Interreg South Baltic 2014-2020

Communication Strategy

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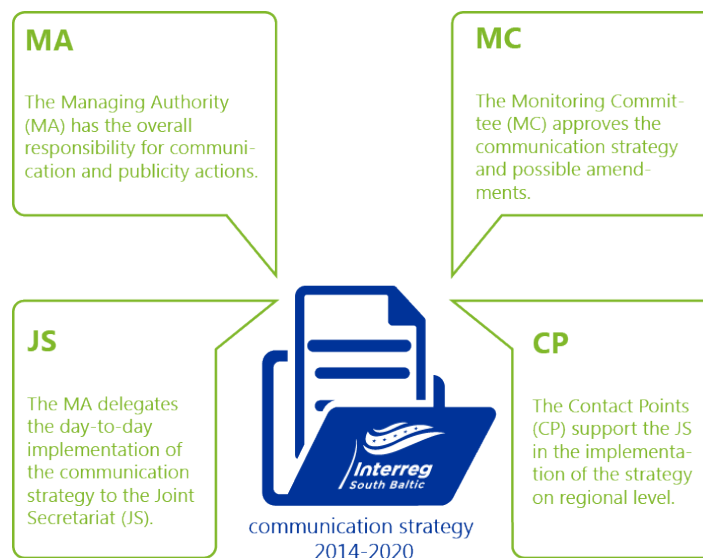
1. Subject matter and legal basis

Pursuant to Article 116/1 of the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council (EU) No 1303/13 of 17 December 2013, the Ministry of Economic Development of Poland, acting as the Managing Authority, shall draw up a communication strategy for the Interreg South Baltic Programme 2014-2020. In line with Article 116/2 of this regulation, the Monitoring Committee shall approve the communication strategy and any possible amendments. Furthermore, measures outlined in this document shall take into consideration Chapter 2 of the Implementing Regulation 821/2014, which lays down the technical characteristics of information and communication measures for operations, and defines the proper use of the EU emblem.

The goal of this document is to set a framework for communication and publicity actions which support the implementation of the Interreg South Baltic Programme 2014-2020. The document describes the processes and rules for communication and publicity actions designed for all relevant target groups.

The communication strategy is a joint effort of the Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat, which, along with the network of Contact Points in Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden, are responsible for its implementation. The document serves as a framework for annual action plans which define information and publicity measures to be undertaken under the Programme on an annual basis.

2. Institutional arrangements

MA

The Managing Authority (MA) has the overall responsibility for communication and publicity actions.

MC

The Monitoring Committee (MC) approves the communication strategy and possible amendments.

JS

The MA delegates the day-to-day implementation of the communication strategy to the Joint Secretariat (JS).

CP

The Contact Points (CP) support the JS in the implementation of the strategy on regional level.

communication strategy
2014-2020

As per Regulation No 1303/13, the **Managing Authority (MA)** has the overall responsibility for information and publicity actions. In particular, the MA:

- ensures the flow of information between institutions involved in the Programme implementation;
- is responsible for the preparation of the communication strategy and possible amendments;
- coordinates the implementation of the communication strategy and the annual plans;

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- plans the indicative budget for information and publicity measures;
- monitors the progress of the implementation of the communication strategy;
- informs members of the Monitoring Committee about the progress of implementation of the communication strategy;
- informs the European Commission about the progress of implementation of the communication strategy by means of annual implementation reports and a final implementation report.

In case the evaluation of the effectiveness of the information and publicity measures reveals deficiencies, the MA can adjust the communication strategy. The updated document is to be approved by the Monitoring Committee. The MA delegates the day-to-day implementation of the communication strategy to the **Joint Secretariat (JS)**. The JS carries out and coordinates the information and publicity measures for the entire Programme area. The tasks include in particular:

- preparation of the annual communications plans with an indicative budget;
- implementation of the Programme annual information and promotion activities;
- providing assistance for partner search activities;
- maintaining and updating the Programme website;
- maintaining and updating other online tools for knowledge sharing, partner search and interaction with the JS;
- maintaining and updating the Programme social media accounts;
- organising meetings, info days and partner search forums for potential beneficiaries;
- organising communication trainings for beneficiaries;
- organising annually a major information activity which promotes the funding opportunities and the strategies pursued and presents the achievements of the programme;
- supporting regional information, promotion and communication activities organised by the Contact Points (e.g. by participating in relevant regional info days, promotion workshops and dissemination events);
- editorial work, publishing and distribution of promotional and knowledge sharing materials (e.g. brochures, publications, videos etc.);
- cooperation with the media;
- examining the compliance of projects with the publicity requirements of the Programme;
- developing and implementing dissemination and capitalisation activities to increase the sustainability and leverage of funded operations (e.g. support thematic consolidation of results achieved by past and running operations, disseminate good practices, establish media and capitalisation partnerships with other Interreg programmes, Pan-Baltic organisations, EUSBSR stakeholders, etc.);
- facilitation of cross-project partnerships within and beyond the Programme;
- providing assistance for the beneficiaries in the use of the IT system;
- coordination of the Contact Points.

The JS employs a Communication and Capitalisation Officer in full time, who is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of communication and publicity actions. The Communication and Capitalisation Officer liaises with Project Officers in different thematic contexts.

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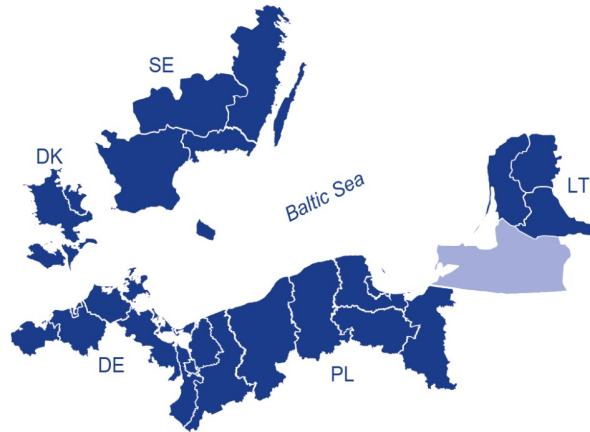
The JS is supported by a network of **Contact Points (CP)** located in the Member States. The Contact Points, in particular, shall perform tasks such as:

