

## **Guidance on Information, Communication & Publicity in the 2014-2020 ESIF Programmes.**

### **(A) GENERAL.**

Cohesion Policy Funding makes up almost one-third of the EU Budget and has funded several key initiatives in Northern Ireland. Use of Community Funds imposes obligations to publicise and communicate the purpose and outcome on the authorities responsible and on beneficiaries of funding.

### **THE 2014-2020 ESIF REGULATIONS**

#### **The Common Provisions Regulation (EU 1303/2013)<sup>1</sup>**

**Part 3** lays down general rules for the ERDF, ESF and Cohesion Fund.

Articles 115-117 cover information and communications requirements:

Article 115 sets out the responsibilities of Member States (MS) and Managing Authorities (MA)

Article 116 requires MS/MA to draw up a Communications Strategy for each Operational Programme and to submit it to the Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC) for approval and to report on progress to the PMC at least once a year.

Article 117 requires each MS to establish an information and communications officer and for each MA to designate a person responsible for the same.

Annex XII sets out:

1. Parameters for the list of supported operations to be published,
2. Information to be provided by the MS/MA (2.1) and by beneficiaries (2.2) for the benefit of the public,
3. Information to be provided by the MA to potential and actual beneficiaries,
4. Elements of the Communications Strategy.

#### **The Regulation on support for Rural Development from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) (EU 1305/2013)<sup>2</sup>** Article

52 deals with the establishment of an EU Network for rural development, Article

54 deals with the establishment of a national rural network.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1303>

<sup>2</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1305>

## **Implementing Regulation laying down rules on support for Rural Development (EU 808/2014)<sup>3</sup>**

Article 13 and Annex III of this regulation set out the responsibilities of Managing Authorities, Beneficiaries and the technical characteristics of information and publicity actions for the rural development programme.

## **Commission Implementing Regulation with detailed arrangements of the technical characteristics of information and communication measures for operations (EU 821/2014)<sup>4</sup>.**

Articles 3 to 5 and Annex II deal with the creation of the Union emblem, its display and the content of plaques and billboards.

### **(B) RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCESSES**

Member State. European Union Division of DFP shall:

1. Liaise with the UK MS Authority to define the structure and relationships of national, regional and OP level websites and information/communications responsibilities;
2. Provide general publicity and transparency information about ESIF funding programmes in Northern Ireland on its web-pages or on a dedicated website, including links to MA sites and contact details;
3. Liaise with MA and others through EU Steering Group and the Core Implementing Group to discuss and reach consistent interpretation and implementation in Northern Ireland of publicity and information requirements across ESIF funding programmes.

Managing Authorities of ESIF Operational Programmes shall:

1. Prepare the Communications Strategy referred to in Article 116 of the Common Provisions Regulation and submit it to the Programme Monitoring Committee for approval within the stipulated timeframe;
2. Publish information on the Operational Programme on their web-pages or on a dedicated website, providing at least the information required by Annex XII (3) of the Common Provisions Regulation, for beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries;
3. Publish guidance for applicants on their responsibility to publicise the operation.
4. Monitor approved operations to confirm that publicity requirements are met.

### **EXCEPTIONS**

As guidance for Territorial Cooperation programmes has to be mutually agreed by participating member states, it may not always match national guidance. However,

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<sup>3</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32014R0808>

<sup>4</sup> [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L\\_.2014.138.01.0045.01.ENG](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2014.138.01.0045.01.ENG)

participants in the coordination structures should seek the maximum consistency possible in the interest of simplification and synergy.

## **REFERENCES**

A library of Cohesion Policy information resources is maintained by the Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy at the European Commission at: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/information/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/information/index_en.cfm)

Training materials (including in podcast format) may be downloaded at: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/what/future/experts\\_training\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/what/future/experts_training_en.cfm)