

Interreg



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Meuse – Rhine (NL – BE – DE)

Communication manual

of the

Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE)

Programme

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Inhoud

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Introduction

We want to ensure that your project is presented in the best possible way and that its results are communicated transparently to the outside world. We have therefore created this guide to help you communicate about your project. It contains guidelines that should be followed to increase the visibility of your project.

The purpose of targeted public relations and communication work is to communicate transparently. The background to this is that we want everyone to know where the EU funds and other taxpayers' money is going and the added value of your project to be presented to the outside world in an understandable way.

It is important that communication about your project is not only considered administratively. Well-planned communication increases visibility, anchors the results in the long term and enables you to make contact with other stakeholders in the Meuse-Rhine region.

For this reason, there are some guidelines in the area of "information and communication" that the lead partners and all other project partners must adhere to. The handbook is a user-friendly translation of the European Commission guidelines. The guidelines and the rules and regulations of the programme are legally valid; legal content is avoided as far as possible in this communication manual. No rights can therefore be derived from the content of this manual. Please ensure that you check all legally valid documents carefully.

The lead partner bears full responsibility for the correct implementation of the communication specifications throughout the course of the project. They must assess whether the communication materials created and promoted as part of the project fulfil the defined criteria.

As a reminder, failure to comply with the publicity requirements will result in a reduction in support of up to 2%, depending on the nature and seriousness of the offence and taking into account the principle of proportionality, in accordance with the provision of Art 36 (6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1059. This can de facto lead to a reduction in the co-financing allocated to the project or even to the recovery of ERDF amounts already paid.

This guide will help you to avoid such unwanted financial cuts in the area of advertising costs and public relations costs. In addition, you will also find plenty of advice that can help you to organise your project's public relations work effectively.

For this reason, please also forward this communication guide to all persons involved in communicating about your project (e.g. all project partners, possible external service providers (e.g. graphic designers) and persons who are involved in the administration of your project on a selective basis (interns, volunteers, etc.)). If you have any questions or need support, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are at your disposal.

Information, communication and visibility obligations

Presentation and type of presentation of the logo

After approval, each project receives its own project logo (consisting of the programme logo and project name in the colour of the corresponding priority).

As a rule, it is no longer possible to design and use an additional logo of your own. As the creation of a project logo is offered by the programme, Interreg funding may not be used for this purpose. Please note that the use of the project logo (consisting of the programme logo and project name in the colour of the corresponding priority) is mandatory for all means of communication.

What you should also look out for:

- **Size:** The project logo must be of an appropriate size, i.e. the text of the entire logo should be easily legible and other logos should not be larger, i.e. the EU flag in the logo should be at least as high or wide as the largest of the other logos.

Please always check this for all communication materials, especially if you have had them created by a graphics agency.

- **Placement:** The project logo must be placed prominently, e.g. on the website (or in social media), so that the logo appears directly after accessing the website within the viewing window of a digital device, so that the user does not have to scroll down the page.
- **Colour representation:** For print and online publications, care should be taken to use the logo correctly in CMYK and RGB format, as otherwise colour deviations may occur.
- **Background:**

- **White/light-coloured background:** The logo should ideally only be used on white or light-coloured backgrounds. According to Regulation (EU) 2021/1060, Annex IX: "If there is no alternative to a coloured background, a white border with a width of 1/25 of the height of the rectangle [flag] must be added around the rectangle." Two examples of this can be found below.



- **Dark background:** If the Interreg logo is to be placed on a dark background, it must be placed in a white rectangle in compliance with the safety margins.

If the use of a white background field is not possible for reasons of space or context, or because it would obscure an important element of the background image, you can use a white-coloured version. In this case, the logo, the border of the EU emblem and the lettering must be white.

The white rectangle display method is always preferable to the white-coloured logo version.



- **Single-colour version:** A single-colour version should only be used if it is absolutely necessary due to printing constraints or special purposes, i.e. only if no colour is available. The rules for the use of the logo remain unchanged, i.e. it should preferably be placed on a white text field when used against a dark or light background. The EU emblem should be used with a black or white border measuring 1/25 of the height of the rectangle.

Help:

If you are confronted with a technical display problem, please never change the logo yourself, but instead inform your project representative, who will endeavour to find a suitable solution in accordance with the communication rules.



