

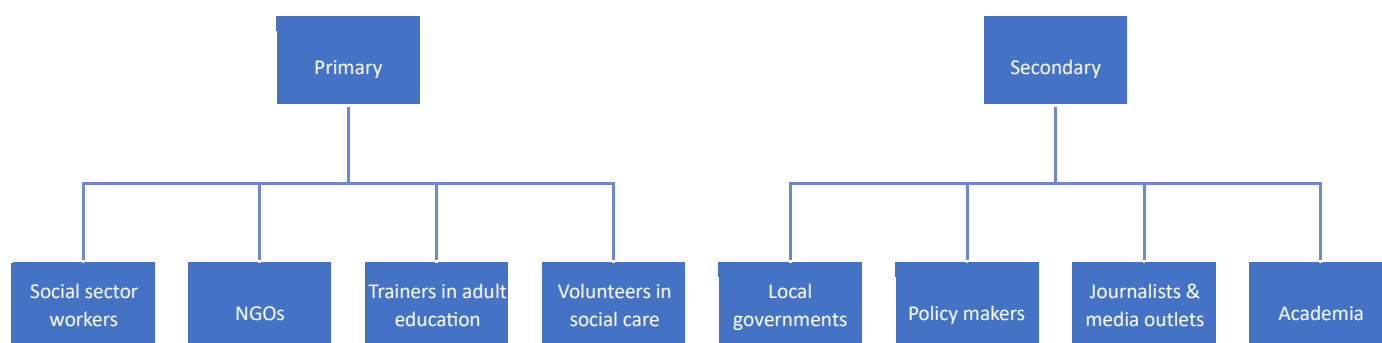
Communication Strategy for Innovative Horizons

Project Code: 2024-1-IT02-KA220-ADU-000245481

1. Objectives

- To raise awareness about the project at a local, national, and EU level
- Disseminate the project results to relevant stakeholders
- Engage with target audiences such as social workers, educators, NGOs, policymakers
- Ensure sustainability by encouraging long-term use of the platform and materials after the project ends

2. Target Audience



3. Key messages

The communication strategy for Innovative Horizons is centered on a set of clearly defined key messages. According to the European Commission (2020), effective dissemination depends on “clear, consistent messages tailored to the audience, which demonstrate the relevance and benefits of the project.” These messages must convey the value proposition of the project, highlight its tangible outcomes, and emphasize the benefits for stakeholders.

In line with these principles, the following four core messages were developed:

Message 1: Innovation in Social Sector Training

We provide modern, accessible training tools for social workers and educators.

This message reflects the innovative character of Innovative Horizons, emphasizing its goal of modernizing adult education in the social sector. It positions the project as a response to the need for new training resources that are both practical and inclusive.

Similar approaches have been highlighted by OECD (2019), which identifies innovation in adult learning as a crucial factor for tackling social exclusion and addressing emerging skills gaps.

Message 2: Digital Transformation and Inclusion

Supporting social sector professionals to combine empathy with technology.

The second message acknowledges the dual focus of the project: enhancing digital competencies, while preserving the human-centered nature of social work. It is particularly important to communicate that technological integration is not intended to replace the human element but to empower social sector professionals to work more effectively. This aligns with the DigiComp Framework of the European Union (Brandt et al., 2016) which promotes the development of digital and social skills for active citizenship.

Message 3: European Collaboration

Sharing best practices across Europe to improve adult education in the social sector.

This message relates to the transnational character of the project, highlighting the value of cross-border collaboration for knowledge exchange and innovation. The Erasmus+ Programme Guide (2023) places a strong emphasis on the sharing of good practices across European partners as a means of strengthening adult education systems. By foregrounding this aspect, the project demonstrates credibility, legitimacy, and a broader impact beyond national boundaries.

Message 4: Concrete Benefits

Free online resources, case studies, workshops, and networking opportunities.

Finally, the fourth message is designed to communicate tangible benefits to the audience. Research on strategic communication emphasizes that stakeholders are more likely to engage with a project when they have a clear understanding of “what is in it for them” (Interreg Europe, 2022). This message highlights the practical outputs of the

project, such as training modules, case studies, and networking events, to encourage active participation and knowledge uptake.

