



Project Communication Guide

INTERREG IVC Programme



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in cooperation with the INTERREG IVC communication staff**

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Introduction

The INTERREG IVC programme is about interregional cooperation. It promotes sharing of ideas and knowledge for more effective regional development policies across the European Union. This in turn requires a strong dissemination effort.

Communication is important not only because all projects need to inform people about EU funds and how they are spent. It is also important that you raise awareness by explaining what you do and how this project helps citizens and regions. Disseminating your project outputs also helps you to guarantee the durability of the project's results. Inspire others by presenting results you have achieved by interregional cooperation!

This communications handbook is addressed to people working with communication and information in the INTERREG IVC programme. It helps you to plan and improve your communication strategy and provides practical examples of communication tools and activities.

All INTERREG IVC projects are encouraged to develop a communication plan, which is the basis for all practical public relations activities. The structure of the guideline follows the structure of a communication plan, giving an overview of all its main elements:

- Communication objectives
- Target groups
- Project messages
- Communication tools
- Internal communication
- Evaluation methods

We hope you will find the guide useful and enjoy reading it. To help you navigate we have included page references to additional examples in the guidebook.

Numbers in brackets (e.g. [3]) refer to a list of suggested additional reading found on the last page of the handbook.

In addition to this guide, you need to remember to follow the communication policy guidelines in the Programme Manual, including its Annex 7. The Programme Manual is available on the "Projects" section of the INTERREG IVC website at www.interreg4c.eu.

If you have more specific questions, you are welcome to contact the communication advisers of the programme for further support:

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1. Communication strategy

A communication strategy covering the aims, target groups and messages forms the backbone of a project communication plan.

The legal basis for the communication strategy in the INTERREG IVC projects is expressed in the Commission regulation (EC) No 1828/2006 in articles 8 and 9. This regulation formulates the basic obligation of the project partners, which reflects the general approach of the EC to communicating the information about the structural funds:

“The beneficiary shall be responsible for informing the public ... about the assistance obtained from the Funds.”

1.1 Set clear objectives

Communication needs to be goal-driven. We communicate to achieve or change something; therefore it is important to define communications objectives properly in advance.

At the same time, it is not sufficient for a project to define its objectives as “to raise awareness” or “to communicate our activities and results”. Communications objectives need to be clearly defined, detailed, achievable and measurable. Its ultimate goals could be to improve legislation, to inform public policy on a particular topic, to improve public services, to change opinions of certain stakeholders or to raise public awareness of a specific issue.

It is important to make a difference between the project objectives and communication objectives. In addition, it is necessary to distinguish between internal and external communications objectives. Both need to be addressed: communication between the partners as well as communication which is targeted to stakeholders outside your partner organisations, including the general public.

The starting point is to understand and define what you and your partners want to achieve, and develop project-specific communications aims.

Your communications objectives need to **SMART**:

- S – Specific
- M – Measurable
- A – Appropriate
- R – Realistic
- T – Timed

1.2 Identify your target groups

The key stakeholder audiences your project needs to communicate with are called “target groups”. These groups all have different characteristics and needs. To be effective, it is important to know precisely who you need to address and think about the target audience every time you communicate.

How to define target groups?

Target groups can be easily identified by developing a list of important people and organisations that you want to know about your project and its work. Be sure to include all partners in this brainstorming exercise!

Examples of well-defined target groups could be “politicians and public officials dealing with water management”, “regional business support organisations” and “public transport authorities”. However, “EU”, “politicians” and “academic institutions” are not specific enough. Finally, remember not to consider media as a target group; they are a tool to convey your messages to the final audience.

1.3 Develop messages

A message is a simple and clear idea that acts as a guiding principle for all kinds of communication – everything from the content of leaflets, brochures and websites to the agenda for a media interview, to conversations with stakeholders. A message is not the same as an advertising slogan or a marketing line. Messages sum up the main aims of your project and may focus on some of the specific aspects of the project.

It is essential to think about the audience every time you communicate. Different target groups are reached by different tactics and different media. Messages need to be tailored to be appropriate for different target groups: what is relevant to local policy makers might not interest the general public. A good message will be immediately appealing to its target audience: it should be strongly worded to stand out from everything else that is competing for their attention.

At the same time, it is important to keep things clear and simple. Do not use more than three messages at any time, otherwise your audience will suffer from “information overload” and fail to grasp any of these ideas. Instead, to multiply the effect, try to send few messages from different sources and on different occasions.

How to develop project messages?

1. Try to put down what you do in one short sentence. What problems does your project tackle? How does it benefit the participating regions? Why should people care about it? What would be the best

- possible headline about your project in the media? What three things would you like the audience to remember and tell someone else about your project?
2. List the target groups, create a table and match each audience with a communication objective – state what you want to achieve by communicating with them.
 3. Mark down what ideas and information you need to communicate to achieve these objectives. This is the basis for your messages.
 4. Check the list of draft messages and combine similar ones, if possible. Decide which messages are the most important.
 5. Try to refine the language and say the same messages in a more simple way. Remove all unnecessary words and complicated vocabulary. Look at each word and ask whether it would be understood by someone who is not fluent in your language or who doesn't know much about the subject matter of your project. Make every word count!
 6. Show the messages to people outside your project. Friends and family will do, but journalists or people close to your target audiences are better. Do they understand? Are they interested? If not, try again.
 7. Finally, select the best three messages. Support each message with evidence and examples (“proof points”). Make sure everyone within your project is familiar with how to use them as every piece of external communications should be executed in line with your key messages.
 8. Periodically, take a look at any press coverage and see whether your messages are getting across. If the messages are not working at all, you need to think again. However, do not take this step lightly – this is the essence of your project. This is why you should put effort into getting it right during the first time.

A message should be a short sentence (up to 25 words), which is simple, clear, credible, memorable, positive, active, free from jargon, easily identifiable, and adoptable in different communication tools.

Messages can come in a form of a statement, idea or assertion: e.g.

- “(x) is a problem and (y) is the solution.”
- Project (x) enables (actors) to cooperate on improving (y).”
- “The work of project (x) is valuable because (y) and (z).”
- “(actors) must share solutions on the issue of (x) because ...”
- “(x) must take action on the issue of (y), otherwise (z) will happen.”

1.4 Create a time plan

Each project needs to define their main communication activities already in the application phase. The activities and outputs listed in the semesters of component 2 of the application form are the basis for all communication and dissemination. However, it is useful to gather the partners once the project is approved and to create a more detailed time plan (e.g. specifying times, places, responsibilities, etc.).

1.5 Define your budget

The budget for communication activities also needs to be planned in the application phase. When planning the communication budget, do not underestimate the value of having a Communication Manager working full-time or part-time for the project. Go through all of the planned activities and think whether you are able to organise everything with your own staff or whether the expertise of an external service provider would be needed. In case you would like to contract external experts, be sure to foresee it in the External expertise and services budget line. Please keep in mind that it is not possible to increase the approved budget of your project.

Although the budget in the application form should be as precise as possible, there are specific flexibility rules that can be applied in the course of the project (see section 4.4 of the Programme Manual).

2. INTERREG IVC communication activities

This section gives an overview about the main communication tools and offers some practical tips. It also provides an insight into the specific characteristics of different media, teaching how to create media interest and giving useful tips about communicating with the press.

Below are a number of communication tools that you can combine to generate interest and awareness in your project. All of these tools and tactics are useful, but it is important to find a right mix and in each case consider whether the coverage generated would merit the cost. Be sure that the result is sufficiently valuable to you and is in line with the overall communication strategy of your project. Always make sure that all expenditure is eligible.

2.1 Basic non-media tools and activities

2.1.1 Visibility

The aim of your logo, brand, image is to get people to recognise your project. If you can use your logo, signature, web site, newsletter, press releases effectively you present a coherent and memorable image of your project.

Branding is one of the most difficult disciplines to get right and it is likely that you will need to outsource some or all of the design work to a design company. Advertising and corporate logos are everywhere. Why are logos so important? Because people can visualise a logo: it brings the project to life for ordinary people.

Branding is more often associated with the private sector where commercial organisations seeking to create trust that will bring their customers back to them. But brand and image is important for INTERREG IVC projects too. If you want your target groups to remember your project and to identify with the themes and issues then a strong image and brand is important.

What is branding for?

Many people think that branding is simply a matter of designing a new logo for their project or organisation and possibly a tagline to go underneath it, often barely distinguishing between branding and marketing.

To what extent is 'brand' relevant to your projects?

A strong brand has to do with every aspect of a project's relationship with its target groups. The function of branding is to make us feel good by making our decisions easier and safer. It does this by reducing anxiety and doubt and enhancing the trustworthiness of the brand.

The process of branding

The steps that you can follow to establish the brand identity of your project are similar to the process of communications planning.

1. What is the aim of your project?
2. Who are your target groups?
3. What benefits will your target groups get?

Does this all sound familiar? It should – your brand identity is part of your communications plan.

Logos

Designing good, clear and innovative logos is a very difficult task and you may need to use a design company.

Your name and your logo are usually the first points of contact with your target groups. Having a strong identity is very important. It is essential that the logo is seen as mark of quality and when a brand is marked with a distinctive logo, a client can trust it to be good.

Things to consider when designing a logo

Becoming more involved with your brand and understanding how branding works will help your project communications. Your project's logo should convey the essence of the project and reflect the project brand through the use of shape, fonts, colour and images. Here are some tips and ideas for logo design to start you going.

1. Start paying attention to logos and brands around you and learn what works and what doesn't work.
2. Create a logo that is simple, describable and memorable.
3. You will have to use the logo on different backgrounds and fabrics - make sure that it also works without colour and in different sizes.
4. Colour is key. Enhance your logo with colours that are meaningful.
5. Sometimes the most obvious images can be cliché. Try to incorporate a creative visual into the logo.
6. Avoid negative images and associations.
7. Experiment with different fonts to see which resonate with your brand.
8. Logos always work in their context. Don't assess logos from just purely design principles.
9. Check other projects for ideas and to make sure that your logo is unique.
10. Conduct a focus group with your target groups. What is their first reaction?

Some examples of INTERREG IVC project logos are presented on page 69. Useful references are also available online [3, 4].

2.1.2 Website

A website is an invaluable tool for your project. It is the first source of information about you for many people outside your project, so it needs to contain the right information in a clear and accessible design and structure.

The website should give an overview about the project, its objectives, progress and results, partnership and their contacts. Develop a section for the press (including the latest press releases, fact sheets, photos and links). A login-based Intranet for partners can be a useful tool for exchanging information as well as having an overview of the responsibilities of the partners and the implementation of the project. See page 58 for an example screenshot of a project intranet.

Use simple messages and language that is understandable for everyone. When developing the content, have in mind that on screen people's eyes scan around unpredictably and settle on interesting keywords. People lose interest quickly, so break up your text with sections and bullet points, highlight key words and be as concise as possible. Update the website regularly; consider using an RSS feed to keep readers informed [1].

Pay attention to web site design and usability: make it user-friendly and practical [2]. Good websites have an intuitive system of links to all the key pages and sections of the site. The reader should be able to access all information with no more than three clicks. Make it easy to navigate between pages and remember that not all users will enter the site at the front page. Keep the design minimal and professional, avoiding any sound, movement or clashes of colour. Look for value for money. On page 35 you can read more about writing for the web. See page 59 for an example of a website structure.

Make sure that your webpage meets the publicity requirements and remains available for a minimum of five years after the closure of the project.

2.1.3 Publications

Create publications for your project that are easy to read and understand. This also applies to the rather technical studies and guides. The brochures, guides, leaflets, flyers, fact sheets, posters, etc. do not have to be done by a professional company. What is more important is that they contain the right information about your project. Quality of the content always comes before expensive design, layout and printing. Cut the jargon, keep it simple, get to the point and ensure that each item emphasises the same consistent core messages of your project.

Vary the format of your content, use boxes, lists, bullet points, and graphics. Be realistic how much information can be conveyed in the space available and do not crowd the design – leave a substantial amount of white or empty space to make the content easier on the eye.

Make good use of graphics and imagery – use bold and striking pictures, preferably including some action or an interesting view or place, rather than bland portraits, group pictures or handshakes.

Publications are expensive. If you don't have budget for bulk printing, opt for online marketing materials that can be downloaded from your website in PDF format.

Remember to have all publications checked by a native speaker, preferably by someone with editing experience. Always check that the publications meet the publicity requirements. You can find a poster example on page 60.

Use of photographs

Good use of photography will enhance the visibility of your printed material and web site. Poorly conceived photographs do exactly the opposite. You may decide to use a professional photographer for some promotional materials, but often projects will take their own photographs of project activities, conferences, events. There are numerous websites where you can download pictures for free, often the conditions of the Creative Commons license need to be followed.

Good photographs

What sort of photographs will editors use?