General obligations

Each funded project is obliged to publicise the fact that it is supported with EU funds as part of the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme. This means that the project logo organised by the programme must be displayed on **all materials** developed by the project, in addition to a clear indication that the project is funded by Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE), an EU fund for cross-border cooperation.

Examples of developed materials that fall under the area of public relations are

- Brochures
- Leaflets
- Newsletter
- Presentations
- Business letters
- Invitations
- Videos
- Press releases
- Interviews (reference to the project funding by Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) and the European Union is sufficient here)
- Equipment
- Promotional items
- ...

If you are unsure whether a medium falls under the rules listed here, we advise you to contact your project officer and clarify this conclusively.

You are welcome to reword the sentence, but it is important that you explicitly refer to Interreg funding from the European Union. For information on the presentation of the logo, please refer to the chapter "Presentation and type of presentation of the logo".

Important:

The reference to the funding can be made textually or, in the case of spoken contributions, audibly, e.g. by the following sentence: "Project XYZ is being carried out as part of the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme and co-financed with XYZ euros by the European Union ([if applicable:] and with XYZ euros from [name the co-financiers here])". If it is a shorter text, for example on a leaflet, it can read: "Supported by the European Union and the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme".



In addition, the project partners need to:

- maintain a project-related website or portal page (see below) on the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) website (<https://www.interregmeuserhine.eu/>). Each project will have its own portal page. A portal page will be set up for all projects on the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) website. The portal pages are displayed under the menu item 'Projects' together with portal pages from other projects. You have the option of entering the information yourself or using the service offered by the programme.
a description of their project, including the necessary references to the programme and EU funding, on their organisation's websites and on any social media channels of the partners (if available).

For further information, please refer to the chapter "Websites and social media of the project partners".

Important:

Please note that other project websites are not eligible according to our cost catalogue. Specific online databases and tools may be eligible if they are necessary for the realisation of the project. However, websites for purely communication purposes are not eligible. If in doubt, please contact your Regional Antenna (in the application process) or your project officer (during the implementation phase) before incurring costs to clarify eligibility.



- Visibly display the A3 poster you receive from the programme or an equivalent electronic display in the premises of each project partner, containing information about the project and highlighting the support provided by the Interreg programme. Visible display means that the poster should be displayed in the entrance area of the institution, as it must be accessible to the public. A poster in the office of the project staff is therefore not sufficient.
- Projects with costs of more than EUR 500,000 that have physical investments or purchase equipment must display permanent plaques or billboards that are clearly visible to the public and show the emblem of the European Union. In this case, you can also receive such a plaque/billboard from the programme. Please contact your project managers of the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme.

Project plaques

The EU regulation stipulates that each partner (including sub-partners) must display a clearly visible, durable plaque or billboards with information on the project and the project logo for each project exceeding EUR 500,000 and making investments in kind or purchasing equipment as soon as the actual implementation of an Interreg project with investments in kind or the purchase of equipment has started or procured equipment has been installed.

This project plaque can be ordered from the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme.

Project posters

For Interreg projects of less than EUR 500,000, each partner must display at least one poster (minimum size A3 or larger) or an equivalent electronic display with information about the project, emphasising the support provided by Interreg, in a clearly visible place - for example in the entrance area of a building.

The project partners receive these project posters from the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme.

Events and activities as part of the project

If a co-financed measure involves participants other than the project partners (e.g. an event, training, etc.), the lead project partner ensures that the participants have been informed about the EU funding of the measure and the project. The lead partner makes it clear that the measure it is carrying out is supported by the European Union as part of the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme.

Any document (e.g. invitation, press release, presentations, etc.), including certificates of participation or similar, relating to such a project will contain the combined project logo and a reference to the fact that the project was co-financed by the EU under the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme.

These elements should also be taken into account when preparing events or meetings (e.g. PowerPoint presentations, invitations, agendas, conference documents, etc.)

Media relations

When working with the press and media (e.g. in interviews, press releases, etc.), please make sure that the EU funding of the project as part of the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme is clearly mentioned. In particular, make sure that you emphasise the cross-border quality of the project and ensure that you clearly differentiate between the project (your specific venture) and the Interreg programme (the framework within which you are implementing your project).

For press releases and editorial contributions, a reference to the funding in the body text is sufficient; an additional programme logo is not mandatory.

Obligations in the area of digital communication

From a communication perspective, it is highly desirable that projects also communicate digitally via dedicated channels, such as a project website or social media. Such means of communication must not only be set up, but also maintained, which of course requires time and resources.

