



## PROGRAMME MANUAL

# 5. COMMUNICATION

Programme cofinancé par le Fonds Européen  
de Développement Régional (FEDER)

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## FORWARD NOTE

For the 2014-2020 programming period, the Interreg MED Programme has adopted a new approach for project management that drives new orientation on project identities and on (expected) results rather than on processes or simple outputs. Each project will be part of a thematic community of projects running during the whole programme period and to which they will contribute. Project partners will have to develop their relations in the spirit of the “MED community” in order to allow the development of a true “community identity”. In this sense, the project communication approach will be based on thematic communities rather than on the identity of the project itself. Following this new approach, project partners as well as Programme bodies will permanently be interconnected in one consistent and single manner.

## PROJECT BRANDING, INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY RULES

All projects need to observe a series of obligatory publicity rules and branding guidelines for all their communication actions. **These requirements are laid down in the Annex XII of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and the Annex I of the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 821/2014.**

The fundamental principle is that project beneficiaries must inform the general public and all those involved in the operation about the assistance received from the European Union.

EU and Programme branding illustrative elements have to be clearly and visibly displayed in all published materials and/or activities addressed to the public. These obligations stand for:

- printed publications: reports, promotional handouts;
- audio-visual: videos, audio podcasts, channels;
- digital or electronic materials (websites, web tools, videos, podcast, etc.);
- events (e.g. on PPT presentations, agendas, bags and other conference material);
- Stationary and office materials.

The observance of these rules is critical for the co-financing of the communication materials.

### LOGOS

Following these rules, the Interreg MED Programme has adopted a single branding for project logos that includes the following elements:

- THE INTERREG LOGO (symbol of the *European Territorial Cooperation* objective), associated with the EUROPEAN UNION flag, in accordance with the graphic standards, and the reference to the European Union;
- THE PROGRAMME LOGO (“Mediterranean” naming with the brush stroke symbol coloured with gradient that includes all its four axis colours).
- THE INTERREG MED THEMATIC COMMUNITY LOGO (eight communities) or the related PROJECT’S LOGO in the case of Modular projects.

This approach allows to comply with the EU eligibility rules as to the use of the EU emblem and logos.

All communication materials developed by Interreg MED projects need to display the project logo provided by the Programme and when necessary add the reference to the European Regional Development Fund. Failure to do so will result in ineligibility of expenses

## a) The thematic community logo

The Horizontal projects must use the thematic community logo (see model here under) as well as a thematic community naming created by the Programme, instead of a project name.

When a publication or a communication action is developed by several projects from the same thematic community, it is not necessary to display all the project logos on the communication materials. A list of project names with the “thematic community logo” can be displayed instead.



## b) Modular Project's logo

The Modular projects must use the following logo model here under:



## c) Using the logo

A branding package with all the versions of the project logo will be available in JPG and EPS files. EPS versions are mostly used by professional illustrators and with professional illustration software while JPGs can be used also for WORD, PPT, EXCEL and similar standard software.

A brand book explaining the logo design rules will be available for download on the Programme website as long as with a branding package for each project. Nevertheless, please take notice here of some **unacceptable modifications of the original versions:**

**The following is not allowed:**

- Disproportionate resizing;
- Rotation of the logo combination;
- Modifications as regards typography and colour;
- Changes between the different elements of the logo.

**Positioning, size, background and transparency of the logo**

- Display the logo in a visible position, top central or other (e.g. on the outside, front or back cover for brochures, on the starting page of the project website, on the cover of a DVD, etc.).
- Use a white or suitable, one coloured background. If placed on coloured background, foresee a contrast between the background colour and the logo. In case the logo combination is placed on a photo, a suitable, not overloaded background shall be chosen.
- Also, the logo must be placed in its non-transparent version (this means that inside the frame the background remains white). The use in its transparent version can only be accepted on a suitable, one coloured and light background.

- For reduced size materials (PEN Drives, for example), use the minimum size: 1,55 cm x 2,55cm so as the textual elements remains readable. If it is not possible, please contact the JS Communication unit to find solutions to avoid any ineligibility.
- No vertical version of the logos is foreseen.

#### REFERENCE TO EU CO-FINANCING

All projects **co-financed by the ERDF** should be aware that the reference to the fund must appear on all promotional materials, if otherwise they will not be eligible.

- a) Projects with partners from EU Member States only shall use the following sentence:

«Project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund»

The ERDF reference can be written in any language used in the cooperation area. In this case, it must be also guaranteed that the transnational project approach will nevertheless be clear to the public (e.g. in textual reference and background descriptions). Moreover, it can be integrated in the text (for example in press articles, brochures...), added somewhere visible or simply added to the project logo.

When adding it to the logo, make sure to use the font Montserrat. This font can be downloaded for free via <http://www.fontsquirrel.com/fonts/montserrat>.

- b) Materials co-financed by the IPA (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro)

No specific reference to the fund is necessary. **The project logo is the only compulsory element** in that it already includes the EU flag emblem and the reference to the «European Union» (as mentioned before).

#### PROJECTS ACRONYM

The acronym chosen to identify the project (Horizontal and Modular) on Synergie CTE must not be longer than 12 characters. The choice of project acronym should respect a few guidelines:

- Be short and memorable;
- Not to repeat acronyms of previous projects, to avoid any confusion or mistakes with them;
- Be intuitive, meaning that it must correctly identify the project purpose or mission;
- Be easy to pronounce and “catchy”. For this reason, technical information should be avoided, including Programme specific terminology, like “M1” (Module 1), or reference to the Interreg MED Programme (already included in the logo), for example.
- Be in lowercase for Modular projects. Upper case letters are reserved for Horizontal projects in order to respect the branding coherence.

