) or the Cohesion Fund.
2. The communication plan shall include at least the following:
 - (a) the aims and target groups;
 - (b) the strategy and content of the information and publicity measures to be taken by the Member State or the managing authority, aimed at potential beneficiaries, beneficiaries and the public, having regard to the added value of Community assistance at national, regional and local level;
 - (c) the indicative budget for implementation of the plan;
 - (d) the administrative departments or bodies responsible for implementation of the information and publicity measures;
 - (e) an indication of how the information and publicity measures are to be evaluated in terms of visibility and awareness of operational programmes and of the role played by the Community.

*Article 3**Examination of compatibility of the communication plan*

The Member State or the managing authority shall submit the communication plan to the Commission within four months of the date of adoption of the operational programme or, where the communication plan covers two or more operational programmes, of the date of adoption of the last of these operational programmes.

In the absence of observations made by the Commission within two months of receipt of the communication plan, the plan shall be deemed to comply with Article 2(2).

If the Commission sends observations within two months of receipt of the communication plan, the Member State or the managing authority shall within two months send a revised communication plan to the Commission.

In the absence of further observations by the Commission within two months of submission of a revised communication plan, it shall be considered that the communication plan may be implemented. The Member State or the managing authority shall commence the information and publicity activities provided for in Articles 5, 6 and 7, where relevant, even in the absence of the final version of the communication plan.

Article 4
Implementation and monitoring of the communication plan

1. The managing authority shall inform the monitoring committee for each operational programme of the following:
 - (a) the communication plan and progress in its implementation;
 - (b) information and publicity measures carried out;
 - (c) the means of communication used.

The managing authority shall provide the monitoring committee with examples of such measures.

2. The annual reports and the final report on implementation of an operational programme, referred to in Article 67 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, shall include:
 - (a) examples of information and publicity measures for the operational programme carried out when implementing the communication plan;
 - (b) the arrangements for the information and publicity measures referred to in point (d) of Article 7(2) including, where applicable, the electronic address at which such data may be found;
 - (c) the content of any major amendments to the communication plan.

The annual implementation report for the year 2010 and the final implementation report shall contain a chapter assessing the results of the information and publicity measures in terms of visibility and awareness of operational programmes and of the role played by the Community, as provided for in point (e) of Article 2(2).

3. The means used for implementing, monitoring and evaluating the communication plan shall be proportional to the information and publicity measures identified in the communication plan.

Article 5
Information measures for potential beneficiaries

1. The managing authority shall, in accordance with the communication plan, ensure that the operational programme is disseminated widely, with details of the financial contributions from the Funds concerned, and that it is made available to all interested parties. It shall in addition ensure that information on the financing opportunities offered by joint assistance from the Community and the Member State through the operational programme is disseminated as widely as possible.

2. The managing authority shall provide potential beneficiaries with clear and detailed information on at least the following:
 - (a) the conditions of eligibility to be met in order to qualify for financing under an operational programme;
 - (b) a description of the procedures for examining applications for funding and of the time periods involved;

- (c) the criteria for selecting the operations to be financed;
- (d) the contacts at national, regional or local level who can provide information on the operational programmes.

In addition, the managing authority shall inform potential beneficiaries of the publication provided for in point (d) of Article 7(2).

3. The managing authority shall involve in information and publicity measures, in accordance with national laws and practices, at least one of the following bodies that can widely disseminate the information listed in paragraph 2:

- (a) national, regional and local authorities and development agencies;
- (b) trade and professional associations;
- (c) economic and social partners;
- (d) non-governmental organisations;
- (e) organisations representing business;
- (f) information centres on Europe as well as Commission representations in the Member States;
- (g) educational institutions.

Article 6

Information measures for beneficiaries

The managing authority shall inform beneficiaries that acceptance of funding is also an acceptance of their inclusion in the list of beneficiaries published in accordance with point (d) of Article 7(2).

Article 7

Responsibilities of the managing authority relating to information and publicity measures for the public

1. The managing authority shall ensure that the information and publicity measures are implemented in accordance with the communication plan and that they aim at the widest possible media coverage using various forms and methods of communication at the appropriate territorial level.

2. The managing authority shall be responsible for organising at least the following information and publicity measures:

- (a) a major information activity publicising the launch of an operational programme, even in the absence of the final version of the communication plan;
- (b) at least one major information activity a year, as set out in the communication plan, presenting the achievements of the operational programme(s) including, where relevant, major projects;
- (c) flying the flag of the European Union for one week starting 9 May, in front of the premises of each managing authority;
- (d) the publication, electronically or otherwise, of the list of beneficiaries, the names of the operations and the amount of public funding allocated to the operations.

Participants in an operation of the ESF shall not be named.

Article 8

Responsibilities of beneficiaries relating to information and publicity measures for the public

1. The beneficiary shall be responsible for informing the public, by means of the measures laid down

in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4, about the assistance obtained from the Funds.

2. The beneficiary shall put up a permanent explanatory plaque that is visible and of significant size no later than six months after completion of an operation that fulfils the following conditions:

- (a) the total public contribution to the operation exceeds EUR 500 000;
- (b) the operation consists in the purchase of a physical object or in the financing of infrastructure or of construction operations.

