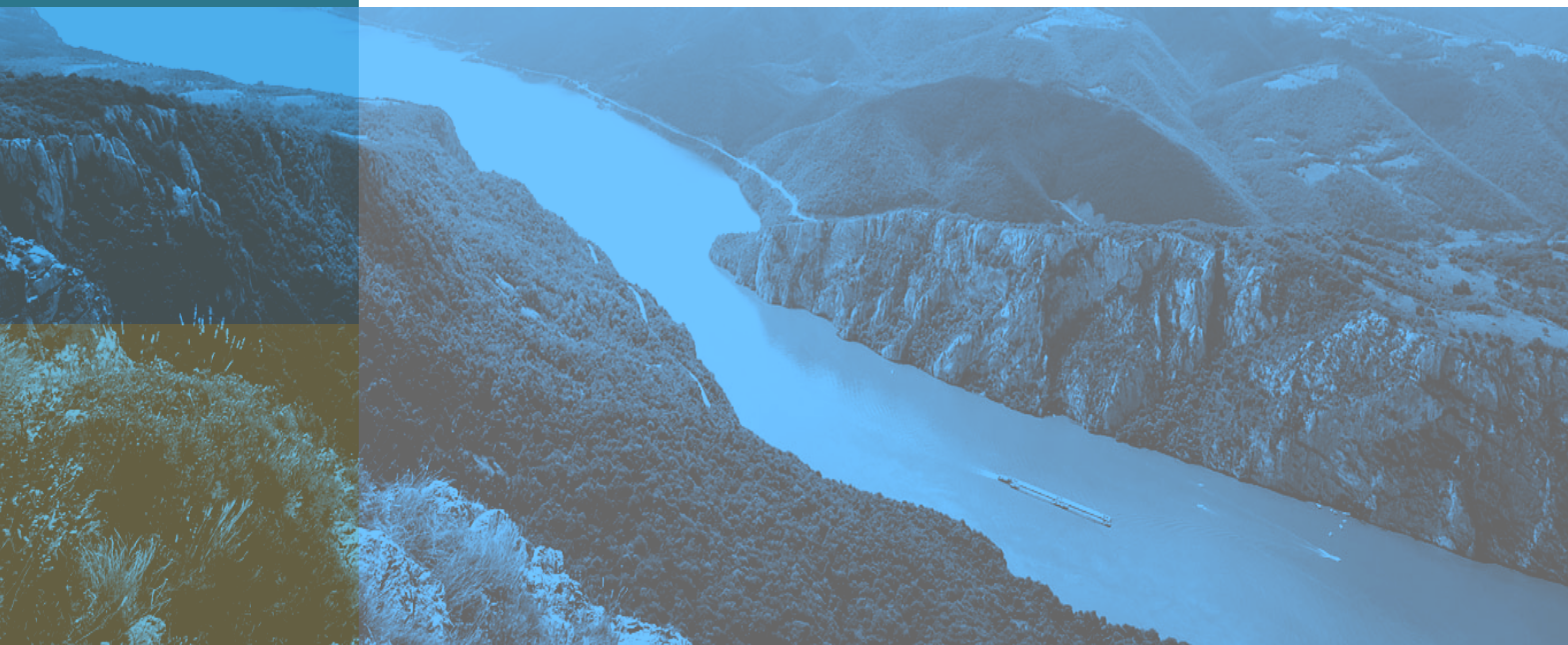




Interreg



Danube Transnational Programme



DTP Communication Toolkit for projects

A stream of cooperation

This document has been adapted by the Danube Transnational Programme based on the document 'Communication Toolkit. Version 3.0' developed by Interact.

Version July 2019



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This toolkit is a compilation of global recommendations for effective communication tailored to Interreg specific context to help projects plan and carry out their communications more effectively and in synergy with other projects. The contents are not binding and projects should be aware of their programme-specific requirements.

"The two words *information* and *communication* are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through."

Sydney Harris

The Communication Toolkit

Communication is a crucial process embedded into every stage of a project's life cycle. From project start up, through implementation, until and even after closure of a project, communication plays a key role in its success. Considering the diversity of contents communicated to varied target groups through diverse channels, the complex process of communication requires careful planning and implementation.

Communication is complementary to a project's overall management tasks, but it is also a management task in itself. It is not possible to identify a single process that could be applied to every communication activity every time. But it *is* possible to draw up some general principles for projects funded by Interreg programmes based on combined experience and good practises.

This toolkit has been prepared by Interact (the supporting programme of Interreg programmes) and adapted by Danube Transnational Programme for inspiring communication staff working for projects funded by European territorial cooperation programmes (branded as Interreg) in handling their daily communication operations.

The toolkit is a compilation of global recommendations tailored to Interreg-specific context to help projects plan and carry out the communication activities most relevant to their works. It does not claim to provide exhaustive guidance for communication of all projects funded by Interreg programmes. Therefore, you should always take into consideration specific rules and requirements of Danube Transnational Programme while getting inspired by the toolkit.

The toolkit is prepared taking into account the needs and demands of Interreg programmes and projects. As the projects are key messengers about the benefits of EU funding with their concrete activities and local target groups in the regions, it is the programmes' responsibility to strongly encourage and support them in their communication activities.

In case of questions, do not hesitate to contact the Communication officer of the Danube Transnational Programme Joint Secretariat: Eloy Gómez (eloy.gomez@interreg-danube.eu ; Tel: 0036 1 795 1787).

PLAN





1. General introduction to project communication

Despite their relatively small budgets, Interreg programmes generate thousands of cooperation projects that positively impact the lives of European citizens and connect the territories of the European Union with each other as well as with their neighbours.

Projects are key messengers showing the benefits of EU funding with their concrete activities directly targeting citizens. This makes well planned project communication essential to convey the messages efficiently. Effective project communication is a key element of successful projects.

The tips and observations listed in the following chapters are intended to provide the reader with a guiding reference in project efforts.

Legal Basis

The obligations of beneficiaries regarding information and communication measures for the public are included in: Annex XII, section 2.2 of [EC Regulation 1303/2013](#).

The regulations contain a set of general, compulsory measures, but each programme can develop additional requirements, which they insert in subsidy contracts and partnership agreements.

Whose responsibility?

Communicating projects is a shared responsibility involving both programme bodies and project partners. On the project partners' side, not only the person in charge of communication but all the project team shall be committed to the promotion of the project and the dissemination of its good results in their respective countries and regions.

One of the key first steps in effective project communication is to ensure communication is not left orphaned. Project partners are usually focused on the key project activities and financial management of the project to meet their objectives and making sure they are fulfilling their contractual obligations. This is very natural. But communication may be neglected if there is not enough project encouragement and emphasis on how important it is as well as its ownership.

Having a dedicated and qualified communication manager per project will positively impact quality, direction and consistency in the project's communication, overseeing communication activities and materials and following up on tasks and responsibilities among project partners.

Project communication officers need to be supported by their implementation colleagues with timely provided contents, as people who are well informed about projects' progress content-wise.

Project communication officer's tasks may include:

- Prepare a communication plan comprising communication objectives, target groups, key messages, activities, channels, delivery timeline, task division among the partners, evaluation plan, budget etc.
- Coordinate the implementation of the plan ensuring consistency of the communication activities across the partnership
- Monitor the results of the communication activities and adapt as needed in order to achieve the objectives set.
- Ensure programme visual guidelines are observed
- Liaise with the programme regarding all communication matters
- Investigate and exploit project promotion channels
- Exchange good practices with other DTP projects

What should be the aim?

The overall aim in project communication efforts should be to ensure high quality communication at project level. While it is important to ensure that the eligibility rules are observed, it alone does not ensure efficient communication. Once legal compliance is ensured, the focus should be on:

- Support to partners in understanding and applying the communication rules
- Improve visibility of the project and its results
- Ensure good quality project communication materials
- Urge partners to highlight the support from the EU funds
- Ensure efficient branding
- Support project partners in handling specific communication topics in a way to ensure that project communication objectives are met, such as organising well-planned and impactful events, creating videos, reaching out via social media and traditional media, creating or evoking emotions when communicating to the public, etc.

How are the projects supported?

Programmes support project partners mainly via guides and manuals, communication trainings and personal support via daily communication channels. In most programmes, project implementation manuals, visual identity guides and project communication strategies/plans are the main reference documents for partners in planning and implementing their communication activities and materials.

From planning to project closure

Project promotion starts as early as the application stage as this is the stage at which the objectives and activities of a project are planned. The first stage is to make sure that you strategically planned your communication already at the application phase as it will be difficult to adjust the contract once projects go into implementation. It is still advisable to plan the project communication in a more strategic way and with more detail in the early phase of the project and to clearly agree on the division of responsibilities. The DTP doesn't request a communication plan at the application phase but at an early stage of implementation and to be submitted together with the first progress report.

A communication plan is a communication strategy but on a smaller, project scale. It should still include the main aims for the project's communication activities and not just list activities.

That way the project will have a document that partners can agree upon. It will serve as a document to refer to periodically. If a written plan doesn't exist, it can be easy to forget the non-urgent (but perhaps more important) activities. The level of detail in the project communication plan can be adjusted to the needs of the project in question. It is always important to underline the question why: *Why communicate to a target group and why should they be communicated a certain message.*

Promotion of projects

What kind of achievements to promote, to whom, how to formulate the key messages, and which channels to use? It all depends on your project objectives. What does your project want to achieve? What kind of messages should you be conveying in order to convince these target groups to become aware of your project achievements, get involved and make use of its results?

Target groups of project promotion

In communication, knowing who you talk to is the key element in identifying the what, how and where talk to them. Your own prioritisation will depend on what you would like to achieve and with whom, but here is a list of potential audiences you may want to highlight:

- Thematic/sectoral groups based on the type of project such as NGOs, SMEs, educational institutions, public authorities etc.
- Policy makers
- EU community (EU institutions, other European Social and Investment Funds (ESIF) programmes, EU grassroots)
- Citizens primarily inside but also outside the project's geographical area

What to highlight in a project?

Sometimes showing the tip of an iceberg is enough to inform the viewer of what lies underneath. Although it will depend on many variables, here are a few ideas for what aspects of the project can be highlighted:

- Direct impacts on the lives of your project target group and wider public
- Most spectacular outputs
- Number of people it positively effects and other key figures
- Key improvements:
 - Economic growth, e.g. jobs created by a rural development project
 - Environmental improvements, e.g. wildlife saved, emissions/pollution reduced, forestation increased, improvements in air quality, etc.
 - Innovation, e.g. new techniques, methods discovered or ones that became widespread
- Project partnership, show what people across borders can achieve by working together.

Formulating promotional messages

When you want to feature a message, skip the typical “project summary” facts and focus on the improvements brought by the project such as:

- What has your project done that made a difference?
- What is improved compared to the situation before your project?
- What would happen if your project was not implemented?

- What was the benefit of cooperation? How could the results not have been reached without cooperation of the partners?

Once you spark interest and convince the viewer of the benefit, they are more likely to go to the sources you provide for the “project summary” facts and more.

Highlight the EU support

The European Union is a product of many parts. The parts make up the entity of the EU. Interreg is one of them.

Always use the brand "Interreg" to refer to European Territorial Cooperation and the fact that the project is financed by the European Union through the Danube Transnational Programme.

Each time you use your project logo, you contribute to the joint perception of the Interreg brand. Use your project logo as prominently and frequently as possible.

Use our programme visual identity and Interreg brand elements.

Mention the EU funding in written pieces such as interviews, articles, news reports, newsletters etc. However, remember that people should be in focus and the technicalities are only there to support it. Have them available but keep the focus on the story.

When formulating messages for your identified target groups, consider formulating it around “do you want to see how our project improved? It is funded by the EU”. This way, you are talking to a variety of individuals interested in the project’s topic and what it offers regardless of their stance of the EU. Once sparked interest, your measures for EU visibility will ensure that the target is aware of the achievements of the project thanks to EU funding.

Make use of different channels

Having identified why you are promoting your project, to whom, by whom and with what kind of messages, now you are ready to pick the most suitable channels. Making good use of different channels does not necessarily mean making use of all of them. It is rather utilising channels that will deliver your messages to your identified target groups in the most effective way.

Modern consumers are lazy, have limited time and are selective. Being aware of the typical behaviour of these consumers and your technical abilities in using different channels will provide you with a head start. Use multiple channels to increase your chance of reach. Here below you can find some of these channels, to be explained in more details in the following sections of this Toolkit.

On the website

The summary and basic facts of each DTP project are automatically included on your project website. Ensure the project description is easy-to-understand and appealing and include rich visuals in all sections. The rich visuals may include high quality images with the true spirit of the project, short and simple videos, professionally designed infographics with key data, etc.

Highlight important project news that are of wider interest. Websites of project partners and of other organisations they are a member of can provide excellent targeted promotion opportunities. We encourage you to make use of such channels.

Videos

Consider using videos for promoting your achievements. The videos should be kept short and show what your project actually achieved through a selection of your best practices/results.

Ensure the availability of authentic footage from projects. To do that, identify in advance how you are gathering such footage: are you filming the projects on the spots yourself, hiring external film makers or asking project partners to film and send to you? Make sure project partners are aware of their role and what you ask from them.

You could feature interviews with people directly benefiting from projects to pass on the key messages through authentic stories.

Use simple storytelling techniques: Bad situation – project – improvement of bad situation for the better.

Social media

The use of social media as a source of information about what is going on in your project is of major importance. By following the projects in social media your target groups are able to keep themselves up to date about your achievements, events, promotional products and more. Building a strong connection and feeling of cooperation between target groups and projects on social media can be used to enhance the feeling of working together and helping each other reach out to wider audiences such as by sharing/re-tweeting each other's relevant posts.

- Feature social videos with key project achievements
- On relevant days e.g., World Water Day --- remind followers of your project on water treatment
- Share catchy visuals
- Share project news on media with links

Press

Here are a few points to consider to increase the chance of your project coverage by mainstream media:

- Actuality of project topics/results. For example, a region suffering from flood will be more alerted to a news piece about your project that works on cross border solutions to floods
- Relevance of project achievements to the country/region that makes up the audience of the media you are targeting
- Present a story that the media and society can identify with. Abstract profound concepts are good for background articles, features and other formats. If you would like to attract the attention of local media, present a local story, e.g., a project that helps the city be more environmentally friendly.
- Keep a journalist contact list that you can send your interesting stories to. Even better is to work with journalists focusing on certain topics and target only them when you have something related to their interest.
- Build a win-win partnership with the journalist. The institution is not the only party seeking the accomplishment of an objective (to have the information published) but also the journalist gets benefits from this partnership: an interesting story, attractive or powerful images and the possibility to include sources that are valuable for their media.

Example: Project 3Smart, funded by the Interreg Danube Transnational Programme www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/3smart/section/in-the-media .

In writing

Whether you are promoting your project through news, newsletters, blog posts or another written method, the way you formulate the text and its accessibility will determine its impact.

Give a brief overview of the output/result generated by the project and links to a more detailed story/product. These can be inventories, researches, online platforms, maps, publications and many more things.

Keep in mind the readers' existing knowledge on the issue and make it easy reading for also those who are not familiar with the specific field.

In your project newsletters include interesting information in plain English, e.g., an interview with project partner(s), an article written by a beneficiary. These can focus on their project management experience or promotion of their project's actual content and results. Remember to whom you are writing while formulating the messages.

Sometimes you don't need a whole article to promote your project. A sentence with the most crucial details from a project can help you achieve that promotion.

Examples:

- “Did you know? Thanks to ... project funded by the Danube Transnational Programme people in regions can now get service faster, cheaper and more efficiently.”
- “By the time project is finalised, emissions in region will be reduced by XX%”
- “Thanks to the project, border regions in and countries now have and benefits”
- “With the observation system established as a part of project funded by the Danube Transnational Programme, and countries can now jointly monitor ship wastes illegally disposed to X river”

Support project related contents with visuals and links to further details and contact details as much as possible.



2. Communication Plan

The projects will have an approved budget and plan for activities already in place in their application. It is still advisable to plan the project communication in more detail in the early phase of the project and to clearly agree on the division of responsibilities.

A Communication Plan or Strategy is the bible of project communications. It ensures that communication efforts help to achieve the project's goals, and that they are coordinated and effective. It also helps to clarify what staff, time and resources are needed and how to use them. Therefore a Communication Plan must be developed by the projects once approved in order to have standardised project communication practices, and use them effectively throughout the whole project implementation.

A Communication Plan provides an overall view on communication objectives and how the project plans to achieve these, whereas annual plans describe how, when and by whom the activities will be implemented for the particular year at hand.

It's a good idea to write down a communication plan, even if it is a small

project. That way the project will have a document that partners can agree upon. It will serve as a document to refer to periodically. A lot of communication work consists of "putting out fires" – responding to urgent needs. If they do not have a written plan, it can be easy to forget the non-urgent (but perhaps more important) activities. The level of detail in the project communication plan can be adjusted to the needs of the project in question.

The project's Communication Plan needs to be developed in close cooperation with the project coordinator and PPs. Communication is an essential element of a successful project, so all partners must be involved and committed in the communication activities.

The Communication Plan shall be submitted to the JS with the first Progress Report.