As previously mentioned, Horizontal Projects will make use of a thematic community naming, instead of a project name in the logo. The partnership name can be used in descriptive texts of the communication materials and displayed in a place where it shall not overshadow the thematic community logo – e.g. in the footer – as “Interreg MED Blue Growth featured by ‘project partnership name’”. The partnership name shall not be bigger than the thematic community logo.

#### POSTER

According to the Annex XII of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, all approved projects should place a poster (of minimum A3 size) with information about the project including the financial support from the Union and the project logo, **at least at the Lead Partner’s premises**, at a location readily visible to the public, such as an entrance area of a building.

In order to help project partners to comply with this obligation, the Programme will provide a Poster template available for download on the web platform.

All projects should send a photographic evidence of this poster display together with the first progress report.

#### BILLBOARDS AND PLAQUES

In the case of infrastructure investments receiving funding of more than EUR 500,000 specific illustrative requirements, set out in Annex XII of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, have to be adopted. More specifically, this relates to the production and the setting up of billboards and plaques at the relevant sites which shall contain the logo and references as set out above.

**In this very rare case, please contact the JS Communication Unit to adopt relevant solutions.**

#### PROJECT WEBSITE

The Programme will provide and host a complete ready-to-use website (calendar, document library, directory, tools, etc.) to each approved project. Shortly after their approval, the communication managers of the project will receive the elements to manage and configure their website (visuals, features, content, social networking, etc.).

Project websites will have to be updated on a regular basis and provide a short description of the project in English including its aims and results and highlighting the financial support from the Union.

The Programme will hold trainings and develop tutorials to illustrate the different features of the platform so as to help webmasters in using the web platform and to improve their performance and contents. However, projects can still work with specialised service providers for the development of graphics, content editing and translation or implementation of multimedia elements, in accordance with their communication strategy.

**As a consequence of this approach, no website development costs should be budgeted. Only staff costs for regular content updates should be considered.**

Projects developing specific web tools requiring a dedicated website that cannot be provided by the Programme can develop a specific website for this tool (to be checked with the Programme) as long as it complies with all the publicity rules of branding and funding mentioned before.

However, a link to the web tool must be placed in a visible place of the projects website in the Interreg MED platform and the update of the latter one must not be overlooked.

#### PARTNER INSTITUTIONAL WEBSITE

All project partners should publish on their institutional websites ("where such website exists") a short description of the operation, as set forth in the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 (Annex XII, Article 2.2 paragraph 2.a).

This description should be proportionate to the level of support, including its aims and results, and highlighting the financial support from the Union". Partners should also include the project logo and the reference to the EU co-financing and, both set in a visible place and complying with the publicity rules herein detailed. A link to the project website in the Interreg MED platform should also be added.

#### EVENTS

The project logo, as well as a clear reference to the EU co-financing has to be used on agendas, list of participants, related publications, promotion materials and presentations. (Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013). During the events, projects are encouraged to place the project poster or a project banner in a readily visible place (e.g. the front of the meeting room).

## PUBLICATIONS

All project publications, including brochures, newsletters, studies, articles and others must include the project logo and the reference to the EU co-financing. When this is not possible, for example, in scientific articles, conference proceedings or other publications, projects should explicitly mention the contribution from the EU co-financing and the Interreg MED Programme.

In addition, projects are strongly recommended to publish most essential results (or a summary of them) in the two official languages of the Programme: English and French in addition to the other languages.

## PROMOTIONAL GOODIES

Promotional goodies can be a good way to raise awareness about a project. However, they should be produced only if they meet strategic objectives and are linked to a promotion strategy. Please take notice of some parameters to take into account when producing goodies:

- is it relevant for the promotion of my project?
- is it useful, creative and memorable enough?
- Is it green? It is strongly recommended to produce green goodies having in mind the fewer the better.

Again the golden rule: all promotional goodies should be branded with the project logo and the reference to the EU co-financing.

## TIPS

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- ➡ To **avoid ineligibility** of any activity or product, you can countercheck the products with the programme's Communication Unit before printing.
- ➡ A **communication handbook** on the techniques and PR specific activities can be found on the Programme website. The Interreg MED Programme will also offer communication trainings and seminars.

## DESIGNING YOUR (EXTERNAL) COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Six months after their approval, Modular projects are requested to provide a communication strategy, together with the first progress report. Whereas, Horizontal projects must present a first draft version of their communication strategy including a communication plan (or activity plan), no later than 4 months after the project approval.

When designing their communication strategy, both Horizontal and Modular projects should carefully take into consideration the development of a true “community identity”, thematic and Mediterranean, in order to create a greater awareness of results.

Bearing this in mind, there are three interactive levels that must regularly communicate and cooperate with each other:

