

**Technical Support Instrument**

*Supporting reforms in 27 Member States*

# *Building Capacities for Effective Communication of the Benefits of the Recovery and Resilience Plans*

*Second training:  
Strategic RRP communication planning*

*16 May 2024 | 10.00 -12.30 CET*



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# Before we start

- » To ensure call quality, your microphones are turned off.

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- » If you have a question, please, type it in the call chat, or save it for the Q&A session at the end of the training. When the speakers call for questions, you can raise your hand and organisers will unmute your microphone.

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- » Please note that the training is being recorded. The recording will be shared upon the request of the Member States.

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- » Please respect speakers and other participants during the training.



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# Agenda

## Objective

The objective of this training is to equip participants with skills and knowledge necessary to design and implement effective communication strategies. The training aims to deepen participants' understanding of strategic communication planning processes, as well as the measurement of communication impact.



Time	Activity	
10.00 – 10.05	Opening remarks by the DG REFORM	
10.05 – 11.05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RRP communication planning: progressing from strategy and plans to practical execution</li><li>• Engaging various audiences</li></ul>	
11.05 – 11.15	10-minute break	
11.15 – 12.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitoring and evaluation methodologies and tools</li><li>• Best practice examples on successful strategy planning, implementation and evaluation (Latvia, Portugal, Romania)</li></ul>	
12.15 – 12.30	Q&A session and closing	



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# Speakers for today's training



**Radu Danu**



**Ieva Stūre**



**Ieva Gaigala**



**Benedita Albuquerque**



**Cristian Ghinea**

## DG REFORM

**Radu** is a Policy Officer and Project Manager responsible for RRF coordination in Horizontal Policies Unit of DG REFORM, European Commission. Previously he worked for Frontex, European Parliament, and several NGOs. He has over 5 years experience in project management, stakeholder engagement, and policy analysis in public and civil society sectors.

## Komunikācijas aģentūra/ Edelman Affiliate

**Ieva** is a strategic director at Komunikācijas aģentūra (Edelman Affiliate). Ieva has experience of over 20 years in the field of communication, consulting clients in financial, retail, IT and technology industries on strategic communication, media relations, crisis communication, B2B and B2C communication. She has been part of extensive public sector campaigns: euro launch in Latvia; vaccination against COVID-19.

## Latvia

**Ieva** is the National Communication Coordinator for EU funds at the Ministry of Finance. Ieva has more than 20 years of experience in the field of communication, working in the private sector in event management and advertising and in the public sector in public relations. Ieva is currently responsible for strategic communication planning, monitoring and practical implementation of EU funds, RRF, EEA and Norway Grants and the Swiss-Latvian Cooperation Programme.

## Portugal

**Benedita** is a dedicated mother and a professional with 20 years of experience in marketing and communication. She has been Head of marketing and communication in business such as an agency or a TV Channel. She is head of communication of Recupera Portugal the entity responsible for executing RRP in Portugal.

## Romania

**Cristian** is the president of the NGO 'O Țară ca Afară' as well as the Coordinator of the public policy department at Union Save Romania (USR). During his mandate as Minister for European Investment and Projects he was the chief negotiator of the country's Recovery and Resilience Plan. He specializes in European policies, founded the Romanian Center for European Policies (CRPE) and worked for the Dilema publication. He has a master's degree in European politics from the London School of Economics.



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# Opening remarks by the DG REFORM



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# Planned training sessions

1. **Training No 1**  
**EU communication and visibility requirements on RRP communication**  
April 30 (online) | 10:00 – 12:00 CET 
2. **Training No 2 **TODAY****  
**Strategic RRP communication planning**  
May 16 (online) | 10:00 – 12:30 CET
3. **Training No 3**  
**Communication tools, channels and content**  
June 5 (hybrid) | 10:00 – 16:30 CET

4. **Training No 4**  
**Stakeholder engagement and media relations**  
September 12 (online) | 10:00 – 12:00 CET
5. **Training No 5**  
**Efficient use of digital communication tools**  
September 19 (hybrid) | 10:00 – 16:30 CET
6. **Training No 6**  
**Effective communication in crisis situations**  
October 10 (online) | 10:00 – 12:00 CET



RRP communication  
planning:  
progressing from  
strategy and plans to  
practical execution



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# RRP communication & visibility: Communication strategies



## COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Key elements

1. Raise awareness of RRF's role in Europe's recovery, especially in green and digital transitions.
2. Implement joint communication actions with the European Commission and its Representation.
3. Display EU emblem with funding statement "funded by the European Union – NextGenerationEU".
4. Communicate adoption of the final RRP and key milestones.
5. Establish a central web space for RRP information and related projects.
6. Coordinate communication on selected priority projects with the Commission.



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# RRP communication & visibility: Communication plans



## COMMUNICATION PLANS

Key elements

This plan must be based on sound analysis, proper sequencing, and an appropriate budget, ensuring the requisite scale and focus to achieve impact. At minimum, it should cover the elements set out:

1. Narrative
2. Objectives
3. Audiences
4. Approach
5. Activities
6. Measuring impact
7. Risks
8. Budget



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# RRP communication & visibility: Strategic projects



## PROJECTS OF THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

Particular attention is to be paid to the operations of strategic importance

When strategic communication activities are foreseen as part of a specific programme or project, implementing partner should:

- » produce a **Strategic Communication Plan**.
- » organise a **communication event or activity\***, as appropriate.
- » involve the **Commission and the responsible managing authority** in a timely manner

\* Ensuring communication activities are **data driven** is critical to their success.



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Why is strategy  
needed?



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# Why we can't just do our job? Without any strategy....

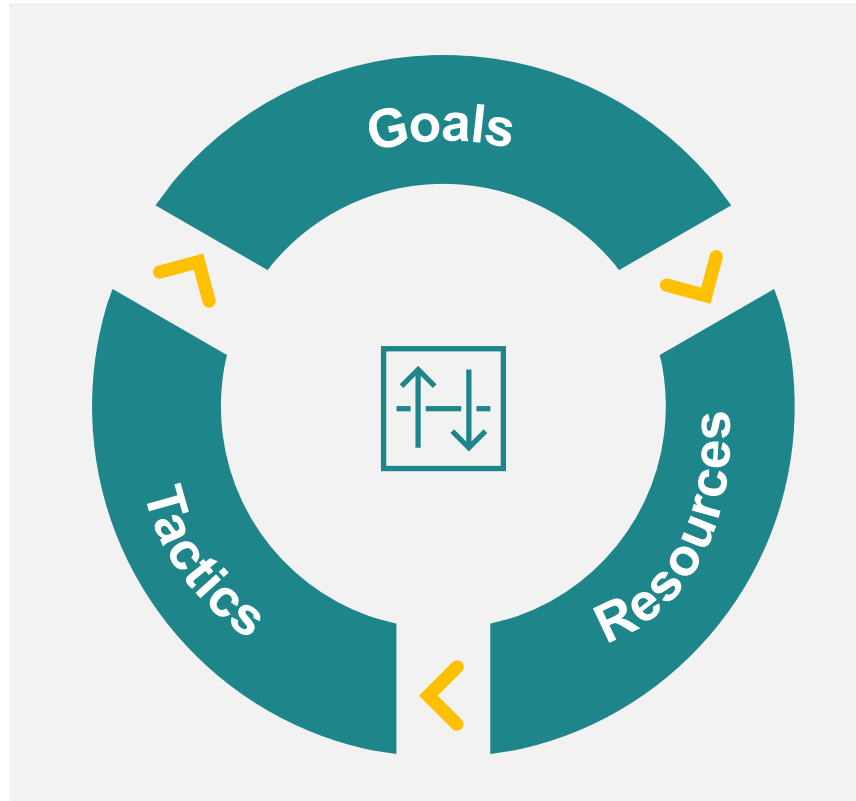
- » Short-term goals
- » Duplicated actions
- » Mostly reactive communication
- » Not achieving communication priorities, but solving everyday "crisis"
- » Not effective communication
- » Not reaching the right audience
- » Not using the right messages
- » Resources spent not effectively



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# What is strategy?



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# What is strategy?



## STRATEGY

Why and what?



## ACTION PLAN

How and when?



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# What are most common mistakes when creating communication strategies/plans?

Not clearly defined problem/challenge



Too many goals/priorities



Based on assumptions, not data



Unrealistic



Made for the document, not for action



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# "Can you just tweet something?" Or how to deal with colleagues?"



Don't talk about assets....  
remind about bigger picture



Always think of the goals



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# Creating the strategy



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# Job of communicators is harder than ever...

	<b>51% trust their government in OECD countries (OECD, 2021)</b>
<b>Low trust in government</b>	In 4 democracies, between 1/3 and 2/3 say their political system needs major change (Pew, 2021)
	52% across 34 countries are dissatisfied with democracy (Pew, 2020)
	Record low trust in all categories of information providers; 35% trust social media (Edelman, 2021)
... and information	46% of public trust the news they choose to consume (Reuters Institute, 2020)
	News avoidance is a growing phenomenon (Reuters Institute, 2020)



[OECD Report on Public Communication, 2021. The Global context and the Way Forward](#)



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# 4 main strategic communication elements

INSIGHT



IDEAS



IMPLEMENTATION



IMPACT



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# 4 main strategic communication elements

INSIGHT



IDEAS (AND DECISIONS)



IMPLEMENTATION



IMPACT



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# Insight



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# Research BEFORE drafting a strategy

1



Policy Analysis

2



Stakeholder Mapping

3



Situation Analysis

4



Audience Perception Studies

5



Contextual Research

6



Policy Impact Assessment



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# 1. Policy analysis

Examining existing policies, regulations, and initiatives relevant to the communication context



Understanding the goals, objectives, and constraints of government policies and programs



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## 2. Stakeholder mapping

Identifying key stakeholders, including government agencies, community organizations, and advocacy groups



Mapping stakeholder interests, influence, and relationships to inform communication strategy development



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# 3. Situation analysis

Assessing the current social, economic, and political landscape impacting the communication environment



Analysing trends, challenges, and opportunities relevant to public governance and citizen engagement



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## 4. Audience Perception studies

Conducting research to understand citizen perceptions, attitudes, and knowledge about public policies and services



Identifying gaps, misconceptions, or areas of concern that may influence communication strategy formulation



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# 5. Contextual research

Investigating broader contextual factors, such as cultural norms, historical events, and socioeconomic conditions



Recognizing how contextual influences shape citizen behavior, expectations, and responses to government communication



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## 6. Policy impact assessment

Evaluating the potential impact of proposed policies or initiatives on various stakeholders and communities



Anticipating potential challenges, controversies, or public reactions that may arise from policy implementation



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# Defining the problem



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# Communication & policy objectives. Example 1

## Policy objective

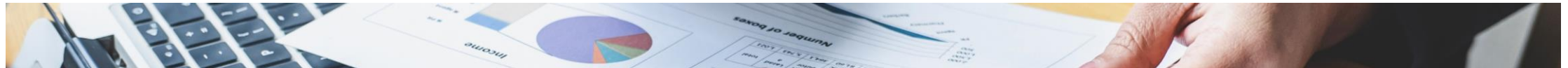


Reduce the national obesity rate by 20% over the next five years.

