# Communication Plan of Home Affairs Programme in Bulgaria 2014-2020

### Aims and Target Groups

**Objectives**

The aim of this Communication Plan is to create awareness of the existence, the objectives, the possibilities for and actual bilateral cooperation between Bulgaria and Norway as well as the Council of Europe as International Partner Organisation, the implementation and the overall impact of support from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 through the Home Affairs Programme.

All activities under the Communication Plan will be implemented until 2024.

This Plan follows the objectives laid in the Regulation and the Communication Strategy in Bulgaria, while building up on the achievements from the previous funding periods. The slogan “Working Together for a Green, Competitive and Inclusive Europe” shall be used as an overall message to communicate the project grants.

The main objective of the Communication Plan is to increase the visibility of the contribution from the EEA and Norway Grants to reduce economic and social disparities and to strengthen bilateral relations, make the existence and results of the bilateral cooperation more visible.

The achievements in the field of bilateral relations will be upgraded through the forthcoming implementation of the programme and their implementation will develop the bilateral relations in close partnership with organizations from Donor Programme Partners.

The overall implementation of communication activities at programme and project level will be implemented in accordance with the Communication and Design Manual 2014-2021 developed by the Financial Mechanism Office. A working group on communication has been established by the National Focal Point (NFP). The group consists of one member and at least one substitute from each Programme Operator (PO). The aim of the group is to facilitate the coordination role of the NFP, as well as to provide the floor for discussion on activities and exploration of possible synergies.

The communication plan has three main objectives:

1. To ensure that funding is made available in transparent manner by informing potential beneficiaries of the available opportunities;
2. Increasing public awareness of the programme, its objectives and impact on asylum and migration policies in the country, law enforcement and international cooperation, and good governance; Disseminate the results of the projects implemented in the Programme by publications in mass-media and social media;
3. To make the existence and results of the bilateral cooperation more visible.

**Target groups**

Target groups of the communication plan are:

* potential and actual project promoters;
* potential and actual partner entities;
* the general public;
* central, regional and local authorities and other public bodies;
* social partners (trade unions, employers and business groups and organisations, civil society organisations);
* local, regional and national opinion formers and influencers, including journalists and the media, academics, researchers and educators.

Particularly, target groups are civil servants/public administration staff, including law enforcement officers from the Ministry of Interior of Bulgaria, State Agency for Child Protection, State Agency for Refugees at the Council of Ministers (SAR), State Agency for National Security, Commission for Illegal Assets Forfeiture, prosecutors, magistrate, investigators and police officers, and non-governmental organisations.

**Responsibilities of the project promoters**

In order to ensure effectiveness and transparency in the implementation of the Programme, the Programme Operator shall use and encourage the Project Promoters to use information and publicity activities aimed at involvement of a wide range of stakeholders. These activities may include information days, workshops, meetings, conferences, round tables, internet, media presentations, brochures or other printed materials, etc.

Project Promoters shall include a Communication Plan in their project application, with the aim of creating awareness of the existence, the objectives, any bilateral cooperation with donor state entities, the implementation and the impact of support from the financial mechanism to the project.

The Project Promoter shall ensure that the information and publicity measures are implemented in accordance with the Communication Plan and that those taking part in the project have been informed of the funding from the Programme and the financial mechanism.

PO will provide support for the communication activities of the project promoters together with the NFP.

### Information and publicity measures

In order to accomplish the objectives of the Communication Plan, various information and publicity measures will be used depending on the target groups and their expectations.

The communication methods which will be used for the target groups are as follows:

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| Target groups | Communication method |
| General public | Media, web site/page, explanatory plaques, Facebook |
| Project promoters and potential beneficiaries of the programme | Press releases, web site/page, e-mails, media, manuals |
| Potential and actual partner entities, embassies and other representatives of the donor states | Press releases, web site, e-mails, media, Facebook, conferences, regular seminars |
| Central, regional and local authorities and other public bodies | Manuals, e-mails, web site, media, Facebook |
| Social partners (trade unions, employers and business groups and organisations, civil society organisations) | Press releases, media, web site, Facebook |
| Local, regional and national opinion formers and influencers, including journalists and the media, academics, researchers and educators. | E-mails, press releases, press briefings, press conferences, regular seminars, web site, Facebook |

The major communication tools which will be used to inform the general public and all the target groups are:

**Media campaigns**

Press conferences for big events and milestones (including Programme launch and closure);

Press releases will be sent out to alert the public for all main activities and achievements on the Programme, especially regarding calls for projects and award of funding;

Press briefings, assisting journalists to write in-depth stories;

Message “Working Together for a Green, Competitive and Inclusive Europe” will be the key message to communicate on all levels for specific events.

