



COMMUNICATION PLAN

Revised Version 2010-05-06

Investing in the future by working together for a sustainable and competitive region



European Regional Development Fund
Interreg IVB 2007 - 2013





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1. BACKGROUND

To make a project successful it is of great importance that the aim and results of the project gets widely spread. Target groups as well as other stakeholders should, at the end of the project period, be well acquainted with the aim and the objectives, as well as the outcome of the project. It is also essential that the general public have reached knowledge about the project. Effective communication is, in this matter, the key to success.

By being a part of the European Regional Development Fund Interreg IVB 2007 – 2013 the E-CLIC project lies under the obligation to present a communication plan. In the communication plan the Lead Beneficiary describes what communication actions will be taken throughout the project period. The communication efforts that are planned are based on the stipulations in the Article 69 of the Council Regulation (EC No 1083/2006) and Chapter II, Section 1, Article 2 of the Commission Regulation (EC No 1828/2006).

All E-CLIC partners will implement the regulations regarding communications in order to communicate the project, the work carried out within it, its results and outcomes. The emphasis of the communication plan is on the two areas of communication most relevant for the project:

- to widely spread general information about the E-CLIC project, i.e. to inform about the project;
- to spread specific and targeted stories about its accomplishments, i.e. to promote the results and outcomes of the project.

In phase one of the project, focus will be on informing primary target groups and stakeholders about the project. As the project progresses there will be a natural shift towards publicising the work, results and outcomes towards stakeholders on all levels and to the general public.

In order to maximise the impact of the efforts in communication it is important that all stakeholders, are regarded as a valuable resource in informing about the project and achieving good publicity. It is important to stimulate spin-off effects within the project. Another important task throughout the whole project period is to communicate the results and outcomes of the project to a wide audience, and to enhance communication between all partners and the general public, in line with initiatives of the European Commission and the general aim to increase transparency of the work of the EU.

Effective communication will help to raise awareness of the project, and generate support from stakeholders at all levels as well as from the general public. By helping to raise the quality of the project as a whole, communication adds value to the project.

1.1. Purpose

This document emphasises the importance of the communication and will provide details as to how the E-CLIC project will deliver the European Council and the European Commission communication requirements.

The plan outlines the aims and objectives, target groups and methods and tools planned to ensure the communication of the project; its purpose, the work carried out within it. The ultimate goal is of course that the results of the E-CLIC project will leave permanent impact.

2. AIM AND COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES

The following aim and objectives have been identified for the communications of the E-CLIC project.

2.1. Aim

The overall aim of the E-CLIC project is:

To stimulate innovation through the establishment of eight new European collaborative innovation centres for broadband media services, and to develop the capacity for growth and employment across the NSR through collaboration in a North Sea cluster. The Project aims to build on the acknowledged strengths of the NSR and create opportunities to stimulate SMEs, research institutions and public administrations to work together transnationally. Through collaboration and knowledge exchange, E-CLIC also aims to generate human capital for the NSR.

The communicative approach and the communication plan must follow the overall aim of the E-CLIC project and support the outlined objectives of the project. The communication within E-CLIC aims to raise the level of consciousness among students and other stakeholders of the possibilities that being part of an E-CLIC project can bring, and to promote both the proceeding of the project and the outcome of the WP-projects and case studies.

2.2. Objectives

The main objective of the E-CLIC project is:

To establish transnational cooperation between business clusters, research institutes, universities and public support agencies in the field of development and provisioning of broadband services and media products.

The main objectives for E-CLIC Communication are:

- To communicate the achievements and added value of the project, with special attention to its transnational aspects, to stakeholders and the general public.
- To consistently communicate and brand the project in line with its graphical profile in order to achieve a wide recognition of the project among stakeholders and to further raise general awareness of the project.
- To attract new stakeholders by effectively informing about the project and its work.
- To facilitate the building of networks of relevant policy level stakeholders and decision makers with connections to the North Sea Region in the community in order to maximise the long term effects of the E-CLIC project.

- Internally, the communicative objectives are set to establish support for the project among partners, to maintain the profile of the project, to express clearly the message at project and WP-project level and to gain familiarity with the aim and content of the project.
- Externally, the communicative objectives have – besides gaining familiarity with the aim and content of the project – more focus on establishing a positive image of the project and that external target groups realise the value of the outcomes and the idea of a strategic alliance within the member states and the North Sea Programme.
- To see to that all target groups, after the end of the E-CLIC project, are well acquainted with the E-CLIC centres – and what the E-CLIC centres have to offer. The target groups shall also recognize the results and outcomes of various E-CLIC WP-projects.

