



Communication and visibility rules

European Union
funding programmes 2021-27

Guidance for Member States

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1. Introduction

This document supports Member States in their awareness-raising efforts in their own administrations and among stakeholders about the legally binding communication and visibility rules in European Union (EU) funding programmes under the long-term EU Budget and NextGenerationEU as from 2021. It also guides them in the implementation of these rules to the extent they have a shared management responsibility.

The first part answers general questions, and the second part looks into each of the corporate requirements that the European Commission (EC) has grouped into a list of ten for presentational purposes. Some programme-specific issues are addressed in a third part, including on the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (NextGenerationEU).

The document anticipates the main issues of relevance for Member States and includes the answers to questions from delegates in the Council Working Party for Information (WPI) addressed to the EC via the Council General-Secretariat.

Based on needs for further guidance, regular updates of this document are foreseen in the context of the Working Party on Information (WPI).

This document is available for Member States on the Council's internal Communicators' Portal and on the EU Publications Office website.

2. General questions

‘Ambitious funding and resolute policy action on the path to recovery must be communicated properly and visibility maximized as a European Response (...)

(...) all programmes under the future long-term budget, regardless of their management modes, would include a set of binding and coherent minimum requirements for communication and visibility.

This also applies (...) to (...) NextGenerationEU.

The Commission will keep a watchful eye on how Member States and other recipients of EU funding will communicate and raise the visibility of the Union and on how they will report the implementation of the funding received.’

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in her letter to MEPs of 31 August 2020

Why do we need minimum requirements for communication and visibility?

Delivering on the EU’s priorities, overcoming the crisis and paving the way to a lasting recovery are key objectives of the EU’s long-term budget and NextGenerationEU. This requires not only that the EU is effectively delivering on these priorities, but also that the EU is seen as precisely doing that. Policy and communication are two sides of the same coin: it is important to deliver and good to be seen. That’s why the EU’s action needs to be communicated effectively on the ground – including when implementing funding programmes. EU communication is a responsibility shared between the EC and recipients of EU funding, including Member States, in the spirit of the [Sibiu Leaders’ declaration](#) of 2019.

In order to ensure effective and coherent communication on the ground, the various legal acts of EU funding programmes contain rules for communication and EU visibility. They are legally binding on recipients of EU funding and largely coherent across programmes and management modes, while leaving some margin for programme-specific approaches as, for example, reflected in the communication article (Article 34) of the RRF regulation. It is now crucial that largest possible awareness and proper implementation are ensured.

What are the communication and visibility rules exactly?

They can be summarised in '[Ten ways how recipients of EU funding are expected to communicate and ensure visibility of EU funding](#)':

1. All recipients of EU funding have a general obligation to acknowledge the origin and **ensure the visibility of the EU funding** received.
2. Link to the **EU's priorities**.
3. Engage in **specific communication activities** (depending on the programme).
4. Display the EU emblem **correctly and prominently**.
5. Display a simple **funding statement**, mentioning the EU support.
6. Use **accurate information**.
7. **Involve the granting authority/EU** when communicating (depending on the programme).
8. Remember that generally communication & visibility expenditure count among **eligible costs**.
9. **Grant the EU the right to use communication material**.
10. **Expect financial reductions in case of non-respect** of contractual obligations

Will these rules apply retroactively to financial support granted in the 2014-2020 long-term budget?

No, the new rules apply for all programmes and partnerships under the long-term budget and NextGenerationEU as of 2021. There is no retroactive application.

Are these rules legally binding or mere recommendations?

The communication and visibility requirements are legally binding and complemented through guidance on specific issues. The obligation to acknowledge receipt of EU funding and enhance the EU's visibility has long been laid down in the Financial Regulation. However, for the first time ever, in a coherent and horizontal approach under the new 2021-2027 long-term budget, the Multiannual Financial Framework and NextGenerationEU, each funding programme contains a standard corporate clause on communication and visibility and more detailed provisions on communication and visibility in the legal base and the applicable financing agreements. Various guidance documents exist in addition to help recipients of EU funding to understand and properly implement the rules. Here below the relevant references to and extracts from the legal texts.

Where do we find the rules for communication and visibility in the new EU programmes?