- coordinating, preparing and implementing the Programme promotion and information in the regions (including the organisation of local/regional info days and promotion workshops);
- providing information about the Programme to potential applicants in English and/or national languages (including direct contact, phone, e-mail, regional websites, etc.);
- supporting the JS in organising programme-wide events such as "European Cooperation Day", info days, partner search forums, Lead Beneficiary seminars and seminars on project implementation as well as good practice fairs;
- preparing and/or assisting the JS in the preparation of brochures, leaflets (both electronic and hard copies) and other publications;
- distributing Programme advertising materials;
- bearing responsibility for regional networking activities (e.g. cross-project partnerships);
- support for project development and generation;
- providing consultation to applicants on how to correctly fill in the formal application form;
- informing potential beneficiaries about the First Level Control requirements;
- providing advice to partners of running operations (e.g. general information about First Level Control, contracting requirements, public procurement procedures, etc.);
- organising local and regional dissemination activities;
- ensuring public relations with the media on regional and local levels;
- supporting the communication activities of the JS, e.g. through editorial contribution (to the Programme website and newsletter) as well as by sharing relevant information (e.g. about events and project results in the regions) with the JS;
- participating in external events at local/regional level to disseminate the results achieved by the Programme;
- contributing to the capitalisation activities of the JS, e.g. by identifying and recording good practices and project results achieved in the regions, by facilitating the cross-project dissemination of results at regional level and by identifying potential target groups for the capitalisation process at Programme level.

In order to fulfil the tasks related to result dissemination and capitalisation, the CP will be updated on the progress of individual projects by the JS staff. With deeper knowledge about individual project activities, the CP can also contribute to the efforts to facilitate synergies and cross-fertilisation among projects across funding programmes.

The **Monitoring Committee (MC)** shall approve the communication strategy and possible amendments. Furthermore, the MC shall be kept informed about the progress of strategy implementation as well as about the annual action plans which define concrete measures to be undertaken on an annual basis.

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3. Geographical scope of Programme communication

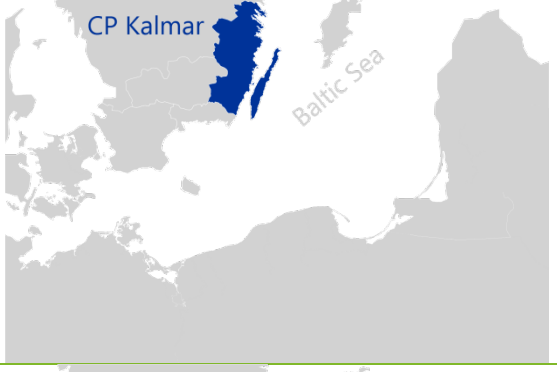The core communication activities shall concentrate in the Programme area, i.e. the coastal regions of Germany, Denmark, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden, in particular in the following administrative units at the NUTS III level:

- in Germany – districts (Landkreise) of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern: Nordwestmecklenburg, Rostock, Vorpommern-Rügen, Vorpommern-Greifswald and district-free city (kreisfreie Stadt): Rostock;

- in Denmark – Regional Municipality of Bornholm and Region Zealand (subregions: Østsjælland, Vest- og Sydsjælland);

- in Sweden – counties of: Kalmar, Blekinge, Skåne and Kronoberg;

- in Lithuania – counties of Klaipėda, Tauragė and Telšiai;

- in Poland – subregions of: Miasto Szczecin, Szczeciński, Stargardzki, Koszaliński, Słupski, Starogardzki, Gdański, Trójmiejski and Elbląski.

The table below illustrates the geographical coverage of Programme communication and publicity actions under the responsibility of the Contact Points.

Region	Member State	Hosting institution	Geographical coverage of communication and publicity activities
Bornholm	Denmark	Regional Municipality of Bornholm Sekretariatet Ullasvej 23 DK 3700 Ronne Denmark	

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Region	Member State	Hosting institution	Geographical coverage of communication and publicity activities
Zealand	Denmark	Region Zealand Regional Development Alléen 15 DK 4180 Soroe Denmark	CP Zealand
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	Germany	Technologiezentrum Fördergesellschaft mbH Vorpommern Brandteichstraße 20, 17489 Greifswald Germany	CP Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
Counties of Klaipėda, Tauragė and Telšiai	Lithuania	to be established	CP Lithuania
Pomorskie	Poland	Office of the Marshal of Pomorskie Voivodeship ul. Okopowa 21/27 80-810 Gdańsk Poland	CP Pomorskie

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Region	Member State	Hosting institution	Geographical coverage of communication and publicity activities
Zachodniopomorskie	Poland	Office of the Marshal of Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship ul. Piłsudskiego 40-42 70-421 Szczecin Poland	CP Zachodniopomorskie
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	Poland	Office of the Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship Ul. Emilii Plater 1 10 - 562 Olsztyn Poland	CP Warmińsko-Mazurskie
Kalmar	Sweden	Regional Council in Kalmar County Box 762 (Nygatan 34) 391 27 Kalmar Sweden	CP Kalmar
Skåne	Sweden	Region Skåne Dockplatsen 26, 205 25 Malmö Sweden	CP Skåne

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Region	Member State	Hosting institution	Geographical coverage of communication and publicity activities
Blekinge	Sweden	Region Blekinge Valhallavägen 1 37141 Karlskrona Sweden	CP Blekinge
Kronoberg	Sweden	Region Kronoberg Nygatan 20 352 31 Växjö Sweden	CP Kronoberg

4. Communication SWOT

The communication strategy builds on the strategic Programme document adopted by the European Commission on 23 September 2015 as well as on the analysis of communication performance in the period 2007-2013 which includes ex-post evaluation from external experts, direct feedback from beneficiaries and mapping of the regional involvement patterns. The conceptual design of the strategy takes into account also other relevant sources such as the EUSBSR communication strategy as well the Eurobarometer survey on border regions conducted in 2015. These findings translate into the following communication SWOT matrix:

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Strengths

- The overall Programme concept of "blue and green growth" offers a catchy and memorable expression, and condenses the Programme goals into a simple figurative phrase.

- The overall Programme concept breaks down into Specific Objectives which offer 6 concrete communication action fields

- Well-functioning network of Contact Points in all regions.

- Well-developed communication tool portfolio.

- Recognisable Programme brand.

- Available portfolio of good practices from projects implemented between 2007 and 2013 which can be aligned with the Specific Objectives of the period 2014-2020.

- Support and services of the Joint Secretariat well-perceived by applicants and project partnerships.A number of existing micro-networks emerged as a result of projects, which are committed to promotion and dissemination within their respective domain.

- A network of Knowledge Agents (project experts) committed to knowledge transfer in their respective field.

Weaknesses

- Complex INTERREG language: this may prevent newcomers and local actors to apply.

- The Programme rationale (blue and green growth) may still occur too abstract to some potential applicants but also to the broader public and media.