## Behaviour supporting policy



## Communication objective



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# Communication & policy objectives. Example 1

## Policy objective



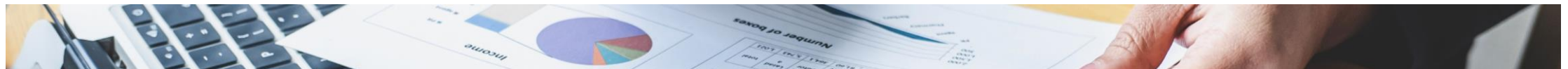
Reduce the national obesity rate by 20% over the next five years.

## Behaviour supporting policy



- **Taxing Sugary Drinks:** Implement a tax on sugary drinks to discourage consumption and encourage healthier beverage choices.
- **Subsidizing Healthy Foods:** Provide subsidies for fruits and vegetables to make them more affordable and accessible.
- **Promoting Physical Activity:** Develop public programs that encourage daily physical activity among all age groups.

## Communication objective



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# Communication & policy objectives. Example 1

## Policy objective



Reduce the national obesity rate by 20% over the next five years.

## Behaviour supporting policy

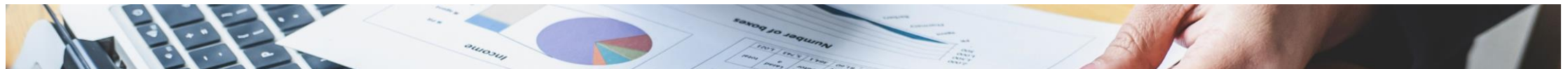


- **Taxing Sugary Drinks:** Implement a tax on sugary drinks to discourage consumption and encourage healthier beverage choices.
- **Subsidizing Healthy Foods:** Provide subsidies for fruits and vegetables to make them more affordable and accessible.
- **Promoting Physical Activity:** Develop public programs that encourage daily physical activity among all age groups.

## Communication objective



- **Increase Health Literacy on Obesity:** Improve understanding of obesity-related health risks and the benefits of healthy choices among 70% of the targeted population within one year.
- **Enhance Utilization of Subsidized Food Programs:** Increase enrolment in programs providing subsidized healthy foods by 50% within the next six months.
- **Reduce Sugary Drink Consumption:** Achieve a 30% reduction in the average consumption of sugary drinks per capita in the target demographic over the next year through educational campaigns.



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# Communication & policy objectives. Example 2

## Policy objective



Improve digital literacy across all age groups by 25% by 2025.

## Behaviour supporting policy



## Communication objective



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# Communication & policy objectives. Example 2

## Policy objective



Improve digital literacy across all age groups by 25% by 2025.

## Behaviour supporting policy



- **Digital Literacy Certificates:** Create a certification program for completing various levels of digital literacy training, providing formal recognition for participants.
- **Mobile Learning Units:** Deploy mobile units equipped with computers and internet access to underserved areas to provide hands-on digital training.
- **Incentives for Continuous Learning:** Offer rewards such as free internet access or discounts on personal computing devices to individuals who complete a series of digital literacy courses.

## Communication objective



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# Communication & policy objectives. Example 2

## Policy objective



Improve digital literacy across all age groups by 25% by 2025.

## Behaviour supporting policy



- **Digital Literacy Certificates:** Create a certification program for completing various levels of digital literacy training, providing formal recognition for participants.
- **Mobile Learning Units:** Deploy mobile units equipped with computers and internet access to underserved areas to provide hands-on digital training.
- **Incentives for Continuous Learning:** Offer rewards such as free internet access or discounts on personal computing devices to individuals who complete a series of digital literacy courses.

## Communication objective



- Increase awareness about the digital literacy certification program to 90% of the target population within the first year, emphasizing the personal and professional benefits of being certified.
- Double the participation rates in digital literacy training sessions in underserved areas by the end of two years, using the mobile learning units as the primary tool for engagement.
- Achieve a 40% repeat engagement rate among participants who initially complete a digital literacy course, by promoting incentives for advancing to higher levels of the curriculum.



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# Audience engagement goals



**Awareness**



**Attitude**



**Behaviour change**



**Recruitment**



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# Strategy elements



## DEFINITION OF OBJECTIVES

What do you want to achieve?



## AUDIENCE INSIGHT

Who are you trying to reach with the campaign?  
What are their needs, wants and concerns? What barriers need to be overcome?



## STRATEGY/IDEAS

What are the best ways to reach audience and achieve your objectives?



## IMPLEMENTATION

How will you put your strategy into action?



## SCORING/EVALUATION

How will you measure the success of your campaign?



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# Engaging various audiences



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# Types of audience segmentation

## Demographic segmentation



Based on age, gender, income, education, etc.

## Psychographic segmentation



Based on values, lifestyles, beliefs, etc.

## Behavioural segmentation



Based on purchasing habits, online behaviour, engagement with public services, etc.



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# Basic data: Key economic or demographic characteristics

» Key numbers

» Age

» Gender

» Income level

» Education

» Location

» Education



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# General lifestyle: occupation & hobbies & attitudes & beliefs, etc.

?

- How do they live?
- What do they like doing?
- What do they believe in?
- What are their attitudes towards government/life in general?
- What are their priorities?
- What are their aspirations?



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# Attitude towards specific issue

?

- Needs, benefits & motivation
- Passion points
- Behaviour: what do they do?
- Beliefs and attitudes?
- What are their barriers to behaviour change?



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# Audience and their use of media



Where do they get information?



Who influences?



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# Audience segmentation



**Crucial in order to reach hard-to-reach audiences. Helps to select appropriate messages, language, tone, communication channels, time, occasion, etc.**



## **Ways how to segment audience:**

- By demographics (age, gender, location, income, education level, etc.)
- By topic questions (audience needs, interests, behavioural norms, behavioural barriers, etc.)



## **CHOOSING THE PRIORITY TARGET AUDIENCE GROUPS!**



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# Audience segmentation components (Ritzman et al, 2019)

GENERAL	VITAL STATISTICS				WHO THEY ARE		GENERAL LIFESTYLE	
	How many people are like this? Trends? Indices and comparisons?				Key economic or demographic characteristics (individuals age, sex etc.)		How they live? What they like doing? Priorities. Aspirations. Consumer trends. Attitudes to government/life in general.	
THIS AREA / ISSUE	NEEDS, BENEFITS & MOTIVATIONS				BEHAVIOUR – WHAT THEY DO			
	Rational needs, emotional or hidden needs. What motivates them?				What drives and triggers action? Where do they do what they do? How frequently? Barriers to doing/thinking? Key words/language used?			
	INFLUENCERS				BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES			
	Who or what influence them? Why? (See also <i>Media</i> , below.)				Thoughts, beliefs, attitudes to this? What values do they hold that relate to the issue? What makes them feel good? Bad? Why?			
MEDIA	GETTING INFORMATION & MESSAGES				WHO INFLUENCES THEM			
	Place, time & how they get info	How much info they want/need?	Where they get it from – media used?	When & where they're most receptive?	Who they do/ don't listen to & respect?		Who delivers for them? In contact with?	



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# Where to get the data?

- » **Surveys and questionnaires: Collecting primary data directly from stakeholders**
- » **Data analytics: Analysing digital footprint and online behaviour**
- » **Focus groups and interviews: Gaining qualitative insights into audience preferences and perceptions**
- » **Behavioral observation**
- » **Big data analytics**
- » **Advanced sampling methods**
- » **Experimental research design**

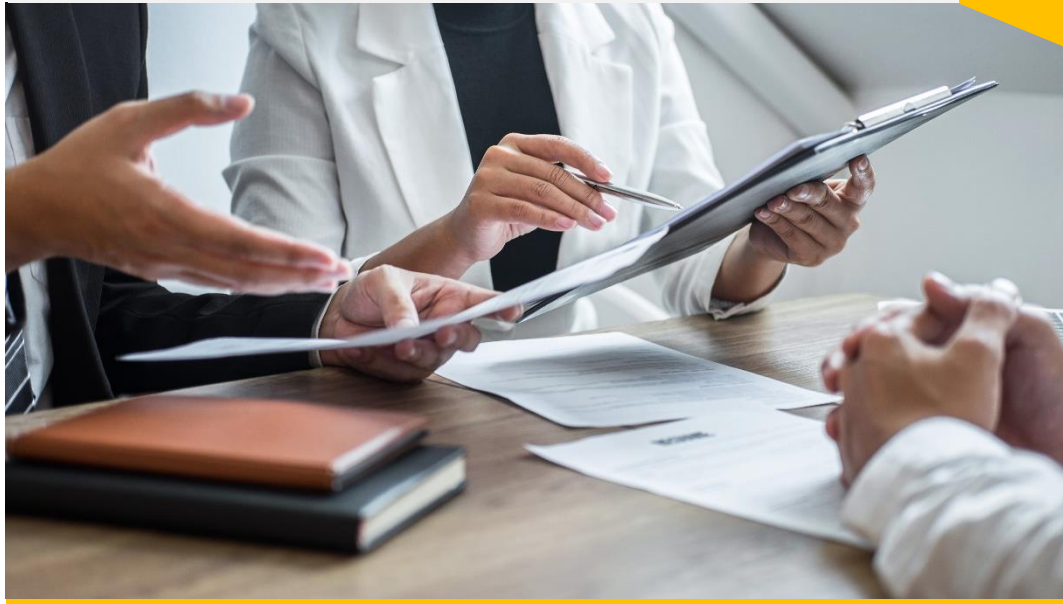


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# Surveys and questionnaires