- Keep groups small – 3 or 4
- People – faces in particular
- People doing something
- Avoid cluttered backgrounds
- Fill whole picture
- Use strong colours – reds or yellows
- Relevant to the activity of the project



Things to avoid:

- Avoid using the publicity photo clichés
 - One person passing a cheque to another
 - Someone breaking ground with a shovel
 - Two people shaking hands
 - Someone cutting a ribbon
 - One person passing an award to another



2.1.4 Newsletters

Newsletters are a good medium to let people know about your project, inform readers regularly about recent changes, new initiatives, events in which you have participated, or even interesting case studies. They also provide a written record of your activities and can create interest in upcoming events.

Depending on your project's scale and workflow, a newsletter can be published monthly, quarterly or annually. If you prepare a regular newsletter, develop a new theme for every issue and focus a number of your articles on this theme. Encourage all your colleagues to write articles. You could also ask local politicians, NGOs or other organisations to contribute articles or editorials.

If you don't have budget to print, consider creating an electronic newsletter that can be available on your website and in an email version. It is user friendly to use the HTML code for the newsletter text - then the

newsletter opens automatically on the screen and speeds up the reading process. HTML is also stored easily on the Internet. However, also allow a choice between text and HTML for those who might not be able to download the codes. Keep the layout simple, do not include unnecessary pictures or colour backgrounds.

Do not forget that publicity requirements also apply for all electronic information!

You can also check newsletters compiled by other organisations as they can be interested in INTERREG project activities. This is a great opportunity to reach out to a new segment of your target audience.

2.1.5 Promotional materials

Promotional materials are items carrying the visual identity of your project e.g. bags, folders, pens, USB hubs, cups, calendars, T-shirts, etc. Always make sure the materials have practical value and keep ecological aspects in mind when producing them.

Questions to consider when deciding to buy promotional products

Fit with your project goals

1. Are they in line with the messages that you want to convey about your project?

What do they say about your project? Do they fit with the themes, the outputs, the deliverables or are they simply merchandise that are useful for people to have?

2. How do they support the promotion of your project?

Is there a creative angle to the product that makes it really memorable? Will people 'want one'?

3. Who are you going to give them to? At what event or occasions?

You don't want your project to come to an end and then find a cellar full of expired promotional materials.

4. What do they say about the features and benefits of your project?

Branding and image

1. Are you able to brand the products in line with the image of your project?

If purchasing products on-line, can you get the exact specifications of your logos and the EC identity standards? Sometimes you have to adjust settings of images to fit the specifications of the products offered.

Colours and quality of images differ on various media. Are you able to check that the colours you specify

come out right on different materials such as paper, glass, textiles? Sometimes the result is not as you anticipated.

2. Can you fit the logo and message onto the product?

Some products are too small to be able to represent your logo or message in an appropriate way.

3. Will they actually work and continue to work?

Cheap ball point pens rarely work for a long time if at all.

Timing – are there any dates contained in your product which will render them redundant after a particular time – e.g. diaries, conference dates on pens, branded stationery?

4. Is the source of these in line with the ethical policy of your project?

People are increasingly aware of the environmental impact of products and so it is vital to check that the products you buy are from appropriate sources. Many companies that provide cheap high volume promotional products will not be as up-to-date with ethical issues as you are expected to be.

Distribution

1. Who are you going to give these to? On which occasions?

Do people want to receive promotional products or will they end up in the bin?

2. Do these have a limited or long shelf life?

Some simple canvas or cloth conference bags, that are well branded, are really useful to people after the event now that more and more supermarkets charge for carrier bags.

Conference folders can be used for years after the event.

A sturdy good quality umbrella will be used for a long time and will continue to show off the name and brand of the project.

Promotional products - ingenious carriers of message

Ideally you should only purchase promotional products that are able to carry the message of your projects in a way that other media can't.

Florescent bicycle clips are cheap, easy to brand and really relevant to a project that deals with sustainable urban transport. They are useful too.

Reusable water drinking bottles are a striking and imaginative give-away for a project promoting responsible use of water.

In addition to your project's name, logo or slogan, do not forget the Programme logo and the EU logo! Please refer also to Annex 7 of the Programme Manual.

2.1.6 Project events

Organise events that are interesting for your target audiences and for media to attend. This can be a conference, an exhibition, a round table discussion, a field trip, a briefing, etc. Read more about organising events on page 40.

2.1.7 External events

Take part in external events such as exhibitions, conferences, trade shows and round-table discussions. This could be either as an exhibitor (although sometimes there might be a charge for this), speaker or even a delegate. External events give you an opportunity to come face-to-face with your target audiences and tell them about your project. Always go to events with your information pack and press kit to give to people who might want more information about you. If there are journalists at the event, use this as an opportunity to develop relationships and tell them about your project.

Find speaking opportunities as this allows you to reach out to your target audiences. This could also mean giving talks at schools, universities, business groups or other organisations. Make use of opportunities to raise the profile of your project and to share information about your good work. Make it interesting for your audience, provide lots of examples, and always speak about the importance of European cooperation. Be interactive and always plan time for questions from your audience.

Remember that participation in external events contributes to the promotion of the project and its results, as well as of the institution or region involved. One of the major promotional events organised on the European level are e.g.:

- Open Days – European Week of Regions and Cities who deal with implementing the European Cohesion policy.
- Euregia – international trade fair for local and regional development in Europe.

2.2 Examples of possible additional activities

2.2.1 Social media

The Internet offers an array of modern opportunities to promote your project. Different options include blogs, social networking (Twitter, Facebook, etc.), and wikis.

There are numerous examples of companies and organisations who get very excited about blogs, Wikis and Facebook at first only to find it difficult to maintain implementation of communications over time.

This section describes the key features of some of these new tools. When you decide which tools to use it is vital that you then agree an operational plan for implementing the communications.

Blogs are an easily created and regularly updated websites that works a bit like an online diary, discussion board and news forum [5]. A blog can contain personal or project information and facts or opinions on any topic. An author will usually write about something topical and allow other users to post comments or rebuttals to the person's comments.

Creating a blog can help you showcase a project, and can be a way to get people involved dynamically in its development. Your blog can be hosted on your website server or you can set one up for free or a very small charge with a blog hosting service. Blogging is becoming very popular: even European Commissioners publish blogs. These can be found at <http://blogs.ec.europa.eu/>.

If you create a blog for your project, make sure to update it regularly and encourage other people in your project to participate. However, do not underestimate how much time is required to manage the blog and to post new articles. You need to designate a person to manage this.

There are a countless online chat rooms and networking websites, so you can also explore the world of **social networking** [6]. Twitter (www.twitter.com) is a networking environment for sending short online messages (e.g. project news) [7]. Wikis are websites which allow easily creating and editing any number of interlinked web pages [8]. Wikis can be used for creating collaborative websites, storing your project's results and for simple note taking. It could also be useful to enter an encyclopaedic article about your project in Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org).

Facebook (www.facebook.com) is by far the biggest social network with over 850 million users worldwide. It is a website mainly used for getting in contact with friends, but can also be used as a tool to raise awareness about causes and initiatives (e.g. inviting people to join a cause or participate in the project's events). However, you should not simply add website content to a Facebook page – because people are not likely to engage.

Most people think that Facebook is only for personal use and therefore is not relevant for communicating projects. However, recent research by Edelman PR suggests that Facebook is increasingly used by policy level staff to monitor issues and campaigns and to communicate for professional reasons. See here for a summary of their research www.edelman.com/Capital_Staffers_Index.pdf.

Tips on setting up and using Facebook for your project

- Set up your own “Facebook” profile with a brief description of your upcoming activities. Facebook works well if you have events or a campaign.
- Invite people and get them to write their opinions.
- You can moderate what is written – so maintain control. You can also see all the friends of the people you invite and you can invite them too.
- You can also see what other interest groups they belong to and become their members too.
- Facebook allows you to quickly build up a very large list of members. However, not all of them will be active members

However, also keep in mind the limitations of social media for communicating your project. Many public institutions have blocked such sites from being accessed by their employees. Also, you need to carefully identify the target group that you wish to address via social networking and make sure that this tool is of added value.

2.2.2 Videos and documentaries

Filming documentaries and videos can be a way to reach specific target groups (including the general public), especially through local and regional media. However, it is very time consuming and costly, so it should be considered carefully.

A less expensive option would be to upload a video clip to an online video service such as YouTube (www.youtube.com), Vimeo (www.vimeo.com) or Google Video (video.google.com). Also include a link to the video on your website.

2.2.3 Networking and finding supporters

Get out to events and activities and speak to people about your project. Network whenever you meet opinion-formers, politicians, non-governmental organisations or business leaders. Consider every contact as a potential opportunity to further expand your network and reach your aims. Tell them about your project, promote your messages and show their added value in this process. Find people who would endorse your project, who will be like ambassadors for your project and will speak about it when out in public. Prepare and circulate briefing documents to make sure that your supporters also understand and forward the same core messages.

2.2.4 Participate in award schemes or create one yourself

An award scheme can generate awareness of your project with your target audiences and with the general public. If your project can develop a creative awards scheme, even if it is mainly symbolic, and encourage people to apply, it could create more awareness among your target audiences.



For example, the INTERREG IVC project SUGAR created the SUGAR award, a European prize for cities which have developed innovative and sustainable public policies in city logistics.

For more information: www.sugarlogistics.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=111&Itemid=81

RegioStars is an annual award scheme for most innovative and interesting projects which is a part of the communication policy of the Regions for Economic Change initiative. Its objective is to identify good practices in regional development and thus reinforce their transfer and visibility. It is up to Regional Managing Authorities to nominate projects for this award. Further information can be found at the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/regions_for_economic_change/regiostars_en.cfm

2.3 Media communication activities

This section gives an overview about the possibilities you have in terms of different media, shows how to create media interest and find press opportunities.

2.3.1 Communicating with the Media

Know your media

Europe is home to an enormous number and range of news media, each with a different target audience and its own news values. It is not possible or desirable to target all of them. Projects should consider two factors when deciding which media to target:

- 1) Which media do our own target audiences pay most attention to?
- 2) Which media will consider our messages newsworthy?

The answers to these two questions will usually be similar, because media define news as information that their own target audiences want to know.

Media	Target group	Specific features
National, regional and local newspapers	Can target the national, regional or local population, but also specifically people working in business, intellectuals, people supporting a specific political party, etc.	Afternoon deadlines for morning distribution and around lunchtime for evening distribution. Style ranges from serious politics to soft gossip.
Magazines	Can be focused on news, general consumer (e.g. men or women), specialists (e.g. fishing, health), industry or trade (e.g. transport, technology)	Articles are sometimes planned months in advance; there is an opportunity to pitch your stories for next issues.
TV and radio	Can be focused on an age group or a specific area. Often produce own news. Often have shows targeting a specific audience.	News is fast moving and immediate; stations often work to very tight deadlines.
News agencies and wire services	Deliver raw news to all major media to adapt for their own input, often report local news to international audiences.	24/7 news coverage, work very fast and often break news first; strict deadlines.
Internet news	Main sites are affiliated to larger newspapers, magazines, TV and radio stations. In addition, there are Internet media portals, specific industry sites, and newsgroups.	Internet news provide endless PR opportunities.

It is recommended to first contact the media target at the public administration (e.g. periodicals issued by regions or ministries). This is also recommended by the DG Regio to contact the EC representations in your country and other information relays such as Europe Direct in order to cooperate with them in terms of media contacts and promotion possibilities.

Develop relationships with reporters

Try to find out their story interests, work processes and deadlines, and be as helpful as possible. However, do not inundate journalists with too much information and do not be too pushy. Think of long term relationships, not short term coverage.

Get to know your local media and find out what kinds of stories interest them. You can call or email them, but it might be even better to invite them out to lunch or coffee to develop personal relationships. When you do have news, try to organise interviews for them with key people from your project.

Send a letter to the editor

This can be in response to an article from a previous edition. The letter can argue a point of view or express an opinion, agree or disagree with an article, or be used to dispute facts and figures – or even the entire article. A letter in response to an article must be sent within 48 hours and should not exceed 150 words.

Write opinion editorials

An editorial is an expression of opinion on an issue by an individual who doesn't work for the publication. These are normally written by communications people, but carry the signature of a well-known or high-level person. The subject matter should be timely and linked to something that is already in the news. There is no sense talking about flooding if the media are covering a drought. Be sure to contact the publication in advance and limit the writing up to 400 words.

Link your project to other news and events

Link your project's media coverage with other events and news on EU or national level. Use other news stories as a way of generating news for your project. For example, projects in the field of transport could create links to the European Mobility Week and Car-free-Day, the European SME week could be an opportunity for entrepreneurship projects, etc.

