



Communication Plan

for the

ATLANTIC AREA 2007-2013
Transnational Cooperation Programme

Prepared by the Managing Authority
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0. Introduction

(1) Following the rules set by the Commission Regulation (EC) N° 1828/2006, as well as the general orientation set in the Atlantic Area Operational Programme and in the Programme Implementation and Management Handbook, the Managing Authority has drawn up this Communication Plan, leading to the optimization of information and publicity measures addressed to beneficiaries, citizens and other stakeholders.

(2) The Atlantic Area Communication Plan was developed and built as a driving tool leading to an effective Programme communication framework. The overall aim is setting up information measures guaranteeing that information on possible funding opportunities are disseminated widely to all stakeholders. Such communication measures shall contribute to enhance transparency regarding the use of the public funds, to improve the capitalization of Programme results and to ensure efficiency in the implementation and assessment of the information and publicity strategy.

(3) The Communication Plan will be set through a Communication Strategy, a Communication Action Plan and a Communication Governance framework. The Communication Strategy sets out the communication objectives and corresponding strategic measures, means, resources and timescales programmed to achieve them. The Communication Action Plan sets out the detailed actions and operational measures needed to implement the overall communication strategy, as well as a set of communication performance indicators. The Communication Governance defines roles and responsibilities, technical and legal communication constraints and a monitoring and evaluation system addressed to the assessment of the performance and progress attained on communication measures and objectives.

1. Communication Strategy

(4) Communication is a crucial issue for the success of any strategic programme. Being the 2007-2013 Atlantic Area a transnational cooperation programme, communication becomes a determinant element of its successful implementation. A good communication strategy is essential to allow transparency, fairness and objectiveness in all Programme management levels.

(5) The Atlantic Area Communication Plan is structured on the basis of a Communication Strategy, which is supported by a set of values and principles statements, overall aims and information measures addressed to well defined targets audiences and a timescale and in-house, technical and financial resources allocated to its implementation.

(6) Firstly, is presented a set of unquestionable values and principles that shall drive communication activities at all Programme levels. Secondly is established the global aims and target groups of the communication plan, followed by an overview of the information and publicity measures. Finally is set a timescale and resources, including an indicative budget, programmed in line with the implementation of this Communication Plan.

1.1 Values and principles

(7) In Atlantic Area Programme implementation context, communication activities shall emphasize planning, full involvement and participation of stakeholders and public visibility principles. A common referential set of universally accepted communication values supporting such principles shall drive communication activities, all over the programming period, Programme levels and cooperation area. The Atlantic Area communication values are defined according to the following statements

(8) All Atlantic Area communication action is:

- **Timely and universally proactive:** Information are delivered in due time, easily and equally accessible to all stakeholders and enabling the capacity to anticipate and act on their needs;
- **Objective and understandable:** Information makes sense and runs in plain language, making interpretation easy and avoiding to any double meaning or misunderstandings;
- **Reliable and pertinent:** Information is accurate and well contextualized, ensuring credibility of sources, relevancy of context delivering and the reliability of contents;
- **Interactive:** Information is produced and delivered in a two-way communication channel, by promoting the participation of stakeholders on communication quality improvements.

1.2 Aims and target groups

(9) The overall aim of the Communication Strategy is to optimize the available resources allocated to information and publicity highlighting the role of the Community, ensuring transparency on Structural Funds assistance and improving the capitalization of results. The Communication Plan shall be organized based on a set of clear and straightforward strategic goals addressed to specific pertinent groups of stakeholders.

(10) Strategic goals are overall accomplishments that should be achieved according to major issues and challenges of the Operational Programme implementation and to legal compromises. Leading the overall methods (strategies) structuring the communication actions, the strategic goals must be designed and worded as a measurable, timely and realistic challenges, specific to major target audiences.

(11) Target audiences are groups of stakeholders with whom there are public interest of developing synergies and sharing information. As each group of stakeholders has specific profiles and is faced with specific information needs, specific communication strategies should be defined. Each target audience should be associated to a message, which formulates an idea strictly related to its specific information needs. The segmentation of stakeholders in target groups is essential to establish an accurate action plan ensuring the effectiveness of information and publicity measures on the Programme.

Strategic goals

(12) The strategic goals adopted by the Atlantic Area programme to lead the communication plan are the following:

- **To provide information and publicity on funding opportunities helpful to generate high quality cooperation project partnerships;**
- **To provide information and communication tools useful to the implementation process of operations, the dissemination of results and the sharing of acquired knowledge;**
- **To promote the capitalization of Programme and projects results by generating interests for the materialization of the Programme results and for the cross-fertilization and funding for new developments;**
- **To aware EU citizens on the benefit of transnational cooperation, to highlight the role of the community and to promote the European dimension of Atlantic Area main outputs.**

Target groups

(13) The targets groups of the Programme are multiple and diverse. The following groups with different information needs have been distinguished:

- **External disseminators partners and potential beneficiaries:**
Composition: Networks, public agents, not for profit organizations or business organizations concerned with the Programme priorities being able to collaborate in the promotion of transnational cooperation (external partners) or to benefit of funding, becoming potential project applicants (potential beneficiaries).
Key message: Provided information and publicity on funding opportunities are helpful to stimulate the generation of new applications partnerships.
- **Beneficiaries**
Composition: Organizations involved in funded project as lead partners or project partners.
Key message: Provided information and means of communication are helpful for and facilitate the implementation of operations and dissemination of its results.
- **Key decision-makers**
Composition: Public and private decision makers concerned with the Programme priorities and with issues on transnational co-operation, interested in Programme results as inputs for their strategies and policies.
Key message: Promoted communication and dissemination actions are determinant factors for increasing the level of interest and awareness of key decision-makers at all levels.

- **General Public**

Composition: Atlantic Area Citizens and EU citizens, which benefit indirectly from transnational cooperation and Structural Funds.

