Good practice: Programme communication evaluation

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE | Frank Schneider | Head of Communication and Public Policy
EU COHESION POLICY AND INTERREG

**INTERREG 2014-2020**

1. OF THE 2 GOALS OF EU COHESION POLICY
   - 10.1 € BILLION OUT OF 351.8 € BILLION FOR COHESION POLICY (2013 PRICES)
   - 2.8% OF THE TOTAL COHESION POLICY BUDGET
   - 107 COOPERATION PROGRAMMES

**CROSS-BORDER INTERREG VA**
- 60 COOPERATION PROGRAMMES
- 6.6 € BILLION

**INTERREG IPA**
- 12 INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION
- 242* € MILLION

**INTERREG ENI**
- 16 EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD INSTRUMENT
- 634* € BILLION

**TRANSNATIONAL INTERREG VB**
- 15 COOPERATION PROGRAMMES
- 2.1 € BILLION

**INTERREGIONAL INTERREG VC**
- 4 COOPERATION PROGRAMMES
  - INTERREG EUROPE
  - INTERACT
  - URBACT
  - ESPON
- 0.5 € BILLION
INTERREG TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION
INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE

TAKING COOPERATION FORWARD

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE is a funding programme that encourages cooperation beyond borders between public and private institutions. Financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), it helps innovative yet isolated ideas to grow into jointly developed, tested and accepted solutions for a better central Europe.

www.interreg-central.eu

COUNTRIES, REGIONS/CITIES AND INHABITANTS COVERED

146 MILLION CITIZENS

76 REGIONS

9 COUNTRIES

DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME


BUDGET INVESTED

231 MILLION EUROS

= 0.07% OF THE TOTAL EU REGIONAL POLICY BUDGET OF 351.8 BILLION EUROS

0.22€ SPENT PER CITIZEN PER YEAR
COMMUNICATION CONTRIBUTES TO PROGRAMME SUCCESS

Programme Communication

Objectives and audiences → Approaches and activities → Outputs → Results → Management results → Programme results

external factors

- EU Cohesion Policy Objectives
- Programme Management Objectives
- Programme Thematic Objectives

TAKING COOPERATION FORWARD
BUT DOES IT REALLY?

EVALUATION AND MONITORING WILL HELP US TO FIND OUT AND IMPROVE
WITH THIS GOAL IN MIND WE HAVE TAKEN 3 STEPS TO BETTER EVALUATION

Think of evaluation in the communication strategy

Regularly monitor progress and collect data

Integrate communication evaluation into programme evaluation
Step 1

Think of evaluation in the communication strategy
Define communication objectives
Make sure they are linked to management objectives

Cooperating beyond borders in central Europe
to make our cities and regions a better place to live and work

**Programme Objective**

**Specific Management Objectives (as in cooperation programme)**

**Specific Management Objectives (unchained)**

**Communication Discipline**

**Specific Communication Objectives**

**Internal communication**

- **C 1:** Strengthen the communication and support capacity within the programme

**External communication**

- **C 2:** Raise awareness of external audiences about the programme
- **C 3:** Increase knowledge of external audiences about the programme
- **C 4:** Improve attitudes and behaviour of external audiences towards cooperating with the programme

**SO 5.1:** Effectively implement the programme
- Effectively implement the operational programme and reduce administrative burden to increase the satisfaction of beneficiaries

**SO 5.2:** Support applicants and beneficiaries and strengthen the involvement of relevant partners in programme implementation
- Support applicants and build their capacity, i.e. improve their awareness, knowledge & attitude to participate in the programme
- Support beneficiaries and build their capacity, i.e. improve their knowledge & attitude to participate in the programme
- Strengthen the involvement of relevant partners in programme implementation, i.e. improve their attitude and behaviour
Define result indicators for evaluation
As for example for knowledge increase of applicants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result indicator</th>
<th>Measurement unit</th>
<th>Baseline value (2014)</th>
<th>Target value (Ø 2015-2023)</th>
<th>Source of data</th>
<th>Frequency of reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintained high satisfaction with information provided by the programme at events</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Monitoring of event feedback on national and transnational events</td>
<td>2018, 2020, 2023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CO 1: Strengthen internal communication capacity
CO 2: Raise awareness about the programme
CO 3: Increase knowledge about the programme
CO 4: Improve attitude and behaviour to the programme
Define **output indicators** for monitoring

