



Interreg Project Management Camp

Project Communication Strategy

The communication strategy is designed to help the project communicate effectively and achieve project objectives. It shows how effective communications can engage effectively with stakeholders and demonstrate the success of project's work.

The purpose of the communication strategy:

- It helps address and overcome the challenges that come with having to communicate from and about an Interreg project.
- It reflects the project purpose towards the external environment - linking project beneficiaries and target groups.
- It makes things happen. Projects are not isolated islands, communication is important to move forward.
- It makes the priorities transparent, identifies where resources should be concentrated and proposes delivery mechanisms for this.
- It allows projects to plan ahead and thereby act in a timely fashion: stakeholders' agendas are busy and they need to be informed in good time of events or promotional activities.

Figure: Communication strategy



**Table: Key elements of the communication strategy**

<p>Objectives</p> <p><i>Why do we communicate?</i></p>	<p>To inform about achievements and showing the Community assistance as well as the added value of Interreg cooperation.</p> <p>To involve the target audiences. Get the attention and connect with the audience in order to persuade them and eventually influence their behaviour.</p> <p>Communication objectives should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate how communications can contribute to the achievement of project objectives. • Reflect the project vision and objectives. • Embed a long term perspective which supports the durability and transferability of project outputs.
<p>Target groups</p> <p><i>To whom do we communicate?</i></p>	<p>The target groups are the audience of the project. It is the group whose behaviour, attitude or condition the project intends to influence or it is influenced by. They are identified with the stakeholders analysis carried out at the project idea generation stage.</p> <p>The partnership will need to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the target groups interest in the project; • what the target groups' needs are; • what information the target groups will need from the project for their work and interests; • what information or knowledge are they missing or wishing for. <p>Select which audiences will be interested in which parts of the project or its activities.</p>
<p>Key messages</p> <p><i>What do we want to tell?</i></p>	<p>A message is what is communicated. The purpose of the message is to establish an engaging relation with the project target audience.</p> <p>Once you have identified your audiences, the next task is to break down your objectives into relevant messages for each of those audiences.</p> <p>It is sufficient to identify the key contents for your messages.</p>
<p>Roles</p> <p><i>Who does what?</i></p>	<p>The cooperation criteria are valid for communications, as for any other work in the project: joint implementation and joint staffing are concerned at this stage.</p> <p>The purpose of agreeing on communication roles and jointly develop the communication is manifold:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The project establishes a common identity. b) The project communicates with a unique voice. c) The messages are coherent and non-contradictory. <p>Defining the roles in project communications means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to choose a partner who takes the overall coordination responsibility; • to identify a reference person in each partner organisation who will develop, implement and follow-up on the communication tasks.
<p>Activities</p> <p><i>How will we do it?</i></p>	<p>Communication activities are the specific tasks that the partners will carry out to fulfil the communication objectives. These activities are developed alongside the project activities and therefore differ during the various phases of project.</p> <p>Sometimes there is a fine distinction between communication tasks and general</p>



	<p>project activities. General project activities should be clustered logically into work packages and contribute to the objectives. Those activities that are directly contributing to the communication objectives should belong to the communication work package.</p> <p>When drafting the communication work package listing the communication activities, you will also define the communication outputs and deliverables.</p> <p>Besides the communication objectives, the choice of the activities will depend on two other factors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) What are the communication tools and channels. b) What are the best activities and methods to support the communication about the project towards the target audiences.
<p>Timeplan</p> <p><i>When to do what?</i></p>	<p>The time plan addresses when communication activities should take place in relation to the rest of the project.</p> <p>At the stage of project development a time plan for communication coincides with the work plan, giving an indication of the main project communication activities and outputs based on the communication objectives and on the expected development and deliveries of the other work packages.</p> <p>More detailed communications time plans should also be developed during implementation with a short, medium and a long term perspective in order to support the project durability.</p>
<p>Budget</p> <p><i>How much will it cost?</i></p>	<p>The budget must reflect the cost of carrying out communication activities and the share of responsibilities among the partners. It is important to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess the human and financial resources required for each activity. 2. Allocate these resources on the various activities. 3. Calculate the corresponding share per partner. 4. Integrate the costs with the rest of the project budget.
<p>Measuring</p> <p><i>How do we know if we will be successful?</i></p>	<p>Like any other activity, communication is measurable and can be evaluated. This should be based both on quantitative and qualitative indicators which measure the level of achievement of the communication objectives:</p> <p>Qualitative indicators: describe how a certain objective or target has been reached and to which extent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They normally consist in a series of structured questions. • They may be measured before, during and after the project duration in order to capture a change. • Information can be gathered by means of surveys, polls, interviews, “likes”, testimonials etc. <p>Quantitative indicators: they provide evidence based information on the extent to which a certain objective or target has been reached.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop meaningful indicators. • Keep it to a minimum of essential and effective indicators. • Plan to measure it regularly in order to capture the extent of the change. <p>Do not forget that collecting and analysing these data is part of the project communication tasks, develop simple indicators and do not be overambitious.</p>