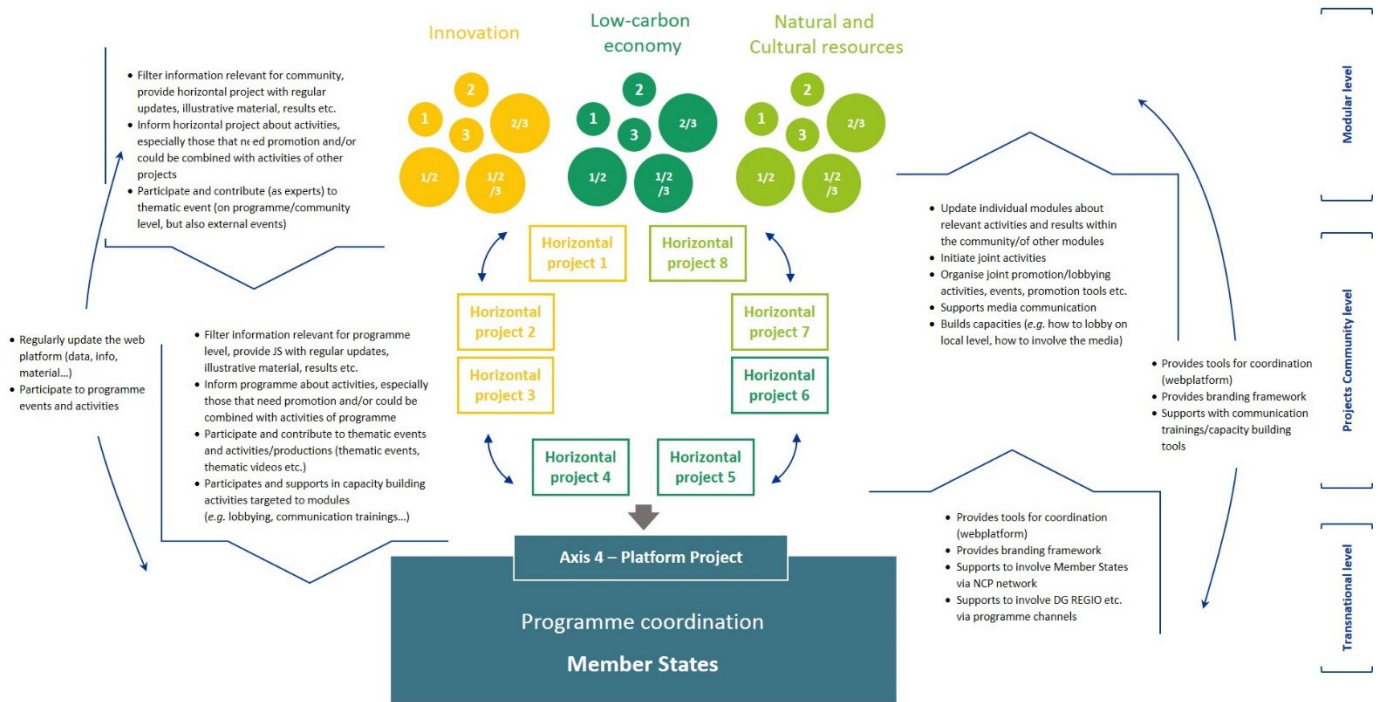
- Transnational/Programme level;
- Thematic community/horizontal projects level;
- Project level.

Each level should find means of coordination and define their degree of intervention, as well as the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder in terms of communication activities and supports, definition of the communication strategy and media communication. Clear separation will allow enhanced complementarity and will help to avoid any overlapping.

The communication strategy of the Horizontal project must be set up in coordination with the Programme and with the Modular projects of its thematic community, through meetings, working papers or consultations. This positioning has the purpose to grant the strategy the coherence and adherence of every modular project to develop a clear understanding of mutual tasks and coordination methods. In this respect, the communication responsibilities of Horizontal projects can be summed up as the following, they must:

- Draw the communication strategy of the thematic community they are in charge of;
- Implement this communication strategy through an annual communication plan;
- Coordinate this communication strategy between all the stakeholders (see part “internal communication”).

FIGURE 1: COMMUNICATION LEVELS OF INTERVENTION



Either way, project partners are strongly advised to follow the recommendations detailed hereunder to draft their communication strategy that should be based on discussions and decisions involving all project partners. The communication strategy shall be short and precise and at least include the following main sections:

1. Strategic overview and situation analysis
2. Objectives
3. Target groups
4. Tailor messages
5. Communication channels and activities
6. Timeline
7. Financial and human resources
8. Evaluation

#### STRATEGIC OVERVIEW AND SITUATION ANALYSIS

Project partners are strongly advised to perform a SWOT analysis beforehand. For this purpose, they need to list all the project's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in terms of communication. A SWOT analysis will help them look realistically at the project's communications environment and plan accordingly. Project partners can answer the following questions to undertake their SWOT analysis:

- **STRENGTHS:** What are the strengths of your project?
- **WEAKNESSES:** What are the potential weaknesses of your project? What could be damaging or negative?
- **OPPORTUNITIES:** What communications opportunities are there? Is there anything new, different, interesting or unique in your project that you could capitalise upon for publicity?
- **THREATS:** Are there any potential threats that your project could face? What might go wrong? How could this affect your communications and PR activities?

## OBJECTIVES

Communication needs to be goal-driven. We communicate to achieve or change something.

The communication objectives derive from the management objectives. Project partners are advised to build-up their communication strategy on the same grounds as their project strategy, in order to achieve better results and coherence.

Project's overall communication objectives should be expressed in short bullet point format and clearly indicate what the project communication will bring to the project.

It is important to define these objectives in a way to be able to measure the success of communication activities. This should be about setting SMART (specific, measurable, assignable, realistic and time-related) goals that are broad enough to allow flexibility and room to adapt to changing circumstances.

## TARGET GROUPS

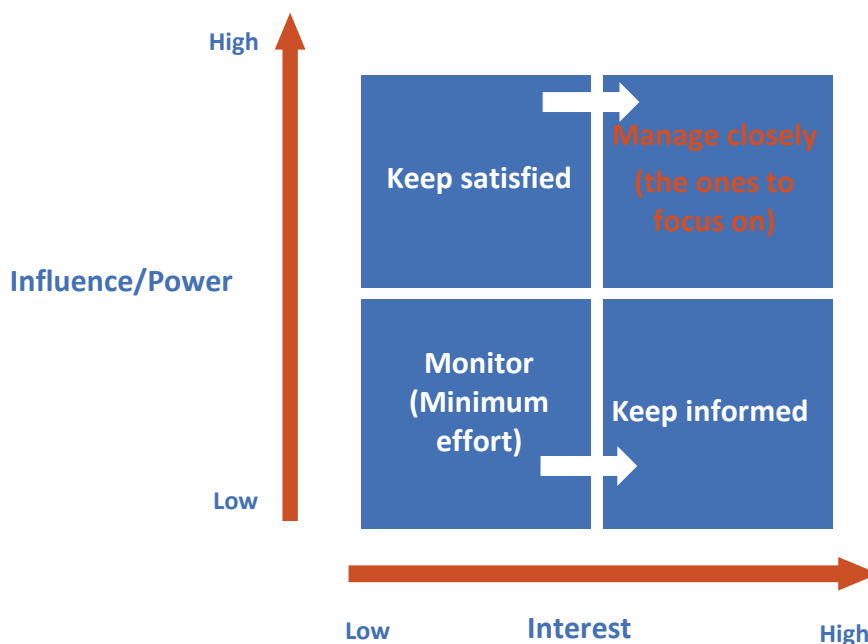
All projects need to communicate with a number of people who are – or might be – interested in their project and can have an influence on their ability to achieve their goals rapidly and efficiently.

