European Commission

COMMUNICATION NETWORK INDICATORS

SUPPORTING GUIDE

Version 1.2 – 28 January 2019

TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTION 1

NETWORKS 3

EVENTS 5

PUBLICATIONS 7

VIDEOS AND PHOTOS 9

SOCIAL MEDIA 11

WEBSITES 13

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS 15

GLOSSARY 17

INTRODUCTION

Monitoring and Indicators

This guide accompanies the streamlined list of Communication Network Indicators, adopted by the Communication Network in June 2018 and endorsed by the Corporate Communication Steering Committee in November 2018.

Why do we need good indicators?

Harmonised and simplified indicators across the communication domain will allow services to:

- Better steer and coordinate the work of external contractors when designing and implementing monitoring systems and evaluations, leading to better quality;
- Increase the effectiveness of learning by improving comparability and consistency of data generated through monitoring and evaluation activities, setting the basis for future benchmarking;
- Improve transparency and accountability of spending on communication activities through clearer and more consistent measurement of success.

Monitoring is a continuous and systematic process of data collection about an activity. It helps identify and address any implementation problems and generates information that allows evaluating whether the activity has achieved its objectives. A good monitoring system is planned alongside setting the objectives.

There is no clear-cut rule how detailed the indicators should be – this depends on the type of the initiative, the complexity of the intervention logic and the set objectives. In principle, however, the more "SMART" (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-Bound) the policy objective is, the easier it is to define a corresponding indicator.

Indicators measure the degree of meeting objectives, mobilising resources and getting results. They can be quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative indicators define measurable information and are mathematically verifiable, whilst qualitative indicators reflect, reasons, personal views or attitudes and so on. In a good monitoring system, both types of indicators complement each other.

When it comes to choosing indicators, more is not necessarily better. A handful of "RACER" (Relevant, Accepted, Credible, Easy to monitor and Robust) indicators is usually sufficient.

Further Methodological Guidance and Framework Contract

Monitoring and indicators are part of a larger process of evidence-based decision-making and evaluation. In order to get the most out of communication activities, monitoring systems and indicators should be considered from the very start of the planning and designing process.

This guide provides additional context and support for applying the "Communication Network Indicators". The Communication Evaluation Resource Centre, on the DG Communication Corporate Services intranet hosts an extensive catalogue of useful material for evaluating and planning communication activities. These resources aim to help plan, design and carry out results-focused and evidence-based communication activities

- For a general overview of carrying out an evaluation of communication activities, including the various roles and responsibilities in the evaluation process, please consult the Evaluation Charter;
- For detailed descriptions of the principles of good evaluation as well as of the various methodological tools used, such as surveys, focus groups, etc. please consult the Toolkit for the Evaluation of Communication Activities;
- For a selection of ready-made small-scale evaluation tools, such as feedback forms, visitor surveys and ex-post surveys, please consult the Small-Scale Evaluation Tools.

Additionally, the Directorate-General for Communication evaluation function manages a Framework Contract (FWC) for evaluation of communication activities. This FWC is available to all Commission services and interinstitutional partners. Please consult the Communication Evaluation Resource Centre on DG Communication Corporate Services intranet. For any questions regarding evaluation of communication activities in the Commission using the FCW, do not hesitate to contact the evaluation function: COMM-EVALUATION@ec.europa.eu