Media monitoring to timely identify adverse stories or criticism and create possibilities to undertake adequate measures for resolving the problems;

Media monitoring will be an important tool to measure the awareness of communication and will shows the media interest and public opinion among different media – national and local, specific events, etc.

**Print materials**

The Programme Operator will use a set of print materials to orientate and later provide more detailed information on all aspects of the Programme. It will include leaflets, fact sheets, guidelines and copies of key documents.

**Web and social media based information**

The NFP will further develop its current website to serve as a single portal that provides information on all programmes. POs will not have to create their own websites but rather have access to subpages of the NFP website. Through the day-by-day communication and the established working group, the PO will maintain a webpage with timely and useful information available to stakeholders and general public. The webpage, in Bulgarian and in English will be linked to the website of the EEA and Norway Grants in Bulgaria, and shall be used for any information on all funded projects including contact information, description, duration, amount of funding and partners where applicable; updates in the course of implementation including photos and videos where available; Information on open calls, documents pertaining to the open calls available for download as well as results; project stories and information about public events, etc.

Facebook is the primary tool to disseminate information to the wide audience. The PO continues the presence on the social media by renaming the existing pages for the 2009 – 2014 programmes with the new ones 2014-2021 and thus ensures continuity.

### Major information activities

* 1. Opening press conference

It will aim to create awareness of the existence, the objectives, the possibilities for bilateral cooperation between the relevant institutions within the framework of the programme and the actual bilateral cooperation before its start, the forthcoming implementation and the overall expected impact of support from the financial mechanism through the Programme.

* 1. Dissemination of information

Information on the programme and the open call will be disbursed through the contact network of the Monitoring Committees of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Internal Security Fund. As most governmental bodies and non-government organisations in the home affairs area are represented in the Monitoring Committees, the information will reach a large range of stakeholders and potential project promoters.

* 1. Information day on the open call

It will aim to inform potential project promoters on the purpose of the Norway Grants support, eligibility criteria, application process, and selection procedures.

* 1. Information day with all Project Promoters at the start of the projects’ implementation;

Project Promoters will receive information on project implementation, eligibility of costs and detailed technical information.

* 1. Closing events
* Seminar with the stakeholders: the overall impact of support from the financial mechanisms to the key stakeholders and the general public; close cooperation and interaction between the competent authorities that worked together within the framework of the Programme;
* Press conference: actual benefits and changes, results and achievements, due to the Programme and the financial mechanisms support.

f. Social media

* In the previous Programme period a facebook page of Programme Operator BG 12 and BG 13 was created. Currently 220 followers were reached. The Facebook site will continue to be used under the new Programme as a tool for information regarding activities being organised by the PO and the PPs, general information and publicity of the milestones achieved by the Programme and projects.

### Website Webpage

The following information on the Programme shall be published on a specifically dedicated webpage, in Bulgarian and in English:

1. Information on the Programme and the financial mechanism;
2. Publication of the draft open calls for public consultation;
3. open calls, including documents pertaining to the open calls:
   1. information on selection criteria, procedure and deadlines;
   2. information on all funded projects, including contact information, a description of the projects and their duration, the amount of funding allocated to the projects and information on cooperation with Donor State entities,
   3. information on impact from the Programme and financial mechanism support;
   4. relevant documents;
4. a link to the website of the financial mechanism;
5. a link to the website of the financial mechanism in Bulgaria;
6. links to websites of donor programme partners and other relevant institutions; and
7. contact information, including website messenger allowing users to submit information requests or signals through the internet site.