Key message: Promoted communication and dissemination actions are attractive easily understood by citizens to be aware of transnational cooperation and of the role of community as relevant factors of the territorial development of its spaces of life.

1.3 Information and publicity measures

(14) The information about the Programme will be spread through a variety of channels in order to reach the different target groups and raise general awareness, but privileging the collaborative communication platform. Furthermore, it shall be ensured that the Information addressed to different target groups will be adjusted to its specific needs.

(15) Consequently, the Communication Plan shall endorse an Action Plan, detailing general and specific information measures addressed to each target group: external disseminators partners and potential beneficiaries, beneficiaries, key decision-makers and general public.

(16) The information and publicity measures are displayed in relation to the life cycle of the Programme, differentiating three main phases: start of the Programme, ongoing information and presentation of results. This catalogue of measures should be amended along the programming period as it becomes considered as appropriate to better meet the overall aims of the communication strategy.

Timeframe overview of the communication strategy

1. On the Start and the Announcement	
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To spread general information on the Programme as widely as possible. • To inform stakeholders on Programme implementation issues like contact partners, Programme bodies or decision making procedures and structures.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of the website. • Drafting of the Communication Plan. • Creation of a contact list of external partners. • Creation of a contact list of potential beneficiaries. • Kick off event: Transnational seminar for priorities debate and for major OP information activity. • Media Relations: Creation of a contact list of relevant media. • Creation of a contact base of disseminators. • Statement highlighting the value of the intervention of the Community. • Creation of the Logo and Graphical Identification ID of the Programme. • Creation of a crisis management guide.

2. Ongoing information, communication and presentation	
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide clear and homogeneous information on the administrative procedures and on the eligibility and selection criteria and evaluation mechanisms. To provide regular information and networking events of projects, financing institutions and funding bodies. To maintain stakeholders informed on the current status of implementation of the Programme and on the completion of successful projects.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants' package. Project leaders and Project leaders and partners contact list. Assignment of a contact person in the Joint Technical Secretariat to provide ongoing support to project leaders and partners. Newsletters for potential beneficiaries and other parties interested in the Atlantic Area Programme. Newsletters for project leaders and partners. Information events (at least one major information activity per year) and national seminars. Participation in external events. Ongoing advice for project leaders and partner in the project communication activities. Online communication resource centre. Ongoing information via website. Flyers and brochures. Publication electronically of the list of beneficiaries. Websites informing on projects contents and results, partnerships, budgets and geographical coverage. Setting up a network of Atlantic Area Programme projects including the organisation of events to share experiences among projects. Active participation in the Network of Communication Officers. Networking activities with other programmes. Flying the flag of the European Union for one week starting the 9 May, in front of the premises of the Managing Authority and its Joint Technical Secretariat. Media Relations. At mid term a transnational seminar for ongoing analysis of the Programme.
3. Presentation of results	
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform on Programme and project results addressing what they give to the Atlantic Area citizens and to EU citizens. To promote the capitalisation of the Atlantic Area Programme results.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media relations: press releases, press conferences and press dossiers. Participation in external events. Presentation of the completed projects (detail and summarize information on projects contents and results, partnerships, budgets and geographical coverage). Communication of the evaluation. Final events: Transnational seminar for Programme balance and discussion on future challenges. Closure of the Programme and capitalisation measures.

1.4 Indicative budget

(17) At Programme or projects levels, communication budgets should include ERDF and domestic financial means, as well as in-house staff, information systems and other in-house resources accounted as communication costs.

(18) At Programme level, all measures established in the communication action plan are covered by Technical Assistance. EUR 757 650 is available as an indicative minimum budget for information and publicity measures. In-house resources allocated to communication activities by the various management bodies should be accounted as indicators for communication performance assessment purposes.

(19) A quantitative approximation to the cost of the activities foreseen by the Communication Plan will be done within the annual technical assistance budgets. Such quantification shall be done by a combination of a top-down approach and a bottom-up approach. The top-down approach reflects the restricted budget financing. The restriction is defined as the ceiling (maximum amount allocated). The bottom-up approach is derived from item-based budget costs and search to adjusted available technical assistance financial means and needs with in-house resources contributions.

(20) At projects level, specific communication action plans shall be established in compliancy with Programme Communication Plan covered by projects budgets. Applications for projects shall propose such communications actions and budget plans, which will be considered as a contribution to the accomplishment of the overall Programme Communication Plan.

2. Communication Action Plan

(21) The strategic objectives and related measures are transposed to this Communication Action Plan, which schedules a work plan for the implementation of the communication strategy and the achievement of the communication main goals. The Action Plan details, by target groups, the objectives and measures do be achieved along the programming period as information and publicity challenges.

(22) The Communication Action Plan is a live working instrument. Eventual overtaken actions should be replaced and new relevant and not predictable new needs on information should be satisfied by new adjusted measures responding appropriately to such communication gaps. It's a dynamic communication approach, aiming to improve its capacity, as a leading instrument to achieve outstanding objectives. The Action Plan should be monitored on a regular basis, tracking how near the communication objectives are being achieved and questioning about aspects where it has to be modified.

(23) Information measures are established covering the overall target groups, as well as specifically addressed to each target group of stakeholders. Key communication messages and objectives define the positioning of each group in the context of Programme implementation and shall be likely to help setting, by the communication plan, the answers to specific information needs. Some information measures are specific to a target group, while other information measures are transversal to a more than one group of stakeholders. Information measures are identified by a descriptive, a rationale, expected results, a message and monitoring indicators.

2.1. Overall information measures

(24) Overall information measures cover the generality of stakeholders. Such measures cross all target audiences with the main goals of giving visibility to the Atlantic Area Programme and to the role of the community, to disseminate useful information, to set useful contacts and to provide continuous and efficient general support to project applicants, project partnerships and other stakeholders.

