

Project Title:

Strengthening the entrepreneurship  
culture and collaboration in the eligible  
programme area

Project Acronym:

STRENGTHEN

Deliverable:

D.2.1 Communication Plan

*Delivered by the Chamber of Serres (LB) and approved by all partners.*

## Table of Contents

The STRENGTHEN Project .....	3
Background of the project.....	3
Overall Objective.....	5
Expected Results.....	6
General Communication strategy .....	8
The nature of the communication plan .....	8
Overall communication objectives.....	11
Target groups .....	14
Within the country (ies) of the programme where the action is implemented .....	14
Within the EU (as applicable) .....	16
Specific objectives for each target group, related to the action's objectives and the phases of the Project cycle.....	17
Communication activities .....	19
Nature and responsibilities for delivering the activities .....	19
Communication tools chosen .....	20
Completion of the communication objectives.....	30
Indicators of achievements .....	30
Provisions for feedback .....	31
Resources.....	32
Human Resources .....	32
Financial resources.....	35

### Disclaimer:

"The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union, the participating countries and the Managing Authority"

## The STRENGTHEN Project

### Background of the project

The development of extroversion and exports is one of the main levers in order to overcome the intense problems created by the economic crisis and the prolonged recession in both countries. In this context, the initiative for strengthening the entrepreneurship culture and collaboration in the eligible programme area, aims to highlight, promote and enhance the extroversion of quality Greek and Bulgarian products and services by stimulating their export activity, upgrading their general international trade, their international networking, the search for partners, etc. The project idea was initially developed by the PPs, and especially the two Chambers in Serres and Blagoevgrad together with the LLC of Region of Central Macedonia SA and the EICC-BG regions, which aim (in addition to business support and actions targeting the entrepreneurship climate) at capacity building through the provision of non-formal, general adult education and the formulation of joint strategy for the enhancement of collaboration in the cross-border area.

The common cross border problems and challenges which STRENGTHEN project is trying to encounter are listed below:

1. SMEs encounter resource constraints that seem particularly prevalent among smaller, newly established firms. Finding business finance is always a challenge that the project will try to overcome,
2. SMEs often lack experience and information on foreign countries and markets. Businesses are built on networks of investors, partners and team members. That may be challenging for those with little networking experience,

3. Inadequate human development and skills has been always a major barrier and especially many SMEs do not have specialised staff to deal with exports and quality management. The project comes to provide a solution to this bottleneck with the provision of training seminars in the field of Export Trade and Food Safety & Quality Management by recognizing that human resource training is a function that involves developing employees' skills, knowledge and abilities to meet the organization's needs.
4. SMEs in the cross-border area have been rather slow in expanding their activity to the other side of the border; the borderline remains a barrier and business activity is often limited to local boundaries. It is challenging for the project "STRENGTHEN" to strengthen business stability and development which is one of the ultimate goals of the thematic objective 03 and investment priority 3a of the Interreg V-A "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020" Cooperation Programme.

The innovative character of the project "STRENGTHEN" arises from the collaboration, the joining of forces and the recognition, for the first time, by business intermediate organisations, policy makers and productive interest groups of the need to create a cross border collaborative network of SMEs. Moreover, the promotion and support of SMEs business networking (eg. clusters) in order to establish economies of scale and better access to markets brings a new aspect in the cross border cooperation agenda. The cross border area is in need of structures and facilities that will enhance the entrepreneurship and competitiveness in the area, especially towards those vulnerable to the risk of unemployment; women, young people, people with disabilities, etc.

Entrepreneurs will benefit from training seminars and develop business knowledge, upgrade their skills and attitudes. Through participation in training

programmes focused on thematic topics, targeted SMEs, business executives, self-employed will be able to stimulate the market and steer their business to new, dynamic and competitive markets. Also they will participate in networking activities to enhance their extroversion capacity.

Young unemployed potential entrepreneurs will benefit from the project by giving them access to sector relevant networks (customers, suppliers) as they will get in touch with established entrepreneurs in their sector of interest

Policy makers will benefit from the project by participating in focus groups for the investigation of competitive clusters and the formation of a joint strategy and action plan for the design of future cluster policies.

## Overall Objective

The overall objective of the project “STRENGTHEN” is to enhance the competitiveness, sustainability and management capacity of targeted SMEs in the cross border area by stimulating cross border cooperation, enabling the promotion of local products and services and improving services and tools for business support and internationalization.

The objective will be reached through targeted actions to support the business networking and partnership of SMEs in cross border area and promote the export activity of Greek and Bulgarian products and services through participation in trade fairs and business missions. SMEs are much more likely to survive in the globally competitive business climate if they internationalise. International SMEs are also more innovative than their stay-at-home cousins and more resistant to local and national crises.

Moreover, the project aims at exploiting opportunities for cross border cooperation by developing common mechanisms and actions on strategic issues,

such as the creation of conditions for the future development of competitive cross-border clusters.

In conclusion, the project “STRENGTHEN” provides with the purpose to improve entrepreneurial support systems for SMEs in the cross border area – through joint actions undertaken by the project partners – focusing on removing the above mentioned barriers and bottlenecks for SMEs thus strengthening business survival and providing support to specific SMEs.

