

2014 to 2020 England European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund Programme

Communications Annual Activity Plan for 2023

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Focus of 2023 communication activities

The 2023 communications activity plan aims to publicise the impact, purpose and priorities of ERDF and ESF funding in England and facilitate effective delivery and closure of these Programmes. The activities listed ensure compliance with the EU publicity requirements and build on well informed and used channels with target audiences. The plan is reflective of the stage of the funding and programme.

Activity Area	Activity Details	Target Audience	Purpose	Timescale	Cost	Funding Stream	Expected Results and Impacts	Evaluation Measures
ERDF and ESF Programme major annual information activity	National information activity using a variety of materials and channels. Activities could include the publication and distribution of new programme specific case studies in a booklet or on a GOV.UK website page or a special bulletin highlighting key milestones/figures for the programmes.	Relevant external partners including national and local audiences, LEPs, public and private sector organisations, voluntary sectors, EC, general public, media (including sector specific) among others. Internal MA staff and other government bodies.	To promote the programme, it's aims and raise awareness of programme/project achievements. To support partners and grant recipients as the programmes draw to a conclusion. Highlight project investments across various local areas and the impact / added value of these ESIF interventions to local Growth. This will be the official annual 'major information activity' for the programme, as specifically required in ESIF communications regulation (1303/2013 – Annex XII, 2.1.2b)	During 2023	Direct ERDF/ESF MA costs - time/ staffing only Production in-house	Growth Programme level – ESF and ERDF	Partners, projects and general public have an increased level of awareness and understanding of the activities, achievements and impact delivered through ERDF and ESF to support local growth	GOV.UK stats Bulletin stats
GOV.UK	Promotion of the ESI Funds pages on GOV.UK The structure, content and accessibility of ESI Funds website	External partners incorporating all European, national and local audiences, particularly those in	To provide one central online portal for all ESI Fund information To inform and raise awareness of the	Ongoing update of content as and when required	Time / staffing costs only	Growth Programme level – ERDF and ESF	Increased awareness of programmes, enhanced access to key programme	GOV.UK stats Page views target – 40,000 for the year.

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	<p>pages to be reviewed regularly and updated.</p> <p>Promote pages in all programme communications activities.</p> <p>Develop a plan for the phased closure/ archiving of the ESIF pages on GOV.UK from 2024.</p>	<p>receipt of ESI Funds funding.</p> <p>Internal MA staff and other government bodies.</p>	<p>Programme and funding streams</p> <p>Provide access to information, guidance and forms required by existing applicants and approved projects.</p> <p>Inform audiences about the achievements and impact of the Programme through the use of the List of Beneficiaries and project booklets</p> <p>Ensure pages remain relevant and pages are archived / retained as appropriate once they become outdated.</p>			Appropriate linkages made with EAFRD	<p>documents and information.</p> <p>Maintain high numbers of hits and visits to ESI Funds website pages.</p>	
ESIF Programme bulletin	<p>Electronic direct updates through Programme bulletin</p> <p>This activity includes ensuring an up-to-date, relevant and targeted database of partners is developed and maintained.</p>	<p>Relevant external partners including national and local audiences, public and private sector organisations, voluntary sectors, EC, among others.</p> <p>Internal MA staff and other government bodies – to keep informed.</p>	To inform external partners about any key programme developments and significant messages which need sharing. No fixed frequency – most probably 1 or 2 per year.	E-bulletin circulated in line with programme developments as required	Time / staffing costs only	Growth Programme level – ERDF and ESF	Increased awareness of significant programme news, achievements.	Number of partners distributed to: Target – 1,000
ERDF Practitioner Network Bulletin	<p>Electronic direct updates through Programme bulletin</p> <p>This activity includes ensuring an up-to-date, relevant and</p>	Existing ERDF only project applicants	To provide accurate and clear up to date information to stakeholders and project beneficiaries to help ensure ERDF activity is	E-bulletin circulated in line with programme developments as required	Time / staffing costs Bulletins to be produced using free	Growth Programme level - ERDF	Successfully reinforced messages regarding the programme requirements, guidance and	Number of people distributed to: Target – 600

