SUMMARY OF THE INFORM AND INIO NETWORKS MEETING
OF EU COHESION POLICY COMMUNICATORS
27 -28 November 2019, Ghent, Belgium

All the presentations are online:

Summary of the country team discussions is in Annex I
27 NOVEMBER

CITIZENS’ AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION OF EU REGIONAL POLICY

The Eurobarometer Flash survey on citizens’ awareness and perception of Regional Policy shows that the vast majority of Europeans (81%) believe EU-funded projects have a positive impact on their life – when they are actually aware of those projects (40%). Awareness and positive perception are on all-time high level, but the differences between counties are huge.

The Commission has stressed the need for more communication from programme authorities and beneficiaries on EU-funded projects and laid out new requirements in its proposal for the next Cohesion Policy.

Presentation

PROGRAMMES 2021-2027: COMMUNICATION SUPPORT PACKAGE

The Commission presented the new provisions on communication for 2021-27. Major changes compared to the 2004-20 period:

- Communication strategy should be in a dedicated section of the programme. Stress on the relevant indicators for monitoring and evaluation
- Monitoring Committee has a role in supervising the performance of the programme, including communication
- Specific visibility to operations of strategic importance
- Additional communication obligations for projects above 10 million
- Pre-publication of planned calls by the programme
- One national communication coordinator for all funds
- Single branding, no mention to the funds
- Sanctions to beneficiaries who are non-compliant with the obligations
- Member States shall submit to the Commission detailed information on implementation of communication measures for the annual review meeting

The Commission will put at disposal of the programmes a support package composed of:

- Booklet on communication provisions
- Handbook on monitoring and evaluation
- Brand manual
  - Download centre (templates for plaques, posters, lists of operations etc.)

Presentation
EURO BAROMETER: Our Efforts Paid Off!

MAKE COMMUNICATION GREAT AGAIN

Support Package

- Booklet on Communication Provisions
- Handbook "Monitoring and Evaluation"
- Brand Manual
- Workshops to prepare the package
- EU EMYLEN - Small & invisible

Communication chapter of programmes
- Single branding
- Coordination & consistency
- Responsibility of tender states, managing authorities and beneficiaries

EU in my region
- A scuola di OPENCOESIONE
- Project postcards to be sent
- Dialogues with regional offices

REGIOSTARS 2019

EU DELIVERS in the regions
- AT-FR-GR-IT-BE

Youth 4 Regions

#EURegionWeek

To be continued in 2020...
COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES: RESULTS 2019 – AND WHAT IS AHEAD FOR 2020?

EUinmyRegion:

REGIOSTARS:
- Call for applications and award categories to open in February/March 2020

EU delivers in the regions
- 34 regions covered: Austria (5), France (9), Greece (8), Italy (7), Sweden (5). More regions and countries to be covered in 2020

The Road Trip Project:
- Have a look at the 2019 edition. New revised concept for 2020 connected with the European Green Deal: green projects to visit and green travelling.

Citizens’ Engagement with EDICs:
- 250+ events planned; for 2020 an open call to the Europe Direct Centres to organise events has been already launched

At the School of Open Cohesion
- 7 public organisations (regional or national) participating in the project from PT, HR, EL, BG, ES in response to the call for interest launched in April. Implementation phase during the school year 2019-2020.

Call for Media
- A 3rd call for proposals was published in October 2019, with a total budget of EUR 4.8 million (including 4 million for all entities apart from managing authorities, and EUR 800,000 only for Universities and educational institutions).

Youth4Regions
- In 2019, number of applications received: 446 (33 in 2018). 33 applicants selected (28 from the EU, 5 from neighbouring and accession countries). Applications for Youth4Regions 2020 will open on 6 April.

European Week of Regions and Cities
- Next edition 12-15 October 2020. Implementation period: Potential partners meeting (January); Proposals deadline (March); Selected partners announcement and meeting (May); Registrations (July)
Dialogues with Regional Offices

- **January/February 2020 (tbd)** – Annual meeting with the new Commissioner

Communicating Social Europe

A wide range of initiatives and actions are in place and will continue in 2020:

- European Vocational Skills Week
- The European Day of Persons with Disabilities and the Access City award
- Combating discrimination in the work place
- European Pillar of Social Rights
- European Social Fund
- Youth Employment Initiative
- Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived

Presentation 1 – Presentation 2

27 NOVEMBER

**WORKSHOP 1: BOOST YOUR CREATIVITY!**

“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them” *Albert Einstein*

Creativity is for all, it can be created in a structured manner, it yields concrete results take the time for it, and remember you can develop it in you.

Creative ideas usually come up outside from work or work place, mostly while doing something completely; sports, arts, driving, showering, sleeping etc. Where and when do you get your “Eureka” moments? Use this knowledge strategically!

Keys to creativity

1. **Postpone judgement**
   Because you never know what the idea will turn out into!
   Embrace curiosity – Avoid “yes, but” – Give ideas a chance – Build on ideas.

2. **Think in alternatives**
   Because the first one might not be the best one, in creativity quantity turns into quality
   Challenge yourself to come up with multiple solutions – And beyond – Look for variants – make it a competition – seek for crazy ideas.

3. **Make new connections**
   Because making new connection can bring forth original solutions. There is not necessarily a need to reinvent the wheel every time; the solution might exist already out there, you just need to bring to your system.
Who else might have faced a similar challenge – Look for everyone’s personal associations – Connect things not connected before.

4. **Observe differently**
   Because reality is not always what it seems like to us.
   Let go your reflexes/habits – Try another perspective – Focus on details – Keep asking – Pay attention.

5. **Use your imagination**
   Because this is your way to the unimaginable!
   Dare to dream – Dare to speak it aloud – Everything is possible – Be playful – Take risks.

**Presentation – Creativity Fitness Program**
WORKSHOP 2: THE PSYCHOLOGY IN COMMUNICATION: LEVERAGING INSIGHTS FOR BETTER RESULTS

- **Persuasion** - to ensure that others will follow you in your opinion, ideas or propositions, by influencing in an ethically responsible way.
- **Increase your persuasion power** in each three key components of communication sender - message – receiver.
- **The way in which** a given message is communicated, has a great potential to create the (un)wanted impact.

- **Sender** – principles of *authority* and *likeability* of the sender will influence impact of the message. Be aware that the two can be mutually exclusive.
  - Authority can be enhanced by claiming expertise and trust through for example title, appropriate clothing.
  - Likeability can be enhanced by physical appearance and/or accordance between the people within the given communication situation through sympathy, praise, similarity, strive for similar goals.

- **Message** – can be made impactful by using a pinch of *fear*, communicating on *scarcity* and with a touch of *charisma*
  - Stimulating a sense of fear is powerful tool to persuade, but also to paralyse, the receiver; hence, it is advised to be used only in moderately and to be coupled with a solution.
  - Since people want what there is little of, communicating on scarcity can prove effective.
  - Adjust your message in form content and style to become more charismatic and there by convincing.

- **Receiver** – you can influence a receiver’s response through principles of *reciprocity*, *commitment and consistency*, *social proof*, taking into account the receiver’s *perception* and the likelihood for deep or superficial *processing of information*
  - Reciprocity – giving makes people want to give something back, paying attention to the ways in which you give is worth the extra effort.
  - Commitment and consistency – people like to be consistent with their commitments, to trigger this you can commit first yourself, move from smaller commitments to bigger ones and try make their act of commitment as tangible as possible e.g. by letting them write it.
  - Social proof – since people like to act as their reference group, letting them know about the behaviour of the reference group can be helpful in persuasion.
  - Perception – perception of the receiver should bare an impact on the ways in which the message is communicated, therefore it is recommended to persuade, coach and listen.

Deep or superficial processing – if the audience is likely to process the message superficially it is advised to use different kinds of arguments than when the audience has the motivation, the skills and the opportunity the message. In the first case the quantity of arguments can matter more, where as in the latter, the quality of the argument(s) has more influence.