- Difficulties to attract mainstream media.

- Difficulties to massively educate the general public about the merits of cross-border projects.

Opportunities

- Pan-European efforts to increase the visibility and recognisability of Interreg (e.g. Interreg brand harmonisation, European Cooperation Day)

- The call for result orientation offers prospects for more tangible achievements, thus more comprehensible communication.

- EUSBSR stakeholders are committed to communication, thus communication synergies are conceivable.

- Active relevant networks in the Baltic Sea Region as well as proxy[1] structures which can serve as multipliers.

- Existing thematic information platforms in the region.

- Harmonising internal Programme information flows will help to build the foundation of a good external communication.

Threats

- Reducing project communication activities to the Programme and EU requirements due to lack of capacities

- Failure to exploit synergies with Programme communication channels (editorial and Programme events)

- On regional level, the role of INTERREG may be perceived as minor (in comparison with the perceived added value of other available funding instruments)

Seeking to design effective multiannual communication that is capable of attaining the communication objectives, it is necessary to introduce the measures which capitalise on strengths, overcome weaknesses, seize opportunities and prevent risks.

5. Communication objectives

The overall objective of Programme communications is to support the development of a cross-border community that recognises common challenges and is willing to jointly capitalise on supraregional assets for the benefit of citizens, businesses and the environment through cross-border cooperation and

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[1] Proxies are intermediaries who are capable of effectively reaching local stakeholders (e.g. associations, local action groups, administrators of relevant social network groups etc.).

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competence networks, supply chains and interorganisational alliances. The efforts to strengthen the cross-border community shall be targeted and purposeful, thus **directly supporting the Programme overall aim of unlocking South Baltic's potential for blue and green growth**. Building on the maritime character of the Programme, "blue growth" addresses the economic potential of the Baltic Sea for growth and jobs across the shores of the South Baltic. At the same time, "green growth" underlines the need to pursue the path of economic growth in balance with the environment, in particular by utilising South Baltic's rich natural and cultural heritage in a sustainable and preserving manner. The communication actions shall ensure that potential beneficiaries understand the Programme aim and focus their actions. The overall objective of Programme communication shall be attained through an iterative and self-reinforcing three-phase target process:

1) Attracting newcomers and supporting the application phase (specific objective 1)

The experience made between 2007 and 2013 reveals improvement potential with regard to organisations which hesitate to embark on cross-border project because of the alleged administrative burden. Moreover, such organisations are not only interested in funding but in tackling their challenges. Thus, Programme communication measures shall assimilate both financial and non-financial incentives to attract newcomers. New awareness raising actions shall be undertaken to widen the audience in the eligible regions beyond the beneficiaries of the 2007-2013 funding period. Another impediment is the perceived risk of failure within a call for proposals. The communication and publicity efforts of phase 1 shall, therefore:

- proactively encourage newcomers by demonstrating that South Baltic funds are attainable for organisations with or without experience in cross-border projects. Small-scale organisations can be particularly targeted with the possibility for small projects under all Programme Priorities as well as with Programme Specific Objective 7 *"Improve the cooperation capacity of local South Baltic area actors through participation in cross-border networks"*;
- showcase the impact of previous projects on communities, businesses, individuals and the environment. Highlighting changes occurred as a result of cross-border cooperation;
- support the Project Officers and Contact Points in arranging individual consultations with interested applicants (including face-to-face and online meetings);promote the Programme's dedication to results and the prospects of tangible benefits for individual organisations and their own target groups;
- use new channels and forms to raise awareness about the funding opportunities beyond the beneficiaries of the 2007-2013 funding period;
- facilitate partner search, thus supporting bottom-up efforts to activate and involve new partners;
- be accompanied by individual support of Project Officers as well as Contact Points during the application phase;
- make the Programme logic easily comprehensible.

2) Supporting the communication efforts of beneficiaries (specific objective 2)

The project partners serve as communication agents and shall share the same understanding as the Programme communication staff (JS and CP) as to why it is important to communicate project achievements. The Programme staff shall be perceived as partners. The understanding of Programme communication among beneficiaries shall not be limited to the control of technical compliance of communication materials. The Programme communication staff shall give advice as to how to increase the efficiency of project communication. Furthermore, the communication staff shall support the project implementation phase by making available supporting tools and providing guidance (e.g. Programme

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Manual, Lead Partner seminars). Cross-fertilisation and cross-promotion among projects shall also be streamlined. The communication efforts of phase 2 shall, therefore:

- proactively train project partners in terms of Programme communication requirements and efficient communication management in order to reach the desired target groups of their respective domain;
- facilitate the exchange of good communication practices among projects;
- use the Programme communication channels to promote projects and their activities in the respective domain;
- promote cross-programme activities to facilitate "mirror" project cooperation in the respective domain.

3) **Disseminating results and streamlining uptake and exploitation (specific objective 3)**

The Programme aim of unlocking South Baltic's potential for blue and green growth can be achieved through durable and impactful project results. The Programme communication staff shall ensure the exposure of exploitable results to a wider audience. The communication and publicity efforts of phase 3 shall, therefore:

