



Interreg
Estonia-Latvia
European Regional Development Fund



EUROPEAN UNION

Communication Strategy 2.0

INTERREG V-A – Estonia-Latvia
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1. Introduction

Interreg Estonia-Latvia programme (hereafter “the Estonia-Latvia programme” or “the programme”) supports cross-border cooperation and is implemented under the goal of the European territorial cooperation of the EU cohesion policy. The programme carries on the co-operation relationship between Estonia and Latvia that was well established during implementation of the 2007-2013 cross-border cooperation programme. Funding to cooperation projects is around 36. 27 million euros from the European Regional Development Fund, which is complemented by the partners’ co-financing.

Vision of the programme

Estonia and Latvia are places with excellent opportunities for people to lead successful and fulfilling lives, among happiest in Europe.

Mission of the programme

We support ideas that help Estonia and Latvia to grow through neighbourly cooperation.

Strategic objectives of the programme:

- 1) Active and attractive business environment
- 2) Clean and valued living environment
- 3) Better network of harbours
- 4) Integrated labour market

The Communication strategy (hereafter “the strategy”) of the programme is a basis for the communication throughout the programme cycle of the period 2014-2020, starting with promotion of the funding opportunity and supporting generation of project ideas, continuing with project implementation phase and ending with projects’ and programmes’ achievement exposure phase. The strategy fulfils requirements that the European Commission laid down in regulations 1303/2013 and 821/2014.

Within this strategy we are drawing a road map for reaching destination – called “better informed society” in relation to implementation of the programme in Latvia and Estonia and setting a framework for individual communication activities to address overall needs of the programme. As the programme is thematically focused and priorities that support entrepreneurship, tourism development and small harbours are jointly addressing strong axis of socio-economic development, the main communication message of the programme is “Growing through neighbourly cooperation”.

The programme demonstrated very successful communication with target audiences in the period 2007-2013 and accumulated best practice approaches, which are continued. This applies for the visual appearance of the programme as the thematic images used for each support area continue the concept used in the animations produced in the previous period – storytelling through drawings. Another path that we continue following is organizing attractive promotional events that are in line with the support areas/projects of the programme, as, for example, the Road Trip in 2013. The programme further

promotes its Facebook page, which was established in 2012, and by the end of 2019 reached over 2200 fans. The book Estonia-Latvia Stories should have its next edition, since the stories told by project people from Estonia and Latvia and attractive format of the book was well perceived by everyone, among others, also local libraries. In well compiled and concentrated way the book demonstrates the results of the previous programme – all 67 projects are covered.

The focus of the programme's communication shifted towards concentration of the message - social media channels are integrated in the programme website and secondly, exploiting on-line communication is the priority, as the potential applicants have the access to Internet all over the programme territory and this approach is also environmentally friendlier.

The programme expected some challenges. First, it was related to the strategic objectives of the programme, where private companies were potential applicants and later on would become project partners. Private sector is usually less experienced in cross-border cooperation and as earlier surveys show, they are used to be competitors. The programme organized information activities in Estonia and Latvia for entrepreneurs, business support organizations and business consultants – both private and public, to encourage them to participate in the cross-border cooperation. The other challenge expected to be the new electronic management system, which applicants use to submit project proposals and project partners to submit reports. The programme organized trainings to familiarize the applicants with the system.

The programme aims at intensifying cooperation with media and establishing partnerships with regional media.

In 2019, the Eurobarometer has carried out the survey on "Citizens' awareness and perceptions of EU regional policy", where cross-border cooperation was measured too. The awareness of and support for EU regional funding for cross-border cooperation and awareness of EU strategies to promote cooperation, including Interreg, was measured. At national level in Latvia and Estonia there are following results – 59% from respondents in Latvia and 27% from Estonia are aware of cooperation between regions from different countries because of the EU regional funding. The average of EU28 is 24%.

The programme is aware of the Eurobarometer results in December 2015 for the Estonia-Latvia programme, where the awareness about the EU-funded cross-border cooperation was measured. In cross-border region Estonia-Latvia 30% of respondents had heard about EU-funded cross border cooperation activities, which is very similar to the EU average of 31%. The European Commission will repeat the measurement of the awareness in 2020.

Interreg is celebrating its 30 years in 2020 and the promotion of this will be included in the communication activities to increase the awareness and visibility of Interreg.

For reaching the objectives of the programme, the strategy describes:

- Communication objectives and target groups;
- Information and communication measures including measures for people with disabilities (e.g. the webpage is accessible those with visual impairments);
- Indicative budget;
- Responsible bodies;
- Assessment;
- Quantitative indicators.

The Managing Authority in cooperation with the Joint Secretariat (hereinafter JS) may amend the communication strategy during the programming period. The amended communication strategy shall be submitted by the Managing Authority or the JS to the Monitoring Committee for approval.

2. Communication objectives and target groups

The strategy aims at raising the general awareness on cross border cooperation and programme's funding opportunities in Estonia and Latvia, with the focus on the programme territory. It also aims to showcase achievements of the Estonian-Latvian cooperation through highlights of the impact of projects and the programme, the best practice and the EU role in the regional development. It provides the tools for ensuring transparency and visibility of the programme and its projects.