The Communication Evaluation Model

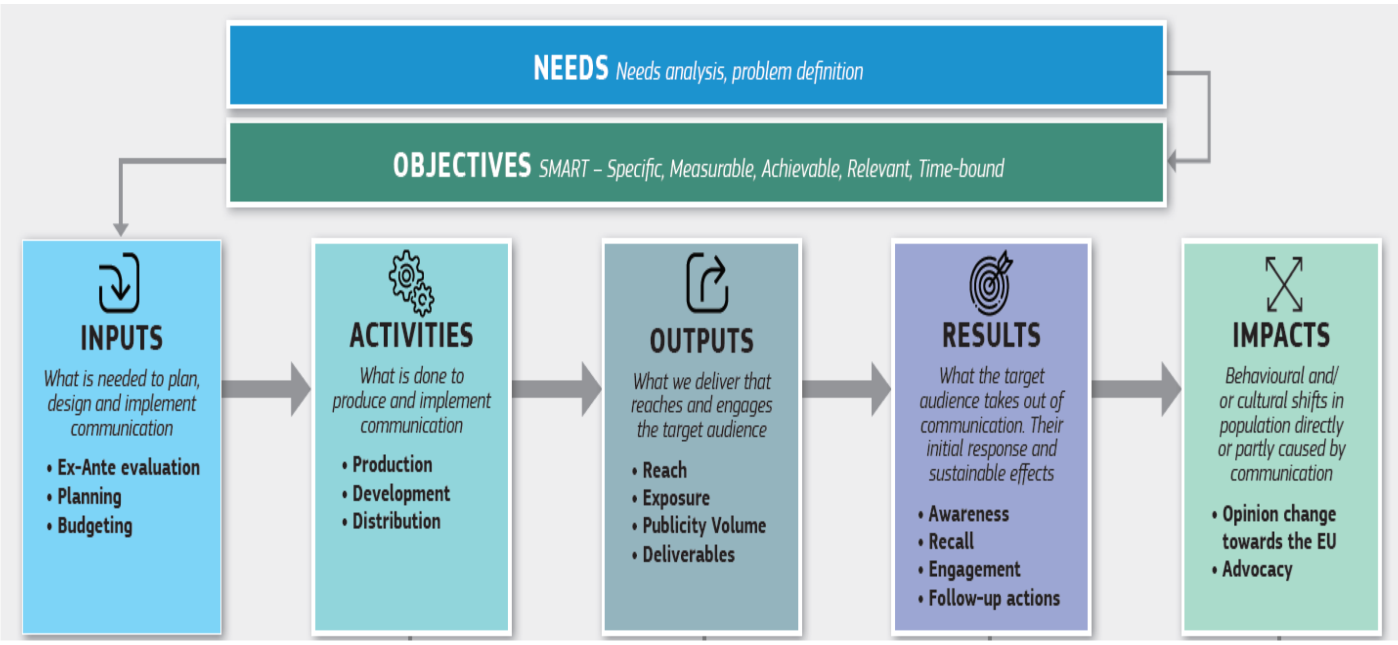
- **Input:** What is needed to plan and design a successful communication action. **With input indicators, we measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisational aspects of communication activities.**
  - Example: Planning, budgeting, SMART objective setting.

- **Activity:** What is done to generate communication products and deliverables. **With activity indicators, we measure what activities we implement aiming to deliver communication.**
  - Example: Writing posts, designing posters, organising an event, developing a website.

- **Output:** What is done to reach and engage our target audience. **With output indicators, we measure what we deliver and how well we reach the target group with the communication action.**
  - Example: Number of impressions on social media, number of participants in an event, number of readers of a publication, audience reach of a campaign.

- **Result:** The immediate effect resulting directly from the communication. These indicators tell us whether the desired specific effect was achieved due to the communication action. **With result indicators, we measure the effectiveness of the activities.**
  - Example: audience recall of a campaign, overall usefulness of an event, conversion rates on websites.

- **Impact:** The shift in public opinion, society, the economy or individual behaviour that the European Commission's communication activities are striving to achieve. **With impact indicators, we measure behavioural and social changes and reputation improvement triggered by the communication actions.**
  - Example: number of people who have more positive opinion of the EU; an increase in Eurobarometer results on questions like "Trust in the Institutions".



NETWORKS

OUTPUTS *What we deliver that reaches and engages the target audience*	The main output of a network is the number of “contacts” that it makes. This can be visitors, attendees at events, members, calls, emails, etc. Networks, which have a broader target audience, benefit greatly from keeping track of new contacts compared to returning users as it indicates how well they are “getting the word out”. Simple surveys and counting of contacts can already give a very valuable insight to how the network is performing over time.
RESULTS *What the target audience takes out of the communication. Their initial response and sustainable effects*	User satisfaction gives an insight into the driving factors behind the numbers. Surveys can extract comparable data from a large population when used properly. As networks offer services in various forms, how useful users perceive them to be is an important indicator of success. Networks that need to keep growing their reach can help inform future decisions by tracking users intentions to return to the network or willingness to recommend the service.
IMPACTS *Behavioural and/ or cultural shifts in population directly or partly caused by the communication*	The ultimate goal of EU communication is to improve its image and encourage people to be multipliers of the positive messages of the EU. Ideally, impact is measured 3-6 months after the communication, to assess whether the effect has carried beyond the initial point of contact. Accomplishing this requires having an overview of the users of the network and a capacity to reach out to them with surveys. Networks which seek to inform users of other services and opportunities that are available to them have that as an impact goal as well.

Methods: Survey, Desk Analysis

Going beyond counting the number of contacts a network makes, surveys can give a lot of relevant information about the contacts and measure whether you are achieving the goals that you set out.

The simplest way to run a survey is an on-the spot paper handout for visitors to fill in after their visit. It should be kept as short as possible, only asking for necessary information. Long surveys are less likely to be filled in and they contribute to “survey-fatigue”. Similarly, avoid open-ended questions, opting for predefined answers to enhance comparability and simplicity.

