



How to communicate about YOUR PROJECT



#CommsJourney

Share your experience.

Make a difference.

Acknowledgements

This guide aims to help beneficiaries of the Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps and Creative Europe programmes with their communication activities. It has been drawn up by the European Commission (Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture) in close collaboration with the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

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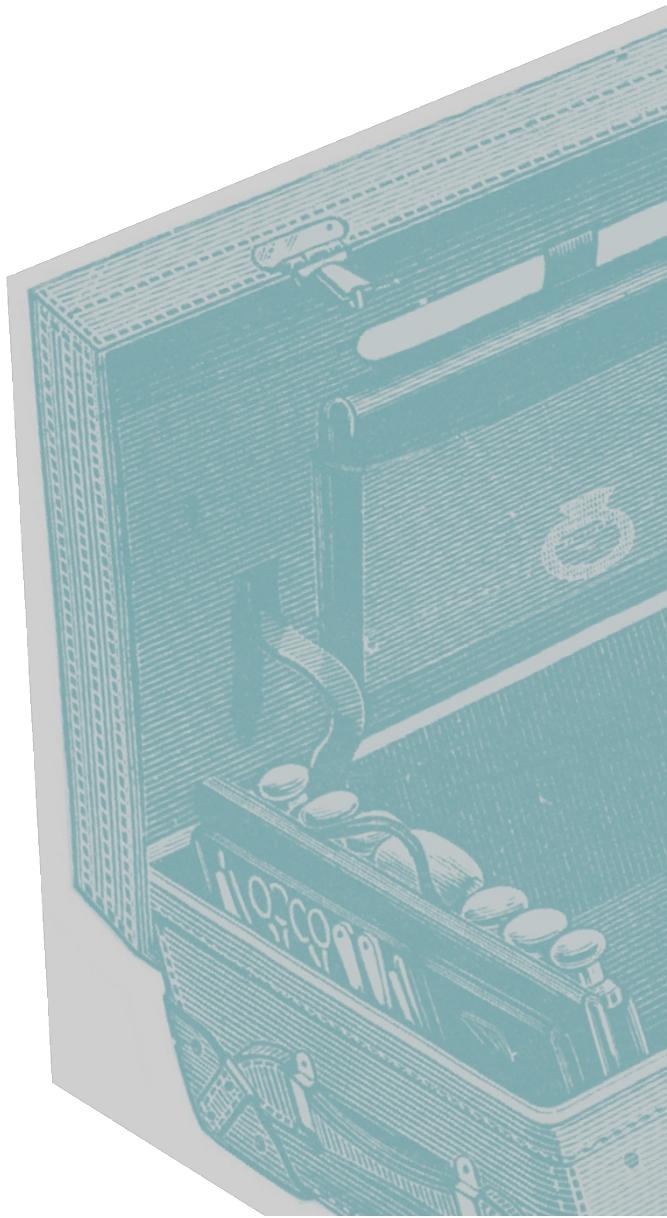
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Step-by-step guide

on communication

projects and their results

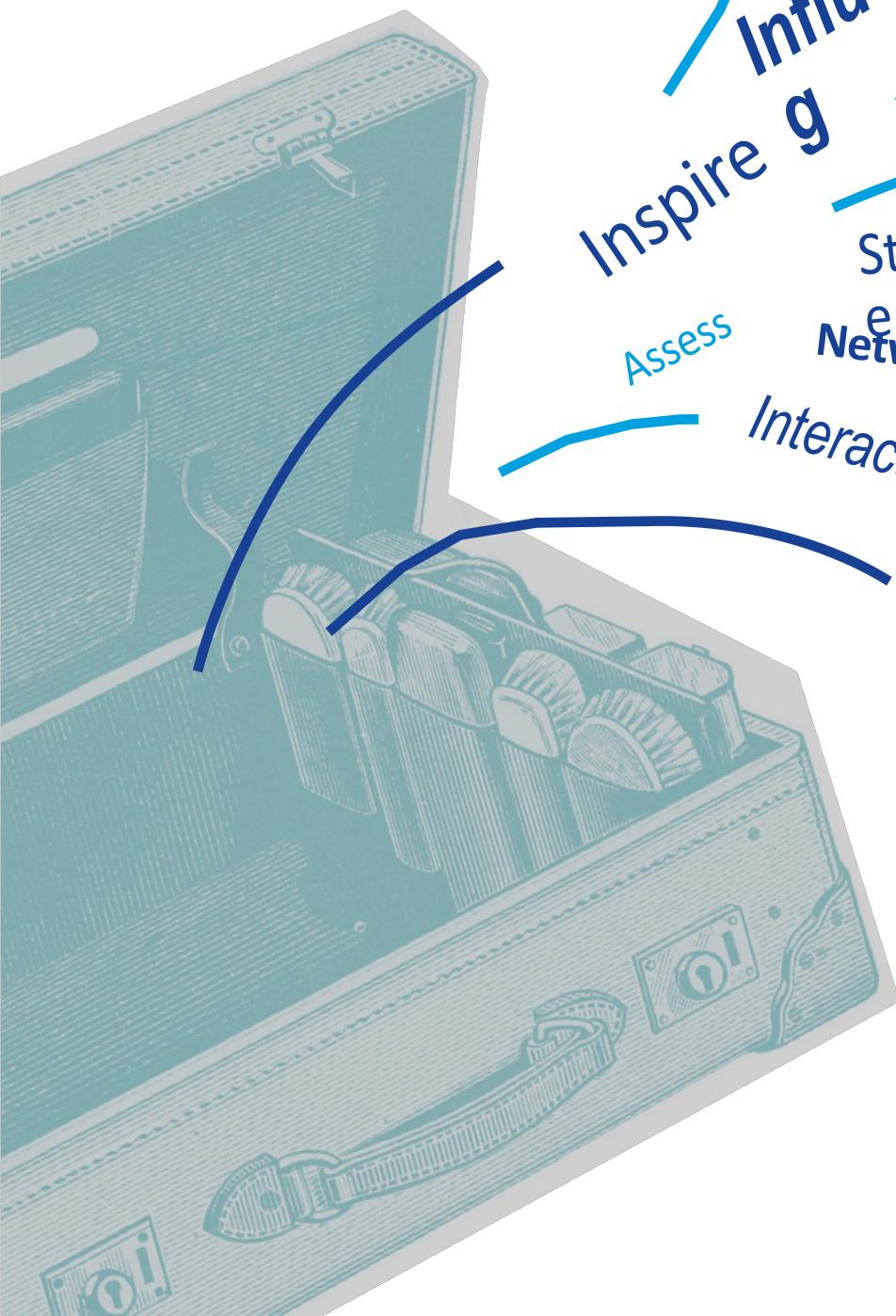
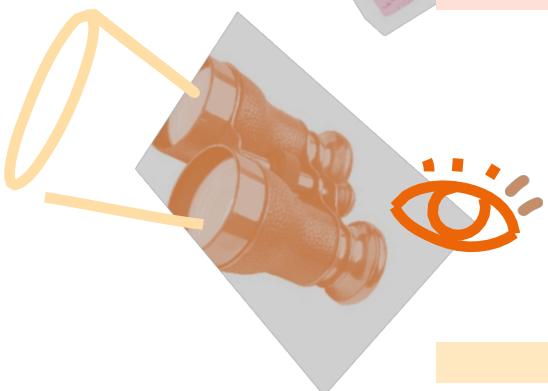


