

FACTSHEET

**Interreg IPA South Adriatic
(Italy–Albania–Montenegro 2021-2027)****PROGRAMME MANUAL****4.5 Communication Guide**

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Communication is strategic

Communication plays an important role in ensuring the success of EU funded projects.

The projects funded under IPA South Adriatic Programme have a huge responsibility: enable the European Union to demonstrate in a practical way how the EU impacts on the everyday lives of citizens.

it is essential for IPA South Adriatic Programme beneficiaries to approach communication as a strategic project tool, and link communication objectives to project outputs and results.

Therefore, project partners must dedicate sufficient time and resources to project communication at all stages of the project.

The success of communication depends on the substantial commitment, professionalism and experience of project beneficiaries.

In other words, communication should not be treated as a bureaucratic task, but should be a key priority for each individual project.

Each project partnership must draw up a project communication strategy, defining a specific mix of tools and activities in support of their project's objectives.

Having a dedicated and qualified communication manager per project will positively impact quality, direction and consistency in the project's communication.

“If you always do what you always did, you will always get what you always got”

Be creative, be disruptive

Why promote Projects?

- Highlight the project results with concrete and visible achievements that emphasize the Programme impact to the wide public and in the citizens' life.
- Demonstrate the role of EU and How and where European funds are spent by ensuring transparency about the use of public money
- the public authorities involved in projects need to show the added-value of allocating resources to cooperation and how they use public funds more efficiently as a result

EU Regulations and Interreg IPA South Adriatic define several transparency and communication requirements which projects must respect. This factsheet describes these requirements.

It provides guidance and templates to help projects turn project communication into a tool that helps projects to achieve their main goal(s), and ultimately to inform the general public in all the partner regions of Interreg Europe's achievements.

This communication guide has the final goal to support and to help the beneficiaries of the funded projects, to the information and promotion of the projects and the dissemination of its results, in order to comply with the Regulations (EU) 2021/1060 based on the Common Provisions Regulation - CPR), 2021/1059 (Interreg Regulation) and 2021/1529 (IPA III Regulation).

1. Drawing up a project communication STRATEGY & PLAN

A project's communication strategy should set out how communication will help it to achieve its overall objectives.

It is a roadmap that should serve the project throughout its lifetime. Planning and implementing the Communication Strategy & Plan should be treated as a horizontal project management task. The whole partnership has to be involved and the leader of the communication work package shall be responsible for building the partners' communication capacity and for coordinating the implementation and quality management of communication measures.

First determine the strategy that serves the project goals, then draft the plan that supports the strategy, and fix the processes that enable the plan. It is also important to explain through communication that the project is part of a bigger picture since it is co-financed by the European Union's Interreg IPA South Adriatic.

The Interreg IPA South Adriatic programme has its own communication strategy and projects are expected to contribute to the programme's communication efforts. These can be consulted in Chapter 5 of the Cooperation Programme, (<https://bit.ly/programmecommunicationstrategy>) which sets out the programme communication strategy with its objectives, target groups, channels, and evaluation methodology.

Developing a communication strategy & Plan

Based on information provided in the application forms, all approved projects (except for Small Scale Projects) have to submit to the MA/JS a concise Communication Strategy & Plan, preferably before the kick-off meeting. The final version can be sent to the programme communication officer after the kick-off event and after collecting all partners approval. *

*** EXCEPTION FOR SMALL SCALE PROJECTS**

Small Scale Projects are not required to submit to the MA/JS a Communication Strategy & Plan. However, they should identify the communication activities foreseen during project implementation and share them with their partners.

The Programme suggests the appointment of a Communication Manager.

In this document, projects shall provide detailed information on target audiences, expected results, approaches, activities, budget and result indicators. The sharing of tasks and responsibilities among the partnership as well as the implementation timeline also have to be described.

The project communication strategy should briefly describe the following:

- **The objectives of the communication strategy:** Communication objectives need to be SMART, which stands for specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound. They

could, for example, serve to inform public policy on a particular topic, to change the opinion of certain stakeholders, or to raise public awareness about a specific issue.

A **SMART** overall project objective could, for example, be: "Increase business creation among young people in the participating regions by 10 start-ups per region on average by 2027, thanks to a specific training session in each region addressing the issue."

A related **communication objective** could be: "Persuade policymakers that youth entrepreneurship remains a political priority (sign action plan detailing willingness to implement change – 5 signed by 2026)."

- **S** – Specific Among young people/youth entrepreneurship
- **M** – Measurable Increase by 10 start-ups on average per region/ 5 action plans signed
- **A** – Achievable Through organizing a specific training session/ by persuading policymakers
- **R** – Realistic increase business creation
- **T** – Time-bound By 2027/ by 2026

Attention: It is therefore important to **distinguish between project objectives and communication objectives; the former determine the latter**. The starting point for project partners is to determine what they want to achieve or change. What problem do they contribute to solve? The question is then: What do we need to communicate to bring this improvement about?

- **The project's target groups:** A project's key audiences are its 'target groups'. Target groups can easily be identified by drawing up a list of important people and organisations who need to know about the project and its work for the project to succeed. Examples of well-defined target groups could be "politicians and public officials dealing with innovation management", "regional business support organisations", or "public transport authorities". However, "EU", "politicians", and "academic institutions" are not sufficiently specific.

It is important to identify the project targets (that are the final beneficiaries of project activities) and the communication target groups that include the local stakeholders, press & media, local communities, enterprises, citizens and so on.

The list may be quite long, so grouping and analysing the people and organisations according to their characteristics and needs will help in deciding which to target, how, and when.

Projects should also try to increase the interest and engagement of any individual or organisation able to positively influence their project's outcomes.

Therefore please specify typology of targets to be involved and number to be reached per each Technical WPs.

- **Use an appropriate mix of communication tools and channels:** What is the best way to transmit a particular message to a given target group? Would a brochure, conference, or video be best?

