

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Communication strategies should:

- (1) Be included in the overall work plan
- (2) Be agreed-upon with your partners, including the EU Delegation Sector manager and Communications manager
- (3) Include activities to mark key results at different stages of the project's life

1. Getting Started: Think Strategically

Start brainstorming and agreeing on the following:

1. Formulate your **project purposes**.
2. Determine your **speakers/project representatives**. Final beneficiaries of the project are often ideal candidates.
3. Determine your **target audience**.
4. Think about the **key message** you are delivering.
5. Select proper **tools and channels of communication**.

The communication process involves five elements you should consider before planning your actions:

1. **Why communicate?** What is the main purpose of your communication activities?
Start with formulating your purposes. These can be **more general**, focusing on the project's overall goal or **more specific** (informing certain group of people about...)
2. **The sender of the message: who communicates?** Decide who will be your **communication or PR-officer**, providing media relations and managing communication activities. Even if existing human resources do not allow for a dedicated communications officer, one **contact person for journalists** should be selected.
Many people can contribute to highlighting the project's impact. Final beneficiaries, such as a mother benefiting from an EU-funded childcare centre or a school teacher whose classroom benefited from an EU-funded renovation, are often the best representatives to speak about the project results.
3. **The recipients of the messages: target audience.** The messages you communicate should be targeted at specific people. Who are those people? What do they already know and what they should learn?
4. **What to communicate: key messages.** Messages must serve as a hook to attract your audience and keep them listening to what you are saying. Therefore, the message must be clear, short and easy to remember.
5. **How to communicate: tools and channels.** There are various communication instruments at your disposal and your choice of which to use will depend on your goals, audience and resources.

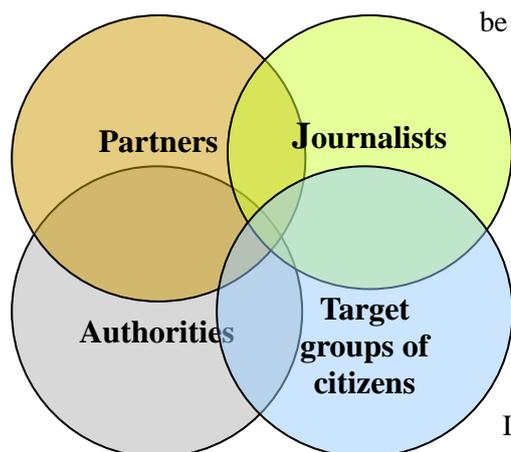
Read more in **Ошибка! Источник ссылки не найден.**

We also recommend preparing a **short project/organisation fact sheet** – a one-page summary in very simple language answering the following questions:

- Why does your project exist? When was your project launched?
- What are its goals and tasks?
- Why it is special and unique?
- How do you work? What are your main activities?
- What are your main achievements?
- How does your project benefit Ukrainian citizens?

2. Define your target audience

To whom do you direct your messages? A key message is rarely addressed to the general public. It should be developed for a specific target audience: ecological organisations, farmers, schoolteachers, etc.



A project usually demands interactions with several target groups. To define your audiences, answer the following questions:

- Who should be involved in your project activities?
- Who may help in achieving your project's goals?
- Who would potentially be interested in the outcomes of your project?

If you want to multiply your audience, the media should ALWAYS be a target group.

3. Developing Key Messages

The key message is the number one “big idea” you want your audience to remember or do as a result of your speech, interview or presentation. Think about what your audience knows and what you want them to do as a result of your communication. Adapt your message for each of the audiences you address based on their interests, values and habits.

Test your message. First, can you remember it? You should be able to say it without looking at your notes. Test yourself. Then, say it to a friend – see if they can say it back to you. Then ask them to remember it one hour later, and one day later. If they can, well done – you've got a memorable key message. If they say it back to you in an easier way, use this new message.

Checklist for key messages:

- Does it correspond with our communication goal?
- Is it short (15 seconds) and easy to remember?
- Is it written in an conversational, clear manner?
- Does it include does it include action verbs in the present tense?
- Is it focused on concrete outcomes and benefits for ordinary people?