In developing the project Communication Plan, it is important to decide what communication tools and methods would be appropriate for specific project and communication objectives and for specific target groups

a) Prepare the Communication Plan

Before taking the first step with drafting the project Communication Plan:

- Review your **project objectives and priorities**. Understanding the overall project aims is key to identifying how the communication of the project will be organised.
 - Read the project approved application.
 - Understand what kind of *change* the project aims to bring about in the Programme area. This will help you define your communication objectives to help achieve this *change*.
 - Prepare an introduction about the project; include it in the Plan while drafting the document.
- Do a **SWOT analysis** of the project regarding communication. Identify:
 - Strengths: What have we got that we can use?
 - Weaknesses: What could damage our reputation?
 - Opportunities: What could we capitalise upon?
 - Threats: What might go wrong?
- Involve your colleagues in the project in setting up the Plan.
 - Hold internal consultations within project partners, and consult with other project stakeholders/experts.
 - Inform them of your SWOT findings, ask for their input. If possible, involve them in SWOT analysis process.

Outlined below are some key steps in developing a project Communication Plan

Step 1: Identify and analyse your target groups

You are now aware of what your project aims to achieve, when, where and how. And you have analysed your current situation with communication. You can proceed with the following:

- **Define** the project's communication **target groups**. For example, these can be:
 - Final beneficiaries of your project's results

- Local, regional, national authorities and European institutions
 - Network institutions and organisations
 - General public (citizens)
 - Internal stakeholders
- **Analyse your target groups.** This will help you identify what messages you want to deliver, how and through which channels.
- **Interests and information needs**
 - **Characteristics** (for example: number, location, education, language, background, organisation and position)
 - **Knowledge, attitude and practice** on the project's objectives
 - **Information sources**
- Identifying **primary and secondary target groups** can help you prioritise audiences and therefore determine the focus of your activities and messages.
- Primary target groups are more important audiences you primarily want to reach out to.
 - Secondary target groups are less (but still) important target groups you want to target with your communication efforts.

Step 2: Define your communication objectives and key messages.

- Identify your communication objectives and break it down for **each** target group. These objectives will depend on the **overall project objectives**. What kind of *change* do you exactly want to bring about in a target group?
- Following the possible target groups you defined, your objectives could be, for example, increase awareness of the **general public** about the results of your project.
- Communication activities should support the project objectives in achieving a change in at least one of the following three characteristics of the target groups:
- **Knowledge:** what new things do you want them to learn about your subject?
 - **Attitudes:** what changes in opinions do you want to stimulate?

- **Practice:** what changes do you aim at in what the target group does? What new things would you like them to do, and what things should they stop doing?
- For each of your objectives and each of your audiences, think of the **key messages**/information you want to convey.
 - Basic messages should be kept simple. Details can be added later if necessary.
 - Messages should address the audience's interests and attract their attention.
- It is important to formulate the objectives correctly in order to better focus on, implement and evaluate your communication activities.

Step 3: Define your communication channels.

- Define **tools and activities** that you will use in addressing your target groups to achieve your objectives.
 - Identify the best channels that will enable you reach out to a specific target group you identified, based on your findings of target group analysis.
 - For example, prefer mass media activities for target groups with a larger number of people (such as general public) while you can deliver your message to specific target groups via direct communication channels (such as emailing, delivery of well-designed informative materials or organising events).
 - The choice of the communication channels should be based on the audience, the message that you want to convey, and the cost-effectiveness of the channel. Repeating your message and using a mix of several communication channels can help your message actually reach your audience. The channel needs to match the message.
 - For example, if you need to convey detailed technical information, radio is probably not the best channel as it is hard for the audience to remember technical details. Detailed and technical information may need several pages of explanation, so a manual may be the best choice: readers can always go back to the manual later to check on the details.
- Define the **project's visual identity**.
 - A visual identity will make sure all communication activities and tools are visually aligned. Your tools and activities will be easily recognised if you have a visual identity approach preparing them. This will add brand value to your project visibility.

- Consider the rules of the Danube Transnational Programme, [namely the Visual Identity Guidelines for projects](#), while defining your project visual identity.
- Define a **budget**.
 - Set budget values as rough estimations to enable you to define tools, assign overall resources, but to be flexible at the same time.
- Describe **responsible partners and human resources** that will be made available for implementation of the Plan.
 - Which project institutions are responsible for implementation of the Plan?
 - How many core person(s) are made available for its implementation?
 - How the involvement of other project partners will be coordinated in implementation?
 - Tip: Involve your colleagues in other partner countries in preparation and implementation of the Communication Plan.
- Later, make sure the responsible person for the project's Communication Plan implementation, and any change of this person during the project implementation, is communicated to the DTP Joint Secretariat.
- Do not overload yourself, be realistic.

b) Write the Communication Plan

Considering all three steps, the Project Communication Plan must include at least the following sections:

- **Project communication main goal and objectives:** What to achieve with the communication activities?
- **Target group(s):** The success of project communication depends on establishing and developing continuous relations with the key audience (target groups previously selected) during the whole project duration, engaging some of them to contribute to the project implementation and reaching all of them when informing about the project achievements

- **Main messages** of the project to be communicated through the communication activities and to be tailored for different target groups.
- **Tools and methods** to achieve the objectives: explanation of the foreseen communication activities, the **time plan** and which activities will be tailored to different target groups' needs
- **Evaluation measures:** Regularly checking whether – and to what extent - the activities are reaching the communication objectives, allowing revision and readjustment if necessary
- **Budget:** reasonable financial resources to be committed for the project communication activities

c) Annual follow-up of the Communication Plan

Once the Communication Plan is in place, it functions as a framework for the communication work during the whole project life cycle. Planning of the day-to-day communication activities should be done as an integral part of the overall planning and budgeting of the project implementation annually for each year to come.

Tips for making a follow-up of the Communication Plan per year (it is advisable to put it in written every year):

- **Overview** the implementation of plan for the previous year.
 - Break it down to specific activities. Evaluate the available outputs you have. For example, the number of visitors to the website, description and number of events organised, etc.
- Identify **communication goals and objectives for the year ahead**. These should take into account:
 - **Communication objectives** described in the Communication Plan (which also derived from overall objectives of the programme)
 - **Current stage of project implementation**
 - **External factors** to be taken into account. For example, political factors, national, regional or EU-level initiatives: European Year of... etc.
- Define a **key target group** focus for the year ahead.

- 2-3 target groups and the associated tools to be concentrated on (which does not mean that other target groups are neglected). These key target groups for the year at hand can then be broken down into more specific groups especially concerning the wider public. For example: students, professionals, etc.
- Describe your **channels**
 - Describe channels that will be used to address the target groups in that year.
 - For example: Press releases for mass media, newsletters for beneficiaries of the project results, social media for general public.
 - You can always use multiple channels to reach a target group, a channel to reach multiple target groups and multiple channels to reach multiple target groups.
- Think of an **annual communication calendar**.
 - When should each output be ready? Prepare a timetable for producing each item. Planning can be specific (e.g. mentioning months, weeks) or flexible (mentioning quarters in the year). For example newsletters quarterly and website continuous/constant.
 - Define frequency of periodical publications/tools.
 - Calendar shall be specific yet still flexible enough to allow room for changes.
- Think of the **annual communication budget**.
 - How much money is available for each item? It is necessary to be sure there is enough scope to allow for the delays, crises and extra work that always occur. It is a good idea to keep 10% of the budget and time in reserve for such items.
 - Identify “external” costs (venues and catering for events, materials, visibility items, external expertise etc.) including the needed flexibility within the already planned budget framework.
- Set the **annual target values** for the indicators of the Communication Plan.
 - Describe the number of communication activities outputs planned for the year: How many media articles to be published, how many videos produced, how many events organised, etc.
 - Plan and keep sources of verification for these output indicators archived. For example: Keep event participant lists, evaluation forms, survey results, statistics of the website (dated), etc.

- Draw up a general list of lessons learned, use as a reference for future years.
- Organise the **work share** for implementation of the annual activities:
 - Which body is responsible for each item?
 - Who is responsible for producing each item: Existing staff, part-timers, or external service providers?
 - Make sure your colleagues in the project are aware of their tasks and responsibilities in the Communication Plan.
- You can use a work plan table with columns breaking down the annual communication such as: tool/activity, description, target groups, responsible bodies, estimated budget, estimated time, etc. following the logic of Communication Plan.

d) Evaluation of the Communication Plan

Include in your Communication Plan a description on how the implementation will be monitored and evaluated. Each communication objective should have indicators for following up the success in reaching the objective in order to be able to evaluate and show how well the communication was done. Plan and describe the data you will collect and how the evaluation process is done.

Consider evaluation also a tool for improving your communication work during the project lifetime. For instance, in case there would be shortcomings in reaching certain goals during one year, an analysis of why this happened and what could be done to overcome the challenges could help to improve the respective activities in the upcoming years.

The benefit of efficient monitoring and evaluation of communication activities is twofold: it feeds into both the periodic reporting of the project as well as into the larger process of project evaluation.



3. Joint Branding



Interreg is now the accepted brand name, used to refer to the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC). One word, used across all Europe in every language aiming at increasing visibility of the results as well as the opportunities of this EU Cohesion Policy initiative.

European Territorial Cooperation is present all over the EU and beyond with 72 programmes, implemented locally which ensure an adapted approach to the local and specific needs. As much as this decentralised approach helps focusing on local needs, it raises challenges in terms of visibility of Interreg. Without any coordination, ETC appeared as an abstract mosaic of local initiatives while it aspires to be a leading force and a promoter of European integration on the basis of the results it delivers on the ground and on the demonstration of the added value of cooperation in Europe. Therefore Interreg programmes decided to join under one single brand name and one single logo.

The benefits of a joint brand are multiple and tangible at all levels from a political/management level to potential beneficiaries.

A joint logo/brand mark is first based on a common simple name that can be used across languages. It allows actors to speak

about the same initiative across Europe and also to benefit from the promotion of the new “Interreg brand”, including on the Internet.

Already 75% of Interreg programmes have chosen to have their logo based on the joint harmonised logo and all accepted the general logo for representing Interreg in general.

The European Commission strongly supports the process and adapted the name Interreg in all public communication alongside the joint Interreg logo.

Bringing further the level of recognition for potential beneficiaries across Europe, specific icons associated with a specific colour code have been developed with the European Commission for all 11 Thematic Objectives.

a) Benefits of a joint brand for European Territorial Cooperation (ETC)

For potential beneficiaries

- Programmes can easily be recognised as part of Interreg
- Easier search for regionally available Interreg funding
- Easier identification of potential partners from already implemented projects

For beneficiaries

- Cost savings because the project logo has already been created and delivered by the Danube Transnational Programme
- Time savings because design implementation becomes easier
- Positive spill-over effects of communication activities of other projects
- Easier cross fertilisation among projects
- Reaching out to policy and decision makers becomes easier as the new brand becomes more familiar across Europe as a clear part of Interreg

For programmes (including Member States)

- Higher programme profile as the relation to a specific EU initiative is clearer
- Better reach to potential new beneficiaries as well as policy makers
- Easier justification of the importance of Interreg. Higher sustainability of results as part of a bigger setup
- Cost savings because programme design development is reduced
- Positive spill-over effects of communication activities of other programmes
- Easier cross-fertilisation between different programmes

For policy and decision makers (including DG Regio)

- Better understanding of Interreg on all governance levels
- Increased recognition and relevance of Interreg

- Clearer visibility of Interreg results, per thematic objectives
- The joint brand allows Interreg stakeholders to benefit from each other in their communication, both to attract project applicants and to make projects visible and at a lesser cost

Interact has developed a promotional video for the launch of the harmonised logo which illustrates the process and the benefits of this initiative for every Interreg programme and project. [Click here to watch the video.](#)

b) Joint branding for the DTP projects

The Danube Transnational Programme has decided a full brand integration of its visual identity in line with the Interreg one, just inserting a small specific graphic element. The DTP uses as well 4 icons associated with specific colour codes for its 4 priority axes in line with the joint Interreg branding.

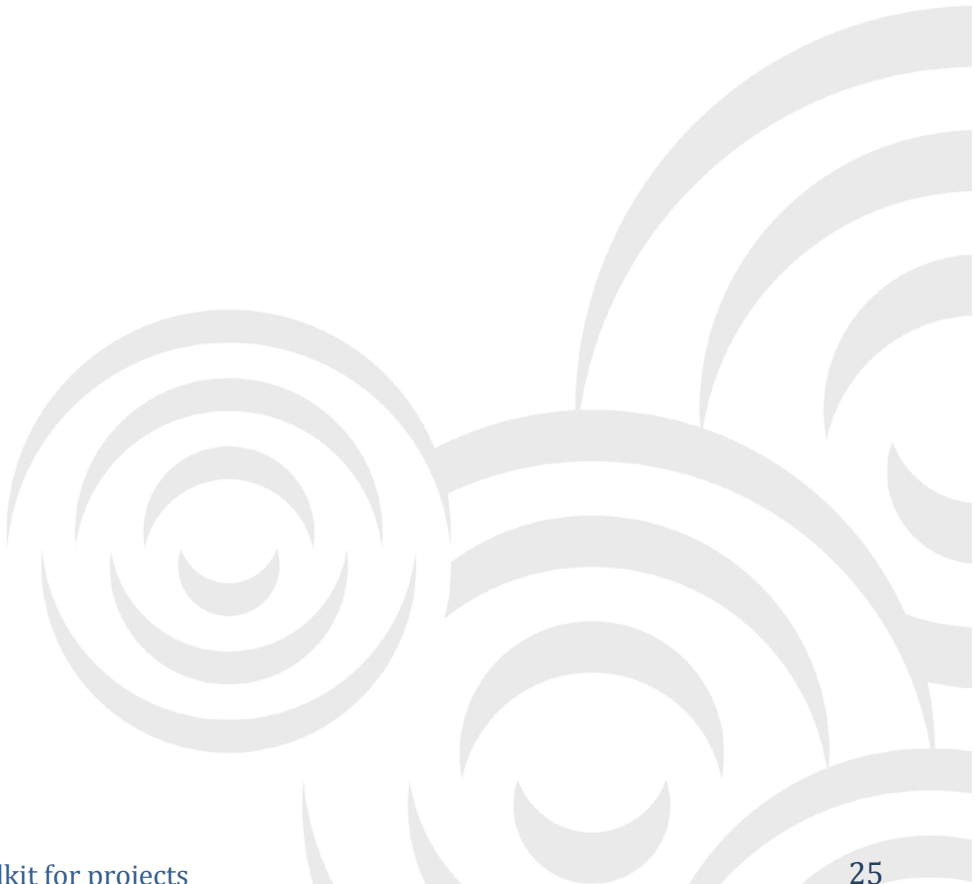
DTP projects are not allowed to develop their own project logo. Developing a logo is costly, it has a limited lifetime and so many logos bring confusion to the audience. For this reason and in order to limit costs, projects will share the programme's logo just adding the project acronym below in the colours of the priority each project belongs to. [The DTP approved projects can download their own logo in different formats in the DTP website.](#) All approved projects are obliged to use it on all their communication materials, outputs and deliverables (both hard copy and electronic) as well as to display it in events. The logo must always be visible in a prominent place.

A specific logo might exceptionally be considered for an output/result/brand with a lifetime going beyond the project if well justified in the AF and approved by the Joint Secretariat.

The DTP provides [Visual Identity Guidelines for projects](#) with rules to be followed by all projects and non-binding related templates. **DTP projects need to put special attention to the use of additional logos in their communication activities (Annex of the Visual Identity Guidelines)** and the display of the poster in each project partner's premises according to regulations.

Non-compliance with the rules on branding could lead to negative effects including a potential decision on ineligibility of some costs decided by national controllers and other programme bodies. The JS will help the projects in fulfilling these rules and support them constantly in all their communication activities.

ORGANISE





1. Events

At least two major events must be organised by the project to create awareness and disseminate the project results. A kick-off event should be organised, whenever possible, within two months after the beginning of the project implementation and a final dissemination event should be organised at the end of the implementation period.

To these events, not only project partners but key stakeholders/final beneficiaries/decision-makers should attend and the audience should be as wide as possible. During the events, projects are encouraged to place the EU flag and ensure visibility of the project logo.

Other activities/events can be organised by the project (i.e. targeted small events) or the partners can decide to participate in an activity organised by others if relevant for the project implementation. Participation in external events is a good way to promote the project as well as of the institution or region involved and it can be useful as it gives projects an opportunity to come face-to-face with their target audiences.

Projects are invited to participate, whenever requested, in other events organised by the programme with the purpose of presenting/discussing/developing/sharing project results and creating synergies with other projects and relevant organisations. The DTP organises thematic events intended to inform stakeholders, policy

makers, beneficiaries and other interested parties about programme and project achievements and to foster capitalisation opportunities among the approved projects. The DTP organises as well trainings for beneficiaries of ongoing projects on project implementation issues (e.g., reporting, procurement, financial issues, communication, etc.).

The content of the events organised by the projects depends on the stage of the project. For projects, it is important to organise events that are interesting for the target audiences and for media to attend. Typical project events include conferences, seminars, exhibitions, field trips, kick off and closing events. It can also be interesting to join forces with other thematically relevant projects to organise joint events. This can save human and financial resources and even broaden the audience significantly and it is in line with DTP Capitalisation Strategy.

One of the major promotional events organised in the European arena where programmes and projects can take part in is a Europe-wide campaign called **European Cooperation Day (EC Day)** with the aim of highlighting results of European cooperation across borders to the general public. More information can be found on the [EC Day campaign website](#). DTP projects may think of organising some of their events in line with the EC Day that takes place normally in September each year.



2. How to organise a successful event

a) Preparation of the event

No matter what type of event you are organising, it needs to be planned and prepared with a clear purpose in mind. Remember to ask yourself (and your event planning team) the following three questions:

1. Objective: What do we want to achieve with the event?
2. Audience: Who do we want to reach?
3. Method: What is the most effective way of reaching them?

The success of an event depends on a clear understanding of the purpose of the event, its target audience and how to reach them, matched with an appropriate event plan. All parts of the event need to support the main goal of the event. A good event is a sum of different elements making up integrity. The participants of a good event shall be able to remember the main message that was intended to be delivered via that event.