Financial Regulation

Recital 11

*In accordance with the principle of transparency enshrined in Article 15 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), Union institutions are to conduct their work as openly as possible. With regard to budget implementation, the application of that principle implies that **citizens should know where, and for what purpose, funds are spent by the Union**. Such information fosters democratic debate, contributes to the participation of citizens in the Union's decision-making process, reinforces institutional control and scrutiny over Union expenditure, and contributes to boosting its credibility. **Communication should be more targeted and should aim to increase the visibility of the Union contribution for citizens**. Such objectives should be achieved by the publication, preferably using modern communication tools, of relevant information concerning all recipients of funds financed from the budget which takes into account those recipients' legitimate interests of confidentiality and security and, as far as natural persons are concerned, their right to privacy and the protection of their personal data. Union institutions should therefore adopt a selective approach in the publication of information, in accordance with the principle of proportionality. Decisions to publish should be based on relevant criteria in order to provide meaningful information.*

Article 63 - Shared management with Member States

*Where the Commission implements the budget under shared management, tasks relating to budget implementation shall be delegated to Member States. The Commission and Member States shall respect the principles of sound financial management, transparency and non-discrimination and **shall ensure the visibility of the Union action when they manage Union funds**. To that end, the Commission and Member States shall fulfil their respective control and audit obligations and assume the resulting responsibilities laid down in this Regulation. Complementary provisions shall be laid down in sector-specific rules.*

Article 154 (2) - Indirect management

*Persons and entities entrusted with the implementation of Union funds or budgetary guarantees pursuant to point (c) of the first subparagraph of Article 62(1) shall respect the principles of sound financial management, transparency, non-discrimination and **visibility of Union action**. Where the Commission establishes financial framework partnership agreements in accordance with Article 130 those principles shall be further described in such agreements.*

Article 201 - Grant agreement

2. The grant agreement shall at least include the following:

- h) **provisions governing the visibility of the Union financial support**, except in duly justified cases where public display is not possible or appropriate.*

Article 234 - Union trust funds for external actions

1. *Union trust funds shall only be established and implemented subject to the following conditions:*

*(b) Union trust funds bring **clear political visibility for the Union** and managerial advantages as well as better control by the Union of risks and disbursements of the Union and other donors' contributions.*

Standard corporate communication article in the legal base of each programme

- *The recipients of Union funding shall acknowledge the origin and ensure the visibility of the Union funding (in particular when promoting the actions and their results) by providing coherent, effective and proportionate targeted information to multiple audiences, including the media and the public.*
- *The Commission shall implement information and communication actions relating to the Programme, and its actions and results. Financial resources allocated to the Programme shall also contribute to the corporate communication of the political priorities of the Union, as far as they are related to the objectives referred to in Article [xxx].*

Shared management

- The communication and visibility rules for the majority of programmes under shared management are notably contained in the [Common Provisions Regulation \(CPR\)](#), but also in other relevant legal instruments (for details please see the CPR section of this document).
- The Funds under shared management covered by the CPR are:
 - Regional Policy: European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Just Transition Fund (JTF) and Cohesion Fund (CF).
 - Social Policy: European Social Fund (ESF+).
 - Home Affairs: Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), Border Management and Visa Instrument (BMVI) and Internal Security Fund (ISF).
 - Maritime Affairs: European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF).

Direct/indirect management

- The [Corporate Model Grant Agreement \(CMGA\)](#) CMGA is applicable to all directly managed EU programmes and also used in certain indirect management cases such as Joint Undertakings.
- The CMGA (Articles 16 (IPR) and 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility) and Annex 5 (specific rules on IPR and communication, dissemination and visibility) adopted by the College on 12 June 2020 [C(2020)3759] contains a comprehensive set of rules for communication and visibility. An [annotated version of the CMGA](#) serves to guide authorising officers and beneficiaries of EU funding.

- The corporate communication provisions also apply, mutatis mutandis, to indirect management (e.g. to be set in a Contribution Agreement). Article 154(2) of the Financial Regulation requires that entities entrusted with the implementation of EU funds or budgetary guarantees must respect the principle of visibility of EU actions.