**Presentation**
WORKSHOP 3: CO-CREATING CAMPAIGNS

“EU Delivers in the Regions”

- The campaign was presented generally: regional campaigns that highlights EU-enabled projects.
- The processes surrounding the implementation of the campaign were reviewed.
- Emphasis was placed on the EU/region co-creation aspect, in the sense that the regions are fully involved in creative and operational choices at each step of the campaign.
- The main results of the 32 campaigns completed were also overviewed, as well as the results of some post-tests conducted to measure general satisfaction towards the campaign.
#EUinmyRegion:

- Main results: Over 2000 events; Photo contest: 751 pictures submitted, 231 projects, 111 postcards (x 300) produced; Storytelling contest: 116 entries received (48 citizens & 68 experts), 6 winners (3 citizens, 3 experts); Event videos: 5 videos created (Guadeloupe, Czech Republic, Portugal, Ireland, Poland); 1 wrap-up video case; Video case studies contest: 17 entries, 9 videos (+2 translations) created; 4 online training modules (storytelling, live events, social media, case video); 2 quizzes: 3,687 participants (+300%), 5 winners
- What worked well: organisation of events; FB budget; postcards; campaign look-and-feel

Group discussions: 3 questions: What should we improve in the campaign? How could we help you more? What would you need for the next edition? The answers included a wide range of answers. The two groups presented many positive feedbacks, as well as insights about some elements that could be improved in the future

- EU Delivers - Discussion about the interactive billboard, communication with agency, media plan and multipliers.
- #EUinmyRegion – more budget for FB; better digital strategy including Instagram; re-use existing online trainings

Takeaways / lesson learnt:

Doing together:

- Shared management = joint communication
- Co-create together while having ready-made and customizable products
- Working together is learning from peers and enhance professionalism
- Cooperation is efficient in terms of budget and resources

Local aspects

- Local involvement = local reach
- Knowledge and experience on the ground
- Cultivate local pride
- Support with municipalities / local politicians
- Local player are best known to communicate
- Selling local events/campaigns in the contest of an EU-wide initiative work with media&politicians
- National level is not enough

Communication aspects

- Campaign mechanism should be simple. ONE idea
- Using paid promotion to reach population
- Outdoor display for proximity and recall (seeing it several times)
- Interactive billboard
- Multipliers (Partnerships with local media and/or influencers)

Presentation
WORKSHOP 4 - EVALUATING COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

The workshop aims to present the work of the Commission on two aspects. One is the support to MS and programmes in performing a more effective evaluation of their communication in the next programming period. The second aspect is an assessment of the synergies across the EU and national/regional campaigns that DG REGIO is conducting via an external contractor (Technopolis).

Introducing the seminar, DG REGIO provides an overview of 2021-2027 communication provisions as regards the monitoring and evaluation of programmes’ communication activities. MAs shall spell out in the programme (under the communication chapter) the main indicators that they plan to use (art. 17). They are expected to perform a regular monitoring of communication in view of reporting to monitoring committees and annual review meetings about the impact.

DG COMM present a guide designed to help MAs measure their comm. activities in the 2021-2027 period. The document provides a methodological explanation and a list of suggested indicators based on the Commission’s evaluation framework.

Technopolis presents the interim results of a study commissioned by the Commission on the degree of synergies and integration across EU and national/regional campaigns around the cohesion funds. After the presentation, two group discussions take place to gather feedbacks from the network on the matter. One common theme emerging from the discussions is that programmes are struggling to follow up on the numerous communication activities rolled out by DG REGIO. They also signal a wish to be consulted more by DG REGIO whenever it is designing or launching a new campaign to avert the risk of overlaps with national/local campaigns.

WORKSHOP 5: HOW SUCCESSFUL ARE WE – AND WHERE CAN WE IMPROVE?

- The workshop fostered an exchange on INFORM member communication needs and the related input from the European Commission

- The participants split in groups were asked to answer, discuss and report on two questions:

1) What is successful communication for you? (define criteria)

The participants defined successful communication as the same overarching message adequately transmitted to different audiences via different communication tools adapted to their specific circumstances. Successful communication should be scalable (replicated) and always measured (a more in-depth analysis will follow).

2) What do you need from the European Commission to achieve that success (define tools or actions)

The answers included an ample range of suggestions, most notably the need for templates, guidance, access to knowledge sharing tools, and constant bilateral contacts between EU and national level (a more in-depth analysis to follow)

- In the last part of the workshop, DG REGIO presented the quantitative survey on communication needs shared with the Matrix in November and the participants were asked to spontaneously name the most and the least useful EC communication tool / action for their needs.
WORKSHOP 6: INTERREG 30 YEARS

1) Presentation from INTERERG Unit DG REGIO

The aim was to familiarise the participants with the rationale of the key themes (Greener Europe, everyone has a neighbour and youth) to highlight Interreg’s contribution to main challenges which will be used for selecting 30 projects for the exhibitions throughout 2020, the e-book or the digital strategy. The chosen corporate EC events as well as ad-hoc events are a good opportunity to steer a notion of Interreg 30 years to a broad audience from stakeholders to the wider public. The core celebration will take place on 15-16 October 2020, back to back with the EWRC 2020. With the support from A2 Interreg 30 years will be embedded into REGIO communication activities within DG REGIO. Support from Interreg Programmes will be welcome to make the events a success.
2) Interact

Immediate involvement of Interreg programmes already started in view of submitting their best projects (one per theme) and of choosing the common visual identity for Interreg 30 years. Interact will provide a repository with all promotional material which can be used by the programmes. The latter will include the right branding while leaving room for the programme to include programme specific information. Suggestions to improve the three branding proposals shall be forwarded to Interact.

3) TESIM

With the ENI CBC Programmes joining the Interreg family from 1 January 2020, the Technical Support to the Implementation and Management of ENI CBC programmes will kick off an event in February in Lviv, Ukraine with regard to the launch of the RegionStars Awards. A special bulletin will be issued between May and September 2020. What is more, ENI CBC Programmes will open their doors for the Interreg Volunteer Youth (IVY) initiative soon.

COMMUNICATING TOGETHER WITH THE MEMBER STATES

In her keynote speech, Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen, Director-General for Communication, European Commission, referred to several documents:

- **Un Union that Strive for More**: President of the Commission, Ursula von der Leyen’s political guidelines for 2019-2024
- **Europe in May 2019**: Preparing for a more united, stronger and more democratic Union in an increasingly uncertain world (part of the communication for the Informal EU27 leaders’ meeting in Sibiu
- **The EU Public Opinion 2014-2019**
- **Citizens’ dialogues and citizens’ consultations** – Key conclusions
INFORM: INSPIRATIONS FROM AND FOR THE NETWORK

1) **Peer-to-peer exchange.** Slovenia and Portugal have successfully activated the first peer-to-peer exchange on communication. Communication officers are invited to apply, using the Commission’s. [For more information](#).

2) **How to valorise knowledge and information on programme and projects?** POSEUR (Portugal) presented an innovative IT tool, which allow to rapidly extract information from internal database on the implementation of the programmes to provide information to external audiences (journalists, researchers, citizens). [Video](#).

3) **Zero-emission communication.** [How to plan, act and measure related to green communication](#). Proposal: integrate greening in the communication strategy for 2021-2027. It was agreed to dedicate a full workshop on the “green communication” topic during the next INFORM-INIO meeting.

4) **Integrity Pacts: a tool** – currently piloted for 18 projects in 11 Member States - to increase transparency and accountability, enhance citizens’ engagement and trust in public institutions, in the public procurement process ([presentation](#)) On 6 February 2020 a conference on “Engaging citizens for good governance in cohesion policy” will take place in Brussels. [Registrations are open](#), as well as a call for proposals of successful projects and initiatives in this field to be invited to the market place organised during the press
conference. On the [website](#) of the conference, you will also find more information about the rationale and the objectives of the conference.

5) **At the School of Open Cohesion:** Five countries are piloting the initiative, which originated in Italy during this school year. The objective is to create a European edition of this project for high-schools students that combines an education challenge with the civic engagement in monitoring EU-funded projects. [Presentation](#)

6) **Communicating Financial Instruments:** [fi-compass](#), single entry point for knowledge about financial instruments for the European Structural and Investment Funds. The web hub offers publications, case studies, on-line trainings, plus the organisation of dedicated events. [Presentation](#)

**INIO: COMMUNICATING SOCIAL EUROPE**

1) Main communication challenges of the ESF +
2) Presentation of the media partnership with “Real Economy” Euronews Magazine ([more information](#))
3) Presentation of the most recent EU communications campaign on social topics
4) 2019 ESF Communicator Contest Award Ceremony ([more information](#))
5) Discussion with the INIO Members on the future of the Network
6) Discussion with the INIO Members on the ESF projects dissemination activities
7) Video interviews with the winners

**TOWARDS AN EU COMMUNICATORS’ NETWORK FOR 2021-2027**

The European Commission presented a few ideas on the new EU-wide network from 2021 onwards.