The biggest events are usually planned already in the annual work plan or project application, making it a good starting point for the event to be planned ahead of time. Procurement processes are often time consuming but can luckily be done well in advance.

In case you have a similar target group with any other project (from the DTP or other programme), you could consider joining forces by organising one event together. This will save you both human as well as financial resources and it is in line with the DTP Capitalisation Strategy.

Organisers

Build a team responsible for the event and put together a detailed plan. Identify local contact persons and allocate roles to team members. If the direct decision-makers are not part of the organising team, make sure to brief them regularly, i.e., by holding meetings.

Set up a script or a roadmap (see images below) with all information related to the event (agenda, detailed timeline of the day, contact person venue, data speakers, etc.) so that everyone in the organising team has the overview at hand whenever necessary.

Audiences

To identify your target group, you could ask yourself the following questions:

Which groups of people should be interested in attending? Which groups of people have the potential to help you to achieve your objectives? Who is already involved, but could become

more committed or useful to your project if you engaged them more closely? How can you make your event appealing to them?

Please, do not confuse internal meetings for project management attended only by project partners with public event addressed to general public or external audience which requires good dissemination in advance and good invitation policy in order to have broader participation than just project partners.

Script for your event

Contact details

Name	Organisation	Mobile
• (Floor Manager) <i>At the venue on (date) from (time) onwards</i>		(work) (private)
• (Contact person venue)		
• (Reception venue)		
• (Moderator)		
• (Speaker 1)		
• (Speaker 2)		

Networking dinner - date

From	To	Activity	Who
Monday afternoon		Prepare delegation maps and badges	
Monday afternoon		Preparation of dinner area • Check table setting • Check VIP table + name cards • Check protocol (flags)	
19h00	19h15	Arrival of guests and aperitif	• All • All
19h15	19h30	Request guests to take their seats and point VIPs to their seat	• VIPs seated by (will provide seat assignments)
19h30	19h40	Welcoming by	
19h40	22h00	Dinner	

Arrival of guests
and serving of aperitifs.

Conference - date

From	To	Activity	Who
Preparation			
07h00	08h45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Set-up roll-ups, banners, communication material, etc. •Set-up extra reception desk at entrance of conference room in case participants need guidance •Test audiovisual material: PowerPoint presentations, YouTube video, microphones, etc •Install laptop + start PowerPoint presentation slides •Connect remote control for presentations 	•All
Registration			
09h00	09h45	Registration of participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Hand over delegation map and badges •Point participants to conference room 	•2 hostesses will be present at desk from 08h00 -12h00
09h40	09h45	Inform speakers that they will have to take their seats on stage after the introduction to, so make sure they are seated in the front row (seats will be reserved): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Speaker 1 •Speaker 2 •Speaker 3 	•All: make sure your representative is informed of this •General note: all speakers need to sit in the front row > make sure you inform your speakers/project representatives
Welcome and introduction			
09h45	09h50	•Short welcoming speech on practical information	•Floor manager
Opening speech			
09h50	10h00	•Opening speech	
Presentation speaker 1			
10h00	10h10	•General introduction by Speaker 1	•Speaker 1
Presentation speaker 2			
10h10	10h20	•General introduction by Speaker 2	•Speaker 2
Etcetera.....			
12h20		•Inform participants that lunch will be served in.....	•Moderator
Lunch			
12h30	13h35	•Start asking participants to go back to the conference room	•All
Etcetera.....			
Networking reception			
16h35	16h40	•Closing of conference and invite people for the networking reception	•Floor Manager/Moderator?
16h45	17h00	•Participants move to reception area	•Assistance of all to make sure a smooth transition is secured
17h00	18h30	•Networking reception networking reception	

Budget

Also the event budget should be planned with the objectives of the event in mind. E.g., if you need to train 30 people, the budget is naturally planned smaller than if you aim at taking a bus full of journalists to see 3 different project's results. Consequently, your budget will determine where you can hold the event, the number of people you can invite, and the quality of the support material (such as presentation hand-outs, press packs, brochures, etc.).

Start a budgeting spreadsheet as soon as an event is planned and make a team member responsible for tracking costs. Allocate all fees and costs and keep some contingency budget for emergencies. Be aware of public procurement procedures and the time needed to contract services.

Name and description of the event

The name of an event should let the reader grasp what the event is about at first sight. Good names are short rather than long. Together with the name, a clear description of the aim of the event and whom the event targets should be available.

Timing

Together with the name and description, the time and place (at least the city) of the event should be set ahead of time to allow for effective marketing. Check that the chosen date does not conflict with other events that your target audiences might also be interested in. At the same time, you can also consider organising your event prior or after another event that is thematically relevant to your target audience. Check that the most important participants (e.g. desired speakers) would be able to attend. Also check for clashes with other more newsworthy events: political events, holidays, etc. When working in an international setting and with participants travelling from longer distances, it is a good practise not to organise events starting on Monday morning or ending on Friday afternoon, allowing for travel on working days.

Agenda

Build the agenda in a way to make up a well-planned schedule where the different parts follow each other in a logical sequence. Make sure the aim of the different parts is clear already in the agenda given out before the event in order for the participants to know what to expect.

Keep the event interactive by introducing panel discussions, workshops and break-out sessions (different formats to avoid boring events). Always allow plenty of time for questions and discussion. Also, make sure to build in regular breaks to keep people's attention and to encourage networking possibilities.

Build some flexibility in the programme, for example if some presentations do not finish on time. Make sure the moderation role is given to someone who can keep the schedule.

Plan enough time for coffee breaks (around 30 min) and lunch (at least 1 hour).

Content-wise, remember to always introduce what the project is about (for those who don't know about it), explain the project results and mention the EU and DTP funding (both with the display of the project logo and orally).

Speakers

Interesting, knowledgeable and skilled speakers are one of the make-or-break factors of any event. What kind of speakers to invite depends largely on the nature of your event. Sometimes high profile names or people from well-known organisations can help to make your event appealing to certain target audiences, but sometimes it can be most interesting and effective for the message delivery when the speaker is e.g. ,a young entrepreneur as an end-user of a project result on stage. Individuals who are naturally good at presenting to groups transform the atmosphere and impact of the event itself.

When inviting speakers you will need to provide them with clear information on the event and its objectives, normally in the form of a draft programme, a briefing on the types of people attending the event (including other speakers) and detailed instructions on what they are expected to do and how their contribution links to the other parts of the event. A good practise is to provide the speaker with a set of 2-4 questions that you would need him/her to answer in the presentation. These questions and answers are to support the messages you want to give to your audiences.

Always make sure to follow up with your invited speakers proactively in person: do not assume that people received, read, or registered your invitation or that they will respond to you.

Ask for the presentations and possible hand-outs well in advance of the event and make sure the contents you wanted are in place. Often the speakers appreciate honest feedback and guidance on how to make the presentation better as this will ensure their presentation to meet the expectations of the audience. Ask for permission to publish the presentation online after the event if you plan to do so. Discuss and confirm fees, travel expenses etc., in advance and for prompt payment.

Before the event, collect all presentations and pre-load them in one large presentation file on the presentation laptop.

Moderator(s)

A good event can become great with the addition of an excellent moderator. Make sure that you have someone who is able to manage the event, lead discussions and debates, keep schedules and make the event interesting and relevant to participants. Many journalists also make good moderators; ask some of your media contacts if they know of someone suitable. Keep in mind that while a moderator from "outside" can be a fresh element to your event and provide an interesting viewing angle to your issues, he/she needs to understand the nature of your event, know who is the audience and what the main aim of your event is. Discussing the event and all related expectations well before the event with the moderator is very important.

Venue: rooms and technical equipment

Characteristics of a good venue include good accessibility for the participants (the chosen city and the location in the city), right sized rooms for the sessions, easy transfer between the rooms during the event (if applicable) and a suitable place for potential catering services where people can enjoy refreshments without having to spend excessive amounts of time in lines. Check out the connections to e.g., airports and train/bus terminals. Preference for public transport instead of all participants having to take a taxi to reach the venue is recommended.

Try to use the meeting rooms located in the premises of some project partner institutions, if the venue capacity for the foreseen number of participants is enough, as a way to save costs.

Define the number of expected participants and the need for different auditoriums, break-out rooms, lobby spaces, room for coffee breaks and lunch etc., ahead of time and include them in the term of reference when procuring the venue. If the venue offers catering services they can often be included in the same procurement.

Think also of the technical equipment you will need for holding the event – laptops, projectors, screens, etc. Check what the venue provider has to offer; some equipment can be included in the price and some not. Arrange a site visit in advance and also check the equipment to be used.

Consider hiring a professional photographer for bigger events.

Catering

If you are going to provide food, a buffet is a good idea as it allows people to mix and talk. However, allow for enough tables and some places for people to sit down. Remember to include the dietary requirements into the registration form and check from the catering service provider how long prior to the event they will need to know these requirements.

Agree with the provider the deadline to confirm the final number of participants regarding the catering, Bear in mind that the catering is the most expensive part of an event, so an accurate number of participants can save costs.

Accommodation

Especially with bigger events, recommend the delegates to book accommodation well in advance. You can make a block reservation in the venue if it is a hotel or in a nearby hotel, if possible, especially during other major events or in cities with limited hotel capacity. This is particularly important when participants are arriving from further away and don't know the location - they would appreciate an easy way to book accommodation in or close to the event venue.

Try to get special rates for participants in the proposed hotels.

Invitations to participants

Develop the invitation in good time to notify target audiences well before the event. A “save the date” message can be the first announcement, followed by more details of the event later on. Keep everything simple and easy to understand (what, for whom, when and where?). The basic information should be published on the project website at least two months before the event and updated when the plans proceed.

For the marketing of the event, newsletters reach a large number of people at once. However, be sure that the formulation of the invitation in a newsletter is clear to the people on the list (i.e. does the event address all of them or perhaps only a certain part). Dedicated e-mails are the most efficient way to ensure people’s attention. Indicate a reply-by-date and a contact mail/phone number. If necessary, send a reminder later on and ask them to inform about any potential cancellation.

Registration

If the foreseen number of participants is more than 70, online registration saves you time. People submit their information online into a database that you can access through a private site where you can add, delete and edit participant and event information. Usually there is a “download to Excel” function available in the tools. Use some free platforms online to create your online forms for the registration to the event (and maybe for the evaluation form to be sent to the participants afterwards) such as <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/home/about> or www.jotform.com.

Upon sending confirmations to participants after registration, include some further practical information about the place where the event is taking place. This can be an info sheet about the location of the venue (address and map), main transport options to get there (information on main airports and how to reach the venue from there), accommodation possibilities and other necessary information. Depending on the nature of the event, a list of participants can be sent to the registered participants beforehand or to be hand over during the event. This can help e.g., in partner search or in finding interesting people for other networking purposes.

Rehearsal meeting

Hold a rehearsal meeting with the organising team a day before the event. Go through the main presentations, anticipate frequently asked questions (locations of rooms and toilets, internet access, etc.) and make sure everybody in the team can answer them. Check that the technicalities (e.g. laptops, projectors and sound) work and that you know whom to contact at the venue if something stops functioning during your event. Make sure you know how to adjust air conditioning and the lights.

Make sure you have name badges, place labels for speakers, registration sheets, pens and paper, needed contact lists etc., in place already the day before.

b) During the event

Registration

Make people feel invited. Have someone greet the participants and show them to the cloakroom and the registration desk. Have plenty of people at the registration desks to avoid long lines and to answer possible questions the participants might have. Think of making different lines according to the alphabetic order of the surnames (A-D, F-M, etc.) to get a faster registration process.

Prepare materials beforehand so that people do not have to compile their event package while others are waiting. In case you are using feedback questionnaires that are filled in on the spot, consider whether you want to give them as part of the material kit or later during the day. Reserve a box or other place where the filled-in questionnaires and the badges to be recycled can be returned.

Technical equipment

Arrange and check the necessary technical equipment and set-up, e.g., video projector, laptop, etc. Check you have all connection cables, power sockets, transformers, and adapter plugs.

If possible, collect all presentations before the event and pre-load them in one large presentation file on the presentation laptop.

Media

If media attend your event, make sure they are well taken care of. Make sure that you appoint someone responsible for introducing the journalist(s) to people to interview, explain the project, and act as a contact point if they require any information.

Shortly before the event, sending out a press package including brief background information regarding the event and other useful materials can help journalists correctly comprehend and reflect your event. This should be complemented by additional information and event visuals delivered to the journalists after the event.

Always try to involve media in your events addressed to external audience. Try to sell the project through a personal story behind as a way to attract media. Try to have a relevant actor (local politician, public authority) participate in your event. This will reach media's attention and your event will be more likely to be published in newspapers and digital websites, among others.

Photos

Depending on the nature of your event and the need for photos afterwards, do some planning of the needed photos before the event. Would you like to have action shots, close-ups, general pictures of crowd, a picture of a specific keynote presenter or perhaps of the interesting building you are at? To get the right shots, think of the intended use of the photos – will they be published

in publications, press articles/releases, thank you letters, social media and/or on the project website and what message do you want to send through the photos.

c) After the event

Follow-up

Upload all relevant documents online (presentations, photos etc.) and send a thank you note to all participants and guests together with the link to the online materials. In case you are using an online tool for collecting feedback (e.g. <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/home/about> or www.jotform.com), the link to the questionnaire can be included in the same mail. In that case the mail would need to go out as soon as possible after the event, preferably even the next day, for the people to still feel motivated to provide their feedback. This feedback would be very useful for the organisation of future events,

If you approached or were approached by media about your event, remember to later check and document media coverage. Online coverage can be further spread via any social media channels you might be using. You can also make news on your project website and publish something about the successful event in a post-event newsletter. Include several photos to make more attractive the news/newsletter.

Evaluation

Hold a debriefing session with the organising team - discuss what went well and what can be improved in the future. Thank the team members for a job well done. Once the participant feedback has been collected, go through the findings with the whole team.

D) How to organize a local event?

Plan the event well in advance

Draft in advance the steps to be taken in the preparation of the local event. Write a roadmap with the topics to be covered and set a date for each of them.

Focus on objective

Focus on the ultimate objective. The local event should mostly target the society in general. How can it be done?

- Human and social stories are interesting. People like everyday stories reflecting concrete examples of how cooperation has improved citizens' lives.
- Events focused on different cultures attract people's attention. They could relate to gastronomy, music and regional dances; i. e., a Food Market or a concert with local

singers / players. Never forgetting to combine the 'entertaining part' with the aim of the project and the dissemination of their results.

- Involve society and ordinary people. You can organise a photo contest, a poster contest, a cooperation success story competition. This initiative is usually warmly welcomed by social media users and it registers high participation.
- Try to have a relevant actor (local politician, public authority) participate in your event. This will reach media's attention and your event will be more likely to be published in newspapers and digital websites, among others.

Use social media

As most projects have limited resources, relying on social media becomes crucial. Don't underestimate the power of Facebook or Twitter. They can make your event go viral! Also, they constitute a useful and free platform to disseminate information about your initiative / event. Don't forget that an active contribution on social media is key to the success of the communication activities.

Photographs and images

Select the best pictures of the event and disseminate them. Beautiful pictures are powerful. Upload them onto the website of your project.

Evaluation

Remember to ask for feedback. This will be useful to know what could be improved next year and people will appreciate your interest in registering their opinion. Also, use the evaluation to gather new ideas for future events by asking what citizens would like to be part of.

Event planning checklist

Before the event

- Tasks are allocated to all organisers
 - Invitations and registration
 - Budgeting
 - Welcoming participants
 - Venue, coffee breaks and catering
 - Agenda (Speakers? Moderator?)
 - Photographer
 - Set up script or roadmap of all details of the event
- Invitations sent out in time (speakers, media and participants)
- Make a block reservation at a recommended accommodation, that are included in practical information for participants
- Upon registration, participants receive a confirmation email with the final version of the agenda + practical information
- All organisers are briefed to answer frequently asked questions
- Speakers (and the moderator) are briefed
- All presentations are compiled and checked
- Check technical equipment

During the event

- A reception desk is available for registration
 - Registration sheets
 - Name badges arranged in alphabetical order
 - Conference packs (if applicable) and promotional materials
- Place labels and water are available for speakers
- Conference room equipment is checked
 - Laptops with presentations
 - Multimedia projectors and screens
 - Cables and electricity sockets
 - Microphones, sound system; persons available for handing out microphones
 - Air conditioning and lights
- Enough toilet facilities are available
- There are recycle bins in the conference room
- All activities comply with the publicity requirements (e.g. EU flag on display)

After the event

- Event documents and photos are uploaded to your website
- Thank you notes sent to all participants and guests
- Conclusions made based on feedback forms and debriefing
- All costs and fees are taken care of



3. European Cooperation Day

Since 2012, Interact has been coordinating a Europe-wide campaign called European Cooperation Day (EC Day) with the aim of highlighting results of European cooperation across borders to the general public. Under the motto “Sharing borders, growing closer”, hundreds of local events are held across Europe in the week around 21 September every year, reaching out to thousands of people. The campaign is coordinated by the Interact Programme with the support of the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions. The local events showcase how cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation projects are reducing obstacles and disparities, while at the same time increasing cultural understanding and efficiency between European regions. All Interreg programmes and projects are

invited and encouraged to participate actively in the campaign.

If you would like to contribute to the European Cooperation Day as a project, contact the Danube Transnational Programme and propose your idea of event.