Gathering feedback directly from citizens through structured forms or interviews



Useful for understanding citizen perceptions, preferences, and opinions on public governance issues



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# Data analytics

Analysing data from various sources such as government websites, social media, and administrative records



Provides insights into citizen engagement, behaviour, and sentiment towards public governance



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# Focus groups & interviews

Conducting group discussions or one-on-one interviews with citizens



Offers qualitative insights into citizen experiences, needs, and concerns related to public governance

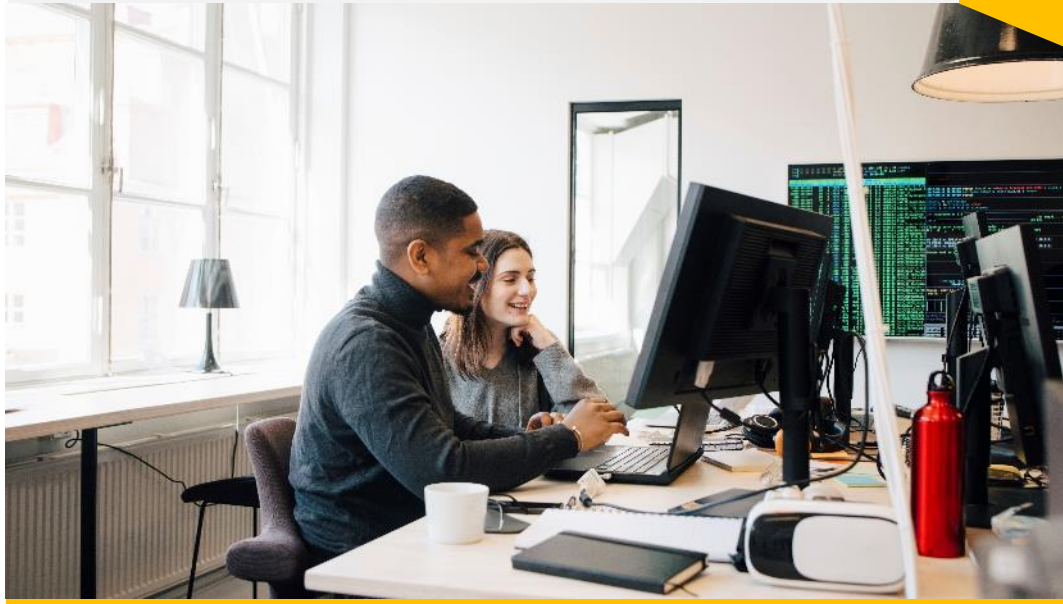


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# Behavioral observation

Observing citizen behaviour in real-world settings or online platforms



Helps uncover implicit preferences, challenges, and interactions with government services



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# Big data analysis

Leveraging large-scale datasets from government records, open data portals, and citizen-generated content



Enables comprehensive analysis of citizen demographics, trends, and engagement patterns



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# Advanced sampling methods

Employing sophisticated sampling techniques such as stratified sampling and community-based participatory research



Ensures representative participation of diverse citizen groups in research and engagement initiatives

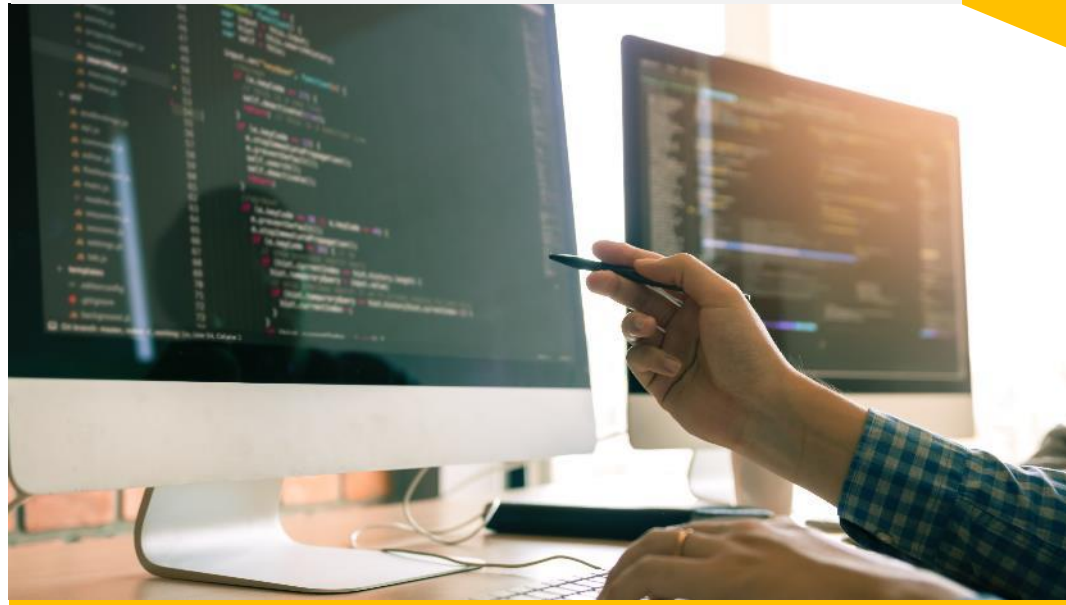


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# Experimental research designs

Designing controlled studies, including randomized controlled trials and A/B testing



Allows for the evaluation of government policies, interventions, and communication strategies with statistical rigor



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10-minute break



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# Choosing the strategic approach



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# Choosing the strategic approach

Deciding on strategic priorities



Assessing strategic choices/trade-offs



Applying the approach based on theory of change and principles of behaviour change



Creating synergy between communication and other interventions



Gaining sign-off and promoting approach to decision makers



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# How to achieve behaviour change?

## Capability



Whether the target audience has the right knowledge, skills, physical and mental ability to carry out the behaviour

## Opportunity



Whether the target audience has the right resources, processes and environment around them to undertake the right behaviour

## Motivation



Whether the target audience wants to or believes that they should carry out the behaviour and establish habits based on it



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# Understanding behavioural science

**Nudging**

**Social norms**

**Behavioural insights of others**

**Gamification**



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# GAMMA+ model

» GOAL

» AUDIENCE

» MESSAGE

» MESSENGER

» MEDIA

» ACTION

» + EVALUATION



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# Defining the messages



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Half-way through the lifetime of the RRF, we can point to a number of key achievements. In the darkest months of the pandemic, the announcement helped to calm markets and avoid a great fragmentation among EU economies. Then as funds started flowing, the RRF gave a boost to the economic rebound, sustaining public investment and accelerating the reduction in unemployment. In the two years since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, it has helped our economies to navigate incredibly rough waters. **And over the coming years, as investments proceed and the benefits of reforms gradually play out, the RRF's impact on EU growth is set to further increase (...).**

**Paolo Gentiloni, Commissioner for Economy**



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# Monitoring and evaluation methodologies and tools



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# 6 stages of evaluation of results



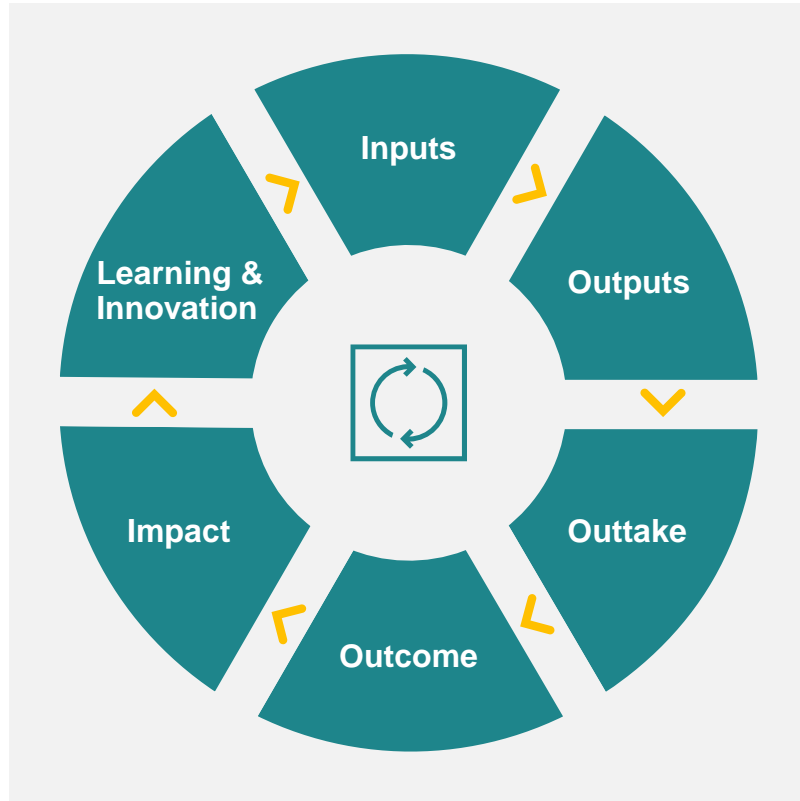
[UK Government Communication Service, 2024. The GCS Evaluation Cycle](#)



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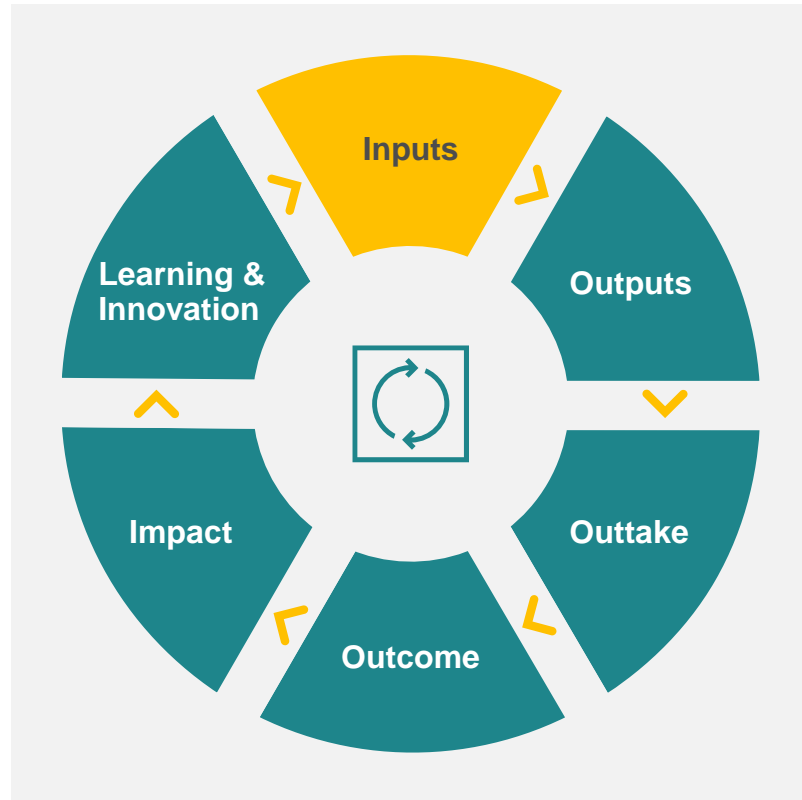
# 6 stages of evaluation of results