The project's communications officer is responsible for maintaining and updating the content. We recommend that input will be provided by the project staff, among others.

Project page on the programme website

Each Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) project will have its own project page on the programme website. This project page contains information that is already pre-populated for your project.

Tip:

The programme recommends that all projects add updates at least twice a year on the website. In the first meeting with your project manager, he/she will therefore also ask which employees should have access to the project website.



Important:

Please note that the responsibility for the information that the project publishes on the programme website lies with the respective project. This applies to the texts that you publish online as well as the graphics and photos etc. If the project information leads to a warning, the programme will pass this on to the project concerned.



Social media of projects

In addition to the website, social media are interesting online tools for project communication. If your project decides that you can reach your target group particularly well with an account in one of the social networks, the material you upload there should always emphasise EU support. Highlighting support on social media can be done in many different ways:

The following applies to the profile / bio:

On the social media profiles, the project logo (including the EU emblem and the funding reference) should be placed on the profile or banner image - provided that the social media platform offers a banner option. The banner option offers more space for the integration of the logo and is therefore recommended.

Important:

The project should display the logo in full, i.e. even if the platform crops the image. Also remember to mention the EU funding in the profile description.



Below you will find an example of what your profile could look like:



You should use the following elements for the individual posts:

- Information/news about the project or topics that are important to the project (incl. photos, infographics, video or similar). Testimonials from end users of your project results are also particularly suitable here.
- The visual material (including videos) that you upload to the channel should always be labelled with the project logo (including the EU emblem and the funding reference), and the information about the EU funding should also be provided as part of the profile description or individual posts.
- Mention partners, participants and the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme (@Mentions). By naming them, all participants can react quickly and easily to the post, like and/or share it. This also increases the reach of the post.
- The use of hashtags such as #interregmeuserhine #interreg, #madewithinterreg, #euinmyregion, #europaomdehoek and any other hashtags that fit the project is also recommended.

Websites and social media of the project partners

Important:

All beneficiaries are required to publish a brief description of the project on their organisation's official website and on social media (if available), appropriate to the level of support.



In addition to the project's own channels, many project partners also have their own websites and profiles on various social media. Information about the project should also be provided regularly here.

The project partners need to publish a project description. It should include at least the following elements:

- a brief description of the project appropriate to the level of support;
- the objectives and results of the project;
- financial support from the European Union;
- Reference to the website of the Interreg Meuse-Rhine programme (NL-BE-DE);

The following elements should also be used in social media:

- Mention partners, participants and the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme (@Mentions). By mentioning them, the partners involved and the Interreg programme can react quickly and easily to the post, like and/or share it.
- The use of hashtags such as #interregmeuserhine, #interreg, #madewithinterreg, #euinmyregion, #europaomdehoek and any other hashtags that fit the project is also recommended.

Highlighting EU support on social media can be done in many different ways! It is expected that project partners communicate regularly about their project. For posts, it is recommended that the project logo (including the EU emblem and co-financing statement) is placed on the visual material, including any videos, and/or the support is mentioned in the text. The beneficiary may vary these approaches in individual posts. The information on EU funding may also form part of the profile description.

Obligation to provide evidence

The programme will regularly check compliance with the communication guidelines, but not all documents. For this reason, you should always keep appropriate evidence of your communication activities, such as

- Samples of brochures, flyers, giveaways;
- Copies of press releases, publications, advertisements, certificates of participation, event invitations;
- Photos of posters hung up, signs and boards erected;
- Photos of promotional gifts with logo imprint;
- Links to the reports on the website;
- Screenshots of posts on social media;
- Publications of all kinds
- Etc.

This evidence can also be requested in the event of possible subsequent audits. Therefore, please keep them even after the end of the project. We recommend archiving at least three copies per communication activity and, if possible, also saving an online version on an external hard drive.

Financial corrections

Please note that projects risk financial consequences if they fail to comply with EU and programme branding requirements. The programme may cancel up to 2% of the ERDF co-financing if it is not possible to change the materials to match the EU requirements, i.e. if a brochure has already been distributed. The financial reductions will be applied to the partner(s) concerned and will take into account the principle of proportionality in view of the infringement. Further information on this can also be found in the general programme manual.

Projects of strategic importance or with EU funding of more than EUR 5,000,000

In addition to the above mentioned requirements, projects of strategic importance have additional obligations. If the funded project is a project of strategic importance **or** projects with EU funding of more than €5,000,000, a communication event or communication activity must be organised.