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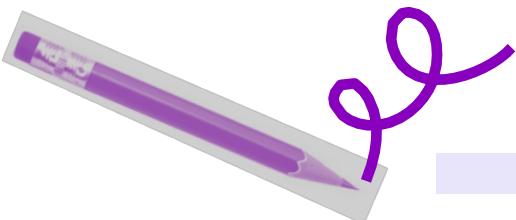
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Dear Beneficiary, Welcome to #CommsJourney the communication path for your project!

A Communication?

Let's start with the basics.



What?



Communication is ...

a *two-way process* of sharing information and exchanging ideas, data and messages, through appropriate channels, in order to reach identified target audiences.



WHY?



Communication is important because...

- it allows people to **connect, explain and share** their emotions with others;
- it is the **vital element** of a project, which must be known and promoted.

The communication activities linked to your project will enable you to:

- **collaborate** with stakeholders;
- highlight the **impact of** your project and its results on society;
- expand your **network with** a view to future collaborations;
- support the **dissemination of** the results of your project;
- **raise public awareness** of how the EU budget is spent;
- to bear witness to the **success of** European programmes.



How?



To do this, you can think of your project as...

- a **journey** to embark on;
- a **story** to tell;
- a **memory** to share.

B Use of the guide "#CommsJourney: your project's communication path".

"#CommsJourney: the communication pathway for your project" is a **step-by-step guide** for beneficiaries of the Erasmus+, "Europe" and "Journey" programmes and the European Solidarity Corps to help them with their communication activities.

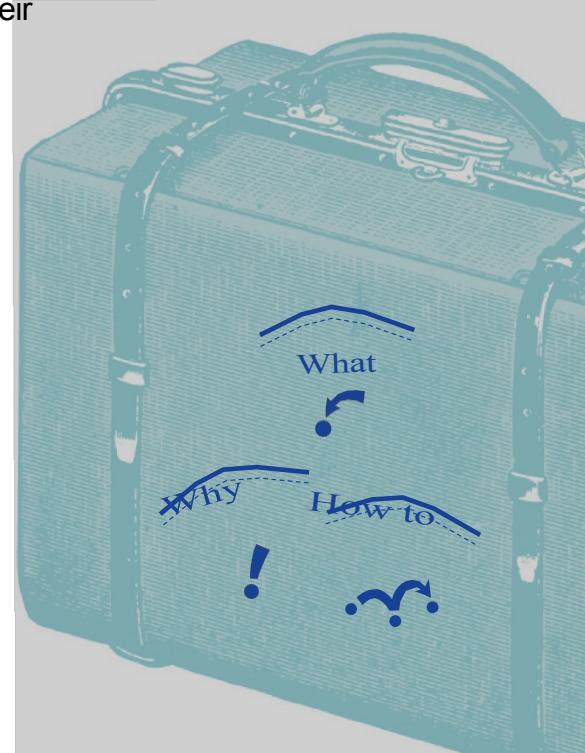
The "What? Why? How?" method

These communication guidelines are divided into **five sections** arranged in chronological stages. Each step is explained using the "What? Why? How?" method, which aims to detail the actions you are going to take.

What? describes the action itself.

Why? explains its importance.

How? lists the steps to follow.



Follow the steps

Once you're familiar with the "What? Why? How?" method, get your staff involved and **follow each step in order** to make your journey more enjoyable.

Use the resources

Click on the hyperlinks to **useful templates** and **external websites** for inspiration.

We're here to help!

Do you have any questions? No need to worry. You can **ask for help** and get involved in exciting initiatives that you may not be aware of.

Depending on the nature of the project (centralised or decentralised), you can **ask for help** throughout your #CommsJourney communication journey. .

Centralised projects

☞ The [European Executive Agency for Education and Culture \(EACEA\)](#) is responsible for **the centralised** Erasmus+ projects and the European Solidarity Corps, as well as for all projects. "Creative Europe."

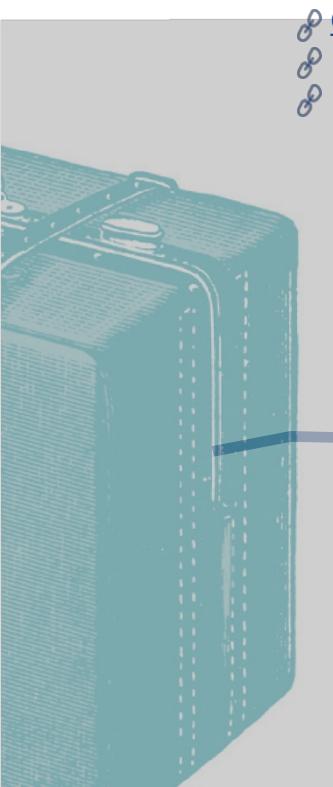
→ For more information on the **rules** and obligations relating to communication, distribution and use, see the documents below:

[Erasmus+ Programme Guide](#)
[Guide to the European Solidarity Corps programme](#)

☞ [Call for proposals under the "Creative Europe" programme](#)

Decentralised projects

The [Erasmus+ national agencies](#) and [Erasmus+ national offices](#) (for partner countries) are the main contact points for **decentralised** Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps projects.



Qui part à l'aventure sans bagage à dos ?
Start
your communication path
#CommsJourney

The term "**communication**" comes from the Latin word *communis*, which means to **share**.