Recovery and Resilience Facility (RFF)

The obligation is laid down in Art. 34 of the [RRF Regulation](#):

Article 34 Information, communication and publicity

1. *The Commission may engage in communication activities to ensure the visibility of the Union funding for the financial support envisaged in the relevant recovery and resilience plan, including through joint communication activities with the national authorities concerned. The Commission may, as appropriate, ensure that support under the Facility is communicated and acknowledged through a funding statement.*
2. *The recipients of Union funding shall acknowledge the origin and ensure the visibility of the Union funding, including, where applicable, by displaying the emblem of the Union and an appropriate funding statement that reads ‘funded by the European Union – NextGenerationEU’, in particular when promoting the actions and their results, by providing coherent, effective and proportionate targeted information to multiple audiences, including the media and the public.*
3. *The Commission shall implement information and communication actions relating to the Facility, to actions taken pursuant to the Facility and to the results obtained. The Commission shall where appropriate inform the representation offices of the European Parliament of its actions and involve them in those actions. Financial resources allocated to the Facility shall also contribute to the corporate communication of the political priorities of the Union, insofar as they are related to the objectives referred to in Article 4.*

For further details please see the RRF section of this document.

[Are the rules for communication and visibility the same for all EU programmes?](#)

In addition to the corporate communication article and coherent corporate rules, depending on the programme, there might be some policy-specific adjustments reflected in the legal base of a programme and the applicable financing agreement.

[What happens to existing guidance for beneficiaries and partners, e.g. in the area of external action?](#)

For those beneficiaries that have received EU funding over the 2014-2020 programming period the respective former provisions and guidelines continue to apply. Under the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework the guidelines for the beneficiaries need to be adapted and aligned to the new rules at the start of the new programmes and partnerships.

Whom do the requirements concern, only beneficiaries of EU funding or also organisations that support Member States in their communication?

The rules apply to anybody who receives EU funding. If a national authority involves organisations, networks or contractors in communication and visibility actions around certain programmes and projects, the national authority has to ensure awareness and respect of the relevant rules applicable.

Does a small-sized project need to communicate in the same way as a multi-million euro project?

Communication and raising EU visibility is a general obligation. The detailed rules for most programmes contain some degree of proportionality. Please check the programme's legal base and the applicable financing agreement and guidance.

Under indirect management, do all existing framework partnership agreements and contribution agreements need to be reviewed to ensure compliance with new corporate minimum requirements?

Existing partnership and contribution agreements are not affected. Only new ones that enter into force between 2021-2027 need to reflect the requirements.

Are there any major differences in the rules for communication and visibility set for the programming period 2014-2020 and for the current programming period 2021-2027?

In the context of previous long-term budgets, such rules existed for individual programmes, but without overarching rationale and corporate coherence across programmes and management modes. The new approach is meant to achieve maximum coherence in order to make it as simple and effective as possible. The scope of the rules goes well beyond sticking the EU flag on projects. Moreover, there is no retroactive application of the rules to the previous funding periods.

How is the idea of 'clearer communication' perceived and how does the EC intend to communicate its vision?

The EC has provided its vision for effective and joined-up EU communication in its [input for the Sibiu Leaders' Meeting in May 2019](#) and formulated five recommendations for EU communication at the service of citizens and democracy. This remains an important and inspiring compass for EU communicators (see chapter 3 of the Communication).

Operationally, since mid-2020, the EC shares its editorial planning and key communication assets with all the Member States (and other institutions) via the new [Communicators' Portal](#). Here you can also find customisable materials from our [NextGenEU communication campaign](#). Member States' communicators are encouraged to make the best possible use of it. The EC would be highly interested in receiving feedback on the relevance and uptake of this shared material in the context of the Working Party on Information (WPI).

Does the EC intend to make progress on the communication about the projects it finances?
Will the EC's communication mainly be based on its website?

Thanks to a corporate effort across policy departments we are able to identify and communicate about EU-funded projects in an effective way. A fully [revamped interinstitutional EU website](#) has seen the light of the day in November 2021 with appealing multilingual content on all areas of the Union. In addition, here below, you will find a selection of relevant EC web pages with information on achievements, projects and results.

For example, in order to illustrate progress on the **exit from the Covid-crisis and towards recovery**, we have showcased 51 projects and stories on our web page that cover a whole array of policy fields: economy and employment, health, EU values and citizens' rights, digital, environment and climate, external relations. All these projects are available [here](#).

The **NextGenerationEU campaign**, a major communication campaign to illustrate the EU's progress on the path to recovery and the green and digital transitions, launched in 2021, is addressed to the general public and notably to the young, in such a way that they acknowledge how the EU policies make Europe healthier, greener and more digital and how they can participate in this process. Once the funds linked to the NextGenerationEU recovery plan are starting to be disbursed and projects are up and running, the [NextGenEU campaign portal](#) will contain additional project examples and stories.