If the network operates mainly online, web surveys can be a very potent tool to measure performance. One of the main challenges of designing a good web-survey is to come up with relevant questions to find what the visitor is using the page for. To maximise the response rate, limit yourself to very few clear and relevant questions. Rather than using “invasive” methods such as pop-ups, surveys can be integrated more smoothly onto the site for example through a banner. Be creative with the interactive capabilities of online platforms! For instance, if you are after an overall rating of the usefulness of the website, you might only need a quick-and-easy slider control to get the information.

For measuring more sustainable effects and impacts, or if the on-the-spot surveys are not feasible, consider a follow-up survey. Be conscious that you will need contact details to send it out. This data can be gathered via registrations or previous surveys, but make sure to seek the users’ consent to be in line with the data protection rules. Follow-up surveys can be used to complement existing data, e.g. to find out how many contacts said that they would come back vs how many actually did.

Prototype Questions

PROTOTYPE QUESTION	RESPONSE CATEGORY
Overall, from 1-5 (1 being not useful at all and 5 being very useful) how useful did you find this visit?	1 2 3 4 5
Overall, from 1-5 (1 being not useful at all and 5 being very useful) how useful did you find this page?	1 2 3 4 5
How likely is it that you will share the information obtained with other people?	Very likely Fairly likely Neither likely nor unlikely Unlikely Very unlikely
How likely is it that you will consider returning?	Very likely Fairly likely Neither likely nor unlikely Unlikely Very unlikely
How did you hear about us?	[Insert channels as appropriate]

Other Useful Tools and Tips

In addition to monitoring, the numbers of contacts and user surveys there are other tools to gather feedback and improve your performance.

Focus Groups - organising a focus group of contacts will enable you to get feedback and suggestions. Additionally, it will allow testing new ideas for future activities.

Customer Journey Mapping - the process of recording how a (potential) target audience experiences a communication they are exposed to from their perspective. This involves mapping the interactions and feelings that take place throughout the journey.

Some tools require expert knowledge and are best carried out with the help of an external contractor. For that purpose please use DG Communication's framework contract for evaluation and impact assessment of communication activities.

For more resources and guidance for evaluating communication activities, as well as for information on using the Framework Contract for communication evaluation, please refer to Communication Evaluation Resource Centre on the DG Communication Corporate Services intranet.

EVENTS

OUTPUTS
What we deliver that reaches and engages the target audience

When evaluating an event reach is the key output. However, one should also consider not only how many people attended but also who. If the intended target audience is not attracted to the event, then it may not necessarily be a success. Attendance can be monitored for example through a registration before the event or on the spot. Using a short survey can also give valuable insights like whether the attendees are newcomers or how they learned about the event.

RESULTS
What the target audience takes out of the communication. Their initial response and sustainable effects

Monitoring overall satisfaction gives an insight into the attendees' perception of the event. Surveys can extract comparable data from a large population when used properly. In addition to indicating the overall satisfaction, surveys can also assess whether your communication had its intended effect, be it simply informing attendees or engaging people in follow-up actions.

IMPACTS
Behavioural and/ or cultural shifts in population directly or partly caused by the communication

The ultimate goal of EU communication is to improve its image and encourage people to be multipliers of the positive messages. Ideally, impact is measured 3-6 months after the activity, to assess whether the effect has carried beyond the initial point of contact. Accomplishing this requires having an overview of the participants in events and a capacity to reach out to them with surveys.

Methods: Survey, Desk Analysis

An analysis of attendance means assessing the extent to which you reached the target audience. This requires collecting information on the registered participants through, for example, an online registration form. This analysis would usually cover issues such as: whether those reached were the intended target audience; how many people were reached (including social media and other coverage); and whether new audiences were reached (especially important if this at was an objective).

Surveys are a standard tool for measuring and evaluating an event. They complement attendance analysis and give information about the background and the overall satisfaction of the participants, their background, or whether they have or intend to engage in follow-up actions.

Some tips for event surveys:

- Keep it short and simple: no more than 10 questions with no more than 2 open ended questions, long and complicated surveys discourage replies;
- Ask for information that tells you how efficient and effective the event was. Consider, for example, whether you really need to know the participant's gender or other such information;
- Consider how to get information that can be used in planning future events, or insights that will help your policy colleagues;
- Depending on the goals and available resources, a more in-depth interviews with a limited number of individual participants can be conducted. This offers more detailed qualitative data.

