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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

REGIONAL AND URBAN POLICY

European Territorial Cooperation, Macro-regions, Interreg and Programme Implementation I

Macro-regions, Transnational/Interregional/External Cooperation, Enlargement

Interreg, Cross-Border Cooperation, Internal Borders

Brussels,
REGIO.D.1-D.2

Dear managing authorities, Dear colleagues

The regulatory framework for the 2021-2027 period introduces a new feature: beneficiaries are required to *organise a communication event* (Article 36 (4)(e) of the Interreg Regulation).

The quality of the events is important because, among other goals, they serve as European Union image-building activities. Therefore, we believe that all partners involved, including the managing authorities, the joint secretariats and beneficiaries, should apply some minimum criteria when organising such events.

The elements set out below could be replicated for events in relation to 2021-2027 operations of strategic importance and other Interreg programme-related events.

Preparation phase:

- ensuring appropriate visibility: the EU flag should always be displayed prominently on the invitation, information materials and during the event,
- informing the European Commission at least four weeks in advance about the date, venue and nature of the event,
- including, where relevant, reference to a speech by a representative of the European Commission in the event's agenda.

Media outreach

- The beneficiary should prepare a press release and consult it with the managing authority, so that the European dimension is ensured.
- The reference to the European Union budget should be made directly in the header, sub-heading or text of the press release (not to be replaced by programme abbreviations such as MAC/ POCTEP/ ALCOTRA/PCIA etc. which are generally unknown to the general public).
- When a Commission representative cannot attend, a quote from the Commission representative should be requested in good time and included in the press release.

- If public authorities are involved in the organisation of the event, the press release should be shared with the national press agencies representing all partners of the Interreg project. The national press agencies' press releases are sources widely used by journalists and newsletter outlets.
- The managing authority should ensure meaningful and close cooperation with the media to increase coverage of the event.

Audio-visual material

- Clear reference to European Union Funds as the source of funding should be included in any audio-visual material: the logo of the EU flag or emoticon of the EU flag should be permanently visible in the layout (using fine print or making a reference for a few seconds at the end of the spot are insufficient).
- The audio-visual material should serve solely as promotion of the project and its contribution to EU policies, excluding promotion of institutions, individuals or local political entities/activities.
- All materials prepared by the beneficiary or the managing authority for promotional activities should be shared with the Commission.

Vouchers during co-financing agreement ceremonies

- The EU flag/emblem should be displayed prominently on the vouchers/prizes/cheques given to beneficiaries and project partners and should be proportionate to other logos.

Social media

- Beneficiaries and public authorities involved in the project materially or territorially should also inform about EU funding in their social media channels.
- In line with the Horizontal European Funds Communication Strategy, standard hashtags #CohesionPolicy or #Interreg should be used.
- The social media account of the European Commission/ EC representations in the given country, DG REGIO/Unit for Interreg should be tagged in the posts: /EURegioInterreg (FB), @RegioInterreg (X).

We would propose that a managing authority produces several short universal “spots” displaying key cohesion policy/Interreg investments from numerous sectors covered by the Interreg programme, with a narrative directed towards the benefits for society. Such videos could always be shared with any beneficiary and be displayed at any conference (or) opening of investments (or) signature of grant agreements.

We would like to underline that both the European Parliament and the Council are repeatedly calling on the Commission and the Member States to make more efforts to strengthen the communication of cohesion policy to improve its visibility. The aim of the standards in communication, listed above, is not to diminish the role of project beneficiaries and project partners but to simultaneously and continuously raise awareness about the European dimension of these measures.

As communication is an integral part of each project, we would be grateful if managing authorities could disseminate the above requirements among all stakeholders territorially or materially involved in the organisation of events in relation to projects implemented within Interreg Programmes.

We hope these recommendations will be helpful and look forward to continuing fruitful cooperation on communication matters.

Yours sincerely

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