

## **BACKGROUND FICHE FOR EGESIF: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 2014-2020 INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY PROVISIONS**

There seems to be undisputed consensus on the importance of communication and visibility among the three institutions (the Council, the Parliament and the Commission) at political level. The question is how it can be done better, more efficiently and with less administrative burden.

The added value of the support from the European Structural and Investment Funds may be self-evident for practitioners but may not be that obvious for the general public. It is important to inform EU citizens about what the ESIF policies are doing and how this affects their lives, what added value the funds bring about and what results they have achieved. It is not about managing public relations. Public scrutiny and increased transparency will also bring about increased ownership and accountability.

The current rules prescribe a number of detailed tasks and responsibilities ranging from data collection and publication, communication strategy, information events, putting up plaques and billboards at project sites (for some projects), informing participants, displaying the Union emblem etc. Nevertheless it is claimed that applicable rules are scattered throughout different documents, they are not consistent between different funds, types of projects etc. and most importantly sometimes they may not ensure that the messages reach our citizens or not in a digestible and attractive form. We have a story to tell, but we may need to improve how it is told.

### Questions for discussion

- On the basis of your implementation experience, should information, communication and visibility rules be aligned across the Funds? Do you see any advantage in keeping specific references to the different Funds or using single branding for all Funds/EU financed projects?
- Which of the current rules do you find especially burdensome and why? Which of the current rules do you think would be necessary to be maintained for the future?
- How do you think visibility of added value and results stemming from the support of the ESI Funds could be better communicated to our citizens? How to do away with "practitioner's language" in our communication?
- Do you see merit in establishing an EU level portal of all supported projects? How do you think results of operations could be better communicated?
- Do you see that lack of available resources (either from national sources or from technical assistance) poses a bottleneck to effective communication? If yes, how should it be addressed?
- How should responsibilities be divided between the Commission on the one hand and managing authorities, project promoters and beneficiaries on the other?