- Organise a local event celebrating the achievements and results of cooperation in Europe and, specifically your projects’ results.
- Become a partner of one of the local events to be organised by programmes in your area
- Attend one of the local events in your area

More information can be found on the campaign website: www.ecday.eu

WRITE



1. Clear and Effective Writing

In order to reach your audience, the way you communicate the results achieved by your project is essential. Apart from the channel, the clear and effective writing or speaking becomes of primary importance to pass the message you like to transmit. If you address general public, try to avoid the ‘technical’ aspects of your project and make it clear for them to understand what you achieved thanks to the EU support.

Anything you write, from a short status update in social media to a multipage document, write using clear, plain language. Use the tips below to help you write in a way that is easy for your audience to understand and remember.

Basis/Background

Before writing, you should think about who your readers are, what they need to know and what they are likely to know already about your topic.

Structure

All readers have limited time to read and process your information. Consider your own situation at work, and how difficult it can be for you to squeeze in some quiet time during a hectic day to read, understand and process a new text on a topic that is important to you. Wouldn't it be nice if the writer of that text had thought about making the information as easily-accessible and reader-friendly as possible?

When you write, think about how you can make your main points obvious in your text, how you can lead the readers logically through your text and how you can avoid losing them during your text. Long sentences and illogical order of facts turn your readers off. Try to help readers feel comfortable with your text – this will make it easier for them to understand, process, remember and act upon your message.

Introduce your main points in the first paragraph, to “hook” your readers into staying with you for the rest of your text. This can be done by answering the “who, what, where, when and how” questions on the content of your text. Then deal with each point in logical order. Finally, close by summing up/repeating those points.

The 5Bs of writing

When it comes to how you put your information down on paper for others, there are 5 basic points to follow for reader-friendly writing – the 5 Bs

- **Be Short** - Avoid long sentences - split them into 2 or more short ones. Make only one main point per sentence. Make sure you bridge well between sentences, to give logical

flow of information – but avoid meaningless filler text. It gets in the way of what you really want your readers to know...

- **Be Straightforward** - Don't make your readers rush for a dictionary. If you feel the need, add a glossary of the professional terms you have included in your text. Use everyday words wherever possible. Complicated language pushes your readers away from your text – straightforward language makes them feel comfortable with the text and invites them to stay with it until the end. Avoid buzzwords and other tired phrases. Explain an acronym (NATO) or an abbreviation (KPI) the first time you use it, and then stick to the short form the rest of your text. Don't use too many acronyms and abbreviations.
- **Be Personal** - Focus on people doing things as often as you can when the situation allows you to. Even though in most professional texts what is being done is far more the focus of the text than who is doing it, increasing the human element of your text makes the readers warm to it and helps them understand the information you are presenting.
- **Be Active** - This is linked to the previous B-. Be Personal. Limit use of passive forms in your text as much as you can. Active text is easier for your readers to understand. They catch on to your message faster and are likely to process the information better if it is presented in active form. Passive text appears cold and official to readers. It creates a distance between text and readers. This distance makes the information more challenging for readers to process.
- **Be Polite** - Add words such as “please” and “kindly” to your text, and keep a polite, friendly tone towards your readers. Especially if the information you are giving your readers is not positive, being polite in your tone can make the information easier for them to read, process and accept or act upon.

Clear writing tips

The clear writing tips shared here are based on a presentation by the Plain English Campaign. You can find more information and resources on their website: www.plainenglish.co.uk.

➤ Sentence length

- Use an average sentence length of 15 – 20 words (never go longer than 30).
- Mix sentence length – short sentences can be very effective.
- Say only one thing per sentence. When in doubt, use a full-stop.

➤ Vocabulary

- Use everyday words that you would use at home – vocabulary that your grandparents, neighbours, and friends would understand.
- **Avoid jargon and acronyms** whenever possible! If you can't, include a glossary at the beginning of your document.

- Tone
 - Use a conversational tone rather than an academic or overly formal one.
 - This does not mean you should use slang or dialect – your writing should still be professional and correct – but your tone should engage your reader and not put them to sleep.
 - Use first and second personal pronouns to refer to your organisation and reader (we, us, and you).
- Structure
 - Put the most important fact at the beginning of your text so that readers can find it easily – don't bury it in the middle.
 - Use bullet points rather than long paragraphs.
- Content
 - Think like a journalist. Make sure you answer the 5Ws: Who? What? When? Where? Why?
- Use active sentences, not passive ones.
 - Active: The European Commission published the document in January. Passive: The document was published in January by the European Commission.

See the next page for an example of how using the above techniques can help to simplify a complex piece.

Example on clear writing

Before editing

4. The Study Findings

4.1 A key finding of the study is that contrary to the perceived view of many that the high profile closures mark the end of large scale marine employment on the north bank, market demand analysis has demonstrated that there are substantial opportunities for attracting marine related employment. However, it is evident that the marine market is also changing, with one pattern of employment being replaced with another and the challenge for the public sector is therefore to manage the process of change, ensure that the continued supply of adequate sites is provided for and guide the growth of the new marine technologies.

4.2 The review of existing businesses located in the study area and nearby found that eleven world class companies within the subsea technology and renewable energy sectors are operating from this area. A number of these, including Wellstream and Duco in Newcastle, are looking to expand. ONE North East has also received a number of inward investment enquiries from companies, seeking sites and looking to make significant investments, who have expressed interest in the study area. The activities of the Port of Tyne are also increasingly requiring additional land and waterfront access. This includes the growth in cruise ships visiting the Tyne.

4.3 The study therefore confirms the continued strategic regional importance of the existing marine infrastructure located on the River Tyne North Bank, in particular sites with appropriate infrastructure including large sheds, hardstandings and quayside areas capable of accepting heavy loads and with deepwater access. It sees a real opportunity to promote a 'Marine Industries Cluster/Centre' on the River Tyne North Bank to build on the European pre-eminence in subsea, fabrication, marine design and naval architecture. It is considered that this could become a leading European integrated marine industrial estate with deepwater facilities, multi-user load out and fabrication facilities and high-wide load access. The complex would aim eventually to establish Global credentials for subsea manufacturing, fabrication, conversion and assembly of offshore oil and gas modules and infrastructure.

4.4 It is concluded that the significant marine infrastructure along the River Tyne North Bank should be dedicated to these growth sectors and inappropriate riverfront uses encouraged to locate elsewhere.

4.5 The consultants propose a number of immediate next steps including commissioning detailed technical reports to identify the condition and extent of riverfront infrastructure (berths, water depth, hardstanding, cranes, dry docks etc), utility capacities, ground condition and contamination, site load capacities, movement strategy etc. They also propose the preparation of a global marketing strategy in consultation with key stakeholders. How these are progressed will be part of further discussions with North Tyneside and ONE.

After editing

4. The Study Findings

Conclusion

The Tyne North Bank could become an international centre for the marine industry, including subsea manufacturing, fabrication, marine design and naval architecture. This would mean building on the area's existing industry and reputation, and concentrating on marine development rather than other sectors.

Existing advantages

The area already has:

- *Eleven major subsea technology and renewable energy companies; and*
- *Sites with large sheds, hardstandings and deepwater quays.*

New development

- *Existing companies, including Wellstream and Duco, want to expand.*
- *ONE North East has received outside development enquiries.*
- *The Port of Tyne needs more land and water access, partly to meet increasing demand from cruise shipping.*

Next steps

The consultants propose that we:

- *Commission technical reports on the area such as:*
 - *Riverfront infrastructure*
 - *Utilities*
 - *Ground condition and contamination*
 - *Load capacities*
 - *Access; and*
- *Produce a global marketing plan, with North Tyneside and ONE North East.*



2. Storytelling

Storytelling is a technique which people have used to pass on information since prehistoric times. So while it may be a hot trend in communication today, it is far from a new concept!

Conveying information through stories not only makes our content more interesting to our audience, it makes it much more likely that they will remember it. Use storytelling to give your project a human face, avoiding complicated/boring information to get your message through more easily. If you are trying to get attention from the media, storytelling techniques are essential. While you need to have facts and figures too, a compelling story is a must.

Many of the storytelling techniques shared here were developed by MSLGroup, a global communications network specialising in PR.

Why story-telling:

- Because it's memorable
- Because its authenticity and emotional appeal
- Because of its sense of togetherness (engaging your audience)

a) Planning your story

When planning your story you need to know very well your project, the audience you would like to address (to adapt the language and to select the communication channel to be used accordingly) and identify the take-away message that you would like to transmit thanks to the story.

- Why does your story need to be told? What is the purpose of your story?
- Who is the audience for your story?
 - What do they care about?
 - What's their/the problem?
 - How much do they know? Where do they get information?
 - What do they need (from you) to act?
 - Remember: Write for them, not for you (or your colleagues)

- Which of the following outcomes would you like to achieve with your communication?
 - Who I am: Awareness
 - *Announce, state, introduce*
 - You want the local community to know that your project exists!
 - Why I'm here: Relevance
 - *Explain, comprehend, relate*
 - You want people to understand what transnational cooperation and your project is about: how it works, what benefits it has already brought to the area, etc.
 - I have a dream: Vision
 - *Inspire, excite, galvanise*
 - You want to inspire people on how your project's idea appeared.
 - I'll show you how: Education
 - *Demonstrate, teach, describe*
 - You want to show people what partners do in your project
 - I do therefore I am: Principles in action
 - *Participate, join, compete*
 - I know what you're thinking: Dealing with the elephant in the room
 - *Provoke, challenge, surprise*
- The format - where will the story land?
 - Newspaper, website, social media platforms, press release to the media?
- What is the story context?
 - What is going on outside of our direct work environment? What is happening in the news? Could these things affect the way our audience hears your message?
- Why is now a good time to tell your story?

- Is there an event or situation which makes the story more relevant today than it would be next week or next month?

b) Writing your story

Starting to write your story is often the most difficult part. For that reason, we are giving you a short exercise you can use to get your creativity flowing, and template to use as a starting point. Just remember to find a main character/hero the story could be based on; a scene/setting where the story is set; and a conflict/resolution to make your story more interesting (problem/solution given by the project).

Six word stories:

Try to condense your story into just six words, similar to how Ernest Hemingway crafted his famous six word story: 'Baby shoes. For sale. Never worn.'

Here are a few more that might inspire you:

- 'Found true love. Married someone else'
- 'Coyote howls, dark night, flat tire.'
- 'Wax wings. High hopes. Long fall.'
- 'Loved abroad. She moved abroad'
- 'Old neighbours, once enemies, now friends'

Template

This 'narrative template' can be used to get you past that blank sheet of paper. It can be a useful starting point for developing your story.

- We believe in a world where...
 - (This is the focus of the story expressed as a belief about the world, e.g., we believe in a world where regions work together to solve problems.)
- We know in that world that...
 - (This is what you know about the world that brings tension, e.g. we know that cooperation in a transnational project isn't always easy. There are complex rules to follow, cultural barriers to overcome, and compromises to make.)
- So we make sure...

- (This is what you do to resolve the tension, e.g. so we make sure to help project partners to develop jointly their activities and work better together.)

➤ Which is why we...

- (This is what you do in terms of outputs, deliverables and overall behaviour, e.g., which is why we have created XXX and believe that this DTP project brings useful solutions for the involved regions, solving common problems.)

It is a very good idea to make your story more interesting and to attract media (if it's the case), to highlight a character (someone who benefited from a project) and add facts and figures that support your story (just make sure you don't overload your audience with information).

Sample story:

When Ana was a child, she was not allowed to swim in the Danube, which runs behind her family's home in Bulgaria. Her mother told her that the river was polluted – that meant no drinking, no swimming, no playing.

That was 25 years ago.

Today, thanks to regions joining forces in an Interreg project and establishing environmental standards, the Danube's waters are clean and safe. Interreg is the European Union's tool for funding cooperation projects. The project (Acronym) made this possible. And environmental protection is just the tip of the iceberg – other Interreg projects are reducing unemployment, increasing renewable energy and improving transportation.

Now, Ana has children of her own, and she is happy to let them swim in the clean waters of the Danube. This is just one example of the activities carried out by the project XXX that has been funded by the European Union through the Danube Transnational Programme.

To find out how more about XXX project, please visit (website link).



3. Newsletters

A newsletter either in electronic or in paper format can be an effective communication tool for the projects. It can also be a good way to draw attention to the news published on your website.

As paper newsletters are costly to print and mail delivery is both costly and less effective than delivery via electronic channels, the Danube Transnational Programme prefers e-newsletters in line with its environmental-friendly policy.

As for any communication tool it is important to remember who the readers of your newsletter are. The content, frequency and format are to match the target group. The project's websites of the Danube Transnational Programme include the possibility to send online newsletters (read specific section in Project's website – User Manual).

a) Some common practises

- Project newsletters, like in the case of programme newsletters, are produced two to four times a year and provide an update on project progress, activities and produced outputs/deliverables. More than 4 newsletters sent by email per year can discourage your audience to read it.
- Shorter electronic e-mail newsflashes (an online newsletter of just 1 piece of news) can be also produced additionally. Brief, up-to-date information on e.g. upcoming project events is provided.

b) Preparation and planning

- Prepare the email newsletter or newsflash with short titles, many visuals and short texts relying on links embedded to them if necessary. Decide the format of the different news according to the 'blocks' provided by the project website-newsletter module.
- Make a schedule for when newsletters are planned to be sent out for the upcoming year. Think of the bigger events, occasions and news that should be covered by each one and leave room for news that come up between the initial planning and publishing of the newsletter.
- Appoint a person responsible for the newsletters and ask all partners to forward the worthwhile information to that person during the period the newsletter will cover.

- Follow the newsletter template and system provided by the Danube Transnational Programme in the project's website and use it consistently (no other formats are allowed).
- Original materials are preferable. If previously published materials are used, get the permission of the author or owner beforehand, and then give them credit in the publication. Know the source of the materials (texts, pictures, illustrations) you are using, obtain prior permission, and give credit, or don't use the material.

c) Drafting

- Highlight a maximum of 3 important news with a specific 'block+image' each of them and include a list of other brief news if needed.
- If your newsletter is more than one or two pages, include a very brief list of contents at the top. For example "In this issue ..."
- When drafting the contents, keep in mind who will read the newsletter. Are they mostly potential beneficiaries of the project results, general public or stakeholders? Plan the contents accordingly.
- Contents can include: Important developments regarding your project, past and upcoming project events, important project news and results.
- Consider including information of other similar projects, in particular those involved in the capitalisation activities of your project or the activities already generated together.
- Respect the provided template to make sure the EU flag and project logo are prominently included and the reference to the ERDF is in place. Do not forget to include the project logo at the end of the newsletter to give more visibility to your project acronym.
- Enrich the contents with visuals, such as photographs and icons.
- Include a link to the project contact details in the website for any potential questions/comments.
- Proofread the whole issue once you are done with contents. Send you a 'test email' and check that the links work and they take the reader directly to the desired content (instead of e.g. a front page where further navigation is still needed to find the actual content).

Promote your project

- Give a brief overview of one or several project output/result/s and links to more detailed story/product. These can be inventories, researches, online platforms, maps, publications and many more things.

- Keep in mind the readers' existing knowledge on the issue and make it easy reading for also those who are not familiar with the specific field. Remember to whom you are writing while formulating the messages.
- Sometimes you don't need a whole article to promote a project result. A sentence with most crucial details from a project can help you achieve that promotion. Examples:
 - "Did you know? Thanks to X project, people in X region can now get X service faster, cheaper and more efficiently."
 - "By the time X project is finalised, X emissions in X region will be reduced by XX%"
 - "Thanks to the X project, Danube regions in X and Y countries now have and benefits"
 - "With the observation system established as a part of X project funded by the DTP, X and Y countries can now jointly monitor ship wastes illegally disposed to X river"
- Support project related contents with visuals and links to further details and contact details as much as possible.

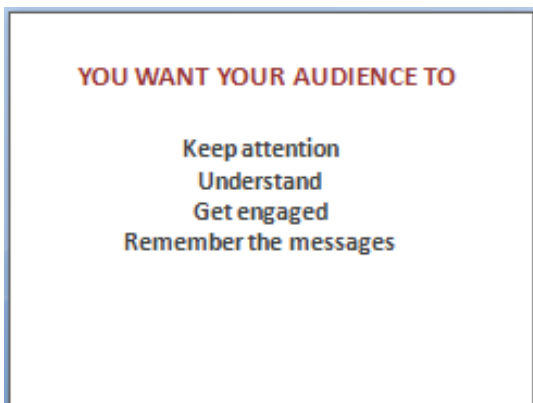
d) Dissemination

- Keep your e-mail list up to date.
- Invite all project partner contacts, institutions, local/regional/national/European stakeholders, experts, etc. to subscribe to your project newsletter through the online form available in the project website. Like this, they will always receive from that moment on the online newsletter with updated information about the project. Promote existence of such mailing list at your relevant events.
- If you have got already a list of contacts to whom you would like to send the newsletter, you can manually insert the contacts one by one in the "Subscribe to project newsletter" form of your project website. If the list of potential recipients is long, please contact the Joint Secretariat to be able to upload the whole list at once.
- All sent newsletters will be automatically published on your project website and all issues stored under the specific section 'Newsletters'.
- Send the newsletters also to the Danube Transnational Programme Joint Secretariat and to all your partner institutions.

4. Presentations

A good presentation can be a very powerful tool to communicate your message to a group but if not used well it can also affect the audience in a negative way. Success depends on the ability to connect with the public (be it a big group in a conference or a small group in a meeting), to offer them a meaningful message and to make it attractive.