Communication also makes a major impact on programme's outcomes and results, as its activities involve a lot of people and each must feel personally implicated, and so can communicate further the experience and benefits.

Communication objectives:

Objective 1. Quality applications for cross-border cooperation (CBC) projects are received and implemented:

CO 1.1 Potential applicants are aware about the funding opportunities and quality project ideas are submitted (2015 – 2020)

CO 1.2 Project partners implement projects at high quality (both technically and content wise) (2017 – 2021)

CO 1.3 Internal information flow between programme institutions is well functioning (2015 – 2021)

Objective 2. Awareness about the EU-funded cross-border cooperation in Estonia and Latvia increases:

CO 2.1 Project partners have the capacity to communicate with target audiences (2017-2021)

CO 2.2 Achievements of cross-border cooperation projects and the programme are visible (2015 – 2021)

Horizontal objective of general transparency of the administrative procedures, including application and selection process of the programme is going to be followed throughout the programme lifetime.

Target groups

I. POTENTIAL APPLICANTS / BENEFICIARIES

Potential applicants are the key audience to be reached. Potential applicants are all types of organizations - national, regional and local authorities, public equivalent bodies, private companies, education and research institutions, business support institutions and non-governmental organisations within the eligible area of the programme. The communication activities are targeted to both experienced and non-experienced applicants.

Project partners are the organizations and companies contracted for implementation of projects. This group is directly involved in programme's implementation and therefore vitally important. Project partners as direct beneficiaries further determine the success of the programme, serve as its ambassadors for other potential applicants, decision makers and the general public. Thematic grouping of projects for better targeted messages and sharing of experience is facilitated.

The project partners have to do everything to communicate further the results and impact of their projects and the contribution from ERDF, following the Annex XII of the Implementing Regulation 1303/2013 – Information and communication on support from the funds, as well as the publicity guidelines of the programme and the programme manual.

II. INFLUENCERS / MULTIPLIERS

Intermediaries

In order to achieve wider dissemination of the messages, the intermediaries for various groups of potential applicants are identified. The communication and cooperation activities with these actors will multiply the effect of the disseminated information, and will meanwhile help to target the qualified potential applicants, especially larger groups (entrepreneurs and development specialists) and including specific groups and networks etc.

The intermediaries are:

- National, regional and local public authorities, especially their development and entrepreneurship specialists;
- Regional development and planning authorities (regional development agencies, planning regions, EU entrepreneurship centres etc.);
- Umbrella organizations and support centres for rural development, businesses and NGOs;
- Think tanks, research and relevant educational centres;
- Other EU representing offices and related institutions;
- Other relevant INTERREG programmes;
- Institutions and networks relevant for cross-border cooperation between Estonia and Latvia (embassies, chambers of commerce, local cultural communities etc.).

Media

The local and regional media are crucial for further dissemination of the programme information and addressing of the general public. The programme respects the growing role of social media, including social channels of media and intermediaries. Social media channels are approached for spreading the word and raise the general awareness of the cross-border cooperation, share the success stories on projects and achieved results among various audiences in the programme area. The local and national TV, radio and press are addressed to reflect on the projects' activities in the regions. Media is invited to participate in relevant programme and project events and activities.

III. DECISION MAKERS / GOVERNANCE

Programme institutions

The programme structure consists of different institutions – Managing Authority, Monitoring Committee, National Responsible Authorities, Audit Authority, Group of Auditors, Financial Controls and JS. All are facilitating the success and directly engaged in programme's implementation, therefore effective

communication among those is crucial for the general implementation of the programme, as well as the external communication. Also the State Shared Service Centre in Tartu, Estonia, where the JS is located and the State Regional Development Agency in Latvia, hosting the Information and Consultation Point of the JS in Riga, belong to this group.

EU institutions

The EU institutions and particularly the European Commission form an important target group for the programme. The communication activities are arranged to provide the feedback and updates of the programme implementation to the relevant offices and representatives. This communication is also necessary for discussing and sharing the experiences and best practices, which is done directly and through various networks such as the Interact Programme and INFORM network.

IV. GENERAL PUBLIC

The general public represents the inhabitants living in the programme area. The information and image of the programme by public influences significantly the interest of the potential applicants. It also influences the general perception of the EU contribution to the cross border cooperation. The general public is addressed through the traditional and social media and public events, as well as indirectly through the project implementers and other target groups. For better concentration of the programme's message we approach organizations operating in fields that the programme address.

Each of the target groups described above is addressed by various communication tools. It is foreseen that fulfilment of the specific needs of the target groups are elaborated during the implementation of the activities listed in this strategy by asking feedback and adjusting the conveyed information accordingly.

Also the information and the key messages are to be adjusted to the specific needs and interests of the different target groups.