## Expected Results

The project “STRENGTHEN” will contribute to the socio-economic development of the border region, providing coherence and raising the region's competitiveness. It will promote the region as attractive tourism destination and a reliable economic player and will open opportunities for joint initiatives. Main results include:

- Mobilization of regional policy mechanisms towards the support of SMEs
- Enhancement and extroversion of the cross border area with multiple benefits for professionals and the entire cross border community
- Extension of the geographical scope of the economic activity of SMEs
- Broadening of SMEs' customer base by exploiting jointly the traditional promotional techniques, especially in economic sectors highlighted by national, regional and european strategies
- Upgrade of human capital skills
- Implementation of joint initiatives to strengthen the local economy tourism, creative industry and the agri-food sector
- Promotion of the commercial cooperation in the cross border area and cross border economy reinforcement

The total budget of the project is 527.900,00€ and has a duration of 24 months.

STRENGTHEN project is co-funded by the European Union and by the National Funds of the participating countries.

This document forms the Deliverable 2.1.1 of the STRENGTHEN project implemented under the Subsidy Contract No. B6.3A.25 in the framework of the 6<sup>th</sup> Call for proposals within the INTERREG V-A Greece – Bulgaria 2014 2020 Cooperation Programme.

STRENGTHEN is implemented by a partnership consisted of four project partners from both participating countries as follows:

Pr.Nr	Partner Title	Country	Budget
LB	Chamber of Serres	Greece	197.457,50€
PB2	Lifelong Learning Center of Region of Central Macedonia SA	Greece	122.490,00€
PB3	Chamber of Commerce and Industry – Blagoevgrad	Bulgaria	153.417,50€
PB4	European Information and Consultancy Center – BG Regions	Bulgaria	54.535,00€

## General Communication strategy

### The nature of the communication plan

Communication Strategy is a key aspect, as it serves as an essential element in supporting the main and overall objective of the STRENGTHEN project. The Communication strategy, which is guided by and fully aligned with the Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020" guidelines, includes communication activities ensuring that all possible channels and opportunities will be used for the project's outcomes to reach as many beneficiaries, target groups and potential final users as possible. It is significant to realise that longevity and sustainability of the project will be achieved only by raising awareness and providing benefits to a wider audience of beneficiaries.

Project Partners will also ensure that all information and/or publicity actions are regularly reported to Communication & Technical Assistance Officer from the Joint Secretariat in Thessaloniki.

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Dissemination and awareness activities are a core part of the STRENGTHEN project and will ensure that the tools and results developed within the project are communicated and exploited by relevant target audiences. In the longer term, communication and dissemination activities will increase project impact by maximizing the opportunities for STRENGTHEN results and tools to be used and exploited at a wider cross border area after the project's end.



Communication is important not only for ensuring transparency and knowledge sharing but also in order to raise awareness among citizens of the benefits accrued through cross-border projects.

All partners are required to disseminate their generated results and are all requested to contribute to communication and awareness raising activities, by proactively looking for dissemination opportunities and making their own dissemination channels available, in order to reach a European-wide audience.

Effective communication is the basis of cross-border cooperation and has vital role for the successful implementation of STRENGTHEN project. In addition, it is a prerequisite for the project to deliver meaningful results not only to project partners but also to audiences and communities within the targeted cross-border area.

Communication takes place between project partners, between project partnership and its audience outside the project community, between the project itself and Joint Secretariat, Managing Authority and different national bodies.

The overall purpose of this Communication Plan is to establish how the project will communicate internally, i.e. between partners, and to ensure the communication with organizations and persons outside the project (national, regional and local authorities, associations and organizations, local citizens, businesses etc.) It is vital to work with stakeholders, general public and mass media in order to raise awareness for the project and the development opportunities it brings.

Thus, the communication strategy will focus on increasing the awareness about STRENGTHEN project, its objectives, activities and goals, giving full visibility and promotion of Interreg V-A "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020" Cooperation Programme.

The communication strategy will outline the global aim and specific objectives of the communication measures, the key target groups, the key messages to be conveyed and the strategic approach, together with the roles and responsibilities of each project partner regarding the information and publicity activities, the evaluation criteria, indicators and measures, the timeframe and the necessary financial and human resources.

Therefore, the Communication Strategy is channeled on two main directions:



1) Internal communication (communication between partners)

STRENGTHEN's Communication Plan shall ensure that all partners are fully informed about the project, its development and implementation.

Due to the cross-border character of the project, effective internal communication has to be ensured in order that successful management and coordination of all project activities is built up. Although the representatives of implementation teams of each partner are responsible for the communication between them on a daily basis, the project management team bears the responsibility to monitor and evaluate the internal communication during entire project implementation.

2) External communication (communication with project stakeholders & target groups)

STRENGTHEN communication aims to provide two key elements regarding the communication between the project and other stakeholders and target groups:

-  Awareness raising among communities in the cross-border targeted areas through proper and timely dissemination of key information about the project;
-  Absorption of capacities which will enable active participation of target groups in project activities and fulfillment of project goals and results.


The Communication & Dissemination is a dynamic component engaging all dissemination activities of STRENGTHEN's project partners. Moreover, this

document includes information and description of the communication activities-initiatives planned in order to reach as many stakeholders as possible, target groups in detail, communication tools to be used and reporting-evaluation mechanisms. These activities will be specifically described and better targeted throughout the project duration.


## Overall communication objectives

The main objective of the Information and Publicity Strategy is the fullest possible information and awareness among stakeholders and the general public for the purpose, directions, priorities and activities of the project.

STRENGTHEN project communication strategy targets to use as many effectively and efficiently communication tools as possible in order to achieve the following objectives:

-  Disseminate the main message of the project

Dissemination Strategy mainly aims to widespread the importance of the extroversion of quality Greek and Bulgarian products and services to all possible target groups and stakeholders. Transfer of knowledge, methodologies and results among public and private bodies are understood as a set of instruments aimed at promoting the region as attractive tourism destination and a reliable economic player providing a favorable environment towards open opportunities for joint initiatives.