Most presentations still show crowded slides with unclear messages. Some speakers nowadays stand out as powerful presenters thanks to simplicity (See references: TED Talks, Garr Reynolds, Nancy Duarte etc.). Their rule is “don’t tell, show” and make it relevant for the audience. An “example” is worth a thousand words:



Don’t tell, show. “Make it visual, you will explain it in person”

You will engage your audience if you manage to visualize your message. Long texts, complex or disorganized slides will not help. Slides are not to be used as the speaker’s “cheat sheet”. It is YOU who tells the “story”, you only need the slides to make it visual and help the audience focus on your speech and help them understand and remember your message. We want to go...

From...

A menu of thematic objectives...

1. Research & innovation
2. Information and communication technologies (ICT)
3. Competitiveness of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)
4. Shift towards a low-carbon economy
5. Climate change adaptation & risk prevention and management
6. Environmental protection & resource efficiency
7. Sustainable transport & removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures
8. Employment & supporting labour mobility
9. Social inclusion & combating poverty
10. Education, skills & lifelong learning
11. Institutional capacity building & efficient public administrations

To...

11 thematic objectives

- Research & Innovation
- ICT
- SMEs Competitiveness
- Low-carbon economy
- Climate change
- Environment & resources
- Sustainable transport & infrastructures
- Employment & labour mobility
- Social inclusion & poverty
- Education & life long learning
- Capacity building & efficient public institutions

From...

DISTRIBUTION OF REGIONAL FUNDS

*Fund Budget for 2014-2020: €454 073 873 653 (funding and cofunding)
 *11 thematic objectives
 *531 programmes as of November 2015

The Cohesion Fund concerns 15 Member States: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

The European Social Fund is Europe's main instrument for investing in people.

Known as the "second pillar" of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), it has been improved for the period 2014-2020 through the process of wider CAP reform.

The European Regional Development Fund covers all Member states and invests under all ESIF thematic objectives.

Fund	Percentage
ERDF	43.3%
CAP	21.7%
ESF	19.0%
CF	14.0%
EAFRD	-
EMFF	-

To...

43,30% of Regional Funds go to ERDF

Fund	Percentage
CF	14%
ESF	19%
ERDF	43.30%
EAFRD	21.70%
EMFF	1.50%
YEI	0.30%

Create Memory, "Make it simple"

You will only engage your public when your MESSAGE creates MEANING for each specific AUDIENCE. So start by understanding the audience and the way they process information. It's all about the audience.

How people process information

- We have short periods of attention
- We pay attention only to a few pieces of simultaneous information

What helps people learn faster and more meaningfully?

- Visuals + narration
- Visuals are processed 60,000 times faster than text

How far do people remember?

- Our working memory is short-term (we forget 90% in 30 seconds)
- Working memory processes limited information
- Working memory relies mostly on acoustic and visual info
- Only meaningful information (relevant to the audience) will be remembered long-term
- People retain: 80% of what they see
20% of what they read
10% of what they listen

Take advantage of how people process information to create meaning and be more effective:

PEOPLE WILL FORGET:	PEOPLE WILL REMEMBER:
Long text	Visual information
Unclear messages	Short, clear information
Long series of data	Personalised, meaningful content
Most of what you say	Stories

a) Before the presentation

Design the slides to connect:

Translate your ideas into visual images. Design an effective and appealing layout and style for your presentation. Apply the golden rule: KEEP IT SIMPLE. As Garr Reynolds says, “make it ZEN for them.”

Single key message per slide

- Understood in 3 seconds
- Only relevant information
- Few key points
- Be specific

- Add descriptive title
- Do not put subheadings

Reduce text

- Easy to read
- Only keywords or phrases
- No long text

Inspirational, high-quality visuals

- Simple graphs, easy to understand
- Choose images that speak for themselves
- Use high quality photographs (be careful with copyrights)
- No 3D effects

Clear layout

- Leave blank space, let it breathe
- No overcrowded slides
- No clutter: eliminate superfluous information (copyright, date...)

Clean design

- Few matching colours
- Very few fonts
- Plain or simple backgrounds
- Group related objects together so that relation is understood immediately
- Align objects: connect them through their edges. It creates sense of order
- Create contrast to add visual interest
- Repeat some aspects of the design throughout the entire presentation to give visual coherence

Convey your message, “Make it meaningful”

Before you go to PowerPoint (or other more-visual formats such as Prezi: www.prezi.com), plan your presentation. Think about the purpose. Define the appropriate message for each specific audience, because it's all about the audience in a presentation. Define the structure to tell the "story".

Tailor your message

You create meaning when your message is relevant for the people, so you need to give your content a different approach for each audience. Before you begin, ask yourself:

What is the purpose of this event or meeting? What is my own purpose in this context?

Your message can be different in each presentation depending on the purpose of the meeting or the event. Are you trying to persuade authorities to support your strategy? Establishing collaboration with another organisation? Each purpose calls for a different style and meaning.

Make sure your presentation:

- Conveys memorable messages
- A limited number of messages will make it more effective: do not overwhelm the audience
- Illustrate complex ideas with stories: it makes it easier to understand

What type of audience? What do they want?

Different target groups have different expertise and interests. Do not recite the same presentation event after event. Tailor your presentation in a way that the audience can relate to it.

E.g. authorities will probably want to know more about project results in general while final beneficiaries will want to know how to exactly implement the project results. Tailor your messages to each audience.

You can save time by having a basic general presentation available. However, to make it really powerful, you need to make an individual presentation for each audience. You can make use of the relevant parts of the general presentation but for the new presentation you need to:

- Adapt your messages and content
- Leave out slides that have no or little meaning for the audience in question
- Choose the stories, anecdotes or examples that make a point to the specific audience
- Add new slides to address the specific purpose and message for that event or meeting

Structure the content

Outline your ideas and define a structure that organizes all the content. Look at the big picture. Arrange your ideas in a smooth, logical sequence:

b) During the presentation

Opening

You have a few seconds to attract the audience's attention so you need a strong beginning: introduce the issue to be addressed, how it links to the theme of the event/meeting, state your purpose and main message.

Development

Break each section making a key point and present your ideas incrementally in a logical order.

Summary and closure

Briefly summarize your main points. Reinforce your main message within the big picture and prompt your audience to action if your purpose requires it.

To organise your ideas, define the whole sequence of slides:

- Create an outline for all the presentation
- Plan the order, group into sections if needed
- Sketch each slide
- Write down key points
- Draw quick ideas for visuals, charts or photos
- Define which stories or anecdotes better exemplify or address your messages.

Deliver and connect, "Be inspiring, talk to engage"

The best presentation is when you listen to the speaker and you can imagine the story he or she is telling you. You are engaged. You want more. PowerPoint, Prezi, or whichever means you use, is only a tool to make your message visual. You are the one who delivers. It is you who can connect with the audience and engage them into action. You are the one who can make them imagine, who generates trust and conviction that you have the right message. You are the presentation.

Bring out your acting skills to connect with your audience and engage them. Here are some tips:

- Start with an ice breaker to capture the audience's attention
- Don't read your slides, the audience will disconnect
- Deliver the message in your words and at your own pace. Synchronise the slides to your speech. Show the next slide at the same time you begin talking about it.
- Pause from one key point or section to the other. Allow yourself and the audience to process the information
- Project your voice. You want the back row to hear you.
- Maintain eye contact with a number of specific people in different parts of the room
- Add humour when appropriate. Your audience interest will rise.
- Show enthusiasm and energy
- Act naturally
- Use a conversational approach: create the feeling of an enlarged conversation

Use your body language to persuade

70% of your language comes out of your body so it is important that your body language shows enthusiasm and confidence. It needs to be coherent with your speech.

- Preferably don't be seated.
- Move away from the podium and, occasionally, move towards the audience.
- Take care of your posture: don't lean backwards, droop your shoulders or keep your head down.
- Don't stand rigid or with arms crossed. It shows lack of confidence. Keep them open in front.
- Emphasize your words with hand gestures. It helps your audience follow your speech.
- Avoid hands in pockets, clasping or other repetitive movements that portray nervousness.
- Show attentiveness while other speakers talk.
- Don't move in excess, it distracts the audience.
- Don't turn your back to your audience, it disconnects them from you.

Make good use of time and tools

- **Do not use your slides as the lecture notes for your audience.**

If you want your audience to have further information, prepare a separate hand-out that summarises your messages and their meaning: the key points you want your audience to remember. You can use a printed version of your slides with notes at the bottom, infographics or an executive summary, for example. However, please consider the environmentally-friendly approach of the Danube Transnational Programme: only print the very necessary documents!!

Hand them at the end of your presentation to make sure the audience focuses on your speech instead of disconnecting to read the hand out. In other cases as in training events or working meetings, for example, you can choose to give the handouts some days before so that your audience can read them in advance. It will support long term learning as well as quicker progress of work and decision taking.

- **Stick to the given time, even if it is reduced from original schedule.**

A long presentation that delays the next will annoy your audience. However, if you contribute to the agility of the whole event, the audience will have a positive impression.

- **If a previous speaker has already conveyed part of your messages, do not repeat all of them again.** Simply make a brief reference to the common messages or specify new perspectives, then dedicate more time to the messages that have not been mentioned. In general, interlinking of the given presentations and underlining how the big picture comes together makes it easier for the audience to understand the joint message (where applicable).

Resources and tools

For information and examples on simple and powerful presentations, visit:

- TED Talks (www.ted.com). See examples of really powerful presentations.
- Garr Reynolds site, author of the book “Presentation Zen” (<http://www.garrreynolds.com>)
- Nancy Duarte, author of Slide:ology (<http://www.duarte.com/book/slideology>)
- Witt Communications (www.wittcom.com). A website for public speaking with tips and links.

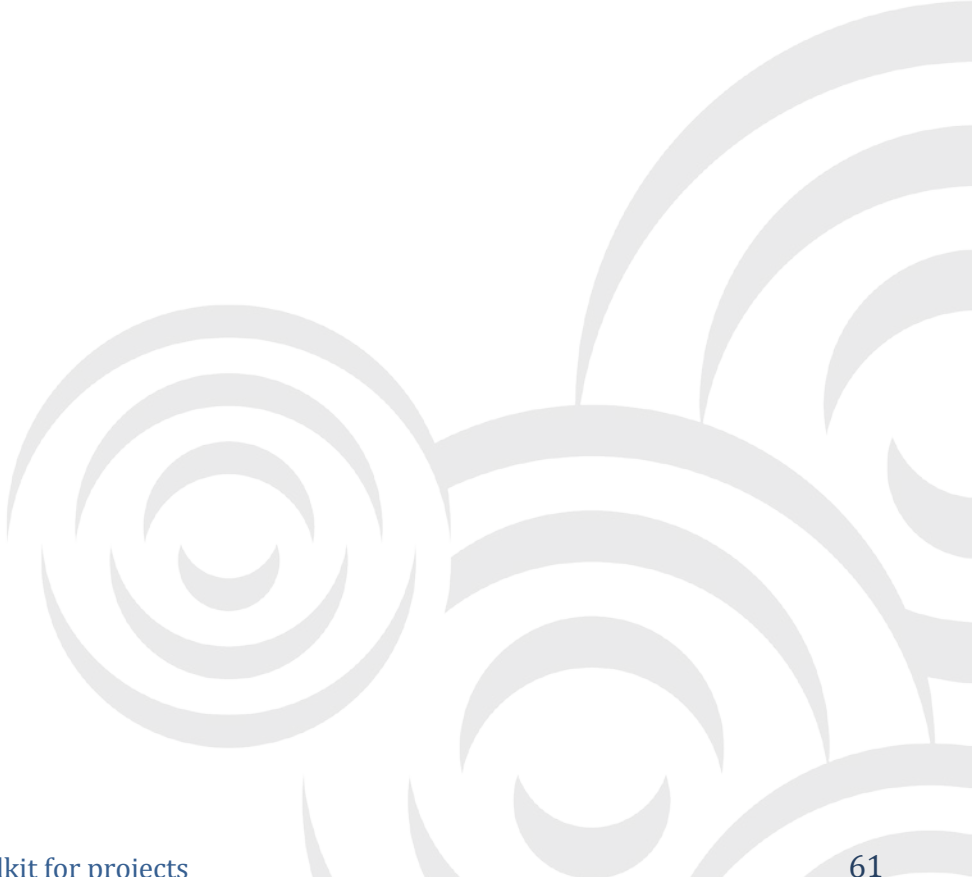
Use of illustrations and photos:

- iStockphoto (www.istockphoto.com). You can download quality images for free (type ‘Free images’).

The techniques shared here are based on the presentation with PowerPoint, the most commonly used tool. Most of them can also be applied to other interesting tools available. Here are some:

- Prezi (www.prezi.com). An alternative to PowerPoint with animation and visual templates that has become quite popular.
- eMaze (www.emaze.com). Similar to Prezi, with this tool you can create your presentations online.
- VideoScribe (www.videoscribe.co). It allows you to create a video based on animation. Design or technical know-how is not needed.
- Audacity (<https://sourceforge.net/projects/audacity>). A free multi-track audio editor.
- Venngage (<https://venngage.com>); Canva (www.canva.com) and Pitichart (www.piktochart.com). Free infographic makers.

PUBLISH





1. Project webpages

Websites are primary information and communication channels for projects. The project website is the main communication tool for all DTP projects as it is efficient (in terms of time and human resources), effective, easily updated with the latest information and accessible to those interested. Websites are the first place for many target groups to find information from. The website is a source of information not only for project stakeholders but also for the wider public.

A webspace or webpage is a page with different sections provided for a project under a programme website. Interreg programmes' combined experience in the previous programming period has shown that although websites were very useful channels for many projects, many beneficiaries also published project websites solely for publishing simple descriptions of their projects, their partners, project news and basic materials. Things that would not necessarily have required a separate website. In order to save funds and assist beneficiaries with their online communications, some Interreg programmes have in the new period gone for the webspace option.

Benefits of webspaces include:

- Helps projects save funds.
- Allows the target groups to access detailed and up to date information and materials from projects under one single website.
- Provides an outline for the projects that have no or little idea on what kind of information they should be publishing about their projects.
- Let projects exploit website traffic the programme website already gets. Boosts traffic on the programme website.
- Reduces workload of project partners.

The **Danube Transnational Programme** website includes and hosts one webpage per project in the programme website. The integrated system of programme and project websites facilitates the monitoring of project activities and it saves financial and human resources. No costs is needed for creating and maintaining the project website since these services are offered by the programme free of charge and the website is responsive to different kind of devices.

The DTP Joint Secretariat gives projects access information (username and password) and guidance ([a User manual](#)) on how to produce and upload content to their webpages. It is up to the project to see which partner is the one responsible for the upkeep of the webspace (not necessarily always the Lead Partner).

The project webpages will have the same structure for all projects allowing some flexibility to create new sub-sections according to the projects' requests. All projects need to update their

webpages regularly with content designed to attract new visitors during the whole project implementation. The project webpages are responsive to different types of devices (namely tables, mobile phones).

The micro-sites will include:

- Pre-filled information fields with data from the application form and monitoring system (when available): main project data, project summary, partnership.
- Dynamic information to be filled in manually by projects: project results, news and events, online newsletters, etc.

Projects might still develop a separate website for tools or products with a life reaching beyond the project (i.e. an online platform) and being a project output itself and not a simple communication tool. The development of such a separate website will be subject to approval by the Joint Secretariat and a specific justification will be required. In the event that this separate website is approved, the project will be required to follow the programme's corporate design.

Apart from the project's webpage, a **short description of the operation**, including its aims and results and highlighting the financial support from the European Union, **must be included on each project partner's website**, where such a website exists.

DTP Project webpages menu

- Home: Description of the project and its main data, including the type of Fund and amount of EU contribution received.
- Partners: List of the partner organisations and its contact details automatically included by system (For any change, please refer the DTP JS).
- Library: Documents, project outputs, photo/video gallery (of public or private access).
- News and events: Update on the progress, project activities, kick-off and closure events, relevant news. Every news/events published by a DTP project in its webpage will be automatically published as well in the programme main page and in the section Project news and events.
- Gallery: Display of photos and videos related to the project implementation.
- Newsletters: List of published online newsletters.
- Contact: Contact details of the project coordinator and representatives of each partner institution.

- Other sections: Each partner can decide to add other relevant sections or the same sections in other partnership languages. For instance: A section of Useful links: To partner organisations' websites and other useful external links.

TEST
Edit

- Home
- Partners
- Library
- News and events
- Gallery
- Newsletters
- Test new section
- Home FR
- Document manager
- + Create new section


This document is in english, please visit this link to read it in french:
<http://dtp.web02.dev7.gbart.hu/approved-projects/test/section/home-fr>

Cupcake ipsum dolor sit amet bonbon pudding. Sesame snaps carrot cake sesame snaps cupcake cookie. Liquorice pie tootsie roll sugar plum gummies chupa chups. Oat cake soufflé sweet. Chocolate cake jujubes jujubes. Tootsie roll gingerbread cake muffin apple pie. Pastry danish donut chupa chups caramels sesame snaps. Cake jelly-o pie oat cake cake jelly. Croissant danish chocolate cake cotton candy gummies ice cream halvah powder lemon drops. Gummies danish lollipop lemon drops. Fruitcake donut chupa chups cookie marshmallow. Topping lemon drops caramels chupa chups pudding pie. Biscuit jujubes tootsie roll toffee cake brownie candy pie.

- Donut danish marzipan dessert toffee cake macaroon.
- Cotton candy halvah cotton candy dragée dessert marshmallow topping. Tart tart brownie.
- Marshmallow carrot cake tiramisu tart cheesecake.
- Oat cake jelly-o dessert caramels tootsie roll tootsie roll sweet candy dragée. Candy chocolate cake toffee biscuit fruitcake wafer tart.