3. Communication approach

The programme uses the following tactics for achieving communication objectives. Appearance of visual image of the programme is followed throughout various communication tools and it includes promotion of the European Regional Development Fund and the Interreg brand developed by the Interact in cooperation with the European Commission. The JS ensures interaction with target groups in various formats of programmes' digital communication tools, like the website and Facebook, through media and by providing wide consultations to interested audiences. Introduction to the electronic management system that programme uses for monitoring the project implementation, and potential applicants use for applying for funding and project partners use for reporting, is facilitated. Once the projects are approved, close cooperation on implementation issues, including communication, is established among the programme consultants in the JS and the project partners. Further on, the approach of thematic grouping of approved projects is facilitated among developers of joint products or services (entrepreneurs), for joint tourism product or service developers and projects that operate in the support area of saving of natural resources. For rising the awareness of the cross-border cooperation and its results, Interreg programmes

operating in the same territory cooperate. It is done through providing the joint visibility of the Interreg, and stronger voice of CBC, for example, by organizing joint activities (e.g. the European Cooperation Day around 21 September), attending jointly popular public events and engaging in the Europe Day actions. The Europe Day is held on 9 May every year and celebrates peace and unity in Europe.

4. Information and communication measures

Communication of the programme is carried out by using a variety of activities, publicity materials and information channels, in order to increase the general awareness about the programme among target groups identified and address those groups according to their specific needs.

4.1. Programme documents

The main programme documents serve as important guidance tools for the potential applicants and the partners of the approved projects – particularly the programme manual, the project idea form (used during the 1st and 2nd calls for proposals), reporting form and publicity guidelines. It is therefore important to make the information in these documents clear and understandable, to add the necessary updates for informative use of the potential applicants and project partners.

Harmonised appearance of the programme documents is used to allow recognition of the programme. Therefore programme logo and templates for the presentations and letters are developed and used by different programme institutions.

4.2. Information events for potential applicants

Direct communication through informative events is carried out through sets of seminars organised by the JS and participation in events organised by or in cooperation with other institutions (intermediaries, approved projects and other programmes). These activities focus on the potential applicants. Venues of the events are accessible for people with disabilities.

▪ *Major information activity publishing the launch of the programme*

The programme started to introduce supporting areas and programme rules by organizing 5 thematic workshops, which altogether served as major information activities for launching the programme and were held in March and April 2015 in Estonia and Latvia. Each workshop was thematically focused – management of joint water resources, integrated labour market, tourism development based on natural and cultural heritage, business development and environmental awareness. During these workshops national authorities of Estonia and Latvia provided background information in the respective field and the JS introduced main principles of the support and novelties of the new programme. As well representatives of the projects supported in previous programme were invited to share the experience and transfer the know-how of project implementation to future project partners.

- *Information events/seminars*

Information activities addressed main objectives of the programme like promotion of the programme, facilitation of partner search, targeting particular groups of potential applicants, disseminating the CBC results and achievements of the projects etc.

The major information event for potential applicants was carried out on 31 March 2016 in Rūjiena (Latvia) and it focused on issues related to the first call for proposals. It included further promotion of the programme and funding opportunity, provided motivating and inspirational speeches, facilitated partner search. The JS organized individual consultations for potential applicants on developed project ideas.

Thematically the focus of information seminars narrowed during the programme implementation, following fulfilment of the programme indicators

According to the current plan the closing event of the programme will be held in 2021.

- *Presentations at the events*

The JS supports events organised by other bodies, where the target audience includes potential applicants by providing programme materials and/or giving presentations.

Upon occasion, the programme may organize thematic events that serve the purpose of disseminating important programme information, results and communicate with different target groups.

4.3. Promotion of Interreg and EU Regional policy to general public

- *Dissemination of programme results*

To raise awareness of the Interreg and cross-border cooperation, its achievements and results, the programme aims at presenting them at bigger and popular public events in Estonia and Latvia (e.g. Annual Entrepreneurship week in Estonia, conversation festivals LAMPA in Latvia and Arvamusfestival in Estonia etc.).

- *Promotion of the Europe Day*

The Europe Day on 9 May each year is marked with wide range of joint actions and celebrations at the EU level and in all Member States. Relevant communication activities to promote cross-border cooperation and Interreg are carried out in cooperation with intermediaries and other Interreg programmes.

- *The European Cooperation Day*

Since 2012, the programme takes part in marking and celebrating the European cooperation day, which is an annual communication campaign to showcase the results and benefits of the cross-border cooperation to the general public and in 2020 the European cooperation day will be celebrated for the 9th time and in 2021 we will celebrate the 10th anniversary. The European cooperation day events take place on or around 21 September. In 2015 the programme organized joint beach clean-up activity on the Baltic Sea coast and border crossing on kick-bikes in cooperation with the Interreg Central Baltic programme in Estonia and Latvia. In the following years the programme continued to explore the clean-up initiative and competition on kick bikes, which were supported with educative workshops. The European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018 provided an opportunity to go on Heritage Road Trip and capitalise on tourism heritage projects, but

in 2019 the Green Space Tour was organized to learn from environmental awareness projects. In the coming years the programme plans to involve project partners in the programme events similar to above mentioned or in organizing their own smaller local events with a goal to spread the cross-border cooperation messages to local communities. The cooperation with other Interreg and/or ENI programmes operating in Estonia and Latvia is considered.