It is useful to list any preferred but especially the most appropriate communication channels and tools for each target group. A range of channels will probably be needed to achieve the project's communication objectives. Depending on the target group, social media channels may be worth considering.

Projects must include the tools and channels required by the programme – these are the project website and the promotional poster.

Communication tools may include written material such as newsletters, email alerts, press releases and promotional brochures, and events such as large conferences, networking lunches, thematic workshops, and regional seminars.

- **How the communication strategy will be implemented and evaluated:** The project communication strategy should briefly describe how it will be implemented and how progress against objectives will be evaluated during the project's lifetime. It should describe how partners will allocate or share responsibilities for the different communication tasks and activities and for the overall coordination of communication work.

Partners also need to decide and describe how the results of the different communication activities will be measured and how the partnership will know if communication objectives have been reached.

In this regard, partners should establish appropriate communication result indicators which they can track internally throughout their project's lifetime.

By tracking internal indicators, partnerships will be able to assess whether the selected communication approach and activities are bringing about the intended results and whether they are helping the project to achieve its goals.

2. COMMUNICATION RULES

Interreg IPA South Adriatic programme developed branding for projects based on a harmonised approach for all Interreg programmes. This branding is instrumental to consolidating the achievements of all Interreg IPA South Adriatic projects and increasing the visibility of Interreg at the same time.

Therefore, South Adriatic projects must follow those branding guidelines when developing their project communication tools and materials. The guidelines are included in a communication toolkit developed by the programme. The toolkit includes:

- Project Logo
- Project Visual Identity
- Project poster template
- Project plaque/ billboard template
- Project roll up template

- Partners' official institutional websites and social media sites
- Operation of Strategic Importance

Please note that if the visibility and publicity requirements described below are not observed or only partly observed, the related costs incurred may be considered ineligible for Interreg funds.

In addition, in accordance with paragraph 6 of Article 36 of Regulation (EU) 2021/ 1059, the managing authority may, taking into account the principle of proportionality, cancel up to 2 % of the support from the funds awarded to any beneficiary who fails to comply with their obligations on transparency and communication.

2.1 Project logo

Regulation (EU) No 2021/1060 (Chapter III, Article 47) requires all beneficiaries to use the emblem of the Union in accordance with Annex IX when carrying out visibility, transparency, and communication activities. The EU logo must always be visible in a prominent place (on the first/landing page, visible, without scrolling, on all electronic and mobile devices) and be of a comparable size to other logos used.

Projects will receive their main visual from the programme once their project has been formally approved (see example below). Projects are requested not to design their own project logo.



All approved projects are obliged to use it on all their communication materials (both hard copy and electronic presentations, print material, or any other communication activity organized within the project) intended for the public or for participants in their project activities.

The design rules outlined in the Programme Visual Identity are described in the [Visual Identity Manual](#) that provides a set of instructions for branding project communication activities. Instructions provided are not eligibility rules and should be adopted as guidelines for gaining a more

effective Programme and Project communication. Any deviation from the guidelines must be agreed with the Joint Secretariat.

The Visual Identity Manual is divided into the following sections:

- INTERREG IPA SOUTH ADRIATIC BRAND: the characteristics of the Programme logo identity, and the usage rules.
- INTERREG IPA SOUTH ADRIATIC: How to use the brand provides a combination of graphic solutions for the correct application of the provisions of EU regulations on communication for the Programme
- INTERREG IPA SOUTH ADRIATIC in conjunction with the project name
- Policy Objectives

2.2 Project Visual Identity

Each project (standard and strategic) must provide the programme with **at least 3 high-quality photos** related to the project's topic and work. This material will be used for the project website and to create a customized the project visual identity, that will accompany the project-life. The project visual identity will be customized for all communication materials (events, folders, power point, social card).

Each small-scale project must provide the programme with **at least 1 high-quality photo** related to the project's topic and work

The Programme underlines that any visuals the project uses need to be acquired with the described requirement: the communication and visibility material, including at the level of project partners, must be made available upon request to the Union's institutions, bodies, offices, or agencies. A royalty-free, non-exclusive, and irrevocable license to use such material and any pre-existing rights attached to it must be granted to the Union. This should not require significant additional costs or a significant administrative burden either for the project partners or the programme (Regulation (EU) No 2021/ 1060 (Chapter III, Section II, Article 49.6 and the Annex IX).

2.3 Project Poster

Within six months after the approval of their project, each project partner must place at least one poster with information about the project (minimum size A3), including the financial support from the Union, at a location readily visible to the public, such as the entrance area of a building (Regulation (EU) 2021/1059, Section II, Article 36(4), paragraph d). Controllers will check compliance with this article. [The Interreg IPA South Adriatic programme provides a downloadable template for producing the poster](#), customized for each Priority Axis.

The text of the poster can be translated into national languages. The poster needs to stay visible for the whole duration of the project. However, an equivalent electronic display of the poster is