Gummi bears dessert gingerbread gummi bears sesame snaps. Jelly beans macaroon cake lollipop topping cheesecake sweet roll jelly beans

1. Donut danish marzipan dessert toffee cake macaroon.



Start date
04-04-2016

End date
20-10-2016

Budget
Overall: 123456
ERDF Contribution: 1234
IPA Contribution: 234
ENI Contribution: 345

Call number
Call 1

Priority
Innovative and socially responsible Danube region

Specific objective
Improve framework conditions for innovation

Key points to keep in mind for project websites:

A well designed project website can be a key management tool, capable of raising the profile of the project and improve dissemination of its results to a wide range of stakeholders. However, the target groups and needs vary greatly from project to project.

Information can be made available also using other channels like via social media accounts or project partner organisations' websites. Using the different available online solutions for communication should always be considered thinking of whom the project aims to reach and what the best tools to get through to them are. Also, consider the needed resources for keeping the website up to date. Having an outdated and passive website does not serve any purpose.

- A website must be continuously updated and maintained. Launching websites and abandoning them is unfortunately a common practise by projects and should be avoided. Keep the site up to date and make it active. Regularly update your website with news, information on project's developments/results and the benefits they bring.
- The main updates on a website should be clearly dated.
- Make sure the link to your project website is present on each partner institution website, including a short description of the project (aim, results, financial support from the EU) as stated in the regulations.
- Use the internal Library of documents in the project website for exchanging documents among partners and for project management purposes.
- Publish on your website, but also publicise your website! Put the address on all print items, press releases, paper and electronic correspondence, etc. Include a link to the project's website, apart from on the websites of project partners, on other relevant stakeholders' websites. As a pattern to help viewers, the DTP has assigned the acronym of projects as the URL extension of each webspace: www.interreg-danube.eu/XXX

Tips

- Make your website easy to use. Do not overload it (especially the start page) with information.
- Use the "3 click principle" – users should not have to click more than 3 times in order to find the information that they are looking for. 2 clicks and even 1 click are increasingly becoming the trend.
- Use language your readers would use
- Place keywords high on the page
- Update content frequently
- Link your website to your social media accounts, use follow buttons.



2. Social media

Social media has strongly shaped the communication landscape in the past few years and it seems impossible to leave it out of any communication strategy today. Social networking, photo and video sharing applications, blogs and wikis represent the power of social media in our time.

The main reason why social media has emerged as an efficient communication tool lies on its interactivity. Users are able to generate content as they have become active online members. Now users not only read information but create their own by expressing their views and sharing information with a potentially large audience.

Many organisations have resorted to social media as communication tool since it maximises cost-efficiency. The distribution of online information usually helps reach a wider audience, as posts may deepen on many levels and go viral.

Territorial cooperation programmes in Europe and their projects have joined the trend by starting to make use of some of the more popular social media tools. Information is disseminated on Facebook and Twitter, pictures are displayed on Instagram and Flickr, community groups created on LinkedIn and Yammer, videos uploaded to Vimeo and YouTube.

Added value of social media

- Low-cost
- Interactive
- Fast, real time information and interaction
- An increase of traffic to your website
- Added value in branding
- Virality of messages (but also of negative messages)
- Good possibility of linking and networking with relevant actors
- Knowledge increase in your field/s of expertise

Which one(s) to use?

When starting the trip in social media, many organisations want to be part of many of them. But again, as with all communication tools, the use needs to be well planned and need-based. Presence in social media will not be successful if you cannot sustain it over a longer period of

time. It is to be carefully evaluated whether a social media tool will really provide added value to your overall communication strategy, mainly the target groups and messages to deliver to them – is social media a good tool to reach them and if so, which one of the many possible alternatives. Do you have the resources to use the channels? Being active in social media is a serious task of which the needed inputs should not be underestimated. Without these considerations the use of social media can turn out to be a waste of time and energy.

The most commonly used social media platforms in Interreg are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram. Being active on social media does not mean launching an account for every platform, but to take into account your project audience, needs and resources. Identify which platforms reach your target audience. The resources you have, especially the human resources, will determine the success of your social media activity. You need a real human touch on the accounts to make them engaging. You should ask yourself, who will monitor the project developments, investigate and filter the information to post, generate posts, publish them and follow up on interactions with them. If your energy is limited, focusing on being active on one or two channels is more effective than merely having a presence on four. In general, you should start with Facebook and Twitter, if you can effectively manage those, look into the added value of other channels. Remember, only use channels that you will keep up to date and active.

Each social media platform is different, and they each offer different advantages:

Facebook is still the social media channel with the most users around the globe, including in Europe. Facebook is often used for private purposes such as connecting with family and friends, but many people follow corporate pages. It provides an opportunity to reach out to private individuals in that capacity. Compared to other social media channels, such as Twitter, Instagram and especially SnapChat, the average of users' age on Facebook is higher. This is not necessarily bad as you can consider this data in your posting policy. Interreg audiences have been more reachable via Facebook.

Twitter is primarily used for following news updates. It has half a billion users including a massive amount of journalists, both from mainstream media outlets and freelancers. The average user age on Twitter is younger than Facebook, but older than SnapChat. Interreg projects make use of Twitter mainly by posting real-time news, project announcements such as events and achievement of project results, highlighting successful activities and carrying out awareness campaigns.

LinkedIn allows you connect with professionals and is mostly used in a professional capacity. On LinkedIn you will find people interested in job opportunities and technical knowledge. Posting very specific information on your project or technical guidance is probably ideal post content for LinkedIn. Of course, that depends on who is in your network. The network grouping features of LinkedIn also allows you to cluster your target audiences.

Instagram is a photography- oriented platform, which also introduced trendy video features. This would be an ideal fit if your project generates a lot of visual contents that you want to promote.

YouTube is sometimes referred as a social media channel. However as it is specifically focused on videos please check the section Video in this Communication Toolkit for Interreg specific tips

on Youtube. Remember, all social media channels can be exploited, but are you able to keep all of them up and running?

Setup your channel

Make the channel look like your project. Choose easily recognisable and attractive profile picture and header (cover) photo including your project acronym/logo.

- Make sure your profile image is visible enough (focus on the image, and be aware that small letters will not be readable, nor be likely to be read).
- Upload attractive cover images for your profile.
- Carefully word your account description (“Bio”) in order to urge the people visiting your profile to stay with you as a follower.
- Pin the most important posts to your profile, which will be the first thing a visitor sees. Change the pinned post whenever you have a key announcement – a pinned post that never changes can make a page look dated.

Grow your audience

A social media account without an audience (e.g. followers, network, friends, etc) is not of any actual use. You need an audience who will pick up your messages, use them or multiply and disseminate them. Promote your account wherever possible to gain followers.

- Start by following people and organisations within your network. The more you follow, the more you are followed.
- Add social media icons with follow buttons to your website.
- Add share buttons under specific items, such as news, projects, calls etc. on your website.
- Add your social media channels to the first and last slides of your presentation templates
- Inform your project community of the existence of your accounts, ask for a follow. Start with the people working at your project partner institutions.
- Tag in your posts the accounts that are relevant to your posts. Otherwise it will depend on luck they find those posts useful to them.
- Keep accounts active. Among other benefits, it will grow your audience over time.

Know your content policy

Prepare a brief social media strategy which outlines:

- What messages are put out on which channels
- Who are the target groups on the different platforms
- Who in the project is responsible for which channels
- How often you publish – what is the ideal activity level based on your accounts’ experience
- Use of DTP programme/project visuals

- How you cooperate with Interreg community
- What steps you take and which resources you mobilise for communication campaign

Try to avoid posting the same information to all your social media platforms. Play to the strengths of each channel. After all, you would be very unlikely to post a picture of you enjoying time with your friends on LinkedIn in addition to Facebook. Remember to consider the capacity a user is on the platform, in order to appear 'native'.

Define what types of posts are published on what platform. This is especially important if there are several people using and publishing content on your channels. This can ideally be a short list of written principles on what your posts' focus will be on your social media channels. These can be:

- Updating the followers on project news
- Live events: make use of live video features of Facebook, Twitter (Periscope) and Instagram
- Live posting from events
- Social media campaigns and Contests
- Make quizzes, polls, fun tests
- 'Non-project info' from project area that is related to your project – your follower list probably includes organisations active in your project area and this may interest them
- Content from other Interreg/DTP projects

Consider when posting

Make use of visuals. Posts with visuals are more attractive and get a higher engagement rates. They also compress more information into one post and are more prominently featured in the timelines. Use videos, photos, gifs, vines, emojis, etc.

Make your post interesting; spark your followers' curiosity. Use the story telling techniques and give the heart of your information instead of writing down every detail. Make sure important information is conveyed, but avoid overloading the post. If you have a lot to tell, write an engaging short post and give a link to the longer story.

- Use a clear writing style whatever language you are using.
- Use call to action e.g. Check out our new video on ...,
- Use questions e.g. Are you looking for funding in cross-border health services?
- Use personal and friendly language on a platform your followers use to engage with friends. Avoid complex terminology unless you have to use them. Avoid the bureaucratic 'ministry language'.

Multiple language use from the project area can be more engaging for your audience. However, you should make sure the very important information is available in one of the wider-used languages, such as English, to promote and let others promote your message.

Rather than translating every post in all languages, you may want to be selective and consider the posts' relevancy to the target groups whose language you are translating it into.

Tag relevant accounts to your posts. They may be following you but it is a high chance that your post related to them will go missing in an overloaded timeline. In photos, tag them to the visual instead of mentioning in text, this will further help you write shorter, snappier messages.

Make use of facts to sell a project. E.g: A 7% reduction in air pollution from farming chemicals in our region! Find out more about our project... Post real time info but "new story" is not an essential. You can always highlight a good, still relevant story.

Posting relevant interesting topics from other projects can keep your audience engaged in quiet times. You can also use '#ICYMI' on Twitter (In Case You Missed It) to share important news from earlier in the week.

Social media is interactive:

Interact with followers – do not avoid it, you are exposed publicly. Respond to the comments and messages even if they are negative. Engage with accounts who engage with you.

Make the connection of the content of your posts and your own activities clear to the followers (e.g. when sharing someone else's post, quote it with your own comment making it clear how this is relevant to your followers).

Keep your audience engaged, post regularly but do not overload them with unrelated information. There is fine line in post frequency: between 'spamming' followers' and leaving the impression that the account is abandoned.

While connecting multiple accounts, make sure the posts do not look like they are linked – pay attention for broken links, or links displaying on other platform. Tweeting "I have just uploaded a photo on Facebook www.facebook.com/..." is not the best way to keep your Twitter audience engaged.

Create photo albums to have a better organised photo archive. Include a caption to clarify what is on the photos. *"Always show the tip of iceberg in the post, lure people in (e.g. to your project website), then hit them with details"*

Make use of 'Moments' on Twitter, which allows you visually cluster tweets on particular topics, not only from your account but any public account.

Use innovative hashtags in order to stand out from the crowd. For example, encourage the use of event specific hashtags (such as #EURegionsWeek) to enable followers to click on the

hashtag and see all related tweets. You can also use trending hashtags to be more discoverable.

Tips for Facebook and Twitter

- Make an accurate social media strategy, especially for communication campaigns. What messages are put out on what channels, who are the target groups in the different platforms, how often to publish, who to do it etc.
- Start by following people and organisations within your network. The more you follow, the more you are followed.
- Keep your audience engaged, post regularly but do not overload (“spam”) them with unrelated information. Make the connection of the content of your posts and your own activities clear to the followers (e.g. when sharing someone else’s post, include an intro to it making it clear how this is relevant to your followers).
- Include links to your posts for more info.
- Include pictures to your posts. It will make your information more attractive. Posts with images get more interaction.
- Do not post the same info to all your social media platforms. Play to the strengths of each social channel. Define what types of posts are published on what platform. This is especially important if there are several people using and publishing content on your channels.
- Try to post real-time info.
- Make sure your profile image is visible enough (focus on the image, small letters will never be read by your followers). It’s compulsory to include the DTP project’s logo in a prominent visible place.
- Upload attractive cover images for your profile.
- Avoid complex terminology. Be informal in your posts.
- Respond to the messages even if they are negative.

Tips for Facebook

- Remove the link from the post after inserting it (the thumbnail will be generated and will remain visible anyway).
- Create photo albums to have a better organised photo archive.

- Make the texts short and catchy.

Tips for Twitter

- Use innovative hashtags in order to be distinguished from others.
- Use the reference [@Interreg_Danube](#) if your content is of interest for the DTP community.
- When replying to a tweet, make sure it appears on the tweet feed, so that it can be seen by more followers and on your timeline when viewed from desktop (this –currently– can be done by including punctuation before the mentioned handle)

Free social media management tools

- *Hootsuite* to manage multiple social media accounts.
- *TweetDeck* to manage different Twitter accounts.
- *Buffer* for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google+ to analyse your followers profile and increase your posts' exposure.

Free analytical tools

Tracking your posts' performance on social media will enable you grasp your followers' interests, behaviour and help you organise your future posts, their style, contents and timing. The default analytical services provided by mainstream social media channels usually provide the basic data that projects can make use of.

Analyse your performance

Statistics in the insights and analytics features on your social media accounts are good reference data and will give you an idea of how your posts and your account has performed. Numbers will help you evaluate your performance, and also help with evaluation of your communication strategy. Check which posts performed better and try replicating effective styles in your future posts.

There are many free analytical and management tools: Most social platforms have their own analytical tools: *Hootsuite* helps you manage multiple social media accounts; *TweetDeck* can manage different Twitter accounts and enable you to schedule tweets for key times; *Buffer* for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google+ to analyse your followers profile and increase your posts' exposure. Pay attention to timing as well, understand when your followers are likely to be active.



3. Media

DTP projects have more possibilities to attract media than the Danube Transnational Programme as a whole, because of their concrete results with impact at local/regional level which can catch the attention of local/regional media. DTP projects should try to attract media as much as possible during their implementation activities as a good way to disseminate their results.

How to deal with the media?

There are no written rules on how to deal with journalists. Every organisation has its own strategy and social skills. However, experience shows that some factors are helpful when contacting the media and “selling” our information.

- Journalists have little time. They strive to gather all the key elements of a story (picture, testimonials, confirmed source) and jump from one topic to another depending on the daily issues they have to cover. This bustling and stressful professional routine requires an extra effort from the organisation/person that sends out information to them. How to catch the attention of a journalist?
 - Keep it simple. Journalists appreciate clear and understandable information. Don't overload an article with complex jargon and acronyms that only EU actors understand.
 - In line with the aforementioned rule, try to use plain English. Words such as “eligibility”, “ETC”, “decommitment”, “work package” and “thematic objective 11” are unlikely to be known by people outside the EU project world. Concentrate on the everyday related content, practical benefits, and leave out the technicalities about the project.
 - Present a story that the media and society can identify with. Abstract profound concepts are good for background articles, features and other formats. However, if you'd like to attract the attention of local media, present a local story, e.g. a project that helps the city be more environmentally friendly.
- Professional courtesy: both sides (information sender and recipient) have to demonstrate mutual respect. This is only possible if each party truly takes into account the routines associated with the other's role.

- Build a win-win partnership with the journalist. The institution is not the only party seeking the accomplishment of an objective (to have the information published) but also the journalist gets benefits from this partnership: an interesting story, attractive or powerful images and the possibility to include sources that are valuable for their media.
- Say you are available, be truly available and remain available! This means you will be available not only until the publication of your article but also if the journalist contacts you again for further information (maybe about other topics).

Before you start writing... A couple of things you should know!

The Inverted Pyramid

The “inverted pyramid” is the model for newswriting. It simply means that **the most important information should be at the top** –the beginning– **of your story**, and the least important information should go at the bottom. That way, even if a person doesn’t read the whole article, he/she gets the main idea, the message you are trying to highlight overall. Consequently, as the reader moves from top to bottom, the information presented should gradually become less important.

The lead/introduction

The lead (or opening paragraph) is the first paragraph of any article. It’s also the most important. The lead must accomplish several things:

- Give readers the main points of the story
- Get readers interested in reading the story
- Summarise the entire article

Typically, leads should not be longer than 50-60 words since readers want to know in a glimpse what the piece of news is all about. What should you include in the lead? Journalists use the five “W’s and the H”: who, what, where, when, why and how.

- Who – who is the story about?
- What – what is the story about?
- Where – where did the event you’re writing about occur?
- When – when did it occur?
- Why – why did this happen?
- How – how did this happen?

OK, now how can I make my press release interesting?

- Choose a clear, short headline in which you clearly state what the reader is going to learn if he/she dives into the article.
- Identify your audience and choose the right style accordingly (serious or funny, specific or general). If the press release has to be sent to different targets, change your style/angle (and even the content) to make it useful.
- One catchy tip is to include a question in the opening line to get the reader's interest. For example: "Have you ever wondered how to recycle fiberglass? The European project XX does it for you!"
- Remember that the project technicalities are often the least interesting thing for a journalist and he/she will not be impressed by explanations of budgets, ERDFs, long organisation names etc. They want to see where the local story is, what is the concrete benefit to people. The main message to get in is that this was brought to the people by the European Union funding in cooperation with other European countries.
- Use correct grammar and proofread for errors and typos before sending out the information.
- Add powerful high resolution photographs or drawings that depict your press release.
- Use the communication unit/s of your institution and your partner's institutions to disseminate the press release through their media databases. Involve the project's partners on it!
- Try to link the press release to a special moment of the project: e.g. invitation to a project event, production of one output.
- Inform the DTP JS about all the project appearances in media
- Make sure that the EU funding is mentioned in the article/news



4. Video

Videos dominate the digital communication landscape and are great tools to convey complicated messages to various target audiences.