(25) General communication measures address cross-targeted objectives as the organization of a Kick off transnational seminar launching the Operational Programme and other Programme information and dissemination events or the participation of Programme officers in external relevant events. The creation of a contact list of external partner disseminators will be a major concern, as such bodies may help and facilitate the implementation of the Programme communication strategy.

(26) Another fundamental communication issue will be the implementation of a Programme website communication platform, a nuclear IT tool for the communication action plan. The overall communication measures will cover also information on contacts of Programme and projects levels. An incidents management guide will be prepared with the aim of providing a coherent plan for managing risks of communication incidents. Overall information measures finish by the adoption of a Programme statement highlighting the role of the Community, the creation of the Logo and Graphical Identification ID of the Programme, and Flying the flag of the European Union.

Measure 1.1: Kick off transnational seminar launching the Operational Programme

(27) This event is intended to be an official presentation of the Atlantic Area Programme. Identified external disseminators partner bodies, potential project applicants and other relevant stakeholders, as well as the media, will be invited to this event.

Rationale		
A kick off event, launching symbolically the Operational Programme, by its visibility, it's a very effective mean for take attention of stakeholders and media, while providing significant information elements.		
Message		
This event puts the Atlantic Area Programme in agenda of stakeholders and of the media, while highlighting major challenges for Atlantic Area cooperation actors.		
Expected results		
To attract attention of stakeholders and to provide direct and interactive information on the Atlantic Area Programme and its relevant procedures.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of people invited.		
• Number of participants.		
• Number of completed questionnaires.		
• Number of media invited.		
• Number of media present.		
• Number of press references about the event.		

Measure 1.2: Creation of a contact list of external disseminators partners

(28) In accordance with national laws and practices, the Managing Authority by its Joint Technical Secretariat will involve, in the information and publicity activities, a set of bodies concerned with transnational cooperation and Programme priorities, available to widely collaborate in the dissemination of relevant Programme information. Indicatively such bodies include:

- national, regional and local authorities and development agencies;
- trade and professional associations;
- economic and social partners;
- non-governmental organisations;
- organisations representing business.

- information centres on EU as well as Commission representation in the Member States
- educational institutions

(29) The first step will be a review of existing contacts list of the past Programme in view of adapting it to the current priorities of the actual Programme. Furthermore, it shall be carried out a search for other relevant bodies to be included in such contact list.

Rationale		
Communication addressed to stakeholders may benefit from the involvement of those bodies that, in compliancy with national laws and practices, can widely disseminate relevant information to targeted potential applicants according to the priorities stated in the Atlantic Area Operational Programme.		
Message		
Relevant external bodies interested in Programme priorities are included in the contact list in order to work closely with Programme management bodies within its information and publicising activities.		
Expected results		
Amplify dissemination to stakeholders, namely to general public and potential project applicants.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of external partner bodies in the contact list		
• Number of external partner bodies in the contact list having included, on the respective website, information and links to the Programme website.		

Measure 1.3: Website communication platform

(30) The Programme website will perform the facilities of a collaborative communication platform, providing tools for efficiently establishes communication and interaction with all interested parts. Such tools will enable possibilities of multiple contacts and feedbacks on every issues of the Programme. Working on a collaborative and proactive way, it will facilitate interaction capacities, provides information adapted to needs of all stakeholders and performs means of communication, for inside and outside levels, and tools for discussion, managing and decision in all levels of Programme bodies and project partnerships.

(31) The website will also perform functionalities of a distribution centre for all relevant Programme documents. Relevant Programme documentation will be available online, to see and download, covering a comprehensive overview of the Atlantic Area Programme, including the details of the financial ERDF contribution and of ongoing and accomplished projects. As an instrument for dissemination and promotion at Programme and projects levels, it will perform facilities for logging and developing contents of Programme bodies and projects partnerships websites.

Rationale		
A website, framed as a collaborative platform, is a widely efficient and transparent mean to disseminate relevant documents of the Programme and support communication with all stakeholders.		
Message		
The website is a day-to-day working user-friendly tool, where is possible to find all relevant information of the Programme and where is possible to efficiently communicate with Programme bodies.		
Expected results		
Well informed stakeholders about the implementation of the Programme and projects.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of visitors per stakeholder.		
• Number of website items per domain.		
• Number of downloads per stakeholder.		
• Number of communication exchange, per stakeholder and domain		

Measure 1.4: Programme information and dissemination events

(32) Information and dissemination events shall be organised at appropriate time. At least one major activity shall be organized each year on the aim of presenting achievements of the Programme and major relevant projects. Such kind of events shall also be organized by the occasion of calls for proposals. At each specific occasion, the JTS, in cases of transnational events, and NC, in cases of national events, will be responsible to coordinate the organisation and preparation of information meeting needs. Two main transnational events will contribute to the dissemination and debate of Programme results: One at mid term and the other at the end of the programming period.

Rationale		
This kind of events are an effective information mean on Programme and results, as well as an opportunity to Programme structures establish direct contacts with stakeholders and to test the reception and understanding of the Atlantic Area communication messages.		
Message		
Information events are a very pleasant, effective and useful platform for being informed in major Programme issues, while stakeholders have the opportunity to establish a lot of fruitful contacts.		
Expected results		
To improve the level of information and knowledge of stakeholders about the implementation of Atlantic Area Programme, of adequacy of communication actions and of capacity to attract interests for the capitalization of results and to enhance new developments of the Atlantic Area Programme.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of information events		
• Number of people invited.		
• Number of participants.		
• Number of completed questionnaires.		
• Number of media invited.		
• Number of media present.		
• Number of press references about the event.		