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	targeted database of partners is developed and maintained.		delivered effectively and compliantly		online software		achievements, widening opportunities for sharing best practice, improving local performance.	
ESF ongoing communication channels to inform and engage with ESF funding recipients	<p>ESF Action Notes used to communicate a range of ESF business to all funding recipients and stakeholder groups - via GOV.UK and a mailing list.</p> <p>These communications cover specific actions for recipients; linked to supporting effective delivery arrangements including ongoing collaborative communications work with local LEP area partners.</p>	Project beneficiaries and potential applicants as well as national or LEP level local partners including TA projects	To provide accurate and clear up to date information for stakeholders - including TA and mainstream project beneficiaries - to help ensure activity is delivered effectively and compliantly through a mix of GOV.UK ESIF Programme content, direct communications and any other relevant activity.	Ongoing	Time/ staffing costs	Growth Programme level -ESF	Improving capacity of funding recipients to deliver against their contracts / help ensure compliance – benefiting local delivery; promote tools/resources that encourage and share best practice. Also to assist with effective closure of projects and the Programmes	Number of communications (by type) issued to all on circulation list.
ERDF Final Evaluation Report publicity	Publish this document and all annexes on our ERDF Evaluation page on GOV.UK and promote it's publication using our various	Relevant external partners including projects, national and local audiences, public and private sector organisations, voluntary	To maximise the volume of partners and stakeholders who read this final evaluation report, to share best practice and provide colleagues with access to key lessons learnt	Early 2023	Time/ staffing costs	Growth Programme level - ERDF	Partners, stakeholders and colleagues in Government managing local funding programmes have a clear	<p>Report (and annexes) published online</p> <p>Bulletin stats</p> <p>Feedback from stakeholders</p>

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	communication platforms.	sectors, EC, among others. Internal MA/DLUHC staff (including those working on other funding programmes) and other government bodies	from our ERDF programme. To support those running future local development projects and funds.				understanding of how the England ERDF 2014-2020 programme operated, thrived and evolved and where it offers lessons to learn for future funds and projects.	
ESF evaluation report activity	Publication of impact analysis (to be confirmed by Ministers / Private Offices) and final leavers survey report	Relevant external partners including CFOs, projects, national and local audiences, public and private sector organisations, voluntary sectors, EC, among others. Internal MA/DWP and DLUHC staff (including those working on other funding programmes) and other government bodies	To ensure transparency, accountability and value for money by publishing research findings (as per the Government Social Research protocol) To share evaluation findings and lessons learned across a wider audience and publicly report the results and impact of the programme	Projects due to be completed in 2023 but publication dates may fall into 2024 (Ministerial approvals required)	Embedded in ESF Evaluation Funding Agreement (Technical Assistance)	Evaluation covers all Investment Priorities (to varying degrees)	Stakeholders and interested parties have access to data and information about the impact, effectiveness and efficiency of the 2014-2020 programme; adds to the evidence base for future policy and programme development	Reports and annexes published online (GOV.UK on DWP research reports pages) Web statistics Feedback from stakeholders
List of Beneficiaries	Maintain the electronic list providing searchable details of supported projects against set EU criteria Displayed on GOV.UK	Relevant external partners including national and local audiences, public and private sector organisations, media organisations, voluntary sectors, EC, among others.	To officially record and publicise the details and activities of projects awarded funding through the Programme	Updated every 6 months – in line with regulatory requirements	Time / staffing costs	Growth Programme level – ERDF and ESF	Transparency around who has been funded through the programmes, how much funding has been awarded and for what	List updated and published on GOV.UK at least twice during the year GOV.UK Stats
Reports and Papers	Progress reports on performance of the communication activities	Growth Programme Board members	To inform members of Governance boards and EC partners of the developments and	Annual progress report to GPB Annual summary of activities for	Time / staffing costs	Growth Programme level – ERDF and ESF	EU reporting requirements met, members of committees / EC	Feedback from EC and committee members

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	GPB Board updates Annual Implementation Report – Publicity content Six-monthly Local ESIF Sub-Committee reports	Local ESIF Sub-Committee members	implementation of the communications strategy and annual activity plan To meet EU reporting requirements on delivery of publicity activities To keep local partners updated and informed on programme delivery and performance in their areas	Annual Implementation Report Two local ESIF Sub-Committee reports per area each year (January and July)			are aware of the implementation of the communications strategy and activity plan, members of local sub-committees sighted on local programme performance	Targets: 1 AIR update annually 1 GPB update annually 2 full sets of local ESIF Sub-Committee reports distributed
Internal communication activities	Various methods including all colleague calls, regular staff briefings, direct emails and notifications, online information, intranet content to reach wider audiences in Departments	Internal MA staff – and wider Departmental staff	To ensure MA staff are informed and have access to information and resources to deliver programmes effectively. To ensure colleagues in respective Departments are kept up to date on Programme developments and news	In line with Programme developments	Time / staffing costs	Growth Programme level – ERDF and ESF	Staff are well informed and kept up to date on programme developments and news	Feedback from staff