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# Inputs



## Communication activities that you put in at the start:

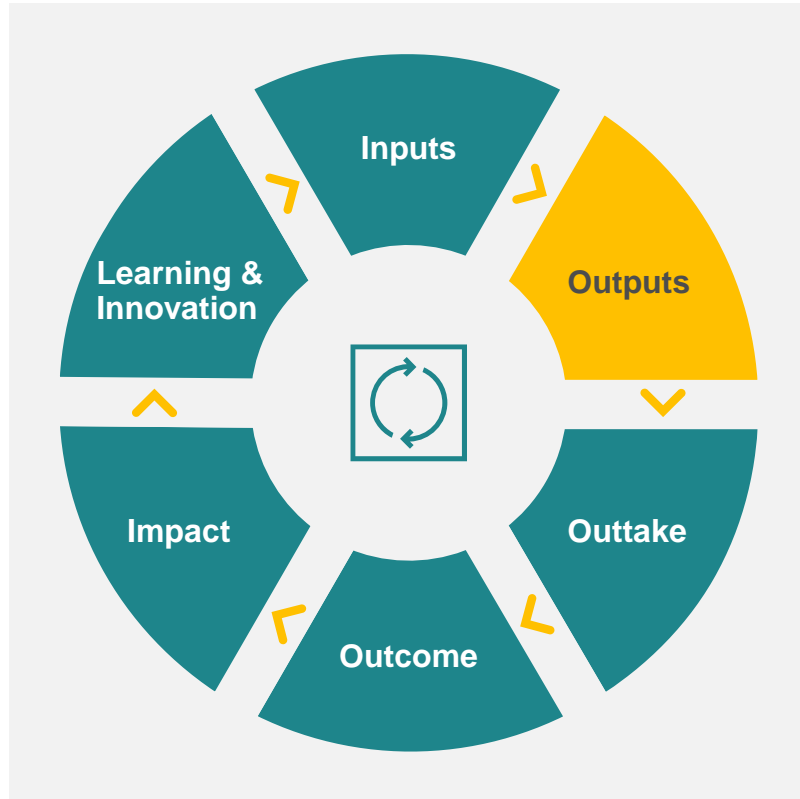
- Policy analysis and how communication can support policy objectives
- Situation analysis
- Research
- Defining budget and costs
- Etc.



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# Output



**Objective measurement of what is delivered and how your audience encounters and interacts with your communication through REACH, DISTRIBUTION and EXPOSURE.**

**Potential metrics:**

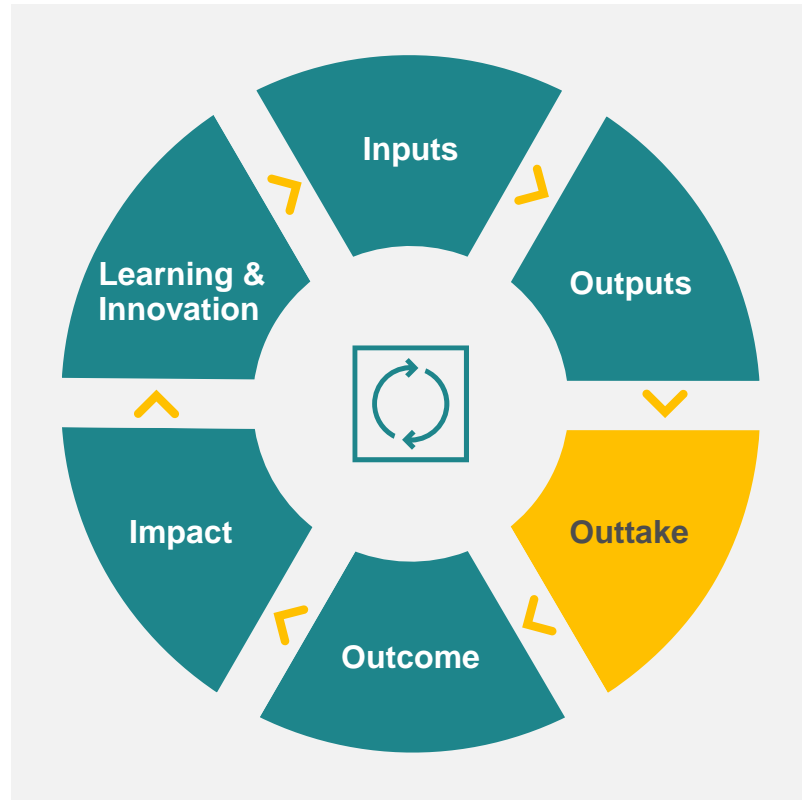
- Volumes of coverage (publicity numbers; tonality; etc.)
- Direct contacts (messages sent; messages read; messages interacted with)
- Events organised (number of events; number of attendees; feedback from attendees)
- Partnerships secured
- **Estimated total reach**
  - Estimated offline reach
  - Reported online reach



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# Outtake



**How the audience perceived your message – what they think, feel or intend to do as a result of your communication activities.**

**Reception, perception, intentions & reaction to your communication activities.**

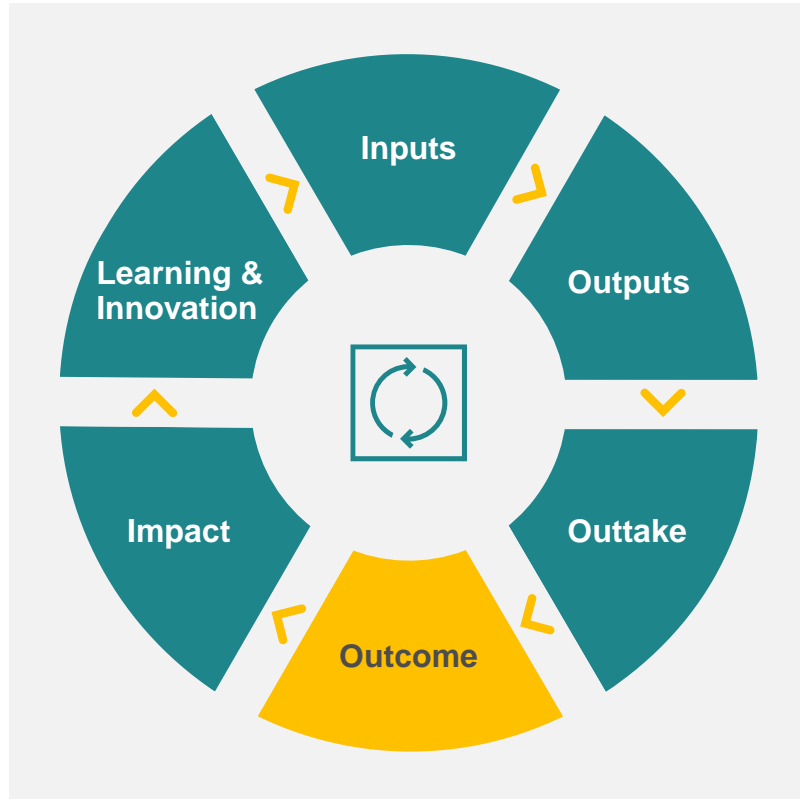
- Attitudes & emotions: % of press coverage; research
- Passive engagements
- Active engagements
- Click through rate; view through rate; dwell time; bounce rate
- Campaign & issue awareness
- Understanding of the campaign content
- The extent to which different groups agree/disagree with key messages
- Attitudinal change
- Stated or intended behaviour change



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# Outcomes



**Response from the target audience in terms of change in behaviour or active engagement**

**Whether audience's feelings & motivations really translate to actual behaviour change:**

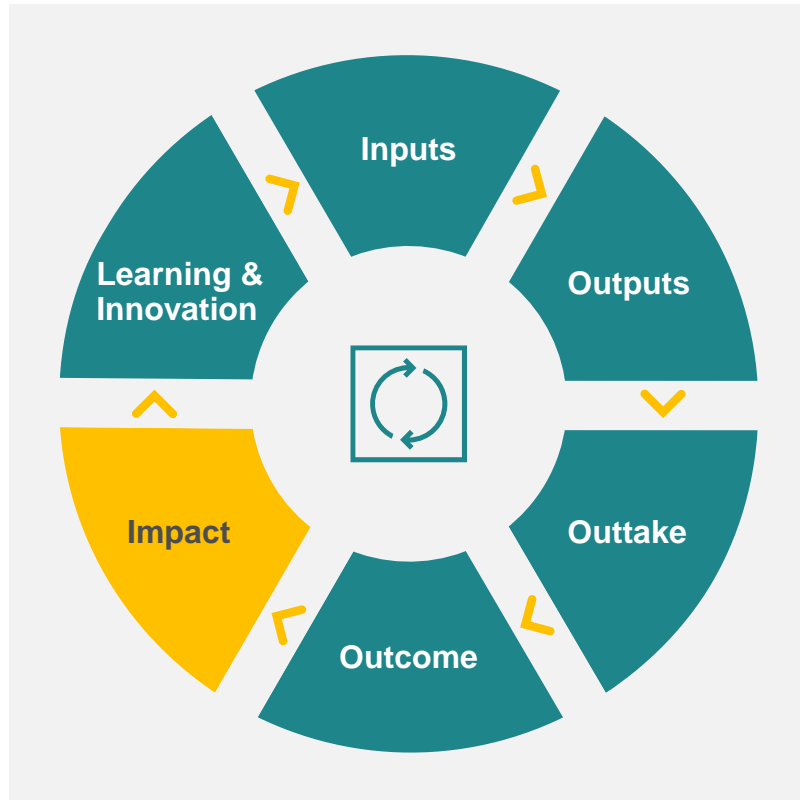
- Behaviour change
- Applications/sign-ups