- capitalise on results and tools developed and tested by project beneficiaries, sharing them with a wider audience of policy makers and practitioners active in the relevant domain with the goal to activate further exploitation;
- disseminate information about the impact of projects, changes made and the resulting benefits to the public, strengthening the image of the European Union;
- showcase good practice of uptake and ripple effects to encourage beneficiaries' active engagement in exploitation and transferability efforts.
- promote cross-programme activities to facilitate the uptake of South Baltic projects results beyond the Programme eligible area.
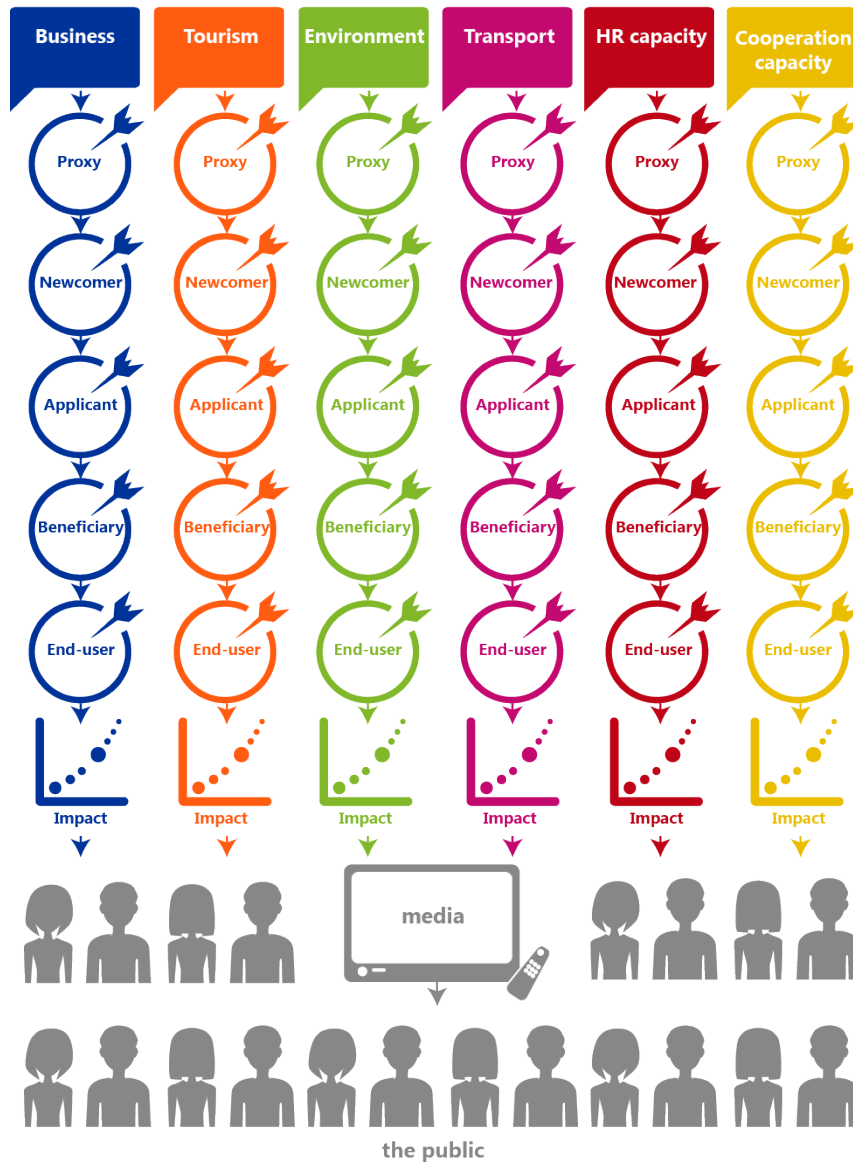
6. Tactics and messages

For a better service orientation towards newcomers, applicants, beneficiaries, end-users and their fields of interest, the Programme communication will be subdivided in 6 specialised communication strands:

| Business | Tourism | Environment | Transport | HR capacity | Cooperation capacity |

Each of these strands will exploit the entire communication value chain (see graph below). This is an effort to attract newcomers active in a specific domain, advise applicants most adequately, facilitate synergies and cross-fertilisation between affiliated projects, increase the interest of end-users and the impact perceptibility in a specific domain. Specialised JS Officers attributed to a specific domain will ensure support throughout the implementation of the respective communication strand.

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Communication strands

Business	Tourism	Environment	Transport	HR capacity	Cooperation capacity
Proxy	Proxy	Proxy	Proxy	Proxy	Proxy
Newcomer	Newcomer	Newcomer	Newcomer	Newcomer	Newcomer
Applicant	Applicant	Applicant	Applicant	Applicant	Applicant
Beneficiary	Beneficiary	Beneficiary	Beneficiary	Beneficiary	Beneficiary
End-user	End-user	End-user	End-user	End-user	End-user
Impact	Impact	Impact	Impact	Impact	Impact

media

the public

The main message of the Programme communication derives from the overall concept of the Cooperation Programme 2014-2020, namely

The Programme supports efforts to increasing the blue and green growth potential of the South Baltic area through cross-border cooperation.

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This message translates into targeted messages in accordance with the 6 communication strands:

Business	The Programme supports joint cross-border efforts to increase the presence of blue and green sector SMEs from the South Baltic area on international markets as well as to benefit them through the improved transfer of innovation.
Tourism	The Programme supports joint cross-border efforts to increase the development of the South Baltic area's natural and cultural heritage assets into sustainable tourist destinations.
Environment	The Programme supports joint cross-border efforts to increase the use of green technologies in order to decrease the pollution discharges in the South Baltic area.
Transport	The Programme supports joint cross-border efforts to improve the quality and environmental sustainability of transport services in the South Baltic area.
HR capacity	The Programme supports efforts to increase the share of skilled labour force working in blue and green economy sectors of the South Baltic area through joint cross-border actions
Cooperation capacity	The Programme supports joint cross-border efforts to increase the cooperation capacity of local actors in the South Baltic area for blue and green growth.

To be most effective, the customised messages above require a tactical approach. Particularly in the stage of attracting newcomers, information about available funding and planned calls for proposals is not sufficient to generate substantial interest. This process shall be supported by examples as to how organisations with similar missions have concretely benefited through their participation in a cross-border project. Equally, the programme communication shall ensure that self-driven interest shall not outweigh the cross-border aspect. Accordingly, potential applicants are not only to be familiarised with good practices from the past but also with the cross-border effect they entail. The interest of newcomers and other potential applicants shall directly translate into a potential contribution to the Programme strategic ambition (i.e. blue and green growth). Consequently, in this initial targeting phase, the following tactics are to be applied:

- To attract newcomers, it is crucial to underline the benefits for individual organisations and communities that come about as a result of cross-border cooperation.
- Targeting proxies is an effective tactic as proxies already enjoy the trust of their stakeholders.
- The Programme staff shall demonstrate service orientation and create trust.
- The Programme staff will introduce measures to ensure that potential applicants understand the need for coherence between the project intervention logic and the targeted Specific Objective.

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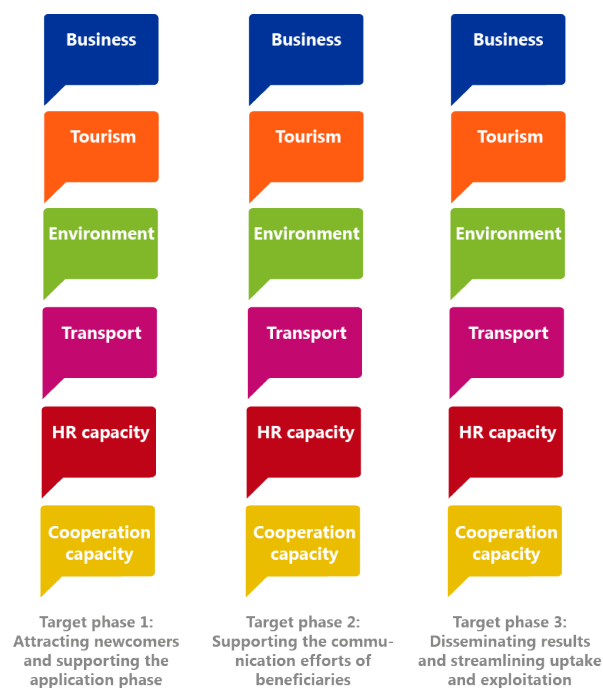Messages addressed to beneficiaries will refer to, *inter alia*:

- the obligations of beneficiary (including the promotion of the project, Programme and EU support),
- dissemination of results,
- need for synergies and cross-project fertilisation,
- result orientation.