- Established under the future CPR, covering 7 funds
- Merging INFORM and INIO + including other funds
- And EIP-AGRI? - And links to directly managed funds?
- 350+ members

Purpose of the network:

- Exchange of information on the results of the communication
- Exchange experiences and good practices
- Coordinate communication activities between MS & EC
- Assess the effectiveness of communication measures
- Propose recommendations to enhance the outreach and impact of communication activities

Make it operational:

- Joint plenary sessions for all funds
- Sub-groups per fund and target group
- Two meetings per year (rotation mechanism)
- Technical workshops • Functional online platform
- Joint secretariat
- New name: INFORM EU
At the same time, a single network coring all the funds should be established at the national level too.

**Presentation**

**STRUCTURED COOPERATION BETWEEN MANAGING AUTHORITIES AND EUROPE DIRECT CENTRES: LOOKING BEYOND INFORM AND INIO**

Art. 43 CPR: The communication coordinator shall involve in the visibility, transparency and communication activities the following bodies: (a) European Commission Representations and European Parliament Liaison Offices in the Member States; as well as Europe Direct Information Centres and other networks; educational and research institutions; (b) other relevant partners and bodies

Example of effective cooperation are already in place in several regions. When drafting the communication section of the programme, a collaboration with the EU bodies should be envisaged.

**Presentation**

**NATIONAL COMMUNICATION NETWORKS: WHAT WORKS – AND WHAT DOESN’T? THE EXPERIENCE OF SWEDEN**

Sweden presented the experience of a single national communication network covering all EU funds.

**Presentation**
ANNEX I - COUNTRY TEAM DISCUSSIONS

AUSTRIA and GERMANY

Alexander Ferstl - Theresa Koenig

1. Planned activities for 2020 + Synergies with EC activities

- German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs will organise an ESF info stand tour together with the Länder;
- Different German Länder/AT will use regional festivities to communicate about ERDF/ESF or organise specific conferences (also in cooperation with EDICs), especially in the context of Europe in my Region. DE: a “Europe in my Region” German central event will likely be planned in Rhineland-Palatinate. REGIO Communication Unit informed that there is a budget available in case countrywide, common activities are planned.
- As part of the German Presidency of the European Council, a conference will be organised in Halle (Saxony-Anhalt) with potential project visits in Halle, Leuna and Saxony
- Lower Saxony is exploring options of sending information on ERDF/ESF per mail to every household; Saxony shared its experience with a similar approach that was implemented this year - outcome yet to be evaluated; Mecklenburg-Vorpommern is exploring options to show ERDF advertisement in trams
- AT will use the celebrations around 25 years EU membership of Austria to communicate about the EU Cohesion Policy (historical witnesses, 25 projects opening their doors, study about the benefits of the EU membership for the Burgenland etc.)
- AT will organise a travelling exhibition, also in less usual places: schools, barracks, and retirement homes
- The Austrian Federal Ministry created image videos this year and will create a podcast series with ESF stories next year

2. A approach to communication in 2021-27 programmes, single national network of communicators

- AT/DE asked for a separate workshop on visibility rules and requirements = need to discuss
- Questions: (1) How to fulfil the requirement to have “one national communication coordinator for all funds?” = full time position?; (2) Guidance on requirements for “Operations of strategic importance” needed. There are still ongoing discussions; Commission will issue recommendations.

3. Projects: state-of-play

- AT/DE received project state-of-play via email
- DE: In September (meeting with German Communication officers in Berlin), it was agreed that REGIO would receive three new project examples per Land in a template in March every year. Project examples should cover different themes (all priority axes). REGIO A.2 will send a reminder in January 2020.
4. AOB

- Will the Eurobarometer video also be available with German text? REGIO Communication Unit will explore options.
- AT/DE ESF communication officers expressed the wish to meet among themselves in order to brainstorm on “How to reach participants in ESF funded projects/or ESF beneficiaries in order to unlock their potential as EU cohesion policy ambassadors?”. The idea is to meet for a day, potentially with external input.
- German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Joachim Zweig) will coordinate and invite for the meeting; interested AT colleagues will be kept in the loop.
- INFORM/INIO 2020 in Germany/Niedersachsen (Hannover), 10-11 June 2020. REGIO Geo Unit to explore possibility of Director F involvement.

BELGIUM/ LUXEMBOURG

Belgium

ESF - ERDF Brussels/Wallonia:

- ESF: Photo exhibition during annual event in “Galerie Anspach” which allowed to have quite some exchanges with people passing by;
- ERDF: photo exhibition in 4 cities (Liège, Mons, Charleroi and Namur). Launch event with 54 European journalists
- Information via Facebook, social media, website, L’Avenir, lot of help from Galerie Anspach
- Participated with EC Rep in Belgium in the #InvestEU Campaign which was a success (event ‘USEE European creative festival’ at See U);
- Campaign Select Actiris
- Production and distribution of 20 web videos about ERDF and ESIF projects
- ERDF: production of canvas to put on projects financed by the ERDF in Wallonia (stations, bridges, buildings...)

ERDF Brussels:

- Organised different events on thematic projects; participated in EU Regions Week; participated with EC Rep in Belgium in the #InvestEU Campaign (event USEE European creative festival’ at See U); organised a calendar to make activities visible; working on 15 videos and they will be ready by Jan/Feb;

ERDF Flanders:

- developing a new database and contacting projects to get updated photos and videos to upload; they will follow a training to be able to create videos – they will share this information with Wallonia;
ESF Flanders:

- Ambassador contest and thematic events with inspiring speakers
- Participated with EC Rep in Belgium in the #InvestEU Campaign (event with press on EU-funded project WIJ3)

Luxembourg

- Campaign on TV and radio as well as movies; participated in the Road Trip with one project;

2. Planned activities for 2020 + Synergies with EC activities

Belgium

EC Rep in Belgium:

- They are happy to collaborate further with all members of the Belgian team, in particular to:
  - Identify projects in the field of green, digital, employment, social (key priorities of the new Commission).
  - Identify projects suitable for Commissioners’ visits (all members of the new College will make visits to Belgium in the first half of the mandate).
  - Share content on social media (tag EU4BE to ease the sharing – FB/Insta/Twitter)
- They asked the regions to keep them informed on inauguration and other activities and some regions replied that they would like to get a mailing on a regular basis with events organised;
- They are organising an event in May/June (date tbc) with 28 EU-funded networks that have been identified in BE (including the Europe Direct Information Centres – EDIC) to inform them about events and share best practices;

ESF Brussels/Wallonia:

- New call for proposals (new comms agency)
- Training for promoters (European Pillar of Social Rights) and training for beneficiaries on how to communicate
- With ERDF Wallonia: Content in Journal des enfants – network with teachers

ERDF Flanders:

- Plan an event in Hasselt with SFC/AGRI/ERDF “Europa in jouw buurt“ on 9/5 to promote projects;

ESF Flanders:

- New ambassador contest (with movie)

Luxembourg

- plan to repeat TV, radio and movie publicity;
- interested in a training on how to communicate better;
- Interested in the closing event;
3. **A approach to communication in 2021-27 programmes, single national network of communicators**

   It was suggested to have this as main point for the next INFORM meeting in Hannover.

4. **Projects: state-of-play**

   The participants were reminded to check dates and financial information. The Communication unit informed they are reflecting on a new system for the new programming period.

5. **AOB**

   Myth Busting – The EC Rep in Belgium informed about a website which is developed with a link to the local websites (on section on Belgium).

   - Eurobarometer: organise information sessions at local/regional level – propose spots on the regional/national TV

   InvestEU Campaign: difficulty of attracting BE press to visit projects.

   Training requests:
   - A NL website “Someflex” with short tutorials was recommended;
   - A need for a closure/launching event, could be organised during one day.
   - How to better communicate on result on projects

   Road trip 2020: Green project – cycling – the participants were reminded to transmit ideas to the communication unit.

   Ideas for project visit for new Commissioners: the participants were reminded to suggest good projects.

   There were quite some discussions on the logo for the future and how the regions flag should be kept or not.