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# Impact (1/2)



**How your communication activity has contributed to or impacted policy and organisational objectives?**

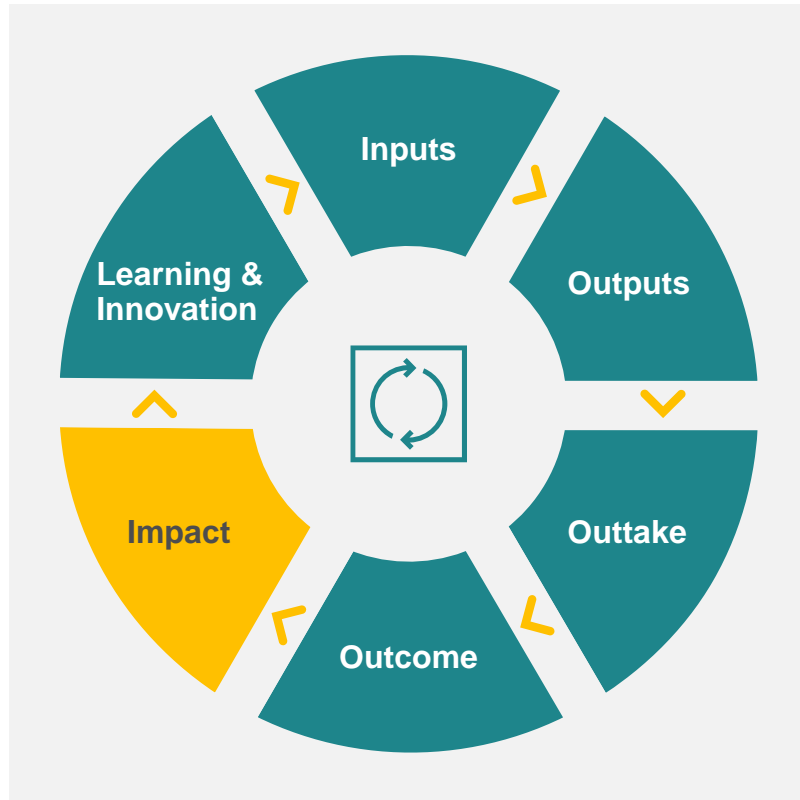
**! Organisational objectives are distinct from policy objectives and include longer-term or wider considerations such as ROI, cost reduction; recruitment; retention; environmental impact; evaluation of physical/mental health, etc.**



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## Impact (2/2)



### Metrics:

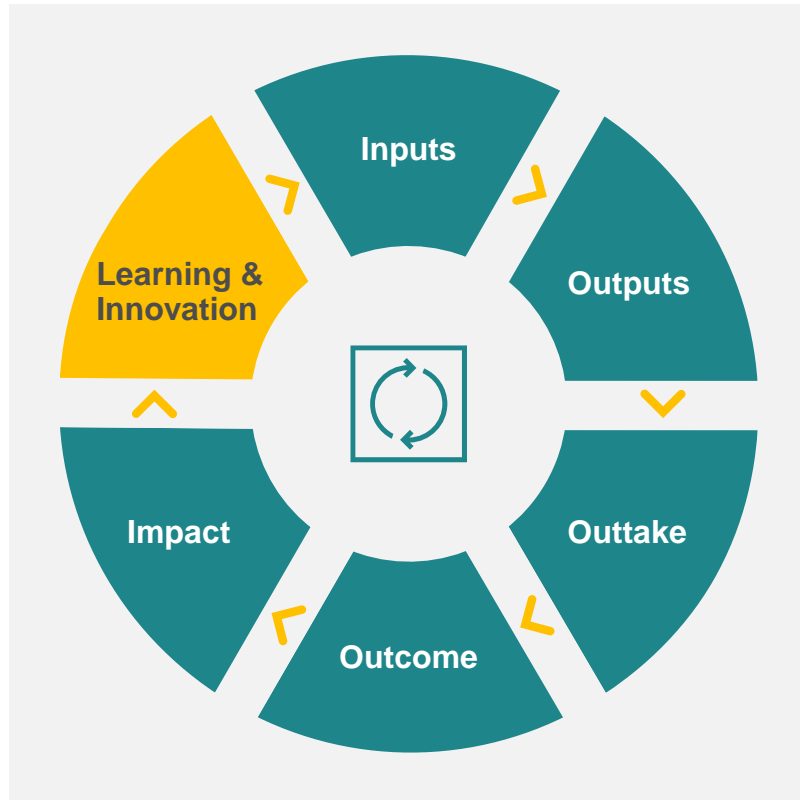
- Long term compliance or retention
- Cost per person with awareness raised
- Cost per person with behaviour change
- Cost per applicant, registration, recruit, etc.
- Current ROI



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# Learning & Innovation



## Evaluation of effectiveness of inputs/outputs to understand the impact on policy/organisation objectives and evaluate: **WHAT WORKED & WHAT DIDN'T?**

- If any innovations in communication were applied, what are lessons learned?
- If objectives/KPI's were not met, what reasons can be identified to explain the variation?
- If the objectives were surpassed, what has driven that?

## **STRATEGIC LEARNINGS THAT CAN BE SHARED.**



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Best practice  
examples on  
successful strategy  
planning,  
implementation and  
evaluation



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Latvia 



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# 1st stage – setting the system



## 1. Establishment of Communication working group

- Involving coordinating authority, line ministries, responsible agencies.
- Meetings at least 4 times a year.

## 2. Communication strategy and annual communication plans

- All involved parties prepare communication strategy and communication plans and present them in the Communication working group.
- Good practices shared within the Communication working group.

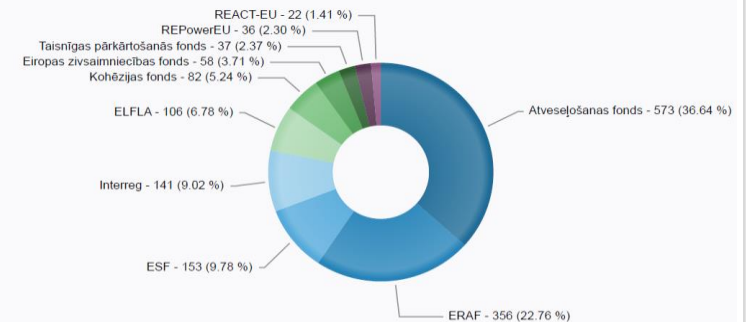
## 3. Communication guidelines

- Set common communication guidelines for all involved parties.

## 4. Evaluation

- Media monitoring – every day and monthly report (April 2024 RRF in media mentioned 573 times, 36, 64% from all funds, tonality – positive and neutral).
- Campaigns result monitoring – after each campaign.
- Public opinion evolution – once a year (year 2022 and 2023 19-20% respondents have heard about RRF).

ES fondu publicitāte pēc pieminējumu skaita analīzes periodā (atsevišķi)



2024. gada aprīlī ES fondi masu saziņas līdzekļos minēti 1331 materiālā.



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# Successes, Recommendations, and Best Practices



## 1. Technical Support Instrument

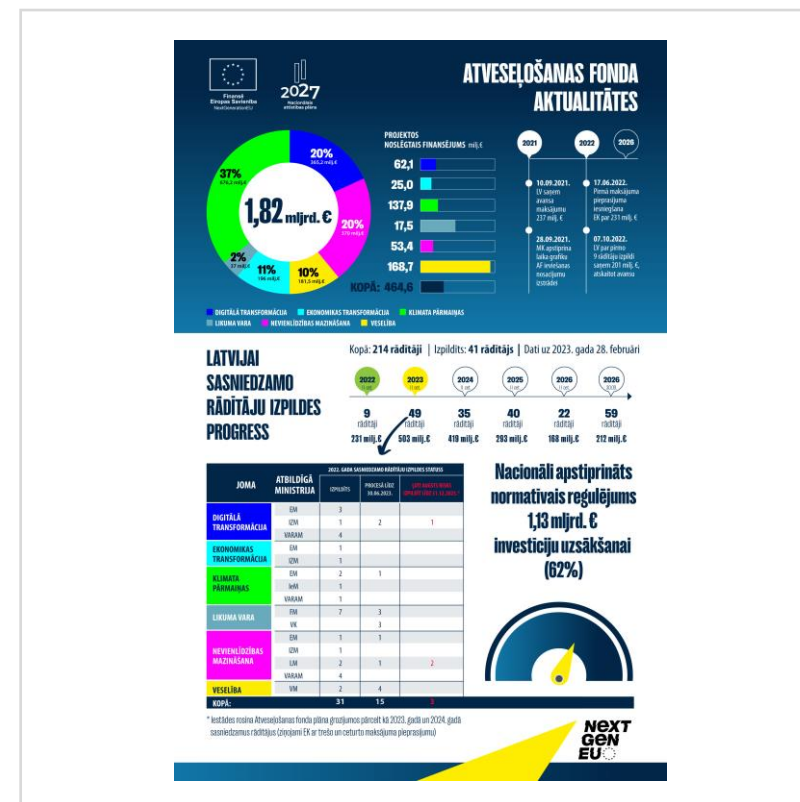
- Overall successful approach – common guideline establishment, focus on specific areas, enhanced communication about high readiness projects

## 2. Knowing your target audience

- Setting specific communication actions regarding the projects specifics and target audiences expectations.

## 3. Best practices

- It differs by the supported area and target audiences needs.
- Projects success stories – works the best for social media and press, opinion articles – build the trust, events – the best for local media and audiences.



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# Successes, Recommendations, and Best Practices



## 1. One web portal

- In 2023 Latvia developed new, united web portal for all EU funds.
- The web page address [www.esfondi.lv](http://www.esfondi.lv) works from 2004 and is well known – no advertisement needed.
- All information is in one place – easy to use for all involved parties, targeted information – news, open calls, events.

## 2. Clear roles in communication

- Coordination institution – overall, horizontal communication about RRF implementation status, events – yearly conference and payment events in close cooperation with ECR.
- Line ministries – communication to their target audiences about RRF reforms and investments in each sector.
- Project implementors – communication about each project in cooperation with line ministries, coordination institution and ECR.