Prototype Questions

PROTOTYPE QUESTION	RESPONSE CATEGORY
Overall, from 1-5 (1 being not useful at all and 5 being very useful) how useful did you find this event?	1 2 3 4 5
How likely is it that you will share the information obtained with other people?	Very likely Fairly likely Neither likely nor unlikely Unlikely Very unlikely
How likely is it that you will [insert relevant follow-up action]?	Very likely Fairly likely Neither likely nor unlikely Unlikely Very unlikely
How often have you attended this event before?	[Insert as appropriate]
How did you hear about us?	[Insert channels as appropriate to how you reach out]
After attending [this event], would you say that your opinion about the EU is	Much more positive Slightly more positive The same as before Slightly more negative Much more negative

Other Useful Tools and Tips

Other tools besides surveys can inform evaluation of events, including focus groups and observation.

Focus Groups - Using a focus group at the planning stage of an event can help better tailor the event to the needs of the target audience.

Observation at the Event - Observation complements surveys by providing qualitative information on participants' behaviour and attitudes – especially on interactions at the event.

Some tools require expert knowledge and are best carried out with the help of an external contractor. For that purpose please use DG Communication's framework contract for evaluation and impact assessment of communication activities.

For more resources and guidance for evaluating communication activities, as well as for information on using the Framework Contract for communication evaluation, please refer to Communication Evaluation Resource Centre on the DG Communication Corporate Services intranet

PUBLICATIONS

OUTPUTS *What we deliver that reaches and engages the target audience*	For all publications measurement of reach / indicative reach will be important. This considers number of downloads and number publications disseminated on request. Ideally, we want to also monitor who we are reaching, this requires employing various methods to monitor who uses the publication. Output also can indicate completion of publication goals relating to accessibility and language coverage.
RESULTS *What the target audience takes out of the communication. Their initial response and sustainable effects*	Monitoring overall satisfaction gives an insight into the perceptions of the users on whether the publications are broadly "hitting the mark". This is done through surveys by extracting comparable data from a large population. In addition to overall satisfaction, a survey can also assess whether your communication had its intended effect, be it simply informing users or engaging people in follow-up actions.
IMPACTS *Behavioural and/ or cultural shifts in population directly or partly caused by the communication*	The ultimate goal of EU communication is to improve its image and encourage people to be multipliers of the positive messages of the EU. Ideally, impact is measured 3-6 months after the communication, to assess whether the effect has carried beyond the initial point of contact. Accomplishing this requires a capacity to identify and reach out the users of publications with surveys.

Methods: Survey, Web Analytics, Desk Analysis

Depending on where a publication is disseminated, monitoring data is available from the EC bookshop as well as through using the EC web analytics tool in cooperation with the Publications Office.

Evaluation provides data on the relevance, usefulness, and impact that a publication has on the knowledge and behaviour of its readers. An ex-post evaluation may also aim at improving the future publications in order to reach the target audience better.

The methodological tools for an ex-post analysis will depend on the specific case but most commonly they will include a survey. Such a survey can examine how useful the readers find the publication, whether they took any specific action as a result of reading the publication, etc.

Measuring effect is often difficult, as publications are generally not distributed to known users. Different options are nevertheless available:

- Include a survey on the website where the publication is available – but consider if they will have read the publication;
- Send a survey to those who have ordered the publication via the EU Bookshop;
- Survey a group of participants of an event in which the publication was disseminated;
- Organise a focus group (representative of the target audience) of people who have reviewed the publication.

If a contractor designs the survey, make sure that the contractor has a very good understanding of what you want to know, what your publication intends to achieve or what you would like your publication(s) to achieve in the future.

Prototype Questions

PROTOTYPE QUESTION	RESPONSE CATEGORY
Overall, from 1-5 (1 being not useful at all and 5 being very useful) how useful did you find this publication?	1 2 3 4 5
How likely is it that you will share [name of publication] with other people?	Very likely Fairly likely Neither likely nor unlikely Unlikely Very unlikely
How clear and easy to understand was this publication?	Very clear and easy Clear and easy Neither clear and easy nor not clear and easy Not very clear and easy Not clear and easy at all

Other Useful Tools and Tips

In addition to evaluating your publication ex-post, other tools in the preparatory phase can be used to maximise the potential impact of the publication.

Online Consultation – if possible, use appropriate multipliers/channels for different target groups;

Focus Group Consultation – invite a selection of people who represent your target group to get as much information as possible to succeed with your publication;

Expert Workshop – invite experts in the area to comment on the needs for a specific group.

At the end of the consultation, you should have an overview of your target audience, how to reach them, and how to monitor and assess the success of the publication.

Some tools require expert knowledge and are best carried out with the help of an external contractor. For that purpose please use DG Communication's framework contract for evaluation and impact assessment of communication activities.

For more resources and guidance for evaluating communication activities, as well as for information on using the Framework Contract for communication evaluation, please refer to Communication Evaluation Resource Centre on the DG Communication Corporate Services intranet.

