



FactSheet

No. 4.4

Project communication

Communication is key to the success of Alpine Space projects, as it helps to build strong relationships with target groups and stakeholders and supports the achievement of the project and programme objectives. Project applicants should therefore integrate communication at the core of their project. This should also be reflected in the project proposal. In order to encourage projects to plan and implement their communication activities strategically, all Alpine Space projects are required to develop a communication strategy. Chapter 1 of this factsheet provides guidance on how this should be done.

Chapter 2 focuses on the formal requirements that all projects have to follow when implementing communication activities, as stated in regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and article 7 of the subsidy contract (SC). Being co-financed by public funds, projects must make their funding source public for transparency reasons.

The [corporate design manual for Alpine Space projects](#) (see chapter 3) provides guidance on project logos and branding. The Interreg Alpine Space is part of the Interreg brand¹ which is expected to increase the visibility and recognition of the Interreg programmes. It accordingly changed its logo to the Interreg logo which is harmonised with other programmes. Projects logos will be based on the Interreg Alpine Space logo.

¹ A brand harmonisation initiative of European territorial cooperation programmes for the period 2014-2020, which was coordinated by INTERACT. The Interreg brand was adopted by the Interreg Alpine Space in 2014. Learn more.



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1. Project Communication strategy

Why?

The projects funded by Interreg Alpine Space contribute to the achievement of the programme objectives and horizontal principles by answering their stakeholders' and target groups' needs as described in the programme's intervention logic (see factsheet "Quality requirements and contents"). They set up a joint work plan and coordinated measures to achieve and deliver outputs in order to realise the set objectives.

Communication is present in all sections of the project work plan in the application form (AF) – in the communication work package but also in the other work packages – with the following rationale:

- + If communication helps to coordinate the partnership (e.g. for getting common understanding, capacity building, etc.), then activities are management related and listed in the management work package.
- + If communication supports the achievement of planned outputs (e.g. by informing or networking with the target groups), then activities are thematic and listed in the thematic work packages (cf. AF section C.5, "How will you involve the selected target groups in the development of outputs?").



- + If communication supports the transfer of outputs or results to target groups not directly involved in the project (e.g. through events or lobbying), then activities add value to the achievements. They are indicated in the output transfer box in the thematic work packages, and gathered and coordinated in the communication work package.

All these elements should be put together into a plan, a strategic framework to ease the organisation of the communication activities. This framework is the communication strategy of the project.

What?

The communication strategy should be a short and clear document so as to easily involve all project participants in its implementation process. It should include a short description of all management-, thematic-, and result-related communication activities (see above rationale), and be completed with a timeline and budget estimation. It should be approved by the project steering group within the first months of project implementation. The communication manager of the programme can be contacted at any stage for support in the elaboration of the document.

How?

The communication strategy should support project management and thus be linked to the specific objectives of the project, which is why these are featured automatically in the communication work package.

From the project objectives to the concrete communication activities, there is a logic process following several steps of strategic definition in order to reach the identified target groups:

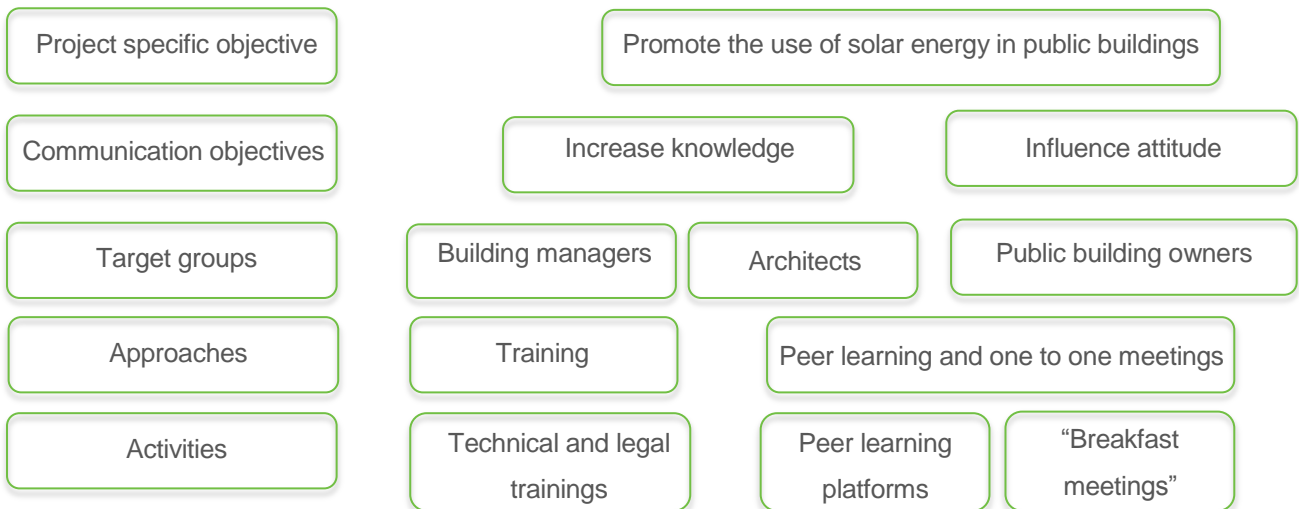
- + For each of the objectives, one or two communication objectives should be defined, which are relevant in relation to its target groups.
- + Approaches refer to the different types of interaction between communication players (all project participants) and the audience. The same approach might be relevant for several objectives, while one objective could also be reached through the implementation of several approaches.
- + The concrete implementation of an approach is an activity. The activities are described in the AF and illustrated by deliverables.



A visual presentation of this hierarchical structure may be found below:



Here is an example of a fictional project having as overall objective: “Enhance the use of renewable energies in the Alps”



At the start of the project implementation phase, the project participants should further develop their communication strategy on the basis of the above matrix, and complete it with a timeline and budget estimation for each activity.



