

**Interreg**   
*Mediterranean*



**PROGRAMME MANUAL**

# INTERNAL COMMUNICATION – COMMUNITY BUILDING

Programme cofinancé par le Fonds Européen  
de Développement Régional (FEDER)

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## FORWARD NOTE

For the 2014-2020 programming period, the Interreg MED Programme has adopted a new approach for project management that drives new orientation on project identities and on (expected) results rather than on processes or simple outputs. Each project will be part of a thematic community of projects running during the whole programme period and to which they will contribute. Project partners will have to develop their relations in the spirit of the “MED community” in order to allow the development of a true “community identity”. In this sense, the project communication approach will be based on thematic communities rather than on the identity of the project itself. Following this new approach, project partners as well as Programme bodies will permanently be interconnected in one consistent and single manner.

## Introduction

The quality of project communication results comes from a committed work of all partners and not only the Lead Partner or the partner responsible for communication activities. This is why a good internal communication management is a key for the external communication of any project.

First and foremost as main principals, regarding the communication inside the partnership of both Modular and Horizontal projects, it is advisable to:

- Make sure there is a good collaboration system, and that partners are aware of the purpose and their fundamental role in increasing the impact and visibility of the project.
- Define a workflow and a reporting system based on:

What is common to the partnership?

- Project’s objectives, processes, results;
- EU communication obligations.

What is specific to each partner of the project?

- Proximity with certain stakeholders;
- Linguistic & cultural issues.

## Tasks and responsibilities of modular projects

After approval, Modular projects will be associated with a Horizontal project which coordinates the communication strategy of the thematic community to which they belong. This means that, alongside the communication strategy of each project, all modular projects must foresee communication coordination roles and tasks in order to facilitate cooperation between partners and with the Horizontal project, such as:

- At their own project level, to ensure that they involve all their partners in every communication action, to share or merge activities with other modular projects, including the development of an evaluation of communication activities, discussing common methods, sharing tools, exploring complementarities and economies of scale, between other modular projects within the thematic community of projects;
- At the thematic community of projects level, they should give an active contribution to the strategy-set/update/realisation of the related horizontal project, in order to enrich the horizontal project/thematic community communication strategy and actions. Regarding target groups, modular projects should distinguish, with horizontal projects, the target groups to be addressed directly with those that should to be covered by the horizontal project.

- Modular projects are also requested to provide and share regular information to Horizontal projects and the Programme in format and deadlines to be defined (for thematic publications, events, etc.), mainly through the web platform that the Programme will be providing to the projects (please consult the section on the web platform) and other tools and forms of participation, decided in the Horizontal project strategy.

#### Mediator

It can be useful to appoint a “Mediator” in charge of the mentioned coordination and moderating tasks between the Modular project and its related Horizontal project. This professional could also be in charge of mediating with the Programme.

Also, the “Mediator” appointed in the partnership will help the projects strengthen and foster synergies between themselves and therefore be an integral part of their crossed-exchanges to facilitate them.

## Tasks and responsibilities of horizontal projects

### a) Coordination methods and mechanisms

Horizontal projects play an important coordinating and facilitating role among the thematic community. Indeed, in order to ensure a good information flow between all stakeholders, all of them should be perfectly coordinated between each other. It is notably the responsibility of the Horizontal project to establish guidelines and set up the rhythm for the delivery and exchange of information with project partners to occur in a regular, usual flow of communication.

As a consequence, Horizontal projects must draw an external AND internal communication strategy taking into consideration a regular information flow and coordination mechanisms between:

- The Horizontal project own partners;
- With the modular project partners of the thematic community and with other Horizontal projects;
- With the Programme in order to feed communication at a transnational level.

The Horizontal project must therefore meet these three dimensions, drawing a strong internal communication strategy, by bringing together competences, capacities, best practices, exploring complementarities.

### b) Coordination between the partners of the Horizontal and the Modular projects

It is most relevant to establish the tools, means and approach to produce a single voice, a single behaviour among peers. The Horizontal project must start its communication addressing its own project partners, making sure that everyone is involved and lined up with project objectives and responsibilities. The Horizontal project must set forth an internal and effective dynamic of cooperation and coordination inside the project itself.