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**BULGARIA AND HUNGARY**

- Anguel Beremliysky (BG) – Tunde Tamassy (HU) – Florin Rugina

1. **Main activities 2019**

   - Hungary has focused on local events partnering with National Parks and universities. Communication officers attended events organised by these institutions to promote EU funded projects and opportunities. This way they could save on budget and still reach a considerable
number of citizens. Bulgaria has worked on social media campaigns, 3-d events, and ASOC-like collaborations with schools;

- In general, social media, creation of related content and media buying are dominating the activities.
- The Fund of Funds in Bulgaria is a good example of communicating on FIs, combining elements of interest for the general public (about FIs and their advantages) and more targeted outreach to potential beneficiaries.
- Campaigns: the colleagues found the EUinMyRegion SoMe boost useful. In addition, they are looking forward to RTP’s new edition, the previous one being a success in their countries; concerns were formulated regarding the choice of influencers and the possibility to influence and propose projects for the routes.
- REGIO suggested more synergies between the different channels (incl. Twitter), “going local” type of events etc.
- Cooperation with EC Reps and EDICs, as well as the local information centres on EU funds, is essential.

2. Planned activities for 2020 + Synergies with EC activities

- The INFORM colleagues will continue the ASOC-like activities and would like to have a campaign similar with RTP, but for journalists. Bulgaria’s ESF campaign targeting mostly children will continue. Media seminars are also included in the planning, especially on 2021-2027;
- For the future the INFORM colleagues have suggested for social media to become “compulsory” in communication and asked for support in methodology for planning, monitoring and evaluation of (social media) activities
- The colleagues requested to receive trainings on video editing, such as MoJo, and on how to be successful on so-me with a low budget. In relation to the first request, we recommend to use the following apps for MoJo:
  - iOS: Filmic Pro, Lumafusion;
  - Android: Filmic Pro, Kinemaster.
- Hungary is already working on a revised common visual identity and claim for the new programming period (will most probably be a continuation of the current one). Bulgaria has not started yet.
- Hungary is planning two campaigns for 2020, one summarizing the achievements of the 2014-2020 period, and one introducing the new directions for 2021-2027.
Croatia

1. Main activities 2019
   • Open Days (200+ events) as well as Regional Open days in May (national version of EU in My Region)
   • Days of Regional Development in Šibenik in October (3 day conference for 800+ people)
   • Continuation of the media campaign “EU funds are changing Croatia” (30 sec tv videos, 15 sec for social media)

2. Planned activities for 2020 + Synergies with EC activities
   • Repeating the above
   • Synergies with Brussels-led EU campaigns are limited due to the language issue; whenever possible they do dissemination via social media and use the material at public events such as fairs

3. A approach to communication in 2021-27 programmes, single national network of communicators
   • A single network already in place

4. Projects: state-of-play
   • Already sent an update via mail

Slovenia

1. Main activities 2019
   • “EU projekt, moj projekt” (=EU project, my project, a national version of the #EUinMyRegion campaign. 100+ events, all regions, 50 cities/towns. EARDF projects came on board as well
   • Video competition; less entries than last year (perhaps saturation due to similar #EUandME as well as Interreg activities?), voting was not possible due to low number of eligible/quality videos.

2. Planned activities for 2020 + Synergies with EC activities
   • Repeating the “EU projekt, moj projekt”
   • Trying to avoid duplication with EU in my Region

3. A approach to communication in 2021-27 programmes, single national network of communicators
• An informal network of such type already exists, needs to be formalised; there is enough interest for cooperation, however the changes will have to be done also in terms of capacity (2 persons at MA only); request that the EC underlines this need and importance of communication activities at high-level meetings with the MA as well.

• SI expressed concern/wish that the national coordinator should indeed be an operational person, not a politically nominated figure.

4. Projects: state-of-play

• SI expressed dissatisfaction over the fact that the external contractor is not doing the work, is being paid to contact the beneficiaries, but at the end the MA does the work (calling and filling in the complicated template instead of the contractor). The template is too complicated for beneficiaries to fill. Also, there is great confusion on the photos – the beneficiaries already agreed that they are used, when they are asked two or three more times, they stop replying and the authorities/Commission appear stupid.

5. AOB

• SI is asking for concrete reply from the Commission on the definition of what is a permanent plaque. What if a plaque is damaged after 10 years, does the beneficiary have to replace it? But there is no more money in the project? Similar for the website – it should be on the website “while the results of the project are visible”, this too is too vague! It would be useful already if Commission told MS that each country decides for itself what is “permanent”.

• SI asks for clarification on the sentence “For small project funds” on point 2. on page 23 of the Communicating cohesion Policy in 2021-2007 booklet.

• SI is having difficulties in including other projects in promotion as they have been told that for example the rural development projects cannot be included as they are not eligible (financing from TA Objective 1), however in some other countries this is not an issue; it would be beneficial to get a clear Commission view on this, formally written.

CZECHIA-SLOVAKIA

Filip Krenek and Thomas Baer

1. Main activities 2019

• CZ: Eurofon and Eurocenters (information for beneficiaries); integrated communication activities (100.000 projects for a better Czech Republic; Where the EU funds help); 2019 campaign: Giants in the city (TV, print, OOH, digital), 13 regional project panels with before-after pictures, 14 on-site events; presence at 9 music festivals; Media partnership

• SK: Majales, Europe Day, Roadshow (young people propose projects, engaging schools), EU Roadtrip Project, separate campaign RoadTrip SK (tour of SK schools), campaign Thank you EU (TV, radio, online), Young European 2019, Documentary TV Series (25 mini episodes and promotional campaign, collaboration with TA3), student video competition (very successful), training course on Information and Communication guidelines, Information Center for Structural Funds; publications: EURO kompas
2. Planned activities for 2020 + Synergies with EC activities

- **CZ**: focus on areas most supported by the public (social, environmental, transport); segmentation and targeting based on previous studies; continuing 2019 activities - 100,000 projects for a better Czech Republic (1 larger and 1 smaller TV campaign) and Where the EU funds help (open days, project visits, VR presentations at music festivals, Facebook, Instagram competitions, etc.); new activities: VR presentations at fairs and exhibitions; newspaper supplements; video-tutorials
  - interested to cooperate on the next edition of the Roadtrip Project (room for improved coordination) and the campaign #EUinmyRegion (positive feedback on the social media collaboration and videos from events)
- **SK**: continuing activities – Majales, Europe Day, RoadTrip SK, campaign Thank you EU (10 TV spots planned for spring 2020), Young European 2020 to be merged with Roadshow, documentary TV series (promotion in 2020), student video competition, publications, FB, training course on Information and Communication guidelines, Information Center
  - interested in the next Roadtrip Project (advance planning needed to ensure presence of local journalists, etc.) and on the #EUinmyRegion campaign; possible synergies on the Roadshow campaign between the EC Representation in Bratislava and the SK Ministry of Regional development

3. An approach to communication in 2021-27 programmes, single national network of communicators

- **CZ**: preparation for post-2020, communication and PR activities involving the public, potential beneficiaries, media and journalists; communication network already in place, CZ plans to roll over the current arrangements e.g. strong coordination at national level (Ministry of Regional Development) with complementary actions at OP level.
- **SK**: improvements in the network needed, currently insufficient coordination on OP level, steering committee not functioning very well; EC encouragement needed for SK to improve the coordination of their national communication network and the respective setup of the SK ESIF communication framework.

4. Projects: state-of-play

- **CZ** and **SK** familiarized with the state of projects on InfoRegio and will follow-up with providing more project proposals for the database.

5. AOB

- Need to better use opportunities for REGIO desk officers and CZ/SK national coordinators to regularly share information, press releases, etc. to be more aware of each other’s communication activities in order to improve collaboration.
- REGIO desk officers invited to meet the OP communication officers at the CZ annual review meetings, working groups in Prague and an upcoming meeting on sharing best communication practices in V4 countries organized by CZ and foreseen for March 2020.
- **CZ** appreciate the communication activity of REGIO in the past year (i.e. technical workshops in Warsaw and Zagreb and the booklet); **CZ** expressed concerns over the lack of proper
evaluation of campaigns (i.e. media call, Roadtrip Project); overall coordination with EC needs to be improved.

- CZ national coordinators can share media coverage of EU co-funded projects with the CZ desk officers in REGIO (project features in regional Denik editions).
- SK would like to join the RoadTrip and #EUinmyRegion campaign again, but stressed the need for timely coordination.
- INIO network in urgent need of better coordination. DG EMPL should be informed.