Theoretical and Practical Basis

The creation of these messages is informed by both communication theory and official EU guidelines. The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) suggests that perceived benefits and positive attitudes significantly influence a stakeholder's intention to engage. By clearly articulating the project's value and relevance, the messages aim to increase engagement and trust among target audiences.

Moreover, the European Commission's Dissemination and Exploitation of Results: A Practical Guide for Erasmus+ Projects (2020) recommends that messages should be concise, adaptable, and audience-focused, all of which are principles applied in the development of the above messages.

4. Communication channels

The communication strategy for *Innovative Horizons* employs a multi-channel approach to ensure broad, targeted, and sustained dissemination. In line with the European Commission's guidelines for Erasmus+ dissemination (2020), this selection balances digital, interpersonal, and institutional channels to reach stakeholders at multiple levels: local, national, and European.

The table below outlines the selected channels and the rationale behind each:

Channel	Use & Strategic Rationale
Website	The project website, to be developed by Il Brutto Anatroccolo ONLUS, functions as the centralized digital hub . It will host all key deliverables, including e-learning materials, research findings, and case studies. According to the European Commission (2020), dedicated online spaces improve transparency, accessibility, and sustainability of project results.
Social Media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram)	Social media platforms facilitate real-time updates, storytelling, and community engagement. Facebook and Instagram are ideal local outreach , while LinkedIn targets professionals and institutional partners . These platforms support the "engage and involve" model of digital dissemination (Interreg Europe, 2022) and allow for two-way communication with the public.
Newsletters	Email newsletters offer targeted, periodic updates to stakeholders, funders, and partner networks. Assuming the partners already have a high volume of newsletter subscribers, this method can increase the reach and engagement with the project.

Local Press & Media	Collaborating with local and national media (TV, print, radio) ensures that project outcomes reach a broader public, particularly those not active in digital spaces. Media coverage adds legitimacy and visibility to the project and may spark interest from decision-makers or future partners (European Commission, 2020).
Workshops & Conferences	Organizing in-person or online events facilitates interactive knowledge sharing, co-creation, and community building. According to Bucchi & Trench (2014), face-to-face formats enhance trust, dialogue, and impact, especially in the social sector where relational dynamics matter. Workshops also allow piloting of training content and gathering feedback.
Partner Network	Leveraging each partner's existing networks ensures that dissemination efforts are amplified through trusted channels. This peer-to-peer model enhances credibility and reach. As per Erasmus+ best practices, engaging multipliers is essential to maximize outreach with minimal cost.

Channel integration

These channels are not meant to operate in isolation. For example:

- Social media posts will link to the website for access to full content
- Newsletters will promote upcoming events or new learning resources
- Workshops will provide materials that are later disseminated online

This cross-channel integration increases engagement, improves information retention, and maximizes visibility across diverse audiences. Therefore, the strategy follows the **Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)** model, which emphasizes consistency, multi-platform presence, and message synergy (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Institutional Dissemination Channels

Furthermore, to ensure policy-level engagement, the project will develop two concise policy briefs summarizing the results and recommendations of the research. These will be shared with local governments and EU institutional networks. Additionally, outputs will be uploaded to the EPALE platform and the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform for broader institutional access. Whenever possible, participation in relevant education policy events or online roundtables will be pursued to encourage uptake.

5. Tools & Materials

A successful communication strategy requires the use of structured, replicable tools to ensure consistency, visibility, and professional delivery across all dissemination channels and partner organizations. These tools serve both internal coordination and external promotion, helping to create a unified visual and verbal identity for the project.