Measure 1.5: Participation in external events relevant to the Programme

(33) Programme management bodies will participate, at national and transnational basis, in external events where it will be discussed relevant issues related to Atlantic Area cooperation concerns. The presence in such seminars, conferences, congresses and other events is an opportunity to present the Atlantic Area Programme strategy and results, to discuss on actual themes related to Programme priorities and challenges and to reach Programme stakeholders.

Rationale		
External related events are an opportunity to communicate efficiently, from the Atlantic Area Programme views, to target audiences and reaching the widest possible stakeholders, namely potential applicants.		
Message		
Participation of Programme management bodies on external events is recognized as useful and enhancing for both, external events and Atlantic Area Programme.		
Expected results		
Improvement of the notoriety of Atlantic Area Programme and of the modalities of communication with stakeholders.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of external events attended.		
• Number of communications presented.		

Measure 1.6: Programme bodies contacts

(34) The Programme and projects bodies will be joinable by telephone, by e-mail and preferentially by the website communication platform. Also, virtual and physical appointments could be set up. Any interested part may easily accede to contact lists available. Such contact lists will be permanently updated by owners, using appropriate tools of the Programme website.

Rationale		
Contacts of Programme and projects bodies is essential to facilitate communication amongst the different interested parts..		
Message		
Stakeholders may easily join Programme and projects bodies using the website contacts item information domain.		
Expected results		
Improve the communication within the Programme and project bodies.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of times that the website contact lists was acceded. 		

Measure 1.7: Incidents management guide

(35) Planned reactions to a potential event incident (eg. a very negative article or broadcast about the Programme or a project) will be prepared, so that a quick and coherent reaction can be given when a crisis occurs. In particular, it will be developed a contact list of potential disseminators to who shall be addressed information in such kind of situations.

Rationale		
An incidents management guide provides general orientations leading to perform coherent and quick capacity of answering eventual communication incidents and crisis.		
Message		
The incidents managements guide, defining consensual positions about how to manage communication event crisis, is an useful tool to effectively react bounding those incidents.		
Expected results		
Improve the capacity of having a planned and common reaction to crisis events at Programme and project levels.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An incidents management guide is produced. 		

Measure 1.8: Adoption of a statement highlighting the role of the Community

(36) The statement adopted to highlight the added value of the community is the following:

Investing in our common future

(37) Such statement shall be widely disseminate by Programme and projects communication initiatives and information tools.

Rationale		
The adoption and use of such statement function as a lemma of the Programme summarizing an idea, easy to understand, about the main value of the intervention of the Community.		
Message		
Such statement is understandable and easily associated to the Programme and major concerns of the Community.		
Expected results		
Wide use in communication actions at Programme and projects levels.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of times that the statement was used 		

Measure 1.9: Creation of the Logo and Graphical Identification ID of the Programme

(38) The Logo and the Graphical Identification ID of the Programme is a crucial element for the identification of the Atlantic Area OP and to normalize its image. A Programme Logo and Graphical Identification will be produced and generalized, by promoting its usage in all kind of communication means (publications and any other printed and electronic media).

Rationale		
A Logo and Graphical ID is crucial to create a uniform public image helping to achieve the status of a brand name or a "corporate identity" during the implementation period.		
Message		
The Logo and Graphical Identity ID of the Programme enhances a good image of the Programme and projects motivating to be used widely.		
Expected results		
To reinforce visually the communication of the Programme.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of times the logo was used and the communication activities complied with the OP graphical ID. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of times the logo was used and the communication activities complied with the OP graphical ID. 		

Measure 1.10: Flying the flag of the European Union

(39) Flying the flag of the European Union for one week, starting 9 May, in front of the premises of each managing authority, is a legal responsibility in view of information and publicity measures highlighting the role played by the community.

Rationale		
It's a legal obligation highlighting the intervention of the Community.		
Message		
The Programme highlights its European dimension and concerns.		
Expected results		
Share a moment of the year symbolically enshrined to the European spirit of cooperation.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of times the flag of the European Union has been fled as required. 		100

2.2. Information measures for potential beneficiaries

(40) The main goal is to ensure that the Atlantic Area Operational Programme is disseminated as widely as possible, and to make the procedures clear to potential beneficiaries with the greatest possible homogeneity while ensuring transparency. The Managing Authority will provide to potential beneficiaries:

- information about the priorities and objectives in the Atlantic Area Programme;
- information about the conditions of eligibility to be met in order to qualify for financing under the operational programme;
- a description of the procedures for examining applications for funding and of the time periods involved;
- the criteria for selecting the operations to be financed (including the quality of the Communication plan at project level);
- the contacts at national, regional or local level which can provide information on the operational programmes;
- information that acceptance of funding is also an acceptance of their inclusion in the list of beneficiaries to be published including the name of the operations and the amount of public funding allocated to the operations;
- highlights about the importance of transnationality, and that Atlantic Area cooperation must be truly transnational;
- highlights about the importance of producing consistent results leading to a capitalisation of the Programme.

Measure 2.1: Creation of a contact list of potential beneficiaries

(41) The aim of this contact list will be to actively motivate detected potential project applicants to develop projects in line with the Programme priorities and objectives. This contact list of potential beneficiaries will be regularly updated. Particular attention will be given to include agents having show interest in the OP. For this purpose National Correspondents and Partner bodies should inform the Managing Authority Joint Technical Secretariat of any potential beneficiary to be included in the contact list.

Rationale		
By enabling targeted information that could be disseminate to agents having show interest in the Atlantic Area programme will contribute to improve the quality and the quantity of project applications.		
Message		
Potential project applicants benefit from integrating a targeted contact list in view of the preparation of good quality projects.		
Expected results		
A wide contact list will be prepared and managed in view of improving the quality and quantity of projects application matching with the priorities and objectives of the Programme.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of potential beneficiaries in the contact list. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of project applicants that were in the contact list of potential beneficiaries before applying for the OP. 		