Knowing your “target audience” is the main starting point of a communication strategy. Meeting their different needs, perceptions and expectations is in fact a critical success factor of any effective communication strategy.

“Who is our target audience in the project?” is the first question that project partners should asked themselves. The target groups need to be identified as accurately as possible so as to ensure that the key messages are transferred to the right audience. For this purpose, it is advisable to list and map all the groups or segments of public and analyse their interest, their attitude and the best channels to reach this group to adapt their communication activities accordingly.

A stakeholder mapping will help prioritise stakeholders in terms of the strength of their interest and the degree of their influence. A good way to create a stakeholder map is the grid below, which shows at a glance which categories of stakeholder demand priority attention.

After listing the concrete target groups, this grid is used by inserting the names of groups and significant individuals in the four quadrants. There should be between **five and ten individuals in each quadrant**. The individuals **in the upper-right box are the ones that project partners should be focusing on**. However, projects should also try and therefore adapt their communication activities accordingly to make the groups of individuals located in the left hand box move into the right hand box.



## TAILOR MESSAGES

Projects need to tailor their messages to their target audience in order to meet their interests and expectations. The messages have to be easily understood. The wording should be carefully crafted to be appealing to the public.

So what is a good message? A good message is distinctive, consistent (your target groups need to hear the same message from different sources and on different occasions), concise, clear and simple.

## ACTIVITIES

Project partners need to define the activities and tools that they will undertake in order to achieve their objectives and set in place the communication approach. The choice of the tools must address the targets in an effective manner.

As seen previously, the Programme will provide a web platform (please refer to the related section), on which the thematic communities, the Programme and the projects will be able to publish information about project management, deliverables, outputs, results, events, news and databases, capacity building information. However, this tool should be completed with other activities. It is up to the project to decide which tools other than the Interreg MED Programme platform are the most appropriate to reach their target audience.

There is a wide variety of tools, each with different purposes. Nevertheless, all projects are strongly advised to follow the recommendations described here below.

### a) General recommendations for Modular projects

All modular projects shall include at least the following general activities in their communication plan:

- Social media communication of/for project and active participation in thematic community and Programme social media communication;
- Publication of at least one short portrait of the project – adapted to main target group(s) (printed publication such as flyer or audio-visual such as video);
- Presentation at and contribution to external events (e.g. with other projects, the community of projects, etc.);
- At least one promotional activity to promote the final output(s), e.g. social media campaign, an event, exhibition, seminar has to be foreseen;
- At least one activity targeted to the general public, possibly via local, regional or specialised media, in line with the targeted public;
- Participation in information and training seminars (and/or following guidance provided):
  - Web platform trainings;
  - Communication trainings;
  - Other capacity building seminars.

When filling in the Application Form on Synergie CTE, each kind of modular project (M1, M2, M3 or a combination of modules) has to consider its own specific communication activities, adding and complementing to the general activities described before, the ones that are the most suited to their activities.

### b) Specific recommendations for MODULE 1 and MODULE 2 PROJECTS – Studying and testing

To better communicate the results of Module 1 and Module 2 partners are specifically advised to observe the following recommendations:

- Publish short project summaries targeting the general public in both languages: French and English;
- Projects delivering policy recommendations must draw up at least one communication activity or a strategy to build credibility for the project output in relation with the horizontal project;
- Technical studies (Module 1) and tests (Module 2) are extremely difficult to understand by unprofessional specific targets but even by professionals of other scientific areas. In this regard, it is highly recommendable for projects to use an accessible language and a user-friendly format in order to make the whole concept and its details easily understandable. Story telling could be an option;
- Results of analyses, studies and tests shall be communicated to projects target groups in the most adapted ways, according to the practices of the targets;
- Projects with Module 1 can include the reinforcement or establishment of networks. In order to communicate a network, specific coordination and information tools should be built up guaranteeing that the members of the network can receive up to date information, can exchange, can be identified, etc. The web platform of the Programme already offers a useful coordination tool. In any case, other efficient tools can be used, depending on the partner's dynamics, as for example a dedicated coordination platform or blog (integrated in the website). Project partners must state in their communication approach how they intend to address this coordination issue. Which methods and tools they will be setting up.

c) Specific recommendations for MODULE 3 PROJECTS – Capitalisation activities

Projects with Module 3 must transfer results from previous projects to territories and targeted beneficiaries. This means that concrete actions on local or regional level or directed to specific targets should be undertaken in order to raise awareness of the target public.

The activities foreseen or expected to be carried out by module 3 are:

- Public relations and/or outreach strategy (e.g. local markets, local entities, associations professional, involving local schools etc., specialised media to draw the attention of specific targets, participation in events as fairs, sectorial and professional meetings);
- Stories, interviews, end user testimonials, images that will nourish communication on several levels;
- Social media activities to get in contact and raise awareness of local/regional citizens;
- Video or radio strategy to bring the stories to a higher level of visibility;
- Seminars or living exhibitions to present demonstrations, experiences, i.e. get the target groups into direct contact or experiencing the subject of the project.