Please see **Ошибка! Источник ссылки не найден.**

4. Selecting Effective Communication Channels and Instruments

The table below offers an overview of the main advantages and disadvantages of various communication

channels and tools.¹

Type of the communication channel	Advantages	Disadvantages
Printed materials (posters, calendars)	Visual, attractive, long life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geographically-limited audience - Good for communicating very short and simple messages.
Printed materials (leaflets and brochures)	Visual, may contain specific messages and arguments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expensive design and printing. - Short life
Feature placement (in newspapers, magazines)	The article can present the problem in detail and with arguments. Wider audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires effort in establishing contacts with a journalist and editor. - Information may be distorted by editorial policy or error of the journalist.
Promotional products (t-shirts, bags, hats)	Visible and touchable, making it possible to inform/engage people. Long life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expensive design and printing - Geographically-limited audience
Social media (internet tools)	Free, easy access, global, interactive communication, wide audience.	-Requires social media skills
Visual instruments (movies, photos, video clips)	Emotional, interactive, may be shown at special events or shared on internet.	- Requires significant financial resources

Do not forget to use the [capacity4development](http://www.capacity4development.org) website to promote your project to stakeholders. In addition to tips on communicating your project results through the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Communications group, it provides the opportunity to exchange information about your project through thematic groups.

¹ Information is taken from the manual “Making difference: Strategic Communication to End Violence Against Women”. http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/MakingADifference_rus.pdf

5. Putting it on Paper: Elements of a Communications Strategy².

Once you have determined the five strategic elements (project purposes, communicators, target audience, key messages, and tools and channels of communication), you are ready to draft the complete strategy. This should include:

OBJECTIVES

1. Overall communication objectives.

Is there a clear focus on communication and visibility? Remember: do not confuse communication objectives with those of the project itself. Is there a story to tell?

For example:

- The objective is to raise awareness of the project and its activities: *«EDU4ALL will bring handicapped kids back to school» (communication about the project)*
- The objective is to raise awareness of the fact that *«This is an EU-financed project»* and *«The EU cares about children's rights» (EU visibility)*
- The objective is to raise awareness about the rights of handicapped children in schools (*This is one of the objectives of the project itself; it is not a communication objective*).

2. Target groups. Are the chosen targets relevant?

Main targets should be the beneficiary population, local media, and stakeholders (regional and local authorities, civil society, etc.).

3. Specific objectives for each target group related to the action's objectives and the phases of the project cycle. Examples of communication objectives:

- Ensure that the beneficiary population is aware of the roles of the partner and of the EU in the activity.
- Raise awareness among Ukrainians of the role of the partner and of the EU in delivering aid in a particular context.
- Raise awareness of how the EU and the partner work together to support education, health, environment, etc.

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

4. Main activities. Are the communication activities well-programmed from the beginning and throughout the duration of the project?

For example: a launching event at the beginning, a press visit mid-term, and a video with testimony at the end.

5. Communication tools chosen. Are the chosen tools appropriate?

Please make sure that the plan includes at least: a case study, the production of quality photos, at least one press release, and a website if it would be useful. Video testimonies can also be helpful. Events with beneficiaries, or press visits can also be included.

6. Calendar. Does the activities calendar match the agenda of the EU Delegation and the main national events?

For example: Communication activities can have a higher impact if linked to a hook or fail if they are organised at the wrong time.

Remember to prepare contributions for Europe Day and Sustainable Energy Week if such events would be helpful.

INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT

² Based on the communication plan template available in the [Communication and Visibility Manual](#) and is designed to help you in validating a project's communication plan.

7. Completion of the communication objectives. Include indicators of achievement for the different tools proposed.

For example: For a press release, include quantitative (number of press releases produced) and qualitative criteria (number of articles published). If the evaluation is not positive, the activities should be adapted.

8. Provisions for feedback (when applicable)

Give details of assessment forms to be used or other means of obtaining feedback on the activity from participants.

9. Innovation. Are there any innovative aspects in the plan?

For example: Social media campaigns, direct marketing tools, cultural events, events targeting specific audiences (opinion leaders, young people, organisations, traditional authorities, etc.).

10. Partnership. Are there partners associated with the implementation of the communication plan?

For example: It can be relevant to carry out communication activities together with other projects, EU member states or other organisations, etc. Partnerships with local media can also be cost effective.

11. Evaluation and adaptation: Are indicators foreseen to evaluate the effectiveness of the communication activities? Is the adaptation of the plan foreseen during the course of the project and following the evaluation of activities?

RESOURCES

12. Communications Budget (should be part of the contract). Is it available, realistic and "cost-effective"?

For example: The budget must be in line with the size and nature of the project. A minimum of €1.000 or 1% of the total budget should be allocated to communication activities.

13. Human Resources. Be sure to account for the number of people and days that will be required to implement the communication activities.

Determine the members of the management team who are responsible for communication activities

Remember: The communication strategy can evolve to take into account new circumstances.