These events and activities can take many forms, such as

- Special project campaigns;
- Events that encourage greater engagement and involve end users or target groups, such as competitions, guided tours, workshops, etc;

- Kick-off or closing events, such as the opening of a centre, a ceremony to mark the completion of construction work, etc;
- Special events that offer a unique project experience, such as exhibitions, performances, theatre acts, fashion shows, etc;
- Events that ensure strong media coverage, such as press conferences, visits by journalists to the project and other formats;
- Any other format of communication event or activity that recognises the support of the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme and the European Regional Development Fund and involves the European Commission and the Managing Authority;
- Activities where the results of the project are presented, e.g. visits to laboratories and renovated facilities, excursions, open days, fairs, etc.

Please ensure that you inform and invite the European Commission and the Managing Authority at least two months in advance of your activity/event. The invitation should include details of basic project information, time, location, type of event or activity, format, expected role of representatives at the event/activity (an active role is encouraged, e.g. speaking) and expected contributions.

The event or activity should serve as an opportunity to make the work of the project visible to the public and to demonstrate the positive changes for the country and the region, i.e. the importance of the project for achieving the specific programme objective.

It is also an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the link between the project's objective, its relevance to national development and its contribution to EU priorities. Ultimately, the organisation of communication events or activities offers citizens an insight into how projects on the ground make Europe more competitive, greener, more connected, more social and closer to citizens.

Further information can also be found in the European Commission's guide for projects of strategic importance, which you can find in the download section of the website:

www.interregmeuserhine.eu/de/downloads/

Recommendations

Project acronym

A key component of a project's branding is its acronym. It is important to choose an acronym that is short, easy to pronounce and related to the project topic. Project acronyms should be a maximum of 18 characters long.

The project abbreviation is also used to create the URL of the project website, so the abbreviation should not contain any special characters (& ! . * @ etc.)

Appointment of a communications officer for the project

Although not mandatory, it is strongly recommended that the project appoints a communications officer to oversee and implement the communication measures - based on these guidelines, the support from the programme and the recommendations in this guide. These resources are intended to minimise the workload while at the same time, making it efficient. We strongly advise you to ensure a good flow of information from the individual project creators to the communications officer.

Communication plan

The Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme attaches great importance to PR and public relations work. The project partners must therefore start working on project communication as soon as they are working on their application and the development of a corresponding communication plan including planned communication activities is recommended at the beginning of the project term. Please ensure that this communication plan is also specifically tailored to the project application submitted.

Target groups

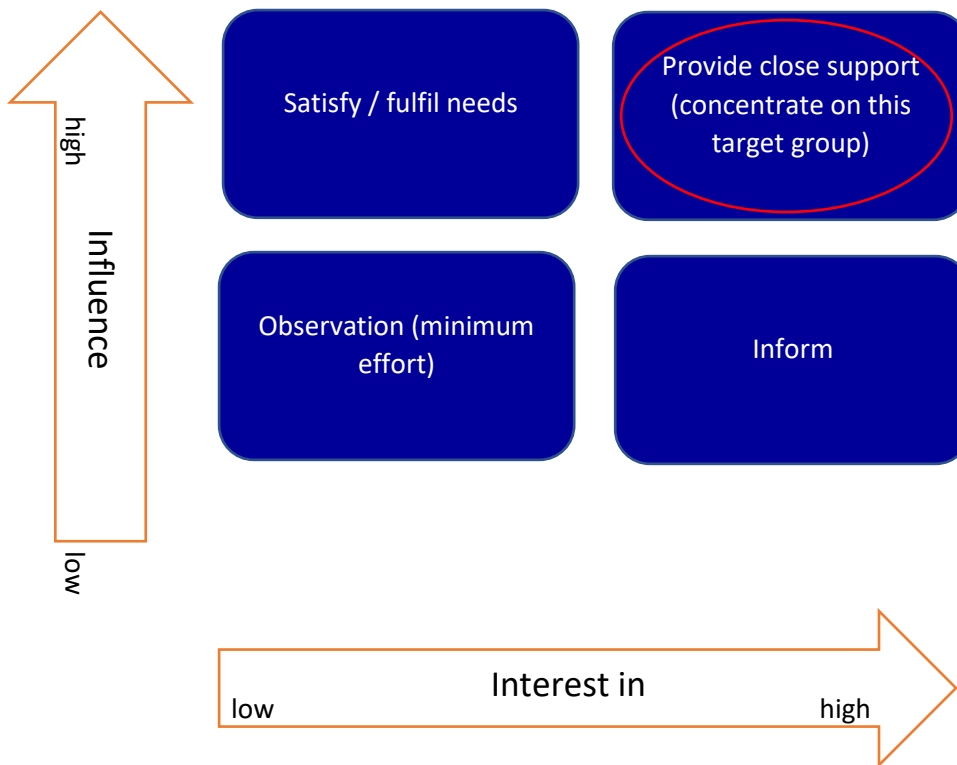
The communication needs and the means of communication vary depending on the target group. Below we provide an overview of the possible (clusters of) target groups and stakeholders.