“ *The words "information" and "communication" are often used interchangeably. interchangeable, even though their meanings are not the same. To inform is to deliver information; to communicate is to seek to be understood.* **”**

Sydney J. Harris
journalist



Plan ahead

your #CommsJourney communication route



Your project proposal has been accepted and you're looking forward to taking on this new challenge. But don't forget that your journey can't begin without good **planning**!

EU-funded projects involve a long-term cycle of different **stages** and several partners. That's why it's so important to plan your communication activities and **allocate** tasks appropriately.



Consult your programme guide and calls for proposals

Consult your programme guide and the calls for proposals, as well as the section devoted to **communication**, **dissemination** and **exploitation**. If you are wondering what the difference is between these recurring terms, here is a brief summary.



The programme guide, your grant agreement and the calls for proposals are the **starting points** for your project. They set out your **obligations** in terms of communication, dissemination and exploitation, and specify what the European Commission expects of you.



Keep the programme guide close at hand throughout. If anything is unclear, **consult** this guide or **ask** your project/communications manager for guidance.



Develop your communication strategy

The first step in your project's #CommsJourney communications journey is to draw up a **communications strategy**, which will act as a **travel guide** and reference throughout your journey. Rework the strategy you presented in your application in detail.

The communications strategy defines your objectives (the reasons behind your project), your target audiences (who are they intended for?), your messages (what you want to say), your channels (how you want to express yourself) and your actions (what you want to do).

It takes into account the context of the **programme** to which the project belongs and helps you to define the **time** and **resources** you need to communicate about your project.

The key stages of a communication:



Inclusion is at the heart of EU programmes, particularly **inclusive communication**. Inclusive communication aims to treat everyone with respect. It helps to combat harmful stereotypes and unconscious prejudice. Along the way, we'll be giving you tips on how to strengthen inclusion and diversity in your communication. Make sure you take them into account from the outset.



The communication strategy lays the foundations for "**what you want to achieve**" in terms of communication and enables you to move from where you are to **where you want to be**.



Work with your project partners

Don't go it alone! Involve those who are with you on your journey and **discuss** your roles and your short- and long-term objectives. Identify any key players in the project consortium and consider hiring communications experts.

Integrate the programme objectives

Don't forget that projects and programmes go hand in hand. Consult your programme's website and think about how the project could reflect the programme's objectives and the European Commission's priorities.

Define your communication objectives

What are the aims of the project and the corresponding results? This is the first question you need to be able to answer. Your communication objectives must be **SMART** (specified, measurable, acceptable, realistic and time-bound), long-term and help to shape your future communication activities.

Define your target audience

Who are you targeting with your project? Identify your primary and secondary **target groups**, as well as their interests, needs, characteristics and behaviours. Once you have this information, you can decide how to focus your activities and messages.



Make sure you include everyone! In any venture, the more diverse the group of participants, the better! Think about how you can target specific groups in society, for example groups disadvantaged by inequalities or people in vulnerable situations, who could benefit from your project and its results.

Choose your key messages

Each objective and each target audience will have its own key message. Messages act as **hooks** to attract your audience's attention and respond to their interests. They must therefore be **clear, concise** and **easy** to remember.

Define your activities and the channels to be used

How are you going to reach your target audiences? **Brainstorm** with your project partners to determine the most appropriate and cost-effective communication channels and activities to use.

Here is a list of examples:

→	ACTIVITY	CANAL
Articles in the news or on the internet	Publications on social media	website, social media platforms Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
Newsletters	Press releases	direct e-mails, website
Press releases		direct e-mails, press release distribution services
Videos		website, YouTube channel, social media platforms
Publications (leaflets, brochures)		website, events
Events		Website, social media platforms

Think about indicators

Define simple performance indicators to **measure** your communication work and success. A survey, the number of clicks on your website or social media analysis can help you assess your performance.

→ [Download the PDF file](#) or go to [section 5](#). → Use the template

↗ [Appendix 1](#).

Draw up your annual communication plan



What?



WHY?



Once your strategy is in place, draw up an annual communication plan based on it. Alongside the strategy, your plan needs to be **specific, timed** and drawn up at the beginning of each year. While the strategy determines "what to do", the plan focuses on "how to get there".

The communications plan is your **roadmap** for organising your communications activities in line with your time, needs and resources. Take the time to make **effective** decisions to achieve your objectives.

Follow the 5 key stages of your communication strategy

Remember your [travel guide](#)? Start by going through it. Make sure your plan is in line with the communication objectives outlined in your strategy, as well as the target audiences, messages, activities, channels and indicators you've defined.