DENMARK, FINLAND, SWEDEN

Hanna Soderstrom - Alice Arnaldi

1. Main activities 2019

Denmark

- 3 workshops for projects under the themes education, innovation and entrepreneurship. The workshops provide inputs for the upcoming periods as well.
- Social media campaign in January consisting of 6 videos. The storyline moves from individuals not aware of the policy to individual benefiting from it to broader impact of the project for the given sector and region.
- Development of new website: during the process, user testing has been utilized.

Finland

- Fraud prevention campaign on social media.
- Advent calendar campaign on social media; from 1.-24. December everyday results of one project will be presented.
- 2 larger events next year: 1 at “countryside parliament” and 2 on migration.
- Peer learning experience in Tallinn.
- Working on new website, focus on accessibility.
- ERDF intermediate body: communicating events and calls, newsletter, participation in Europe day, trainings and webinars for projects, 3 projects in RegioStars.
- ERDF intermediate body: more focus on the communicating the project results; multispectral communication campaign (mostly on social media) and a publication in preparation for the current programming period.
- Åland: Plan to prepare articles on all of the projects.

Sweden

- ERDF: Adjustments on the website with the focus on results: How to bring and tie the results of different programmes together, how to best collaborate on this with the programmes. Thus far new subpage on results, pilot video on tourism in the making.
- ESF: Participation in Almedalen (discussion festival).
- ESF: Social media campaign “TO FIND ONE’S PLACE”: 9 projects, 9 stories in articles, in podcast, hopefully also videos.
• ESF: new website and new visual presence in the preparation for the upcoming period.
• ESF: final conference for the programming period in the making

Interreg Central Baltic

• Communication on “extra” 5th call
• Annual event, during which university students were involved in discovering projects

EU in my region

• In Sweden record year in terms of participating projects, visitors and media coverage
• In Denmark, the campaign took place in May and October. The focus was on green projects that could show concrete results.
• Åland participated to the campaign for the first time, with 15 projects.
• Finland looking forward to activate more projects in 2020.
• What works? To attract more projects: snowball effect, good experiences of participation. For press: possibility to focus on specific (themed) projects that can concretely show results.

2. Planned activities for 2020 + Synergies with EC activities

• Most of the above mentioned activities continue on 2020: EUinmyregion campaign, the website developments, closing of the programmes with events and publications in the pipeline
• Focus will be paid on communicating results, and communicating accessible and clear manner that should be streamlined to the communication towards the public as well as with the potential beneficiaries (“you can never say it too simply”).
• Always possibility to do more – continue good work towards future 😊

3. A approach to communication in 2021-27 programmes, single national network of communicators

• Too early to prepare anything, beyond the actions and inputs stated above.

4. Projects: state-of-play

• Denmark: already provided the corrections.
• Sweden: some project fiches in the pipeline.
• All in all the current system experienced as rather heavy, a wish to simplify and lighten up at least the current fiche format.

5. AOB

• Training wishes: on evaluation and measurement also in relation to upcoming programming period, social media
• Information on the Facebook-regulation on political advertising especially in relation to media budget from Euinmyregion-campaign
Several cross-country issues were discussed at length, such as, for instance, the national awareness and perception surveys on EU funding and projects – ran in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The polling methodology involves personal face-to-face interviews (Eurobarometer studies rely on phone interviews). On similar issues, there are quite substantial differences compared to the Eurobarometer (up to 20% more people saying they have heard about EU co-funded projects) and the costs are also higher to run face to face interviews.

European Commission informed about analysis done in his unit on the EB results for the Baltic countries and offered to share it with those interested. The Commission gave feedback and advice on some communication campaigns run at national level in the three countries, with an emphasis on the “courageous and innovative” approach undertaken, such as projects with schools (children are quick learners and excellent multiplicators) or providing honest information on potential problems associated with EU-funded projects (i.e. rebuilding infrastructure can result traffic jams and noise) to engage and empower the local population.

In terms of the expectations from the EU side, the participants expressed their interest in having more information on the 2021-2027 new communication requirements (i.e. how to place information on the billboards or how to use the logo) and suggested a good model for that: the design manual done by the EEA Norway for project beneficiaries, EE & LV mentioned difficulties in addressing the Russian language speakers in their respective countries and requested more coordination between different DGs managing ESIF, as the information is scattered and there are too many competing brandings and rules to implement (i.e. 10 different Interreg logos in Latvia).

**Lithuania**

The Lithuanian participants presented the communication activities ran in 2019 and the ones planned for 2020 – in general, they implemented 41 communication campaigns throughout the year. Most notably, the representative of the Ministry of Finance referred to an annual competition for journalists organized by the ministry. The competition aims to enable and reward critical thinking and analytical skills for journalists covering EU funded projects, so that they investigate real issues and expose potential misuse of European funds, with a particular focus on local and regional journalists and media outlets, to broaden coverage of such topics outside the capital area. The 2020 edition will be launched in January.

The ministry also organizes a competition for students writing their thesis on structural funds – 6 students were awarded last year.

On the ESF side, notable actions included a storytelling competition for ESF funds beneficiaries (10 stories were awarded) and a social advertising TV campaign about the support for elders enabled by European funding.
Another recurrent activity is the organization of the Contacts Fair (February or March 2020), bringing together 600 guests to promote current and future EU co-funded projects: success stories and videos with a focus on good communication practices are presented. The 2020 topic of the fair will be green projects and the Commissioner is expected to visit Lithuania during the fair (possible synergies with the Green Deal package).

Latvia

The MA representatives from Latvia informed about the national communication activities: they ran 9 major awareness campaigns, organized 300 seminars and produced a good number of supporting video materials.

There is a network of EU funds communicators in Latvia and it meets four times every year to harmonize approaches and exchange good practices.

They organize a local version of REGIO Stars that will continue in 2020 and where they would like to invite the Commissioner, possibly in May. They also take part in the Open Doors Day and the EU in My Region campaigns.

An ampler multi-channel campaign to bring forward EU funded success stories is kicking off in January 2020. Latvia also has a very successful quality show on EU funded projects, broadcasted weekly by the public television with excellent ratings. The hook was to present two projects per show: one successful and the other one not and explain why that happened – this brought in viewers, because the format was honest and engaging (good lesson for communication: it cannot be just self-congratulatory and brush over problems).

Estonia

There was only one participant from Estonia, as there is just one communication officer in the Estonian Managing Authority. She explained how she had just visited the Latvian counterparts to exchange ideas and information and learn from their experience.

Estonia has just run its public awareness survey on EU funded projects in September to excellent results: 95% saw the logo, 80% think the impact of structural funds is good. The only metric that is lower is the awareness on local projects, so they are setting up a national network to increase the visibility of projects at local level.

Communication activities in 2019-2020 include media relations and buying on EU funds (y compris opinion articles) in all media outlets, work on the website to include an interactive map of projects (50 new projects will be added and also translated in English, a video competition for youngsters (what would you do for Estonia with EUR 3 billion?), social media buying (and seeking to outsource the social media strategies), a TV show focusing on tourism projects, local REGIO Stars and a Cities and Counties Day (May / June) to showcase projects and improve cooperation.

Last, but not least, Estonia also organizes Europe’s Day with the local EC Representation – it will take place 9-16 May in 8 different towns and feature games about the EU funded projects, concerts and local markets.
1. Main communication activities 2019-2020

- **INFORM coordination** (CGET): refonte du site internet “Europe en France” en faisant entrer le maximum de projets sur le site; Joli Mois de l’Europe – Open Agenda consultable en ligne avec tous les événements organisés par région; exposition de projets « Les Belles histoires ».

- **FSE France**: Témoignages et vidéos ciblant la presse régionale en lien avec la 5\textsuperscript{ème} édition du “Village des initiatives FSE” organisé en mars 2019; développement du site internet FSE en France (http://www.fse.gouv.fr/).

- **Bretagne**: campagne « Les BrEUtons » qui met à l'honneur 8 Bretons bénéficiaires de fonds européens (FEDER, FSE, FEADER, FEAMP) en illustrant la contribution des fonds structurels à la valorisation du territoire breton (http://breutons.europe.bzh/); jeu « Legends of Europe » destiné à une utilisation grand public qui permet d’approfondir les connaissances des jeunes sur l’Europe (https://www.europe.bzh/jcms/prod_448925/fr/jeu-legends-of-europe); exposition itinérante sur les projets européens en coopération avec les EDIC; campagne « EU delivers in the Regions » autour du projet Réhabilitation du port de Brest.

