



EU TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
TO CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS
IN THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

The new EU Visibility and Communication requirements – what has changed?



WHAT'S COVERED IN THE GUIDELINES?

EU VISIBILITY

It's essential for the EU to transparently showcase its financial support, ensuring that taxpayers and citizens of partner countries are aware of EU funding.

Fund recipients must prominently display Union support on all related communications.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION:

This is a centralised effort to enhance the EU's global stance, democratic support, and credibility and may be specifically funded for key political areas.

It's about conveying the 'why' behind actions, the shared values, and the outcomes, not just the actions themselves.

Strategic communication now prioritises a central approach at the EU Delegation level for broader impact and more coherent messaging.



Visibility is about ensuring recognition for EU funding and its role in specific actions.

In contrast, Strategic Communication is about shaping perceptions of the EU's broader political priorities and values, and it is managed centrally for greater reach and impact.



Biggest change compared to 2018

- Move away from fragmented, project-specific communication towards consolidated efforts at the EU Delegation level, focusing on campaigning and reaching new audiences.
- Shift from partner-implemented communication activities to a coordinated approach focusing on selected priorities. Specific budget and plan for communication are **no longer included unless agreed in advance**.
- **No retroactive retroactive requirement to revise communication and visibility plans or** apply new guidelines; however, alignment with 2022 guidelines is encouraged where possible.
- **Ongoing projects with websites/social media** Can continue; however, principles from 2022 guidelines should be followed, including an exit strategy and compliance with EU visibility requirements.



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EU Visibility



Funded by
the European Union

The **EU Emblem** must be used fully, unaltered, and placed separately from other logos to acknowledge EU funding.

No creation or **use of other visual identities or logos** without prior EU agreement.

Include **the statement** "Funded by the European Union" or "Co-funded by the European Union" in the relevant EU program language and local language(s).

Exceptional Derogations: **only** for special cases like security risks, with required EU approval.

Co-branding: Ensure the EU emblem's prominence and size match or exceed other logos when displayed together.



- **Post-completion**, new communications should avoid the EU emblem, except on permanent fixtures like **plaques**.
- Materials after six months should declare that a previous phase was EU-funded.

For example:

- Display panels must detail the EU's role as a donor and be visible to the public at the action site from its start until **six months after completion**.
- Permanent plaques on EU-funded structures must be **highly visible** and include the EU emblem and funding statement.
- If a vehicle and equipment used in an EU-funded project is part of the deliverables, the EU emblem and visibility marks must be removed when **ownership transfers** after project completion.
- The EU emblem and funding statement must be included in all **related print or electronic publications and digital assets**. If not solely for the EU project, the EU's contribution must still be recognized.
- The funding statement is required on stationery listing EU project titles, but the EU emblem should not be on business cards or general stationery. – **NOT ENCOURAGED**
- Displaying EU visibility in non-traditional media, such as street art, should be decided by the EU on an individual basis.



Budget - Projects should not have a dedicated visibility budget; visibility costs should be integrated into the overall action budget.

- For instance, expenses for **visibility items like stickers** that are meant for supplies fall under the supply distribution activity's budget. For projects like the construction of a school building, costs for visibility items such as **panels are budget-eligible**.
- Partners should **promote projects using their established channels, following EU visibility rules**. New guidelines discourage the creation of new project-specific channels to avoid low impact. Instead, leveraging existing networks like partner or EU channels is encouraged.
- Partners are **obliged to supply any existing content for EU-funded** actions to the EU upon request. If such content is not available, partners are expected to do their best to create or facilitate its creation, even without a dedicated communication budget or person.
- The costs of professional photography or filmmaking are not eligible. Partners are encouraged to create their own visuals, which align with the EU's focus on clear and effective communication.
- **Regular project events**, such as openings or closings, aren't mandatory and may be organised by the Delegation if they support communication goals.



STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

*In cases where the EU has approved project/programme-specific strategic communication, implementing partners must produce a **Strategic Communication Plan** and obtain the EU's approval of it by the start of the implementation of operational activities.*