Communication via media, social media, communication campaigns, events, web.



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# Successes, Recommendations, and Best Practices



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# Successes, Recommendations, and Best Practices



## 1. Technical project outcomes

- RRF visual identity guidelines with asset templates
- Communication campaign – one month, from 26 February 2024 to 22 March 2024:
  - 18 videos;
  - Advertising material in different formats about the six national pillars – banners, social media versions, advertising content for six pillars;
  - 2 infographics;
  - 8 social media posts (advertised);
  - 3 opinion articles, 1 press release;
  - project stories – publications in biggest news portals, social media, web

	Reach	Impressions	Clicks	Video plays	Post engagement
Facebook	370 973	518 713	3 174	146 040	1 053
Instagram	315 216	439 533	1 742	153 098	609
<b>Total</b>	<b>686 189</b>	<b>958 246</b>	<b>4 916</b>	<b>299 138</b>	<b>1 662</b>

**legādāti efektīvi spektrofotometri nezināmu vielu identifikācijai lietošanai muitas laboratorijā un lidostas muitas kontroles punktā.**

**37 MILJONI €** reformām un investīcijām Laboties lauku vides stiprināšanai no ES Atveseļošanas fonda līdzekļiem

**Mēbeļu ražošanas uzņēmums SIA "Bolderāja Serviss" saņēmis kapitāla atlaidi 116 652,55 € par iekšējo procesu digitalizāciju, tai nepieciešamo esošo ražošanas efektīvizēšanu, iegādājoties jaunas iekārtas.**

**365,3 MILJONI €** Latvijas digitālās transformācijas reformām no ES Atveseļošanas fonda līdzekļiem

**Mēbeļu ražošanas uzņēmums SIA "Bolderāja Serviss" saņēmis kapitāla atlaidi saules paneļu parka uzstādīšanai un jau izmanto pašu saražoto elektroenerģiju.**

**510,9 MILJONI €** Kopumā un enerģētiskās reformām no ES Atveseļošanas fonda līdzekļiem



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# Video example: Digitalisation pillar



leguldot digitālās pārejas virziena reformās,



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# Challenges, Lessons Learned, and Areas for Improvement



## Challenges

- No clear requirements for RRF communication on Regulation level.
- No harmonised communication requirements on EC level (different approaches).
- The changing life cycle of project implementation, which makes it difficult to match communication activities to specific time slot.

## Lessons learned and areas of improvement

- Timely planning of communication activities and information sharing is essential.
- Given the limited resources for RRF communication, cooperation between partners – ministries, projects, NGOs etc. – is important.
- Flexibility in implementing communication activities is needed.



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Portugal



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# How to communicate the RRP | Portuguese Case



## How it began (2021)

- In 2021 RRP was created to face the serious impacts of the pandemic on European economies.
- The Portuguese RRP, an instrument of NextGenerationEU, is based on three dimensions: Resilience; Climate Change; Digital Transition.
- This plan is implemented in a different way from other European Funds and a short period of implementation.
- It began in a way that needed to be executed and communicated at the same time.



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# Communication (1st phase)



Firstly, the Communication objectives were to explain RRP to the different stakeholders and targets.

## Site:

A website was created that aggregates all the information about RRP, such as:

- What is RRP, the 3 dimensions, all the components
- Documentation, all the documents about RRP and Technical Orientations
- A Monitoring page that presents target and milestones implementation, as well as financial execution and a weekly report
- A calls for application page that appears as search engine
- A communication page with all the newsletters and news (in 2023 there were 164 news releases in EMRP website)

The website is now being restructured to be more intuitive, friendly and aligned with the new brand strategy

The image displays three screenshots of the RRP website interface. The top-left screenshot, labeled 'Monitoring page', shows a dashboard with various charts and progress indicators, including a 22% completion rate for 'Métricas e Metas Compartidas' and a 19% rate for 'Pagamentos e Beneficiários'. The top-right screenshot, labeled 'Communication page', features a 'Notícias' section with several news items and a search bar. The bottom screenshot, labeled 'Call for application page', shows a search engine interface for 'Candidaturas' with filters for 'Componente', 'Beneficiário', 'Tecnologia', and 'Estado', along with buttons for 'Pesquisar', 'Limpar', and 'Filtrar'.



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# Communication (1st phase)



## Communication Technical Orientation /guide:

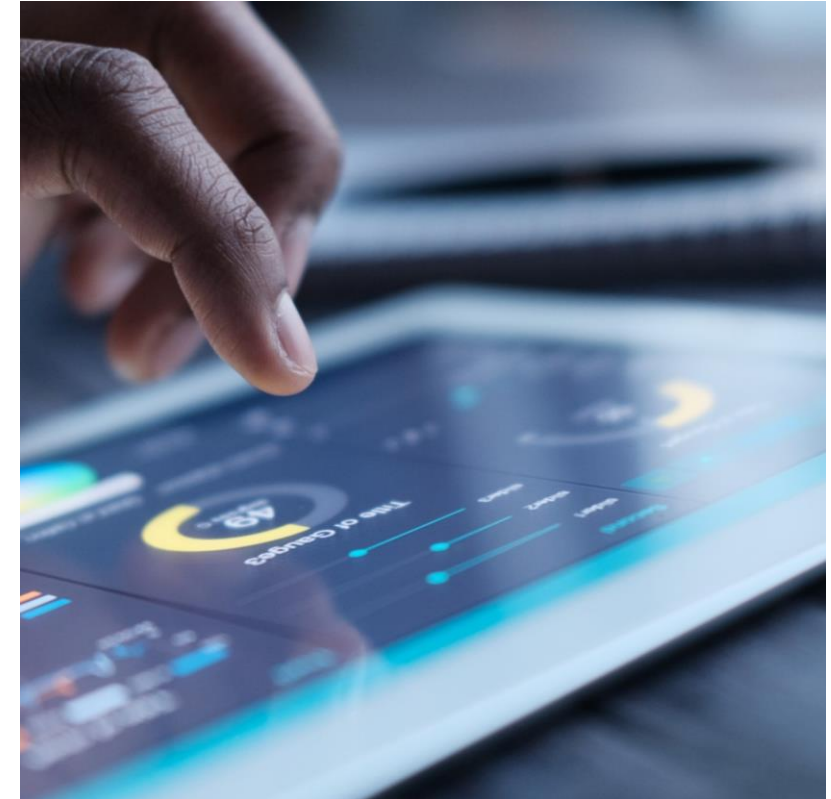
It was created an initial Technical Orientation/guide so the beneficiaries/implementing bodies could know the RRP obligations concerning communication rules.

- This Technical Orientation is available to download on RRP website e in documentation and in the communication page, where is also available the graphic assets that must be use (logos, presentations, flyers...)

Implantation of the communication rules challenges:

- More than 70 implementing bodies, public entities that are responsible for the application calls.
- Very different investments and projects.
- Different sectors of activity with its own languages.

We are creating a more **Practical Guide**, with the help of PWC and taking on consideration the needs and doubts of the implementing bodies.



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# Communication (1st phase)



## Social Media:

### LinkedIn

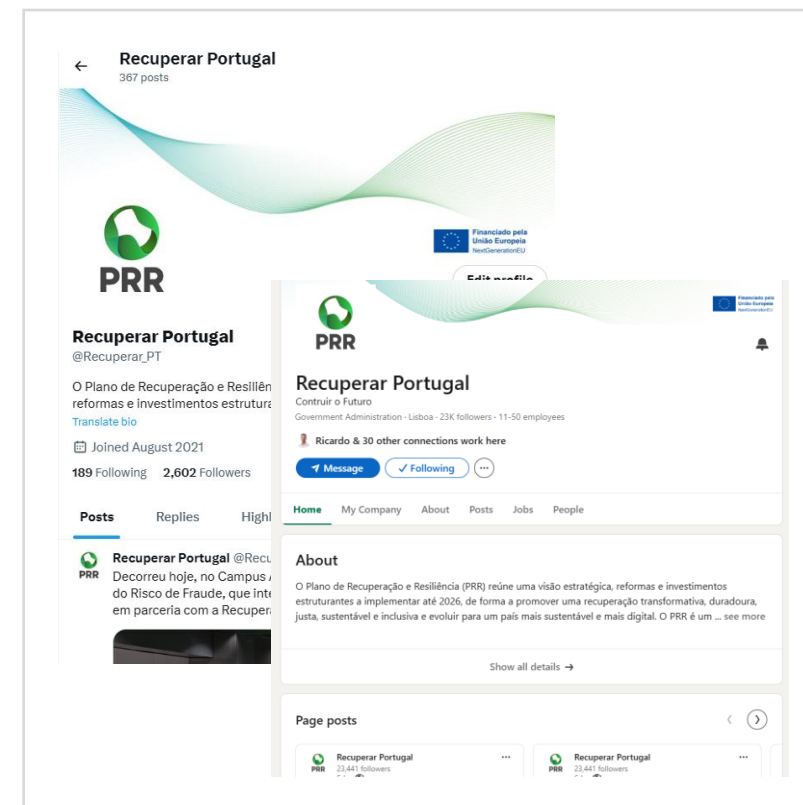
Initially, we created a LinkedIn page because it is a social network designed specifically for professionals with different types of posts:

- News
- Events
- Calls for application

For LinkedIn we decided not to do paid media and to rely on organic posts. We now have 23k followers and still growing every week.

### X (former Twitter)

Twitter was also created in the first phase for a very specific target. In Portugal this social media is used mainly by politicians and journalists.



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# Communication (1st phase)



## Newsletter:

- RRP newsletter has around 20k subscribers.
- Journalists use RRP newsletter as an information source.
- Initially it was released every 2 weeks.

**Challenges:** Keep the public engaged and to have new material (different from the website and social media every 2 weeks).

- The RRP newsletter is now released without any periodical time.
- RRP newsletter is now release every time there is a subject of main interest to do it.
- There are RRP thematical newsletters (e.g.: In World water day we describe the investments and what is done in this sector).