VIDEOS AND PHOTOS

OUTPUTS *What we deliver that reaches and engages the target audience*	Though measuring the output of a video or photo is relatively straightforward - using views as the main metric – there are nonetheless some caveats. Most notably, embedded videos that start playing as a visitor opens a page or videos only played for a very short amount of time before exited should be treated with caution when measuring output.
RESULTS *What the target audience takes out of the communication. Their initial response and sustainable effects*	Surveys are often used to measure the “results” of a video or photo to understand whether viewers find the material useful, informative or whether they achieve the goals. Depending on the objectives, one might evaluate the user experiences of the platform used to access the material. The long-term lifecycle of a video can also provide useful insights to its the relevance and engagement potential.
IMPACTS *Behavioural and/ or cultural shifts in population directly or partly caused by the communication*	The ultimate goal of EU communication is to improve its image and encourage people to be multipliers of the positive messages of the EU. Ideally, we measure impact 3-6 months after the communication to assess whether the effect has carried beyond the initial point of contact. In the case of videos, surveys can help us answer such questions. However, we need to be conscious that in order to be able to contact relevant viewers we need to collect the relevant information beforehand.

Methods: Website Analytics, Social Media Metrics, Survey, Desk Analysis

The approach to evaluating a video or a photo depends largely on the platform and the evaluation questions. For online videos uploaded to sites, such as YouTube, the platforms offer analytics tools similar to other social media platforms. These can be used to measure how many people are watching the videos, for how long and whether they take certain follow-up actions (such as subscribing to a channel).

For material uploaded to the Commission Audiovisual Portal, there are website analytics that can help to extract relevant metrics for the specific content that is under an evaluation. This is done similarly to websites evaluation and can often be done as part of a wider analysis focusing on a platform rather than a single video or a photo.

However, when extracting subjective user experiences, analytics and metrics will not suffice. To find out whether the material had the set intended effect (informing the viewer about a specific policy, a call to action, etc.) or to monitor opinion change, one needs to ask the users directly. This can be done through a survey, collecting relevant information from users and making the answers comparable. An online survey may gather information such as:

- What is the background of the people viewing your content?
- What brought them to your content?
- Did they find it informative and/or useful?
- Have they shared it with other people?

Depending on the set goals, these insights can prove very valuable when planning the future audiovisual content.

Prototype Questions

PROTOTYPE QUESTION	RESPONSE CATEGORY
Overall, from 1-5 (1 being not useful at all and 5 being very useful) how useful did you find this [video/ photo]?	1 2 3 4 5
How likely is it that you will share this information with other people?	Very likely Fairly likely Neither likely nor unlikely Unlikely Very unlikely
How likely is it that you will [insert relevant follow-up action]?	Very likely Fairly likely Neither likely nor unlikely Unlikely Very unlikely
After [seeing this video] you would say that your opinion about the EU is	Much more positive Slightly more positive No difference Slightly more negative Much more negative

Other Useful Tools and Tips

In addition to surveys, there are other tools that can be used to evaluate audiovisual content.

Focus Groups - A focus group can help you:

- Informing about the needs and expectations of the target audience. A well compiled focus group can refine and adjust the content to suit the target audience better;
- Giving feedback on existing content: what are the strong points, is the message clear, what could be improved, etc. Focus groups can give in-depth qualitative feedback to make the best of the current material.

Some tools require expert knowledge and are best carried out with the help of an external contractor. For that purpose please use DG Communication's framework contract for evaluation and impact assessment of communication activities.

For more resources and guidance for evaluating communication activities, as well as for information on using the Framework Contract for communication evaluation, please refer to [Communication Evaluation Resource Centre] on the DG Communication Corporate Services intranet.

SOCIAL MEDIA

OUTPUTS *What we deliver that reaches and engages the target audience*	When measuring social media activity we often measure basic metrics such as impressions and followers to get an overview of the overall outreach and activity. However, these standard indicators form the foundation of deeper insights into your digital communications effectiveness. You should always aim to make the most of your data.
RESULTS *What the target audience takes out of the communication. Their initial response and sustainable effects*	Beyond the initial reaching of an audience member, we start to see results when users interact with us on social media. This can be through commenting, sharing, mentioning a relevant hashtag and so on. Who and how engages with us on social media and other relevant data give an insight to the real implications of reach figures. Similarly to outputs, results indicators help optimise the content strategy and better tailor it to your audience.
IMPACTS *Behavioural and/ or cultural shifts in population directly or partly caused by the communication*	The ultimate goal of EU communication is to improve its image and encourage people to be multipliers of the positive messages of the EU. Ideally, impact is measured 3-6 months after the communication, to assess whether the effect has carried beyond the initial point of contact. In the case of large campaigns where social media is a key tool of communication, we can use surveys to assess whether social media activity has had an impact.