The roles and responsibilities of each partner within the partnership shall be clearly defined (for example, define who is in charge of press relations and media campaigns, etc.). If instead all the project communication activities are assigned to a single partner, his role must be clearly stated.

Cooperation mechanisms between partners of the whole thematic community, can be achieved through some of the following concrete activities:

- In every communication the project must ensure that **all partners** will, in their own media, publish the same content about the Horizontal project;
- A cooperation method to take these responsibilities must also be explained in the communication plan, i.e. how the project will organise itself to address the different elements of the communication strategy. For example, if it creates «working groups» or if it specialises each partner on a specific task;

- It must be clearly mentioned the role of communication in the management model of the project;
- The partners of the thematic community will meet at least once a year to plan and evaluate the ongoing communication activities of the project;
- Team building among the selected projects should be ensured, with for example the organisation of a “speed dating” at the launching event;
- A proportionate number of communication and capitalisation seminars including networking sessions/speed dating/project display corners/expositions/trainings (e.g. maximum 5 in the period between the kick-off and the final conference and short *ad hoc* decentralised meetings/stakeholder consultations with key stakeholders in a team building spirit);
- Establish guidelines and a calendar to set up the rhythm for the delivery and exchange of information with the thematic community project partners.

The organisation of local communication or capitalisation events by modular projects should be included in the Horizontal project plan/calendar and inform/involve one representative; the financial resources for the organisation of these meetings should be borne by the Modular projects.

c) Provision of information and coordination with the Programme

The Programme must be involved and informed in the process of all changes occurred in the communication strategy and plans. Other Horizontal projects might be involved in the discussion of common approaches regarding management issues of the communication strategy, namely:

- Providing to the Programme regular information on the ongoing development of the strategy, following the planning and evaluation activities demands from the Joint Secretariat.
- Regular update of the Programme web platform, inter alia, including news, events agenda, summaries, and feed of documents issued by the projects activities of the related thematic web pages.
- Cooperating with the Programme in the organisation of transnational events, seminars, capacity building trainings and publications, providing printed and audio-visual materials, and an active participation in the events animation with related thematic content. This active participation will involve costs to be foreseen in the budget.

Otherwise, the Programme will provide the framework to the Horizontal projects for the preparation of joint activities, including a communication working group involving all communication officers or personnel in charge of communication in the horizontal projects and the NCP representatives.

d) Community building

Horizontal Projects are responsible for coordinating the whole thematic community and also for building a strong community. To this end, it is not sufficient to coordinate activities and share information between partners of all projects part of the community, it is also necessary to create a sense of membership and belonging. All partners should feel part of a community and identify themselves as a member of this community. For this purpose, Horizontal projects should provide a clear direction and a sense of purpose: i.e. together with all the community members they should set up the community objectives, a common goal and clear tasks recognised by all.

Once the objectives have been clearly set, Horizontal Project partners shall start creating and fostering a team spirit. This can be done for example through team building activities. However, more importantly, Horizontal Projects shall carefully listen to Modular projects, take their comments/remarks into consideration and show that their opinion matters. They shall establish work relationships so as to create an environment where members feel like they have a say in what happens and that their voice is heard. They should instil a sense of mattering.

However, all of the above is not enough if the community members do not see any benefit in contributing to the community. In some way, the members must feel rewarded for their participation and efforts. Horizontal projects should therefore clearly demonstrate the advantages of actively participating in the community and help Modular Projects with their communication and capitalisation activities to better promote their results and

transfer them to a broader audience. Yet, they should pay special attention not to take credit for the Modular Project's work and instead encourage ownership of their work.

This "Community Building" task being one of the main Horizontal project objectives and purposes, a specific work package including a list of types of activities and deliverables has thus been foreseen. For more details about this work package, please see figure "Activities and deliverables for the work package 'community building", section 2.3.3 of the Application Manual.