-  Reach and motivate all important target groups

Widespread dissemination addressing target groups with different levels of awareness: Communication strategy guarantees that all potential target groups will have access to the project results, so that awareness is flourished about the importance of enhancing the competitiveness, sustainability and management capacity of targeted SMEs

Regional and local economic development actors and public authorities need to be reached so that mutual learning, synergies and cooperation is achieved. Furthermore, knowledge and ideas exchanged among crucial actors will have a more substantial impact driving them to reform regional or national start up policies in the cross border area.

- ✚ Select the most efficient communication tools and make optimal use of resources

Using the right resources will optimize the involvement of the targeted groups (appropriate allocation of financial and human resources). Each target group has its special interest and can be reached through a wide range of communication tools. Today a wide range of communication tools are at our disposal starting with events, conferences, printed material (brochures, leaflets, posters, etc.), e-mails and e-newsletters and so on. Through the communication strategy each target group will be reached with the most suitable and effective communication tools in order to promote the project and its results.

Of course budget availability will influence our possibilities and choices.

- ✚ Sustainable results through targeted and well organised dissemination activities

Through dissemination activities all possible stakeholders will be convinced that extroversion of quality Greek and Bulgarian products and services are a crucial and necessary prerequisite in order to have well targeted innovation policies being based to the main actors' synergies and proposals (bottom-up approach), targeting the real needs and setting the correct priorities.

- ✚ Keep a close interaction among partners, stakeholders, public authorities and beneficiaries

Through a wide range of dissemination tools, STRENGTHEN partners will have all key players and possible beneficiaries discussing, exchanging ideas and making

efforts to improve entrepreneurial support systems for SMEs in the cross border area.

This interaction needs to be adopted by all main actors not only as a project based attitude, but as a systematic attitude producing benefits for all.

 Promote that the project is funded by EU funds

In all the dissemination activities project partners will promote that the project financing is being provided from the EU funds in the framework of the Interreg V-A "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020" Cooperation Programme.

## Target groups

Within the country (ies) of the programme where the action is implemented

Communication activities primary should be directed to:

### Group A: Internal public

- ✚ Representatives of STRENGTHEN partnership
- ✚ Subcontractors
- ✚ The staff of management bodies of INTERREG V-A Greece – Bulgaria 2014 2020 Cooperation Programme (Managing Authority of European Territorial Cooperation Programmes, Joint Secretariat Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020", in Thessaloniki, National Authority: Hellenic Republic Ministry of Economy and Development, Ministry of Regional Development, Audit Authority, First Level Control Unit)

### Group B: External public

#### i. General public & the local population

- ✚ The first group, general public, is the group with the highest heterogeneity. The more heterogeneous the group is, the same heterogeneity will have to be used in the strategies or ways of dissemination and of communication in general. The common characteristics are that the information has to be clearly defined, easy to understand, in an attractive way and containing only general topics. Another point, which has to be taken into account, is the country's specific info and the spoken language. There is a different need for information in each country. Although the official language of the Programme is English,

it is recommended that all or part of the information has to be presented in the country's official language as well.

- ✚ Results of the project have to reach the public in a broad sense on a regional and national level. According to the budget available, partners will decide on tools to use in order to support wide dissemination effect. In case it is not affordable to use expensive media tools (television, radio), all other tools are going to be used to support dissemination.

ii. Existing SMEs and entrepreneurs

- ✚ The business sector will be reached through partners' networks. Existing entrepreneurs especially in sectors under consideration in the project, will be reached to participate in networking activities by presenting their company, highlighting success stories and difficulties encountered in their entrepreneurial route. The benefits SMEs will gain from the proposed project "STRENGTHEN" (by participating in trade fairs, business missions and B2B meetings) are: a) identifying prospective customers and gaining access to key decision makers in customer companies, disseminating product information and servicing customers, gain information on competitors, increase employee morale and test new products, b) suffering a lack of innovation and internationalization strategies and facing a competition that goes beyond national borders, SMEs need initiatives of cross border scope where to exchange information with key actors both from demand and supply.
- ✚ Entrepreneurs will benefit from training seminars and develop business knowledge, upgrade their skills and attitudes. Through participation in training programmes focused on thematic topics, targeted smes, business executives, self-employed will be able to stimulate the market and steer their business to new, dynamic and competitive markets.



iii. People looking for employment

- ✚ Young unemployed potential entrepreneurs will benefit from the project by giving them access to sector relevant networks (customers, suppliers) as they will get in touch with established entrepreneurs in their sector of interest

iv. Regional & local authorities and policy makers

- ✚ Policy makers are one of the most important target groups as they influence innovation policies. Policy makers who make decisions about defining strategies and policies relevant to and financing of innovative initiatives and organisations will be targeted. Partners should involve them right at the beginning of the project and keep them informed about results during the whole period. A list of the potential policy makers should be created by all partners.
- ✚ Policy makers, will benefit from the project by participating in focus groups regarding the investigation of competitive clusters and the formation of a joint strategy and action plan for the design and implementation of future cluster policies

**Within the EU (as applicable)**











Furthermore, in a wider aspect at the whole EU territory targeted dissemination activities should be made in order to increase the impact of STRENGTHEN project and the dissemination of results. Policy makers and public bodies at European level, European institutions and related Public bodies at European level should be targeted like the European Commission itself (Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Youth Employment Initiative, the European Parliament (particularly members in the following committees: Regional Development, Employment and Social Affairs), Committee of the




regions, European Economic and Social Committee, and other related entities that will be identified through the implementation of the project.