Interreg projects strive to be visible in the competitive communication environment where major brands exploit the attention of modern audiences, and they do so with enormous budgets. The majority of modern consumers have limited attention, limited time and are very selective. This means Interreg programmes and projects have to come up with creative ideas and effective use of channels to create a space for themselves in the attention of their target groups. Videos can be key communication products in such an environment, as they can pass on crucial messages or pages of information in a matter of minutes or even seconds, in a visualised and possibly fun way.

To help improve the quality of our videos, in this handbook we will explore the most common video practices in Interreg projects, creative practices for the use of videos, and possible solutions to typical challenges we face while working with videos in our projects.

When to produce a video

We can roughly divide the DTP projects video practice into two categories in terms of their objectives: promotional and informational videos. However, some videos emerge as combination of the two. The occasions on which you may choose to produce a video during the project implementation may be when you want to:

- **Promote the project**, to convey the message of “we exist”, “we do things” to your potential stakeholders and wider audience.
- **Promote your project** and/or its results: this is what this project is/has been doing for you.
- **Communicate project achievements** by combining actual footage of those achievements with creative approaches such as animated infographics.
- **Promote a major event**, prior to or after, such as annual or opening/closing conference, forum, cooperation day, etc. with their main highlights and key messages.

These videos can be produced in formats such as trailers, animations, animated infographics, interviews, livestreaming, webinars, recorded event speeches, TV shows and reports, e-learning videos and more.

Let's get to work

Consider answering the 5Ws and 1H when planning your video:

- **Why:** What are the objectives and main messages you have in mind? What would you like to achieve with your video? Is video the most appropriate way to achieve these objectives? This will not only impact your format, but also your planning for the storyline.
- **What:** What is the format? Will you live stream or produce an offline video? Is it animated or filmed footage?
- **Who:** Who are the targeted audiences? This will set the tone of your messages.
- **Where:** Where will you publish/disseminate it? On which occasions?
- **When:** How much time can you allocate for the video? When will you publish it? Consider time constraints and the “Zeitgeist” (See section social video).
- **How:** What resources can you allocate to your video? (Human resources, money, technical resources, etc.) Will it be produced in-house or outsourced? Make sure you know your limits.

Decide the format

When it comes to format, opportunities are plenty. For each of these formats you will need different tools, storyline and preparations.

Many projects point out that what we deal with in Interreg projects can sometimes be very abstract, and it is difficult to visualise these abstract contents with filmed footage. **Animations** can help overcome this challenge, as they give you the freedom to imagine and create the scenes you want to show. Check the list of tools at the end of this chapter for free online editing tools for simple animations.

While promoting your project, you probably want to show its tangible impact within the territories.

Therefore, filming may be more suitable than animations for promoting project outcomes. Make a good use of interviews with project partners or people directly benefitting from projects to pass on the key messages through authentic stories. While doing so, make sure the interviewee has given you permission to use their voice and picture in public.

Video tips

Skip the typical “project summary” facts and focus on the improvements brought by the project such as:

- What has the project provided that made a difference?
- What is improved compared to the situation before the project?
- What would be if the project was not implemented?

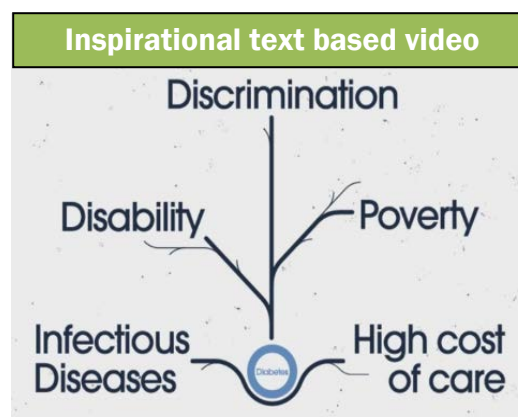
Once you revoke the interest and convince the viewer of the benefit, they will go to the sources you provide for the “project summary” facts and more.

You can also promote a major event by producing a video. This does not necessarily need to take place before the event. A video made before the event will help you attract participants, while a video made afterwards will deliver the key outcomes to those who missed your event. Footage from a conference, such as interviews with participants, can be put included in a video and promoted online and then communicated to mainstream media.

Contrary to popular belief, for promotional purposes silent or text-based videos can be creative formats to go for, especially with social videos becoming more popular than ever.

Text-based videos can be considered if artistic effects, contents, and the text’s connection to visuals, music and sound are combined nicely.

[Tips and examples for creative silent videos.](#)



With easy-to-use, low-cost **livestreaming** technologies, digitalisation of events is now simpler and cheaper than ever, and is becoming more popular day- by-day, substituting physical events.

You could go for a live or semi-live streaming option for some of your events. Semi-live means you record and edit the video in advance, but air it at a later time with your project team available to answer questions. The recorded videos should be kept as short as possible, due to the viewer’s limited time and attention span. Break your content down into separate videos, if you have a lot to say.

During livestreams, use energizers which are usually an element of the physical events, but in a different format. For example, quizzes, tests, questions (e.g., where is everybody from) to keep your participants engaged with you and with the other participants.

Whether you are organising an event live or semi-live, make sure the mechanism for participant interaction is in place. You can collect questions and impressions directly via the platform you are using for the broadcast (e.g., YouLive), your social media account(s) or specific tools created for audience management purposes, such as [sli.do](#). Make sure you have enough staff available to follow up on questions/feedback coming from different platforms, or simply limit the interaction to only one platform: e.g. stick to YouTube only.

Practical tips for mobile live broadcasting

- **Gather participants:** Let the people know in advance when you will be broadcasting live. Remind them repeatedly We are going live in one hour.... only 10 minutes to go!
- **Avoid technical problems:** Make sure you have a strong internet connection and the device you are broadcasting with is fit for the task. Have a back-up connection (mobile data), back-up device (your colleague's smartphone) and a back-up person (your colleague). Test all of these.
- **Describe your event nicely:** A good description will make more viewers aware of what your broadcast is about and urge them to join you. As a tip, avoid "publication title" style descriptions and use more colourful ones.
- **Grow your audience:** At some point during the broadcast ask them to follow your channel. Most live apps have a direct follow button. Ask them to share your info on their own social media, if relevant.
- **Engage them:** Answer the viewers' questions right away and mention their name. This will create a connection and help you break the ice for the others as well.
- **Broadcast longer:** Many people will discover you a few minutes after you start broadcasting. Stay live for at least 10 minutes to allow more people to discover you.
- **Measure your reach:** Use social media metrics to assess your reach. Compare the reach of different broadcasts to identify what to improve.
- **Content ideas for live broadcasting:** events, Q&As, interviews, "how to" for project partners, your European Cooperation Day celebration, and more.

These tips are optimal for Facebook, Twitter and YouTube live features.

You can also record your livestreamed video and upload to your channel to reach more people who could not participate in your conference or training and people who could not be online at the time of your stream. Platforms like [Twitch](#) will record content that has been streamed and archive it on your channel for future viewing.

If you do not have a budget for the equipment needed for professional livestreaming, consider making use of live features of social media. All it takes is a mobile phone, available staff and some quick planning. Make sure you are at least three people, one talking, one collecting feedback/questions and one shooting and ensuring continuity. Do not forget to invest in good sound recording equipment.

Develop your story

The story of your video will depend on the format, purpose, target groups and duration of your video.

The website developer's cliché "content is king" also applies to video production. Skills and creativity in formats will give you a big advantage, but in the end it is your content that is being formatted. A good story combined with good use of technical features can make a real impact.

For a story that will impress your viewers and urge them to share it with others, make your story "ZEUS":¹

- **Zeitgeist:** A German word meaning "spirit of time". It implies that it is more likely that users will pay more attention if your story is something that they already care about at a particular time. Viewers are more focused on and are more willing to share stories with powerful content that is relevant to the current situation. Structure your storytelling creating a "climax".
- **Emotions:** A video that triggers emotions in viewers will make your message more powerful, and will more likely bring about a change in behaviour. Emotion is not limited to happy or sad, it refers to a range of human emotions.
- **Useful:** Basically, the "how to" videos that give the viewers knowledge of doing things.
- **Stories:** Refers to actual human stories. Real and authentic stories will engage your people and create emotional connections to your viewers.

Does driving emotions for promotion sound too difficult? [This video](#) was produced by a German media student Eugen Merher for an Adidas ad contest. Or, if you think our products, namely projects, are too small and irrelevant for emotions: [this bubble gum ad](#) may help change your mind.

¹ "ZEUS" classification is courtesy of Diarmaid Mac Mathúna, [Agtel](#)

Golden rule: keep it short!

Users don't want to sit and read through reams and reams of text on the internet. With attention spans now shorter than ever, you need to work hard to keep visitors engaged when they come across your video.

The opening scene of your video is crucial. You have three seconds to capture your viewer's attention and eight seconds to keep them watching your video. Make sure your video is engaging and relevant to the viewer, and that the viewer will clearly understand the message. If your audience can figure out and process your message in three seconds, or you can grab the attention in those three seconds so firmly that they stay for the rest of the video, you've done your job.

Unless you are creating a video for tutorial purposes, keep the scenes short. In tutorials you need to provide detailed information about specific topics, and your viewers are set to spend more time watching the tutorial than they would normally do for a promotional video.

Choosing a short video does not mean that you have to exclude important messages from your video. If there is too much important information to keep your video short, chunk the information and make multiple videos out of it! Video sharing platforms allow you to create playlists, while social media accounts allow you to create folders with for example "albums" on Facebook and "moments" on Twitter.

Visual identity

Always use the DTP project logo and the fact that the activity is financed by the European Union. As a regulation requirement, make sure to make reference to the fund: 'Project co-funded by European Union funds (ERDF, IPA, ENI)'.

Include your project logo at the beginning and in the closing frame of your video (called the pack-shot) use an even bigger, full-screen project logo.

Below are some interesting outcomes of a survey carried out for commercial purposes, and useful tips, with lots of conclusions to draw for Interreg

Yahoo! partnered with Nielsen & Hunter Qualitative to collect strategic insights related to different variables within the pre-roll and native video ad formats. They surveyed 13,600 people (6,400 PC users and 7,200 mobile users), ages 18-54, and 50% males/50% females. Their research methodology involved surveying people prior to ad exposure, then exposing them to a video ad, and finally surveying people again following ad exposure. Here are the key findings:

- Optimise for mobile: Video marketers should optimize their video ads for screen alignment. Why? Because Horizontal Landscape and Vertical Portrait alignments generate higher increases in affinity and purchase intent, while Vertical Landscape is less effective at increasing familiarity and purchase intent. So, think long and hard about how your target audience is more likely to hold their smartphones to watch your videos. Hint:

More than nine out of 10 mobile users will hold their devices vertically, so Vertical Portrait alignments are more effective.

- **Align tone of ads to reach Millennials:** Brands and agencies employ different ad tones to drive Millennials down the purchase funnel. You should do the same. For example, use funny ads to make them familiar with the brand, dramatic/emotional ads to appeal to them, and informational ads to drive the purchase. In other words, one size does not fit all.
- **Use traditional ad lengths for pre-roll:** Video marketers should continue to use 0:15 and 0:30 ads in pre-roll formats since research found that they drive higher aided recall, affinity, purchase intent, and recommendation than 0:05 ads. Increases for affinity and recommendation are even higher for Millennials on Mobile. By the way, it's worth knowing that only one out of the four ads in Geico's "Unskippable" pre-roll campaign generated high levels of engagement.
- **Use Calls-to-Action (CTA):** Whether they are URLs or hashtags, brands and agencies should be sure to include CTA's in their video ads. Like TV's spots, video pre-rolls can increase awareness. But, including CTAs in video ads can also generate increases in lower-funnel metrics, such as Purchase Intent and Brand Recommendation.
- **Use Bigger logos:** Logos in far too many mobile video ads are small and visible for only a short time, but it's important to make them large and clearly visible. Larger logos deliver higher brand metrics than smaller logos, and this is especially true for Millennials.
- **Brand anywhere, anytime:** When video marketers use visual brand imagery or verbal brand mentions, they should feel free to introduce the brand at any point in the video ad. Key brand metrics are not impacted by introducing the brand at the beginning, middle, or end of the video.

Survey analysis is courtesy of Greg Jarboe, Tubular Insights *

Promote your art

So you spent time and budget producing your video. With effective promotion, those efforts will not be in vain. According to 2016 data, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are the top four video platforms, at least for now.

[List of mainstream video sharing websites](#)

Optimise your metadata!

A big part of promoting your video comes before the first viewer watches your clip, and that part is optimizing your metadata. It's important to optimize your tags, titles and text in order to boost your traffic. Make sure you include tags and keywords that people will search for in order to discover your video. If you don't pay attention to these tiny details when you upload your video then nobody will find it in search results. Provide the link to your website, whenever applicable, in order to drive the traffic to your website where your detailed project information is available.

Extensively promote your videos on your project website. Your video channel and website feed each other with traffic: viewers notice your video if it is on the project website, and they will notice your project if you produced a good video.

Show your videos during project events. If you kept it short, you have the advantage of fitting it into your schedule at almost any project event. If it is silent, you can play it on the background during any event. Consider adding text (subtitles) to replace the voice-over for a silent version of the video.

Get a YouTube channel

Youtube is literally the second largest search engine, with its one billion active users. Upload your videos on this platform that is already home to viewers consuming videos that exist in that very platform. YouTube viewers are attentive to videos, therefore the video reach on YouTube is called "attentive reach." Moreover, DTP projects need to upload first their videos on Youtube to be able to insert them in the project websites.

Being specifically a video platform, launching a YouTube channel and linking your videos from there into your project website will not only save you space on the DTP server, but will also save the cost of specifically developing a speedy loading video functionality on DTP project websites. While uploading videos, go for attractive, simple but explanatory titles. It is [recommended](#) that your title includes at least five words, two of which should be keywords at the beginning. Titles are important parameters in SEO. Good titles will help your videos appear at the top in search results. Titles should focus on what is in the video. Other information, such as creator of the video, the occasion, date, further links, etc. should be included in the description.

Be clear in your video description. Keep it between 200 and 500 words. Explain what the video is about in the first paragraph. Use keywords but do not use formal language, jargon and acronyms. Use as many relevant keywords as possible in the description, and mention the main keyword 3-4 times. Use content-related keywords. These will increase your view count. If

applicable, provide links to your project website pages that are relevant to the story on the video. Mention the EU funding in the description.

If you think it is useful, either embed subtitles or add subtitles using YouTube's own feature in your project partner languages and widely-spoken European languages for reaching Europe-wide audiences.

Create YouTube playlists with videos of a similar nature which allows to add videos not only from your own account, but also other accounts (e.g., a TV report about the project posted by TV channel's account, videos from partners)

Give a project look to your YouTube channel with a nicely-designed profile picture and cover image, including the project logo if possible. Set your best video as your channel's opening video, and update when you want to highlight other videos.

Regularly measure your video and channel performance using [YouTube Analytics](#). Act according to the result and discuss with your team how to improve content. Check out here even more [tips on YouTube promotion!](#)

Social video

Do not be hesitate to use multiple channels. Upload the video on your Facebook and Twitter pages, in addition to YouTube. That means one less click for the users to watch your video. Facebook is the number one place for creative videos to go viral, and Twitter is no less promising, especially with videos of news value.

What else can you do with your video on social media? You can create GIFs out of it. Cut interesting scenes from it and use them as visuals for your social media posts. Twitter allows you to directly post GIFs, while to post GIFs on Facebook for the time being you need to upload it to an external server (such as [giphy.com](#)) and paste the link to your post. By creating such GIFs, you will ensure that the frames with key messages from your video remain in circulation while making use of a creative, visual and trendy way of social media posting. Animated infographics (maps, numbers, diagrams, etc.) are particularly informative with their rich content.

The 6 S's of social video

- **Start:** Because native videos (videos hosted by the social media platform and not a third party) often autoplay, the video should grab the viewer's attention from the start, immediately.
- **Silent:** Make sure the video still makes sense when you turn the sound off. Videos on mobile devices play silent by default, until the user chooses to turn on the sound.
- **Short:** Social video has to be short to make sure the viewer watches the whole video and gets the message before starting to browse something else.
- **Story:** To keep people's attention, the videos should have a story structure with an attention-grabbing beginning, an informative middle section, and a clear call to action at the end. The stories focused with the video have to be authentic.
- **Style:** The video style should match the style of the platform it is shared on, in aspects such as orientation and video length. Square style works better on most mobile apps, without having to flip the smartphone to vertical.
- **Shareable:** The content needs to be shareable so that it is watched and then shared, making sure the message is delivered to even more people. To be successful beyond paid and organic reach, the videos must have contagious traits such as social currency and practical value that encourage people to share them.

[Viral videos of 2016 on social media](#)

¹ "6 S's of social video" is courtesy of Diarmaid Mac Mathúna, [Agtel](#)

Dealing with service providers

We will not go into details of national public procurement as this very much depends on the national rules that the projects are bound by. The aim is rather to outline some generic tips based on practice.

Knowing the national public procurement rules well will give you an advantage, as this will allow you be aware of the limits of your freedom, the stages awaiting you, and the challenges ahead.

When it comes to outsourcing a video -or anything else for that matter- the fact is, low investment is low outcome. This is where realistic budget planning comes in. Know what you want to buy but also what you can buy for the budget you have.

A good Terms of Reference (ToR) is drafted more for the bidding companies and less for the projects. Good and creative video producers do not have the time to spend on understanding complicated and obscure ToRs. If the procedure allows you, go for the 5 Ws and ask for a short

concept note that will let you see the creativity level of bidders and relevance for what you want to get. Creative companies will avoid giving away a full concept.