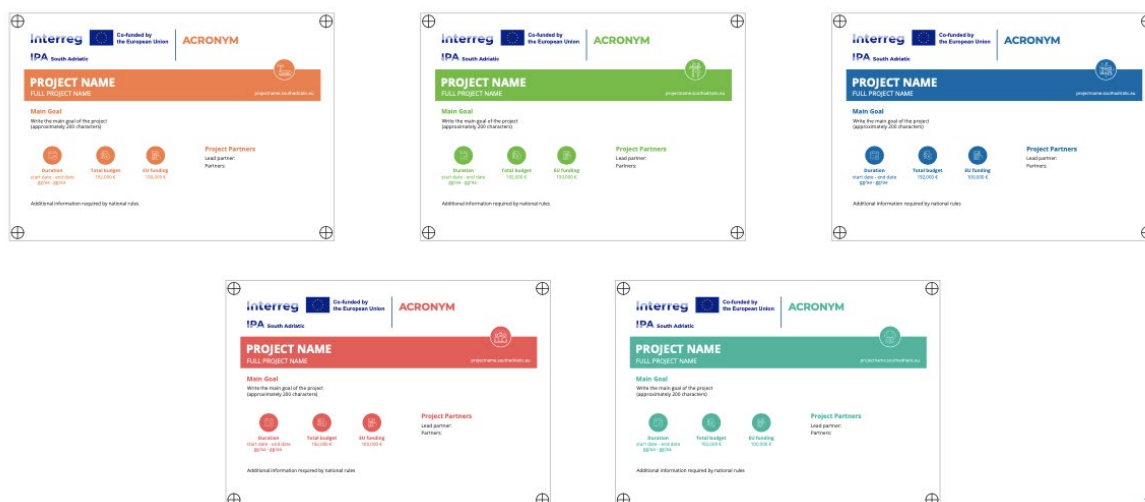
permissible.



2.4 Project Plaques/Billboard

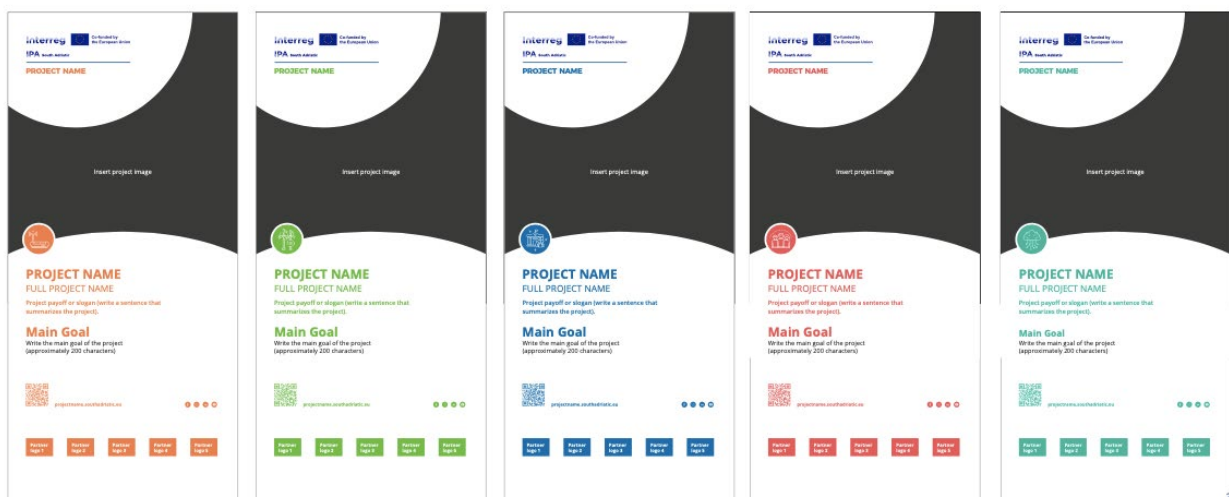
Any project involving physical investment or purchasing of equipment starts or purchasing equipment is installed, with regard to operations the total cost of which exceeds EUR 100 000 (i.e., in the event of infrastructure/works and/or equipment in the context of a pilot action) must display a durable plaque or billboard which is clearly visible to the public and presents the Union's emblem in accordance with the technical characteristics laid down in Annex IX of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 and Article 36 (4) paragraph c) of Regulation (EU) 2021/ 1059. These must be in place at the start of the physical implementation of a pilot involving investment, the purchase of equipment, or the installation of equipment.

[The Interreg IPA South Adriatic programme provides a downloadable template](#) for producing the plaque or billboard, customized for each Priority Axis. The template can be modified by the project partners at their own responsibility. The text of the plaque or billboard may be translated into national languages.



2.5 Project Roll-up banner

The Interreg IPA South Adriatic programme provides a [downloadable template](#) for producing the roll-up banner, customized for each Priority Axis. The template can be modified by the project partners at their own responsibility. The text of the roll-up banner may be translated into national languages.



2.6 Project Sticker

For different types of deliverables (e.g., an electric vehicle, laptop, chairs, general equipment etc.), [the Interreg IPA South Adriatic programme provides a downloadable template](#) producing the sticker, customized for each Priority Axis. The template can be modified by the project partners at their own responsibility. The text of the sticker may be translated into national languages.

2.7 Partners' official institutional websites and social media sites

All project partners must publish information about their project on their official institutional website, where such a website exists, or otherwise on their social media sites. (Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 paragraph 4 (a) of Article 36 of). The information must include a short description of the project, its aims, and results and must highlight the financial support from the European Union. The information about the project must also include the main project visual, set in a visible position, in compliance with the programme's general visibility and publicity requirements.

[The Interreg IPA South Adriatic programme provides a downloadable project template](#) for producing project description, customized for each Priority Axis. The template can be modified by the project partners at their own responsibility. The text of project template may be translated into national languages.

Each partner must send to the Programme communication officer the link of the published template of project partner institutional website.

2.8 Operations of Strategic Importance

Operations of strategic importance are projects providing a key contribution to the achievement of the objectives of a programme. They are intended to be the most representative projects of the programmes embodying its very goals.

To ensure higher visibility, operations of strategic importance whose total cost exceed EUR 5 000 000 are required to organise a communication event or activity, under conditions outlined in Article 50 (1)(e) CPR and involving the Commission and the responsible managing authority in a timely manner. (i.e., at least three months in advance)

The event and the activity can take many forms. They may include:

- Dedicated (mini) campaigns revolving around the project(s)
- Organisation of inauguration events
- Promotion of strong media coverage of the projects, more so when they reach a certain level of maturity (press conference, press release, inviting journalists to visit the project, other media event)
- Dissemination of information on the projects through the single portal/ programmes' website (e.g. a specific section on the single portal)
- Development of promotional material (e.g. leaflets) - also for the use of the Commission



These actions would be best implemented in close cooperation with the managing authority and the beneficiary as common, coordinated efforts will yield a higher added value than fragmented actions.