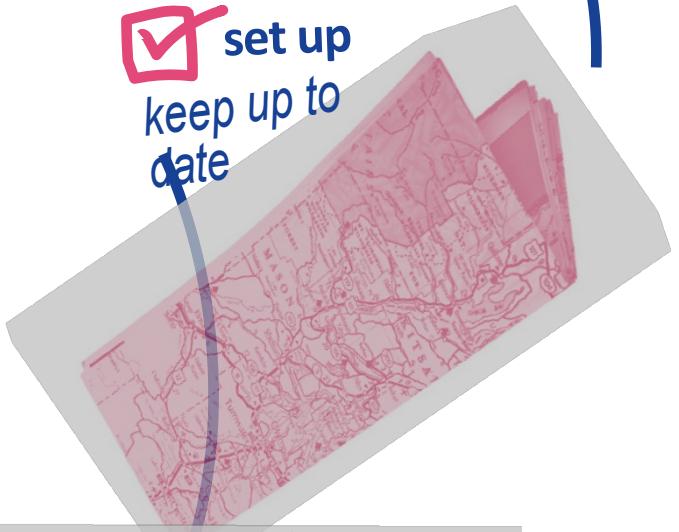
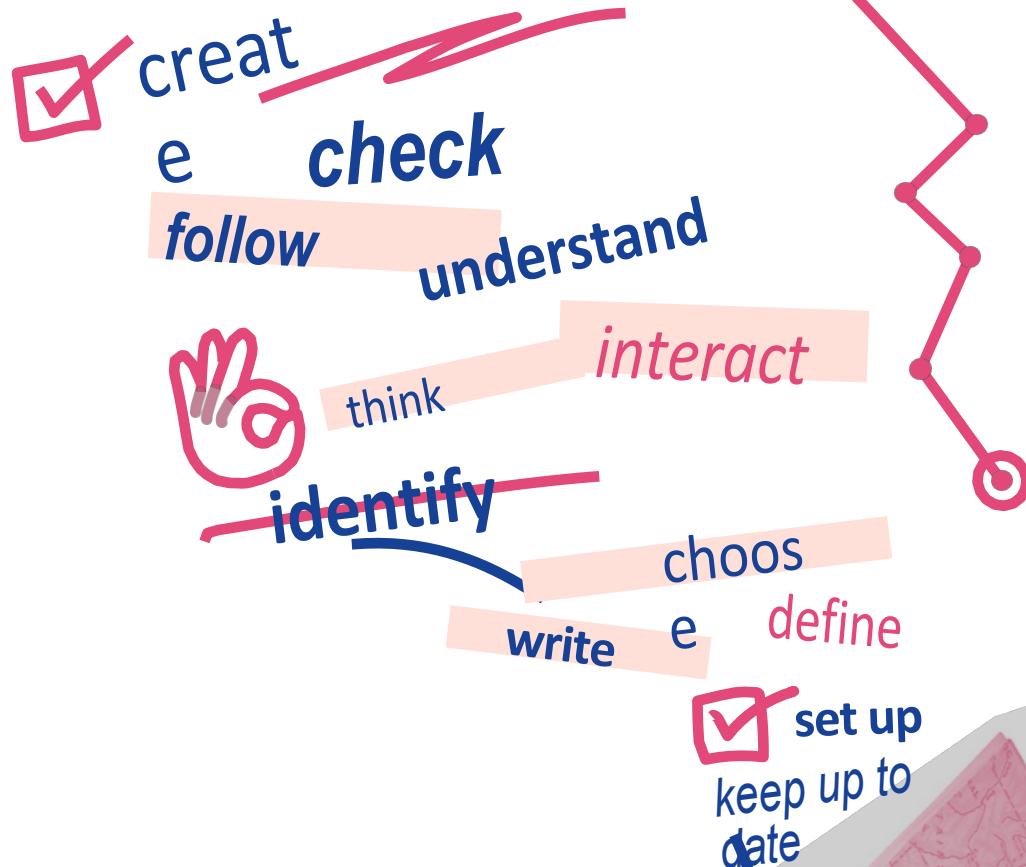
Create your communication plan

Think of your plan as a **calendar** and determine what you are going to do month by month. Prioritise your main objectives and target audiences. Don't forget to include your annual communications budget and agree how resources will be spent. Use the template below.

Keep your plan up to date and keep your partners informed

Be prepared for any **changes in direction**: your #CommsJourney communication journey can be full of surprises and variations! You'll need to keep your plan up to date and keep your partners informed.

Build

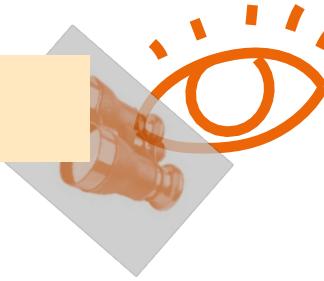


“ *"Identity is always the starting point. It determines how anything is recognised and understood."* **”**



Paula Scher
graphic
designer

Visit your project



It's time to decide how to **present** your project. Think of your project as a brand, with its own mission and characteristics. Don't forget that your project is unique. Try to make it recognisable, and don't forget the need for consistency between the different channels and tools.



Create your visual identity

Visual identity includes all the **visual elements** (e.g. logo, fonts, images) that can be associated with your project. It reflects your communication strategy and the context of the programme and underpins all your communication activities.

Visual identity represents who you are and makes it easy for your target audience to recognise your project. It illustrates your **values** and **influences** the way the project is perceived. This visual identity will be used on the following media::



- your project website;
- digital material (PowerPoint presentations, documents, e-mail signatures, etc.);
- printed material (posters, brochures, etc.) - as far as possible, avoid using paper;
- social media accounts;
- promotional material (mugs, pens, t-shirts, etc.)*.



Work with your partners

Discuss possible styles, colours and visual elements with your partners. Appoint someone in the project consortium to **collect ideas from partners**. This information will be essential for the graphic designers to come up with good proposals. Find inspiration: [Design Inspiration](#), [Canva.com](#).

Design your logo

A logo is a symbol made up of text and images that identifies the project. A good logo illustrates the activity linked to your project and proves its importance. The golden rule is: **keep it simple!**

* Sustainability is at the heart of EU programmes. Make sure you take account of the ecological transition and opt for solutions environmentally friendly. → For more information https://ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/pdf/other/EC_Guide_Sustainable_Meetings_and_Events.pdf

Choose your visual elements

The visual identity consists of the following elements:



the **colour** palette

Useful tools: [Colordesigner](#), [Typeinspiration.com](#)



fonts

Useful libraries: [Google Fonts](#), [Exlibris](#)



illustrations and images

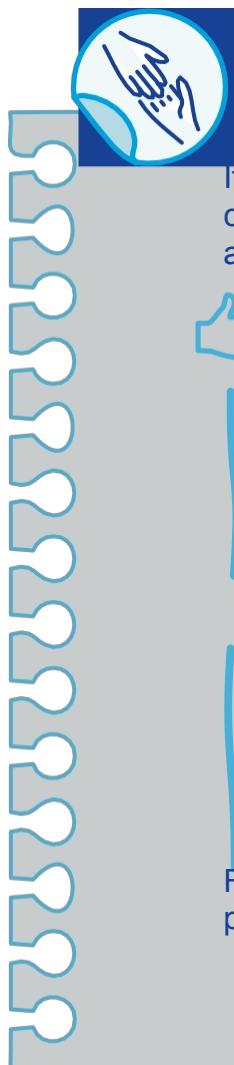
Useful image banks: [Unsplash](#), [Pixabay](#)



Icons

Useful links: [Flaticon](#), [Iconsvg](#)

Be sure to harmonise and balance your visual elements. When using images, illustrations and fonts, always comply with the copyright and personal data protection rules in force in your country. To find out more, go to [section 4](#).



It's often said that a picture is worth a thousand words, so choose your **images** carefully. Make sure your selection is as **diverse** and **inclusive** as possible. Here are a few tips:



TO DO

Use images representing people with disabilities, people of different genders, ethnicities, ages, sizes, cultures and sexual orientations.

Use images depicting women and disabled people in active roles as well as people from ethnic minorities in highly skilled jobs.

For inspiration, consult this manual, published by Swedish photographer Tomas Gunnarson.



TO AVOID

Avoid representing groups that are typically under-represented in specific contexts only, for example a gay family in the context of LGBTIQ rights.