4.4. Networking and cooperation

The communication activities involve regular networking and exchange of information with the intermediaries, including cooperation on various events. These target groups are included in the contact list for receiving important programme news, and invited to join the programme social media profiles on Facebook and YouTube, and regularly provided with the informative and promotional materials of the programme. If needed, specific groups of potential applicants will be targeted via intermediaries.

4.5. Media activities

Different types of media activities are carried out according to the specific news or events taking place; including developing and ensuring publication and sharing of promotion and information materials about the programme, the projects, their progress and results, as well as cooperation with the project partners in media activities related to their projects and events by the JS.

The JS approaches together with project partners the media and especially local and regional media to promote the results of the projects as widely as possible. The JS assists the project partners, if necessary, in rising their capacity to communicate and by promoting their activities and attracting journalists. The programme aims at closer cooperation with local, regional and national media to promote the programme, projects and their results.

- *Press releases*

Press releases are sent to media following the project approvals in the Monitoring Committee, before and/or after major programme events, before the information activities, as well as in relation to other programme news that constitute relevant material for the media.

- *Reactions*

Media activities involve flexibility and operative reactions to various unexpected situations, important changes in the programme or crisis. The necessary special activities can take form of press conferences, press visits, working with some particular media etc. Media activities are aimed at addressing a wide range of target groups and addressing not only the potential applicants, but also the general public.

- *Commercials (if needed)*

As the projects and their activities need to be attractive and interesting for local population, sufficient media coverage can be achieved generally without paid commercials. However, if a specific target group should be reached, it may be considered to invite it to information activities through advertisement.

4.6. Digital communication (webpage, social media, news flash, eMS)

- *Website*

The Estonia-Latvia programme website www.estlat.eu is playing the main role in communicating the programme and project information to the various stakeholders. It serves as the main source of the official programme information, which is relevant for all the target groups of the programme. The site www.estlat.eu is designed so that social media channels of the programme - Facebook and YouTube - are incorporated and accessible from the website, thus ensuring direct access and integration of social media and better concentration of the programme's message.

The website includes the following major features: the general information about the programme, section with essential information for potential applicants, section with information and guidance documents for project partners, partner search section and database of project ideas, section of achieved results – includes list of beneficiaries, database of the approved projects (also for the period 2007-2013), communication products of the Estonia-Latvia programme 2007-2013 and the Estonia-Latvia programme 2014-2020, news section, events section that includes the registration and survey tool, subscribing opportunity to receive news and contacts information. The website is usable by people with disabilities.

- *Social media*

The programme has two social media accounts – Facebook and YouTube. Facebook has become an important tool to communicate programme and project news, as the audience is constantly growing - from 1000 fans in 2016 to ca 2200 fans by the end of 2019. In order to help fans of the programme Facebook account to find the programme website and vice versa, the Facebook feed has been installed in the programme's website as a news feed. Also the programme YouTube account is integrated into the website, there were 106 video productions placed on the channel during previous programme period and 12 added by the end of 2019. The Facebook will remain as the main social media communication channel where the programme shares content from events and activities that are intended for wider public: for instance photos, videos, stories, useful tips and examples of cross-border cooperation within the programme and outside, relevant information about cooperation between Estonia and Latvia from other sources that fosters ties between the two countries, as well as relevant information and publications issued by the European Commission.

- *Digital information materials (infographics)*

The programme will continue to produce shareable items (visuals) – meaning, that most of the information materials will be prepared in a digital format and this will allow to share them easily on Facebook or YouTube, as well as to place on the programme website in a downloadable format. Also the approach of storytelling via images will be continued and statistics, advice, decisions will be provided via storyfied graphics and video stories.

- *News flash*

The programme news flash is a regular issue providing different target groups with latest programme developments and actual news. It is distributed to all contacts of the programme. The news flash contains information about the programme implementation and milestones, the recently approved, as well as the

running projects, important dates of the programme, , as well as comments and stories from the project partners and various other bodies involved in the programme.

- *Publicizing the list of the partners*

The information about projects and project partners is be published on the programme's website under the section EstLat results and subsection Projects 2014-2020. Each supported project has a profile, where basic information about the project, short project description and outputs (when available) is published. The complete list of lead partners and partners is available in a downloadable format.

- *eMS (Electronic monitoring system)*

The eMS is the main working tool for applicants applying for funding and later for the project partners for reporting and communication with the programme authorities. The eMS is also used for uploading the material for the monitoring committee before the meetings.