Messages and tactics in the result dissemination phase shall seek public recognition (e.g. through endorsements, storytelling and testimonials) and acknowledge INTERREG as well as the support of the European Union. Messages on changes and impacts that come about as a result of the Programme may be tailored to a specific communication strand.

The communication language plays an important role and shall be adjusted to the respective target group. Not being acquainted with specific terminology may have a discouraging effect on newcomers. The Programme staff shall ensure that the Programme logic is easily comprehensible for everybody. This applies also to the stage of dissemination and public relations.

7. Target phases and groups

The communication target groups can be structured in accordance with three target phases (corresponding with the three phases described in section 5), which apply to each of the thematic communication strands:

Business	Business	Business
Tourism	Tourism	Tourism
Environment	Environment	Environment
Transport	Transport	Transport
HR capacity	HR capacity	HR capacity
Cooperation capacity	Cooperation capacity	Cooperation capacity
Target phase 1: Attracting newcomers and supporting the application phase	**Target phase 2:** Supporting the communication efforts of beneficiaries	**Target phase 3:** Disseminating results and streamlining uptake and exploitation

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	Target groups					
	Business	**Tourism**	**Environment**	**Transport**	**HR capacity**	**Cooperation capacity**
Target phase 1: Attracting newcomers and supporting the application phase	**Potential applicants and newcomers** including: ■ Eligible organisations which are aware of the Programme but are hesitant to join a cross-border project. ■ Eligible organisations which are still not aware of the Programme (with or without experience in European cooperation). ■ Eligible organisations which already have had experience within the South Baltic Programme. **Proxies** to attract newcomers and widen the communication coverage attained between 2007 and 2013.					
Target phase 2: Supporting the communication efforts of beneficiaries	■ Lead partners and project communication managers ■ Other funding programmes and cross-programme communication networks to facilitate project cross-fertilisation across programmes.					
Target phase 3: Disseminating results and streamlining uptake and exploitation	■ Policy makers, practitioners and their networks ■ Media and the general public					

The South Baltic Member States as well as the European Commission are a horizontal target group spreading over all three phases.

7.1 Attracting newcomers and supporting the application phase

The Programme communication will target proxies in order to increase the chances to attract newcomers and widen the communication coverage attained between 2007 and 2013. The proxies are intermediaries who are capable of effectively reaching local stakeholders. The annual action plans shall consider the involvement of the following proxies:

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Communication strand	Proxies	potential applicants / newcomers
Business	- regional subcommittees and consultation networks; - Business / SME associations; - the Baltic Sea Chamber of Commerce Association; - the Baltic University Programme; - EBN innovation network; - Confederation of European Business Federations "Business Europe"; - ERRIN, the European Regions Research and Innovation Network, entrepreneurial development workings groups, particularly "Blue Innovation Growth"; - Administrators of relevant social network groups (particularly LinkedIn).	- local and regional authorities and their associations - formal associations, clusters and networks of SMEs (having legal personality) - chambers of commerce, business support organisations and development agencies, business incubators, technology parks and other business support and finance organisations - NGOs and R&D organisations providing international promotion and marketing, research and services (e.g. training) - higher education and R&D institutions - NGOs providing promotion and services focused on innovation aspects
Tourism	- Baltic Sea Tourism Forum; - regional subcommittees and consultation networks; - Tourism boards and associations; - the Baltic Sea NGO network; - the Baltic Sea Chamber of Commerce Association; - the Baltic University Programme; - Local Action Groups (LAGs) - Administrators of relevant social network groups (particularly LinkedIn).	- local and regional authorities and their associations - formal associations, clusters and networks of SMEs (having legal personality) - chambers of commerce, business development agencies, tourist agencies and other business support and financial organisations - NGOs providing promotion and marketing services linked directly or indirectly to the tourism and cultural sector - institutions of natural, culture and national heritage protection - forest management institutions - R&D and educational institutions

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Communication strand	Proxies	potential applicants / newcomers
Environment	■ regional subcommittees and consultation networks; ■ Environment and green technology associations; ■ the Baltic Sea NGO network; ■ the Baltic Ports Organisation; ■ the Baltic University Programme; ■ Local Action Groups (LAGs) and Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs); ■ EUCC Eastern Europe Office in Klaipeda, EUCC Germany/Baltic Office as well as the National branches in Poland and Denmark ■ Administrators of relevant social network groups (particularly LinkedIn)	■ local and regional authorities and their associations ■ public or private (having either public or non-profit character) companies dealing with communal and municipal environmental and energy management (such as waste and water, heating, air protection) ■ formal associations, clusters and networks of SMEs (having legal personality) ■ chambers of commerce, business development agencies and other business support and finance organisations ■ NGOs active in the environmental protection and management sector ■ schools, higher education and R&D institutions ■ cooperatives of farmers and residents (having legal personality)
Transport	■ regional subcommittees and consultation networks; ■ Transport and sustainable mobility associations; ■ the Baltic Sea NGO network; ■ the Baltic Ports Organisation ■ the Baltic University Programme; ■ Administrators of relevant social network groups (particularly LinkedIn).	■ local and regional authorities and their associations ■ public transport companies ■ transport infrastructure administration ■ formal associations, clusters and networks of SMEs (having legal personality) working with transport greening solutions ■ chambers of commerce, business development agencies and other business support organisations ■ higher education and R&D institutions
HR capacity	■ regional subcommittees and consultation networks; ■ the Baltic Sea NGO network; ■ the Baltic University Programme; ■ Administrators of relevant social network groups (particularly LinkedIn).	■ local and regional authorities and their associations ■ labour offices and labour market administration ■ labour unions and employer organisations ■ educational and R&D institutions ■ formal associations, clusters and networks of SMEs (having legal personality) ■ chambers of commerce, business development agencies and other business support organisations ■ NGOs involved in the training and qualifications of the labour force
Cooperation capacity	■ regional subcommittees and consultation networks; ■ the Baltic Sea NGO network; ■ the Baltic University Programme;	■ local and regional authorities and their associations ■ NGOs involved in networking activities across the national borders ■ chambers of commerce, business development

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Communication strand	Proxies	potential applicants / newcomers
	- Local Action Groups (LAGs) and Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs); - Administrators of relevant social network groups (particularly LinkedIn).	agencies and other business support organizations institutions of natural, culture and national heritage protection

The Programme communication shall ensure that measures in the application phase will not be limited to information about funding opportunities. Concrete examples how cross-border cooperation can help organisations to tackle their challenges and seize opportunities shall equip each of the communication strands with additional incentives. The technical and administrative handling of the application phase shall be facilitated through adequate professional advice in the respective domain.