This overview serves as a guide and is not exhaustive. Depending on the project, other stakeholders may also be relevant.

- Public opinion and citizens of the region
- Political actors and decision-makers (including programme partners)
- Stakeholders of the project (target groups, partners)
- National and regional authorities
- EU institutions
- ...

Stakeholder mapping

As project resources are limited, you need to prioritise the stakeholders who have an influence on the likelihood of the project achieving its goals quickly and efficiently. Stakeholder mapping supports you in achieving this goal.



Assemble your project team and look at the list of stakeholders you created earlier. Sort the stakeholder groups according to the strength of their interest and the degree of their influence on the map. You should end up with about 5 groups in each quadrant. In the top right-hand corner you will find your main target groups.

Please bear in mind that the general public can have a greater influence on the topics of your project than you might initially realise. The programme therefore strongly recommends that project results are also targeting the general public. This naturally has an impact on the form and content of the project. It is important to demonstrate the relevance of the content for this target group (see also the section on storytelling).

Communication matrix

The programme strongly recommends that you draw up a clear communication matrix each year, containing the following information: the objectives per target group, the measures planned to achieve these objectives and the timing of these measures, as well as the resources required and the timetable.

The matrix can be created by the project's communication officer together with the other project team members in a short space of time. Its most important added value is that it provides the project staff responsible for communication with a guideline and at the same time enables the project officers to track the communication measures.

Of course, some of the communication measures are suitable for several target groups. The communication matrix below provides an overview of the various measures for the individual target groups.

	Public	Politics	Stakeholders	Nat.Gover.	EU
Logo	X	X	X	X	X
Banner	X	X	X	X	X
Poster	X	X	X	X	X
Stationary	X	X	X	X	X
Story/tekst	X	X	X	X	X
Website	X	X	X	X	X
Final report	X	X	X	X	X
Press release	X	X	X		
Newsletter		X	X		
Leaflet	X	X	X		X
Folder		X	X		
Event		X	X		
Social media	X	X	X	X	X

Storytelling

Storytelling is a technique or form of communication that is often used today to communicate information. When you package information in a story, you not only secure the attention of your readers, but also make a stronger impact on them and increase the likelihood that they will remember your information. Storytelling gives your project a human touch. If you want to attract the attention of the press, storytelling is the method of choice.

For projects that are unknown to the general public, this method proves to be helpful in conveying a simple message and thereby increasing the level of awareness.

Length of sentences

It is best to write in clear and simple language so that you can be easily understood by the general public. However, it is not always easy to describe project measures in a comprehensible way. The rule here is: if 15-year-olds understand you, you are usually on the right path.

- Sentences should be no longer than 15 to 20 words (and certainly no longer than 30 words).
- Alternate between long and short sentences. Short sentences can be very effective.
- Pack only one message into each sentence.

Style and vocabulary

- Keep it short (especially on social media). Online tools for text summaries, such as Resoomer can be helpful here (available in various languages).
- Choose a more informal style rather than a scientific or overly formal style
- Avoid using dialect. Your writing style must be professional and correct, but should also be interesting and not boring.
- Use active rather than passive formulations:
 - Active: *The European Commission published this document in January.*
 - Passive: *This document was published by the European Commission in January*
- Use first and second person pronouns ("we" and "you") to refer to yourself and your readers.
- Use words that you also use at home or in everyday life.
- Avoid technical jargon and abbreviations wherever possible. If technical terms and abbreviations are unavoidable: Preface your text with a list of terms/abbreviations.

All good things come in threes

For stories and in communication in general, three is a magic number.