Position people involved in your project as industry experts

Try to get people working for your project quoted in newspaper articles or on television and radio. Media are always looking for people to offer expert opinions, so let them know who your people are.

Write a case study

A case study is a short writing (up to 1 page of the publication) about your project's work. The normal formula for a case study is to identify a problem that your project has addressed, explain what you did to fix the problem and describe the results. Case studies explain in concrete or human terms what your project does. What are the practical applications? How does it affect people from your region? What kind of problem is it helping to address and why is it important? This practical information often provides the real-life illustration that journalists need to grasp a story. Be sure to include interesting quotes! See page 61 for an example of a case study.

Send a press release

Issue a press release if your project is doing something new, interesting or different that would interest

regional, national or international media. A press release will encourage journalists and news agencies to develop articles on the subject. Always carefully target your press release and ensure that it has news value. Try to keep the press release to one page. If you have more information, you can always direct journalists to your project website.

For more information about writing press releases go to page **29**. A press release checklist and examples are available on pages **62-65**.

Organise a press conference

A press conference can be effective if you need to communicate a news story to target media. A successful press conference requires substantial resources, including 15-20 full days of work. Organise a press conference only if there is news of real interest to the target media or when the only way you can respond to a whole range of questions posed by a large group of media is by holding an open conference. Do not abuse the method to announce details. If only a very small, selected group is involved, it might be more effective to hold individual briefings. Often the story could be better covered by just distributing a news release, holding a briefing or telephoning media contacts.

If it is necessary to hold a press conference, send out invitations at least two weeks in advance and choose a central location for the venue. Request journalists to give full particulars at the registration desk and include these in your press list. During the event, allow enough time for questions and record what is said. After the event publish the transcript on the website and send it to media who could not attend but would be interested in the news.

**Do not forget to display the EU flag, the programme and project logotypes
in the press conference room.**

Publicise research results

Provide news material based on research that has been undertaken as part of your project or is linked to your project. Write a concise executive summary that is interesting and easy to understand, preferably using straightforward media-friendly language. Newspapers and magazines are full of reports and statistics issued by companies and organisations – this can be a great headline-getter.

Create a survey

Link a survey to your project and publicise the results to the media, especially if it highlights a problem or shows that you are making a real difference. Make it relevant to your key messages and news angles that are likely to interest media.

Organise a tour or a press trip

If your project is involved in something interesting to visit, organise a field study or a trip to let the press see your project in practice. But remember there must be some kind of news in it and you need to plan it well to actually show them something useful. Moreover, as the INTERREG IVC programme operates mainly on the policy level, you need a good reason like a very interesting sight or a novel solution that can be presented in an attractive way in the media. Avoid just pictures of meetings or static images.

Forward feature lists

Many media have a schedule of topics and themes for future issues. Ask to see the forward feature lists of your target publications and offer to contribute to any themes that are relevant to your project.

Prepare story ideas

Have something ready that you could pitch if called by a journalist. Good PR is not only calling media when you need them but being ready to offer story ideas and being helpful when they need you.

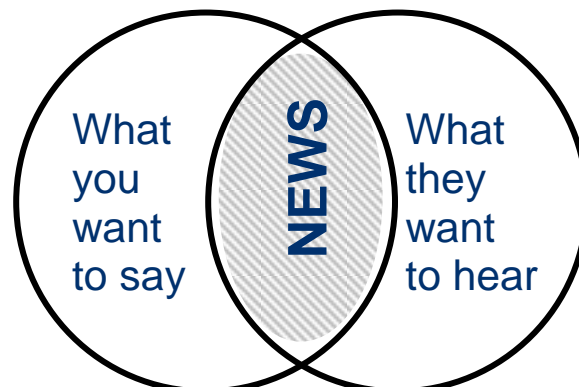
2.3.2 Creating media interest

The first thing that goes through a journalist's mind when he or she reads your news release is always: "So what? Why should my readers care?" Think hard about what journalists and their audiences would be interested to read. Take the information you have, and tell it in a way that makes them care.

News value

News can be hard (information that people need to make decisions) or soft (human interest and entertainment). Look for an angle that will connect your agenda to something your audience cares about.

Have in mind that people outside your project are not interested in the process – what they care about is results and meaning. A key principle is to **look for the intersection** between what you want to say and what they want to hear. Projects can easily fall into the trap of talking about things like process that fall in the circle on the left, but not the circle on the right.



What kinds of ideas and information tend to lie in that intersection?

At one end of the scale, “**the very big**” issues are always interesting: the major themes like innovation, quality of living, jobs, the environment and climate change. These ideas are in the news and in people’s minds and conversations every day. All INTERREG IVC projects address big issues in one way or another. Communicating about how you are part of the solution to big issues will get you into that intersection.

At the other end of the scale, “**the very small**” issues are the local results and impact that people feel on their doorsteps and notice in their everyday lives. These are the results, the concrete impacts and changes that INTERREG IVC projects make in the real world – not the theory of territorial cooperation or the process of cooperation, but tangible outputs like better paid jobs through innovation or safer houses through flood protection.

Messages will not make the news if they just say how worthwhile and important a project is. To get published or broadcast, a project must shape and adapt its messages inventively to be newsworthy. In general, news is about people rather than things, and concrete events rather than abstract ideas.

Think hard about how to touch your target audience. What do they care about? Why will this matter to them? To generate interest in your project and its activities you need to develop creative news angles that will capture the interest of your audiences over the activities of other organisations.

Creating media opportunities

Do not wait for journalists to contact you. Go to them and anticipate their needs by drawing their attention to key events and interesting aspects of your project. From time to time, almost every person within your organisation will come across an event or an idea that is newsworthy. Sadly, not everyone will recognise it when they see it! Here are a few guidelines for spotting a PR opportunity.

- Think **interest**: will this be interesting to other people?
- Think **news**: how your local paper or radio station report?
- Think **local**: how does it involve people locally?
- Think **people**: the media are usually more interested in what people are doing than in what organisations are doing.
- Think **communities**: what contribution has your project made to a community initiative or activity?

If brainstorming sessions are not enough, try to ask a friendly journalist what they would consider newsworthy about your activities. You will probably have to spend some time explaining what you do, but they may come up with something you hadn’t even thought was worth a news release. They might also be able to help with news angles for the story. Often, it is also possible to link your activities or project to other news stories to generate news for your project.

2.3.3 Working with the press

There are standard tools that you should prepare before you begin doing media relations for your project.

These include:

- Communication plan for the overall media strategy
- Press kit with information about your project and the programme
- All relevant logos and EU publicity requirements
- Biographies of any key people who will give interviews
- Media lists with contact details for key journalists
- Photos (preferably uploaded on your webpage)
- Writing style guide to ensure everyone writes consistent materials
- Events calendar of forthcoming events you are taking part in
- A system for archiving press coverage

The following sections describe the main tools you will need when working with the press: press kits and press lists.

2.3.4 Press kit

Every project should have an up-to-date press kit that contains fact sheets of all the important information about your project, case studies and biographies of key people.

Although press kits are designed to be presented to journalists, they can also be an important source of information for other people who want information about your project, such as European institutions, local governments, industry associations, regulatory bodies, member state governments, and the general public.

If journalists conduct an interview with someone from an organisation, or if they receive a press release, they usually need additional information. A journalist can always do their own research about your project, but this could take them a long time. So giving them a press kit could make the difference between them writing a story about your project or not – and between that story being right or wrong.

Press kits can either be in a hard-copy printed format or available electronically, either by email or on a website – it's usually a good idea to have both. Remember to have them in an easy-to-read format.

Your project's press kit should have a nice professional-looking folder with your project name and logo placed in a prominent spot on the front cover.

Remember to include the INTERREG IVC and EU logos on the front cover.

The press kit should contain the following:

- A general fact sheet about your project: what is your project doing and why is it interesting?
- Background information about the project
- Any brochures or materials that might be interesting for the journalist (if it won't be interesting, don't include it)
- At least one case study on your project
- One or two relevant recent articles published about your project
- Recent press releases that you've issued – one or two is enough
- Biographies of any key people or of the main spokesperson
- Recent photos of your project – either hard copy, links to website, a CD or USB stick
- Information about INTERREG IVC (e.g. leaflet, fact sheets)

2.3.5 Press list

Know your media and know your reporter. Each project should have a press list to keep track of all media contacts. You are responsible for making basic list of media contacts. In case you need to extend it, you may refer to your National Contact Point or Information Point, but it is also recommended to contact the EC representation of Europe Direct. Be sure to update and complement this list with further media contacts relevant to your project.

It is particularly important to find out the frequency with which media appear and what the editorial deadline is. There is no point in sending a press release on the day that a weekly publication goes to press – the journalists will be too busy, and the pages already set.

Read, watch and listen to your target media regularly. This will help you to identify what they consider to be newsworthy and what angles they take on events. You can take this to a personal level by searching for previous stories written by a particular journalist: identify themes in his or her interests and gather all the information in the press list. It is always better to contact the media with a reference name, otherwise your effort might get lost amongst everything else.

3. Communication skills

3.1 Writing skills

This section of the communications guide runs through the fundamental concepts and skills that good journalists use to write powerful and effective texts. Many of these ideas are universal and can be applied to all kinds of writing, from press releases and case studies to project or INTERREG IVC internal correspondence.

3.1.1 Writing for the press: articles and press releases

Here you can find information that is relevant to writing articles and press releases for the media. Always make sure that your texts harmonise with the overall communication strategy. Also remember that it is easier for the journalist to publish any article or press release if it is structured as much as possible like an article the journalist would have written.

A press release checklist and examples are available on pages **62-65**.

Audience

There is no such thing as simply good writing. Writing is only good if it gets the right message across to a specific audience. An article full of scientific detail and jargon might be perfect for an academic journal, but useless for a community magazine. Therefore, a writer's first step must be to identify the intended readership. Audience analysis determines the tone, style, angle and content of every article. It determines what knowledge can be assumed and what needs to be explained. Write what your audience wants to read, in a way that will interest and appeal to them.

Messages

Messages sit alongside audiences at the heart of the writing process. What key information do you want to communicate? Narrow it down to two or three basic messages that will form your theme. Build the article around these messages using evidence, quotes and colour.

Messages can be explicit (clearly stated as information) or implicit (intended for subliminal or emotional impact). For instance, an article about an INTERREG IVC project may contain explicit messages about the scheme itself, and the implicit message that pan-European cooperation is valuable and positive. Always be balanced and objective – inject energy into your writing, but don't overdo it – avoid hype and do not "over-sell" your message.

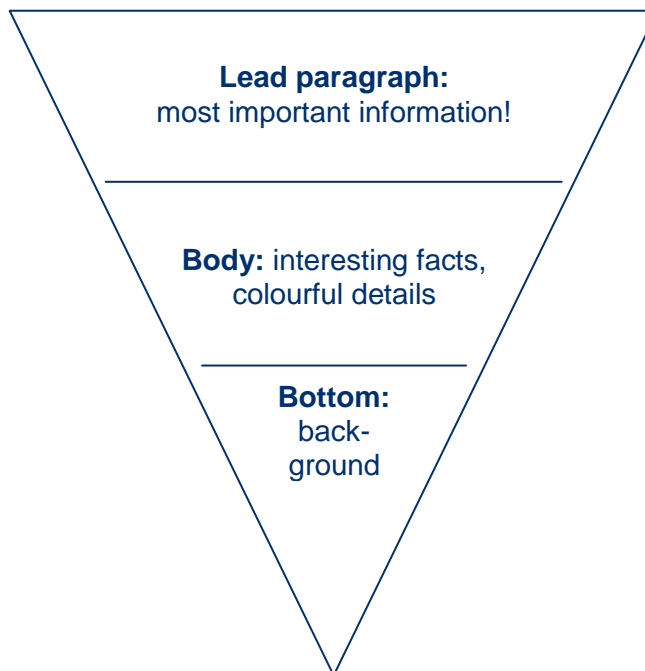
Research

Good writing requires thorough research and knowledge of the subject matter, which should be clear to the reader through those same three building blocks: evidence, quotes and colour. Be sure to have evidence to back up all of your main statements, in the form of recent statistics or official information. Cite sources to give credibility to your arguments and check all facts.

Organisation

After determining your audiences, your messages and a strong news angle to tie them all together, it helps to organise your information systematically. Well-written prose alternates between statements and quotes, between numbers and colour. It gradually unfolds, with text flowing logically between elements, so each sentence connects to the next like a link in a chain. For example: you make a statement, expand on it, illustrate it with a quote, and give some figures or background.

Consider what facts need to be introduced first to put quotes and other information in context. Generally speaking, rank and order your ideas in descending importance. This approach follows the classic “inverted pyramid” journalistic story model, so-called because it is top-heavy with all the important information at the start.