An overall duty of the Programme staff in this phase is the coaching of potential applicants to properly apply the Programme intervention logic and to develop a culture of result orientation from an early stage.

7.2   Supporting the communication efforts of beneficiaries

7.2.1   Lead partners and project communication managers

The Programme bodies in charge of communication are to introduce measures for supporting beneficiaries in their project dissemination efforts and helping them to ensure compliance with the Programme communication requirements. For this purpose, a communication guidebook with practical advice for project communication actions shall be made available. The lead partner training seminars shall include sessions dedicated to project communication. The specialized JS Officers supported by the Communication and Capitalisation Officer shall facilitate synergies and cross-fertilisation among affiliated projects during their implementation.

7.2.2 Other funding programmes and cross-programme communication networks

Cross-programme cooperation and the exchange within communication knowledge sharing networks allows the Programme to share good practices on communication management, increase the visibility of Interreg and better reach relevant target groups through joint activities (e.g. joint promotional stands, joint workshops for applicants, joint dissemination events targeting local/regional policy-makers, etc.). Regular cross-programme meetings and exchanges between the staff of different programmes shall also prepare the ground for the transfer of good management practices, the creation of thematic partnerships, project cross-fertilisation across programmes as well as ripple effects and the "export" of project results beyond the geographical Programme coverage. Cooperation shall be envisaged particularly with programmes that have both geographical and thematic relevance (e.g. Öresund-Kattegat-Skagerrak, Central Baltic, etc.).

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7.3   Disseminating results and streamlining uptake and exploitation

7.3.1   Policy makers, practitioners and their networks

The Programme communication activities performed between 2007 and 2013 have shown that the cooperation with the regional and pan-Baltic networks is an effective way to reach local and regional policy-makers who recognise the added value of cooperation. To capitalise on and geographically expand results and good practice of maritime cross-border cooperation, targeted dissemination activities shall be lifted to both the Baltic macro-regional level as well as to pan-European level. According to the Cooperation Programme, *"driven by the strategic objective to support the joint development and testing of innovative solutions across national borders, the South Baltic Programme 2014-2020 plays an active role in the implementation of the EUSBSR."* In this context, EUSBSR exchange platforms are to be considered by the annual action plans. To increase the exposure of project results and the prospects of exploitation on pan-Baltic and EU-scale, cooperation with the following thematic networks is to be considered in the annual action plans (the list is not exhaustive):

Communication strand	Baltic local, regional and supra-regional networks	EU networks
Business	■ Euroregions Baltic and Pomerania ■ local / regional policy-making networks ■ Relevant EUSBSR policy areas (e.g. "Innovation") ■ Smart and Prospering Cities Commission of the Union of Baltic Cities ■ the Baltic Development Forum ■ the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation Network ■ the Council of the Baltic Sea States ■ the Baltic Sea Commission of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions ■ the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference ■ the Helsinki Commission ■ B7 Baltic Islands Network ■ Southern Baltic Sea Parliamentary Forum	■ Economic Development Forum of Eurocities ■ ERRIN, the European Regions Research and Innovation Network, entrepreneurial development workings groups, particularly "Blue Innovation Growth" ■ EBN innovation network ■ Confederation of European Business Federations "Business Europe" ■ ASTP-Proton, the European association for professionals involved in knowledge transfer between universities and industry
Tourism	■ Euroregions Baltic and Pomerania ■ local / regional policy-making networks ■ EUSBSR policy area "Tourism" ■ Smart and Prospering Cities Commission of the Union of Baltic Cities ■ the Baltic Development Forum ■ the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation Network ■ the Baltic Sea Commission of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions ■ the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference	■ Network of European Regions for a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism ■ European Cultural Tourism Network ■ Enterprise Europe Network, Sector Group "Tourism and Cultural Heritage" ■ European Heritage Heads Forum ■ European Alliance of Responsible Tourism and Hospitality ■ ERRIN, the European Regions Research and Innovation Network, working group "Tourism"

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	■ B7 Baltic Islands Network ■ Southern Baltic Sea Parliamentary Forum	
Environment	■ Euroregions Baltic and Pomerania ■ local / regional policy-making networks ■ Relevant EUSBSR policy areas (e.g. "Nutri") ■ Sustainable Cities Commission of the Union of Baltic Cities ■ the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation Network ■ the Council of the Baltic Sea States ■ the Baltic Sea Commission of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions ■ the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference ■ the Helsinki Commission ■ B7 Baltic Islands Network ■ Southern Baltic Sea Parliamentary Forum	■ Coastal & Marine Union (EUCC) ■ Environment Forum of Eurocities ■ ICLEI – local governments for sustainability ■ Energy Cities ■ Covenant of Mayors ■ European Wind Energy Association ■ European Renewable Energies Federation ■ European Biomass Association ■ Confederation of European Environmental Engineering Societies
Transport	■ Euroregions Baltic and Pomerania ■ local / regional policy-making networks ■ EUSBSR policy areas "Transport" and "Ship" ■ Sustainable Cities Commission of the Union of Baltic Cities ■ the Baltic Development Forum ■ the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation Network ■ the Baltic Sea Commission of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions ■ the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference ■ B7 Baltic Islands Network ■ Southern Baltic Sea Parliamentary Forum	■ Mobility Forum of Eurocities ■ Polis network of European cities and regions cooperating for innovative transport solutions. ■ Green Freight Europe ■ European Sea Ports Organisation ■ The European Community Shipowners' Associations (ECSA) ■ European Logistics Association ■ AVERE, the European Association for Battery, Hybrid and Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles
HR capacity	■ Euroregions Baltic and Pomerania ■ local / regional policy-making networks ■ EUSBSR policy area "Education" ■ Baltic Sea Labour Forum (BSLF) ■ Smart and Prospering Cities Commission of the Union of Baltic Cities ■ the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation Network ■ the Baltic Sea Commission of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions ■ the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference	■ European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL) ■ European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) ■ European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training ■ European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL) ■ Marine Training Platform Office ■ Federation of International Employers