Measure 2.2: Applications toolkit pack

(42) Very simple and user-friendly e-application toolkit, providing relevant documentation, manuals and electronic form helping to the preparation of project applications. This applications pack, other then the application form, will include guidance, such as:

- a very clear description of the conditions of eligibility to be met to qualify for financing;
- a description of the procedures for examining applications for funding and the time periods involved;
- the criteria for selecting the projects to be financed (including the quality of the communication plan at project level);
- the contacts of the National Correspondents to be further informed on the Atlantic Area Programme;
- a self assessment tool: to improve the transparency, the quality of the applications and to actively encourage that only applications complying with the minimum requirements are presented.

Rationale		
As an applicant package it's a way of providing structured, coherent and oriented information and instruments on the application procedures and on the admissibility and selection criteria helping in the preparation of project applications.		
Message		
Potential project applicants have an easy and user friendly mean for efficiently prepare rigorous high quality project applications.		
Expected results		
To improve the transparency and the quality of the project applications.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of applications 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of applications complying with the admissibility minimum requirements. 		

Measure 2.3: Newsletters addressed to potential beneficiaries

(43) Newsletters are efficient low cost means of communication for highlighting targeted issues. Distributed via e-mail to potential beneficiaries and external partners interested in the Programme, according to the contact list, it will be possible to subscribe too the newsletter on the Programme website.

Rationale		
Newsletters are an efficient mean for draw attention of potential project applicants and external partner bodies of calls for proposals and other important news and developments of the Programme.		
Message		
Newsletter is a non vulgarized mean facilitating stakeholders to keep updated with most relevant developments of the Programme.		
Expected results		
Actively update partner dissemination bodies and potential beneficiaries on the development of the Programme, in particular keeping those informed of calls for proposals and encouraging interest and participation in line with their priorities and objectives.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of news letter addressed to potential beneficiaries produced.		
• Number of potential project applicants having received the newsletter.		
• Number of potential project applicants entering the Programme website to search additional related information.		

Measure 2.4: Flyers and brochures addressed to potential applicants

(44) Printed flyers and brochures giving general information about the Atlantic Area Programme will be produced in order to be disseminated in events and targeted sites normally frequented by potential project applicants. Programme bodies offices and external Programme partners should make available these communication materials to public in view of informing and attracting new potential project applicants.

Rationale		
Printed material is an advisable mean of attracting attention of potential beneficiaries and motivated them to search for additional information.		
Message		
Flyers and brochures is an attractive communication tool easily understood, objective and useful about what to do to “know more”.		
Expected results		
To improve the notoriety of the Programme and to reach attention for new potential beneficiaries.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of flyers/brochures edition produced.		
• Number of flyers/brochures distributed		

Measure 2.5: Project Ideas Register

(45) One of the important tools provided by the website communication platform is a system for registering and search for Project Ideas. Potential project applicants will have the possibility of register its project ideas and discuss them with the Programme bodies, previously to any eventual submission as project applications. Also a partner search forum will be provided within the Project Ideas registering system.

Rationale		
An online project ideas register is an efficient and transparent tool for the generation of good quality project applications and for partner searching.		
Message		
Project ideas register is a useful and user-friendly tool helping the preparation of project applications and facilitating the search for interested partners.		
Expected results		
Improvement of the capacity to anticipate trends on future intentions of project applications and generation of new partnerships.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of registered project ideas.		
• Number of project ideas register visitors		

2.3. Information measures for beneficiaries

(46) Communication measures addressed to beneficiaries aims to provide relevant targeted information and support to project leaders and partners. Beneficiaries shall be informed on all relevant issues related to the implementation of projects, namely in financial and communication aspects, available tools and obligations.

(47) In particular it will be required for the use of the Programme website communication platform as project management and communication tool. Communication amongst project partners and with the Programme management bodies shall be done within the Programme website communication platform.

Measure 3.1: Project partnerships beneficiaries lists

(48) The Managing Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat will develop two contact lists, for information purposes, from the project database: a project leaders contact list, and a more extensive project leaders and project partners contact list.

(49) In view of disseminating such contact lists, beneficiaries will be informed that acceptance of funding is also acceptance of their inclusion on the list of beneficiaries to be published including the name of the project and the amount of public funding.

(50) A project database including relevant information about the projects will be regularly updated by the JTS and by project partnerships, and will serve as the main source for quantitative data on projects and their achievements.

Rationale		
Beneficiaries contact lists is a legal obligation, which will be useful to manage communication with project partnerships, provide them with targeted information and informing relevant stakeholders with ongoing information and results.		
Message		
All stakeholders and in particular the general public are provided of relevant information about projects financed by the Programme.		
Expected results		
Publication electronically of the list of beneficiaries in view monitoring the Programme and offering a comprehensive overview of all projects.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of lead partners in the contact list.		

• Number of project partners in the contact list.		
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Measure 3.2: Newsletters addressed to beneficiaries

(51) Newsletters are efficient low cost means of communication for highlighting targeted issues. They will be distributed via e-mail to project leaders and partners according to the contact lists. Other stakeholders interested in the work and progress of the Programme will have also the opportunity to subscribe and receive them regularly.

Rationale		
Newsletters are an efficient mean for draw attention of project beneficiaries important implementation issues, news and developments related to the Programme.		
Message		
Newsletter is a non vulgarized mean facilitating beneficiaries to keep updated with most relevant developments of the Programme.		
Expected results		
Actively keeping project beneficiaries updated on major Programme developments.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of newsletters addressed to beneficiaries produced.		
• Number of beneficiaries having received the newsletter.		
• Number of beneficiaries entering the Programme website to search additional information.		