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# Communication



**Events:** Events are a very important way to communicate with stakeholders and general public.

## External events:

- RRP has developed external events in an hybrid format (in person as well as streamed), such as:
  - Annual Event
  - DNSH – technical event
  - RRP amending, to explain to stakeholders and the public how is the Portuguese RRP now

## Events for implementing bodies:

- Capacity training sessions (mostly on-line, but some in hybrid format) on Topics of great importance to the efficient implementation of RRP
- Presence in external events organized by partners and entities involved in RRP to explain the possibilities of the plan.



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# Communication (2nd phase)



## Campaigns

- As RRP is getting more awareness and people tend to understand it, the strategy is now to humanize it and show what is being done.
  - TV and digital media Campaign.
  - There has been a TV and digital media campaign of 5 spots.
    - Each spot was about a different investment
    - Each spot presented the investment impact on the citizen
    - Each spot was created with real people that have been impacted by RRP in real locations
    - All spots had a 20 second version (for TV) and a 60 second (for digital)
    - (ex: RRP in schools – we filmed a school and its subtends learning with RRP computers) [CAMPANHA PRR | ESCOLA DIGITAL \(youtube.com\)](#)



**That campaign was a success, so it was declined to radio spots.**



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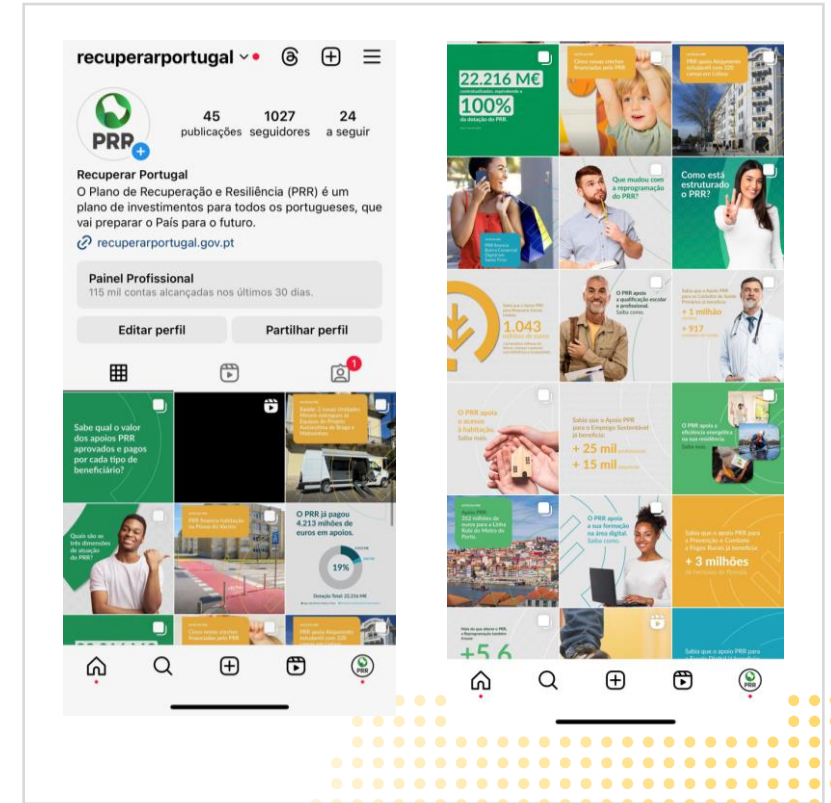


# Communication (2nd phase)



## Inform the community

- As the strategy is to humanize and make the public relate in a more emotional way with RRP, we released the Facebook and Instagram pages with different posts, but the same graphic language:
  - News
  - Videos of investments and projects
  - Information in general about RRP



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# Communication 360°



## Lessons Learned

- The target is the country – from the politicians, to the journalists, to the businesses or the citizens, everyone is part of the RRP public.
- Different targets, different ways to express the message.
- To create awareness and get the message to the multiple audiences, it is necessary to use different tools. It is 360° communication:
  - PR
  - Digital Communication
  - Publicity
  - Events



**RRP Communication is always a work in progress and advances with RRP execution.**



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Romania 



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# What's different from the usual European funds



## The Recovery and Resilience Facility is different from the classic European funds, the cohesion funds

- RRP is a special, non-repeating program.
- RRP includes reforms built on Country Specific Recommendations from the European Semester.
- RRP includes major reforms, and the investment money is conditioned by them.



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# How the differences influence the context



The reforms contained in the RRP can be found in the European Commission's Country Recommendations. These long overdue reforms entail high social and political costs.

A great deal of political will is needed to carry them out.



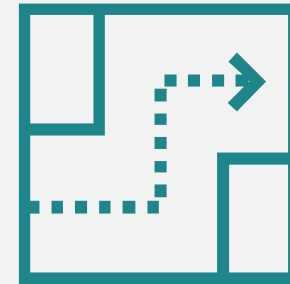
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# The Communication Chapter in Romania's RRP – Strategy, solutions and objectives



- RRP is a transformational program that changes people's lives.
- RRP must become important for citizens.
- Citizens are shareholders in the modernization of Romania.



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# The Communication Chapter in Romania's RRP – Strategy, solutions and objectives



**WHAT'S IN IT  
FOR ME?**



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# The Communication Chapter – Strategy, solutions and objectives



- We promote those reforms that have the greatest impact on the public and are easy to explain.
- Emphasis on the areas of investment that Romania needs the most: transport, health, education.
- Combat Fake News related to RRP.



## PNRR-ul interzice încălzirea cu lemne?

Fals. Comisia Europeană chiar a și publicat o decizie în acest sens: Nu există nicio dispoziție în Planul Național de Redresare și Reziliență (PNRR) care să creeze autoritățile române să mearse interzicerea încălzirii pe bază de lemne până în 2023. Comunicatul oficial al CE. [aici](#)

## PNRR a fost secretizat

Fals. Dimpotrivă – am publicat tot: și propunerile inițiale, și propunerile intermediare, Chiar și toate anexele. Ceea ce este un nivel de transparență fără precedent și uneori în stare europeană. De altfel, așa au ajuns și cei de la PSD să caute în rețea și să găsească informații pe care apoi le-au interpretat eronat sau parțial. Discuțiile tehnice cu Comisia Europeană nu au fost publice – această cerere ar fi nerezonabilă, nici un fel de negociere internațională nu se întâmplă cu presa de față.

Când PSD spune că nu a fost transparentă, minte. Dar ca să fie clar: rugăm pe ministrul Agriculturii de la PSD, Adrian Chelnicu, să asigure aceiași nivel de transparență ca la PNRR acum când lucrează la Programul Național Strategic (dar europeni pentru dezvoltare rurală). Negocierile pentru PNS se fac pe baza unor documente și propuneri care nu au fost publicate.

## PNRR a fost făcut fără consultări publice

Fals. Am făcut cele mai extinse consultări dintre toate exercițiile de programare de fonduri europene. Și consultări pe bune, adică la ele participă ministrul sau secretarul de stat cu abilități, nu doar personal tehnic cum fac de obicei partidele vechi consultări, unde mingea nu apar asociată. Au fost 16 consultări extinse, pe domenii, și am luat note de ele, am căutat să le bane. Un exemplu: bursele pentru: bursă din PNRR pentru burse acordate copiilor din rural care termină 8 clase și merg spre liceu. Acela este momentul când foarte puțin abandonează școala. Această idee a fost propusă de o asociație din Bucovina, care acordă asemenea burse, din donații. Am căutat ideea, am testat-o cu experți și a ajuns la o finanțare de 100 milioane de euro din PNRR. Ca multe alte idei care au ajuns în PNRR. Nu doar că am făcut consultări extinse, ci am făcut consultări pe bune, cu sens. Pe lângă cele organizate de ministere, am participat și la dezbateri și consultări parlamentare de căte ori am fost invitat.

## Comisia a respins primele variante de PNRR

Fals. Nu au existat "variantele" de PNRR trimise la Comisie, alta decât cea limitată de noi în 31 mai 2021. Varianta publicată de Marius Bogdan în decembrie 2020 a fost doar un PDF pas pe site înainte de alegeri, care nu respecta în niciun fel structura de Plan cerută de regulamentul. De altfel, nici nu a fost trimis Comisiei Europene. Ulterior, am organizat consultări extinse, am lucrat pe conținut, am discutat informal cu Comisia, Comisia a cerut clarificări normale. Așa am ajuns la SINGURĂ forma de PNRR evaluată de Comisie. A obținut punctajul maxim acordat de Comisie, egal cu PNRR-ul german, francez, italian, etc.

## Au fost negociate clauze secrete în PNRR

Fals. Absolut tot ce s-a negociat în PNRR se găsește negru pe alb în document.

## Autoritățile locale nu sunt implicate în PNRR

Fals. Există o întreagă componentă dedicată autorităților locale, cu fonduri de peste 2 miliarde euro. Este singurul plan de țară care are o asemenea componentă unde UAT-urile sunt direct beneficiare. A fost inițiată inițiativa și am luptat pentru această idee la Bruxelles, ea fiind una din cele mai bune idei pentru acest instrument de finanțare. În plus, mare parte dintre celelalte investiții vor fi implementate tot prin autoritățile locale: fonduri regionale (2.2 miliarde pentru eficiență energetică clădirii), investițiile în școli, etc.

## PNRR prevede limitarea pensiilor? Ați vrut să sărăciți pensionarii?

De fapt, Comisia Europeană a insistat să existe un proces rațional de creștere a pensiilor, pe măsura creșterii economice. Creșterea de pensii trebuie acordată la momente fixe în an (de două ori pe an, prin lege) și pe criterii statistice – cât crește economia, creștem și pensiile. Asta pentru a preîntâmpina politici responsabile și mincinoase cum au fost cele ale PSD care au blocat creșterea de pensii apoi au promis înainte de alegeri.

În același timp, PNRR include o testare și reformare a pensiilor speciale, astfel încât să existe resurse pentru creșterea pensiilor românilor, nu doar ale pensionarilor speciali.