Specific objectives for each target group, related to the action's objectives and the phases of the Project cycle

#### Group A: Internal public

-  To ensure a clear understanding of STRENGTHEN project;
-  To ensure foreseen objectives, considering human and financial resources available;
-  To ensure an integrated approach of all communication tools and thus enable transparent flow of information among the partners;
-  To ensure effective knowledge transfer among all participating partners;
-  To stimulate partners' commitment to project mission through the involvement of all partners in the same time encouraging increased partner teamwork;
-  To support the successful implementation of STRENGTHEN project by ensuring an effective and on time communication system.
-  To facilitate the flow of relevant information
-  To simplify work
-  To increase participants' understanding of project activities
-  To support and motivate the people involved

#### Group B: External public

-  To ensure that communication is designed in a way to promote the main idea of STRENGTHEN project and to reach relevant stakeholders and target groups;

- ✚ To ensure an integrated approach of all communication tools available thus enabling proper dissemination of key information about the project to the relevant stakeholders & target groups;
- ✚ To create visual identity of STRENGTHEN project and make sure all information and publicity activities comply to the Information and Publicity Guide for Final Beneficiaries;
- ✚ To ensure visibility for STRENGTHEN project and the Interreg V-A “Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020” Cooperation Programme at local and national level;
- ✚ To raise awareness among stakeholders and target groups about the benefits that STRENGTHEN project can provide to them and to the communities as well;
- ✚ To encourage active participation of project target groups in project activities.
- ✚ To ensure that actors & potential stakeholders are equally involved
- ✚ To ensure the cooperation and full support of the media;
- ✚ To inform relevant regional and national decision makers about the project itself, its goals and results, thus ensuring their cooperation and support to project successful implementation.
- ✚ To ensure that the beneficiary population is aware of the roles of the Beneficiary and of the EU in the activity
- ✚ To raise awareness among the host country population or in Europe of the roles of the Beneficiary and of the EU in delivering aid in a particular context
- ✚ To raise awareness of how the EU and the Beneficiary work together to support SME's

## Communication activities

### Nature and responsibilities for delivering the activities

The project has foreseen implementation of different types of activities, in order wider publicity of the project to be accomplished. It includes activities that are designed to disseminate information about the project, promote the action and actions designed to attract stakeholders' involvement and share experiences.

Deliverable Nr	Type of activity	Who delivers	Type	Target value
D.2.1.1	Communication Plan	LB	Document	1
D.2.1.2	Folders, blocks, pens	LB & PB3	Dissemination Material	2000
D.2.1.2	Project Leaflet	LB	Informative brochure	2000
D.2.1.2	Banners	LB, PB2, PB3 & PB4	Dissemination Material	4
D.2.1.2	Promotion through Social Media	LB, PB2, PB3 & PB4	Dissemination Material	At least 50 per partner
D.2.1.2	Usb flash disks	LB	Dissemination Material	300
D.2.1.2	Elaboration of Social Media Plan	LB	Document	1
D.2.1.3	Development of project website	LB (inputs and content update by all partners)	Website	1
D.2.1.4	Organisation of closing conference at Serres, Greece	LB and all partners	Event	1
D.2.1.4	promotional bags with the INTERREG - project logo printed	LB	Dissemination Material	80

The project STRENGTHEN is co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund and by national funds of the countries participating in the Programme

## Communication tools chosen

### OVERALL COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Partners are requested to review, reply to and follow up on project correspondence as soon as possible. If partners are unable to respond in full at any given time, a brief acknowledgement should be returned, until a more considered response can be made. This is especially vital in avoiding confusion and any need for repetition, thereby maintaining overall efficiency of the project processes, and all partners undertake to respect this guideline.

#### Language

English is the working language. In order to facilitate ease of understanding, to avoid misinterpretation and to encourage project progress, every effort should be made to use clear, concise and simple language in project communication. Information overload should also be avoided.

#### Transparency

Project communication should be open and shared across partners as far as possible. This is necessary to ensure that all partners are equally clear about project development and because no partner is at a disadvantage regarding project processes. Partners are required to provide regular updates on project activities and progress, and to highlight any problems. SEPVE, as Lead Partner, has undertaken to consult with partners to the greatest extent possible on any significant decisions to be made on the project and to keep partners informed of project coordination processes.

#### Partner Profiles

Partner Profiles are a short piece of text describing the partner organization and activities, which can be used on shared project materials and at project events. Each partner should prepare it in English.

## Support

Project meetings and teleconferences will be used to speed up the process and strengthen the relationship between partners.

The identification of different instruments and deliverables for publicity and communication will be used for the assessment of the following activities to be developed throughout the project:

### Internal Communication tools

Internal communication between partners is ensured through:

- 📧 Electronic connections: e-mails, chat on-line

Exchange of e-mails and chat on-line is a very simple and usual way of every day communication among partners, but mostly used for simple issues and typical procedures. When it comes to more complicated issues telephone contact might be more suitable and effective.

- 📁 Google documents storage

Common project documents will be saved in STRENGTHEN folder in Google Drive. It is easier to save on cloud documents such as meeting reports, templates, and any other tasks that have to be completed as planned. This would be the best internal communication tool.