2.9 Project and communication format

Once a project is approved, the Programme sends to the project LP a Project Sheet and Communication format in order to collect all the information about the project activities and the project contacts list available at this link <https://bit.ly/projectandcommunicationformat>.

2.10 Disclaimer of liability

The European Union, the Managing Authority or any other Programme body are not responsible for the content of communication materials produced by the Lead Beneficiary and/or by any Final Beneficiary.

Therefore, according to the space available, and especially when content is not simple information, but takes a stand on themes relevant to the Programme or topical issues (e.g. studies, reports, publications, press kits, videos, websites, etc.) the following disclaimer must be included:

“This [document/publication/video/website...] has been produced with the financial assistance of the Interreg IPA South Adriatic Programme. The contents of this [document/publication/video/website...] are the sole responsibility of [Final beneficiary’s name] and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union and of the Interreg IPA South Adriatic Programme Authorities.

3. COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

3.1 Communication human resources

For professional management of project communication activities, the Programme suggests to involve the following professional figures (or at least one with multiple skills) in your project team:

- a project communication officer with qualified skills as journalist who is responsible for the whole project communication for all project partners
- a creative and professional graphic designers
- a photographer/video-maker
- a content creator/social media manager.

3.2 Project websites

Project websites are hosted as subdomains in the Programme web portal (<https://www.southadriatic.eu>), in order to harmonise contents and increase visibility and sustainability of results, which shall be kept in one platform far beyond project closure.

Each webpage will be customized with the project visual identity

A standard project website map will contain:

- Home button
- Project summary field
- project fact and figures

- Budget & duration details
- Partnership/partner locations on interactive map
- News and events
- Results
- Library
- Contact with a possibility to link people to the project

There are no costs for the projects to create, host and maintain their websites on the Program website. Nevertheless, **Project websites need to be regularly updated by standard and strategic projects (at least twice per month) with news, photographs, videos, etc.** All outputs have to be published in the project website.

Each project has to identify a **web content editor who is responsible to implement with content their project website on the Programme web portal**; the web content editor has to use [the website news programme template](#). Only costs for web content management have to be planned. However, in case a project develops a product or activity, which needs specific online services (e.g. tourist products /services, territorial marketing, etc.) or an additional online platform may be developed, upon approval by the JS, for targeted branding purposes, as long as its sustainability is ensured. All outputs have to be published in the project website.

WARNING!

Please note that photographs published in the project website must always comply with copyright laws or be free licence. A few sites, such as <https://www.pexels.com/> or <https://pixabay.com/it/> offer images distributed under a Creative Commons CC0 License, which can be used/modified freely, are available for both commercial and non-commercial purposes and do not require author attribution.

Moreover, in compliance with the GDPR Regulation (UE) No. 2016/679, an explicit consent must be requested from event participants to use photographs making them recognisable (*see § 2.11*).

*** EXCEPTION FOR SMALL SCALE PROJECTS**

Contents of the project web page will be produced by the projects and published by the JS Communication Officer; therefore, projects are not required to appoint a Web Editor. However, they must inform the JS of ongoing activities, and send news about project events for publication in the Programme website.

3.3 Social media

Social Media is an inevitable part of communication in European projects. Interreg IPA South Adriatic is present on several social media channels:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Linkedin](#)
- [YouTube](#)

In this programming period we are experimenting a new solution regarding the management of the project social media pages:

*** Project social media pages**

Small scale projects and standard projects are not obliged to open project social channels but they can use the programme ones.

Considering the importance of Strategic Projects, the Programme suggests the opening of project social channels, but they can also opt for the first solution.

The project LP shall appoint a **social media editor** that writes the content (copy+visual image or video) and shares it in the [Programme Editorial Plan](#) at **least 7 days before publication**. The Programme communication officer integrates/edits and approves it and then the project communication manager publishes it directly on the programme page, after having access to the programme page.

Projects are advised to develop a constant online presence on the institutional social media pages, by sharing the same post prepared for the programme page. The post on the institutional social media pages can be written in local language and the programme expects the project's communication manager to make links to the Interreg IPA South Adriatic digital presence (for example, use @interregipasouthadriatic in their posts). **Projects are advised to invite the Programme page as a collaborator of project post both on Facebook and on Instagram.**

Projects are also encouraged to use the official common Programme hashtag:

#SouthAdriatic
#Interreg
#Inspiredbythesea
#Inspiredbycooperation

Here are **some tips** for effective social media management:

- 1) **Post frequently** (at least once a week), use visuals, emoticons, GIFs, share contents from others related to your work. Create ENGAGEMENT
- 2) Invest enough time and human resources (it's a serious business)
- 3) **Make most use of partner organizations existing accounts** (more followers than the project itself)
- 4) **Consider paid ads**: the programme suggests to invest money to promote some contents and the projects results. Advertising on social media is cheaper than on traditional media (newspaper and TV/radio) and impact in terms of engagement and reach can easily be measured.
- 5) Create consistency between website news and social media content
- 6) Provide dynamic, engaging, and interesting content. Use a **storytelling approach** with the target groups' expectations in mind. The content should bring some benefit to the followers
- 7) **Tag the Programme page**
- 8) **Think SEO**: Search Engine Optimisation is important for building visibility for your project online. By improving your SEO presence, people will more easily find your project when using search engines.
- 9) **Monitor**: Find the conversations that are happening online about your project theme by monitoring keywords. An easy way to get started is to set up Google Alerts.

WARNING

Please note that pictures published on social media must comply with copyright laws or be free licence. They can be taken from sites such as <https://www.pexels.com/> or <https://pixabay.com/it/>, which offer images distributed under a Creative Commons CC0 License.