- **Communication Plan Document:** This strategic document functions as the guiding blueprint for all communication-related actions. It sets out key messages, target audiences, timelines, tools, responsibilities, and channels. It also aligns with the expectations of Work Package 4 (WP4) and supports internal coordination.
- **Press Kit:** The press kit will include a project description, key visuals (e.g., logo, photos, infographics), partner information, and contact details. Press kits are an essential tool in public relations, designed to facilitate media coverage and ensure the project is presented accurately and attractively. According to Bucchi and Trench (2014), such tools are vital for translating scientific or technical knowledge into media-friendly narratives.
- **Templates:** To ensure messaging and visual consistency, CONIL will develop a set of customizable templates for social media posts and workshop events announcements. This supports a corporate visual identity (CVI) approach, commonly used in EU projects to foster brand recognition and coherence across materials (Interreg Europe, 2022). Templates also reduce partner workload and the likelihood of errors, which is key in large, multi-country consortia.
- **Media Crisis Toolkit:** In case of online controversies, misinformation, or thematic sensitivities it is important for the partners to have a plan to fall back on. CONIL will appoint a designated media spokesperson and ensure that pre-approved response templates for key topics such as inclusion, funding, or educational practices are readily available.

6. Monitoring & Evaluation

Effective communication is not complete without ongoing monitoring and evaluation (M&E). These mechanisms ensure that the strategy remains relevant, that stakeholders are engaging, and that results can be demonstrated both during and after the project.

Engagement Metrics

Quantitative data will be gathered from digital platforms, including:

- Social media engagement (likes, shares, comments, saves)
- Website analytics (visits, click-through rates, downloads)
- Email metrics (open rates, link clicks)

These indicators serve as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to assess reach and interaction. The use of KPIs is aligned with the logic model approach to evaluation, where outputs and outcomes are measured against initial objectives (OECD, 2019).

Press Mentions & Media Clippings

A collection of articles, interviews, and mentions in traditional media will be maintained. This form of earned media reflects external validation and provides evidence of public interest and reach beyond the project's internal network.

Partner Reports

Each partner will give updates on:

- The dissemination actions taken
- Audiences reached
- Feedback received
- Any adjustments made locally

This decentralized monitoring supports the **participatory evaluation model**, where all actors are involved in tracking progress and learning (Zukoski & Luluquisen, 2002).

Post-Event Feedback

Workshops and training events will include anonymous feedback forms assessing:

- Satisfaction with the event
- Usefulness of the content
- Suggestions for improvement

This qualitative data helps tailor future efforts and validates the relevance of project outputs. Feedback also supports formative evaluation, allowing for adjustments during implementation rather than only after project completion.

7. Planned Activities (Short-term provisional timeline)

Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Explanation/Purpose
Draft Communication Plan	31/07/2025	CONIL	Central document defining objectives, audiences, messages, tools, and responsibilities for both internal and external communication.
Create dissemination materials	31/07/2025	CONIL	Social media package and newsletter for partner use; serves as the initial external content to introduce the project.
Launch of social media pages	31/08/2025	Akademia	Establish Facebook and LinkedIn presence to centralize public engagement and distribute content regularly.
Website launch	30/09/2025	Il Bruto Anatroccolo	Upload research results, project updates, and downloadable resources; ensures transparency and accessibility for all stakeholders.

8. Post-project Sustainability Plan

Ensuring the long-term impact and visibility of the *Innovative Horizons* project requires proactive planning beyond the funding period. To maintain engagement with the target

audience and foster an active learning ecosystem, the consortium will implement the following sustainability measures:

1. **Creation of a LinkedIn group:** This closed professional network will gather educators, trainers, social workers, and other relevant stakeholders involved in the project or aligned fields. The group will function as a knowledge-sharing platform, where members can exchange practices, post updates, and share new tools or policy developments in inclusive adult education.
2. **Alumni engagement:** Participants of the project's training modules and events will be invited to join the LinkedIn group and encouraged to share their implementation experiences. This will keep the conversation alive and ensure that the project's outputs continue to inspire practical applications.
3. **Annual newsletter:** A yearly email newsletter will summarize the most relevant developments from consortium partners, as well as spotlight success stories or further applications of project materials.
4. **Peer ambassador program:** A small cohort of highly engaged participants or trainers will be identified and supported to act as informal peer mentors. These "ambassadors" can disseminate project materials in local workshops or networks, supporting grassroots multiplication of knowledge and practices.

This sustainability approach is grounded in the theory of communities of practice (Wenger, 1998), which highlights the value of social learning, mutual engagement, and the co-construction of knowledge in professional settings. By extending the life of the network and outputs through recurring interaction and shared ownership, the project reinforces its relevance and resilience over time.

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