In the case of policy recommendations, a lobbying orientated strategy should be implemented and targeted to local levels of government or to specific targets. Lobbying activities are common to Horizontal projects, therefore, more details on this technique on the section "ACTIVITIES FOR HORIZONTAL PROJECTS".

Multi-module projects (M1+2, M2+3 and M1+2+3) are expected to combine the activities foreseen for the specific modules they are including in the project.

**Please note that the roles and tasks of the horizontal projects and the Module 3 projects are very different and cannot be merged.** The basic criterion to distinguish them is the scope of the dissemination process. Module 3 projects mostly keep a thematic and territorial focus. While a horizontal project can coordinate several Module 3 projects and make the synthesis of their results. Horizontal projects and Module 3 projects should therefore be perfectly coordinated in order to avoid any overlapping.

## d) Activities for horizontal projects

Horizontal projects are the centre of capitalisation and communication of the Programme, in every level. They represent the thematic communities of modular projects.

In this context and for transnational transferability purposes, they have to process and filter the results of the exchange with modular project contributions to the thematic community, in particular with results of their activities, qualitative information, participation in events, delivery of stories from the field that could be interesting at the transnational level in order to promote the thematic community.

They should also guarantee the quality of the materials to be published, not only from the point of view of the written contents. The texts should be written in plain language, and demand quality image files: high resolution professional images and high quality audio-visual materials. For this purpose, the horizontal project must establish guidelines and orientations for the modular projects. The Programme can provide guidance on this matter and can also provide joint training webinars or seminars in this and other capacity building events.

In a more precise way, here is the list of the minimum concrete activities to be included in the communication plan of the Horizontal Projects:

- 1) Strategy building and updating (annual plans);
- 2) Management/regular update of the thematic website:
  - Nourished by information and data of project;
  - Further nourishing (after selection) the Programme website;
- 3) Social media communication of/for the thematic community and active participation in the Programme social media communication;
- 4) Participation of the communication officers in the MED communication working group;
- 5) Publication of:
  - One thematic Community brochure after 1 year then regular production of thematic publications (printed or online publications);
  - Short leaflet of the selected projects after 6/8 months of their respective implementation;
- 6) At least one videos for the project (promotional videos, coverage, video streaming of the events);
- 7) Organisation of:
  - Thematic events involving projects and coordinated with the Programme;
  - 4 key events : preparatory meeting; official kick-off; mid-term conference; final conference;
- 8) Participation in Programme events and active contribution (with possible co-organisation);
  - Thematic working groups;
  - Axis 4 “platform” project meetings;
  - Coordination events with programme bodies (JS and NCP);
- 9) Presentation at and contribution to external events (e.g. with modular projects and other thematic communities etc.); Public Relations and media communication (division between programme and horizontal projects to be defined, during pre-kick off).
- 10) Transferable and reusable databases. For this purpose it could be suggested to projects to produce databases connected to smartphone applications (improvement of complementary instruments and tools);
- 11) Lobbying activities in Brussels with relevant international networks and at the EP/CoR/EC, if needed. Therefore, it is advised and expected to draw an approach focused on personal public relations with activities such as:
  - Stakeholder mapping, analysis and targeting strategies;
  - Using expert columns in local media, as a public intervention in the agenda setting;
  - Finding a media partner for an expert event mixing and involving it with the political level;
  - Getting a public character or high credibility and prestigious institution to sponsor the project;
  - Organising a minimum of hearings and establishing regular direct contacts and travels;

- Participating in relevant meetings;
- Influencing relevant and political working groups in the drafting of important policy or legal documents at local and European level.

More detailed information on lobbying can be found in the Communication Guide.

Again, all the activities mentioned above must comply with EU and Programme communication rules. All the activities shall be coordinated together with the Interreg MED Programme authorities, through planning and an Interreg MED communication working group.