Measure 3.3: Programme tools for the support of projects partnerships management

(52) The implementation and communication activity of every project partnerships shall be supported by appropriate IT tools, documentation and advice procedures. A Programme communication resource centre addressed to beneficiaries will be provided within the Programme website communication platform. This will be an innovative, comprehensive online tool, providing projects with technological standard means and documentation guidance helping to setting up their implementation and communication strategies.

(53) It will work also as a collaborative tool, providing means for advising and training projects partnerships on implementation and communication requirements. Such interaction support and provided standard tools shall be at the backbone for effective and efficient publicity and dissemination of information about the projects.

Rationale		
Project partnerships implementation and communication requirement have common needs, which shall be attended by common standards supporting tools helping its efficient achievement.		
Message		
The Programme provides comprehensive and useful tools helping to efficiently manage project partnership implementation and communication requirements.		
Expected results		
Well informed beneficiaries, successful achievement and dissemination of projects results, and well prepared ongoing and final projects reports.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of items in the project communication resource centre.		
• Number of visitors of the project communication resource centre		

• Number of times advice to project leaders and partners was provided.		
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Measure 3.4: Projects results dissemination

(54) Ongoing and final project results shall be disseminate and promote through the projects websites domains allowed by the Programme website communication Platform, as well as by the collaboration with the Programme dissemination tools that shall set up to promote and publicize ERDF support and correspondent outcomes. Furthermore, projects partnerships shall organize information events (as seminars and conferences) and relations with the media in order to promote the dissemination of results trough the press.

Rationale		
Dissemination of project results is a legal obligation and fundamental for Programme capitalization.		
Message		
Programme communication standards and tools facilitate the implementation of projects communication strategies, which is carry out widely and within attractive formats.		
Expected results		
All project results are widely disseminated, ensuring transparency of sound use of public founds and reinforcing the capacity for Programme capitalization..		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of project websites items.		
• Number of project information events.		
• Number of participants in project information events.		
• Number of projects mentions in the media.		

2.4. Information measures for key decision-makers

(55) The main goal is to increase the level of interest, awareness and involvement of key decision-makers with the results of the Atlantic Area Operational Programme. Key decision makers are national and European political administrations, business managers and non governmental officers concerned with the Atlantic Area cooperation priorities. The overall aim is to get their interest in using Programme results and investment according to such results.

(56) The Managing Authority Joint Technical Secretariat will provide:

- the management of a contacts list of key decision stakeholders;
- information and dissemination activities aiming to kept the attention of public and private decision actors to Programme priorities and results;
- facilities for the contact amongst project promoters and other decision-makers.

Measure 4.1: Creation of a contact list of key decision-makers:

(57) Starting by a review of existing contacts of the past Programme, it shall be adapted and completed attending to the current Programme priorities. This list shall include the contact person, e-mail address, postal address and telephone number of public and private entities related to the Programme strategy, and shall be regularly updated. For this purpose National

Correspondents and Programme bodies should inform the Managing Authority/Joint Technical Secretariat of any new key decision maker to be included in the contact list. Also, in the website, it will be also provided the possibility of asking to be registered in such contact list.

Rationale		
A list of key decision-makers is essential to address a communication strategy to such group of stakeholders in view of the capitalization of results.		
Message		
Key decision-makers may benefit from integrating a targeted contact list in view of timely and efficiently access to Programme results relevant to its activity.		
Expected results		
Attract the attention of key decision-makers and improve the capitalization of Programme results.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of key decision makers in the list		
• Number of key decision makers asking for further information and revealing interest in Programme results		

Measure 4.2: Newsletters addressed to key decision-makers

(58) Newsletters are efficient low cost means of communication for highlighting targeted issues. They will be distributed via e-mail to key decision makers registered in the contact list. Other stakeholders interested in the work and progress of the Programme will have also the opportunity to subscribe and receive them regularly.

Rationale		
Newsletters are an efficient mean for draw attention of key decision-makers on important Programme related issues.		
Message		
Newsletter is a non vulgarized mean facilitating stakeholders to keep updated with most relevant developments of the Programme.		
Expected results		
Actively keeping key decision-makers updated on major Programme developments.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of newsletters addressed to key decision-makers produced.		
• Number of key decision-makers having received the newsletter.		
• Number of key decision-makers entering the Programme website to search additional information.		

Measure 4.3: Technical documentation addressed to key decision-makers

(59) Technical documentation with details of Atlantic Area projects will be produced and organized with the collaboration of project partnerships. Such technical documentation shall perform useful information for key decision-makers and other stakeholders, providing sufficient projects details, and being, helpful to ensure a convenient understanding of projects, and attractive, to catch the attention of relevant stakeholders in view of its capitalization.

Rationale		
Programme and project documentation downloadable through the Programme website may provide useful details for the better understanding of the accomplished and ongoing Atlantic Area projects.		
Message		
Programme and project information provided is objective and helpful to be easily understood by the key decision-makers perspective, able to attract its attention.		
Expected results		
Reinforce the interest of key decision-makers in the capitalization of Programme results.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of technical documents available		
• Number of technical documents requested.		

2.5. Information measures for the general public

(60) This kind of information are addressed to citizens in the aim of publicizing the Atlantic Area Programme and the role that the European Union plays with the widest possible media coverage using various forms and methods of communication at the appropriate territorial level.

(61) In the Communication to the general public the following guidelines will be followed in all the measures:

- Maximum simplification of the language used (jargon) check will be made to every information material produced.
- Messages will not only reflect the priorities of the Programme, they have to be linked to the citizen's interests, needs and preoccupations.
- Communication should be as interactive as possible: Communication should establish a relationship and initiate a dialogue with European citizens, should listen carefully and connect to people.

Measure 5.1: Contact database of media

(62) Media is a crucial mean of Programme communication with citizens. Regularly news should be endorsed by media, mainly by the press, to give a direct and actual overview of the latest news on issues connected to the Programme and its implementation. To assist the management of media relations, a list of contacts of relevant media will be developed. Communication officers will establish a collaborative relationship with journalists to have a channel through which to broadcast stories about projects to a wide range of media.