FAQ

<p>Who decides whether a strategic communication component should be included in an individual project?</p>	<p>Exceptionally, the EU may decide to finance specific communication activities for individual projects/programmes. These cases will be decided based on the EU's country/regional priorities and whether they are closely aligned with the EU's own strategic communication priorities.</p> <p>In these exceptional cases, implementing partners must include the proposed strategic communication activities in the Description of the Action.</p>
<p>Should communication activities be agreed upon, and where should the strategic plan appear in the contribution agreement?</p>	<p>The proposed strategic communication activities must be included in the Description of the Action.</p> <p>The budget for these activities should also be included in the overall budget for the action.</p> <p>The detailed Strategic Communication Plan, which outlines the detailed activities, audiences, channels, timeline, etc., does not need to be submitted before the Contribution Agreement is signed but should be submitted during the inception phase after discussing with the concerned EU Delegation(s) and, as relevant, headquarters.</p>
<p>Is there an approximative percentage of the budget that should be dedicated to communication actions?</p>	<p>There is no approximate percentage or lump sum range/maximum indicated for strategic communication. The amount should be determined based on a range of factors, including the intended objectives and impact, as well as the alignment with the EU Delegation's own strategic communication priorities.</p> <p>It is recommended that partners allocate between 30-50% for content production and 50-70% for dissemination.</p>
<p>What is the difference between "awareness-raising" activities and strategic communication?</p>	<p>Awareness Activities: Necessary for certain project goals, like a health project aimed at boosting vaccination rates, requiring outreach to specific audiences to convey details about vaccination rationale, availability, and locations.</p> <p>These should focus on the project's specific aims rather than on promoting EU priorities. They aren't strategic communications per the new approach.</p> <p>It is essential to synchronise these efforts with EU services to ensure alignment and impact.</p>

Strategic Communication plan ¹³

Narrative

- Focus not only on the action but also on why it is needed, including by emphasising shared values, interests, and impact. It requires researching how the target audience thinks and feels and why. It involves understanding their needs, hopes, and fears.

Objectives

- Objectives must be specific, measurable, relevant, and time-bound, supporting the action's main goals.

Audience

The audience should be precisely identified and segmented. Focus is on:

- Wider public, especially ages 18-35, who might be unaware of the EU.
- Specialised groups like leaders, the diplomatic community, businesses, activists, and influencers.

Approach

- The Strategic Communication Plan should outline the approach that will be adopted to achieve the objectives. The approach will depend on the audience targeted.

Activities

- Communications should always be tailored to objectives and target audiences based on the related project/programme. Ensuring activities are pre-discussed and agreed with the EU is crucial for mutual benefit and maximum impact.

Measure impact

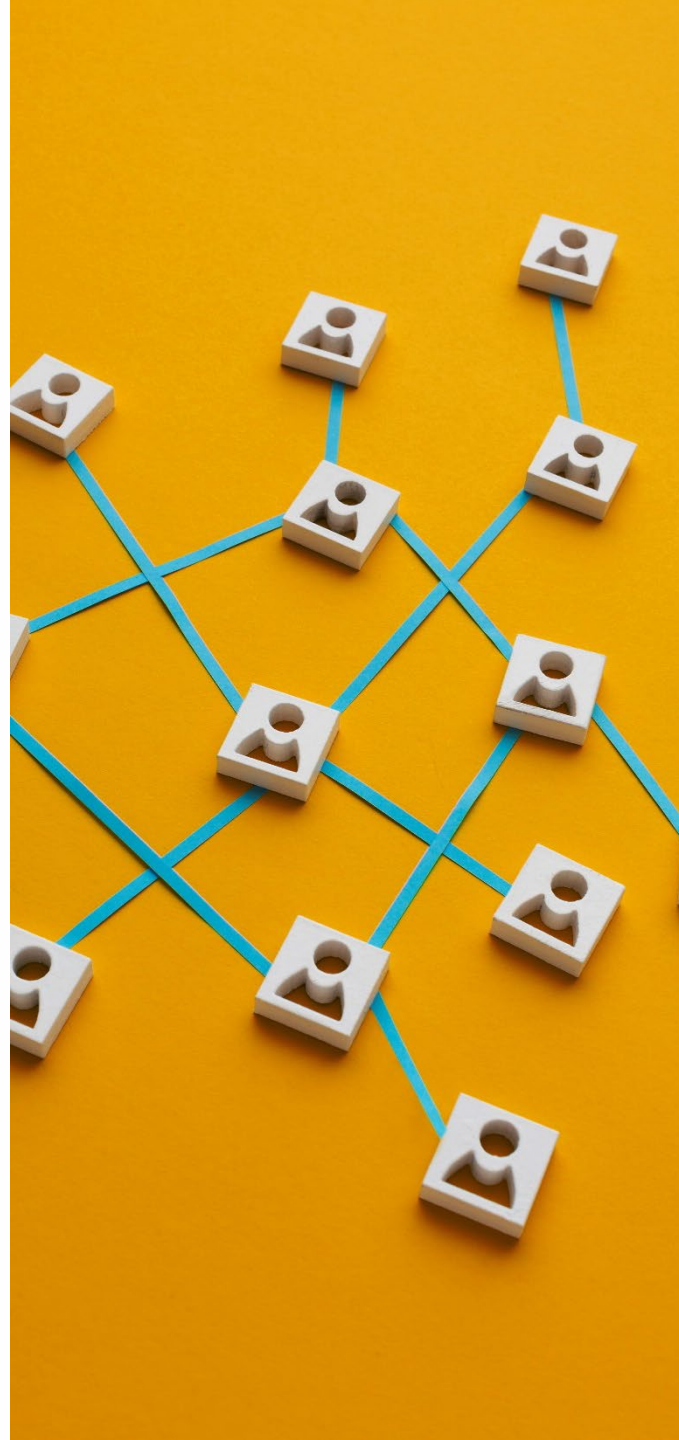
- Establish and use KPIs for assessing communication success, including both quantitative and qualitative KPIs.