**TIMELINE**

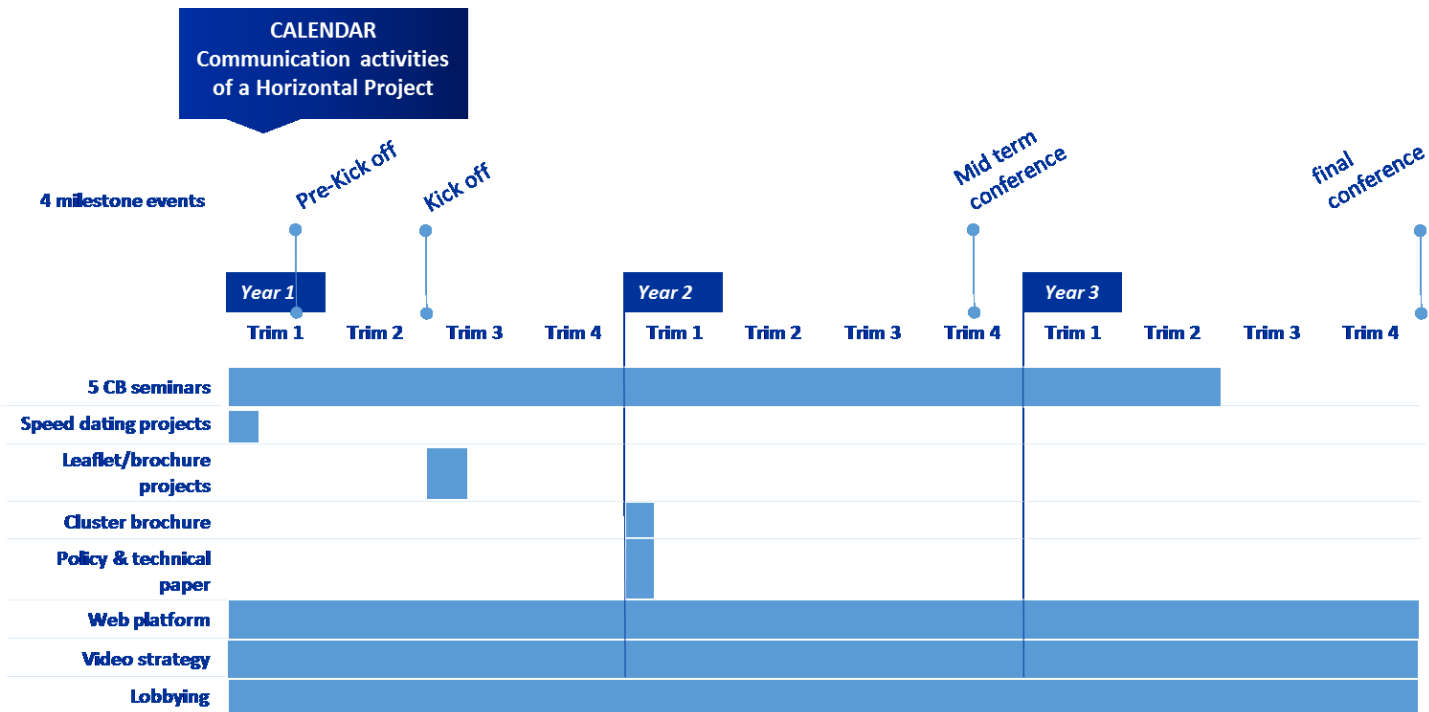
It is advisable to create a timeline that identifies when each activity will take place. This will help to ensure that deadlines and opportunities are not missed. Taking the minimum activities as reference, the calendar allows to set in place the main milestones of the communication strategy and the coordination tasks.

The calendar for Modular project communication activities must be in line with the Horizontal projects one, in order to better set up the coordination between all levels of the Programme architecture.

For Horizontal projects, the calendar should be further developed at the beginning of the project, taking into account key events and milestones of the Modular projects belonging to their thematic community.

As far as possible, in particular for projects with lasting longer than one year, the Horizontal project and the Programme should be informed each year of the planned activities for the following year, in order to better frame complementarities of communication actions and avoid repetitions and waste of resources.

**FIGURE 2: MODEL OF CALENDAR FOR COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES OF HORIZONTAL PROJECTS**



**FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

First and foremost, all projects (Modular and Horizontal) should allocate resources to the development of a website and a logo as those are provided by the Programme. However, specific branding can be created for event

campaigns and products or services delivered by the project, if necessary, or to enhance the contents of the website and other related digital strategy.

a) Modular Projects

Resources should be allocated to their own communication activities and in order to establish a regular work relationship with the related Horizontal project and with the Programme.

The partnership should assign communication responsibilities to a single partner, whereas a contact person should be designated to act as a liaison officer with the Horizontal project and the Programme. Please see hereunder the “mediator”.

Financial and human resources must be allocated to ensure the project participation in external events, when justified and useful for the project, other than the horizontal project events and seminars.

b) Horizontal Projects

The coordination of communication activities being rather complex, resources should be assigned to follow up the strategy from the conception, up to the evaluation, in order to guarantee the follow-up and connection at all levels.

Likewise, financial and human resources must be allocated to ensure the project participation in external events, promoted by other thematic communities or by the Programme or thematically relevant specific transnational events.

Concerning the project budget allocated to communication activities, specific branding can be developed for event campaigns.

In terms of human resources, each Horizontal project shall foresee one full time professional communication officer that could also be responsible for the capitalisation activities. If the Horizontal projects propose two separate officers, one for communication work and another for capitalisation (moreover, if they are from different partners or countries), it is critical to present a model of hand-in-hand cooperation between them.

## EVALUATION

It is highly important to assess the effectiveness of a communication strategy so as to know whether the objectives have been met, which activities were successful and which ones should be improved or left aside. Evaluation also creates useful feedback to share with other projects and the Programme, so that they can learn from the project experience.

The communication evaluation criteria, indicators, measures and methods, during the operation and at its closure have to be defined in line with the project specific and communication objectives. If it is an operation of long-term duration, a mid-term evaluation should be foreseen.

To establish comparability of results, the Horizontal project can propose a common framework and structure of evaluation, sufficiently flexible to be adapted by the projects. In alternative, the Horizontal project can analyse the results of the communication evaluation and submit it to the Programme.

The modular projects will cooperate with the horizontal project in setting up a common evaluation grid and methods.

In these common or individual exercises the Programme can provide the necessary knowledge to support and frame the exercises of evaluation of communication activities.

Evaluation of communication activities should be included in the global project evaluation.

Here is a set of possible qualitative indicators:

- Satisfaction level of activities implemented (questionnaires for conferences, publications etc.);
- Identification and communication with target groups (distribution lists developed, number of direct mailings to number of persons, how is the feedback within interactive web tools developed (how many ‘likes’ on FB, how many comments in discussion forum etc.);

- Further analyses of web statistics: where are most of the hits (after a press article, conference, newsletter);
- Hits on different sections.

Quantitative indicators:

- Number of downloaded publications, number of printed and actually distributed publications;
- Number of participants to events;
- Number of press articles.