Avoid images that convey stereotypes, for example, women in a passive position, people of Roma ethnic origin living in poverty or disabled people shown as weak or dependent on others.

[Images that change the world](#),



Guarantee accessibility

Making graphic design accessible means enabling as many people as possible to appreciate and benefit from your work. Once you have created visual elements, make sure they are easily accessible to people with hearing, visual, cognitive or attention impairments.

Don't forget:

- In graphics, use **patterns** or add **descriptive text** to make it easier for colour-blind people to access the content.
- Avoid using **flashing lights** in videos to avoid triggering seizures in people with epilepsy.

→ For more tips and tricks, consult the [WC3 WAI homepage](#) and the accessibility section of the [Europa Web Guide](#)

Get inspired by other EU-funded projects

→ Browse examples of EU-funded projects and look at their visual identities for inspiration.

🔗 [Erasmus+ project results platform](#)
🔗 [Results platform for European Solidarity Corps projects](#)
🔗 [Results platform for the Creative Europe project](#)

Display the European emblem



Show that the EU has given you this opportunity. Beneficiaries of EU funds must use the European emblem in their communications as a sign of **recognition of the support** received from the European Union. Consult the [guidelines defined at institutional level](#) published by the European Commission and find out about the rules to follow.



By displaying the European emblem, you are making European citizens aware of how the EU budget is spent and of the added value of EU programmes. Don't forget that use of the European emblem is **compulsory** and is a requirement of the grant agreement signed by the beneficiaries.



Indicate "**Co-financed by the European Union**".
or "**Financed by the European Union**" next to or below the European emblem, depending on the nature of your funding.



**Funded by
the European Union**



**Co-financed by
the European Union**



The name of the European Union must always be stated in full.



Do not add the name of the programme to the financing statement.



Do not write the name of the programme next to the European emblem.



→ You can download [here](#) the European emblem.

Visualisation

presentation
logo

printing



illustrations

values

influence

brainstorming

design

visual identity

policies
characters

colours

coherent

emblem
European

images



“ *It's not just about content. It's about stories. It's not just about stories. It's about great stories.*

Mitch Joel
contractor



Write about your project experiences



Tell us about your project from day one

Document your experience and make it a fascinating read! Keep your target audience informed about what you're doing: from the project's objectives to the role of the partners and the activities or results achieved, the stories associated with your project can inspire the public, decision-makers and organisations active in your field.



Gathering testimonials is an integral part of your journey. By telling your stories, you will enable your target audience to travel and stay connected with you throughout your #CommsJourney communication journey. Telling others about your project will open up new opportunities and partnerships.



Distinguish between information and narration

While **information** consists of providing factual data, **storytelling** is the art of constructing a narrative that **arouses the public's interest**. Keep this in mind when you set your communication objectives.

→ For example:



Information

The project consortium is made up of the following partners following: ...

Narration



meet our project partners!
Each month, we'll be bringing you
new partners. Today, we are
let's start with our coordinator
project manager, ...

Choosing the content format

You can present content in **different formats**. Depending on your communication objectives and target audiences, you can adopt a formal or informal **tone** for your content format.

Some formats are used primarily for **information purposes**, while others are better suited to a **narrative approach**.

→ See the table below:

		Content formats				
		Contenu web	News	Press release	Publications on social media	Communication equipment
COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVE		Information and narration	Narration	Information and narration	Narration	Information and narration
YOUR		Formal and informal	Formal and informal	Formal	Informal	Formal and informal
EXAMPLES OF COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES	Page web "About writing the project and its objectives	Monthly or fortnightly newsletter on the project Announcement of the presentation of your project at a major event or by a well-known media outlet	Press release announcing the final conference at which the results of the project will be presented to stakeholders and the media	Publication accompanied by a photo or video announcing an activity organised as part of the	Online brochures, fact sheets or infographics on the project's objectives and results	

Create a content strategy

With these elements in mind, get your team together and **discuss the content format** that would best suit your objectives.

When preparing your content, think first about your **target audience**. This will help you determine...:

→ **the type of content:**

news article, blog post, web page, publication on social media;

→ **the tone:**

it's not the substance of what you say, but the **form** you give it, including your choice of words, the order in which you say them and the rhythm you adopt;

→ **the channel to be used:**

website, social media, radio, press, podcasts.

Don't forget that **content production** is part of your communication strategy and plan (return to [section 1](#)): define your **content production schedule** on a monthly basis and incorporate it into your communication plan accordingly.



Think digital

When you're planning to publish content, think about the **channels** you want to use to share your stories. How best to reach your target audience? Whether you choose a website or social media channels, you will most likely **be** sharing your experiences **digitally**.



Digital is the new norm, and it's also the most environmentally-friendly medium. In most cases, web copy has replaced printed copy. It has become the preferred method of communication. It's a form of **interactive** writing, where links and multimedia content appear alongside the text, increasing your chances of engaging with your audience.



The golden rules for writing digital content

- Be clear and concise:**
readers tend to read only the first paragraph.
- Use the active rather than the passive voice:**
reading is smoother and faster.
- Using headings and paragraphs:**
structure the content to make it easier to read.
- Include links, eye-catching visuals and multimedia content:**
make your content attractive and rich in resources.

1.

to Project summary

First impressions are the most important. It is very likely that your project summary will be the first content that target audiences will read on your website, on your communication material and on the European Commission's project results platforms.

When writing your summary, keep it short and add bullets to make it clearer. Follow the structure below:

Background:

why did you apply for this programme? What
What needs does your project meet?

Objectives:

what are the aims of your project?

Execution:

What activities will you be carrying out? What is the number of
and what is their profile?

Results:

what do you expect to achieve with this project?

2.

news about your project

Make your experience captivating and **draw your readers** into your #CommsJourney communication journey. Think about what's new in your project that might interest or inspire your target audience. This could be an activity you organised recently or a result you produced recently. Consider the following tips:

Start with the most important information:

Your introduction should grab the reader's attention instantly.

Concentrate on the five questions you need to ask yourself, "Who? "What?", "When?", "Where?", "Why?", in the main paragraph
immediately following the title.

Don't forget that it's important to communicate in good time: the earlier an event is announced, the more likely it is to be of interest to the public.

Make sure that the news you communicate is relevant: is it linked to a topical issue?

Don't forget the potential of 'notoriety': if a **public figure** is involved in your project (such as a minister or entrepreneur), your news will be more captivating.