- **Normandie**: campagne d’information « L’Europe, ça change la ville ! » qui vise à valoriser auprès du grand public les projets de rénovation urbaine; chroniques radio – petits récits sur les projets cofinancés en mettant en avant l’impact des projets; campagne « EU delivers in the Regions » autour du projet Cité de la Mer de Cherbourg; organisation de l’événement de lancement de la concertation régionale pour la période 2021-2027 (octobre 2019).

- **Ile de France**: réalisation de capsules vidéo, exposition mobile sur l’Europe et la Région afin de valoriser la rénovation thermique des bâtiments du logement social.

- **Occitanie**: lancement de la saison 2 de la websérie « Tandem en Occitanie » dédiée aux projets cofinancés par les fonds européens et réalisée par 2 youtubers; campagne « EU delivers in the Regions » autour du projet du Lido de Sète; lancement du nouveau site internet; réalisation de 20 vidéos de témoignages de porteurs de projets; diffusion d’un communiqué de presse chaque mois sur un projet particulier.

- **SUD/PACA**: séminaire interne pour expliquer les missions de l’équipe de communication en charge des fonds structurels pour fluidifier le travail en interne et créer des synergies; portes ouvertes dans le cadre du Joli mois de l’Europe; création du module de publicité animée sur les obligations en matière de communication pour les bénéficiaires; campagne « EU delivers in the Regions » autour du projet Hellio.

- **Nouvelle Aquitaine**: une journée avec 12 bloggeurs/influenceurs invités à communiquer sur les actions culturelles et le soutien de l’Europe dans ce secteur; campagne « EU delivers in the Regions » autour du projet Lascaux cave IV, supplément de 4 pages dans le journal régional tiré à 2,7 millions d’exemplaires avec des exemples de projets bénéficiant des fonds européens; compétition “Ecrivez l’Europe”; organisation de l’événement de lancement de la concertation régionale pour la période 2021-2027 (juin 2019).

- **Guadeloupe**: initiative « L’Europe à l’école » - des écoles de Guadeloupe s’associent au Joli mois de l’Europe et parlent d’Europe aux enfants en leur faisant visiter des projets financés par les fonds européens; campagne « Petits soleils d’Europe - 30 vidéos de témoignages de porteurs de projets diffusées sur les réseaux sociaux; expositions itinérantes sur l’Europe; campagne
« EU delivers in the Regions » autour du projet Cité scolaire de Baimbridge; organisation de l’événement de lancement de la concertation régionale pour la période 2021-2027 (septembre 2019).


- Pays de la Loire : des permanences de l’info européenne dans des écoles et des entreprises; concours photo sur les projets cofinancés par le programme Leader; newsletter Europe; spots radio prévus en 2020 pour promouvoir le prochain programme; période de réserve électorale due aux élections municipales de mars 2020.

2. Feedback on “EU delivers in the Regions” campaign

- Améliorer l’utilisation des « Interactive Billboards » (Au niveau logistique, organisation, visuel)  Proposition – Rajouter une petite animation pour accompagner les billboards sur place;

- Circuit de communication – Améliorer le nombre de contacts chez HAVAS (un peu trop nombreux) – Garder la Région dans les échanges avec les projets

- Améliorer la préparation au niveau des influenceurs/bloggeurs;

- Difficultés de mobiliser la Direction de la Communication de la Région  Proposition - Courrier officiel à envoyer par la CE au Président de la région pour expliquer la campagne.

3. Projects: state-of-play

Il est rappelé aux participants de vérifier/compléter les informations sur les projets et de transmettre au minimum 3 exemples de projets pour les régions manquantes avant fin décembre. Plusieurs régions demandent d’améliorer le processus d’échange d’informations entre la CE, l’agence ESN et les régions en matière de communication sur les projets figurant dans la database Inforegio. L’unité de communication est en train de réfléchir à un nouveau système pour la future période de programmation.

4. AOB

Il est rappelé de mettre à jour les chargés de communication dans SFC2014.

GREECE

Eirini Nikolaidou

1. Main activities 2019 / Planned activities for 2020 + Synergies with EC activities

- The EC is encouraged to have more campaigns such as “Europe Delivers in the Regions”.

- The need for more coordinated communication activities at national level was expressed.

2. An approach to communication in 2021-27 programmes, single national network of communicators
Many colleagues have expressed their concerns about the fact that they are not working full time on communication issues. There should be some kind of pressure / incentives for their management to respect the new CPR provision on having full-time communication officers in the managing authorities.

During the monitoring committee meetings, a more prominent place in the agenda should be given to communication (which should be the 1st point according to some colleagues).

There should be more future obligations for beneficiaries vis a vis the managing authorities.

High-level meetings between the hierarchy of managing authorities and the Commission would be welcome (so that communication becomes everyone’s business in managing authorities too).

The national coordinator will send guidelines (e.g. regarding a coherent visual identity for websites) and the EC support package to managing authorities.

Colleagues said that their work was highly facilitated by the official letter sent to them by Commissioners Cretu and Thyssen on the 7 joint actions in the past and would appreciate receiving such a letter for the future too.

3. Projects: state-of-play

Colleagues said that they are frequently asked by DG REGIO to send projects, which appear on the REGIO database. However, they said that they do not see ESF projects of their country on DG EMPL’s website. They suggest a common database for all EU-funded projects is set up.

4. AOB

Colleagues encouraged the Commission to have more Smart Regions' videos covering Greece.

1. Activities 2019

- Interreg Europe: web documentary, five projects stories on achievements from a human angle focused on: textile, innovation, sustainable mobility, nature and biodiversity, historical cities and social enterprises. More info under http://stories.interregeurope.eu/
- Central Europe: under the banner #Cooperationiscentral, 50 (out of 130) projects stories already covered on their blog, including a story map linked to it (message, location).
- Interreg SUDOE: developed Humans of SUDOE à la Humans of New York, working on interactive map linked to it; also cooperation with University to reflect Cohesion Policy with students. To be continued in 2020. Besides, its Interreg Volunteer Youth (IVY) organised a Citizens Engagement Activity in cooperation with the University of Santander. A success, to be continued in 2020.
- Interreg Estonia-Latvia: project to produce green guidelines for citizens; Green Space Tour (with 4 busses and a theatre play) organised on European Cooperation Day to raise/promote environmental awareness, water management projects and green campaigning/ workshops.
- Interreg Med: #MadeinMed reached over 100.000 impression in one month, 5 articles with
Euroactive were issued.

- DE-CZ organised market-like presentation of projects for the public including participation of high level politicians in 2019. Programme took part in 30 years celebration of the Fall of the Berlin Wall. → To be continued in all regions in 2020.
- Baltic Sea: activated projects to be more vocal, organising dedicated workshops per target groups, including storytelling and other communication training (about 50 participants). Trainer: Charlelie Jourdan
- Interreg FWVL promoted the “Project of the month” each month in its newsletter and on social media.

Commission colleagues invited programmes to feed journalists in general and beneficiaries of REGIO grants (winners of the 2018 call) in particular with media opportunities, notably to cover project inauguration, local events, etc.

2. Planned activities for 2020 – synergize with EC activities

- Huge interest to participate in Interreg 30 years celebrations. Short introduction by Commission colleagues on planned activities. More to follow tomorrow during dedicated workshop.
- European Cooperation Day (ECDay) 2020 - Interact to support programmes to increase the use of social media.
- Interact: next meeting of communication network planned for February/March 2020 in Lithuania. Also Interact will launch a Consultation/ survey on Interreg on usability of brand manual for revision in 2020.
- Discussion/Opinion festivals in Scandinavian countries (SW, DK, EE, LV, LT – all in turn in the month of June)
- Interreg Estonia-Latvia: intends to participate in opinion/talk festival with various NGOs, private and public bodies together with other Interreg programmes under the slogan: “together” by using Interreg 30 years brand. Themes: tbd.
- Several Interreg programmes intend to communicate in 2020 around “30 projects”.

3. Approach to communication in 2021-2027 programmes, single national network

Most programmes have started programming Task Force/Working Group Meetings for Programming. Communication strategy has not been part of it yet.

Risks/ issues raised by programmes of one single national network

How to structure communication between single national communication officer and Interreg programmes, given e.g. transnational programmes with various countries involved using different languages?

When draft cooperation programmes (CPs) are outsourced, communication is likely to become a secondary aspect. Commission colleagues confirmed that the Commission will check the communication section in the CP and, where necessary, send observations (meaning reject the draft submitted until satisfactory amendments have been integrated).