Moreover, in compliance with the GDPR Regulation (UE) No. 2016/679, an explicit consent must be requested from event participants to use photographs making them recognisable (*see § 2.11*).

3.4 Promotional materials

Promotional materials may be produced only if they are strictly necessary to project communication activities and if they clearly serve the objectives of the project communication strategy. Their cost and the quantity produced should be reasonable and justified. All promotional materials must be branded with the project logo. The following products may be produced if required by the projects' communication activities:

- Conference folders, Block-notes, Pens
- Low budget shoppers, USB sticks (containing project materials /outputs)

Items not included in this list may be eligible only if agreed with the Joint Secretariat. In order to avoid rejection during project monitoring, the project should contact the JS before purchasing such items, and ask for confirmation that the relevant costs can be accepted.

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.

3.5 Promotional Gift

It is still possible to produce communication items of very limited economic value, having the purpose of making the programme more visible and which are necessary to perform specific project activities (e.g. in case of workshops, pens).

3.6 Media relation

The best way to communicate project objectives and achievements to a targeted and/or a broader audience is to address the media. This can be done in many ways: from the writing and dissemination of press releases, to the arrangement of media interviews, the organization of press conferences, press tours, etc.

Building relationships with the media and raising their interest is not an easy task as journalists are often busy people and EU funded projects are not always considered as the trendiest, most exciting topics. Again, in order for communication to be persuasive, it shall focus on human stories and on the impact of the EU/Programme support on people. Telling how a project has changed the life of a young start-upper offering him/her a bright future might have good chances of engaging the media.

For the implementation of mass media and public relation it is useful to have:

1. **Press release**, available in all programme languages. You can follow the press release template available at this [LINK](#)

When preparing material for the media, projects should emphasise the name of the project, the programme, and in particular the EU funding. The published articles should ideally contain all three references (the EU funding, programme name, and the project acronym).

2. A common and shared **media database** (newspapers, radio, tv, webtv, on line press), local, regional, national press and specialized press
3. **Press conference** - it is useful to choose a location directly involved in a project, a restored building, a creative hub, a park or a museum, improved with the Programme Funds.
4. **Media Corner** on the website
5. **Press Tour**.

Projects are encouraged to **produce a press kit, to be distributed at project events or press conferences**; the kit should include a press release informing about the event, the project summary and other communication materials, when relevant. Press kits must include the project logo and the disclaimer of liability.

However, the programme recommends that projects do not pay for articles. The media presence of a project should be the result of a successful communication strategy, not an advertising campaign. Any deviation from this principle should be justified and approved by the joint secretariat.

Monitoring and collecting articles, publications and radio/TV reports which mention or present your project (press review) is an excellent way to evaluate results and visibility.

Journalists use the five “W’s and the H”: who, what, where, when, why and how.

Who Who is the story about?	What What is the story about?	Where Where did the event you’re writing about occur?	When When did it occur?	Why Why did this happen?	How How did this happen?
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How can I make my press release interesting?

- Use the storytelling approach **Problem- Solution- Result**: describe the problem that the project faces with some data – describe the solution offered by the project (training, platform, special equipment) – describe the results (expected or already achieved) with supporting numbers
- **Choose a clear, short and simple headline** in which you clearly state what the reader is going to learn if he/ she dives into the article;
- **Identify your audience and choose the right style** accordingly (serious or funny, specific or general). If the press release has to be sent to different targets, change your style/ angle (and even the content) to make it useful;
- Sometimes you don’t need a whole article to promote a project. **A sentence with the most crucial details from a project can help you achieve that promotion**. Examples: · “Did you know? Thanks to project funded by our Programme people in regions can now get service faster, cheaper and more efficiently.” · “By the time project is finalised, emissions in region will be reduced by XX%” · “Thanks to the project, border regions in and countries now have and benefits” · “With the observation system established as a part of project funded by our Programme, and countries can now jointly monitor ship wastes illegally disposed to X river” For example: "Have you ever wondered how to recycle fiberglass? The European Project XX does it for you!";
- **Remember that the Project technicalities are often the least interesting thing for a journalist** and he/ she will not be impressed by explanations of budgets, ERDFs, long organisation names etc. They want to see where the local story is, what is the concrete benefit to people. The main message to get in is that this was brought to the people by the European Union funding in cooperation with other European countries;
- Translate the press release in the Programme languages: English, Italian, Albanian and Montenegrin
- **Add powerful high resolution photographs** or drawings that depict your press release;
- **Use the communication unit(s) of your institution** and your partner’s institutions to disseminate the press release through their media databases. Involve the Project’s partners on it!
- Try to link the press release to a special moment of the Project: e.g. invitation to a Project event, production of one output;
- **Share the press release with the JS** and collect together the press review
- **Make sure that the EU funding is mentioned in the article/ news.**

3.7 Organising successful events

Organizing a successful event implies: knowing the project thoroughly, identifying its target audience, devising the event concept, coordinating the technical aspects, and evaluating the outcomes. This requires creativity, passion, and expertise.

It is advisable to plan at least **one public final event to present the results of the project**. Event planning has to be tailored to the projects' objectives and target groups. According to the objectives of the project, other targeted events may be organized so as to inform about activities, disseminate results and reinforce cooperation. Joint initiatives involving all partners and territories involved by the project will be particularly appreciated.

During the events, projects are encouraged to **place the EU flag and the project poster or a project banner in a readily visible place**, ensuring visibility of the EU and of the Programme. All communication materials used for events must follow the project's main visual.

Projects may take part in external events, that is, activities organised by someone else. **Participation as a speaker or as an exhibitor can help the project become more visible**. External events can give projects an opportunity to meet with people from the target groups face-to-face and tell them about their work.