- 👥 Project Meetings

The Steering Committee is the main decision making, monitoring and supervisory body of the programme. Each participant shall delegate one member into the Steering Committee. Each member will have one vote in the Committee. In that way quality and efficiency is ensured for all project activities, within time and budget availability.

Main tasks of the Steering Committee:

- Approval of the reports of the Work Package Responsible Partners, all the results and outputs prepared during the implementation of STRENGTHEN

- Evaluation of progress based on the Reports and agree on follow-up actions decision
- Approval of the modification of budget or the project
- Approval of any other changes which has an effect on the implementation of the project (modification of timing, outputs, results, composition of the Partnership etc).

Four Steering Committee (SC) Meetings are going to be organised:

- Kick-off meeting in Serres
- 2nd meeting in Blagoevgrad
- 3rd meeting in Serres
- 4th meeting in Blagoevgrad

According to the project proposal and timetable relevant project topics are going to be discussed and planned during the SC meetings.

📞 Telephone contact / online meetings

Although the most effective way of communication is to meet in person, partners may not be able to do that too often and/ or sometimes decisions cannot wait to be taken until the forthcoming meeting.

Partners are encouraged to hold frequent short online meetings to check the pending issues status or to react immediately when an issue or problem emerges.

## OVERALL COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES OF THE EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

### External Communication tools

The communication strategy involves a whole set of activities and promotional activities such as promotion of the project through the internet, production of printed material, brochures etc. Furthermore direct communication measures include the participation of project partners at events and conferences where the project results are presented.

Below are the communication tools chosen from STRENGTHEN project and guidelines for their use based on the the programme's guidebook:

- A. Information Material (Leaflets, folders, blocks, pens, banners)
- B. Promotion to Social Media
- C. Developing the project website
- D. Closing conference

In the following sections there are guidelines for correct use of the communication tools based on the INTERREG V-A "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020" Cooperation Programme guidebook.

#### A. Information Material (Leaflets, folders, blocks, pens, banners)

##### Leaflets

The leaflets will comprise the general information of the project, remarking specially its main goals and activities. It will be published in English and translated in each partner's official language to enhance its use. Leaflets can be disseminated in every given opportunity such as meetings with main actors, events, conferences, seminars, to interested visitors, etc. Leaflets will be distributed as promotional material to events, closing conference.

The project's leaflets, brochures and flyers should contain at least the following;

- The Interreg project logo.
- The textual reference to the sources of financing “The Project is co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and by national funds of the countries participating in the Interreg V-A “Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020” Cooperation Programme” with the flags of EU and the two participating countries.
- The disclaimer “The contents of this publication are sole responsibility of <Beneficiary’s name> and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union, the participating countries the Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat”.
- The link to the project website.

Leaflets, produced in the framework of the project will be bilingual (EN/EL and EN/BG)

#### Folders

There is no specific guidance regarding the format of stationary sets. However, they should contain at least the following;

- The Interreg project logo and slogan (in case of existence).
- The textual reference to the sources of financing.

In case, it is impractical on small surfaces to use the Interreg logo and the textual reference to the sources of financing with the flags of EU and the two participating countries, the usage of the EU emblem only is expected.

#### Promotional items

Promotional items (such as usb etc.) should be distributed when specified in the communication strategy of a project. The promotional items should be clearly identified with the Interreg project logo and slogan (in case of existence). On certain promotional items where it is not possible to include all information, at least the EU flag should appear. Before taking any decision on the production of such items project STRENGTHEN partners should consult the JS Communication Officer.



#### Event material (Banners)

According to Interreg V-A “Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020” Cooperation Programme guidelines the STRENGTHEN project partners who organise or participate in events such as conferences, fairs and exhibitions, should contain at least the following on all event materials:

- The Interreg project logo and slogan (in case of existence).
- The textual reference to the sources of financing “The Project is co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and by national funds of the countries participating in the Interreg V-A “Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020” Cooperation Programme” with the flags of EU and the two participating countries.
- The link to the project website.

#### B. Promotion to Social Media

Social media will be used to inform and stay connected with relevant professionals, policy makers and scientific/technical communities as well as reach out to an interested general public and media. It is an ideal outreach channel(s) to support and amplify all elements of the dissemination strategy and key project milestones.

Apart from the traditional methods and techniques of communication, the Internet offers an array of modern opportunities to promote the Projects: the so-called social media e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn etc. In order to include in the communication strategy the use of social media, a specially designed strategy will be developed. The Project’s background and co-funding sources shall be highlighted in the Project’s social media web-pages, including:

- a reference to the Cooperation Programme and the EU co-funding: “The project is implemented in the framework of the Interreg V-A “Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020” Cooperation Programme and is co-funded

by the European Regional Development Fund and by national funds of the countries participating in the Programme”

- a short description about the Project: its nature, goals, benefits; expected results.
- links to: the project's website; the Programme's website and the institutional websites of the Project Beneficiaries

### C. Developing the project website

Websites are invaluable tools for the Projects and during time they become the first source of information. Thus, the development of a structured website is an essential part of the STRENGTHEN Project.

The name of the website shall be short and memorable. It will run under its own Project domain (e.g. [www.strengthen.eu](http://www.strengthen.eu), if available). EMPLOYOUTH website will be developed by the Lead Partner (CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF SERRES) with the support of all partners. The project's website will be developed to serve both as a meeting point among partners, stakeholders involved and beneficiaries and as a channel for interacting, exchanging knowledge and creating awareness. It will contain, among others, relevant information, partners involved, useful links, related events and publishable results. The website will be continuously updated including all necessary information and outcomes of the project. This tool could be reached by all target groups and will be rather effective.