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	■ B7 Baltic Islands Network	
	■ Southern Baltic Sea Parliamentary Forum	
	■ other local / regional policy-making networks	
Cooperation capacity	■ Euroregions Baltic and Pomerania	■ Conference of European Cross-Border and Interregional City Networks (CECICN)
	■ local / regional policy-making networks	■ The European Network of National Civil Society Associations
	■ EUSBSR horizontal action "Capacity"	■ European University Association
	■ Union of Baltic Cities	■ European association of craft, small and medium-sized enterprises
	■ Southern Baltic Sea Parliamentary Forum	

7.3.2 Media, multipliers and the general public

Targeting media, magazine outlets, journals as well as other relevant multipliers (e.g. bloggers and editors of online information portals) shall be aligned with communication strands. This would minimise the risk of waste coverage[2] and make the public relation efforts efficient and service-oriented.

The experience from 2007-2013 shows that project beneficiaries and Contact Points are most effective in engaging local mainstream media. Broader mainstream media coverage can be considered, particularly in cases where the project results directly translate into tangible improvements for citizens and the environment.

The Programme will also capitalise on the experience made in the programming period 2007-2013 with regard to the public exposure of South Baltic project activities and results, particularly supporting the campaign efforts of the European Cooperation Day and other Interreg public campaigns.

8. Measures

One of the assets for Programme communication is a well-developed communication measure portfolio in the period 2007-2013. The measures for the new funding period shall particularly continue:

- the use of the web domain www.southbaltic.eu;
- the editorial management of the Programme website in English;
- the use of the well-recognisable Programme brand;
- the use of the stakeholder interaction tool "South Baltic Smart Alliance";
- the use of the good practice database "South Baltic Knowledge Bank";
- the series of 5 thematic publications;
- the use of the Programme social media profiles
- the use of the Programme movie, jointly produced by project partners from Szczecin and Wismar within the project South Baltic in Moving Images.

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[2] In marketing and advertising, the term waste coverage refers to a situation where the applied measure (massively) reaches irrelevant target groups.

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Programme website

The programme website remains the major source of information for all target groups. It shall provide continuous access to up-to-date information about the Programme, and ensure transparency of applicable procedures. The layout of the website shall correspond with the uniform web standard for EU funds in Poland, having an intuitive and user-friendly design. The website shall also include a public press review section where articles about projects or the Programme published by local, regional, national or European media outlets will be archived. Website news releases shall also be convertible to newsflashes to be distributed among subscribers. The website shall be accessible for visually impaired users. The responsive layout shall ensure a smooth operability on both conventional and alternative devices with web access such as mobiles and tablets.

Programme visualisation

The new Programme logo retains strong resemblance to the old Programme appearance building on the well-developed and recognisable brand. At the same time, the logo signals affiliation with the Interreg family. It shall be proportionately used in combination with the EU emblem.

Smart Alliance

The South Baltic Smart (Serving MARitime Territories) Alliance is an online exchange platform designed to bring together people and ideas. Interested stakeholders can use this network to:

- find partners, set up project consortia;
- look for / join existing project ideas, or share an own project idea;
- access a user's tailor-made library (aligned with the communication strands) to screen project examples from the past and gain inspiration when developing an own project.
- share views, ideas, news or events with like-minded members of the South Baltic Smart Alliance having the same interests.

The platforms offers, furthermore, individualised profile pages of users, taking into account their professional interests and channelling them towards existing South Baltic solutions.

South Baltic Knowledge Bank

The South Baltic Knowledge Bank is an online repository for existing solutions in the domains of business development, tourism, environment, transport and HR capacity. The Knowledge Bank is an interactive mechanism combining a blog-like tool with social network sharing features.

Thematic publications

The communication measures shall capitalise on 5 thematic publications which correspond with 5 of the 6 communication strands, namely "Business development", "Tourism development", "Environmental solutions", "Transport development", "Labour and skills development". The thematic publications can be reissued in new volumes that include new good practices relevant for the respective field. This can serve as a comprehensive knowledge source for future projects. Moreover, it is a tactic that can help to demonstrate the scope of the Programme impact on a certain field.

Social media

The communication measures shall capitalise on the well-established social networks, particularly Twitter, Facebook and Youtube.

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South Baltic in Moving Images

Bringing key achievements of the South Baltic Programme 2007-2013 to the screen, the film makers (the University of Applied Sciences Wismar and the University of Szczecin) demonstrate the merits of cross-border cooperation bringing tangible benefits for citizens, businesses and the environment. The movie is divided in five episodes which correspond with 5 of the 6 communication strands: smart business development, smart environmental solutions, smart tourism development, smart transport development as well as smart labour and skills development.

The tools outlined above will be used continuously throughout the Programme implementation and do not necessarily have to be listed in the annual action plans unless the Programme communication staff contemplates an update or specific use (e.g. social media campaign or a new volume of a certain publication).

Pursuant to Annex XII to f the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the Programme shall, furthermore:

- organise annually a major information activity which promotes the funding opportunities and presents project achievements;
- maintain a list of publically accessible list of funded projects which is to be updated every 6 months;
- publish project examples on the Programme website www.southbaltic.eu;
- update information about the Programme's implementation and achievements on the Programme website;
- provide access to information about funding opportunities and the launching of application calls; Programme eligibility rules; assessment procedures and time; project selection criteria; national and regional contacts; responsibility of beneficiaries;
- provide tools that help beneficiaries to meet their obligations.

The annual action plans shall propose additional measures such as:

- Programme consultations / interactive consultation tools / regional info days;
- lead partner or other training seminars;
- cooperation activities with proxies;
- contribution to external events;
- gamification[3] concepts (e.g. competitions) and other public campaigns;
- social media and viral activities;
- editorial contributions and media relations;
- promotional/exhibition materials;
- info materials,

which will support the efforts to reach newcomers and to stimulate exploitation of project results, thus increasing the prospects of impact and recognition of the EU's cohesion policy. The measures defined in the annual action plans shall take into account the targeting phases relevant for the respective year and shall always be aligned with individual communication strands (see the model matrix for annual action plans in Annex 1).

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[3] In marketing, the term gamification refers to a concept which applies game principles in non-game contexts.

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9. Time plan

The communication strategy will be implemented by means of annual action plans. These plans will specify the timeframe for concrete recurring measures such as consultations, training seminars and annual Programme events.