Already Aristotle had recognised the magic of three - his rhetorical triangle teaches us the ideal storytelling structure: introduction, middle section, conclusion. Psychology has also shown that the number three plays an important role in memory. According to the "rules of threes", people can best remember information that is divided into three parts. This explains why stories are often told in three acts and why three arguments are often more convincing than more or less.

The best way to start this for your storytelling is to break each idea down into three parts. Every communication has a beginning, a middle and an end. Even if there is no formula to follow, the story you tell should always have a structure - otherwise your reader will get lost. This helps to turn complexity into clarity.

Speaking of structure

- State the most important information at the beginning of the text so that your readers can easily find it again. Do not place the most important information in the middle of the text, as it will receive little attention there.
- Limit yourself to a few important points and avoid long paragraphs.
- Make it personal and include an anecdote about a final beneficiary. This will make your project tangible. For example, think of a patient who was diagnosed and treated at an early stage thanks to the project.
- Appeal to your audience with all their senses. This means, for example, that you combine textual elements with visual components (photos, infographics, videos, etc.).

Example of storytelling

The following text may not be relevant to you, but can serve as a starting point for your story. As in the text, you can build your story around a person (who has benefited from a project) and add facts and figures to support your story. However, please be careful not to overload the public with information.

"Erik, Belgian, heart attack, Dutch hospital"

Erik, a young Belgian, loves football. In 2009, he suddenly suffered a heart attack while playing football at the Dutch-Belgian border. The problem was that the nearest hospital was in Maastricht in the Netherlands. Isn't it laughable that lives are put at risk when they could be saved just a few kilometres away abroad?

Thanks to our XXX project, which is funded by the Interreg Meuse-Rhine programme (NL-BE-DE), Erik was able to be treated by the Dutch emergency services without any financial or administrative difficulties.

The cross-border cooperation project thus helped to save valuable minutes in the ambulance - and saved Erik's life. Without this European-funded initiative, the organisers of the football match would have been obliged to call the Belgian ambulance service. This would have taken much longer to get to the scene.

Link to (major) EU measures/campaigns

In order to reach people outside the project, it can be useful to participate in existing campaigns. There are various action days and weeks running in the EU, each with their own communication flows and campaigns. In addition, try to establish contacts with other EU projects in your area

and check to what extent synergies in the area of communication and campaigns can possibly be realised with these projects, thereby achieving efficiency gains.

Examples of important events at European level in which projects can participate:

- **European Cooperation Day** - a Europe-wide campaign called European Cooperation Day (EC Day) with the aim of presenting the results of cross-border European cooperation to the public. Further information can be found on the EC Day website The day takes place in September. Further information can be found at <https://interreg.eu/event/european-cooperation-day/>
- **European Week of Regions and Cities (EU Regions Week)** - The European Week of Regions and Cities (#EURegionsWeek) is the largest annual event dedicated to regional policy. The four-day event is an opportunity for cities and regions to highlight their contribution to growth and job creation and to the implementation of EU cohesion policy, and to emphasise the importance of the local and regional level for good European governance. Since its first edition in 2003, it has developed into a unique communication and networking platform, bringing together regions and cities from all over Europe and their political representatives as well as civil servants, experts and academics. The Regional Policy Week usually takes place in October. More information can be found at <https://regions-and-cities.europa.eu/>
- **European Green Week (EU Green Week)** - The European Green Week is a major event on the EU environmental policy agenda. This annual event attracts policy makers, environmental leaders, stakeholders and other interested parties from across Europe and around the world. Projects can create their own events on the topic and register as a partner event. More information is available online. Further information can be found at https://green-week.event.europa.eu/index_en
- **European Sustainable Energy Week** - the largest annual event on renewable energy and efficient energy use in Europe. The week includes a range of activities aimed at creating a secure energy future for Europe. Activities range from networking opportunities, regional events and competitions for projects. It brings together public authorities, private companies, non-governmental organisations, researchers and consumers to promote initiatives for a green and digital energy transition in Europe. You can find more information online at https://sustainable-energy-week.ec.europa.eu/about-sustainable-energy-week_en
- Other EU events may also be of interest to you. You will find an up-to-date overview of events in the coming months at https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/events/upcoming-events_en

Further resources

If you have any further questions or doubts, you are welcome to contact your programme project officer. We strongly recommend that you clarify any doubts with the responsible contact persons in advance of publication so that we can avoid financial corrections.