The website will be launched in English, which is the official language of the Programme, with the possibility of using also the languages of the participating countries, Greece and Bulgaria.

The Project's webpage must:

- provide information about the Project, its nature, goals, procedures, benefits and the expected results;

include a short description of the Programme. The following description taken from the Programme's website may be used for this purpose:

- <http://www.greece-bulgaria.eu/minisite/#en-press>
- [http://www.greece-bulgaria.eu/com/4\\_A-few-words-about-our-Programme](http://www.greece-bulgaria.eu/com/4_A-few-words-about-our-Programme);

include some basic information for the Beneficiaries and their contact details;

have a category under which one can find the produced communication material such as: press releases, newsletters, invitations, posters, fact sheets, photos and links);

have a category under which one can find the project's main deliverables (surveys, strategies, studies, platforms, networks etc.), which should also be available for download. In case on-line applications, platforms, databases, networks etc., are developed/produced by the project, these tools should be linked to the project website (users should be able to access them through the project website). In addition, a short description-presentation of these tools should be provided in English.

be in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)




Last but not least, it must refer to the Cooperation Programme and the EU co-funding. This includes the Programme logo along with the textual reference to the sources of financing: "The Project is co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund and by national funds of the countries participating in the Interreg V-A "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020" Cooperation Programme". Both must appear on the homepage (front page) of the Project's webpage.

The website has to be linked with the Programme's website (redirection via the Programme's logo that should be included in a prominent place).

There is also a need for a disclaimer on the bottom of the homepage that the material on the website does not necessarily reflect the official position of the EU, the Managing Authority, the Joint Secretariat and the participating countries. This disclaimer should include the following:

"This webpage has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of the webpage are sole responsibility of <Beneficiary's name> and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union, the participating countries the Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat".

The beneficiaries need to make available at least the links to the following websites:

-  the website dedicated to EU Regional Policy:  
[https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/)
-  the Programme's website: <http://www.greece-bulgaria.eu>
-  the institutional websites of the Project Beneficiaries

The link to the Project website must be made available also on the Project Beneficiaries' official websites.

#### D. Closing conference

Based on the programme's information and publicity guidebook, at least one conference (if it is one then it must be the final conference) must be organised in order to inform the public about the results achieved during the Project implementation. The STRENGTHEN project will organise a closing conference. The event will be promoted on the media via a press release available in English, Greek and Bulgarian and audiovisual material (photos, video etc.). The Interreg project logo, as well as the reference to the sources of financing (The project is

co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund and by national funds of the countries participating in the Programme.) should appear on all documents, publications, presentations, or other materials made available during the event.

The results achieved in the frame of the project will be presented and key players, policy makers and technical experts will be invited to discuss the most relevant conclusions of the project. Exact place and date will be decided during the project lifetime.

The Chamber of Serres being responsible for developing the Communication Strategy will also provide partners with some useful guidelines for successful organisation of events on a later stage of the project (can be found annexed), as events is a basic illumination of the project results giving direct access to many target groups.

## Completion of the communication objectives

### Indicators of achievements

All communication activities will be subject to a regular follow-up, so that the results can be evaluated and improved where necessary.

A set of indicators have already been defined for each type of communication tool as summarized in the table below:

Tool	Outputs indicators	Results indicators
Promotion to Social Media	Number of posts uploaded	Number of visits
Website	Number of pages published Regular updates	Number of visits (Google analytics)
Programme webpage	Number of messages sent Regular updates	Number of posts
Events	Number of events organized	Number of participants to the events

## Provisions for feedback

### Monitoring

Even when the communication plan is completed and implemented successfully, it does not mean that the work is ready and we can file our strategy away. Besides of that kind of monitoring, partners also have to prove that all of the planned and arranged material was published. Therefore all partners must collect the following documents related to the project:

- 📁 Minutes, agendas, photos, list of participants after meetings, seminars and other events

In case of media presence the following documents have to be collected:

- 📁 Copy of the published article (press release)
- 📁 Link to the published article on the internet
- 📁 Interview in the radio and on TV: memo of the content of the interview and the exact date and time of the interview
- 📁 Every other record or file constituting proof for the dissemination activity

All dissemination activities have to be monitored, so all partners should keep records of their activities.

### Evaluation

Every communication strategy requires continual evaluation and up-dates. To start with, partners must monitor the implementation of STRENGTHEN strategy. This means making sure that all tactics are being implemented on time and as planned, and making any adjustments necessary to achieve this. Secondly, partners must regularly evaluate whether their tactics are actually helping them achieve their objectives and their overall goal. They have to get the feedback from the target groups, to see if all spending was completed in a cost effective way and also to study the risk analysis and make modifications in the communication plan and work accordingly in the forthcoming period if needed.

## Resources

### Human Resources

The project Management team consists of eleven (11) members in total consisting of four people from the Chamber of Serres, three (3) people from the LLC of Region of Central Macedonia SA, two (2) people from the Chamber of Blagoevgrad and two (2) people from the EICC.

The sound management procedures of the project must ensure that information to all PPs is provided in time so that all PPs can participate equally and quickly solve problems that may occur. The project uses simple yet efficient management and coordination procedures on different operational levels:

🚦 1st level - Procedures for decision-making and coordination:

a Project Steering & Monitoring Committee (PSMC) composed of representatives of all PPs. The Committee is responsible for monitoring the project and the quality control and approval of the deliverables on the basis of achieving the output and result indicators. The Committee will meet at regular basis to a) pinpoint problems and adopt corrective measures, b) take decisions on any changes on the deliverables and / or the budget preferably unanimously or by a majority of 2/3 of its members.