General objectives of communicating are to increase interest, reach awareness, knowledge and familiarity, create positive attitudes and act in focus of encourage, strengthen and promote co-operation across the North Sea Region.

To be able to reach the communicative objectives it is of great importance to allocate time, resources and focus in a systematic and well prioritized manner. It is therefore important that systematic attention will be paid to communication, developments and results that have been achieved. Communication has to be a recurring item on the agenda.

3. TARGET GROUPS AND AUDIENCES

Communicating the project involves both informing about and promoting the work and achievements of the project to target groups and other stakeholders. It is also of great importance to involve the media in the member states to further enhance the effects and impact of the communication efforts and to reach out to the general public. There is a particular interest and need to communicate the transnational aspects and achievements of a project within the North Sea Region Programme.

Different target groups are relevant over the project period 2008-2011, and will be prioritised accordingly. The following target groups have been identified.

Business society

- Business within the IT sector, industry and service (local, regional, national, European)
 - *Why?* Business society is one of the main beneficiary of the outcome of E-CLIC projects, referring to new technology based on broadband development. Business society can be seen as both customer and intermediary unit.

University and other educational institutions

- Universities and related institutions, (local, regional, national, European)
 - *Why?* Teachers and students deliver vital research support for the E-CLIC project. Taking part in an E-CLIC WP-project gives students the possibility to gain relevant experience, to create networks and it also makes it easier for businesses to recruit competent future employees.

Public sector

- Policy makers, decision makers and members of political bodies and forums as well as authorities at all levels of administration (local, regional, national, European)
 - *Why?* To raise awareness of policy makers for the progress of broadband expansion, which in the long run might influence future legislation. To get necessary administrative support.

Project partners

- All E-CLIC project partners
 - *Why?* To spread and exchange knowledge between partners, and also to create networks.

Others

- Media; local, national and media on European level, with a focus on internet based media and printed media, i.e. dailies and weekly news magazines
 - *Why?* Media is important in order to reach all target groups and other stakeholders.
- Citizens and the general public
 - *Why?* To raise awareness for the progress of broadband expansion, and to inform the general public about the work within EU-programs – with focus on the E-CLIC project.

4. STRATEGY

The communication plan is set to support the main aim and outcome of the E-CLIC project. In this perspective there is both a systematic approach as well as an iterative process designed to relate to changes throughout the project. The communication plan will be open for adjustments during the project period.

4.1. Timeframe and measures

Over the course of the E-CLIC project different issues will be in focus in relation to the Communication Plan. In the early stages the main issue will be to build support for the project and inform about project possibilities. As the project enters its main operational phase, extracting good practice and messages to communicate will be a key issue. When the project comes into its final stages it will be important to communicate the findings widely to all stakeholders. There is a natural overlap between the phases of the communication as identified in this document and the timeframe should therefore be regarded as indicative.

2008-2009

- Raising awareness of the project, its aim and objectives and by this creating an interest in the project among target groups and other stakeholders.
- Facilitating networking possibilities to create the right conditions for partnership.
- Establish a website.
- Establish a project platform.
- Form a graphical guideline.
- Create project leaflets, brochures, roll-ups, newsletters etc.

2009-2010

- Focusing on issues not sufficiently addressed in the first phase of the project, and ensuring a good coverage of strategic issues.
- Identifying good practices from WP-projects and make sure that tangible and visible results are communicated widely.
- Communicate early concrete results and work of the project to target groups and other stakeholders.
- Create project leaflets, brochures, roll-ups, newsletters etc.

2010-2011

- Communicate results and outcomes of the project and about the different E-CLIC centres, and also address regional and national media with messages and stories about results and outcomes.
- Work toward the goal that all target groups are aware of the outcome of the project.
- Create newsletters etc.

4.2. Principles

The Communication plan of the E-CLIC project is based on the following principles:

Transparency

All communication carried out under the project will be as transparent as possible.

Consistency

The messages delivered about the project, its work, results and outcomes will be clear and consistent and as such made as easy to understand as possible.

Inclusion

The project area is large and therefore it is important that relevant and updated information about the project is easily accessible to all 17 partners. Regional stakeholders tend to have a good chance of building effective media relations, they should always be provided with the latest news.

Accessible

The tone of communication should be simple and easy to understand. It is important to reach all different target groups, and make the message interesting.

Targeted

In order to maximise the impact of the communication efforts carried out it is essential that they are targeted to their relevant target audience as well as identified for the individual circumstances and specific messages.