Please also refer to the legal requirements in the regulations and the specific requirements in your grant award letter. Additional resources can be found here:

- Programme handbook on the Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) website
<https://www.interregmeuserhine.eu/de/downloads/>
- European Commission recommendations and manuals for projects:
https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/communication/how-to-communicate_en
- Regulation 2021/1060
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32021R1060>

This is the harmonised set of rules for EU funds allocated jointly with Member States and regions. We recommend that lead partners read Article 50 (on the responsibilities of beneficiaries) in Chapter III. Please also take a look at Article 47 of Chapter III and Annex IX, which explain the correct use of the EU emblem.

Checklist

The following checklist can help you to implement the above guidelines and recommendations.

When?	What?	Status
<i>In the application phase</i>	We recommend that you think carefully about the project acronym. You will find recommendations on this in the "Project acronym" section.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We recommend that you think carefully about your project communication during the application phase. Among other things, it is advisable to outline your future stakeholder groups and consider how you can best reach them. Learn more about this in the sections "target groups", "stakeholder mapping" and "communication matrix".	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE) programme offers you the opportunity to discuss your application with an expert. You can find	<input type="checkbox"/>

	the contact details of these so-called Regional Antennas on our website .	
<i>Before project start</i>	We recommend that all consortia members read this handbook, the programme manual, the cost catalogue and the relevant EU guidelines carefully during the application phase. This will help you to realistically assess the requirements for Interreg projects and to design your project plan and budget accordingly.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Meeting with all project partners and the programme's project managers.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	We recommend that projects appoint at least one public relations officer and communicate this to the programme's project managers. You can find out more about this in the chapter "Appointing a communications officer for the project".	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Initial project phase</i>	We recommend that our projects develop a communication plan. For this, you should go through the application documents in detail. In addition, the preparatory work that you have ideally already undertaken in the application phase can also help you. Please also refer to the following chapters: "Communication plan", "Target groups", "Stakeholder mapping" and "Communication matrix".	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Please select a project photo and send it to the programme's project manager. The photo is required for the creation of the project poster, the website and, if applicable, the project plaque. If you do not have a suitable photo, the programme's communications department can find a royalty-free photo for you.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Please make arrangements within your consortium as to which project staff have access to the project website. If you provide their names and contact details to your project officers, they can arrange for them to have access to the future project website. You can find more information about the website in the section "Project page on the programme website"	<input type="checkbox"/>
	If desired, we advise you to set up your social media channels at the start of the project. Please refer to the information in the section "Social media for projects".	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>We recommend that you plan at an early stage which news and articles you would like to publish on the project website and, if applicable, on the project's social media channels.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>After you have provided the contact details of the communications officer, this person will be added to the project website as an administrator.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Please hang up at least one project poster in the entrance areas of the various project partner organisations. Alternatively, you can also decide to use an equivalent electronic display. Further information on this can be found in the section "Project posters".</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>If applicable, please also remember to hang up the project plaque. You can find information in the "Project plaque" section here</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>We advise you to create Word/PowerPoint/Excel/etc. templates at the beginning of the project that contain at least the project logo and a clear indication that the project is funded by Interreg Meuse-Rhine (NL-BE-DE), an EU fund for cross-border co-operation. Further information can also be found throughout the manual, paying particular attention to the information in the chapters "Presentation and type of presentation of the logo" and "General obligations".</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Share your project logo and other templates with your project partners.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Please ensure that each project partner shares information about the project on the respective institutional website. Please also ensure that the project partners share project information via their own social media, if these exist. For more information, please refer to the section "Project partners' websites and social media".</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Please update the information on the project website if necessary. Add your articles and news as soon as you have news in your project. Note: We recommend doing this at least every 6 months.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>During the project term</i>	<p>Please ensure that the planned communication activities take place, especially if they are mentioned in the application documents. Please also bear in mind the general guidelines that you will find in the chapter on "Information, communication and visibility obligations".</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please continue to ensure that your project communications follow the guidelines in the manual.	<input type="checkbox"/>
We would like to draw your attention to the fact that you should keep evidence of the project's communication efforts. Please read more about this in the section "Obligation to provide evidence".	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: This checklist does not claim to be exhaustive and only provides you with general advice. Further recommendations and guidelines may well be relevant to your specific situation (for example, if you are working on a project of strategic importance or a project whose total costs exceed EUR 5,000,000).