Before the start of the Programme, the following preliminary information on Ministry of Interior (MoI) website dedicated to the Programme will be published in Bulgarian and in English:

* information on the Programme and the financial mechanism; objective of the Programme and programme areas; target groups; expected outcomes; public and private structures relevant to the Programme area - potential and actual partner entities from Bulgaria; potential and actual project promoters;
* information on the administrative departments or bodies responsible for implementation of the information and publicity measures, incl. a contact person;
* programme related documents, description of the management and control system, manuals and guidelines for implementation;
* major events, such as stakeholder consultations, stakeholder meetings, cooperation committee meetings, seminars, conferences.

The key collaboration at programme level is the one between the PO and the PPs. This cooperation will aim to build the foundations and overall structure for the successful implementation and dissemination of the Programme in order to obtain the best results from the contribution of the Grants.

To achieve this, the PO will guide the PPs throughout the implementation of their information and publicity activities. The PPs will be provided with the relevant regulations, guidelines and manuals (issued by the Donors and by the NFP/PO) and receiving continuous support. The PO will also monitor the PPs communication activities through the Project Progress Reports (PPRs). It will be stressed to the PPs about the necessity of such communication activities in contributing to reach the objectives of the Programme.

Conversely, the PPs will be involved in the planning and organisation of the activities carried out by the PO in order to include the progress and, eventually, the results/impact of their projects which constitute the main achievements of the Grants

### Budget

The indicative budget for this Communication Plan is X% of the Management Costs of the Programme Operator. The budget shall be allocated to the following activities:

* Development and maintenance of a website;
* Conferences costs;
* Publicity of calls for proposals and information days;
* Preparing and issuing press releases;
* Production of promotional materials (e.g. pens, flags and associated merchandises);
* Attendance at international events relating to communications;
* Hosting of visiting delegations;
* Participation in seminars and conferences on national and international level, if necessary;
* Responding to specific requests for information from the general public, media queries, political representatives, parliamentary questions, researchers and academics and international queries;
* Collecting data on information and publicity actions for monitoring and progress report purposes.

### Evaluation and monitoring

Section 2.2.2 (f) of Annex 3 of the Regulations requires the PO to provide an indication of how the information and publicity measures will be evaluated in terms of visibility and awareness of the FMs, their objectives and impact, supported Programmes and of the role played by the Donor States.

The PO understands that the effectiveness of information and publicity actions needs to be measured to ascertain that the desired level of message penetration is being achieved. The results of evaluation and monitoring exercises can then be used to adapt or reinforce the Plan as necessary. The means used for monitoring and evaluating the Communication Plan shall be proportional to the information and publicity measures identified in this document. This section outlines the approach to be followed with regard to the evaluation of the Communication Plan activities, setting out the assessment exercise to be carried out.

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| Activity | Assesment tool | Source of verification |
| Opening/closing event | Opening/closing event carried out | - participants lists  -announcement/invitation letters  - photos or videos |
| Dissemination of information | |  | | --- | | Publicity materials to spread knowledge about the grants and their visual identity, involvement of stakeholders,  Information about the Programme and the financial mechanism on the PO web site; Conducting of information days for the potential project promoters | | - number of publications on the PO webpage <https://www.mvr.bg/dmp> and NFM webpage |
| Facebook | Posts about projects, PP activities, key events | - number of likes/followers  on facebook  - number of posts |
| Web page | Maintain a database | - number of the on the webpage provided informations |
| Visibility measures | Ensuring that the appropriate slogans and logos feature on all the PO’s communication actions | Copies or photos of all information and publicity material produced |

Reporting on the progress of the information and publicity measures during the programming period will be through reports provided to the NFP and FMO. These reports will be made available on the associated websites, and to the general public and representative organisations on request.

Evaluation will take place at different times and could be undertaken through a number of routes including e-mail surveys; direct feedback from staff; actual attendance at events; willingness and enthusiasm for further involvement.

Specific criteria shall be developed by the Programme Operator together with an external expert to evaluate the information and publicity measures. These criteria will be used as a benchmark of the effectiveness of the Plan’s implementation and to inform communications interventions over the timeframe of the Plan. Communication Plan shall be dynamic and flexible to changes, if needed. When improvident circumstances take place, the Communication Plan can be modified by the Programme Operator in order to reach the outlined objectives.

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