Projects should **plan other public relations activities and events to engage with their target groups** and convey the project's messages in order to reach their communication objectives. Activities such as conferences, exhibitions, round-table discussions, briefings with policymakers, or awareness-raising campaigns, online or in person, must always have a specific communication objective and relevant target group, in line with the project's communication strategy.

General Tips

- **A Connecting Thread**. Not a sum of PowerPoint presentations but a learning experience
- **Question Time** A main question to be answered
- **Speakers** (active moderators, different profiles, final beneficiaries, technical experts etc.)
- **Networking** Allow participants to get to know each other
- **Streaming/Social Live for the event**
- **HD Pictures/Video/Interview**

Inform the Programme communication officer and Joint Secretariat for all public events and invite Programme structures as speaker.

Interreg IPA South Adriatic Programme also recommends that projects **liaise with the National Info points** in their partner countries. The national Info points can serve as relays to disseminate information about an event or achievement more widely and they may also appreciate receiving the news about a project and its activities.

3.8 Participation in Programme and European Events and Campaign

Projects are expected to participate in the events organised by the programme. Depending on the duration of the project, up to 3 events over the lifetime of a project should be included in the work plan (Seminar on project implementation, capitalization event, communication seminar).

The programme may ask projects to present their results and achievements at any of the annual events

In addition, there are several events organised by European institutions which may help the project achieve greater visibility, better disseminate their communication materials, and better publicise their results. The programme participates in these events with input from the projects. Interreg Cooperation Day (ICDay on 21 September), for example, is a relatively new initiative presenting projects' work and local level results to the general public. Projects are encouraged to take part in this initiative, which can also bring them more visibility and increase contact with the local media

Thus, it is advisable for the projects to include the relevant costs in their budget. Such events are as follows:

- Programme Events: info-days, seminars, presentations of best practices, capitalization event
- Project events: workshops, meetings, events for presenting results and achievements, etc.
- Events organized by European Institutions (**Regiostars/EURegionsWeek**), which may help projects to better communicate their results and gain considerable visibility.
- **Interreg Cooperation Day** (yearly, in September), in cooperation with the Programme's MA/JS, is a relatively new initiative presenting projects' work and local level results to the general public. Projects are encouraged to take part in this initiative, which can also bring them more visibility and increase contact with the local media.
- **Interreg Project Slam Competition** that contributes to the improvement of projects' visibility.

3.9 IVY

Representatives of Interreg Programmes can apply to host Interreg Reporters, who will help the partners with communication activities.

Project beneficiaries can host a volunteer for a period of 2 to 6 months, directly involved in the implementation of the project. All project partners can also activate other form of collaboration (stage or university internship) promoted by other institutions or entities.

3.10 Video

Videos, especially those of short duration, are quickly becoming one of the most efficient communication means as people prefer watching videos rather than reading texts.

Videos should transmit emotions since creating emotional response with viewers means raising interest and engagement for the project.

Projects are invited to discuss the video concept with the assigned communication officer before starting the production phase and share the draft video for approval.

The programme strongly suggests to create [a final project video](#) by using the storytelling technique in order to highlight the achieved project results. We suggest to share the draft video with the Programme communication officer before publishing it.

3.11 Storytelling

Storytelling is a technique which people have used to pass on information since prehistoric times. So while it may be a hot trend in communication today, it is far from a new concept! Conveying information through stories not only makes our content more interesting to our audience, it makes it much more likely that they will remember it. **Use storytelling to give your Project a human face, avoiding complicated/ boring information to get your message through more easily.** If you are trying to get attention from the media, storytelling techniques are essential. While you need to have facts and figures too, a compelling story is a must.

3.12 Writing your story

Starting to write your story is often the most difficult part. For that reason, we are giving you a short exercise you can use to get your creativity flowing, and **template** (Annex 1 to this Guide) to use as a starting point. Just remember to find a main character/ hero the story could be based on; a scene/ setting where the story is set; and a conflict/resolution to make your story more interesting (problem/solution given by the Project/results).

3.13 GDPR Regulation (UE) No. 2016/679

In compliance with the GDPR Regulation (UE) No. 2016/679, Project Partners **must request an explicit consent** from participants to project events to use their data, photos or videos, which include personal image, for the purpose of evaluation, audit or promotion of the event outcomes, except for any commercial use, which is not allowed.

If participants deny their consent to use personal data for audit/evaluation purposes or personal image for promotion/audit/evaluation purposes, the event organiser shall blur out a substantial part of personal data (still allowing to verify the number of participants) and personal image on photos and videos making him/her recognisable (most probably, in this case pictures may be inappropriate for promotional purposes).

Practical examples:

You can add in the registration form for the events the following phrases (to sign or to flag):

- I give the consent to the [Name of Organization] of the event to use the data I provided for the purpose of this registration, in compliance with EU General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679.
- I hereby authorize [Name of Organization] to photograph and/or record me during this event and to use such images or videos in promotional materials, websites, social media, press releases, educational materials, or any other lawful purpose.

4. Personal Data Protection

Interreg IPA South Adriatic Programme treats carefully all data collected as confidential and use it only under the legal compliance with EU regulations. All data collected and managed by the Programme, namely accounts, databases of project partners, beneficiaries list, event participants, etc., is in strict compliance with the [Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679](#) of 27 April 2016, “on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation)”.

The responsible for management of personal data is the Managing Authority (MA) Interreg IPA South Adriatic Programme. To contact the Managing Authority Interreg IPA South Adriatic please write to:

- js@southadriatic.eu
- c.sfregola@regione.puglia.it Interreg IPA South Adriatic Communication Officer

Partners (beneficiaries) participating in projects co-financed by the Programme are likely to collect data within the framework of their project.

All beneficiaries can print or download the communication guide for personal use. This material can be used for public use, provided the source is acknowledged. None of this material may be used for commercial purposes. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the Interreg IPA South Adriatic Programme Authorities and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.