Methods: Social Media Metrics, Surveys

The tools for measuring activities on social media are either built into the social media platforms or provided by a third-party monitoring tool. Often we collect basic metrics such as shares and likes which are particularly useful when combined with other data to extract most relevant performance metrics. The European Commission social media team can support you in retrieving relevant data from Commission social media entities and provide methodological guidance on how to best utilise the data.

The sources of data constantly evolve and provide different or better methods to measure what matters, also new platforms or tools might emerge anytime. It is essential to have thorough understanding of what these tools measure and to what extent the data is comparable over time or across different platforms. Occasionally, the right data is available but presented in the wrong or insufficient format, which requires downloading and post-processing of the data to extract the insights relevant to you.

When using the corporate monitoring tool, you get the benefit of more advanced data analysis such as influencer identification, trends and pattern recognition, which can be tailored more specifically to a campaign's measurement needs. This can be instrumental to understanding the real impact of social media activity. Furthermore, if you reach users with a high influence and they engage with the activity, they spread the message to many more people.

External consultants might work with different social media monitoring tools that calculate metrics with the same name in different ways. It is thus important to ensure comparability of metrics across different tools.

Prototype Questions

PROTOTYPE QUESTION	RESPONSE CATEGORY
Did you follow [insert relevant social media channel here] before the campaign?	Yes No
After [following the social media account/seeing this post/etc] would you say that your opinion about the EU is	Much more positive Slightly more positive No difference Slightly more negative Much more negative

Other Useful Tools and Tips

If running a campaign with a social media platform as one of the principal communication tool, it is important to consider taking a more in-depth approach to analysing how the campaign impacts your overall social media presence and vice-versa. It is often valuable to take baseline measures before, during and after the campaign.

Measuring can be done on a channel level (example: a Facebook page) and on an item level (example: a Facebook post).

When designing the activities, one should compare to similar initiatives to avoid a duplication of efforts and instead maximise utilising existing data. Following questions should be asked:

- Is there a previous campaign with data that can be used?
- Is there another organisation account with data that we can use?

Measurement should be made:

- Before the campaign to get the baseline if, for example, you use an existing platform or profile on social media rather than creating a new one;
- At intervals during the campaign (for example once a week) to evaluate progress continuously and decide if actions are needed (for example additional ad exposure);
- After the campaign to make a concluding evaluation.

Some tools require expert knowledge and are best carried out with the help of an external contractor. For that purpose please use DG Communication's framework contract for evaluation and impact assessment of communication activities.

For more resources and guidance for evaluating communication activities, as well as for information on using the Framework Contract for communication evaluation, please refer to Communication Evaluation Resource Centre on the DG Communication Corporate Services intranet.

WEBSITES

OUTPUTS *What we deliver that reaches and engages the target audience*	In websites evaluation, website analytics are often used to monitor directly the volume of use However, one must be careful in distinguishing between number of visits, unique visitors and page views as all three give different insights into how the website is being used. A good monitoring arrangement will also be conscious of the rapidly evolving nature of web technology and adjust its methods accordingly.
RESULTS *What the target audience takes out of the communication. Their initial response and sustainable effects*	Once a user has reached the website, we monitor how they use it, whether it is simply viewing certain information or the completion of a goal, such as registration to a programme. Europa Analytics remains a powerful and useful tool at this stage as well, but certain aspects of the user experience can only be measured by asking the user directly. The most appropriate indicators will always be dependent on the exact nature of the website and the goals you set out for it.
IMPACTS *Behavioural and/ or cultural shifts in population directly or partly caused by the communication*	The ultimate goal of EU communication is to improve its image and encourage people to be multipliers of the positive messages of the EU. Ideally, we measure impact 3-6 months after the communication to assess whether the effect has carried beyond the initial point of contact. In the case of websites we use surveys as well as monitoring some of the follow-up actions taken on the platform, such as sharing the content on social media.

Methods: Web Analytics, Survey

Many different metrics are available from the website analytics package to evaluate a website. Some are explained in more detail in the glossary section of this guide. The Europa Analytics tool provides a set of reports to deliver exactly the metrics that are most commonly needed. The choice of metrics should be based on the purposes of the website and the selected indicators.

In addition to website analytics, one can also use a survey to gather feedback on the content of the website. Through an online survey a wide array information can be collected. This includes:

- Background/ the composition of your users;
- Visitors' satisfaction with the content;
- Reasons for visiting your website/purpose;
- Ease of use.

An online survey should be short and generally involve closed questions. It should take into consideration the size and type of website. A more technical website may need more in depth questions relating to the content and use, a more general website may be related to topics of more general interest.