An increasing number of projects and results of programmes implemented by the EC are published in a [single database](#), which you can search according to a funding period and/or programme. You can also consult [performance information per programme](#) and numerous examples and stories on programme-specific pages. An [overview of Results and Information on EU-funded projects](#) in different policy areas was also recently published on the Europa website, and will be periodically updated. For the [European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020](#) a platform gives access to data on financing and achievements. Take a look through our [database](#) to discover examples of the most innovative projects supported under EU regional policy programmes. In addition, the [Kohesio platform](#)¹ will include all projects co-financed by the CPR Funds for both the 2021-2027 and 2014-2020 programming periods and their related beneficiaries.

In the area of **digital, culture and media**, the EC communicates and showcases the projects it supports through all the events organised in the framework of:

- the [European film forum](#) for the audio-visual activities covered by the MEDIA strand;
- the [European news media forum](#) for the news media activities covered by the cross sectoral strand.

Information about all the activities and supported projects covered by the **Creative Europe programme** and its different strands (culture, MEDIA and cross-sectoral) are available on the [Culture and Creativity website](#) and its [annual monitoring report](#). Specific information is also offered on [grants](#) as well as on the [Project Results Platform \('Valor'\)](#).

The [European Youth Portal](#) provides numerous stories and project examples in the area of **education, culture, languages, youth and sport**. It also informs about activities in the context of the **European Year of Youth 2022**.

In relation to enlargement and neighbourhood policy the EC provides up to date information on our cooperation in the region on the webpage ['European Neighbourhood Policy and](#)

¹ The Kohesio platform is in development and will be officially launched in March 2022. Until then, the EC is capturing data from projects co-financed by ERDF, CF and ESF funds from the 2014-2020 programming period.

[Enlargement Negotiations](#)'. More in depth information is available by choosing [any specific country](#) from the region.

All the relevant communication related to projects in the agricultural field is available on the webpage on ['food, farming and fisheries'](#) serving as a hub for other levels of information. In the case of the rural development pillar or other programmes and initiatives, the EC's portal relays to specific websites, such as the [European Network for Rural Development \(ENRD\)](#), the [Agricultural European Innovation Partnership \(EIP-AGRI\)](#), or the [Research Executive Agency](#) (for agri-food promotion policy, migration from previous CHAFEA agency is ongoing).

Concerning beneficiaries of the CAP, communication is managed by the Member States themselves, which means that publication is not under the responsibility of the EC. However, an [inventory](#) of the relevant publications is provided.

[Where can social media accounts be found through which the EU and its institutions communicate about funding programmes, stories and project examples?](#)

Information on social media accounts with EU content can be found [here](#). Information can be filtered by institution, type of account and policy area.

[Where can guidance on the use of EU social media be found?](#)

The [Europa Web Guide](#) is the official rulebook for the EC's web presence, covering editorial, legal, technical, visual and contractual aspects. It contains an important chapter on the use of social media.

[Are there any possibilities for continuous training courses on communication - especially communication via web and social media and how to reach new audiences - in order to make communication strategies most effective and maximise visibility of the projects?](#)

The [INFORM EU](#) network organises [seminars and training](#). Member States have already been informed about this possibility in a recent letter addressed by the Directors-General of SG-RECOVER and DG ECFIN, dated 14 September 2021.

[How can we improve effectiveness and efficiency of our communication through monitoring and evaluation and how can we place more emphasis on result-orientation and impact on citizens?](#)

In an ever-changing communications environment, performance management helps to identify how needs and problems have evolved, to which extent a communication activity matched expectations, and how evidence can contribute to improve the quality of future communications. Enhancing the performance of communication activities through monitoring and evaluation implies the incorporation of a measurement logic from the planning phase of each communication activity. More specifically, the key elements of an evaluation model or logic are the following:

- Good initial **assessment of the needs**, meaning the identification of the problems to be addressed by the communication activity. The problem analysis is also important to define target groups. The more specific the target groups are, the more tailored the communication activities will be and will conduct to better results.