0.3 % budget for communication– programmes alerted that this “advice” was not a reality in the implementation of 2014-2020 budgets, that parts of the communication budget originally earmarked for communication was spend to cover other costs.
NL reminded that existing and future reporting indicators should and protect the budget earmarked for communication.

Idea raised to develop a template for communication strategy that will most likely be relevant for all programmes and leave room for programme specific elements.

4. AOB

**Eurobarometer**: the 2019 flash survey on regional policy is already helpful, will be complemented by 12/10/2020 (#EURegionsWeek) by an update of the 2015 flash survey focusing on the awareness and perception of citizens in cross-border areas.

**Fighting disinformation together**: invitation to programmes to alert REGIO A2 the moment fake news are spotted.

**Training needs identified**:  
1. How to evaluation communication campaigns?  
2. How to enlarge audiences? How to use consultations to meet their needs? (Interact took note for its Communication seminar in Feb/March 2020)  
3. GDPR  
4. Logos for projects allowed or not, clearer rules, how to place own logos (size etc.).

ITALY

Matteo Salvai – Alessandra Flora – Bruno Cortese

1. Planned activities for 2020 + Synergies with EC activities

- Agenzia per la coesione territoriale to launch soon a new national survey on awareness and perception of cohesion policy in Italy.  
- EU Delivers in the Regions to cover additional regions in Italy in 2020. So far, seven were already covered (Lombardia, Veneto, Toscana, Abruzzo, Sardegna, Campania and Sicilia). The campaign proved to be particularly successful in Italy. Piemonte, Umbria and Calabria interested to participate in 2020.  
- Participants invited to disseminate further the media call. Italy has a record number of applications. Managing Authorities are in contact with some of the winners and consider this call useful for their purposes.  
- Participants asked to involve Italy in the new edition of the Road Trip Project  
- #EUinmyRegion: a few programme will take part and use the FB ads budget

2. An approach to communication in 2021-27 programmes

- Agenzia per la coesione territoriale and national and regional communication officers will exchange inputs and suggestions on the new communication provision 2021-27  
- Agenzia per la coesione territoriale will draft a document outlining a general approach to a communication for the 2021-27 period (including a common branding, coordinated actions and
a joint approach to monitoring and evaluation). The documents will be circulated to the regions and then be referred in the communication chapter of the programme.

- Participants asked to raise the profile of the communication and to have specific official discussions in the contest of the programming in parallel with the already established policy objectives discussions. Participants would like to have an exchange with REGIO and EMPL management on the specific topic of communication in Italy at the beginning of the next year.
- Appoint a national coordinator for seven funds could turn to be difficult for the current governance of the funds

3. **Projects: state-of-play**

- Programmes will check the table and provide additional projects when needed.

4. **AOB**

- Need to have a consolidated list of contacts including ERDF and EFS communicators
- Need to reach out to the regions which are generally not represented in these meetings
- Plan to establish a mechanism to fight fake news and disinformation on cohesion policy at the national level. Commission can share its experience on the disinformation network.
- An online platform to exchange information, have conversations and share good practices is still to be found. Meanwhile, the WhatsApp group serves the basic purpose of exchanging information.

**NETHERLANDS**

Alain Vanden Borre

1. **Main activities 2019**

- Weekend of Sciences: open doors of 22 ERDF projects (out of 400).
- Facebook campaign was a success, REGIO financing welcome (all year round!)
- “Libelle”: most popular women magazine, with REP budget: 4 advertorials (first in December): projects with women leader or beneficiary
- Kansen voor West: survey stakeholders to prepare next period
- ESF campaign against discrimination offers trainings, best practices, exchanges for job market intermediaries. Town hall meetings and Bus Tour. 10 video testimonials. Hook on campaign with ministry.

2. **Planned activities for 2020 + Synergies with EC activities**

- Renew Weekend of Sciences
- Complete and adapt project descriptions on website and list of operations (results)
- Interreg NL-DE interest for EU delivers in the regions campaign
- Events with stakeholders to prepare new period
- ESF: Best of 7 years (still brainstorming)
3. **A approach to communication in 2021-27 programmes, single national network of communicators**
   - Network already started, lots to be defined including national coordinator
   - Issues of single national portal: responsibility, financing?

4. **Projects: state-of-play**
   - Need to know: Why are these projects needed? How will they be used? 3 projects per province, really? 3 per programme seems more reasonable

5. **AOB**
   - NL wants to network with other net contributors EU-sceptics (AT-DK-SV), what can we offer?
   - Is it still compulsory to prepare annual event, when does communication obligation end?
   - TAIEX: 3 participants from LT received
   - Training needs: Creative commons (like Palermo) > guidelines? – Also social media (obtain engagement, reach targets, evaluation)

**POLAND**

*Julia Majewska - Małgorzata Kucinska*

1. **Discussion about visibility of EU funds in 2019 activities, covering:**
   - Short films (30-180 sec.) participating in the Camerimage film festival competition;
   - Social media accounts of managing authorities (MA) and/or marshal offices;
   - Articles;
   - Open days of EU funds and other events such as Mazovia Development Forum.

Conclusions:

   - EU support and the objectives of the cohesion policy are not sufficiently addressed by the current communication activities. Little reference to European values, the objectives of cohesion policy and the wider European context is to be found in the deliverables of communication campaigns.
   - A clear reference to EU funds/EU should be included in all communication products (articles, SM posts, movies...), abbreviations such as ROPWP should be avoided.
   - Visibility of EU funds, both in the visual and program aspect should be ensured in events, such as business forum financed as a communication action under ROP.
   - Social media accounts visual identification should be unified in 2021-2027
   - A preference for a separate SM account managed by the MA, devoted to EU funds

2. **Coordination of communication activities in 2021-27**
   - There is an interest in the cooperation with the EC representations and EDICs.
• However, 2 points were raised: one, they have very limited resources, two, EDIC target their activities to children and youth, which were excluded as a target group in 2014-2020 communication strategy in PL.
• PL will reconsider including children and teenagers in the target groups for communication.
• They requested that the EC writes an e-mail to EDIC encouraging their cooperation with MAs.

3. **A general approach to communication in 2021-27, single national network of communicators**

• PL communication coordination body is planning to have a **single network for all funds** covered by the cohesion policy. They would like to include the European Agricultural Fund (EAFRD) as well, however it might be challenging without a support from the EC.
• PL would like to continue the **single branding policy**. National communication network will work on branding for social media for example.
• **A role of intermediate bodies** in the communication strategy and network must be clearly defined for the future. In PL ministries of culture, climate, health and others, play a role of an intermediate bodies and receive a TA for communication activities. However, as the EC has observed, there communication activities are not visible or do not include “European funds/EU” branding.
• **Programmes and priorities names** should reflect more the European dimension of the support. The goal is to improve the impact of the communication actions on building the European identity of citizens and authorities. Names of the programmes should be clear for citizens in particular, as they are being regularly used in media releases, articles and projects websites etc. It is important that each priority investment is also described in the form of end-benefits understandable to the general public.
  Examples of programme names: European Funds for Mazovia Region /EU for Mazovia development; and a transport priority: “Better connected Europe”.
• The conclusion was that PL communication officers are very much in favour for this idea, but they need a clear message (sent by letter) from the EC that this approach is required.