Sub-headings make it easier to read the text. If you are unable to avoid introducing an important idea relatively low down in your piece, at least to refer to it briefly higher up as well. However, in soft news stories, features and case studies, it can be worth saving a good quote or piece of information for last, to have a colourful ending to the story.

The headline

The headline is right at the top of the inverted pyramid, so in many ways it is the most important part. The headline is your chance to sell your story. It is the first thing your reader sees. If it's bad, it's also the last thing they see. A perfect headline will encapsulate all of the messages and key facts and also capture readers' attention.

Write the headline first: the process of getting it right is an exercise in organising ideas and distilling the essence of the story, which often makes the rest of the piece much easier to write. Keep it short and snappy, stick to one main point. The headline should be no more than 10 words and should contain an active verb. Use strong vocabulary and make every word count.

When writing, we often make lazy choices, especially when choosing verbs. We like to use generic all-purpose verbs such as *deal with* or *show*, which on the surface can sound snappy and technical. However, these words convey no analytical meaning. Use verbs with more meaning such as *theorize*, *suggest*, *imply*, *propose*.

The lead paragraph

The lead paragraph is particularly important for writing both articles and press releases. The lead paragraph must tell the reader what is essential about the story: what is new and why it matters. It usually answers to the 5 Ws: What? Who? Where? When? Why? Often also How? is included. Work hard not to exceed 25-30 words to cover this information.

Give the broad picture first and bring in supporting information later. Agonise over the lead paragraph: if you get it perfect, the rest of the piece can seem almost to write itself because everything important flows from the lead. For longer articles like features and extended case studies, the same principles apply but can be spread over two or three paragraphs.

Not all lead paragraphs are hard and factual. "Soft news" stories and feature articles often start with a teaser – an anecdote, a description, a narrative, a question. However, a soft lead still follows the same logic: provide main information in the beginning of the story, later add detail, quotes and context.

Evidence, context, and background

Assertions become convincing when backed up with facts. Give context, comparisons and sources, and be precise. "Thanks to this INTERREG IVC project, local authorities have spent less than half as much on widgets recently" is not very useful or convincing for a journalist. It would be much better to say: "Thanks to this INTERREG IVC project, average spending on widgets by local authorities fell by 75 percent to €200,000 in 2009 from €800,000 in 2008, according to an independent survey by AB polling in April 2012".

Context is also important. INTERREG IVC projects do not exist in a vacuum; they interact with other

systems and people's lives in complex ways. Always ask whether what you are describing is part of a bigger theme. Often a good news angle can be found by stepping back and looking at where a development in a project fits into the bigger picture.

All stories are part of the bigger picture, and it is this link with other events that makes them relevant. A trend, anywhere in the world, always makes for good context. The most elementary form of context is rank. Superlatives such as "the world's biggest" or "the fastest-growing" provide crucial context. When something happens, readers want to know if it's the first time or the second time, or how long ago it last happened, or how long since something similar happened. Context is the reason why readers would want to read your story, it is the "so what?".

Context is often confused with background. Context gives meaning to the story and is essential: you cannot write a proper story without it. Background is the description or explanation of basic facts relating to the story. It is useful, but less important. Unlike context, background does not necessarily have to appear high up in the story. Do not stick one-paragraph slabs of background in the middle of your piece. Try to weave in little bits of background as it unfolds.

Quotes

Quotations add legitimacy and emphasis to your messages. Quotes are a good way to make abstract ideas seem concrete, personal and relevant to the real world. They can inject humanity, personality, emotion, immediacy and colour – but only if they are lively and clear. Don't waste quotes on purely factual information. Use quotes to give reasons, explanations or judgments, express opinions or emotions. Quotes are for illustration, decoration and emphasis, not conveying new information. However, don't use too many quotes or quote too many different people. Spice up a story with a few good quotes, and keep them short.

The first quote in your story is very important. It can make the difference between a reader reading on and giving up. Try to get a quote in by the third or fourth paragraph, if not the second.

Be sure to quote people with authority over your subject matter. These can range from project managers with a broad overview to personnel with more hands-on experience where appropriate. Quotes from third parties such as people whose lives have been touched by a project can be especially valuable. Talk to people as part of your research and listen out for powerful and descriptive words and phrases that you can use in quotes.

Good quotes sound like realistic spoken language. Avoid hype, slogans, and corporate buzz-words. Do not just put quote marks around written prose. Spoken English uses short sentences and simpler, brighter vocabulary. Use words that people actually spoke, or speak your rewritten quotes to ensure they sound natural. Make quotes personal, using phrases such as: "I believe..." or: "For me, this is...". "Put full sentences inside the quote marks." Broken sentence fragments in quotes are "worse than useless to" a

journalist. Check that the person being quoted is happy with the quote, whether the words are theirs or yours.

Make available a photo of the person quoted, where appropriate. Always double check the spelling of the name and job title of everyone you quote. Mistakes make people angry and undermine your credibility.

Language

Be concise and use as few words as possible: this will concentrate your message and make space to say more. Examine each word and ask if it is essential or can be cut out. Use simple grammatical constructions, avoiding multiple sub-clauses, commas, semicolons (and brackets).

Short sentences and short paragraphs are clearer. Two short sentences are better than one long sentence. Sentences should usually contain no more than 30 words, because any longer than that and they become hard to understand and remember since readers have to hold too much information in their short-term memory, which starts to strain the mind just as this 49-word sentence is starting to do. Paragraphs should contain no more than three sentences and one basic theme or idea.

Write with normal words such as you use in everyday business life. Your goal is clarity, not to impress readers with clever words. Picture the least sophisticated member of your target audience and remove or explain any technical terms that they would not understand. That includes corporate or management buzz-words as well as programme and industry jargon. Avoid or at least spell out acronyms and abbreviations.

Vary your language. Try to replace dull words with lively synonyms and use strong verbs. Choose words that convey movement and dynamism, while avoiding clichés. Avoid repeating words and phrases.

Use the present/future tense. In general, it is better to write in the active voice. Prefer verbs to nouns (e.g. inform/informing people instead of providing information to people). Write in the third person, do not use “we” or “I” except in quotes.

Style

Write in a style that is appropriate to your audience. In-house corporate communications can sometimes be chatty or informal in tone, whereas publications for outside audiences should usually be more formal and written in business-like language. The European Commission English Style Guide provides good guidance on written English [9].

Be consistent with linguistic style, either according to your project’s own style guidelines if they exist or according to a standard newspaper style guide. Layout guidelines should apply to text style, font and sizes, as well as presentation. Style consistency is a sign of professionalism and should be used not only for printed materials but also for e-mails and websites.

Ensure that the layout and content of everything you print and distribute conforms to not only your project's but also the programme's guidelines for publication, including all relevant and applicable logos.

Check the content

Be sure not to mention an element without explaining it. If you have just mentioned Europe's second-busiest sea-port, the reader will wonder immediately which is Europe's busiest sea-port. Tell them. A well-crafted piece does not leave the reader wondering what the writer meant.

Check everything, including photograph captions. Be extra careful with names, figures and unfamiliar or technical words. Check that days of the week coincide with dates. If you say a certain number of points follow, count them. Be sure not to infringe copyright or libel laws – if in any doubt, consult a superior before publishing.

Check all numbers. Numbers are the single-biggest cause of holes and errors. If you mention a number, give some context or something to compare it with. If a figure has changed from 446 to 903, don't expect the reader to find the meaning: do their calculations for them and tell them it has doubled. Don't burden a piece with too many numbers: one or two in the top third should be enough to illustrate any trend. Beware decimal places; do not confuse millions and billions.

Edit and rewrite

Few of us get it perfect the first time. Write a first draft, leave it, and come back to it. If the deadline is tight, don't panic: time pressure can actually help you to crystallise what is important and write it clearly. Play with words, substitute and replace until you get it just right.

Well-written text sounds right when spoken. If it strains your voice, simplify it. If you run out of breath, shorten the sentences. Reading out loud often uncovers mistakes that are difficult to spot by eye.

"So what?" is the most important question of all. Read back what you have written and ask yourself "so what". If you have to come up with extra information to answer the "so what" question, rewrite to answer the question in the first place. When you have written a paragraph that could not possibly leave anyone asking "so what?" only then have you got it right.

Sending the release

If possible do not send the press release or article to a general e-mail address, but use your media list to target specific journalists who are likely to be interested in it. Try to avoid attachments – always send the main text in the body of the e-mail. If you need to share larger documents, upload these to your website

and provide a link. This link could also lead to supplementary texts and a few high resolution photos in case the journalist will need additional information. If you still need to send in an attachment, the best practice is to compress it as a PDF file. Use the post only for large items that are not time sensitive or are distributed well in advance or a news event, such as press kits and formal invitations.

Calling journalists after sending your press release can improve your chances of generating a story if it jogs their memory or draws attention to your news among other competing stories. It can also be a way to annoy them, unless you are efficient, friendly and brief.

3.1.2 Writing for the web

Content is the most important part of a website. When writing web texts, try to anticipate what kind of information the users need. Always use short sentences and simple language – when you write, think about the person with the least expertise on the subject. Avoid acronyms, abbreviations, jargon and everything else typical readers might not understand. Be neutral in your language, otherwise you risk losing credibility and people’s trust.

You should support your readers in their goal to find useful information as quickly as possible. To get your message through you have to know the reading habits of web users.

People tend to read text on websites very differently from the way they read on paper. On paper, people read sentences fairly predictably from left to right, and persist through long stories. On screen, people’s eyes scan around unpredictably and settle on interesting keywords. On paper, people are more likely to read to the bottom of the page. On screen, people lose interest more quickly and many people do not bother to scroll down.

Main recommendations for writing for the web include:

- Highlight key words (bold typeface, colour, hypertext links)
- Use meaningful sub-headings (e.g. no metaphors)
- Break up your text with sections and bulleted lists
- Use the “inverted pyramid” writing style: present news and conclusions first, details and background information later
- Be concise. Avoid long texts that require scrolling. Use half of the words you would normally use in a written text.

3.2 Presentation skills

The next paragraphs will help you to prepare a successful presentation. Here we explain how to structure the presentation and what to keep in mind while performing.

3.2.1 Content and structure

The content is always the key. Effective presentation content depends on identifying a handful of clear and memorable messages around which to build everything else.

People are surprisingly inefficient at taking on board new information in a limited amount of time. Do not construct your presentation around more than three key messages, otherwise the listeners become confused or bored. These messages – the guiding ideas or themes or propositions – must be clear and simple, consistent and repeated. Be sure to tailor your messages to the audience you are addressing.

Plan to hook the attention of your audience during the first few moments. Plan your first actions and sentences carefully. Show the audience an early stage of the presentation that the topic has a link to their own experience and is worthy of attention. Explicit previews of the content are often useful – explain the point of your presentation, indicate where you are going and how you will get there.

Also bear in mind that people's attention will start to wane after about 20 minutes. Make full use of time, but be realistic about what can be conveyed effectively. Choose information that is best suited for oral delivery and leave data, routine or technical information for the handout. Choose aspects that are best suited to the audience and occasion: their needs, attitudes, knowledge and expectations.

3.2.2 Presenting

Good presenting is very individual. The most important thing is to stay natural - build on your true, positive and professional personality without introducing any artificial elements. Present your own personality, speak your own words, and adapt to the response you receive.

Know exactly what you want to convey. Use language that is both clear and vivid, be careful with unfamiliar vocabulary and avoid abbreviations.

Always operate as a communicator rather than a presenter. That means planning and responding to the needs of those on the receiving end, and performing collaboratively by paying attention to feedback.

Have a conversation with your audience. They may not actually say anything, but make them feel consulted, questioned, challenged and argued with; then they will stay attentive. To create a bond with the audience, you may wish to refer to the occasion or setting, refer to someone present, or use humour. To

keep their attention consider using visuals, telling a story, using a prop, moving around, changing the tone of your voice, asking the audience to do something, writing on a flip chart or demonstrating a process.

Your physical presence is also an important component of your presentation. Your body language has just as much of an effect on an audience as your words and the way you express those words. Try not to stand rigidly on one spot, gesture as you normally would in conversation. If you feel comfortable without a lectern, do not use it. Identify any distracting habits – fiddling with glasses, twirling hair, tapping fingers, etc. – and try to avoid them. Aim to have eye contact with your audience 85 per cent of the time, and especially at the most important moments: introduction, conclusion and key messages.

Remember that nerves can be a good thing. Most people are nervous before giving a presentation. Just remember that the audience is just a group of individuals. Most audiences are supportive and they respond to you no differently than they would in small groups or individually.

3.2.3 Visuals

Good visual and audio-visual aids can enhance a presentation. Bad visual aids can make a presentation unbearably tedious. One major risk is that a presenter becomes secondary to the slides. Do not narrate your PowerPoint. It should not duplicate your verbal presentation. Do not use it as a prompt or script for your own presentation: that is the purpose of private speech notes. Speak to the audience, not the screen: the visuals should support the speaker, not vice versa. Make eye contact with the audience at all times: do not turn to the screen and keep talking as the slides are changed.