- Based on the identified needs, **definition of the objectives** of the communication activity. Objectives should be **SMART**, this means that they have to be **Specific** (precise and concrete enough not to be open to varying interpretations), **Measurable** (should define a desired future state in a measurable terms, to allow verifications of their achievement), **Achievable** (should define a desired future state in a measurable terms, to allow verifications of their achievement), **Relevant** (should be directly linked to the problem and its root causes) and **Time-bound** (should be related to a fixed date or precise time period to allow an evaluation of their achievement).
- The objectives should further be transposed into concrete **communication activities** for which indicators (**output, result and impact**) should be associated. Good **monitoring processes** will allow to check if the implementation of the activities is on track, if context elements have evolved and how well the communication activity has achieved its objectives.
- In addition, consolidated data, both quantitative and qualitative, will allow to keep a record of the performance of the communication activities and capitalise over years (success and challenges), to learn from past lessons and **reinforce the long-term performance (impact)** and to design better future communication activities.
- **Evaluation** is a tool to help assess the actual performance of the communication activity compared to initial expectations (objectives). Evaluation is a scientific process based on triangulation of different methods, typically going through the following criteria: *effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, coherence and EU-added value*.

Will the new visibility and communication rules be transposed by delegated acts? And if so when will those be published?

Each programme's legal act and the applicable financing agreements already contain the communication and visibility rules with no further need for additional delegated acts. Only in the case of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), the draft CAP Strategic Plan foresees an implementing act, which is currently under preparation.

3. Ten ways for recipients of EU funding to communicate and ensure visibility of EU funding

Here is what is expected from recipients of EU funding. A summary is publicly available on the EC's [web page on funding and tender opportunities](#):

3.1. General obligation to acknowledge the origin and ensure the visibility of EU funding

What can Member States do to contribute to awareness-raising about this general obligation?

Awareness-raising should target both internal and external stakeholders: Member States administrations are encouraged to use existing channels at their disposal to inform the responsible services and levels about the communication and visibility rules in general and on programme-specific aspects as relevant and in line with their obligations for each programme where they have a shared management responsibility.

Externally, Member States are encouraged to highlight the importance of communication and visibility and explain their application through the appropriate channels, such as web pages, stakeholder meetings, social media, information brochures on EU funding etc.

The competent EC services will ensure that in their communication about general or programme-specific funding opportunities, the applicable communication and visibility rules are systematically covered too.

Are there derogations to this general obligation?

Depending on the programme, there might be some policy-specific adjustments. The EC in its various policy-specific call documents or guidance documents will reflect eventual different provisions to guide applicants and recipients of EU funding.

Where can I find some best practice examples for inspiration?

Within programmes, we are encouraging best practice exchange as much as possible, e.g. during network and stakeholder meetings, but also between programmes and services. In 2021, the EC launched [INFORM EU](#), the umbrella network for all stakeholders involved in the communication of EU programmes under shared management. INFORM EU allows communicators from the Member States and regions to exchange best practices and to foster expertise in the area of communication and visibility of EU programmes.

3.2. Link to the EU's priorities

How does the EC see the link between the requirements and the political priorities of the EU in practice? Should the link between the requirements and the EU political priorities not just be an option but a natural obligation? What is expected from recipients of EU funding?

Every EU programme is implementing the EU's political priorities. It is important that recipients of EU funding link back to these priorities not only in their project action but also in their communication activities, to show how their project contributes to achieving them. This is about showing the big picture. In order to help achieve this, we encourage Member States to make best possible use of existing narratives and communication material about the EU and its priorities.

Where can recipients of EU funding find narratives and communication material about the EU and its priorities?

You'll find below a few suggestions for relevant political documents as well as information and communication material that can support the EU communication of Member States. Member States' communicators are notably encouraged to make best possible use of the [Council's Communicators' Portal](#) created in 2020 where access to a wide range of communication assets and editorial planning is provided. Here below a list with references to particularly relevant background and materials:

- [A new Strategic agenda 2019-2024](#), adopted by the EU leaders in Sibiu in May 2019.
- [Joint legislative priorities for 2021 and joint policy objectives and priorities for 2021-2024](#).
- [European Commission priorities](#).
- [European Union recovery stories](#).
- [NextGenerationEU](#) (NextGenEU) campaign: the EC has launched a corporate communication campaign in spring 2021, which provides a narrative, stories and manifold materials in all EU languages that illustrate the EU's way to recovery and the transitions to a green, digital and resilient EU. The EC encourages its widest possible use by Member States and other recipients of EU funding.
- [Recovery and Resilience Facility \(RFF\)](#).
- [Safe Covid-19 vaccines for Europeans](#).
- [News page of the European Commission](#).
- [Audiovisual Portal of the European Commission](#).
- [European Union social media networks](#).
- [Learning Corner of the European Commission](#).