As for example for programme conferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Output indicator</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Baseline value (2014)</th>
<th>Target (2023)</th>
<th>Source of data</th>
<th>Reporting dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1</td>
<td>Programme conferences organised</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Yearly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 2

Regularly monitor progress and collect data
Example: Our social media planning tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Short description</th>
<th>Link</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Blog</th>
<th>Newsletter</th>
<th>Facebook</th>
<th>Twitter</th>
<th>Youtube</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 2023</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Example: Our social media planning tool</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Planning tool for social media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example: Our social media monitoring tool
Example: Our social media monitoring tool
Integrate communication evaluation into the programme evaluation
External operational evaluation: The process

Task 1: Methodology

Inception Report

Task 2: Evaluation Part 1

Report Part 1

Update

Task 3: Evaluation Part 2

3.1: Management settings
3.2: Project cycle & support to beneficiaries
3.3: Implementation progress
3.4: Stakeholder involvement as beneficiaries
3.5: Horizontal principles
3.6: EU2020 & macroregional strategies

3.7: Update Part 1

Final Report

Task 4: Project management & quality control
Evaluation methods

- **Document analysis**
  - Cooperation programme document & annexes
  - Programme communication strategy and brand manual

- **Data analysis**
  - Survey data
  - Monitoring data from digital sources
  - Feedback on programme events

- **Interviews**
  - With all programme bodies
Evaluation questions

- Effectiveness of **internal communication** within the programme management
  - How are the interactions between the programme bodies?

- Relevance and effectiveness of programme **communication strategy**
  - How well is the programme reaching out to applicants?
  - Is the strategy for programme communication sound? Does communication contribute to reaching the specific programme management objectives?
  - How effective are the approaches for reaching the communication objectives (e.g. for involving competent partners)?
Evaluation conclusions by external evaluators

- Effectiveness of internal communication within the programme management
  - Good and open communication culture in the programme
  - Good and timely flow of information between programme bodies
Evaluation conclusions by external evaluators

- Relevance and effectiveness of programme communication strategy
  - Sound, concrete and coherent
    - Clear & well-founded intervention logic
    - Lessons learned actively used to improve communication
    - Tailored communication
    - Output & result indicators and baseline & target values - clear & measurable
    - Generally clear roles and responsibilities
Evaluation conclusions by external evaluators

- Relevance and effectiveness of programme communication strategy

  - Implementation *progress is fine*
    - Progress on spending in line with plan/expectations
    - Planned activities fully implemented
    - Social media activities behind expectations (in 2016, before we launched the #cooperationiscentral campaign)
    - Some indicators with high or 'over-achievement'
Evaluation conclusions by external evaluators

- Relevance and effectiveness of programme communication strategy
  
  - **Effective and good outreach to stakeholders**
    
    - Programme has been **effective in reaching out** to programme stakeholders
    - High share of programme newcomers attracted.
      - But: no data on the share of newcomers among successful applicants
    - Good representation of private sector entities as project partners
      - But: imbalanced geographic distribution of the applicants
      - But: low number of projects received under priority 4
      - Additional priority-specific outreach and support is needed
THANKS TO MONITORING AND EVALUATION WE ARE CONSTANTLY IMPROVING...

www.interreg-central.eu/cooperationiscentral
Frank Schneider
Head of Communication and Public Policy

www.interreg-central.eu
schneider@interreg-central.eu
+43 1 8908088-2411

facebook.com/InterregCE
twitter.com/InterregCE
Linkedin.com/in/interregce
youtube.com/interregcentraleurope