Time	Task	Responsibilities
23 March 2016	Approval of the Communication Strategy	Approval by MC
26-27 April 2016	Presentation of the Action Plan for the months May-December 2016 to the MC	Preparation by JS and MA Peer-review by CPs to be adopted by MC
October 2016	Interim report on the Action Plan 2016 implementation: presentation to the MC	Preparation by JS Contributions from CPs
December 2016	Action plan 2017	Preparation by JS/MA Peer-review by CPs
January 2017	Action plan 2017 submission to the MC	Submission by JS to be adopted by MC
Spring 2017	Report on the implementation of the Action Plan 2016: presentation to the MC	Preparation by JS Contributions from CPs
Autumn 2017	Interim report on the Action Plan 2017 implementation: presentation to the MC	Preparation by JS Contributions from CPs
December 2017	Action plan 2018	Preparation by JS/MA Peer-review by CPs
January 2018	Action plan 2018 submission to the MC	Submission by JS to be adopted by MC
Spring 2018	Report on the implementation of the Action Plan 2017: presentation to the MC	Preparation by JS Contributions from CPs
Autumn 2018	Interim report on the Action Plan 2018 implementation: presentation to the MC	Preparation by JS Contributions from CPs
December 2018	Action plan 2019	Preparation by JS/MA Peer-review by CPs
January 2019	Action plan 2019 submission to the MC	Submission by JS to be adopted by MC
Spring 2019	Report on the implementation of the Action Plan 2018: presentation to the MC	Preparation by JS Contributions from CPs

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Time	Task	Responsibilities
Autumn 2019	Interim report on the Action Plan 2019 implementation: presentation to the MC	Preparation by JS Contributions from CPs
December 2019	Action plan 2020	Preparation by JS/MA Peer-review by CPs
January 2020	Action plan 2020 submission to the MC	Submission by JS to be adopted by MC
Spring 2020	Report on the implementation of the Action Plan 2019: presentation to the MC	Preparation by JS Contributions from CPs
Autumn 2020	Interim report on the Action Plan 2020 implementation: presentation to the MC	Preparation by JS Contributions from CPs
December 2020	Action plan 2021	Preparation by JS/MA Peer-review by CPs
January 2021	Action plan 2021 submission to the MC	Submission by JS to be adopted by MC
Spring 2021	Report on the implementation of the Action Plan 2020: presentation to the MC	Preparation by JS
Autumn 2021	Interim report on the Action Plan 2021 implementation: presentation to the MC	Preparation by JS
December 2021	Action plan 2022	Preparation by JS/MA
January 2022	Action plan 2022 submission to the MC	Submission by JS to be adopted by MC
Spring 2022	Report on the implementation of the Action Plan 2021: presentation to the MC	Preparation by JS
Autumn 2022	Interim report on the Action Plan 2022 implementation: presentation to the MC	Preparation by JS
December 2022	Report on the implementation of the Communication Strategy	Preparation by JS/MA

10. Budget

For the implementation of the communication strategy, the Joint Secretariat and the Contact Points will use resources attributed to "Task 3: Information and communication" of the Technical Assistance project. The available budget for the implementation of the project until 2022 includes resources for staff,

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overheads, travel and accommodation, external expertise and equipment for the Joint Secretariat and the Contact Points, and amounts to 1,720,069.00 EUR. The resources for the Joint Secretariat under this task amount to 164,000.00 EUR. The resources for the Contact Points are available until 2020.

11.   Basis for assessment of the strategy implementation

The table below lists relevant indicators of the Technical Assistance Project as well as other indicators which shall measure the achievement of the communication objectives. Communication measures and related indicators (as presented below) will be assessed annually when introducing the progress of the strategy implementation to the Monitoring Committee. The assessment will also be a part of the Annual Implementation Report in years 2017 and 2019, according to art. 14 (4) of Regulation 1299/2013 on specific provisions for the support from the European Regional Development Fund to the European territorial cooperation goal. Selected measures or aspects may be evaluated as part of the external Programme evaluations. Detailed information in this regard is described in the Programme's evaluation plan.

Indicator	Unit of measurement	Indicator target value
Facilitation of calls for proposals	no. of calls	5
Newcomers attracted	Number of newcomers involved in received project applications	100
Consultations for potential applicants	Number of consulted project ideas	250
Members of the interactive partner search and idea sharing tool	Number of members	200
Publications	Number of distributed copies	5,000
Publications	Number of released titles with an ISBN number	6
Editorial contributions (unpaid articles) on Programme level	Number of produced articles	10
Media and multipliers (on Programme level)	Number of media outlets, information portals, blogs involved in dissemination	10
Proxies and networks	Number of organisations reached	30
Annual communication action plans	no. of plans	7
Programme website	no. of websites	1
Organisation of Lead Beneficiary seminars and training workshops on project implementation for beneficiaries	no. of meetings/seminars	5
Programme annual events	no. of meetings	5

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No. of regional information and promotion activities organised (events, campaigns, meetings, workshops etc.)	no. of occasion	110
Participation of JS staff in external meetings to promote the Programme and disseminate results	no. of events	28
Total participation of Contact Points in external events to inform about the Programme and disseminate its results (presentation, stand, panellist etc.)	no. of events	112

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Annex 1   Model matrix for annual action plans

	Category	Specific target group	Business	Tourism	Environment	Transport	HR capacity	Cooperation capacity	Indicator and target value	Coordinated by	Expected time
Annual measures (Annual Action Plans)											
Target phase 1: Attracting newcomers and supporting the application phase											
Measure XY (brief description)	If applicable, select one of the categories below	Catalogue available in section 7	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Catalogue available in section 11	JS/ CP	If known date, month or quarter
Target phase 2: Supporting the communication efforts of beneficiaries											
Measure XY (brief description)	If applicable, select one of the categories below	Catalogue available in section 7	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Catalogue available in section 11	JS/ CP	If known date, month or quarter
Target phase 3: Disseminating results and streamlining uptake and exploitation											
Measure XY (brief description)	If applicable, select one of the categories below	Catalogue available in section 7	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Tick if applicable	Catalogue available in section 11	JS/ CP	If known date, month or quarter

Measure category (non-exhaustive list)

1. Programme consultations / interactive consultation tools / regional info days;
2. lead partner or other training seminars;
3. online partner search and other online interaction and knowledge-sharing tools;
4. cooperation activities with proxies;
5. Programme event;
6. contribution to external events;
7. gamification concepts (e.g. competitions) and other public campaigns;
8. social media and viral activities;
9. editorial contributions and media relations;
10. promotional/exhibition materials;
11. info materials;
12. publications.