Risks

- Identify and evaluate communication activity risks, factoring in political, security, or resource limitations. Develop mitigation strategies and modify with EU's case-by-case consent.

Budget

- Ensure budget is sufficient, reflecting activity scale and context. Typically, allocate 30% for content creation, 70% for distribution, following EU norms.



APPROACH

- **Channels:** Which channel is best to reach your audience? Different audiences consume content via different channels (written media, TV, social media, events), and effective communication depends on knowing where the target audience will be.
- **Content:** Just as different audiences are reached via different channels, the content (images, videos, publications, etc.) needed to reach and resonate with them varies according to audience and channel.

Networks and Multipliers: Leverage partnerships with media, civil society, academia, business sectors, and Member States to extend your reach, including written media, TV, social media, and events.

Influencers Collaboration: Engage with influencers like local celebrities and industry champions, who can amplify your message and connect more personally with the audience.



ACTIVITIES

- Ensuring all activities are pre-discussed and agreed upon with the EU.
- Key materials produced by the action (photos, videos, etc.) must be accessible to the EU in an appropriate format throughout the action's implementation.
- Project/programme-specific communication channels such as websites, social media accounts, and newsletters are **typically not allowed unless there is a specific and compelling reason.**
- When approved, a proper exit strategy should be developed and included from the beginning.



PRESS AND MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Press Releases: Can be used at action start to detail objectives, beneficiaries, budget, and EU collaboration, and at action end to announce outcomes and achievements.

You must get text approval, including a **quote** from a high-level EU official.

Press Conferences: Must be organised with the local EU Delegation or office. The EU flag must be displayed alongside other flags or emblems.

Journalist Visits: Require prior EU authorisation for project visits. Inform the EU in advance for planning and input on timing and focus, and share press clippings with the EU.





ONLINE COMMUNICATION

Web Communication: Partners should feature ongoing EU-funded project information **on their websites and may need to contribute to Europa domain pages**. Web content must contextualise the project, showcasing **its value and impact with concrete data in an accessible, jargon-free manner**.

- **Human Interest Stories:** These should highlight the role of individuals and communities in development, focusing on significant changes and their narratives.
- Creating dedicated websites for projects/programs is prohibited without prior EU agreement.

- **Social Media Communication:** Partners should create compelling content with strong visuals for social media to engage audiences. They should leverage their social media presence to share project-related content and propose collaborative posts with the EU to increase reach. Project-specific social media accounts **are not allowed without the EU's prior consent**.
- **Social Media Content:** Must comply with visibility requirements, clearly acknowledge EU support, and include mentions or tags of the relevant EU entities in posts.



EVENTS

- Coordination with the EU is essential, and events should comply with visibility requirements, whether organised directly by the implementing partner or not.
- EU representative will be part of the event.
- Promotional material should comply with the visibility requirements.

PHOTOS

A powerful tool to help tell a story.

As part of their strategic communication, implementing partners are encouraged to plan and budget for the production and dissemination of high-quality photos.





VIDEOS

- **EU-Funded Video Approval:** Videos for EU-funded actions require EU approval pre-screening, broadcasting, or distribution.
 - Pre-production: Submit a concept note with the draft script, storyboard, and dissemination strategy detailing the target audience and outreach potential.
 - Production: Provide a video draft when edits are still feasible, accommodating EU feedback.
 - Post-production: Inform the EU of the video's distribution and all legal details

Branding and Legal Compliance: Videos must display the EU emblem and funding acknowledgement ('Funded by the European Union' or 'Co-funded by the European Union') as well as disclaimers per Section 4.6.



THANK YOU