#### SUMMARY OF THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR THE APPLICATION FORM

- ➡ Each project must present its communication approach in the related field of the Application Form (section C.5. of the AF, Work Plan, and Communication Work Package); for this purpose, the project should draw major lines stating the name of the project, the communication objectives, the target groups as well as the communication activities and tools.
- ➡ Beware, there are only 2000 characters available to describe the project communication approach, therefore we recommend all applicants to be as specific as possible. **Internal communication – coordination and community building.**

## INTERNAL COMMUNICATION – COMMUNITY BUILDING

The quality of project communication results comes from a committed work of all partners and not only the Lead Partner or the partner responsible for communication activities. This is why a good internal communication management is a key for the external communication of any project.

First and foremost as main principals, regarding the communication inside the partnership of both Modular and Horizontal projects, it is advisable to:

- Make sure there is a good collaboration system, and that partners are aware of the purpose and their fundamental role in increasing the impact and visibility of the project.
- Define a workflow and a reporting system based on:

What is common to the partnership?

- Project's objectives, processes, results;
- EU communication obligations.

What is specific to each partner of the project?

- Proximity with certain stakeholders;
- Linguistic & cultural issues.

### TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MODULAR PROJECTS

After approval, Modular projects will be associated with a Horizontal project which coordinates the communication strategy of the thematic community to which they belong. This means that, alongside the communication strategy of each project, all modular projects must foresee communication coordination roles and tasks in order to facilitate cooperation between partners and with the Horizontal project, such as:

- At their own project level, to ensure that they involve all their partners in every communication action, to share or merge activities with other modular projects, including the development of an evaluation of communication activities, discussing common methods, sharing tools, exploring complementarities and economies of scale, between other modular projects within the thematic community of projects;
- At the thematic community of projects level, they should give an active contribution to the strategy-set/update/realisation of the related horizontal project, in order to enrich the horizontal project/thematic community communication strategy and actions. Regarding target groups, modular projects should distinguish, with horizontal projects, the target groups to be addressed directly with those that should to be covered by the horizontal project.
- Modular projects are also requested to provide and share regular information to Horizontal projects and the Programme in format and deadlines to be defined (for thematic publications, events, etc.), mainly through the web platform that the Programme will be providing to the projects (please consult the section on the web platform) and other tools and forms of participation, decided in the Horizontal project strategy.

### Mediator

It can be useful to appoint a “Mediator” in charge of the mentioned coordination and moderating tasks between the Modular project and its related Horizontal project. This professional could also be in charge of mediating with the Programme.

Also, the “Mediator” appointed in the partnership will help the projects strengthen and foster synergies between themselves and therefore be an integral part of their crossed-exchanges to facilitate them.

## TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HORIZONTAL PROJECTS

### a) Coordination methods and mechanisms

Horizontal projects play an important coordinating and facilitating role among the thematic community. Indeed, in order to ensure a good information flow between all stakeholders, all of them should be perfectly coordinated between each other. It is notably the responsibility of the Horizontal project to establish guidelines and set up the rhythm for the delivery and exchange of information with project partners to occur in a regular, usual flow of communication.

As a consequence, Horizontal projects must draw an external AND internal communication strategy taking into consideration a regular information flow and coordination mechanisms between:

- The Horizontal project own partners;
- With the modular project partners of the thematic community and with other Horizontal projects;
- With the Programme in order to feed communication at a transnational level.

The Horizontal project must therefore meet these three dimensions, drawing a strong internal communication strategy, by bringing together competences, capacities, best practices, exploring complementarities.

### b) Coordination between the partners of the Horizontal and the Modular projects

It is most relevant to establish the tools, means and approach to produce a single voice, a single behaviour among peers. The Horizontal project must start its communication addressing its own project partners, making sure that everyone is involved and lined up with project objectives and responsibilities. The Horizontal project must set forth an internal and effective dynamic of cooperation and coordination inside the project itself.

The roles and responsibilities of each partner within the partnership shall be clearly defined (for example, define who is in charge of press relations and media campaigns, etc.). If instead all the project communication activities are assigned to a single partner, his role must be clearly stated.

Cooperation mechanisms between partners of the whole thematic community, can be achieved through some of the following concrete activities:

- In every communication the project must ensure that **all partners** will, in their own media, publish the same content about the Horizontal project;
- A cooperation method to take these responsibilities must also be explained in the communication plan, i.e. how the project will organise itself to address the different elements of the communication strategy. For example, if it creates «working groups» or if it specialises each partner on a specific task;
- It must be clearly mentioned the role of communication in the management model of the project;
- The partners of the thematic community will meet at least once a year to plan and evaluate the ongoing communication activities of the project;
- Team building among the selected projects should be ensured, with for example the organisation of a “speed dating” at the launching event;
- A proportionate number of communication and capitalisation seminars including networking sessions/speed dating/project display corners/expositions/trainings (e.g. maximum 5 in the period between the kick-off and the final conference and short *ad hoc* decentralised meetings/stakeholder consultations with key stakeholders in a team building spirit);
- Establish guidelines and a calendar to set up the rhythm for the delivery and exchange of information with the thematic community project partners.

The organisation of local communication or capitalisation events by modular projects should be included in the Horizontal project plan/calendar and inform/involve one representative; the financial resources for the organisation of these meetings should be borne by the Modular projects.

c) Provision of information and coordination with the Programme

The Programme must be involved and informed in the process of all changes occurred in the communication strategy and plans. Other Horizontal projects might be involved in the discussion of common approaches regarding management issues of the communication strategy, namely:

- Providing to the Programme regular information on the ongoing development of the strategy, following the planning and evaluation activities demands from the Joint Secretariat.
- Regular update of the Programme web platform, inter alia, including news, events agenda, summaries, and feed of documents issued by the projects activities of the related thematic web pages.
- Cooperating with the Programme in the organisation of transnational events, seminars, capacity building trainings and publications, providing printed and audio-visual materials, and an active participation in the events animation with related thematic content. This active participation will involve costs to be foreseen in the budget.