🚦 2nd level - administrative management:

The LP will appoint a Project Manager who will have the responsibility for the coordination and proper implementation of the entire project. Each PP will also appoint a contact person as a communication link in the partnership. The communication takes place: a) through regular meetings (in person and/or via skype meetings. In person meetings will take place every 4 months) and b) contact by email. The LP will also appoint a Financial Manager responsible for an adequate and orderly project accounting, for properly financial managing of the



budget, for monitoring project financial progress and internal handling of the ERDF funds / national co-financing.

PPs will cooperate in preparing and submitting the project progress reports (project activity and financial reports). The LP performs plausibility checks and submits them, on a 6-month basis, to the JTS.

Effective communication is often the foundation of successful projects. Good communication can unite team members and stakeholders to a project's strategy, objectives and budget. It can also enable everyone involved in the project to understand his or her roles, which may make them more likely to support the project. Without effective communication, projects can incur more risk and fail to meet desired outcomes.

## Partners' Details

Partner	Organization	Position	Contact Person	E-mail
LP	Chamber Of Serres	Project Manager	Thomai Boziou	<a href="mailto:boziou@eves.gr">boziou@eves.gr</a> ; <a href="mailto:eves@eves.gr">eves@eves.gr</a>
		Project Team Member	Elisavet Tsiarea	<a href="mailto:etsiarea@eves.gr">etsiarea@eves.gr</a>
		Project Team Member	Ioannis Kotzampasidis	<a href="mailto:ikotz@eves.gr">ikotz@eves.gr</a>
		Financial Manager	Katerina Tzimoula	<a href="mailto:tzimoula@eves.gr">tzimoula@eves.gr</a>
PP2	Lifelong Learning Center Of Region Of Central Macedonia SA	Financial Manager	Kalathas Athanasios	<a href="mailto:info@kekpkkm.gr">info@kekpkkm.gr</a>
		Coordinator Supervisor	Giannakidou Savvato	<a href="mailto:info@kekpkkm.gr">info@kekpkkm.gr</a>
		Project Coordinator	Matziari Chrysoula	<a href="mailto:info@kekpkkm.gr">info@kekpkkm.gr</a>
PP3	Chamber Of Commerce And Industry - Blagoevgrad	Project manager	Romeo Shatev	<a href="mailto:palata_bl@abv.bg">palata_bl@abv.bg</a>
		Financial manager	Borislav Chobanov	<a href="mailto:palata_bl@abv.bg">palata_bl@abv.bg</a>
PB4	European Information And Consultancy Center- BG Regions	Project manager	Adriana Krasteva	<a href="mailto:eicc.bgregions@abv.bg">eicc.bgregions@abv.bg</a>
		Financial manager	Tatyana Kozhuharova	<a href="mailto:eicc.bgregions@abv.bg">eicc.bgregions@abv.bg</a>

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## Financial resources

Particular attention should be paid on detailed budgeting of communication tools and actions per partner/ activity/ year of project's implementation and type of cost. The project proposal has established a balanced budget which allows every local partner to produce their planned information tools & actions.

The total budget of the project that will be used to address the information and publicity measures is 38.090,00 €. In more detail, 20.950,00 € of the total budget of LB (55% of the overall budget for the action), 4.520,00 € of the budget of PB2 (11,87% of the overall budget for the action), 6.820,00 € of the budget of PB3 (17,9% of the overall budget for the action) and 5.800,00 € of the budget of PB4 (15,23% of the overall budget for the action) are allocated for the implementation of the communication activities. The budget includes expenditures on preparation of publicity and information materials; a closing conference including all the necessary organisation costs (catering, photos, technical support and reporting of the event, translations, travel and accommodation costs of invited speakers, experts if applicable, support materials; promotion through social media, translation of the project website etc. In the following tables is analyzed, in more details, the available budget per partner for the project's information and publicity activities:

#### Allocation of Budget LB (PB1) Chamber of Serres for WP2

WP	Del.	Budget line	Brief justification of the expenditure (Max 350 Characters)	Quantity of item (Nr.)	Time of item	Cost per item (€)	Total Cost
WP2	D2.1.1	External Expertise and Services	Elaboration of Communication Plan	1		2.000,00 €	2.000,00 €
WP2	D2.1.2	External Expertise and Services	Folders (dimensions: 43x71, 350gr VELVET, colored) Blocks (A5 size, 20sheets), Pens (4 colored, blue or black ink).150 folders, 150 blocks, 200 pens per partner i.e. 500*2 greek partners in total 1200 folders, blocks and pens	1000		1,50 €	1.500,00 €
WP2	D2.1.2	External Expertise and Services	Leaflets (4-colored, 170gr illustration, 3-fold, A4 size-design and printing in greek language). 500 copies per partner i.e. 500*2 greek partners in total 1000 leaflets (500in greek and 500 in english) to inform about the project, its objectives, expected results, partners and activities. It will be distributed in project's events	1000		1,50 €	1.500,00 €
WP2	D2.1.2	External Expertise and	1 banner (roll ups, dimension 1x2)	1		200,00 €	200,00 €