3.

your press releases

A press release is a well-structured text sent to journalists, which has a formal tone and conveys clear information. It serves to "create" **the news**. The main objective is for this press release to be reused by journalists and presented in the media.

- Concentrate on the **five questions you need to ask yourself**: "Who?", "What?", "When?", "Where?", "Why?"
- The headline should **convey the news**: "EU project reveals that..." or "Education minister attends final conference of EU project..." or "EU funding of €2 million has been allocated to EU sustainability project".
- Add **quotes** from your project coordinator or a key stakeholder: this is what journalists are most interested in.
- Add useful information, such as **data, links and contact details**.

All press releases from the European Commission are available at available via . You can visit the Press Corner to use it as inspiration when writing your own press releases.

4.

your publications on social media

Writing on social media must be **concise, catchy and punchy**. It is limited to a certain number of characters, which makes your communication more attractive, but also more demanding. Text and multimedia content such as images, animated visuals and videos are all part of the same story.

Below are a few **tips** for creating effective publications on social media:

- **Identify the social media channel(s) to be used:**
Not all social media are the same. Depending on your target audience and your resources, decide which channel or channels to prioritise (for more information, see  [Section 4](#)).
- **Learn to speak the same language as your audience:**
Language differs according to the age of your audience. Learn to speak the language of your target audience to communicate better with them. You can ask a question, use a quote or a series of emojis, encourage recipients to comment on your publication and share their experience.
- **Use multimedia content:**
Social media are all about **visual communication**. Images, videos or infographics attract the user's attention much more quickly and effectively than text alone. With this type of content, you can tell a story and touch the audience on an emotional level.

- **Images:** make sure you use the correct size and resolution.
- **Videos:** avoid posting videos longer than one minute.
- **Infographics:** make your figures and data visible.
- For links and resources, see  [section 2](#).

→ **Suggest creative content ideas:**

Profile project participants, present your events and activities via live streaming, a series of photos or a survey. Combine these elements: a varied and attractive content plan will help you build a solid and lasting relationship with your audience.

→ **End your publication with a "call to action":**

What reaction do you want your target audience to have after reading your publication? This is more commonly known as a "call to action". Invite the reader to browse your website, share your publication, add a comment, click on a shared link or react.

→ **Use the appropriate #hashtags:**

Hashtags work like tags and labels on social media. They make it easier for users to find information and content on a specific subject. Users interested in a certain topic can use a hashtag search (for example, #erasmusPlus or #SolidarityBody) and find related content. Find relevant hashtags so that potential participants in your project can find you, or even create your own hashtags! What's more, [Twitter's help centre](#) summarises how to use hashtags correctly and effectively. Free websites such as Hashtagify or All Hashtag can help you choose the hashtag best suited to your needs. If you prefer to use an app, Hashtag Expert (iOS, for Instagram) or Leetags (Android) could be useful.

5.

your communication material

Are you organising or taking part in an event and want to **promote** your project? Make sure you **think digital** and apply the **golden rules of web copywriting**. If you opt for limited printed information material, such as fact sheets, brochures or a few gadgets, keep the following in mind:

- apply the **three Rs**: reduce, reuse, recycle;
- always use the **visual identity of your project** (switch to the  [section 2](#));
- if you're offering gadgets, choose them responsibly (i.e. **eco-labelled**, fair trade and reusable for practical purposes);
- Opt for catchy headlines to highlight your material.



Sustainability and **digital** are core values of the European Commission. This includes waste reduction and thoughtful production. We encourage you to opt for digital versions rather than printed documents, as this will contribute to a more sustainable and digital approach!



Make sure you include everyone!

It goes without saying that **words matter**. Inclusive language aims to avoid excluding or discriminating against groups of people because of their gender or ethnic origin, for example. Avoid words, phrases and other linguistic elements that promote stereotypes of any kind, such as racist or sexist stereotypes.

TO DO

Adopt gender-neutral language that considers people in general, for example:

"Individuals are not fully aware of their impact on the environment."

Adopt gender-neutral language by avoiding gendered descriptions, for example:
"The chair of the eco-action group, Moni Patel, works closely with the person in charge of the social action committee, Matthieu Dubois, to plan events".

TO AVOID

Avoid sexist wording that favours one sex over the other, for example:

"Every day, men must ask themselves how they can fulfil their civic duties". Instead, write **"Every day, the individuals..."**

Avoid language that promotes stereotypes of any kind, particularly through the use of gendered adjectives or irrelevant information about gender, for example:
"The chairman of the eco-action group, Moni Patel, is working closely with the chairman of the social action committee, Matthieu Dubois, to plan the events".



In a linguistic context, **accessibility** means making your text readable and understandable to as many people as possible. People with reading difficulties, such as dyslexia or visual impairments, need the help of a screen reader. And don't forget to use a screen reader:

- Avoid long titles, abbreviations and acronyms. Use simple language and short sentences.
- You can also use [this free text-to-speech tool](#) to check the readability of your final text.

→ Find out more:

- ♂ [Writing clearly: Claire's advice](#)
- ♂ [Unesco guidelines for style on the web](#)
(in English only)
- ♂ [Instruments relating to the EIGE's inclusive language](#)
- ♂ [Publications Office of the European Union on Accessibility](#)
(in English only)
- ♂ [Sustainability guidelines for meetings and events](#)
(in English only)

Narration

stories

information

channe
ls

think digital

Kanäle

collection
of

content format

news

yo
ur

writing

content strategy



“ *The biggest problem with communication is the illusion that it has taken place*”.

Bernard Shaw
playwright



Share the results of your project



The concept of **communication** goes beyond the communication activity itself, such as writing articles about your project or posting on social media. Communication happens when you **actually reach** your target audiences and manage to **interact** with them.

To do this, it's essential to **share** your experiences and results through the right **channels**. This stage is a key moment in your #CommsJourney communications journey, and shows how your project can make a difference.



What are "project results"?

Results are the tangible or intangible **products** of your project, such as publications (manuals, reports, etc.), new working methods or participants' experiences. They help to generate a certain amount of **influence**, either by the project partners or by other stakeholders. The results of the project can be re-used and inspire other work in the same field.



Share your results for the common good

Don't keep the stories and results of the project to yourself. **Use them to speak** on behalf of your project consortium, across different countries and different experiences.

It's important to **share** your experience and your results with ;

- disseminate collective knowledge;
- building a learning community and culture.

Collective knowledge is one of the fundamental dissemination principles of EU programmes. EU-funded projects are a **valuable source** of tools, resources and good practice for European citizens.