Rationale		
A registry of Atlantic Area general and specialized media is a crucial tool for the management of Programme dissemination through this broad mean of communication.		
Message		
The most relevant media of Atlantic Area is covered by the contact list, which will be very helpful in the management of relation with such mean of communication.		
Expected results		
Amplify the dissemination to general public and other stakeholders.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of general media in the contact list.		
• Number of specialised media in the contact list.		

Measure 5.2: Media Relations

(63) The management of media relations will be central in the communication of the Programme to Atlantic Area Citizens and EU citizens. Communication Officers will regularly prepare material for the media taking into account the public interest and therefore communicating the Atlantic Area programme in terms of the direct impact it has in the lives of citizens. Media shall also be informed and invited to cover the most relevant Programme events. In addition, always it happen important Programme developments, press releases will be sent to relevant written press media in the Atlantic Area.

Rationale		
To address the general public, mass media coverage seems to be an appropriate mean to ensure the widest possible Programme dissemination.		
Message		
Atlantic Area produces regularly results clearly relevant for media coverage, which will help to reach further the general public with information about the Programme.		
Expected results		
To inform the widest possible general public on Programme results.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
• Number of different media coverage and people reached		
• Number of published articles/news items		
• % of articles where facts have not been related correctly		

Measure 5.3: Flyers and brochures addressed to potential applicants

(64) Printed flyers and brochures giving general information about the Atlantic Area Programme will be produced in order to be disseminated in events and targeted sites normally frequented by potential project applicants. Programme bodies offices and external Programme partners should make available these communication materials to public in view of informing and attracting new potential project applicants.

Rationale		
Printed material is a mean of attracting attention of general public trough external partner disseminators.		
Message		
Flyers and brochures is an attractive communication tool easily understood, objective and useful about what to do to “know more”.		
Expected results		
To improve the notoriety of the Programme and to reach attention of the general public.		
Indicators	Baselines	Target
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of flyers/brochures editions addressed to general public produced. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of flyers/brochures addressed to general public distributed 		

3. Communication Governance

(65) The model for the governance of communication is and influential factor in the capacity of communication activities to help achieve the aim of well informed citizens and stakeholders and transparency in the application of structural funds. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities, systematized technical requirements on information and publicity, actable monitoring and evaluation procedures on communication issues and enhancing networks benchmarks are major concerns in the communication governance structures.

(66) The quality of governance communication depends on the ability to adjust communication strategies and policies to changing needs of the various stakeholders. To do participation and involvement of stakeholders on the definition of such strategies and policies is essential. Communications measures are themselves addressed to achieve adequate public consultations, manage complaints and exchange of opinions and to ensure openness and transparency in the communication plan. These mechanisms should facilitate that the overall views of stakeholders are taken into account in communication strategy adjustments.

(67) A full detailed description about the roles and responsibilities of the various bodies that compose the management structure of the Programme with regard to the communication and publicity strategy is provided firstly. Simultaneously is also addressed the definition of role and responsibilities of the beneficiaries as well.

(68) A second issue regarding the management of communication policies refers to the technical requirements of information and publicity measures. A set of technical characteristics, which shall be accomplish in all communication measures, are provided. Such requirements covers all target audiences and define restrictions in the implementation of overall information and publicity measures, including the use of the four official languages of the Programme.

(69) The next part of this chapter offers an indication on how information and publicity measures are to be monitored and evaluated in terms of visibility and awareness of the Programme and of the role played by the Community. Particular attention has been given to those being proportional to the information and publicity measures identified in the communication plan.

(70) Finally, are defined the aims of networks of projects partnerships, of transnational and national communication officers and amongst other programme management structures, as ways for improving exchange of experiences on communication issues. Such networks shall be

promoted as informal structures able to enhance the potential of information and knowledge sharing in the field of communication frameworks.

3.1. Roles and responsibilities

(71) This section sets out clearly a full detailed description about responsibilities and tasks to be performed by the various bodies that compose the management structure with regard to the communication strategy and to the implementation of the information and publicity measures

(72) The main responsible of the implementation of the Communication Plan is the Managing Authority. On behalf of Managing Authority, the Joint Technical Secretariat will carry out the daily implementation.

(73) The Managing Authority will inform the monitoring committee of the communication plan, and progress in its implementation; the information and publicity measures carried out; and the means of communication used. The Managing Authority will provide the monitoring committee with examples of the measures.

(74) The National Correspondents will take responsibility to inform potential applicant and relevant stakeholders of their country in the National language.

Roles and Responsibilities of the various bodies that compose the management structure of the Programme

(75) The roles and responsibilities of the various bodies that compose the management structure of the Programme. Particular attention will be given to the role and responsibilities of the Managing Authority.

(76) The Managing Authority is responsible of compliance with the requirements set in the existing Regulations responsible for implementing the communication plan.

(77) The Communication plan will be implemented by the Joint Technical Secretariat.

(78) National Correspondents will play however an important role when it comes to information activities in the respective participating countries. The Managing Authority is responsible for publicity at transnational level and the National Correspondents at national level.

(79) All communication activities will be carried out under the supervision of the Monitoring Committee. The Managing Authority will for this purpose inform the monitoring committee of the communication plan and progress in its implementation, the information and publicity measures carried out and the means of communication used providing examples of such measures.

(80) In addition the Joint Technical Secretariat will have a liaison role with all the organisations involved in the Atlantic Area Programme.

(81) The administrative departments or bodies (and contact persons) responsible for implementation of the information and publicity measures will be named, together with full contact details once it is decided in this Communication Plan.