Otherwise, the Programme will provide the framework to the Horizontal projects for the preparation of joint activities, including a communication working group involving all communication officers or personnel in charge of communication in the horizontal projects and the NCP representatives.

d) Community building

Horizontal Projects are responsible for coordinating the whole thematic community and also for building a strong community. To this end, it is not sufficient to coordinate activities and share information between partners of all projects part of the community, it is also necessary to create a sense of membership and belonging. All partners should feel part of a community and identify themselves as a member of this community. For this purpose, Horizontal projects should provide a clear direction and a sense of purpose: i.e. together with all the community members they should set up the community objectives, a common goal and clear tasks recognised by all.

Once the objectives have been clearly set, Horizontal Project partners shall start creating and fostering a team spirit. This can be done for example through team building activities. However, more importantly, Horizontal Projects shall carefully listen to Modular projects, take their comments/remarks into consideration and show that their opinion matters. They shall establish work relationships so as to create an environment where members feel like they have a say in what happens and that their voice is heard. They should instil a sense of mattering.

However, all of the above is not enough if the community members do not see any benefit in contributing to the community. In some way, the members must feel rewarded for their participation and efforts. Horizontal projects should therefore clearly demonstrate the advantages of actively participating in the community and help Modular Projects with their communication and capitalisation activities to better promote their results and transfer them to a broader audience. Yet, they should pay special attention not to take credit for the Modular Project's work and instead encourage ownership of their work.

This "Community Building" task being one of the main Horizontal project objectives and purposes, a specific work package including a list of types of activities and deliverables has thus been foreseen. For more details about this work package, please see figure "Activities and deliverables for the work package 'community building'", section 2.3.3 of the Application Manual.

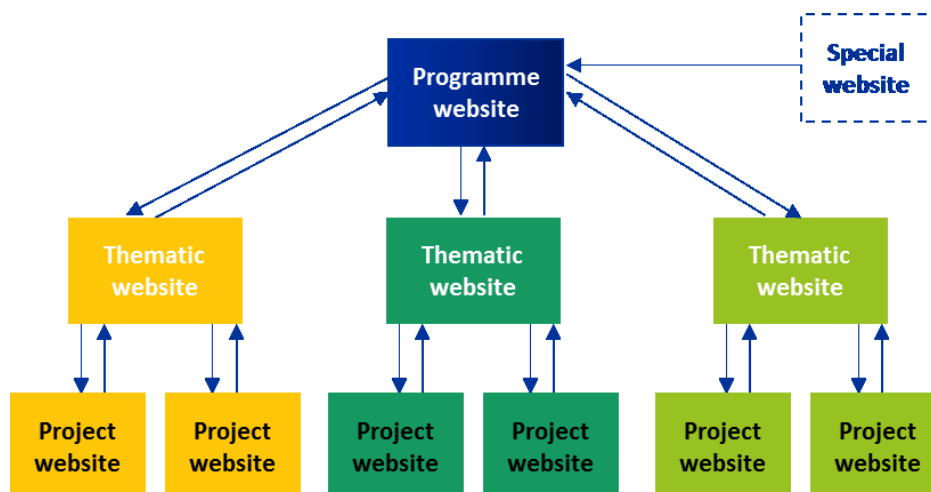
## THE INTERREG MED WEB PLATFORM

As previously explained, the Interreg MED Programme will provide websites to all approved projects.

The web platform will constitute the communication and coordination hub of the whole Programme. It will be hosted on dedicated web servers, integrating the following:

- The Interreg MED Programme website;
- Specific thematic community websites, 8 thematic communities and Axis 4 website: blue growth, green growth, social and creative industries, efficient buildings, renewable energy, low carbon urban transports, sustainable tourism, biodiversity protection;
- Projects websites;
- Special Websites (for events)

**FIGURE 3: ARCHITECTURE OF THE WEB PLATFORM**



All these websites are generated under a common architecture, the same concept with similar and shared functionalities, in order to ease the follow up as well as their evolutions and maintenance.

THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE PLATFORM:

For projects:

- Harmonise all websites of the programme in terms of organisation and layout of the content, user interfaces and navigation experience to facilitate the navigation from a website to another for all stakeholders of the programme;
- Ensure the presence of the main features on all websites, compliance with disclosure rules of the programme and the online publication of specific information;
- Reduce development and hosting costs by providing projects a basic website integrating the functionalities necessary for the project life, adapting to each project type;
- Propose to all projects technical tools to facilitate the transfer and analysis of data through common formats and technologies (calendar, directory, documents, etc.).

#### For the programme:

- Ensure the duration of projects' productions in their context and in time, even after the programming period;
- Facilitate and automatize the collection of data present in the project websites, including directories, calendars, documents (maps, databases ... etc.) and news;
- Improve pedagogical materials and support offered to project partners by providing them with similar tools as well as customised resources and technical support;
- Propose dashboards summarising data from the websites of the projects, from extractions of the monitoring tool and from fields filled in by the JS responsible officer for the monitoring during project implementation.

Sharing and broadcasting data must primarily be based on the general principles of flow (RSS, etc.). To this end, there are various tools of the platform that users can choose to follow to keep up with calendars as well as document libraries, news or discussions.

#### AVAILABLE FEATURES

- Configurable user interfaces
- Authentication / Single Sign
- Multiple profile accounts
- Directory of individuals and institutions
- Project Organization
- News
- Integration of Social Networks
- Research
- Exchanges and discussions areas
- Private area
- Calendars
- Form Tool
- Deliverables data base
- Multimedia galleries
- FAQ and Glossary
- Mailing Tools
- Dashboards and monitoring tools
- Statistical Analysis

#### FURTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- Commission Annex XII of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013;
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 821/2014;
- The European Commission's website with guidance on the use of the EU emblem:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/information/logos/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information/logos/index_en.cfm)