Determine the appropriate communication channels

They help you disseminate a message or information to a wider audience. Channels all have different characteristics that influence the way your audiences receive the message. To choose which channels to use wisely, follow the steps below.



Use websites

Think of your **website** as the main "home" for your content. It presents information, testimonials and results related to your project and is the most comprehensive channel to use. If you are managing a small or medium-sized project, you may opt for a **landing page** or a section on the websites of project partners.

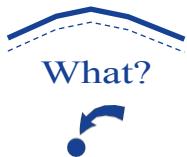
A website or landing page guarantees **your project's digital presence**. It's an opportunity to promote your experiences or results and leave a record of your achievements.

- Plan the structure of your website/landing page and organise your ideas in a mind map.
- Make sure you apply your visual identity.
- Determine the content you need.
- Buy the domain name if you opt for a project website.
- Add content to your website and optimise SEO (natural search engine optimisation).
- Publish content and promote your website via the project's or partners' social media accounts.



Since the website is your main means of communication, make sure you design it to be as inclusive as possible. This applies not only to its **accessibility**, but also to the **selection** of diverse and inclusive testimonials. Return to [section 3](#) to find out more about inclusive language and to [section 2](#) for advice on how to design and structure your website in an accessible way.

Share your results via the project results platform

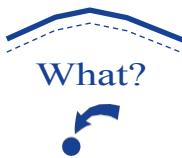


Project results platforms are **databases** containing descriptions, results and contact details for all projects funded under the [Erasmus+](#) programmes, ["Creative Europe"](#) and the [European Solidarity Corps](#).

The platform is a **free dissemination resource** for making the results of your project available to third parties. You can **inspire** other projects or **draw inspiration** from the body of best practice projects that have been deemed exemplary in terms of strategic relevance, communication potential, influence or design.

Share the results of your project on [platforms](#). Return to [section 3](#) and the elements of interest to your collaborators.

Determine the appropriate social media channels



Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter or LinkedIn: there are plenty of **platforms** to choose from. Decide which ones seem to best suit your project, your objectives and your resources.



Not all social media are the same. It all depends on the audience you're trying to reach. It's worth taking the time to choose the most appropriate platform.



Research the channels

All social media channels have their own characteristics, advantages and disadvantages. To decide which channel to use, a bit of research can be useful. Here are some questions you can ask yourself:

- What channels do my **target audiences** use?
- Are similar projects already present on social media? If so, which channels are they using?
- What **resources** do I need to manage these channels?

Plan your communication

There are two fundamental principles to be followed when publishing on social media:

→ choosing the right moment for publication

Each platform has its own **peak time**, when it records a higher rate of engagement and therefore greater exposure for your publication. Choose the best time to publish to increase your visibility.

→ frequency of publication

Less is more! Studies suggest that the optimum frequency is one publication per day, with a maximum of two publications per day. The minimum threshold is set at three publications a week.

Consider creating your own **social media publication calendar** to help you keep an overview of your upcoming publications. You can adapt this calendar to suit your needs, including information such as the date, time and content of the publication, the platform on which it will be shared or the links to be included.

☞ [Hootsuite](#) provides more tips and free templates. You could make planning even simpler by integrating a tool like ☞ [Buffer](#) or ☞ [Falcon](#) to schedule your social media activities in advance.

Make the most of key communication moments

Special occasions such as anniversaries or internationally recognised days are key moments to increase your efforts to promote and publicise the project. These communication moments can be used to attract clicks on your publications.

Contact the media



Media outreach involves sharing your experiences and results with **journalists** who have a platform to share them with a wider audience and maximise the reach of your message.



The media can **multiply** the power of your message. The aim is to obtain media or digital coverage which, in turn, can help to increase the influence of your results over time.



Define your media audience

In order to choose the right media to disseminate your content, you first need to determine who you are addressing and what the purpose of your key message is for the target group.

Draw up a media list

Collect journalists' contact details and create a directory. Start by browsing Google, particularly its "News" section. You can also register with databases to access ready-to-use media lists for a monthly subscription fee.

Think about how you approach journalists

When sending a press release to the media, bear in mind the same principles as when publishing on social media: **timing and key moments in the communication**.

Don't forget that a well-written press release, published at the right time and sent to the right people, is the key to maximising your reach.



What?



WHY?



How?

Share your results at events

Events are ideal opportunities to **present** your results. These can range from small meetings organised by project partners to larger events organised by several stakeholders or in collaboration with EU institutions.

Events have infinite potential. They bring you into contact with people who are genuinely interested in your project and give you the opportunity to **interact directly** with them. There are many event formats: online exhibitions and discussion groups, physical workshops and interactive activities, to name but a few.

Think about format and timing

You can organise **your own events** during and after the project cycle, as well as taking part in initiatives or **events organised** by other beneficiaries and institutions. Here are some examples of events you could take part in:

- events organised by your national agency or national office "Creative Europe";
- events organised by partners, such as universities or schools.

Make sure you prepare a communication plan to promote your event via your web and social media channels, or those of your stakeholders.

Organise sustainable/environmentally-friendly events

Ask yourself the following seven questions:

- Is physical participation in the event necessary? • Is the venue sufficiently environmentally friendly? • Is the printed and promotional material sustainable?
- Are the 3Rs being applied (Reduce, Recycle and Reuse)? • Is the catering business sustainable?
- Are accommodation and transport environmentally friendly?
- Are you helping to raise environmental awareness?

To find out more, consult this [PDF guide](#) produced by the European Commission.

Make sure you include everyone. Choose a **venue that is** accessible to everyone and spacious enough, for example, for wheelchairs or guide dogs. If you are organising a round table or presentations, make sure that the selection of participants and speakers is **diverse**.