Prototype Questions

PROTOTYPE QUESTION	RESPONSE CATEGORY
Overall, from 1-5 (1 being not useful at all and 5 being very useful) how useful did you find this website / page?	1 2 3 4 5
How likely is it that you will share this information with other people?	Very likely Fairly likely Neither likely nor unlikely Unlikely Very unlikely
After using [website name] would you say that your opinion about the EU is	Much more positive Slightly more positive No difference Slightly more negative Much more negative

Other Useful Tools and Tips

Before launching a website, it is essential to define **the goals of the website**. Design, content and information architecture should all point towards these goals. Such goals could include:

- Viewing a specific page containing key information to complete a user task;
- Signing up to a newsletter;
- Downloading a PDF;
- Submitting a web form;
- Commenting to a blog post;
- Submitting an application.

All these goals can be measured by tracking visits to individual URLs or tracking visitor interactions with content and they should be set up in the analytics tool. Use analytics to determine the impact of your digital presence and online campaigns.

Some tools require expert knowledge and are best carried out with the help of an external contractor. For that purpose please use DG Communication's framework contract for evaluation and impact assessment of communication activities.

For more resources and guidance for evaluating communication activities, as well as for information on using the Framework Contract for communication evaluation, please refer to Communication Evaluation Resource Centre on the DG Communication Corporate Services intranet.

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

OUTPUTS *What we deliver that reaches and engages the target audience*	When evaluating integrated communication campaigns one can focus on individual channels used or the campaign as a whole. Aggregated statistics help measure the overall reach of the campaign. Due to the difficulties of obtaining data for some channels, these figures are always an approximation and should be regarded as such. Additionally, simple desk analysis can give valuable insights into the efficiency by calculating the cost per contact.
RESULTS *What the target audience takes out of the communication. Their initial response and sustainable effects*	When measuring results, one should look beyond whether the campaign merely reached “someone”. This can be done by using surveys to measure the recall, informing about the effectiveness of the message in being retained after the communication. Furthermore, we link the communication to engagement, for instance by looking at follow-up actions.
IMPACTS *Behavioural and/ or cultural shifts in population directly or partly caused by the communication*	The ultimate goal of EU communication is to improve its image and encourage people to be multipliers of the positive messages of the EU. Ideally, impact is measured 3-6 months after the communication, to assess whether the effect has carried beyond the initial point of contact. In cases of large scale integrated communication campaigns special Eurobarometer questions can be used to register changes in public perception linked to the campaign content.

Methods: Survey

Integrated communication campaigns use multiple channels. This means that you can use a variety of evaluation principles and tools depending on which aspect of the campaign is evaluated. However, as an integrated communication campaign aims to be greater than the sum of its parts, there are approaches to evaluate the performance of the campaign as a whole.

Figures such as audience circulation, reach of posts, participants in events and so forth measure the aggregated reach of the campaign. An important caveat is to avoid double counting people who have been reached through multiple channels of the campaign. Contractors can employ methods to calculate “deduplicated reach” which aim to arrive at a more accurate estimate. However, even then one should remain realistic about the reported figures. Whenever possible, target audience should be carefully defined in the planning phase, and the reach should be measured in relation to reaching this very target audience. This gives a more accurate measure of performance.

Integrated communication campaigns usually have a theme or slogan. Surveys can help you test the effectiveness of the message by measuring recall. This allows you to compare channels to see what has been the most effective one, not only in terms of how many people were reached, but whether the message “stuck” in your audience.

Prompted recall – When people are exposed to communication material (such as a poster), and asked whether they have seen the campaign and the main messages associated with it.

Unprompted/spontaneous recall – When people are asked whether they have seen or heard any of the material relating to the campaign theme. This is generally considered a stronger indicator of message retention.

However, even high recall figures are not necessarily an indicator of success. Surveys should also explore whether people who were exposed to the campaign also engaged with it. This can mean simply visiting the campaign website or engaging in follow-up actions such as turning up to vote. A good survey will aim to find links between the communication activities and the resulting engagement.

Prototype Questions

PROTOTYPE QUESTION	RESPONSE CATEGORY
Unprompted recall: **Have you seen, read or heard about the [campaign/product]?**	Yes No Don't know
Prompted recall: **Have you seen [respondents are read the description of the campaign's products]**	One of them Two of them The three of them None of them Don't know
Recall per channel: **Did you see, read or hear about the [campaign/product] [name] through any of the following means?**	[Insert channels as relevant]
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement "The [name of the campaign/ product] improves your understanding of what the EU is doing in this field [or name policy]"	Totally agree Tend to agree Neither agree nor disagree Tend to disagree Totally disagree
How likely is it that you will share this information with other people?	Very likely Fairly likely Neither likely nor unlikely Unlikely Very unlikely
After [name of campaign] you would say that your opinion about the EU is	Much more positive More positive No difference More negative Much more negative

Other Useful Tools and Tips

For multi-channel communication campaigns, the planning and designing stages can be as crucial as the execution itself.