Visuals should be simple, clear, and should support the presenter. Text should be brief and minimal: single words and phrases. While there is text on the screen, the audience will be reading it, not listening to you. Make sure the text is large enough to be seen by the whole room (at least .24 font size for body text and .40 for headings). Maintain styles and continuity between slides. Use simple typefaces and no more than two fonts. Clear and simple pictures, graphs, charts and illustrations are most effective. Animations should be subtle and only used for particular effect.

3.2.4 Media interviews

You need to give your interviewer a story that he or she wants to pass on to readers, viewers and listeners. The best way to control the agenda of an interview is to give the journalist a ready-made news angle that suits your agenda but also makes great news for his or her particular audiences.

Preparation

A very good way to prepare your agenda for an interview is to imagine the best possible headline that you would like a journalist to write afterwards, and that you can realistically imagine appearing in a publication.

That's your news angle. Remember: put yourself in the place of the publication's reader – what are they interested in?

Messages and proof points are the foundations of interview preparation. Prepare and memorise your key messages. Strong and consistent messages can influence the focus of a news story and help control what angle the journalist takes. Messages should be consistent through time, but their details should be reviewed and customised to the needs of each particular news situation and each particular interview. For more information about project messages please go to page 8.

Also prepare proof points to validate, explain and illustrate your key messages. Reporters respond to facts but they are sceptical about pure talk and ideas. Facts help persuade them that they are not being spun an agenda, and facts give them the foundations that they need to generate a credible story.

Anticipate questions that are likely to be asked and preparing responses that incorporate key messages and proof points to back them up. It is especially important to prepare for areas of weakness. Make a list of questions that you would least like to be asked, along with the best possible answers to them. Prepare those answers in advance and not off the top of your head when the journalist asks your nightmare question. Preparing for and covering your weaknesses is also a great way to boost your confidence for the interview.

During the interview: DO...

Push your messages. Link your answers to your key messages. Illustrate your messages by using facts, examples, and stories. Give good quotes, using lively language and short sentences. Frequently use the names of the project and the programme. Remember that making your messages known requires consistency and repetition.

Keep it simple. Avoid unnecessary details. Use basic universal language, no jargon. Technical terms and abbreviations that are everyday to you will often be meaningless to outsiders. Adjust your language to the reader or viewer of the media in question with the least specialist knowledge. You can picture your grandmother or grandfather and imagine explaining it to them in a clear and engaging way.

Forget process, talk action. Internally, communication about process is very important. For anyone on the outside, process can be very boring and is usually irrelevant. Don't talk about institutions, procedures or bureaucracy – talk about action, people and results.

Body language is particularly important for television interviews, but also plays a role in any face-to-face interview. If you sit up straight, make eye contact and speak naturally, you will more readily inspire trust.

Start and finish well. Go in strong and don't let up at the end. How you start sets the agenda for the whole interview. Your final comments will be the ones people remember most readily, so no matter what mistakes have been made during the interview, you may be able to rescue it with a good positive finish.

Bring a press kit where appropriate to give the journalist all necessary background information.

During the interview: DON'T...

Don't leave the main subject. Do not talk about something that is not your main subject unless you think they will be genuinely interested. In most cases you can be confident that changing the subject will annoy the journalist as well as the listeners and viewers.

Don't be taken by surprise. Journalists sometimes call unexpectedly or ask for an interview without warning. If you don't feel prepared, ask to meet or speak by telephone later – even if it's only a few minutes to give you a chance to collect your thoughts.

Don't raise issues that you don't want to talk about. It might sound obvious but it is surprising how many people, having prepared to cover their weaknesses, voluntarily start talking about them when they might not have come up at all.

Don't be afraid to say "I don't know", if you couldn't be expected to know. It is better than rambling or digressing – and it is honest. You can always offer to get back in touch with the journalist with more information if necessary.

Don't criticise third parties. Conflict and controversy make great news so journalists may try to encourage you to criticise or disagree with views attributed to a third party. This will rarely serve your purposes.

Don't be intimidated by a tape recorder. It can feel like having evidence taken down against you in a police interview – but it is there to protect you. Journalists often use them to check quotes and information.

Never say "no comment". It makes you sound defensive, evasive, and as if you have something to hide. Make every effort to actually answer the question, whenever possible. Sometimes, it's best not to try to deny a negative question, but instead to acknowledge the problem quickly and openly and immediately focus on what practical action is being taken to resolve the problem.

Don't speak "off the record". If you don't want to see something in print, don't say it. To be safe you should assume that everything you say, whether on or off the record, might be published. You need a very good reason to speak off the record, and a journalist you trust utterly.

3.3 Organising events

There are many opportunities to hold or take part in events that bring together your project partners and key target audiences. Use the events to communicate your key messages directly to your target groups and generate awareness for the value of the work that your partnership does.

This section of the manual in conjunction with the event management checklist (see page 66) focuses on a range of ideas and practical knowledge that will facilitate the organisation and management of effective events.

3.3.1 Preparation

INTERREG IVC project events can sometimes be weak because they are seen as an objective in themselves rather than as a strategic tool to achieve a bigger objective. An event needs to be conceived and planned with a clear purpose in mind and deliver long lasting value.

Remember to ask yourself and your planning team these three questions

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

Planning has been the key for INTERREG IVC projects that have organised successful events. It depends on a clear understanding of the purpose of the event and the target audience, matched to an appropriate event plan. For instance, if you want to influence policy on a regional level, it will be very important to plan an event that will be appealing to regional policy makers.

Be sure to start planning early. If you are holding a large conference for 300 people, you might need to begin a year before the event.

In case you have a similar target group with any other INTERREG IVC project, consider pooling resources and organising an event together.

Organisers

Build a team responsible for the event and put together a detailed plan. Identify local contact persons and allocate roles to the team members. If the direct decision-makers are not part of the organising team, make sure to brief them regularly. Hold regular meetings with agenda points and minutes; keep the whole team informed and committed.

Audiences

Think laterally when considering target audiences for an event. Which groups of people can you interest in attending? Which groups of people have the potential to help you to achieve your practical and communications objectives if you can reach out to them through an event? Who has a stake or an interest in your subject matter? Who is already involved, but could become more committed or useful to your project if you engaged with them more closely?

It never hurts to be ambitious in planning a list of people you would like to attend. There are no guarantees that they will come, but you can improve your chances a great deal by thinking hard about how to make the event attractive for your target audiences. Think about what they are interested in. Why would they want to come? How can you make your event appealing to them?

Budget

Projects have a set budget for their events and you will normally not be able to exceed this. Check all costs in advance. Your budget will ultimately determine where you hold the event, the number of people you invite, and the quality of the support material (such as presentation handouts, press packs, brochures, etc.). However, it is good preparation and execution that will determine the overall quality of the event.

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

Theme/title

The headline theme of an event defines its identity and is an important factor in helping people decide whether or not they want to attend. The theme must fit your project's objectives and the communication strategy.

Keep it short, simple and easy to understand. If your project is about developing parks in urban areas then "Spatial planning and international cooperation for the effective use of green spaces in urban centres" would be difficult to understand for many external audiences. A conference theme such as "Improving green spaces in European cities" would be much more effective.

Timing

The date chosen should not conflict with any other events that your target audiences might also be interested in attending. Check carefully if all relevant employees and spokespeople are able to attend. Also check for clashes with other more newsworthy events: political events, holidays, etc.

Agenda

Always make sure that the format of your event is based on the needs and interests of your target audiences. Organise sessions and arrange speakers in a clear and logical order. For example: general introduction to the topic, specialist views and case studies, workshops on different aspects of the topic, summary and conclusions.

As a general principle, don't rely excessively on one-way communication. Include regular interactive elements in the programme, such as panel discussions, workshops and break-out sessions for discussions. Always allow plenty of time for questions and discussion. Be sure to build in regular breaks to encourage networking possibilities and for busy attendees to answer phone calls, send emails, etc. Build in some flexibility in the programme, for example if some presentations do not finish on time. Plan enough time for coffee breaks (20-45 min) and lunch (1-1.5 hours).

If you want media to attend your event, ensure that you have interesting sessions for them or organise an event specifically for journalists, such as a briefing, press conference or interview opportunity. If you want to attract national news media and want coverage on the day of the event for TV and radio, or the following day for print media, you should organise such sessions in the late morning.

Speakers

Interesting, knowledgeable and skilled speakers are one of the make-or-break factors of any event. High profile names or people from well-known organisations will help to make your event appealing to target audiences. Individuals who are naturally good at presenting to groups can also transform the atmosphere and impact of the event itself.

Depending on the nature of your project and event, interesting speakers to invite might include:

- European policy: people from the Commission or Parliament
- National policy: people from Member State governments or organisations
- Regional or local policy: people from regional assemblies, local authorities, etc.
- Experts: academics, researchers, think-tanks, etc.
- NGOs: with an interest in your project
- Industry: many projects have some link with industry and it is often important to involve them in some way with your project – offering a speaking slot can be useful
- Trade associations: relevant EU or Member State-based bodies

When inviting speakers you will need to provide them with more information on the event, normally in the form of a draft programme, a briefing on the types of people attending the event (including other speakers) and a summary of what they are expected to do. You can find an invitation letter example on page **67-68**. Develop the invitation early to give your speakers as much notice as possible. Always follow up proactively

in person afterwards: do not assume that people received, read, or registered your invitation or that they will respond to you.

Provide speakers with presentation templates. Obtain and assess all their presentations and hand-outs well in advance of the event. Discuss and confirm fees, travel expenses etc. in advance and for prompt payment.

Moderators

A good event can become great with the addition of an excellent moderator. Make sure that you have someone who is able to manage the event, lead discussions and debates and make the event interesting and relevant to participants. If necessary, you may consider hiring a professional moderator. Many journalists also make good moderators; ask some of your media contacts if they know of someone suitable.

Venue

Before researching suitable venues have some idea of how many people you expect to attend, how many rooms you will need and what kind of catering is required. Make sure the venue is accessible for the people you wish to attract. Always ask for several offers and check what is included in the price (e.g. catering, technical equipment, etc.). Visit the venues before making a decision. Negotiate the price and contract and avoid paying up front – credit card guarantees sometimes work.

If your budget is small and you cannot afford to hire a venue, consider using a meeting room in your office. If the event is to be held outdoors, make a contingency plan in case of bad weather.

Catering

If you are going to provide food, a buffet is a good idea as it allows people to mix and talk. However, allow for enough tables and some places for people to sit down. Ensure that you allow for all dietary requirements.

Accommodation

Insist that delegates book accommodation well in advance. Make a block reservation in a nearby hotel, if possible, especially during other major events or in cities with limited hotel capacity.

Technical equipment

Think carefully about what technical equipment you will need for holding the event – laptops, projectors, screens, etc. Always check what the venue provider has to offer; some equipment is often included in the price. Arrange a site visit in advance and also check the equipment to be used. Ensure that on the day of the event you will have somebody available for support at all times – preferably in the presentation room but at least in the building.

If possible, collect all presentations before the event and pre-load them in one large presentation file on the presentation laptop – run one after the other, including links to any external media.

Consider hiring a professional photographer for bigger events.

Invitations to participants

Develop the invitation as soon as possible to notify target audiences well in time. To inform people about your event it is best to use a combination of email notification, letters through the post and telephone calls. Make sure that the invitation tells your target audiences “why I should attend.” Keep everything simple and easy to understand. A dedicated e-mail address is the easiest way to ensure replies. Indicate a reply-by-date and a contact mail/phone number. If necessary, send a reminder closer to the date. Don’t forget to include all the necessary logos to the invitations.

Don’t forget to use your project’s website and newsletters to promote the event. It is also common practice now when organising most significant events to have a dedicated website. This can easily be a page on your project’s website. It might be useful to publish a list of attendees or at least mention their organisation name somewhere on your website.

Registration

You can organise registration for the event by e-mail, but common practice is to have online registration. This makes life easier both for delegates and for event organisers. People submit their details online into a database that you can normally access through a private site and output into Excel in order to keep track of delegates. A website that has a content management system will allow you to add, delete and update event information yourself without the need of a programmer.

Have a specific person to be in charge of maintaining invitation list and sending confirmations to participants once they have registered. In addition, send some further practical information about the place where the event is taking place. This can be an info sheet about the location of the venue (address and map), main transport options to get there (information on main airports and how to reach the venue from there), accommodation possibilities and other necessary information

Rehearsal meeting

Hold a rehearsal meeting a day before the event. Go through the main presentations, anticipate frequently asked questions (locations of rooms and toilets, internet access, etc.) and make sure everybody can answer them. As things never go exactly as planned, also prepare for the unexpected – decide who will make decisions on the spot, also when it concerns additional costs.