Platforma globală pentru pensii este 9.4% din Produsul Intern Brut, un indicator care crește, deci pensiile vor crește odată cu el. Dacă guvernul limitează pensiile speciale, cu atât mai mult va avea loc de a mări pensiile obișnuite, în interiorul platformei. De ce 9,4%? Este mult mai mult decât propunerea Comisiei, și acesta este un succes al echipei de negocieri. De fapt, 9.4% din PIB este MAI MULT decât a cheltui România pe pensii în toți acești ani. Este mai mult decât a cheltui PSD pe pensii de câte ori a guvernat. Ca să accedă această realitate, Marius Bogdan, se referă la o medie europeană de 13%. Această medie ascunde realități foarte diferite: Toate statele din zona noastră au cheltuieli din PIB de sub 8.5% cu pensii. Explicația țese de capacitatea mai mică de colectare a veniturilor. Dacă raportăm la cheltuielile cu pensii din BUGET, atunci România (25%) este peste media UE (24%). Ca să rezumăm: am asigurat un plafon de pensii peste cât a acordat România până acum, există loc de creștere a pensiilor și această creștere va fi făcută prin lege, la momente fixe. Fiecare pensionar va fi când și cu cât îi crește



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# The Communication Chapter in Romania's RRP – Strategy, solutions and objectives



## Promoted major projects – selecting them on the ~What is in it for me~ factor

- Increasing the energy efficiency of private houses, part of component C5 – Renovation Wave.
- National afforestation program: planting 45,000 new hectares of forest, forest curtains, support for the management of small private properties, digitization of databases – forest register.
- Reform: Modern and safe railways and the project of modernization, electrification and implementation of the traffic management system for the Arad-Timișoara-Caransebeș railway.
- The A7 highway, known as the "Moldova Highway", which will connect Bucharest with the North-East region of the country. RRP will finance the Ploiesti-Pășcani section.



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# The Communication Chapter in Romania's RRP – Strategy, solutions and objectives



## Promoted major projects

- Introduction of the electronic identity card (e-ID) for 8.5 million people, an important part of the process of digital services for citizens.
- Reducing the bureaucratic burden for citizens and the business environment through digitization: government cloud reform, interoperability law, adoption of the "once only" principle.
- The reform of the Minimum Inclusion Income, with the aim of bringing the inactive population closer to the labour market, reducing poverty.
- The reform of the recruitment system in the public administration (through a competition on the EPSO model) and the creation of a new system for the promotion of civil servants.
- Green schools and green buses for pupils and students in sparsely populated areas to facilitate their access to quality education while protecting the environment.



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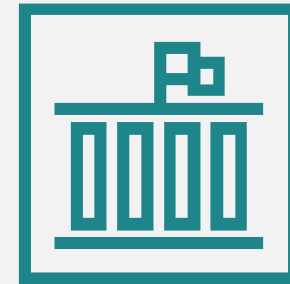


# The Communication Chapter in Romania's RRP – Strategy, solutions and objectives



## Activities organized jointly with the European Commission

- Inauguration of major investments, with the physical or virtual presence of a European Commissioner, together with coordinators at national level.
- Launch event for reforms, with the physical or virtual presence of a representative of the European Commission. In a similar format, for the completion event where the main results are presented.
- Video reports during the implementation of the projects, with images from the project location and relevant testimonials, which will include representatives of the Commission and possibly members of the European Parliament.



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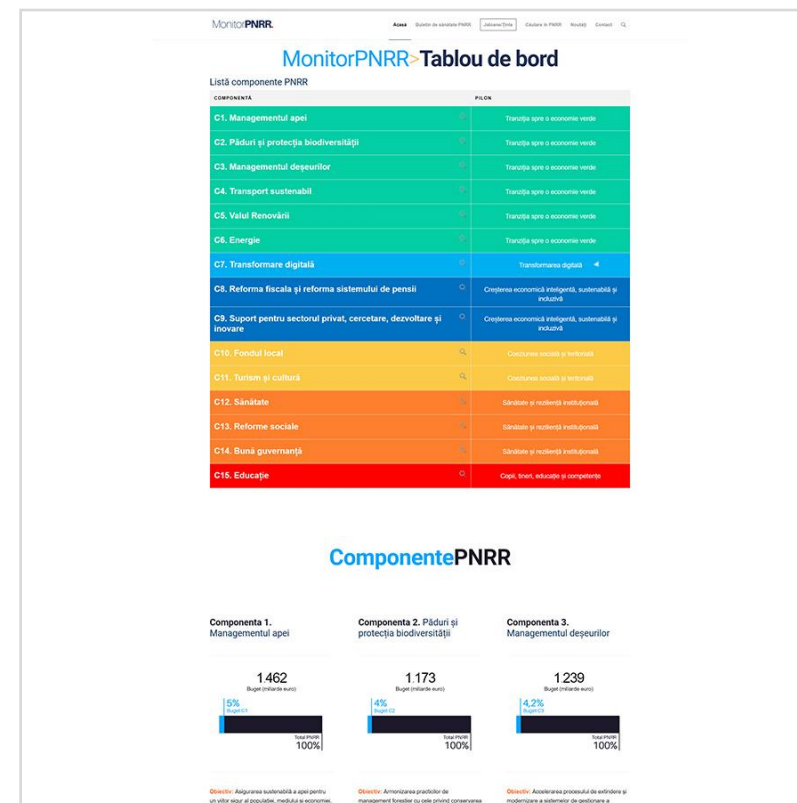


# Examples of good practice



## MonitorPNRR.ro

- Tracks (in real time) the achievement of milestones.
- Pursues the timely initiation and completion of reforms and investments.
- Co-interests the citizens in the process of monitoring the implementation of the RRP – public pressure on the authorities works.



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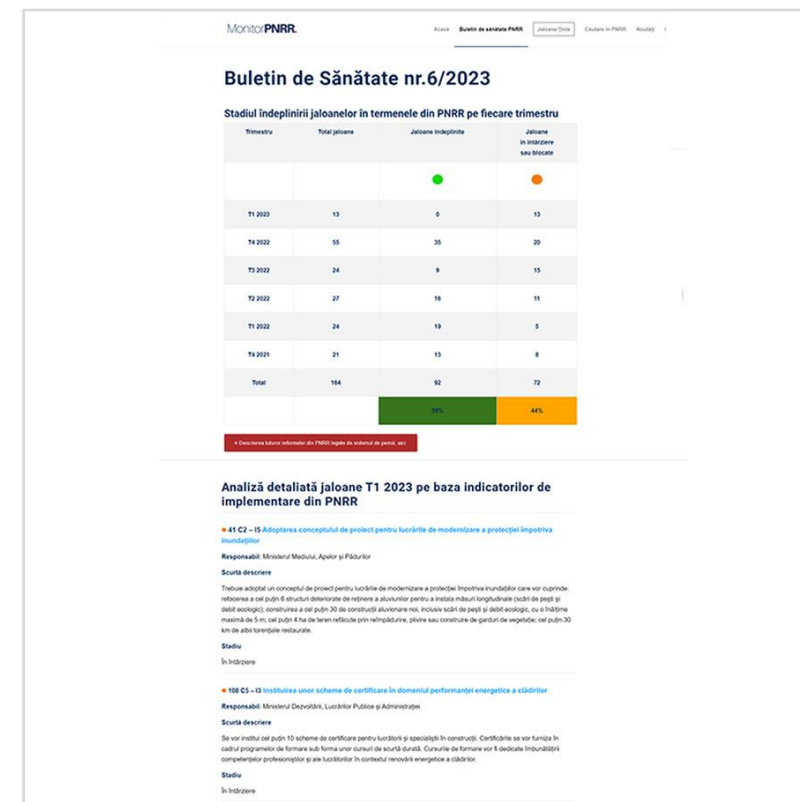


# Examples of good practice



## Monitor PNRR – Stage 2

- RRP's Health Reports – focus on reforms, we follow step by step the fulfilment of milestones.



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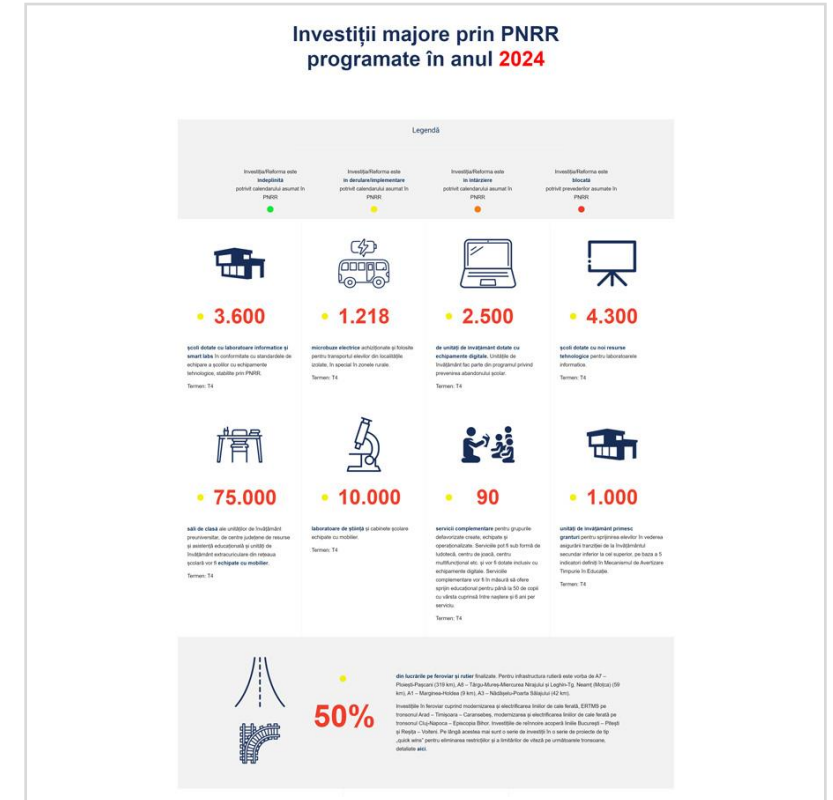


# Examples of good practice



## Monitor PNRR – Stage 2

- Focus on following Major investments from RRP – focus on investments with direct and immediate impact on citizens' lives.



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## Q&A

(please raise your hand and host will unmute your microphone)



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# Complimentary information sources for Strategic RRP communication planning



## SOURCES

- » [European Commission, RAN, 2021. Understanding Strategic Communications for P/CVE: Audience segmentation and message testing approaches](#)
- » [UK Government Communication Service, 2024. The GCS Evaluation Cycle](#)
- » [UK Government Communication Service, 2021. Strategic Communication MCOM Function Guide](#)
- » [OECD Report on Public Communication, 2021. The Global context and the Way Forward](#)



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