5. Checklist of publicity requirements

CHECK LIST OF PUBLICITY REQUIREMENTS	Small-scale Projects	Standard Projects	Strategic Projects
Logo set used	Required*	Required*	Required*
Partners' official institutional websites: all partner institutions provide project information on their website, if such a website exists, and social media sites	Required*	Required*	Required*
All partner institutions' websites linked to Interreg IPA South Adriatic project website	Recommended	Required*	Required*
Poster: all partner institutions place the A3 project poster at a clearly visible to the public visible place on their premises	Required ¹	Required*	Required*
Plaque or billboard clearly visible to the public at the start of the physical implementation of a pilot involving investment, the purchase of equipment, or the installation of equipment	-	Required*	Required*
FUND Mention EU support mentioned on all documents used for the public or the participants in the project's activities	Required*	Required*	Required*
A royalty-free, non-exclusive, and irrevocable license to use all project communication and visibility material and any pre-existing rights attached to it to be granted to the programme/ the European Union	Required*	Required*	Required*
Organization of a communication event or activity, involving the Commission and the responsible managing authority in a timely manner (inauguration events, national communication campaign)	-	-	Required*

¹ Required* means mandatory according the Regulation (EU) No 2021/1060

6. Checklist of key Communication tools

CHECK LIST OF KEY COMMUNICATION TOOLS	Small-scale Projects	Standard Projects	Strategic Projects
Developing a communication strategy & Plan	-	Required	Required
Fill in the Project Sheet and Communication format	Required	Required	Required
Project Visual Identity: provide at least 1 high-quality photo related to the project topic	Required	-	-
Project Visual Identity: Provide at least 3 high-quality photos related to the project topic	-	Required	Required
Appointment of a Project Communication Manager	Recommended	Required	Required
Organize a communication team with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a project communication officer with qualified skills as journalist who is responsible for the whole project communication for all project partners - graphic designer - photograph/video- maker - Content creator and social media manager 	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
PROJECT WEBSITE			
Project website updated at least twice a month	Contents to be produced and sent to the JS Communication Officer for publication	Required (a project web content editor to be appointed)	Required (a project web content editor to be appointed)
Publish and regularly update project achievements and output	Contents to be sent to the JS Communication Officer for publication	Required	Required
SOCIAL MEDIA			
Creation of social media pages	-	-	Required
Appoint a social media editor that writes the content (copy+visual image or video) and shares it in the Programme South Adriatic Editorial Plan	-	Recommended	Recommended
presence on the institutional social media pages, by sharing the same post prepared for the programme page	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
Projects are advised to invite the Programme page as collaborator of project post both on Facebook and on Instagram	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
Use official Programme hashtag #SouthAdriatic #Interreg #inspiredbythesea #inspiredbycooperation	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended

CHECK LIST OF KEY COMMUNICATION TOOLS	Small-scale Projects	Standard Projects	Strategic Projects
MEDIA RELATION			
Produce a press kit including a press release, the project summary	Recommended	Required	Required
Video and press review	Recommended	Required	Required
ORGANIZATION OF EVENTS			
Planning at least one public event to present the project results	Required	Required	Required
Inform the Programme communication officer, Joint Secretariat and National Info points for all public events and invite Programme structures as speaker	Required	Required	Required
Streaming Social Live for the event with stories and reels HD Pictures/Video/Interview with the participants	Recommended	Required	Required
Place the EU flag and the project poster or a project banner in a readily visible place	Required	Required	Required
Participation in Programme Events: info-days, seminars, presentations of best practices, capitalization event	Required	Required	Required
Participation in Events organized by European Institutions Regiostars/EURegionsWeek in cooperation with the Programme	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
Participation and organization the Interreg Cooperation Day with the Programme	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
Host an IVY Interreg Volunteer Youth	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
VIDEO			
Produce and publish at least one short video about the project results	Recommended	Required	Required
Use storytelling approach	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended

Template

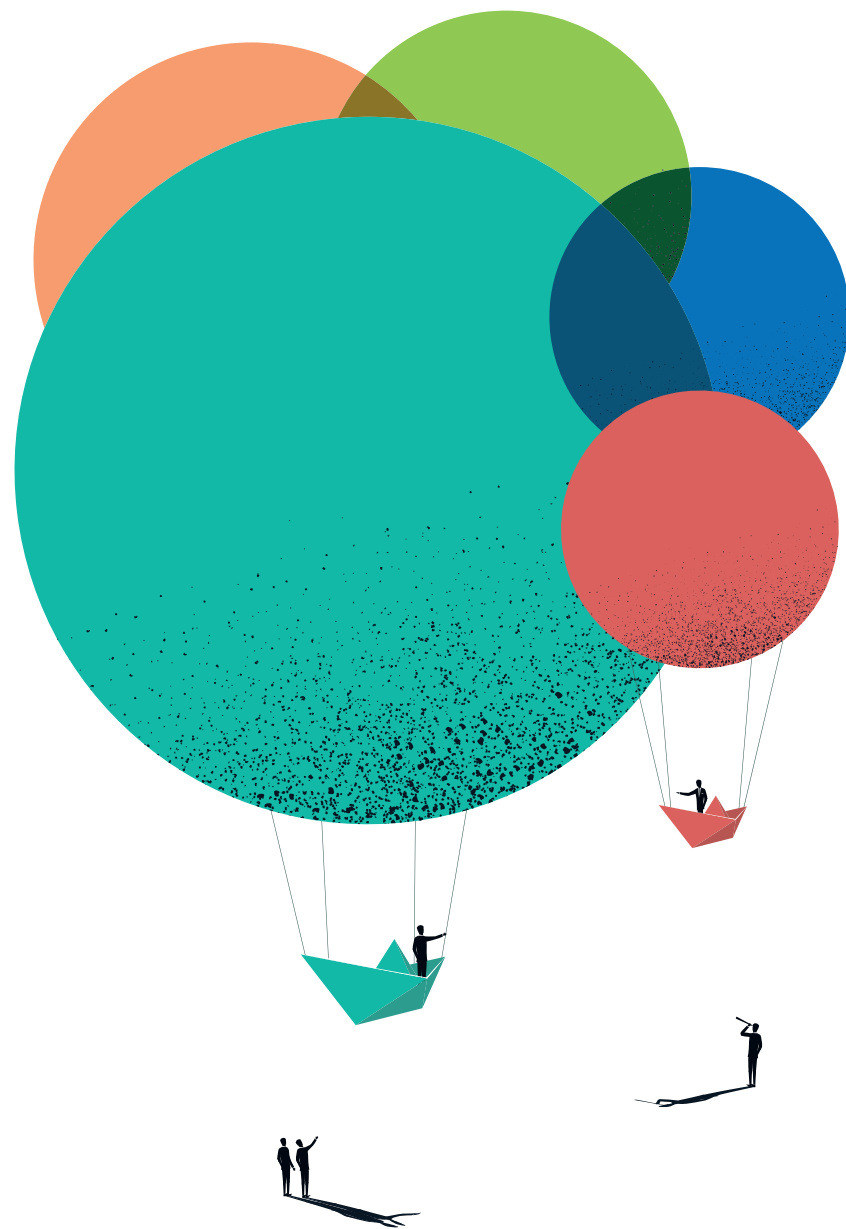
Storytelling builder

Interreg



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IPA South Adriatic



Introduction

The next slides will guide you how to structure your story. This template can be easily adapted to turn your story into a video script.

On each slide there are three examples on the left, and space to write your story on the right.

The last slide is for your story title.

Use plain language and avoid technical terms.



1. Context

Examples

Raspberry cultivation can be very profitable, but it was not well developed in Montenegro and Albania.

It can be very hard to support our ageing family members, especially when they are suffering from dementia.

For over a century, the arctic fox has teetered on the brink of extinction in Sweden and Norway.

In 1 or 2 sentences we want to know where the project takes place, and in which sector we are.

Your text – keep it short

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2. Specific problem

Examples

Young people wanted to get involved in local production but needed support, expert training and materials to start.

People in Romania and Serbia were in a particularly difficult situation because of crumbling infrastructure, lack of trained professionals and the stigma surrounding the disease.

People wanted to help the Arctic fox, but lacked knowledge on how to do it, and resources to put a plan to action.

In one sentence we want to know about the specific problem within the context.

Your text – keep it short

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3. Idea

Examples

What if the young people could get the support from a European Union project?

What if we took the steps to slow down the development of the disease and to improve the quality of life of existing patients?

But hope emerged. Scientists and conservationists from Sweden and Norway united to protect this iconic species.

One sentence, to announce or suggest what we could do to address the problem.

Your text – keep it short

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4. Solution

Examples

We made it happen – a training project to support the young entrepreneurs in starting their raspberry business.

Experts from both sides of the border united and helped with both the infrastructure and the medical training.

They made a cross-border cooperation project and helped the fox population in several key ways:

One sentence to announce the “big solution” as a category that everyone can understand.

Your text – keep it short

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5. How it works - 1

Examples

First, we selected 40 young volunteers from both countries and trained them for 8 months.

First, we started building a new health department in Vrsac, Serbia, and bought the latest medical equipment in Resita, Romania.

First, they improved research and monitoring, by tracking the foxes' movements, breeding patterns, and health.

We detail how our solution works in three steps/levels – this is the first one.

Your text – keep it short

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6. How it works - 2

Examples

The trainees attended 64 expert classes, combining theory and practice.

Then, we organised professional trainings to promote the exchange of knowledge between medical experts dealing with dementia patients.

Then they shared knowledge, resources, and strategies to safeguard the arctic fox.

We detail how our solution works in three steps/levels – this is the second one.

Your text – keep it short

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7. How it works - 3

Examples

Finally, we provided the participants with the seedlings and equipment to start planting.

Finally, we have implemented a cross-border regional research to identify risk factors for dementia emerging, allowing the medical experts to focus on the key vulnerable groups.

And ensured that these elusive creatures had enough food during harsh winters.

We detail how our solution works in three steps/levels – this is the third one.

Your text – keep it short

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8. Proof

Examples

In two years, we helped set up 40 plantations, registered 2 associations of raspberry producers, developed a manual and organized a cross-border raspberry fair.

In less than three years we completed two major medical infrastructural investments, trained 108 health experts, and involved 600 people in an extensive research study.

Thanks to this and similar projects, the number of fox litters born has significantly increased.

We explain what we achieved in terms of performance, numbers and testimonials. The results must have a clear connection to the problem, as we framed it.

Your text – keep it short

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9. Vision/impact

Examples

Now, young people can increase their standard of living and develop as exemplary entrepreneurs.

The awareness campaign has reached over 150 000 people and patients have direct access to higher quality medical care. Our mission will continue - forget no one, even if they forget us.

Step by step, we're paving the way for a future where the arctic fox roams freely, a symbol of nature's resilience.

One sentence to inspire people about what we've done, and (if applicable) what we intend to do in the future

Your text – keep it short

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10. Brand

Example 1



Project/programme name, logo/s, slogan

Your branding elements

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.....
.....



10. Brand

Example 2



Interreg - IPA CBC
Romania - Serbia



Project/programme name, logo/s, slogan

Your branding elements

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10. Brand

Example 3



Project/programme name, logo/s, slogan

Your branding elements

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Title of your story

Examples

Berry Beginnings:
Sowing dreams, harvesting hope

Forget no one, even if they forget us

From endangered to flourishing:
The arctic fox's comeback

The title should be short and original. You can post your whole story text in an AI tool and ask for ideas for a title, and then adapt it.

Your story title – keep it short

.....
.....