4.7. Publications and promotional materials

The planned publications and promotional materials may include:

- **Colouring book** - the EstLat Colouring Book was issued on the occasion of the opening of the first call and it promoted seven support areas in a user friendly and prominent way. It was supported with colour pencils for not only creative colouring, but also for making notes during information activities.
- **Citizens' Summary of the Annual Implementation Report**- the summary of the Annual Implementation Report for general public (5-10 pages) with concentrated information and visuals.
- **E-Catalogue of products/services** – all products are in one place, with branding “Made in EstLat”.
- **Estonia-Latvia Stories II** – all supported projects in a storytelling form are compiled in one book. The format is similar to the first edition of the Estonia-Latvia Stories, but implicates on the priorities of the new programme and includes stories about all supported projects. Coverage of it in English, Estonian and Latvian will be provided.
- **Videos for promoting cooperation and project results** - project partners from tourism, business and environmental awareness projects are sharing their experience and achieved results in a roundtable discussion format called “Talking results”.
- **Video stories** - on product development (following how the product or service is being developed), of the sailing route on the East Baltic Coast and of the joint centre of Valga-Valka.
- **Other promotional items/give-aways** - small promotional and representation items and environmentally friendly thematic give-aways for the EC communication actions like the Europe Day and the European cooperation day and other relevant programme events (e.g. promotion of Interreg 30 in 2020) will be produced to support the visibility and publicity of the programme at the events.

4.8. Events and other support to project partners

Project partners are the best promoters of the programme, thus it is important to ensure active and regular communication with them and make sure that efficient communication with target groups of projects and media is also implemented further on the project level. The JS establishes close and direct communication with project partners in order to build the trust between the JS and project partners and

to support partners with adequate information flow in their daily implementation work. It is also important to inform and remind the project partners about the publicity requirements of the programme.

To support and improve quality of communication activities at project level, there is regular sharing of project information and outputs and communication with the project partners. The JS organizes partner seminars, keeps up regular direct communication is attending the project activities and carries out site visits. The JS organises the partner seminars in cooperation with the financial control bodies and audit authority. The project partners get information about all the aspects of the project implementation: eligibility, procurement and publicity rules. Other thematic seminars might be organized if necessary (e.g. partner day in 2018).

- *Direct communication*

The communication with project partners takes place on a regular basis, using the phone and email, the Skype, as well as by holding individual meetings, if necessary. The project implementers are informed about the necessity to share the information on project events and activities on Internet and with the JS, and have individual programme consultant from the JS, whom to approach with specific questions in relation to project implementation, including communication.

- *Attendance of project events and site visits*

The JS regularly attends the project activities and carries out site visits in order to follow the project developments, receive feedback, compile information, photos, videos and project stories, as well as monitor the activities and fulfilment of the publicity requirements.

4.9. Promotion of projects within EU and EUSBSR communication initiatives

The programme follows the EU and EUSBSR communication initiatives e.g. European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, INFOREGIO, EUSBSR communication campaigns and relevant projects are promoted.

4.10. Feedback tools and activities

It is important for the programme to have a two-way communication with its target groups as much as possible, particularly with the potential applicants and partners of the approved projects. Therefore the programme foresees feedback tools to be applied within other communication activities, such as interactive survey tool on the programme website.. Important feedback is obtained orally through the meetings and discussions with project partners during their events and site visits.

Please see the framework of the Interreg Estonia-Latvia programme communication in the table 1 (page 14).

Table 1: Framework for the Estonia-Latvia programme communication

COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES:				
CO 1: Quality applications for cross-border cooperation projects are received and implemented			CO 2: Awareness about the EU-funded cross-border cooperation in Estonia and Latvia increases	
CO 1.1 Potential applicants are aware about the funding opportunities and quality project ideas are submitted	CO 1.2 Project partners implement projects at high quality (both technically and content wise)	CO 1.3 Internal information flow between programme institutions is well functioning	CO 2.1 Project partners have the capacity to communicate with target audiences	CO 2.2 Achievements of cross-border cooperation projects and the programme are visible
TARGET GROUPS:				
Business support institutions Entrepreneurs National, regional and local authorities Public equivalent bodies Education and research institutions Non-governmental organisations	Lead partners/partners of approved projects	Joint Secretariat Monitoring Committee Managing Authority Financial Control bodies National Responsible Authorities European Commission (DG Regio) Audit Authority	Lead partners/partners of approved projects	Organizations operating in the fields, that programme support Local, regional and national authorities General public
COMMUNICATION APPROACH:				
Wide and supportive consultations via e-mail, phone and in person are available to all interested potential applicants Strongly and widely promoting the funding opportunity to interested target groups or organizations (clusters,	Reliable and accurate information is published on programme website and provided during seminars Implementation support and guidance from the Joint Secretariat is made available Clustering of supported	Responsibilities of each institution are clear and well-coordinated Keeping active day-to-day contacts between employees of programme authorities	Introduce effective and economic communication tools and channels Sharing projects achievements via programme Facebook page Supported projects are introduced and shortly described in programme website, as well results are	Spreading information via tailored (including thematic) media and intermediary organizations lists Regular posts and growing number of followers on Facebook page Monitoring the appearance and further dissemination of results Establishment of close relations