Pack all the necessary equipment and materials you need with you from your office: this could include name badges, place labels for speakers, registration sheets, pens and paper, contact lists of suppliers, fully

charged mobile phones, a binder with information about receipts and confirmations of bookings, and an EU flag.

3.3.2 During the event

Registration

Make people feel invited. Have someone greet the participants and show them to the cloakroom and the registration desk. Have plenty of people at the registration desks to avoid long lines and to answer to possible questions the participants might have.

An applicant pack could include a name badge, an agenda, presentations, speaker biographies with photos, a list of participants, accommodation details, a map of the venue, a feedback form, tourist information, contact phone numbers of organisers, a press pack, and project publications.

Although delegate packs and paper handouts are regularly used and expected by attendees, there is a slow move towards providing such documentation electronically. Electronic support materials can be downloaded from the event website or e-mailed in compressed format.

Technical equipment

Meet the person responsible for technical support. Arrange and check the necessary technical equipment and set-up, e.g. lectern, video projector, laptop, etc. Check you have all connection cables, power sockets, transformers, adapter plugs. Make sure you know how to adjust air conditioning and the lights. Check if all presentations are available in the laptops and that you are able to open all files.

Guests

Arrange for the arrival of guests in sufficient time for a dry-run and any last-minute changes. Meet speakers on their arrival and introduce them to necessary people, e.g. the person responsible for technical support.

If media attend your event, make sure they are well taken care of. Always appoint people responsible for journalists who can introduce them to people to interview, explain your project, and act as a contact point if they require any information. All journalists who attend your project events should have personalised itineraries that highlight who they will meet and where they should go, and full contact information if they need to follow up with you later.

Photos

Photos tell more than words. No matter whether you have hired a professional photographer or a person from your project, make sure to brief him/her on the main moments you would like to retain and what kind of photos you would like to have taken. Avoid using staged group photos. Prefer realistic and colourful action shots, which can be later used in publications, press articles, thank you letters, and on your website.

3.3.3 After the event

Follow-up

Upload the event documents online (presentations, photos, etc.), take care of all costs and fees, and send thank you notes to all participants and guests. Use photos taken at the event for illustration. Send photos of the event to media who attended as well as to those who did not. Be prepared to answer follow-up telephone calls. Later check and document media coverage.

Prepare a post-event newsletter or brochure or at least follow up on the event in your next newsletter.

Evaluation

Hold a debriefing session with the organisers - discuss what went well and what can be improved in the future.

Go through feedback questionnaires that were filled in on the spot or send a feedback form to all participants a day after the event by email.

4. Internal communication

Internal communication includes all communication within a project and is just as important as external communication. One might even see internal communication as a prerequisite for all external communication. Internal communication makes sure that all partners speak with one voice and provide the same consistent information.

4.1 Audiences

For communicating internally with INTERREG projects you have two different kinds of audiences. One group is the people that are working directly within your project. These are your project partners and of course the lead partner.

The second target group consists of the people who work within the partner organisations – whether it is a local or regional authority, agency or foundation. Too often people working on INTERREG projects are too busy to tell the people within the organisation what they are working on and why it is of benefit to people living in the region. If you don't tell them what your project is about and its benefits, they will not know about it. Informing people might also help you find some good third party advocates or endorsers, such as local politicians or organisations that conduct similar or complementary work to your project.

4.2 Targets and aims

An internal communications strategy should be planned using the same framework as a public relations strategy for external audiences. Define communication objectives and messages which respond to the needs and characteristics of your partner organisations. Be sure to align your internal and external communications.

The aims could be that all partners:

- have the same information (what is done, why and when, responsibilities, deadlines, etc.)
- identify themselves with the main aims of the project
- feel being part of the project
- know their responsibilities and tasks

As to partner organisations, the aims could be that they are aware:

- that they are participating in the project
- what results are produced
- how the organisation benefits from the results
- who is the contact person for the project in the organisation

4.3 Tools

There are a number of different ways that you can communicate with the people working on your INTERREG project. Below are a few suggestions that you could consider:

- Newsletters
- Intranet
- Telephone conference calls
- Meetings (technical working groups, management meetings)
- Trips to partner institutions or regions
- Team building events
- Internet
 - online meetings
 - file sharing
 - online groups
 - message boards
 - blogs
- Marketing materials
- Event reports (see example on page 70)

There are also multiple ways to reach out to people who are not working on your project directly, but who work within the same organisation as you do. These can include:

- Newsletters
 - sending them copies of your project newsletters
 - asking them to write an article about your project in their own newsletter
- Intranet
- Website
 - Publish information about the project on your organisation's website
 - Ask to add a direct link or a banner to your project on the home page of the organisation's website
- Meetings
 - Ask to make a presentation about your project at the meetings of other departments
- Marketing materials
 - Distribute copies of your brochures and leaflets
 - Ask to have information about your project included in their marketing materials

Always think about what kind of information is already available for the people working at your partner organisations, what are the attitudes and opinions of the staff at the moment and what would interest them the most.

4.4 Responsibilities

It is important that everyone within your project knows what is going on and what their role is within the project. It is important to define responsibilities to ensure the communication tasks of the project are managed effectively.

It is especially important to allocate responsibilities for internal and external communication. Make sure that the tasks and responsibilities of the project coordinator and the project component 2 (Information and communication) leader are complementary and do not overlap.

The nature of INTERREG IVC operations means that PR activities must take place on many levels: local, regional, national and pan-European. As you need to execute public relations activities in one or more countries, you will usually need a coordinator to ensure that:

- There is a level of consistency in communications across all countries
- The individual public relations programmes are executed well
- Interaction takes place and best practice activities are shared
- Reporting is carried out in the required way and in a timely manner

Activities that project partners should regularly undertake include:

- Translating, adapting and distributing information from the coordinator to target audiences
- Informing local internal audiences about what is happening with the project
- Initiating news releases and developing PR opportunities for local activities
- Handling local media enquiries and developing relations with local press
- Performing media monitoring in their country and/or region
- Reporting to the overall project coordinator

5. Evaluation

Evaluation of communication activities helps to determine the success of past PR actions. It is a useful way to check whether the communication objectives are being met and decide whether the communication plan needs to be changed. If you have enough funds, you can hire external experts to do the evaluation. However, you can also do it yourself by using the set indicators and simple questionnaires.

5.1 Indicators and targets

Already when you set the communication objectives, be sure to think about how you are going to evaluate if you have reached these aims. Think in advance what kind of proof you will be able to acquire to confirm the changes that have taken place. The mere listing of indicators is not sufficient, it is important to set targets and explain how you will measure them. Be realistic when setting targets. This does not mean that you have to be extremely modest.

Indicators might not always be enough. You also need to get feedback from your target audiences. In addition, you could organise interviews with policy stakeholders and members of local community.

5.2 Evaluation of tools used

Periodically it is also useful to check whether the tools you use are effective. Maybe you have discovered additional target groups and you need different tools to communicate with them?

Feedback questionnaires

Put effort into planning event feedback questionnaires as this is a valuable evaluation method. Adapt these to the specific events, but always ask feedback about the content of presentations, venue and organisation. Ask whether the event fulfilled the expectations of the participants and whether they have suggestions for improvement. Try to keep the questionnaire to one page.

The most accessible way of getting feedback about your communications is by asking people with a questionnaire survey.

Advantages

- In-house: Questionnaires are relatively easy to design and can be incorporated into a wider survey of the project
- Sample size: You can get responses from a high number of people
- Distribution: questionnaires can be given out during large conferences or sent out by mailing list
- Time: most questionnaires should be kept to no more than 10 questions – they are relatively easy and quick for respondents to complete.

Disadvantages

- The data: the results are for big sample but the information is not very detailed
- Questionnaires provide some good quantitative evaluation, but are limited on feedback about quality
- Distribution – low return rate: people are not interested in completing them

Focus groups

You can organise a focus group of up to 6 to 8 people. You invite the member of the focus group to 20-minute discussion session.

You encourage, through questioning, respondents to give you their opinions on your project communications. You structure the survey questions from the very general to specific. Your aim is to get rich qualitative feedback from a limited sample size.

Advantages

- In depth qualitative information that can reveal very useful trends, issues, opinions
- These results give insight that you can act on
- You are able to use the focus group to engage with your target groups

Disadvantages

- Resources: These are time consuming to organise and you need a skilled interviewer (s) who has been trained and a note taker
- You need to very carefully consider the types of questions
- You can only get responses for a very small sample size

Monitoring the media

Feedback about your public relations activities is crucial, so be sure to monitor the media systematically for relevant news.

- Scan daily papers
- Keep copies of key trade publications
- Search news sites and news aggregators e.g. Yahoo, Google news

Look for coverage not only of your own projects but of anything interesting, relevant or useful in the sector or industry. This may signal potential public relations opportunities or problems for you.

Media analysis

A more in-depth look at press coverage will enable you to look at longer-term developments in opinion about your project and is a good way to give your project partners an overview of your work and the media results that it generates.

A media analysis should be a detailed look at the press coverage you have received, in an accessible format incorporating charts or graphs that make the information easy to assimilate and understand.

Typical areas for attention will include:

- Volume (number of articles) of press coverage about your organisation
- Tone of press coverage: is coverage positive, negative or neutral?
- Prominence of press coverage: small mention in an article, small article specifically about your project, large article, etc.
- Presence of desired messages in press coverage

If you have a small budget it is fine to do a media analysis yourself, but it can be time consuming and is unlikely to be as objective as it would be if done by an external organisation.

Web evaluation

As the communications focus for many types of audiences migrates steadily online, so web evaluation tools are becoming increasingly important. Consult with IT experts before establishing online systems to ensure that their structure will provide you with useful information about users. Website traffic can be easily monitored with Google Analytics.

Basic web evaluation might involve measuring site visits alongside the timing of public relations activities to establish whether surges and peaks in traffic to your website correspond with interest that you have generated. You can usually do this with Google Alerts.

6. Publicity and information requirements

No matter what tools you use to communicate on your project, there are minimum requirements for publicising the European co-financing and the programme that facilitates the funding. In this section you will find specific guidelines on how to meet these requirements. Beyond the purely regulatory nature of information and publicity measures, these are also important in creating awareness of project's activities and results, and in helping other regions to potentially capitalise on these results.

Legal basis:

The regulation ([EC 1828/2006](#), articles 8 & 9) specifies what measures project beneficiaries need to take to show that the project has been financed in part by the European Union, and in particular the European Regional Development Fund.

Further programme requirements are detailed in the subsidy contract (article 7), and the programme manual, concerning the INTERREG IVC logo.

6.1 Visual elements

What you need

1. INTERREG IVC logo:



- a. For websites: www.interreg4c.eu > Projects > Resources for project partners
- b. For printing: www.interreg4c.eu > Projects > Resources for project partners

2. EU logo:



To download: www.interreg4c.eu > Projects > Resources for project partners

The technical part (for your graphic designers):

1. **INTERREG IVC graphic identity guidelines:**
<http://www.interreg4c.eu> > Projects > Resources for project partners
2. **European Union graphic identity guidelines:**
http://europa.eu/abc/symbols/emblem/graphics1_en.htm

6.2 Use of elements by activity

The following list details how the above publicity elements must be used for each activity.

6.2.1 Publications

This includes brochures, leaflets, press releases, event invitations, best practice guides. This list is non-exhaustive. The INTERREG IVC logo as well as the EU logo and references must appear on the front page and in a prominent position of all printed publications.

e.g. project leaflet



Project Partners

The 14 partners, drawn from eight member states, represent a broad spectrum of authorities and climate change challenges, all with varying degrees of strategic policy and experience.

Austria
Provincial Government of Styria

Greece
Municipality of Kalamaria

Italy
Etnambiente SLR
Province of Genoa
University of Catania

Lithuania
Klaipėda University Coastal Research and Planning Institute

Netherlands
City District of Geuzenveld-Slotermeer

Slovakia
Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe, Country Office Slovakia

Sweden
City of Malmö

UK
London Borough of Sutton
Southampton City Council
South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)
Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA)
University of Manchester

New era in European partnership to plan for climate change adaptation

A network of leading organisations involved in integrating climate change adaptation into regional planning and development has been established across Europe in the new Green and Blue Space Adaptation for Urban Areas and Eco Towns (GRABS) project.

The GRABS project will facilitate the much needed exchange of knowledge and experience and the actual transfer of good practice on climate change adaptation strategies to local and regional authorities.