Detailed guidance on strategic communication planning and implementation will be given at the communication seminar for approved projects.

In all communication activities, project participants must respect the programme's communication requirements.

2. Communication requirements

The EU and programme requirements are listed and explained below. Correct application of these requirements will ensure that the project communication activities can be co-financed by the programme.

Never without our logos!

Project logos will be based on the programme logo. Projects may choose one of the following options:

- + a simple logo with the project name (will be provided by the JS),
- + a customised logo with a design element (to be developed by the project).

If projects choose to develop a customised logo, the design rules outlined in the [corporate design manual for Alpine Space projects](#) (see chapter 3), have to be followed.

The project logo must be featured on all promotional material, presentations, print material, or any other communication activity that the project organises (cf. SC article 7).

If other logos are displayed in addition to the project logo, the European Union emblem (i.e. the flag in the Interreg logo) shall have at least the same size, measured in height or width, as the biggest of the other logos.

We got our project co-financed, and we show it!

ERDF claim

In addition to the project logo, all communication materials and products must display a statement acknowledging the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as a co-financing source. Projects must make sure to insert the reference to the ERDF in all documents and products. They may either use the sentence "This project is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund through the Interreg Alpine Space programme" (cf. SC article 7) or include the ERDF reference directly in the project logo with the text "EURO-



PEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND” (see corporate design manual page IV-VI). The height of this line (height of the capital letters) is the same as for “European Union” under the flag. Guidance on how to display the ERDF claim can be found on page X of the [corporate design manual for Alpine Space projects](#) (see chapter 3). The ERDF claim must be visible, readable, and (if not included in the logo) written in a bigger font size than 7,5.

Project information on project partners’ websites

Every project partner must display on their organisation’s website the following information about the project:

- + The project logo,
- + A short project description including its aims and results,
- + The financial support (amount and ERDF claim – see above),
- + A link to the project website.

Project poster

Each project must produce a poster (minimum size A3) with information about the project, the project logo and information about the ERDF co-funding of the project. This poster must be displayed at each project participant’s premises, at a location readily visible to the public, such as the entrance area of a building.

A template with the minimum requirements of the poster can be found in the [section “communication material for projects”](#) of the programme’s website. This template has to be used as a basis for the poster. The projects are free with regards to the rest of the design.

We’re online most of the time!

In order to increase not only the visibility but also the sustainability of results, project websites are integrated and hosted on the programme website as sub-websites with features tailored to project needs. A template structure with the following subpages will be offered, to which projects can add further pages and content elements:

- + Homepage,
- + About the project,
- + News and events,
- + Project outputs and results,
- + Partnership and contacts.



There are **no costs** for the projects to create, host and maintain their websites as this service is offered by the programme. However, in case a project develops a specific product or specific activities, an additional website or online platform may be developed for targeted branding purposes, as long as its sustainability is ensured.

The Alpine Space projects are given webmaster rights to set up and maintain their website (staff costs should be planned for this task). Project websites must be online within six months after approval, and need to be updated on a regular basis (cf. SC article 7). All outputs have to be published on the project website. Detailed guidance (manual) and training on how to set up the sub-websites is provided by the Joint Secretariat (JS) after project approval.

Come and have a look!

All projects are required to plan at least one public final event to present the results achieved during their implementation phase (cf. SC article 7). The event must be held in English, additional languages are allowed. The type of event should be tailored to the projects' target groups. Project participants should apply the greening principles and guidance outlined in factsheet "Project greening" when organising events.

Only smart promotional material!

Promotional materials are branded items which are distributed to raise awareness of stakeholders on a particular project, whereas communication products are either not distributed (roll-ups or banners) or include content information on the project (e.g. a brochure or a flyer).

Promotional materials may be produced only if they appear to be strictly necessary to project communication activities and if they clearly serve the objectives of the project communication strategy. They should respect greening principles (see factsheet "Project greening") and the first question that should be asked before the production is: "Do we really need this?". Their cost and the quantity produced should be reasonable and justified.

All promotional material must be branded with the project logo and the ERDF claim (cf. Subsidy contract article 7).



Products from the following list may be produced if strategically required by the projects' communication activities:

- Cardboard conference folders
- Note blocks
- Pens
- USB sticks (only if the project presentation / material / outputs are uploaded, not empty)

Items not included in this list may be eligible only if agreed by the JS. The project should thus contact the JS before making the purchase of such items, in order to receive confirmation that the relevant costs can be accepted and to avoid any rejection during project monitoring.

Communication products, as well as publications containing information on the project and its results are not considered as promotional material and are, thus, not subject to the above restrictions.

Last but not least, spread the news!

The best way to communicate project purpose and achievements to a targeted and/or a broader audience is to address the media and use social media. Many activities can be organised to attract the media: from the writing and dissemination of a press release to press conferences and press field trips, etc. All documents and materials produced for the media must include the project logo and ERDF claim. The social media are a very good channel especially to reach project stakeholders and create a community around the project's objectives and results.

Advice and hints for quality media and social media activities can be found in the project communication toolkit, in the [section "communication material for projects"](#) of the programme's website.

3. Corporate design manual for Alpine Space projects

This manual contains all rules and guidelines for the correct use of Interreg Alpine Space project logos and corporate design elements for project communication. Alpine Space project participants are required to apply these rules to ensure co-financing of their communication activities.

The corporate design manual for Alpine Space projects is available [here](#).



Reference documents

- Subsidy Contract
- Factsheet 0: Quality requirements and contents
- Factsheet 4.8: Project greening
- [Section “Communication material for projects” of the Interreg Alpine Space website](#)