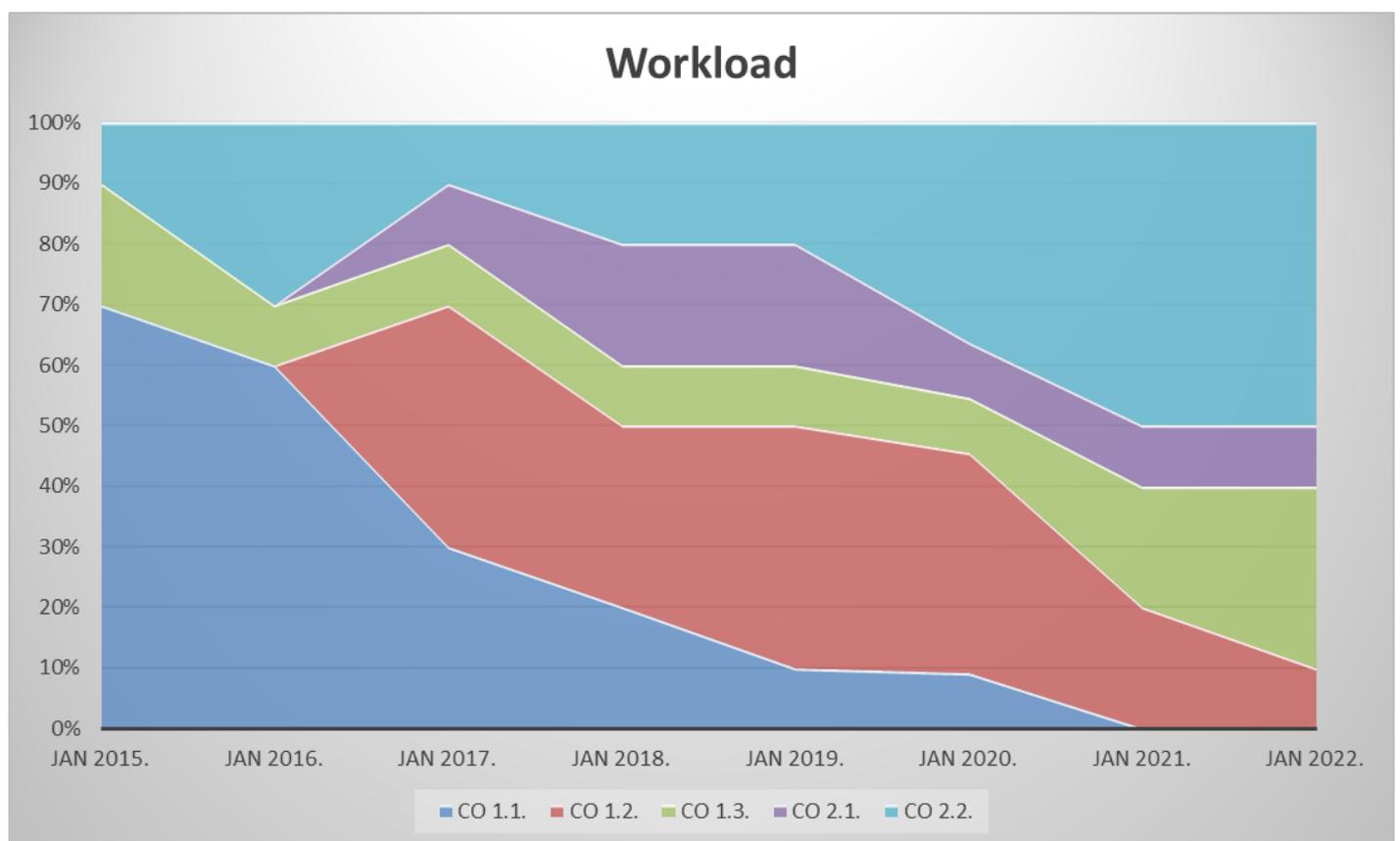
development centres, etc.)	projects by support area		published	with regional media
Supporting partner search for development of cooperation ideas Communication channels have common visual appearance and the programme is recognizable	Participation in programme communication campaigns is encouraged		Guidance during information events on EC requirements for the visibility and communication	Organizing and participating in communication activities that highlight the EU contribution and in cooperation with other Interreg and/or ENI programmes
COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES:				
Seminars, roundtables, networking events (including use of eMS) Website (all guiding documents published), Facebook Wide contact list (subscribers, participants at events, consulted persons, intermediaries, programme authorities, etc.) News flash Media Feedback	Information seminars (including about the use of eMS) Website (all guiding documents published), Facebook Advice by programme consultants (e-mail, phone, individual consultations) Publications and promotional materials Mailing lists News flash Feedback	Meetings Skype Website Mailing lists Facebook New flash Publications and promotional material	Trainings Partner seminars Communication activities for each supported project Publicity guidelines	Media (including thematic media) Collecting material (photos, stories, videos) about all supported projects during their lifetime Website, Facebook, YouTube Communication campaign (European Cooperation Day) Participation in promotional events (Europe Day, etc.) Publications and digital information materials News flash to intermediary organizations Feedback

5. Implementation

The communication strategy is used to plan the communication activities taking into account the project and programme cycles. Implementation of all supported projects (their management cycles is integral part of the programme cycle and that phase is characterised with the highest workload intensity for the JS/MA during the programme lifetime.