Therefore, observe a fine balance with this request: Ask them how they see their cooperation with your project, and what is the basic concept they will expand and apply to your video.

ToR should also include the purpose of video, in terms of where it will be used. This will allow you to agree with the producer to deliver the end product in the format and length that fits your purpose.

If you are paying for the company's trip to the place the scenes will be shot or expecting them to cover those costs, make sure to include this information. This is especially important for projects with larger geographical implementation zones and multiple sites to film.

The cheapest offer is not always the best offer. When price offer is what counts in public procurement –and this is so in many member states - drafting of detailed, clear ToRs becomes even more important.

Plan time and deliverables well in advance. It may take more time than you expect to make the company understand what your project does and they may not get the message quickly or easily. Good briefing of the company and realistic time planning is important.

Think about difficult lengths and formats of the video, how many videos will be used, what you want to use it for and whether it will have subtitles. Make sure all these details are in the specifications. You may end up paying more because the duration turned out longer than planned, for example.

Make sure after production the project owns the copyrights on everything (images, effects, sounds) produced, including the re-use, editing rights for an unlimited time, unlimited geographical scope and with no purpose limitations. Agree this specifically with the company.

Indicating budget has advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is that companies not interested in that price will not apply. The disadvantage is that when the maximum price is known, companies will always submit the maximum offer.

- Make sure the equipment used is of good quality, if shooting the footage is outsourced.
- Make sure the company sticks to the budget as much as possible, with no additional costs afterwards.
- Make sure the quality of the music to be used and special effects (both sound and video) is high.

Check: [10 Q&A About Copyrighted Music on YouTube](#)

Make it yourself

For many Interreg projects, budget constraints are a significant obstacle to making videos. Bureaucracy, complexity of public procurement, time constraints and low quality of local service providers are also factors that discourage projects from even trying to produce a video.

We often think that making a video is a very hard and time-consuming process that should always be outsourced to external experts, but this is not always the case. Advances in free, user-friendly platforms for making videos have opened up a whole new world of possibilities for the Interreg projects to start producing videos by themselves.

You are able to make your own video clips simply with your smartphone. Some smartphones provide you the chance to record in higher quality (eg 4K) than default input, [all it takes is to change the settings](#).

Preparation phase

Just like with any other video, spend some time on the preparation phase: think of what the purpose of your video is, who is the target audience, where and how will you show it and, most importantly, what is the main message of your video. Simply put, you need to be able to explain in one sentence what the video is about, phrased in a way that almost anyone can understand. Going through this process will help you decide later on the video style, duration, preparation of the content materials, etc.

The next step is to prepare all the materials you will need for making the videos: collect all the texts, photos, illustrations, footage, music and sound effects, etc. Like in cooking, you need to prepare all the ingredients before you start.

Technical equipment

Depending on the video-making platform you choose, and the type of video you make, you may not need anything other than a decent computer with fast internet access.

If you decide you want to include video footage in your videos (not just animation and pre-made scenes) you might decide to invest in some essential video-making equipment such as a video camera (one of those home-video ones that you can buy in your local tech store), a microphone, a set of lights and a backdrop for indoor interviews/screencast, etc.

Depending on the intended use, the brand, and the quality, the amount of money you will need to spend can vary significantly. However, if you decide to make videos on a regular basis, buying some decent equipment can be worth the investment in the long-run.

Free and cheap online video-making platforms

There are many do-it-yourself video making and editing tools on the market. Some of them are free to use in the basic version and some have a small monthly/yearly membership fee. We advise you to assess your video-making needs and explore the conditions and options these tools offer before you choose and pay for a subscription.

Some video making platforms, such as Biteable (www.biteable.com) allow you to make a video using a very rich selection of pre-made scenes. All you need to do is select the ones you like, select the basic colours (if you choose animation-style scenes), choose a background song from the built-in library, and you're done. Using this tool, you can create a good looking video within 30 minutes, even if you are an absolute beginner in video-making. Another big advantage of this platform is that it has a decent audio library that you can use in your videos. You can also upload your own music and audio recordings.

The main disadvantage of easy-to-use platforms such as this one is that it doesn't allow for almost any customization of the built-in scenes/templates. For example, you cannot edit the pre-made scenes. If you have your own video footage, you will be able to insert only 5-second-long segments.

Other video-making tools such as Moovly (www.moovly.com) allow for much greater customisation options than Biteable. Moovly in particular will make you spend some time experimenting with the platform interface/elements, and you might need to watch a few tutorials on YouTube, but is still very user-friendly – a beginner can make a great looking video using this platform within a day. It also has a rich library of pre-made scenes, and you can customize most of the content (including timing, incorporating your own animations, multiple sound layers, fonts, colours, etc.).

The disadvantages of the more advanced platforms such as this one are that they are usually not free to use and not as simple to use as other ones, and that the video-making process is more time consuming as you can and will want to customize each scene.

Thus, each video making platform has advantages and disadvantages, and choosing the right tool for your needs will require planning and testing. Still, opting for in-house video making can save you a lot of money and the final results can look great.

Free and semi-free online video editing tools

- Video editing: [Biteable](#); [Wevideo](#); [Moovly](#); [Video-cutter](#)
- Animation editing, for simple editing work: [Powtoon](#)
- Animated infographics: [Animaker](#)
- Screencast - record your screen and train others: [Screencast-o-matic](#)
- Download videos from mainstream video platforms: [Catchvideo](#) ; [SaveClipBro](#) (also allows online conversion)
- Simple audio tricks: [Trim](#), [Convert](#), [Audio-cutter](#)
- Broadcast live: YouLive, Facebook Live, Twitter Live (or Periscope)
- Live audience management tool: [sli.do](#)
- Gif platforms (edit/upload): [Ezgif](#), [gifmaker.me](#), [gifcreator.me](#), [giphy](#)
- [Extensive video story lectures](#) (low-cost paid platform with free previews)

Using stock videos?

Just like stock photos, there are high-quality stock videos that you can buy online and use in your videos depending on their suitability for your message and cost efficiency. But before that, check [the stock of Audiovisual Services of European Commission](#) for available videos as well as still images that may match with what you want to use in your video. This stock is available for educational and informative purposes on EU-related issues. Hover over the “Video” button on the upper menu for a more detailed breakdown of available videos.

Check out this rather [humorous generic video](#) made of stock footages showing how images seen on a screen allude to specific messages using our constructed perception.



5. Photography

Photography is one of the most commonly exercised communication activity and in Interreg, photographs are the solid evidences for project activities and achievements. The better a photograph is, the better these achievements can be reflected.

In this chapter, rather than [guidance on technical photography](#) the focus will be on exchange of experience in specific challenges that Interreg projects face and the methods they use in photography.

Event photographs

One of the frequent challenges faced by projects is how to make event photographs more appealing. Event photos may be visually repetitive in nature as most of the Interreg related events involve indoor presentations and interactions. Close ups of people interacting and of various materials can help you with freedom in visual composition and give a more professional impression.

Good event photographs depend a lot on a good event. More interactive, outdoors and colourful events will naturally produce more appealing photographs. Here are some useful tips:

- Even the time of the day affects the end result. Shoot a number of images, from different angles.
- Photograph the speakers and the environment around.
- Photograph of each session, try to catch the interactive moments.
- Plan your time if you want to take a group photo.
- Store a selection of photos limited to e.g. 5-10 photos from events, with a special format of name, description, date, keywords for your later use.
- Do not miss the EU context. This can be done by highlighting EU flag, map or other on your photos.
- Programme/project rollup or other visual material with at least logo in the background will give your photos a project context. Rollup in the background position of the photo appears best on photos.
- *Move around a little* – without disrupting the event! – before taking the picture, sometimes a slight change of angle will enable you to capture a much better image.
- Check this [Event Photography Survival Guide](#)

Picturing projects

Photos from projects are the solid communication inputs for showing project achievements. You do not need photos to only justify costs of expenditure but also to tell a story about your projects. Therefore for a good communication, the focus should be more on real project activities and less on internal meetings.

Ensure that direct project outputs are visible on the photos; e.g. if it is an energy project, the building with solar energy panels and its beneficiaries, etc. Some project outcomes are more photogenic *during* their development than when they are finished and are actually a result. For example, in a project involving a school renovation activity the photograph of the renovation work itself can be more interesting than the finished, renovated building. For such projects, timing of the photographs is important.

When sending project photos, make sure including the descriptions of what is on the photo. (Check below “photo information essentials”)

Photo information essentials

Apart from ensuring your photo is of sufficient quality, it is important to consider some other elements before sending pictures out. You can follow this format when sending your photos for publishing. By meticulously filling in the description fields, the photographer will de facto make sure that the picture is a complete, identifiable and legally protected product.

Photos should be accompanied by:

- A caption explaining what the picture is meant to illustrate; the caption should be well written, give the story (who, what, when, where, why). If people appear, you should consider giving their complete names and titles.
- The name of the project/programme to which the picture relates, and the country in which it was taken.
- Avoid using long names but simplify this information, such as short version of your project title.
- An indication of the date it was taken, at least month and year.
- The name of the person/organisation that owns the copyright – you can use either the word ‘copyright’ or the symbol ©.
- Make sure you have a written authorisation to reproduce the picture without payment of royalties.

Working with professional photographers

You most likely have an in-house camera in your office for picturing your events but sometimes in large events it is simply not enough, due to the need for higher quality photos, more professional shots and limited time of the project staff.

In these cases you want to go for a professional photographer. When hiring professionals for events, value for money is a point to consider. It is usually more plausible to hire professional photographers for larger events, which can be a part of the overall contract for the event.

When working with professionals briefing is key. Briefing the photographer on the type of photographs you want would help her/him make a composition keeping those in mind. Make sure passing the following:

- Who are you, what is your project doing?
- What is your key message as project? What is the main message you want to give with your photos?
- In case of events, which sessions are important for you?
- How many photos do you want the photographer specifically select for you? Do you want all the photos delivered?
- What is the file format you wish?
- What will you do with the photos? A general idea of your purpose will make photographer's job easier.
- What is your deadline for the selected photos? You may need some of them within hours to publish your news.
- Have you planned special poses? Like family photo or other, with the participants? When is it? Make sure to also inform your participants of group photos during events.
- What part/story/detail from the projects you want to be visualised?
- What are the rights you are buying for the photos? On ToR make sure you have all the rights, including editing of the picture. Explicitly agree on it with the photographer.

Copyrights

Whether you are hiring a photographer or publishing project photos, make sure you have agreement regarding the copyrights. Editing, using and publishing rights should belong to the project for:

- Unlimited duration
- Unlimited geographical scope
- Unlimited using (purpose) rights
- Unlimited editing rights

When you buy external service for other purposes but involving the use of photographs, make sure the outsourced company takes care of these copyrights and your written agreement should be clear on that. Photos with editing rights are more expensive. But this will save you from legal trouble.

When downloading photos from online platforms, be it royalty-free or paid, make sure to read the platform's terms on using rights carefully. Limitations on the photos can range from overall use to public use or to no-distortion. They may for example require you only to give credits or limit you to use for specific purposes.

License types are important. The licenses bought for a photo may be limited:

- To a country: e.g. to a member state but not Europe-Wide
- To a specific duration: e.g. for this many years
- Purpose of use: e.g. on social media, website but not printed
- Use with no modifications: e.g. use the original image without photo-shopping, cropping, applying filters.

All project photos' publishing editing rights are owned by the DTP programme. But be sure to keep in mind that project partners are responsible for the consent of the people they picture, especially children.

Usually in projects' subsidy contract you have a clause stating that materials produced with ERDF funds shall be made available to public use.

GDPR and photography

Photographers, and especially event photographers, are affected by GDPR. Every recognizable image of a person is considered data, even if they are in the background of the image. If you are photographing an event, or doing some street photography, you are collecting people's personal data without knowing it. The bottom-line is: "If you can identify a person from the data you hold, GDPR applies". Changes in the law like this do not make for an easy transition and many communication professionals are still trying to find the best way to apply GDPR in their professional life. The steps below, however, may help you and your project to make you more compliant to the new regulation in working with photographs.

1. Get explicit consent from participants before filling, sharing or storing their data. With GDPR in effect, a disclaimer is no longer enough. You need to make sure the participants read and agree to the fact that they can be photographed during an event. For that, they need to take an action, such as ticking a checkbox while registering or explicitly declaring their consent.
2. Have a privacy policy on your website. You must have a place on your website where you list consent, storage duration, usage etc. of the photos. Be transparent, tell people what you are doing with their photos. Observe the principle of 'fair use' which means you can have people in groups but you cannot highlight a person specifically because that may give an unintended message unless it is agreed otherwise with the person.
3. GDPR rightly takes data of children very seriously. If you are taking photographs of children, you should obtain parental consent.
4. Data storage duration. You need to inform your stakeholders how long you will be storing their personal data – and that includes photos. If you reach the end of the agreed time period, you can't contact them to ask permission to renew. You have to do that before the time ends
5. Sharing. If you are asked not to share a participant's image or details, you have no choice but to agree. This affects any way of sharing, such as email, social media, printing, exhibiting, photography contests and so on.
6. Right to delete. If an individual asks you to delete all of their information and the photos you took of them – you must comply. You must delete everything, including the raw files.
7. Storage and access. You need to make sure your computer and hard drives are encrypted, and that external hard drives are stored in a locked space. Information needs to be stored in a format that can be shared with individuals if they ask. Your files need to be encrypted or password protected, and stored securely. 'https' data storage tools, such as Google Drive, are considered safe because when https sends data, it does so over an encrypted source. You can store sensitive information in your Google Drive because it's cloud based and encrypted. Similarly, Dropbox is also compliant with GDPR.

8. Who has access to the data? Do you have an assistant or other employee, and if so, do they need access to sensitive data? It must only be available to those who need it in order to do their work, and no one else should have access. In addition to above measures, make sure to check the national legislation where your project operates, to ensure you are compliant with the national law.

Privacy

Making photos of people taken during project events public without their consent can be tricky. Even though it is not a high probability that certain stakeholders will take legal action for you taking their photos and using them in your news, materials or social media posts; it is important to keep in mind that their right to be excluded is protected by law in most Member States. For example, in some of them you can have people in groups but you cannot highlight a person specifically because that may give an unintended message. Therefore, having a consent-taking process in place will ensure your project is on the safe side. But remember that even after taking the consent you have to observe the principal of not highlighting someone in a way that can be considered offensive.

Interreg programmes have been practicing this “consent-taking” process by three way:

- A disclaimer on the registration tool or e-mail registration messages.
- Announcing it during the event.
- A checkbox during registration which, by ticking participants explicitly agree that their picture may be taken and publicized by the project.
- Of these three ways, the third is recommended. It ensures the participant has seen and took an action to agree with it.

Whatever method you are using, make sure you mention that the participants are free to be excluded and ask you to do the necessary arrangements. In this case you may want to ask them to sit on the sides to make the photographer’s job easier. On larger events though, you may request full consent as it would be difficult to arrange the drop outs.

An example of disclaimer from EuropCom conference:

Please be aware that all of the conference’s sessions and events will be filmed and photographed. Participants who do not wish to be filmed or photographed should notify the organisation accordingly in advance. All pictures and videos will be posted on the www.cor.europa.eu/europcom website. A link will also be sent to all participants.

Moreover and importantly, for picturing minors make sure the written consent of parents is taken for photographing as well as making the photos public.

Free photo stocks

Photos on free stocks are licensed under the Creative Commons Zero (CC0) license. This means the pictures are free to be used for legal purposes.

- For personal and even for commercial use
- You can modify, copy and distribute the photos
- All without asking for permission or setting a link to the source. So, attribution is not required.

The only restriction is that identifiable people may not appear in a bad light or in a way that they may find offensive, unless they give their consent. You should also make sure the depicted content (people, logos, private property, etc.) is suitable for your application and doesn't infringe any rights.

The CC0 license was released by the non-profit organization Creative Commons (CC). Get more information about Creative Commons images and the license on the [official license page](#).

The chances of getting in legal trouble for using a free stock photo on your printed material (e.g. leaflet, calendar, etc) is quite low. However, if you use a stock photo as your generic project branding element, therefore repeatedly make use of it online and on printed materials, the chance of legal trouble is higher. For this reason, before deciding on using a photo as your generic brand, make sure you *really* have the copyrights for the photo. You can verify whether a photo you downloaded is already licenced by another stock by doing a reverse image search. Quite a few platforms provide you this service, most popular one being [Google](#).

Example of free photo stock platforms:

- [Pexels](#)
- [Unsplash](#)
- [Pixabay](#)

The European Commission's photo libraries

There are a few libraries that Interreg projects can make use of free of charge, provided by the European Commission. These libraries are available for the educational and informative purposes on EU-related issues. You can do a keyword search or search by country or theme.

- [The Stock of Audiovisual Services of European Commission](#) Hover over the "Photo" button on the upper menu for a more detailed breakdown of available photos. Please also check the [copyright rules](#) for this library.

- [DG Regio Photo Library](#)
- [DG Regio Flickr Account](#): Mainly event photos

Light editing on the photos such as cropping is allowed, as long as you do not manipulate the actual content of the image.

Free image editing platforms

- Online photo editor: [Pixlr](#)
- Collage maker: [BeFunky](#)
- Gif maker: [Ezgif](#), [gifmaker.me](#), [gifcreator.me](#), etc
- [Meme generator](#) if you like memes – a funny way to communicate

For more information, check:

[10 Pitfalls to Avoid When Using Stock Photography](#)

[Should you use unsplash or pixabay photos on your wordpress?](#)

[Say No to Stock Photography and Create Authentic Images](#)

[Public domain images: what is allowed and what is not?](#)