Interactive

The key difference between information and communication is interaction, i.e. to engage the recipient. The project will listen to the views of its target audiences, and as far as possible incorporate these into the communication efforts carried out.

Innovative

Social media will be an integrated part of the overall communication efforts of the project, which is of particular importance in relation to communicating with the general public.

Language

The mandatory language used internally within the E-CLIC project is English. Externally the communication could be translated into each partner country's own language.

4.3. Message

In all communication situations the E-CLIC project's logo should be used, and all messages must follow the graphical guidelines.

The lead beneficiary will advise all E-CLIC partners to use the tagline for the Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme: *Investing in the future by working together for a sustainable and competitive region*. Partners are also advised to use the tagline along with the required logo of the programme on all publicity materials. The EU flag must also be on all publicity materials.

4.4. Actors

The following actors have a role to play in the delivery of the communication strategy of the project.

Lead Beneficiary

The Lead Beneficiary is responsible for ensuring compliance with rules and regulations concerning communications, which also includes the submission of the Annual Report of the project as well as the Final Report and the ongoing evaluation studies regarding the E-CLIC project.

E-CLIC Partners

All E-CLIC partners have responsibilities for the E-CLIC communication, and will report the action that has been taken, and results to the Lead Beneficiary.

5. MEASURES

A wide range of measures will be used to maximise the impact of the communication plan. Web based formats will be an important part of the measures used, with the E-CLIC project's website as a base. Due to the fast changing media landscape it is likely that external expertise will be brought in at crucial stages to further enhance the effects of the communication efforts carried out.

5.1. Communication and Publicity Tools and Materials

The communication efforts for the E-CLIC project will partly be web based, using the project website as starting point to inform and publicise the project. A number of different web based tools can potentially be used to reach target groups, e.g. web based video formats and podcasts. Printed materials will primarily be publicised on the web in accessible and easy to download versions, but will also be handed out at conferences and other meeting occasions. Printed materials will in other words be provided by all partners when deemed appropriate.

A number of events will be arranged to inform about the project and the work carried out within it.

5.2. Media Channels and Tools

A number of media channels and tools will be deployed to maximise impact of the communication strategy.

Graphical Identity/Profile

The project will develop a graphical identity. It will improve the E-CLIC project's visibility in all its communication efforts and work to streamline production of communication activities and materials. The graphical identity includes a logo, a corporate colour scheme, mood board for illustrations and pictures as well as templates for all print and presentation materials.

The E-CLIC logo, the logo of the Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme and its tagline, the EU flag and references to the EU must be included on all materials.

Website

The project's communication measures are web based. A user friendly and up to date website is a crucial element in the overall communications of the E-CLIC project. The website is the main interface to communicate with target audiences and other stakeholders. It is also the main news channel of the project and updated on a regular basis. The project website is under constant development and subject to regular revision.

Project Platform

For internal communication the project platform is used.

Database

Create a database of challenges/tasks/ideas and problems.

New Media

All E-CLIC partners have the ambition to subject to documentation through new media, i.e. web based videos and podcasts. Due to the fast changing media landscape the exact nature of the new media solutions will be evaluated on a case to case basis.

Printed Materials

Printed materials developed by Lead Beneficiary will be made available as downloads via the E-CLIC project website.

Marketing and Awareness Materials

The project will produce a number of marketing and awareness documents, such as newsletters, leaflets, folders and documents highlighting results and outcomes.

Conference and Events Materials

Different materials to increase visibility and assist participants will be produced for the events the project arranges or attends, such as conference packs, visibility (print) materials, roll-ups, pop-ups, banners, videos.

Press and media

The project will work to achieve press coverage and gain broadcast media attention in the whole of the project area as well as in relevant community publications. Press releases will be communicated widely in preparation for major events or when deemed relevant.

5.3. Events

The E-CLIC project will arrange and visit a number of events during the project period.

E-CLIC Sponsored Conferences

The E-CLIC project has the ambition to sponsor interesting relevant conferences that are being held in the North Sea Region.

Kick-Off Event/Launch Event

A kick-off/launch event was arranged in Norwich in the autumn of 2008. The event attracted a large amount of participants.

Midterm Conference

A midterm conference will be arranged in Hannover, Germany in May/June 2010.

Final Conference

The finale conference will be arranged in Karlstad, Sweden in June/July 2011.

Steering Committee Meetings

At least seven meetings to be held at different E-CLIC centres.

Presence at Events

Participants from the E-CLIC project will visit and participate at external events in order to keep updated on the latest developments in fields relevant to the project.



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Annual Conference

Participants from the E-CLIC project will attend the Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme's annual conference.