3.3. Engage in specific communication activities (depending on the programme)

What are these specific communication activities?

These activities can vary from one programme to another. They might depend on the value of the funding received or the specific context, reflecting the necessary proportionality. They may include for example:

- The preparation of a detailed communication and dissemination plan.
- Rules for digital communication and communication materials.
- Organisation of launch events.
- Relations with media.
- Billboards, plaques or other printed or electronic displays etc.
- Publication of project results.

For details, recipients of EU funding are advised to consult the programme's legal base, call documents and applicable financing agreement² concluded with the EC.

3.4. Display the EU emblem correctly and prominently

What is expected exactly?

The EU emblem is the single-most important visual brand used to acknowledge the origin and ensure the visibility of the EU funding. It needs to be correctly and prominently displayed. Apart from the EU emblem, no additional visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EU support unless agreed with the granting authority. As a general rule, the EU emblem and the funding statement are displayed as follows:



Please consult our detailed guidelines on the use of the EU emblem [here](#).

² For example, the [Corporate Model Grant Agreement](#) describes the various communication rules and options in its article 17 (communication, dissemination and visibility) and Annex 5 (specific rules on communication, dissemination and visibility)

Are there any specific cases?

For the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), the funding statement is slightly different: 'Funded by the European Union – NextGenerationEU':



For Interreg the term Interreg needs to be placed next to the EU emblem, along with the funding statement:



These variations are laid down in the respective legal acts.

Is there a possibility for recipients of EU funding to download the EU emblem? Is there any central place where all the banners/logos could be downloaded?

Yes. Recipients of EU funding can download the EU emblem and the funding statement in all official EU languages and some non-EU languages, thanks to a new [download centre](#) developed by the EC. This also works for the slightly different RRF and Interreg funding statements.

Can a programme-specific logo be added or replace the EU emblem?

No. This is not possible as a rule. There are however cases, where a programme-specific logo has been (re-) introduced by the co-legislator in a programme's legal base, notably for the LIFE programme and the Creative Europe - MEDIA programme.

In case of questions, please contact COMM-VISUAL-IDENTITY@ec.europa.eu

Would we still be allowed to use national logos alongside the EU emblem?

Yes. The provisions are about acknowledging the EU support by displaying the EU emblem correctly and prominently, but if there is financial support and involvement from the Member State and/or other partners, their logos can of course be displayed in order to highlight their respective support and involvement.

When displayed in association with other logos (e.g. of beneficiaries or sponsors), the EU emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos and be at least the same size as the biggest of the other logos.

The new [download centre](#) for visual elements also contains templates with blank spaces for such complementary logos.

For further details, you can consult our [detailed guidelines](#) on the use of the EU emblem 'The use of the EU emblem for EU programmes 2021-2027'.

How will these new rules affect communication campaigns in partner countries, which already have their own brands? For instance, EU4Georgia, 'MovingForwardTogether' in Ukraine, etc.

Beneficiaries must acknowledge EU support by displaying the EU emblem and EU funding statement. This is the basic rule. The corporate and visual elements of ongoing communication campaigns in partner countries, such as EU4Georgia, 'MovingForwardTogether' in Ukraine, etc. could however be maintained.

For further information please contact COMM-VISUAL-IDENTITY@ec.europa.eu.

3.5. Display a simple funding statement, mentioning the EU support

What is expected exactly? Will the EC provide a coherent logo/emblem & funding statement that Member States could use in the context of their communication efforts?

It is expected that recipients of EU funding display a simple funding statement, mentioning the EU's support. The funding statement 'Funded by the European Union' or 'Co-funded by the European Union' shall always be spelled out in full, in local language, and be placed next to the emblem.



**Funded by
the European Union**



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Please consult our [detailed guidelines](#) on the use of the EU emblem.

For the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), the funding statement is slightly different: 'Funded by the European Union – NextGenerationEU'. For Interreg the term Interreg needs to be placed next to the EU emblem, along with the funding statement.



**Funded by the
European Union**
NextGenerationEU

Interreg



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

A new brand book has been made available for shared management funds, which is useful also for other programmes.

What is the funding statement for the Recovery and Resilience Facility/NextGenerationEU?

The Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation (RRF) lays down the specific funding statement: 'Funded by the European Union - NextGenerationEU'. No other variations are legally foreseen. This funding statement is available on the [download centre for visual elements](#).