Ex-ante evaluation – Can be used to define the needs of a campaign, the target audience, SMART objectives and solid monitoring systems. An ex-ante evaluation or a foresight study is especially important for a high-impact campaign to maximise its success. It can employ a range of tools, such as focus groups, surveys and interviews.

Focus Groups – A well-selected focus group can help with tailoring the main message and function as a test audience before launching the campaign.

Some tools require expert knowledge and are best carried out with the help of an external contractor. For that purpose please use DG Communication's framework contract for evaluation and impact assessment of communication activities.

For more resources and guidance for evaluating communication activities, as well as for information on using the Framework Contract for communication evaluation, please refer to Communication Evaluation Resource Centre on the DG Communication Corporate Services intranet.

Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION
Bounce Rate	The percentage of visits that started on a particular page and left the website straight away. It is calculated as single page visits divided by all visits that started on this page.
Coherence	The extent to which the objectives, messages and implementation of a communication activity are non-contradictory (internal coherence), and do not contradict other activities with similar objectives (external coherence).
Conversion Goal	The measurement of some action an individual user has done on your site. This could be downloading a file, playing a video, opening a given page, subscribing to a newsletter or clicking a link that directs on to an external page.
Conversion Rate	The percentage of visits that triggered the conversion goal.
Cost per thousand (CPT)	The cost of reaching 1 000 of the target audience, e.g. 1 000 adults.
Desk Analysis	Evaluation method. Consists of compiling and studying secondary data and sources already available on the implementation of an activity. The purpose is to summarise, collate and synthesise existing relevant information.
Downloads	The number of clicks on a download link. Direct downloads are not counted.
Ex-ante Evaluation	Evaluation type. It describes an evaluation that occurs at the beginning of an intervention, at a planning or developing stage. It gathers data and evidence to define the logic and rationale for an intervention and to develop a baseline and indicators.
Ex-post Evaluation	Evaluation type. It is summative in nature and takes place at the end of a communication activity/intervention in order to determine the extent to which the outcomes and impacts were achieved because of the intervention.
Impressions	Unlike reach, impressions does not measure how many people saw the content, but how many times it has been potentially seen. It is based on an addition of audiences that have had an opportunity to see it. A single individual can register multiple impressions. Calculating impressions: sum of all potential audiences by channel.
Interim Evaluation	Evaluation type. Interim evaluations (or process evaluation) are intended to improve the decisions and actions of those responsible for ongoing communication activities. It mainly takes place during implementation of an activity. It can be done as continuous feedback or at a specific point during the intervention.

Media Tiers	Classification of different media channels in terms of impact and influence in order to better understand the dissemination of messages among the population as part of the overall communication strategy. Using quantitative (readership, circulation, audience figures, website's popularity) and qualitative (degree of specialisation and influence) indicators, the media channels are clustered according to the following criteria: • Tier 1: Mass media with very large circulation or very high number of views • Tier 2: Media with large circulation (but less than mass media) and influence • Tier 3: Regional media with influence
Metric	A measure of activities and performance. Metric is a generic term mostly used for online and social media measurements.
Page Views	The number of times a particular page was visited.
Reach	Unlike impressions, reach measures not the times the content was seen but how many people saw it. The appropriate data to use for reach is highly dependent on the channel, type of communication activity and the availability of data. Electronic communication can be more accurate in identifying a unique person, whilst more traditional media might not have such data available. When possible, reach should be measured as target audience reach, which is the percentage of people within the intended audience who were reached. When possible audited circulation and media ratings should be used to measure target audience reach.
Recall	A measure of communication effectiveness in which a sample of respondents is exposed to a communication activity and then at a later point in time is asked if they remember it. Recall can be on an aided or unaided basis. Aided recall means that the respondent is told for example the name of the campaign.
Returning Visits	A returning visit is (as opposed to a new visit) made by someone who has visited the website at least once before.
Time Spent on Website	The average duration of a visit on a website.
Unique Visitors	The number of unduplicated visitors coming to your website. Every user is only counted once, even if he visits the website multiple times during a specific period of time. Unique visitors are determined using first party cookies stored in your visitor browser. When a person visits your website on two different devices (for example a laptop and a mobile phone) then it will be counted as two unique visitors.
Visits	If a visitor comes to your website for the first time or if he/she visits a page more than 30 minutes after his/her last page view, this will be recorded as a new visit.

DG COMMUNICATION
COMM.D.1
Planning, Budget and Evaluation

COMM-EVALUATION@ec.europa.eu