Lead Beneficiary Seminars

E-CLIC attended the Lead Beneficiary Seminars in Lübeck, Germany, February -09.

WP-Meetings

WP-meetings will be held for all work packages, in order to achieve good WP-results.

Transnational Workshops

At least eight transnational workshops, mostly connected to various conferences.

Regional Workshops

At least 16 regional workshops with special invited, such as politicians and decisions makers in business life.

6. BUDGET

The budget for communications for the E-CLIC project as a whole is ~ 300.000 Euros, some parts are included in the budget for the E-Clic partners. Individual measures, e.g. materials for conferences and seminars and other costs are not specific budget lines. Indicative figures can be found in table 6.1.

6.1. Table: Measures and Budget

Measure	Target audience	Message	Timeframe	Indicative budget (€)
Graphical Identity/Profile	All	To improve the E-CLIC project's visibility in all its communication efforts and work.	Whole period	20 000
Website	All	The website is the main interface to communicate with target audiences and other stakeholders.	Whole period	60 000
Project Platform	Partners	For internal communication.	Whole period	20 000
New Media	All	New media, i.e. web based videos and podcasts.	Whole period	10 000
Printed Materials	All	Are available as downloads via the E-CLIC project website.	Whole period	20 000
Marketing and Awareness Materials	All	Newsletters, leaflets, folders and documents highlighting results and outcomes.	Whole period	60 000
Conference and Events Materials	All	Such as conference packs, visibility (print) materials, roll-ups, pop-ups, banners, videos.	Whole period	60 000
Press and media	All	To achieve press coverage and gain broadcast media attention.	Whole period	20 000
General costs	All	All	Whole period	10 000
Total				280 000



7. RESPONSIBLE BODIES

Lead beneficiary

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E-CLIC partners

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8. EVALUATION

The lead beneficiary will monitor the progress of the delivery of the communication plan and the measures proposed. The updated communication plan will be presented to the Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme at least once a year and regular updates on communications will also be presented to the NSR programme. The following indicators have been chosen for the evaluation of the communication plan.

8.1. Table: Evaluation of Communication Measures *(see next page)*

Indicators on publicity	N° of required communication tools	N° of project newsletters N° of press articles N° of TV-productions N° of Radio/TV appearances	6 newsletters 24 press articles 2 TV-productions 8 radio/TV appearances	County Administrative Board of Värmland All Partners
Indicators on publicity	N° of optional communication tools	N° of PowerPoint presentations N° of project picture libraries N° of project posters N° of project DVDs N° of other tools	Optional numbers	County Administrative Board of Värmland All Partners
Website	N° of published pages	N° of users/visitors N° of registered users N° of pages views	1 website	County Administrative Board of Värmland All Partners
Project platform	N° of documents	N° of visitors/users	1 platform	County Administrative Board of Värmland All Partners
Database	N° of project ideas etc.	N° of visitors/users	1 database	All partners
E-CLIC sponsored conferences	N° of events	N° of invited people N° of attendees	Minimum 4 events	Responsible Partner
Promotional materials	N° of copies printed N° of versions created	N° of copies distributed N° of copies downloaded from the website	Depending on the events	County Administrative Board of Värmland All Partners
Conference materials	N° of copies printed N° of versions created	N° of copies distributed N° of copies downloaded from the website	Depending on the events	Communications Officer All Partners
Graphical identity and guideline	N° of versions created	N° of graphical guidelines distributed	1 complete identity guideline, updated as relevant	County Administrative Board of Värmland
Kick off/Launch event	N° of events	N° of invited people N° of attendees	September 2008	County Administrative Board of Värmland, Norfolk CC
Midterm conference	N° of events	N° of invited people N° of attendees	May /June2010	County Administrative Board of Värmland, Initiative D21 and UAS Hannover
Final conference	N° of events	N° of invited people N° of attendees	June/July 2011	County Administrative Board of Värmland
Steering committee meetings	N° of events	N° of invited people N° of attendees	Minimum of 7	County Administrative Board of Värmland All Partners
Presence at events	N° of events	N° of meetings attended	Depending on the events	All Partners
NSRPs annual conference	N° of events	N° of invited people N° of attendees	1 per year	All Partners
Lead Beneficiary seminars	N° of events	N° of invited people N° of attendees	1 per year	County Administrative Board of Värmland
WP-meetings	N° of events	N° of invited people N° of attendees	Minimum of 12	All Partners
Transnational Workshops	N° of events	N° of invited people N° of attendees	Minimum of 8	All Partners
Regional Workshops	N° of events	N° of invited people N° of attendees	Minimum of 16	All Partners