Programme cycle consists of a starting phase (no running projects), a build-up phase (projects increasingly run in parallel and the first projects start to produce outputs), and the achievements phase (projects and programme intensively produce outputs, number of projects running in parallel decreases). In the final phase, when all projects are ended, the programme compiles final results and reports.

Chart 1: Expected workload related to communication objectives throughout the programme cycle



Objective 1. Quality applications for cross-border cooperation projects are received and implemented:

CO 1.1 Potential applicants are aware about the funding opportunities and quality project ideas are submitted (2015-2020)

CO 1.2 Project partners implement projects at high quality (both technically and content wise) (2017 – 2021)

CO 1.3 Internal information flow between programme institutions is well functioning (2015-2021)

Objective 2. Awareness about the EU-funded cross-border cooperation in Estonia and Latvia increases:

CO 2.1 Project partners have the capacity to communicate with target audiences (2017-2021)

CO 2.2 Achievements of cross-border cooperation projects and the programme are visible (2015 – 2021)

Horizontal objective of general transparency of the administrative procedures, including application and selection process of the programme is followed throughout the programme lifetime.

The annual communication plan is an integral part of the annual work plan that is prepared jointly by JS and MA. The plan is adjusted to the programme's respective cycle and relevant activities when necessary, closely following the strategy.

Implementation plan

The general plan and timeframe for implementation of the planned communications activities is summarized in the table 2 below.

Table 2: Planned communications activities and general timeframe

Activities		Targeted groups	Until 2017	2018-2021
Programme documents	Providing clear and updated programme documents with harmonised appearance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - making documents easily accessible; - alerting on the latest updates; - translating the key documents into Estonian and Latvian. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential applicants; - Project partners. 	Regular	Regular.
Information and promotional events	Major information activities promoting the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public sector bodies; - entrepreneurs; - non-profit sector representatives. 	April – May 2015	-
	Annual major information activity (European Cooperation Day)		Annually.	Promotion of the achievements of the programme in 2019 – 2020. Closing activity in 2021.
	Promotion of the Europe Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential applicants not familiar with the programme; 	Annually.	Annually.
	Information seminars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - potential applicants from the less active regions/ further from the border area and with concrete project ideas/ questions; - less active groups of potential applicants (for example, businesses, NGOs); 	On average 3-4 seminars a year both in Estonia and Latvia, usually connected with launching the calls.	On average 1-2 seminars a year both in Estonia and Latvia, usually connected with launching the calls or pre-defined projects. Except 2021.
	Presentations at other events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - information seminars of other Interreg/ENI programmes; - events of state and municipal institutions; - events of Planning Regions, NGOs, rural development, business support centres and business associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - intermediaries; - media. 	Following the respective events/ need-based, oriented on the crucial target groups.	Following the respective events/ need-based, oriented on the crucial target groups.

	and other intermediaries; - popular public events.			Dissemination of programme results.
	Consultations in the regions		Upon request	Upon request.
	Other events		Upon necessity.	Upon necessity
Networking and cooperation	Regular contacts and cooperation activities with intermediaries: - other Interreg/ENI programmes; - relevant state, regional and municipal institutions; - business support centres; - NGO networks and support centres; - EU representing institutions; - relevant cross-border cooperation oriented bodies (EE and LV chambers of commerce, embassies etc).	- Intermediaries; - potential applicants of diverse fields; - potential beneficiaries of specific target groups (businesses, transport industries, NGOs etc., addressed through the specific networks).	Continuous.	Continuous.
Media activities	Press releases: - on approved projects; - on major project events; - on info events; - on other relevant programme news.	- Potential applicants not familiar with the programme; - potential applicants generally familiar with the programme; - potential applicants from the less active regions/ further from the border area;	For each occasion.	Within dissemination of programme results.
	Reactions/ special activities in case of important events or changes in the programme, unexpected crisis etc.	- other specific target groups; - general public.	Upon need/ occasion.	Upon need/ occasion.
Digital communication	Web page		Continuous updates.	Continuous updates.
	Social media	- Potential applicants not familiar with the programme; - potential beneficiaries with specific questions; - beneficiaries; - all Programme institutions; - relevant EU institutions; - intermediaries; - media;	Continuous production of materials and posts on Facebook. Update of YouTube account.	Continuous generation of materials and posts on Facebook concentrating on communicating the achievements and results, including strategic projects. Update of YouTube.
	News flash	- general public.	Linked to announcements of the calls, newly approved projects and other relevant programme news and events.	Linked to relevant programme news and events. Closing issue in 2021 or 2022.
and promo	Colouring book	- Potential applicants; - intermediaries.	2016 (reprinting/ updates upon need).	-