- (82) The Managing Authority Joint Technical Secretariat will be responsible for preparing the annual reports and the Final Report on Implementation of the Programme, as referred in Article 67 of Regulation EC 1083/2006;
- (83) The annual and the final report on the implementation of the Programme will include:
- (a) Examples of information and publicity measures for the operational programme carried out when implementing the communication plan
 - (b) The arrangements for the information and publicity shall include the following measures including, where applicable, the electronic address at which such data may be found
 - A major information activity publicising the launch of an operational programme, even in the absence of the final version of communication plan
 - At least one major information activity a year, as set out in the communication plan, presenting the achievements of the operational programme(s) including, where relevant, major projects;
 - Flying the flag of the European Union for one week starting 9 May, in front of the premises of each managing authority
 - The publication, electronically or otherwise, of the list of beneficiaries, the names of the operations and the amount of public funding allocated to the operations
 - (c) The content of any major amendments to the communication plan. In particular the annual implementation report for the 2010 and the final implementation report shall contain a chapter assessing the results of the information and publicity measures in terms of visibility and awareness of the Programme and of the role played by the Community

Role and Responsibilities of the National Correspondents

(84) National Correspondents will address the national issues or issues with a national focus. In particular National Correspondents will be responsible for nationally-focused communications. In addition National Correspondents will provide with the legal check of the compliance of information and publicity measures with national laws and practices

Role and Responsibilities of beneficiaries (projects) relating to information and publicity measures for the public: The Communication plan at project level

(85) The beneficiaries will be responsible for informing the public about the assistance obtained from the ERDF. In particular the project leader will ensure that those taking part in the project have been informed of the ERDF Funding. In order to achieve this, the project leaders and partners will provide clear notice to the effect that the project being implemented has been selected under the Atlantic Area Programme co-financed by the ERDF: any document including any attendance or other certificate, concerning such project shall include a statement to the effect that the Atlantic Area Programme was co-financed by the ERDF.

(86) Project managers will be aware that the best way to inform the general public on programmes and operations financed with Structural Funds is by carrying out communication activities. The information and publicity activities to be used have to be chosen upon the

available resources in each stage. Information and publicity activities are part of the actual work load of project. Additionally projects have to comply with the requirements and guidelines for reporting and requirements and guidelines for dissemination.

(87) The Communication Officers and the management of the Programme in general will support to project managers in their communication activities and will raise awareness of the importance of information and publicity activities and the benefits stemming from them.

3.2 Technical characteristics of information and publicity measures

(88) Transversally the following technical characteristics apply to the measures of the Communication plan:

- User-friendly, well-structured and clear information;
- Use of the emblem of the European Union (in accordance with the graphic standards) and reference to the ERDF;
- Use of the statement chosen by the Managing Authority, highlighting the added value of the intervention of the Community; preferably "Investing in our common future"
- Use of the logo and graphical identification ID of the Programme;
- Use of state of the art and cost-efficient information and communication technologies;
- Use of the four official languages of the Programme (English, French, Portuguese and Spanish) in the official documents of the Programme. Nevertheless in order to avoid disproportionate translation costs, English will be the internal working language of the Programme for the day to day communications. In order to guarantee a complete coverage of the population the National Correspondents will provide translation to their home language for all sorts of communications when is required.

3.3 Monitoring and evaluation

(89) The information and publicity measures are to be evaluated in terms of visibility and awareness of the Programme, as well as of the role played by the Community. The monitoring and evaluation system to be set on shall produce communication assessment indicators measuring such performance, as well as the overall performance on the implementation of the communication strategy. The overall objective is to help to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and the coherency of the communication measures.

(90) The Communication Officers at the JTS will permanently monitor the communication activities. This continuous evaluation and follow up of the measures will ensure that the strategies used are always relevant and that broad coverage of information is provided to all interested parties. The Communication plan will also be used as an instrument for the JTS to monitor, coordinate and evaluate the information and publicity activities in the entire Programme on an annual basis.

(91) The Communication plan will also be used as an instrument for the Secretariat to monitor, coordinate and evaluate the information and publicity activities in the entire Programme on an annual basis. A formal evaluation of the information and publicity activities will take place every year with a view to include the results in the annual reports to the

European Commission. The Managing Authority must watch over the inclusion within the annual reports to the European Commission of the information and publicity measures, alongside with the evaluation of such activities.

(92) The annual reports and the final report on implementation of an operational programme will include: Examples of information and publicity measures for the operational programme carried out when implementing the communication plan; the arrangements for the publication, electronically or otherwise, of the list of beneficiaries, the names of the operations and the amount of public funding allocated to the operations; and the content of any major amendments to the communication plan. In addition the implementation report for the year 2010 and the final implementation report will contain a chapter assessing the results of the information and publicity measures in terms of visibility and awareness of operational programmes and of the role played by the Community.

(93) It must be taken into account that the nature of the information and publicity activities presents limitations in the measurement of the effectiveness. In particular in what regards the cost of evaluation has to be proportionate to the size of the communication plan.

3.4 Networks and exchange of experience

(94) The main objective is to create and participate in those networks which favour the exchange of experience and good practice. Three Networks are foreseen:

- **Network of projects**

The Joint Technical Secretariat will set up networks of project leaders and partners, organized globally and on the basis of themes, with a view to promote the exchange of ideas and experiences. It will include Forums to exchange ideas. To favour communication the Joint Technical Secretariat will act as the secretariat and animator of this network establishing issues like the calendar of activities and themes for discussion. The network will be based on the collaborative communication platform.

- **Network of Communication Officers**

Designation of the contact person(s) to be responsible for information and publicity; The Managing Authority will nominate one contact person to be included in the network of communication officers developed by the Commission. The main aim is to exchange good practice. It will include the results of implementation of the communication plan, and exchanges of experience in implementing information and publicity measures.

- **Network with other Programmes**

Communication with other Programmes will be encouraged at all management levels to promote the exchange of experiences and good practices.