4. **AOB**

• A **communication booklet** presented by the DG REGIO gives an interpretation that the plaques and billboards shall stay in place permanently. PL communication officers required to define what does is mean “permanently”. In 2014-20 PL is following a rule that the billboards must stay in place at least for the durability of the project.
• **Eurobarometer** – should measure not only the awareness about EU funds presence in the country, but also awareness about objectives of EU funds (cohesion policy) and their impact on the local/regional/national/European levels.
1. **Main activities 2019**

**POSEUR**
- #EURegionsWeek
- #EUinmyRegion
- Debriefing sessions
- Presentation in Madeira
- 5/12.- Presentation of results of projects (POSEUR + MAR2020 + PDR) for 5 schools (including debate)

**NORTE2020**
- Two types of communication activities: regular and complementary
- #EURegionsWeek (NORTE and Galicia partnership)
- #EUinmyRegion (9th May parade, video done)
- EU funds + Douro architecture award
- Regional TV and Radio programmes

**CENTRO2020**
- #EURegionsWeek
- #EUinmyRegion (not only open the doors but develop specific actions
- Regiostars finalist
- Campaign “Europa aqui, no CENTRO da sua vida”/ “Europe here, at the centre of your life” (Social media, Newspaper Expresso, regional TV and radio)

**POCH**
- #EUinmyRegion
- People qualification (9 May, dedicated event)
- Events with young people, to raise awareness between them
- Participation in 2 big fairs (big stand shared with other regional PO on education)
- Visits to beneficiary entities to highlight what they can capitalise and get visibility from 1) Communication advantages and 2) Monitoring results.
- During those visits create the video series “historias de sucesso” with the projects
- MOSTRA Portugal 2020
- Peer to peer (Portugal <> Slovenia)

**POISE**
- #EUinmyRegion
- Regiostars (but didn’t got selected as finalists)
- Mostra Portugal 2020
• Annual meeting with POAPMC
• Two videos (EN), one about the PO action and another with testimonials
• Another video (EN + sign language) for AVI (Apoyo Vida Independiente)
• Another videos series with testimonials of projects were done as well

COMPETE2020

• #EUinmyregion
• Regiostars (wasn’t selected as finalists, the same project won another European award)
• Web Summit (stand presence and workshop presence)
• Content marketing (200 news/projects per year)
• 80 interviews
• Monitoring of KPI and indicators for social media performance
• Campaign Tourism of Portugal co-financed

PORTUGAL2020

• #EUinmyRegion (600K)
• Tool to search for open calls, “tenho um projeto”
• 9/12 official launch of “Portal da competitividade” (used already for Web Summit)
• Five workshops on communication about rules to be followed and design of applications to empower the beneficiaries (evaluation= more than 4 out of 5)
• Mostra Portugal 2020 = joint annual event
• 14 films = 5 films about the Mostra Portugal 2020 and 10 about storytelling
• Portugal2020 study results: simplify the communication

2. Planned activities for 2020 + Synergies with EC activities

NORTE2020

• #EUinmyRegion
• Host technical meeting for INFORM network
• Regiostars regional awards: “O norte somos Nos” (2nd edition)
• Focus group to understand if communication is good or not
• Promotion of Europe (connection with Europe Direct)
• Present NORTE2020 not only as an envelope of money

POCH

• Again, Participation in 2 big fairs (big stand shared with other regional PO on education)
• Human capital awards (FSE projects)
• Campaign TV and radio on professional training
• Campaign TV and radio on professions for tourism in Portugal

POISE

• POISE awards (images, photography and videos)
PORTUGAL2020

- Research of new brand for 21-27 programming period
- Increase focus on communication on the design of the programmes and how to align it with the needs of journalists, etc ( “hear the beneficiaries”)
- Development of various videos

3. A approach to communication in 2021-27 programmes, single national network of communicators

- Portugal2020 communication network includes all funds and all programmes in Portugal. They reached 16 meetings this year.

Announce the open calls to come before they are open:

- The programmes don’t have the capacity to decide when an open call will be open
- Ministries decide to open the calls
- The open calls for the programmes can be used to do public policy
- ESF open calls, more likely to be continuously open
- ERDF open calls, open and closing date most of the times
- COMPETE2020 research on calls descriptions permit a simplification for knowledgeable public. After the analysis, they were able to reduce the description from 70 pages to one page.
- Request to identify “green” projects that could be used in the frame of Green deal future actions or campaigns, as well as, Road trip project or Euronews chapters

4. Projects: state of play

- Projects
  - Too much information requested.
  - In case the information cannot be fulfilled by the Managing Authority and the beneficiary needs to be contacted the form takes longer to be completed.
  - In general the pages of projects online are good for communication
- Major projects
  - Example of “Embraer” project, very bad description to explain what the project it is about. COMPETE2020 propose to send the (normal) projects fiche to correct it.
  - The content of the major projects fiches are not as good as the one of projects
  - Revise the indicators and their values to confirm that they correspond to the reality of the project and not to the expected results.

5. AOB

- Many EU co-funded projects won external awards that were evaluated by non-EU bodies what could show even more interest for the relevance of the achievements.
- Regiostars awards:
The award is very popular in Portugal and recognised as important by the population and beneficiaries.

Risk of losing interest due to low quality of the voting online for the public choice. IP detection system is not good (could permit double voting by the same person, desktop and mobile, or block different people to vote if they are connected to the same network).

Public choice voting is not fair: an INTERREG finalist with multiple partners will have more chances to get votes than a project with only one partner.

Technological risk and paid votes are another threat to the public online voting.

Anyhow the voting should stay simple or the people will not do it (registration will lower the participation).

Mobile telephone voting needs to be controlled as well.

All the previous could discredit the selection process of the competition and frustrate good projects to take part.

The award ceremony was too fast this year. The work needed to become finalist and win the award is long and demanding, the visibility to the finalists was very low (except for the winners), and therefore they would like to have a bit more of visibility that recognise their efforts (as well as the reasons or quality of the project).

- Media call sent to their networks
- Positive feedback of the participation on the Web Summit
- PANORAMA article with Portugal (POSEUR + COMPETE + Portugal2020) is almost ready for the next publication.
- Regiostars Portugal not decided yet but multiple awards are going to be organised separately by different programmes.
- Portugal reflecting on the possibility to organise INFORM Summer 2021 at the same time of the Portugal Council presidency and during the mandate of Commissioner Elisa Ferreira.

1. Main activities 2019

- MT: Comms unit only created in July 2019. Increasing our social media presence. Focus on sponsored posts which have had huge reach, but Facebook’s new political posts rules are making this more difficult. There are also cumbersome procedures in place which make it difficult to fund sponsored posts. Otherwise media coverage is god, with high level officials attending openings, and lots of billboards. No political problems: government is proud to show that we get money from the EU. But procedures can still slow things down and stifle creativity. One big success: a wraparound 4-page cover feature on the Sunday Times newspaper, about 15 years of EU membership. Other papers and magazines (even Eurosceptic publications) are interested in producing coverage now.
- UK & Interreg: small projects in general are grateful and cooperative, but larger projects do their own communications and don’t feel the need to acknowledge EU funding. Interreg projects tend to be more aware and compliant.
- Northern Ireland: PEACE IV programme runs until 2021. Running events for closing projects. Held an exhibition in Brussels on St Patrick’s Day. Only a two-person team so resources are stretched, and creativity is limited by the public procurement rules. Only have time for reactive, rather than proactive work.

- IE: work can be done on Twitter to fit in mentions of the EU funding when the MA or project ‘forget’. Many have become complacent, take EU funding for granted, and don’t see the danger in not communicating. Have published “What’s the story?” booklet, and commissioned a series of short films to show in local cinemas. Have also organised free school trips to funded projects such as the Marine Research Centre. ESF: sponsorship of Star Awards ongoing. Road Trip Project was successful, although some disappointment that ESF project was cut, and that a lot of work put in to find other projects didn’t result in the desired visibility. Problems with lack of contact and support from DG EMPL in terms of promoting and supporting projects nominated for awards.

2. Planned activities for 2020 + Synergies with EC activities

- MT: Plans to reach out to schools in 2020. But teachers unions and Minister of Education warn against any increase in teacher’s workload. Instead of adding to the curriculum, plans for one-off events and visits, and then leave materials for the children to take home (comics, colouring books, etc). Planned testimonial videos, schools and Open Days.

- IE: Will work more with the Europe Direct offices to reach the public. Involvement with 2020 European Maritime Day. Planned cooperation with research centres, and big project launches on the horizon: bridge in Cork; park in Shannon.

- UK & Northern Ireland: case studies published on site; launch of England ERDF Instagram account; involvement in World Environment Day campaign. Scotland promoting Life Sciences Centre, low carbon hubs and green infrastructure. ESF in Scotland officially suspended by the Commission so no resources now.

3. A approach to communication in 2021-27 programmes, single national network of communicators

- Concerns from all about restricted use of logos. Resistance in IE to single branding. Interreg partners want their logos included. Giving Member States discretionary powers allows them to dodge obligations. Better to say that something is imposed at an EU level.

4. AOB

- IE: Projects have less visibility to the public than in the past when the EU funded more large infrastructure. EU co-funding often sidelined, especially during election periods. Even civil servants within the relevant departments are often unaware that a project has received EU funds.

- UK: BBC and other journalists don’t consider EU funding “newsworthy”. No interest at national news level, and local media find it hard to communicate funding issues in plain language.

IE: all ESF-related comms have to go through central government: we can’t contact journalists directly.