The plaque shall state the type and name of the operation, in addition to the information referred to in Article 9. That information shall take up at least 25% of the plaque.

3. The beneficiary shall, during the implementation of the operation, put up a billboard at the site of each operation which fulfils the following conditions:

- (a) the total public contribution to the operation exceeds EUR 500 000;
- (b) the operation consists in the financing of infrastructure or of construction operations.

The information referred to in Article 9 shall take up at least 25% of the billboard.

When the operation is completed, the billboard shall be replaced by the permanent explanatory plaque referred to in paragraph 2.

4. Where an operation receives funding under an operational programme co-financed by the ESF and, in appropriate cases, where an operation receives funding under the ERDF or the Cohesion Fund, the beneficiary shall ensure that those taking part in the operation have been informed of that funding.

The beneficiary shall provide clear notice to the effect that the operation being implemented has been selected under an operational programme co-financed by the ESF, the ERDF or the Cohesion Fund.

Any document, including any attendance or other certificate, concerning such an operation shall include a statement to the effect that the operational programme was co-financed by the ESF or, where appropriate, the ERDF or the Cohesion Fund.

Article 9

Technical characteristics of information and publicity measures for the operation

All information and publicity measures aimed at beneficiaries, potential beneficiaries and the public shall include the following:

- (a) the emblem of the European Union, in accordance with the graphic standards set out in Annex 1, and reference to the European Union;
- (b) reference to the Fund concerned:
 - (a) for the ERDF: “European Regional Development Fund”;
 - (b) for the Cohesion Fund: “Cohesion Fund”;
 - (c) for the ESF: “European Social Fund”;
- (c) a statement chosen by the managing authority, highlighting the added value of the intervention of the Community, and preferably “Investing in your future”.

For small promotional objects, points (b) and (c) shall not apply.

Article 10
Network and exchange of experience

1. Each managing authority shall designate the contact persons to be responsible for information and publicity and shall inform the Commission accordingly. In addition, Member States may designate a single contact person for all operational programmes.
2. Community networks comprising the persons designated under paragraph 1 may be set up to ensure exchanges of good practice, including the results of implementation of the communication plan, and exchanges of experience in implementing the information and publicity measures under this Section.
3. Exchanges of experience in the field of information and publicity may be supported through technical assistance under Article 45 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006.

Annex 1: Instructions for creating the emblem and a definition of the standard colours

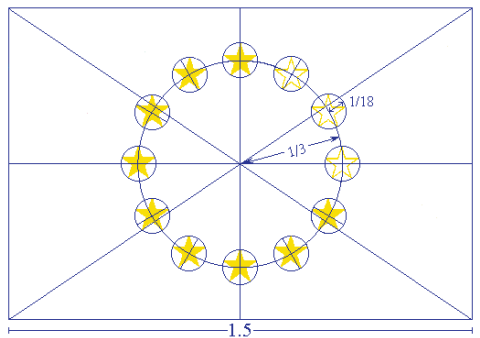
SYMBOLIC DESCRIPTION

Against a background of blue sky, twelve golden stars form a circle representing the union of the peoples of Europe. The number of stars is fixed, twelve being the symbol of perfection and unity.

HERALDIC DESCRIPTION

On an azure field a circle of twelve golden mullets, their points not touching.

GEOMETRIC DESCRIPTION



The emblem has the form of a blue rectangular flag of which the fly is one and a half times the length of the hoist. Twelve gold stars situated at equal intervals form an invisible circle whose centre is the point of intersection of the diagonals of the rectangle. The radius of the circle is equal to one third of the height of the hoist. Each of the stars has five points which are situated on the circumference of an invisible circle whose radius is equal to one eighteenth of the height of the hoist. All the stars are upright, i.e. with one point vertical and two points in a straight line at right angles to the mast. The circle is arranged so that the stars appear in the position of the hours on the face of a clock. Their number is invariable.

REGULATION COLOURS

The emblem is in the following colours:

PANTONE REFLEX BLUE for the surface of the rectangle;

PANTONE YELLOW for the stars.

Four-colour process

If the four-colour process is used, recreate the two standard colours by using the four colours of the four-colour process.

PANTONE YELLOW is obtained by using 100% “Process Yellow”.

PANTONE REFLEX BLUE is obtained by mixing 100% “Process Cyan” and 80% “Process Magenta”.

INTERNET

In the web-palette PANTONE REFLEX BLUE corresponds to colour RGB:0/0/153 (hexadecimal: 000099) and PANTONE YELLOW to colour RGB:255/204/0 (hexadecimal: FFCC00).

MONOCHROME REPRODUCTION PROCESS

Using black, outline the rectangle in black and print the stars in black on white.

Using blue (Reflex Blue), use 100% with the stars reproduced in negative white.

REPRODUCTION ON A COLOURED BACKGROUND



If there is no alternative to a coloured background, put a white border around the rectangle, the width of the border being 1/25th of the height of the rectangle.





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Regional Operational Programme

www.inforegio.ro

Romania-Bulgaria Cross Border Cooperation Programme

www.cbchromaniabulgaria.eu

Romania-Serbia Cross Border Cooperation Programme

www.romania-serbia.net

Joint Operational Programme Romania-Ukraine-Moldova

www.ro-ua-md.net

Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Programme

www.blacksea-cbc.net



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