The project has been co-financed by the European Union European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and made possible by the INTERREG IVC Programme.

grabs
green and blue space adaptation for urban areas and eco towns

INTERREG IVC
INNOVATION & ENVIRONMENT
REGIONS OF EUROPE SHARING SOLUTIONS

European Union
Europe Region, Development Fund

www.grabs-eu.org

All photographs courtesy of the City of Malmö

6.2.2 Websites, electronic information, audio-visual material

Requirements:

- EU logo & INTERREG IVC logo must appear at least on the home page of website, on the first slide of any electronic presentation, on electronic newsletters, and in a prominent position
- Logos should be clickable in electronic versions:
 - o Hyperlink to INTERREG IVC website: <http://www.interreg4c.eu>
 - o Hyperlink to DG Regio website: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_en.htm
- on websites, a short description of INTERREG IVC programme should be present. We can suggest the following text:

The *Interregional Cooperation Programme INTERREG IVC*, financed by the European Union's Regional Development Fund, helps Regions of Europe work together to share experience and good practice in the areas of innovation, the knowledge economy, the environment and risk prevention. EUR 302 million is available for project funding but, more than that, a wealth of knowledge and potential solutions are also on hand for regional policy-makers.

e.g. project website with clickable logos



Home | Project Structure | Partners | Contact

CITEAIR II NEWSLETTER
News & events
City comparison
Benchmarking mobility emissions
Integrating green house gases emissions
Forecasting common air quality indices
Results from CITEAIR I

Partner's area
Login
Password
OK

CITEAIR II Air Quality Conference and Networking Workshop (Paris, 3-4 June 2009) - INFO PRESS + PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Introduction

Cities and regions all around Europe are facing exposure to high levels of air pollution and the emerging impacts of climate change, which have detrimental effects on their citizens and their economy.

The European Union has taken many initiatives in this and is supporting local and regional authorities in their actions to mitigate air pollution and climate change and to provide updated and comparable information to their citizens.

Designing, implementing and monitoring mitigation measures is a tremendous challenge for policy makers and authorities, as it the need to raise public awareness. A wealth of knowledge and best practices is available for cities and regions, which offers ample opportunities for collaboration.

Let us share our knowledge!
--> [Download our presentation leaflet!](#)

What CITEAIR II is about:

- Provide up-to-date information on air quality, greenhouse gases and emissions in European cities to local and regional authorities, the public and the media and enhance consistency of this through the interactive website www.airqualitynow.eu (in which 50 European cities already take part) and common air quality indices;
- Identify, test and transfer good practice to describe the traffic situation and its impact regarding CO₂ emissions in urban agglomerations by a mobility indicator;
- Identify, test and transfer good practice to integrate greenhouse gases into existing air pollution emission inventories for regulated pollutants and to select measures with a combined effect on reduction of urban pollutants and greenhouse gases.

INTERREG IVC
Made possible by the INTERREG IVC Programme

European Union
European Regional Development Fund
Co-financed by the ERDF

6.2.3 Conferences, events, exhibitions

Requirements:

- EU flag displayed in meeting rooms, conferences, etc.
- Attendance or other certificates shall include a statement such as “This project is co-financed by the ERDF and made possible by the INTERREG IVC programme”.

Some examples of use of flag during seminars and conferences:



6.2.4 Other things to check

INTERREG IVC layout and spelling

The programme name INTERREG IVC shall always be presented in capital letters, with Roman numerals as shown here.

Sending publications

Three copies of main project publications (e.g. general brochure, good practice guidelines, final results) should be sent to the INTERREG IVC Joint Technical Secretariat in Lille, France.

Any apparitions in the media should also be sent to the INTERREG IVC Communication Officers.

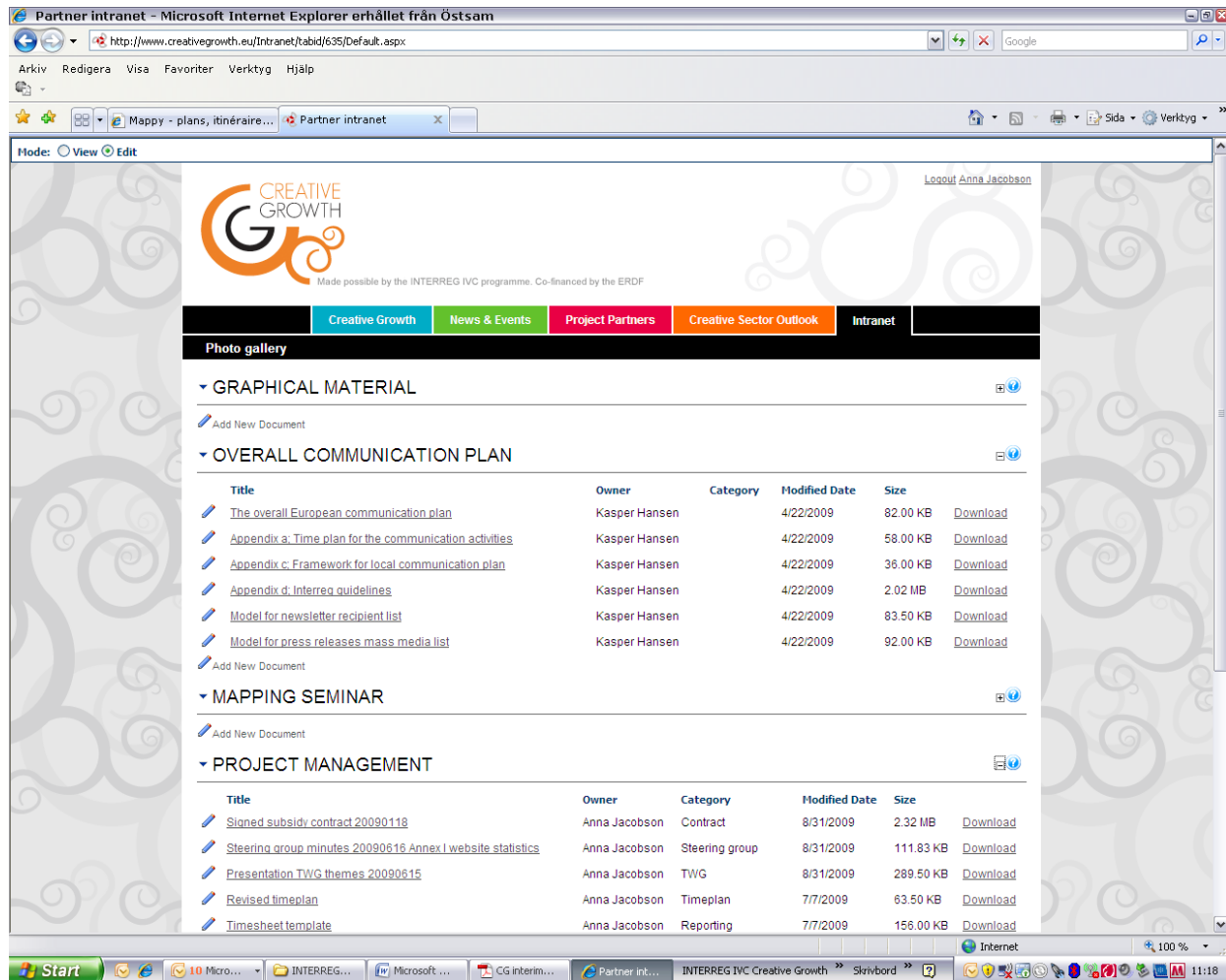
Eligibility

Communication elements that do not respect the information and publicity guidelines will not be considered as eligible costs for ERDF funding. Please double check, and if in doubt contact the Communication Officers in the Joint Technical Secretariat!

Annexes

Annex 1: webpage intranet example

Screenshot of the intranet of INTERREG IVC project “Creative Growth” www.creativegrowth.eu





Mode: View Edit

CREATIVE GROWTH
Made possible by the INTERREG IVC programme. Co-financed by the ERDF



Logout Anna Jacobson

[Creative Growth](#)
[News & Events](#)
[Project Partners](#)
[Creative Sector Outlook](#)
[Intranet](#)



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▼ OVERALL COMMUNICATION PLAN  

Title	Owner	Category	Modified Date	Size	
The overall European communication plan	Kasper Hansen		4/22/2009	82.00 KB	Download
Appendix a. Time plan for the communication activities	Kasper Hansen		4/22/2009	58.00 KB	Download
Appendix c. Framework for local communication plan	Kasper Hansen		4/22/2009	36.00 KB	Download
Appendix d. Interreg guidelines	Kasper Hansen		4/22/2009	2.02 MB	Download
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Model for press releases mass media list	Kasper Hansen		4/22/2009	92.00 KB	Download
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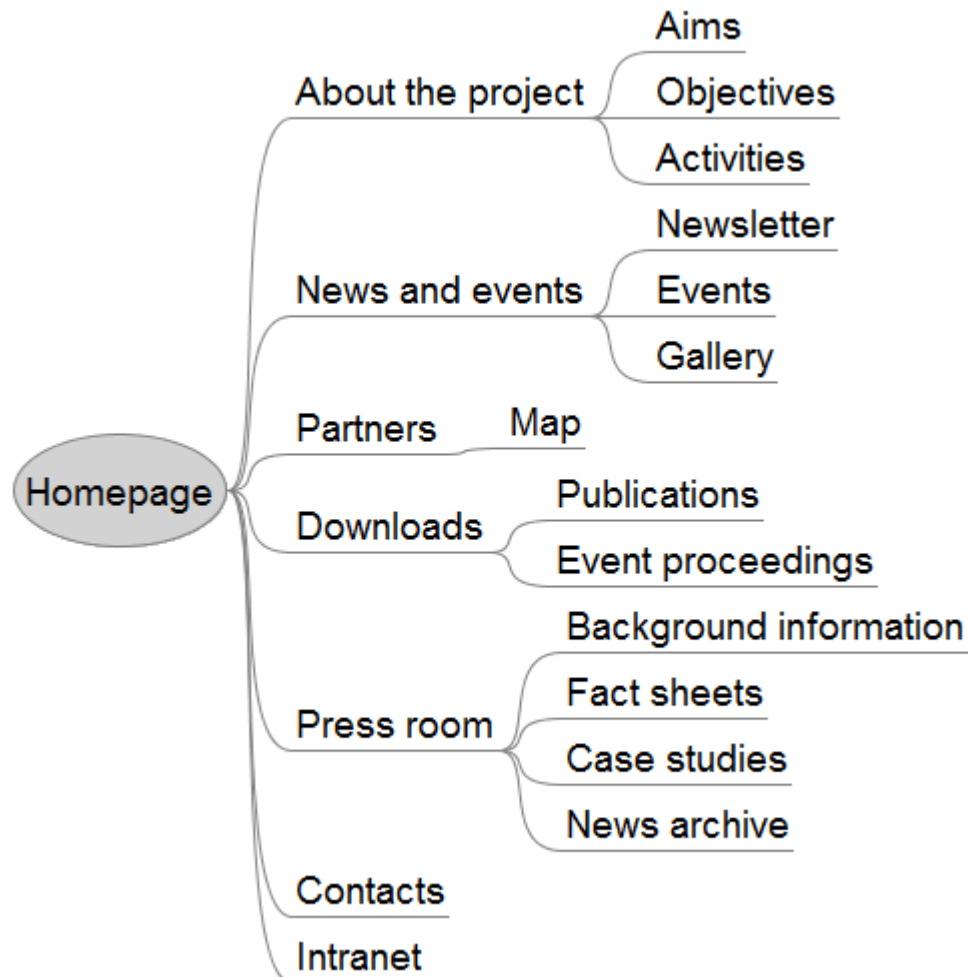
▼ MAPPING SEMINAR  

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▼ PROJECT MANAGEMENT  

Title	Owner	Category	Modified Date	Size	
Signed subsidy contract 20090118	Anna Jacobson	Contract	8/31/2009	2.32 MB	Download
Steering group minutes 20090616 Annex I website statistics	Anna Jacobson	Steering group	8/31/2009	111.83 KB	Download
Presentation TWG themes 20090615	Anna Jacobson	TWG	8/31/2009	289.50 KB	Download
Revised timeplan	Anna Jacobson	Timeplan	7/7/2009	63.50 KB	Download
Timesheet template	Anna Jacobson	Reporting	7/7/2009	156.00 KB	Download

Annex 2: example of a hierarchical website structure



Annex 3: example of a poster

INTERREG IVC project B3 Regions



Annex 4: example of a case study

SETRIC (Security and Trust in Cities)

INTERREG IIIC West zone project

Major disasters have struck fear into mankind across the world in recent years. Some are man-made tragedies like the September 11 terrorist attacks on America and the Madrid train bombings; others are natural catastrophes like the Asian tsunami, which seem to come around ever more frequently.

With citizens' lives at stake, cities and regions must all prepare effectively to prevent all kinds of disasters and respond effectively when the worst happens. Through INTERREG IIIC, the SETRIC project will help them do exactly this by sharing knowledge and lessons learned.