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#### Services

WP2	D2.1.2	External Expertise and Services	Promotion through Social Media	1		2.000,00 €	2.000,00 €
WP2	D2.1.2	External Expertise and Services	Usb flash disks will be used by the project beneficiaries and participants in project events. 100 usb flash disks will be distributed in the closing conference while Greek partners will get around 175 Usb flash disks each to distribute in projects events.	300		10,00 €	3.000,00 €
WP2	D2.1.2	External Expertise and Services	Elaboration of Social Media Plan	1		1.000,00 €	1.000,00 €
WP2	D2.1.3	External Expertise and Services	Development of project website (requirement analysis, web design, CMS portal, s/w development and customisation, hosting), man-months	2,5		1.500,00 €	3.750,00 €
WP2	D2.1.3	Staff Costs	Administration and project website texts inputs and content update, man-hours	1	59,26	13,50 €	800,00 €

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WP2	D2.1.3	External Expertise and Services	Translation of project website content in english, 1 person for 12 months	1		1.200,00 €	1.200,00 €
WP2	D2.1.4	External Expertise and Services	Cost of External Expert for the organisation of the closing conference at Serres, Greece (max.80 people). It includes all the necessary organisation costs (catering, photos, technical support and reporting of the event, translations, travel and accomodation costs of invited speakers, experts if applicable etc.)	1		3.000,00 €	3.000,00 €
WP2	D2.1.4	Staff Costs	Organisational issues before during and after the closing conference (facitating and support the implementation, invitations, support to participants, reminders to participants, facilitate the open discussion, disseminate information about the conclusions reached), man-hours	1	44,44	13,50 €	600,00 €
WP2	D2.1.4	External Expertise and Services	Purchase of 80 promotional bags with the INTERREG - project logo printed (1 sided, 1 colour)	80		5,00 €	400,00 €

Allocation of Budget PB 2 Lifelong Learning Center of Regional of Central Macedonia SA for WP2

WP	Del.	Budget line	Brief justification of the expenditure (Max 350 Characters)	Quantity of item	Time of item	Cost per	Total Cost
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				(Nr.)	item (€)	
WP2	D2.2. 2	External Expertise and Services	1 banner (roll ups, dimension 1x2)	1	200,00 €	200,00 €
WP2	D2.2. 2	External Expertise and Services	Promotion through Social Media	1	2.000,00 €	2.000,00 €
WP2	D2.2. 3	Staff Costs	Administration and project website texts inputs and content update, man-hours	1	86,96 11,50 €	1.000,00 €
WP2	D2.2. 3	External Expertise and Services	Translation of project website content in english, 1 person for 12 months	1	1.000,00 €	1.000,00 €
WP2	D2.2. 4	Staff Costs	Participation in the closing conference (collecting data, prepare the .ppt and present it in the conference)	1	34,71 7,78 €	270,00 €
WP2	D2.2. 4	Office and Administration	Consumables supplies	1	50,00 €	50,00 €

Allocation of Budget PB3 Chamber of Commerce and industry – Blagoevgrad for WP2

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WP	Del.	Budget line	Brief justification of the expenditure (Max 350 Characters)	Quantity of item (Nr.)	Time of item	Cost per item (€)	Total Cost
WP2	D2.3.2	External Expertise and Services	1 banner (roll ups, dimension 1x2)	1		200,00 €	200,00 €
WP2	D2.3.2	External Expertise and Services	Promotion through Social Media	1		2.000,00 €	2.000,00 €
WP2	D2.3.2	External Expertise and Services	Folders (dimensions: 43x71, 350gr VELVET, colored) Blocks (A5 size, 20sheets), Pens (4 colored, blue or black ink).150 folders, 150 blocks, 200 pens per partner i.e. 500*2 greek partners in total 1200 folders, blocks and pens	1000		1,00 €	1.000,00 €
WP2	D2.3.2	External Expertise and Services	Leaflets (4-colored, 170gr illustration, 3-fold, A4 size- design and printing in greek language). 500 copies per partner i.e. 500*2 partners in total 1000 leaflets (500 in national language and 500 in english) to inform about the project, its objectives, expected results, partners and activities. It will be distributed in project's events	1000		1,00 €	1.000,00 €

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WP2	D2.3.3	Staff Costs	Administration and project website texts inputs and content update, man-hours	1	209,45	4,87 €	1.020,00 €
WP2	D2.3.3	External Expertise and Services	Translation of project website content in english, 1 person for 12 months	1		1.000,00 €	1.000,00 €
WP2	D2.3.4	Staff Costs	Participation in the closing conference	1	50,00	11,00 €	550,00 €
WP2	D2.3.4	Office and Administration	Consumables supplies	1		50,00 €	50,00 €

Allocation of Budget PB4 European Information and Consultancy Centre – BG Regions for WP2

WP	Del.	Budget line	Brief justification of the expenditure (Max 350 Characters)	Quantity of item	Time of item	Cost per item (€)	Total Cost
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				(Nr.)			
WP2	D2.4.2	External Expertise and Services	1 banner (roll ups, dimension 1x2)	1		200,00 €	200,00 €
WP2	D2.4.2	External Expertise and Services	Promotion through Social Media	1		3.000,00 €	3.000,00 €
WP2	D2.4.3	Staff Costs	Administration and project website texts inputs and content update, man-hours	1	205,34	4,87 €	1.000,00 €
WP2	D2.4.3	External Expertise and Services	Translation of project website content in english, 1 person for 12 months	1		1.000,00 €	1.000,00 €
WP2	D2.4.4	Staff Costs	Participation in the closing conference	1	50,00	11,00 €	550,00 €
WP2	D2.4.4	Office and Administration	Consumables supplies	1		50,00 €	50,00 €

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