→ Find out more:

- ⌚ [Video: #CommsWorkout: increase the influence of your project communications](#)
- ⌚ [Horizon 2020 guidelines on the use of social media](#)
- ⌚ [Guide to creating a website for your Horizon Europe project](#)
- ⌚ [Interreg guide to media relations](#)
- ⌚ [UK National Agency workshop: sharing project success on social media](#)

Share

contact with the media

social media

sustainable events

channel message

is digital presence

multiply

organise events

press release

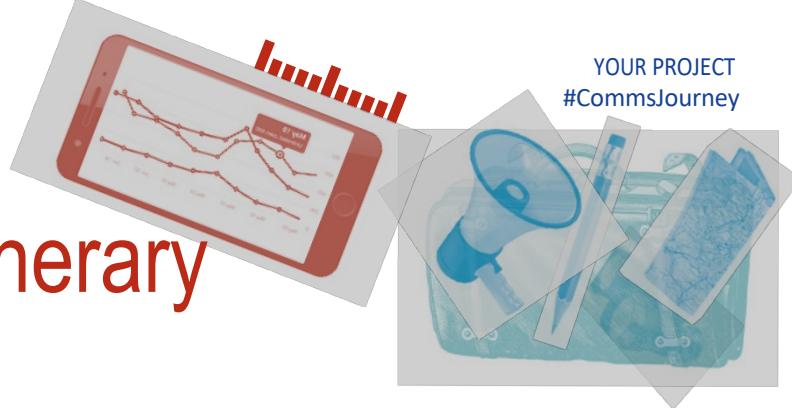


“ *What can be measured
can be improved.* ”

Peter Drucker
writer and management guru



Evaluate communication itinerary your #CommsJourney



Congratulations to you! You've reached the **final stage** of your #CommsJourney journey. So, how did it really go? Has it been successful or is there still room for improvement?

Assessment in a nutshell

The final step in a successful communications strategy is **to evaluate your communications activities and analyse their effectiveness**.

There are **three key moments** in the assessment process:

- 1. Before** you start your business, when you choose your indicators in your communication plan;
- 2. During** your activity, when monitoring your performance;
- 3. After** your activity, once your communication has taken place.

In order to evaluate your communication efforts, you need to choose the appropriate **performance indicators** when planning your activities. This will enable you to progressively measure your success and improve your work.

What is a performance indicator?

A performance indicator is a **quantitative or qualitative** criterion that measures the success of your communication activity. It can measure the quantity of content as well as the number of activities, their scope or scale.

Let's say you've organised the final event of your project and you want to know if it was successful and had the expected impact. To do this, you first need to ensure that your objectives are **SMART** (for example: at least 100 people attend your event, see [section 1](#)) and look at indicators such as the following:

- the **number of people** attending your event, both physically and virtually;
- the **number of people** who "liked" or commented on the publications on social media or who followed the live streaming;
- the **number of unique visits** to the article on the website about the event; the results of the **satisfaction survey** you sent out after the event.
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Ask yourself the following questions during your assessment:

- What are the **best indicators** for measuring my communication objectives?
- Looking at what I've achieved through my indicators, **what should I change** to improve my communication efforts? Am I addressing the right target audience? Is the channel appropriate or should I explore other possibilities?

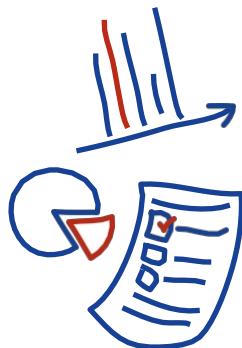
Follow the steps below to ensure the quality of your #CommsJourney communications campaign!

Choose your indicators



Depending on your communication objectives, target audiences and channels, you can define a **set of performance indicators** to assess the success of your communication. Defining **SMART objectives** can help you make the right choice.

Here's a brief overview of some of the performance indicators you can use:



Social media: reach

(number of people who see your content), **impressions** (number of times your content is viewed), **engagement** (number of times people interact with your content through likes, comments, shares or retweets).

Website:

number of visitors, time spent on the website, thematic interests of visitors.

Press room:

media coverage, number of journalists attending your final event.

Events:

number of participants, feedback from participants via short surveys.



For a broader overview of indicators by channel, see this [resource](#) published by the European Commission.

Indicators show you what **you are doing well** and what you are not doing well. Make sure that your communication objectives are always consistent with your indicators. Do they really show whether you have achieved your objectives? This is important to ensure **meaningful monitoring** of your project's progress and achievements.

For example, to find out whether your project has had a positive effect on your target audience, the **number of "likes"** on your social media posts would not be an appropriate indicator. Instead, you should look at the type of feedback you received on social media or in survey results.



Refer to your communication plan

At the start of your #CommsJourney journey, you created a **communications plan** that included performance indicators. It's important to remember that the choice of indicators must go hand in hand with **the communication objectives you set out in your plan**.

For example, if your communication objective is to increase public interest in your project, you can study the number of unique visitors to the dedicated page on your website or check whether the rate of engagement with your social media posts has increased over the last month.

The more specific your communication objectives, the more effective your evaluation will be.

Plan ahead

Evaluating communication requires **in-depth planning and reflection**. Data collection takes place during and after your communication activities. Don't wait until the last minute; follow up throughout the #CommsJourney communication journey.



Carry out your assessment

Once the indicators have been defined, it's time to collect your data and analyse it in depth. A well-executed evaluation will provide you with **useful feedback** and new ideas for your next communication activities or your next #CommsJourney communication path.



By adapting your activities according to the data, you can **improve** your reach to target audiences and maximise the **influence** of your communication activities.



Collect data

Any useful evaluation requires the regular collection of data. This is evidence of the influence of your communications activities: have they helped you to achieve the objectives you set in your communications plan?

Keep track of your business

Digital channels such as social media platforms or website providers offer **free integrated tools** for tracking your reach and engagement rate. They give you direct and almost "immediate" feedback on the performance of your communication activities.

In the case of events, you might consider sending a short survey to participants after the event. Here are some examples of questions to ask:

- *How did you hear about this event?*
 - the participants' responses will show you which channel worked best.
- *Did you find the event interesting and inspiring?"*
 - the responses will provide food for thought about future event formats (e.g. giving more time to presentations, including more interactive moments).
- *Would you like more information?*
 - The responses will tell you whether people are interested in receiving more information about your project.

Find inspiration at [Google Survey](#) or [SurveyMonkey](#). These sites provide good advice on how to write survey questions.

Incorporate lessons learned

Once started, the adventure never really ends! Take your memories with you, but also leave your mark. Celebrate your success with your project partners and take note of the lessons learned. They'll come in handy for your **next #CommsJourney communications journey!**

→ Find out more:

- [DG COMM toolbox on evaluation](#)
- [Communication network indicators - Companion guide](#)



#CommsJourney!

ERASMUS+
Enriching lives,
opening minds.

**EUROPEAN
SOLIDARITY
CORPS**
The power of together

CREATIVE EUROPE
Push boundaries

Appendix 1



COMMUNICATION STRATEGY TEMPLATE - FIND INSPIRATION!

Appendix 2



MODEL COMMUNICATION PLAN



Publications Office
of the European Union