Just as the tsunami devastated the shores of a dozen countries, many disasters ignore borders and wreak havoc in similar patterns across the planet. Exchanging experience of these patterns and effective responses to them is the key to preventing and managing crises, and an example of interregional cooperation at its most valuable.

All nine partners in the SETRIC project have experienced disasters first hand, so they are a mine of information for places facing similar dangers. Bologna was shaken by a bomb attack in the central railway station in 1980. A chemical plant explosion brought Toulouse to a standstill in 2001 and injured over 2,500 people. Devastating floods across Europe in 2002 required widespread evacuations and a huge relief effort in both Prague and Cologne.

Each city has developed its own strategies to manage the risks that it has faced. The challenge and inspiration behind SETRIC is to bring them together to share knowledge and plans for emergencies so that the best ideas can be transplanted into any European city. That includes specific procedures and technical devices that are being developed by research institutes, and which might otherwise remain unknown to the authorities in places where they could save lives.

For instance, a key issue is how to make it easier for emergency services to communicate. 'One major barrier in many cities is that the police force and fire brigade use different radio frequencies. This makes it very difficult for them to talk to each other,' said project coordinator Albert Deistler from the city of Cologne.

"This project bridges the gap between research and practice as well as the distance between different regions and cities," Deistler added.

Cooperation takes place through conferences and workshops with experts, complemented by a database and website that together will enable partners to design and improve their disaster strategies.

SETRIC is led by the city of Cologne, and has eight other partners: Naestved in Denmark, Marseilles and Paris in France, Bologna and Siena in Italy, Prague, the CERTU Institute in France and the Fraunhofer Institute for Applied Information Technology in Germany. For more information on SETRIC see: www.setric.org

Annex 5: Press release checklist

- Have you identified your target audiences?
- Have you determined your messages?
- Have you chosen the best angle to make them care?
- Are you targeting the right media?
- Will they consider it news?
- Have you put the news in context – the big picture?
- Is all the important information at the top?
- Are your messages consistent throughout the press release?
- Is the headline catchy and shorter than 10 words?
- Does the headline have a strong and active verb?
- Does the first paragraph tell the whole story?
- Does it answer the “so what” question?
- Can you speak every sentence comfortably? Does it sound right?
- Are your sentences all shorter than 30 words?
- Are your paragraphs all shorter than 3 sentences?
- Are there any dull words that you could strengthen – especially verbs?
- Are there any complicated or flowery words that you could simplify? Is it interesting?
- Is it written with energy?
- Can you avoid repeating any words or phrases? Would synonyms help?
- Have you used any jargon or unexplained acronyms?
- Is the tone appropriately businesslike and balanced?
- Is the language objective? Are you over-selling the message?
- Have you backed up your assertions with evidence?
- Have you left any holes or unanswered questions?
- Have you given sources for any external statistics?
- Have you checked every number and the spelling of every name?
- Do your quotes use strong, natural, spoken language?
- Are the spelling and grammar 100 percent perfect?
- Do the format and layout conform to your template specifications? Are all appropriate logos present and displayed correctly?
- Is the date correct?
- Are the contact details present and correct?
- Are the notes for editors present and correct?

Annex 6: Press release template example



Project

LOGO

Date of issue

PRESS RELEASE

HEADLINE SHOULD HAVE ACTIVE VERBS AND FEWER THAN 10 WORDS

CITY, Country (name of city and country where press release is issued)

Write a strong and clear first paragraph capturing all key details.

Other paragraphs developing the message you wish to forward. Include a good quotation by paragraph four at the latest. A strong quote is the part of a press release that is most likely to be reproduced unchanged in print.

At the end of the text of the press release, write –ENDS– or ### to denote the end. If you need to continue onto a second page, write –MORE– at the end of the first page to denote that another page follows, and number the second page at the top. Three pages is too long for a press release.

-ENDS-

FOR MORE INFORMATION (full contacts of a person available at the time of publication of the press release)

Contact Name, job title

T: +123 123 123456

F: +123 123 123456

M: +123 1234 567890

Email: email@address.eu

NOTES FOR EDITORS (numbered list of background information items)

1. **PROJECT** is a Europe-wide project that supports ETC. This is a boilerplate paragraph about your project.
2. **INTERREG IVC** programme short description should follow here, in standard format

Annex 7: press release example

INTERREG IVC project GRaBS press release No 5 from 18 June 2009.

Source: http://www.grabs-eu.org/downloads/20090618_GRaBS_PR5.pdf



PRESS RELEASE – 18th JUNE 2009

NEW RESEARCH ON THE CLIMATE CHANGE THREAT TO BRITAIN MAKES URGENT CASE FOR ADAPTATION

The government must act now in response to the UK Climate Impact Programme's (UKCIP) latest research which suggests that 800,000 homes could be affected by floods in the next 25 years^[1]. The research has warned that by 2040 average summer temperatures in the South of England will rise by 2C by the 2040s and up to 6.4C by 2080.

TCPA Chief Planner Hugh Ellis said:

“The implications of the latest climate change forecasts are severe and what matters now is that we urgently take action on these findings. We must adapt now, learning to live with more extreme weather events and changing weather patterns, and preparing for other changes that are unavoidable. To succeed under a changing climate individuals, organisations, local and central government will all have to do some things differently. Through policy at all levels - national to local - there must be a clear consensus on the need for adaptation and climate change adaptation strategies must ensure decisive action.”

Through the TCPA^[2]-led project **Green and Blue Space Adaptation for Urban Areas and Eco Towns (GRaBS)**^[3] the 14 project partners representing eight member states will raise awareness and increase the expertise of how green and blue infrastructure can help new and existing mixed use urban development adapt to projected climate scenarios such as heatwaves and drought.

The GRaBS Project first expert paper *‘The case for climate change adaptation’*^[4] published yesterday emphasises the urgent need to act on the UKCIP scenarios. During periods of high temperatures residents of urban areas will suffer significantly. This is because buildings store heat and contribute to the urban heat island (UHI) effect. This can result in temperature differences of up to 7°C between centres of large conurbations such as London and their surrounding rural areas. But even small urban centres demonstrate a UHI effect. Heat waves are expected to increase in frequency and severity in a warmer world, and the

UHI will accentuate the affects of regional warming by increasing summer temperatures relative to outlying districts.

Hugh Ellis added:

“By sharing best practice and advancing the knowledge and expertise of the GRaBS partner staff across Europe we aim to help regional and local municipalities, decision makers, politicians and communities, to make a more informed and strategic response to climate change adaptation.”

For further information about GRaBS visit www.grabs-eu.org and to download the first expert paper at www.grabseu.org/downloads/20090617_GXP.pdf

- Ends -

Contacts:

Kate Henderson, TCPA (Lead Partner)

Tel: 020 7930 8903/ 07915 057769

Email: kate.henderson@tcpa.org.uk

Notes to Editors

1. UKCIP <http://ukcp09.defra.gov.uk/>
2. The Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) is an independent campaigning charity calling for more integrated planning based on the principles of accessibility, sustainability, diversity, and community cohesion. The TCPA puts social justice and the environment at the heart of the debate about planning policy, housing and energy supply. We inspire government, industry and campaigners to take a fresh perspective on major issues including climate change and regeneration. www.tcpa.org.uk.
3. **History of the GRaBS project proposal** - Working with the two initial partners in the early part of 2007, the TCPA developed an outline GRaBS project proposal, which was presented to UK local and regional government in order to gauge interest in and relevance of both the project idea and the proposed European wide exchange of experience and knowledge. The TCPA decided to offer to take on the Lead Partner role for the new project and together with the **University of Manchester**, the **City District Geuzenveld Sloterveer** (Amsterdam), the **London Borough of Sutton** and **Southampton City Council** began the process of extended European partner search. The aim was to find partners with a range of interests, cultures, experiences and needs, located in a range of climate zones. Towards the end of 2007 the **Province of Genova, Etnambiente**, the **University of Catania** (Italy), the **City of Malmo** (Sweden), the **Municipality of Kalamaria** (Greece), the **Regional Environment Centre for Eastern Europe** (Slovakia), the **South East England Development Agency** (SEEDA), the **Region of Styria** (Austria) and **CORPI** (Lithuania) joined the project as partners. The project has been co-financed by the European Union European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and made possible by the INTERREG IVC Programme.
4. Download the first GRaBS Expert Paper: The case for climate change adaptation www.grabs-eu.org/downloads/20090617_GXP.pdf.

Annex 8: Event management checklist

Before the event

- Tasks are allocated to all organisers
 - Invitations and registration
 - Budgeting
 - Welcoming participants
 - Coffee breaks and catering
 - Taking photos
 - Taking minutes
- Invitations sent out in time (speakers, media and participants)
- Rooms are available for the number of people expected
- An alternative indoor venue is available for outside events
- A block reservation is made or the participants have received practical information with accommodation recommendations
- Enough time is planned for coffee breaks and lunch
- All organisers are briefed to answer frequently asked questions
- Speakers (and the moderator) are briefed
- All presentations are checked for content and appropriate typeface

During the event

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

After the event

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

Annex 9: invitation letter template

Template for an invitation letter (to invite to speak or participate in project events)
for the European Parliament or European Commission

[Project name]

[Project contact details]

[Name of the person you are inviting]

[Address]

[DD.MM.YYYY]

Dear [name],

On [DD.MM.YYYY] the [organisation name/project name] and its partners across Europe are organising a major event, which will highlight regional development around [topic of your project, e.g. flooding, transport]. As a key [function: Parliamentarian, Commission official, etc.] dealing in the field of [field: e.g. transport policy issues], we kindly invite you to participate and attend our event. It would be immensely helpful in showcasing the major contribution of EU funding to regional development and [field] policy.

The primary purpose of the event will be to highlight the great value that EU funded projects are adding in the field of [field], and the benefits that [xx] can generate in line with many of the Commission's key regional development goals. This conference is about more than [theme]: it is about how EU projects can lever their benefits deep into regional economies and communities. That is why we are keen for [MEP, Committee, etc.] to take part in this event.

One of the subjects of the [day-long seminar, two day conference, etc.] will be a showcase of the INTERREG IVC project [name], which is a great example of how we can deliver the practical side of the Lisbon Agenda and the Gothenburg Strategy. This project is turning the Commission's view for the future into reality on the ground, with tangible benefits for EU citizens. It shows how we can harness the huge power of interregional cooperation to stimulate [theme: e.g. commerce, competitiveness, employment, urban regeneration, social renewal, regional connectivity and European integration].

I believe that many of these issues are of considerable interest and importance to you, and I also hope that you would wish to be associated with a great success story for extracting tangible, practical value from European funds. [In case you will ask the person to give a presentation, specify details here.]

The event will be moderated by [name, if you have a known moderator] and attended by over [number] senior politicians, EU and national officials and private sector executives with a stake in regional development. It will be promoted to journalists for media coverage both before and after the event.

I do hope that you will be able to lend your support by attending the event. For further information and to register, please see conference website [address] or contact the event administrator [name] by telephone on [number] or by email: [e-mail].

Yours sincerely,

[signed by a high-level member in your project, e.g. mayor, councillor]

Annex 10: examples of INTERREG IVC project logos



SHARING EXPERIENCE EUROPE
POLICY INNOVATION DESIGN

Annex 11: Event report template

This report can be used to inform colleagues and partners about events attended.

Author	
Event / Meeting / Subject	
Date, location	
Agenda	
Participants	
Links to further information	
Summary of the meeting	
Follow-up meeting	
Other personal remarks	

Additional references

1. Research Based Web Design and Usability Requirements - Guidelines by the US Department of Health and Human Services www.usability.gov/guidelines/
2. Video introduction to RSS: www.youtube.com/watch?v=0klgLSxGsU
3. 5 useful logo design tips by David Airey
www.davidairey.com/5-vital-logo-design-tips/
4. Logo Designer Blog (a blog focused on branding, logo, identity design)
<http://logodesignerblog.com/>
5. Video introduction to blogging: www.youtube.com/watch?v=NN2I1pWXjXI
6. Video introduction to social networking:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=6a_KF7TYKVc&NR=1
7. Video introduction to Twitter: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ddO9idmax0o
8. Video introduction to wikis: www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dnL00TdmLY
9. European Commission English Style Guide
http://ec.europa.eu/translation/writing/style_guides/english/style_guide_en.pdf

Main European news services:

- Reuters: www.reuters.com
- AFP Agence France Presse, AFP: www.afp.com
- Deutsche Press Agentur, DPA: www.dpa.com
- Associated Press: www.ap.org
- Bloomberg: www.bloomberg.com

Main pan-European media portals:

- EUObserver: www.euobserver.com
News and reports on European issues
- EurActiv: www.euractiv.com
EU news monitoring, policy positions, discussion forums
- EuroZine: www.eurozine.com
Linking over 100 European cultural magazines



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