	Videos (thematic, product/project based)	- General public; - intermediaries.	-	2020 - 2021
	Catalogue or other compilation (possibly in several phases) of products and services	- General public; - intermediaries.	-	2020 - 2021
	Other promotional items/ give-aways with EU and programme Logos	- Potential applicants; - beneficiaries; - intermediaries.	Linked to the relevant occasions for dissemination and the following the general budget.	Linked to the relevant occasions and the following the general budget.
	Estonia-Latvia Stories II	- Intermediaries; - Project partners; - all programme institutions; - relevant EU institutions; - politicians and opinion leaders		2020 - 2021
	Citizens' Summary of the Annual Implementation Report	General public	-	Annually
Events for project partners	Project partner seminars	- Partners of the approved projects.	1-2 seminar on reporting, procurement, publicity requirements, communication, etc. after MC decisions; follow-up upon need.	1-2 seminar on reporting, procurement, publicity requirements, communication. Follow-up upon need.
	Direct communication, attendance of project events and site visits		Regular.	Regular.
Feedback tools and activities	Within other activities: - feedback sheets or on-line survey after events; - survey tool on webpage; - feedback during the field trips/ site visits & meetings with beneficiaries; - follow-up on media stories.	- Project partners; - potential applicants; - general public.	Regular.	Regular Within closing assessment.

6. Budget

The JS and MA envisage a total expenditure of 236 604, 00 EUR on promotion and communication measures (see the table 3).

Table 3: Budget planned for the promotion and communication

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Promotion and communication	9 104	42 300	46 000	30 000	17 000	365 00	63 000	20 500	264 404

7. Management and responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Managing Authority

The MA of the programme is responsible for ensuring compliance with the information and publicity requirements laid down in Articles 115-117 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1303/2013 and thus for drawing up and implementing the strategy. Contact details of the MA are as follows:

The Managing Authority
Interreg Estonia-Latvia programme
State Shared Service Centre
Lökke 4, 10122, Tallinn, Estonia

Ms. Ege Ello
Head of the Managing Authority
E-mail: ege.ello@rtk.ee
Tel: + 372 6631933

Ms. Anu Roomere
E-mail: anu.roomere@rtk.ee
Tel: + 372 6631942

Ms. Külli Kaare
E-mail: kylli.kaare@rtk.ee
Tel: + 372 6631950

The MA delegates the day-to-day implementation of the strategy to the JS, who is in charge of the information and publicity activities under the supervision of the MA. The JS shall work closely with and report to the MA on implementation of the activities specified in the strategy. Close cooperation is ensured via continuous communication and information exchange between MA and the JS, including regular meetings.

Role of the Monitoring Committee

The strategy and any major amendments to it will be drawn up by the MA in cooperation with the JS and approved by the Monitoring Committee.

The Managing Authority delegates to the JS the task to provide the MC with the overview on implementation of the strategy and achievement of the targets set in the strategy each year. The progress made in the implementation of the communication strategy will be included in the annual and final implementation reports also to be approved by the MC. The MC approves Annual Work plans, where the planned communication activities for a respective year are included.

Other information and publicity activities of the Joint Secretariat

The information and publicity activities of the JS have been described in the Chapter 4 Information and communication measures. In addition to those, the JS is ensuring the implementation of the strategy and carrying out the tasks listed below:

- Producing and visualising statistics about the state of implementation of projects and the programme, including financial data, fulfilment of indicators, partner data, and pointing out topics that are under or over represented and less active regions;

- Maintaining and updating address lists of institutions interested in the programme and media contacts;
- Monitoring how the beneficiaries follow publicity requirements and promote the contribution from the Programme and the EU.

Contact details of the JS are as follows:

Interreg	Ms. Helena Järviste	Mrs. Vineta Šnore
Estonia-Latvia programme	Head of the Joint secretariat	Tel: + 371 29274310
Joint secretariat	Tel: + 372 5281971	e-mail: vineta.snore@estlat.eu
Sõbra 56, 51013 Tartu, Estonia	e-mail: helena.jarviste@estlat.eu	
www.estlat.eu		
Facebook: Estonia-Latvia programme		

8. Monitoring

The MA shall inform the MC at least once a year on the progress in the implementation of the communication strategy as referred to in point (c) of Article 110 (1) of the regulation 1303/2013 and on its analysis of the results, as well as on the planned information and communication activities to be carried out in the following year.

Quantitative indicators are set to measure if aims of the strategy have been achieved and what needs to be improved. Frequent on-line feedback surveys on communication measures will be carried out by the JS. Indicators set below will help to evaluate information and publicity measures in terms of visibility and awareness of the programme and the role played by the EU and are related to the communication objectives set by the programme.

▪ *Quantitative indicators*

INDICATOR	2015 - 2017	2018 – 2021
Visits on the website (monthly)	2000	1500
Number of different e-mail addresses in the JS contact list receiving regular information	2000	500
Number of shareable items produced (videos, digital publications, etc.)	20	40
Number of project ideas consulted	300	-
Number of submitted project applications to the JS	180	-
Number of programme and project related articles/appearances in media.	210	200
Number of projects covered by mass media with reference to co-financing.	60	40