Is there a possibility for recipients of EU funding to download the EU emblem and the funding statement?

Yes. Recipients of EU funding can download the EU emblem and the funding statement in all official EU languages and some non-EU languages from the [download centre for visual elements](#).

Can the funding statement be modified?

No. The only allowed funding statement to acknowledge EU support is 'Funded by the European Union' or 'Co-funded by the European Union' unless the legal act of the programme foresees differently, as the case is with the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), NextGenerationEU and Interreg.

Can the funding statement and EU emblem be used separately? Can a minimalistic approach be used, when the organizing government also uses a minimal approach, for example use only the logo, without mentioning 'Funded by the European Union'? For example, in social media posts, short films etc.?

As a rule, the EU emblem and the funding statement always go hand in hand and must not be separated. Both are essential to acknowledge EU support.

Can the programme name be added to the funding statement?

No. Only in cases where it has been explicitly foreseen in the programme's legal base, the programme name can be added. For example, this is the case for the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) where the funding statement will read: 'Funded by the European Union - NextGenerationEU' or for 'Interreg'.

Can the same funding statement be displayed in two different languages?

Yes. If this is appropriate in a given bilingual local context, this is possible. See also the guidelines for the EU emblem.

Can we use Co-funded/Funded by the EU?

No. 'European Union' must always be spelled out in full.

Can we still mention the programme's name in social media hashtags or in other communication material?

Yes, of course. You are even encouraged to do so, in particular in cases of programmes that resonate widely with the public and constitute a recognisable sub-brand of the EU.

Can the logos of other sponsors / partners be displayed? (e.g. For Trust Funds financed by other donors)

Yes. The logos of other (funding) partners can of course be displayed to acknowledge their respective support. However, they must not outsize the EU emblem.

What if a beneficiary received funding from several programmes? Do they have to display the EU emblem and funding statement for each programme or is one display sufficient?

With the simple corporate EU funding statement, it is not necessary to have multiple displays to highlight different EU funding sources. By doing so, we avoid some confusing situations of the past when multiple billboards with references to different funding sources were displayed at the same place. Now, one billboard or plaque with the EU emblem and funding statement is sufficient. For details, please consult the programme-specific rules and guidance.

What if a beneficiary received funding for more than one project? Do they have to display the EU emblem and funding statement for each project or is one display sufficient?

EU visibility has to be ensured for each supported project through the prominent and correct display of the EU emblem and funding statement.

Does the obligation apply to general promotional activities performed by national authorities?

All of the above serves to acknowledge EU support, including in national communication and promotional activities for EU-funded programmes and projects. Member States (and other partners) may well have complementary national legislation in place that governs communication and visibility of their own financial contributions. Please also consult a programme's legal base and the financing agreement for further details.

3.6. Use accurate information

What does this mean exactly? How can we prevent misinformation?

In times of disinformation and misinformation it is important that recipients of EU funding are reminded and legally obliged to use accurate information. In practice this could mean that they use EU-related information only from official or other trustworthy sources when they communicate about the EU. For project-related information, they need to ensure that it is factually correct and not intentionally misleading.

3.7. Involve the granting authority/EU when communicating (depending on the programme)

The different programmes' legal acts and applicable financing agreements contain provisions about when and how to involve the EU when communicating. For example:

Direct management - article 17.1 of the Corporate Model Grant Agreement for directly managed programmes:

Before engaging in a communication or dissemination activity expected to have a major media impact, the beneficiaries must inform the granting authority.

Shared management - article 50.1(e) of the Common Provisions Regulation:

A communication event must be organised for operations of strategic importance and operations whose total cost exceed EUR 10 000 000. The Commission and the responsible managing authority must be involved in such events in a timely manner.

Is there a legal obligation to inform the EU on projects with major media impact?

Under direct management, the EU must be informed before engaging in a communication or dissemination activity expected to have a major media impact (see article 17.1 of the CMGA). This can be the granting authority and, in addition, also the EC Representations or EU Delegation in the country where the project takes place.

Under shared management, the minimum requirement set out in Article 50(1)(e) CPR is for operations of strategic importance and operations where the total cost exceeds EUR 10 million, organising a communication event or activity, as appropriate, and involving the EC and the responsible managing authority in a timely manner. This means informing these actors about future visibility activities already in the planning phase in order to secure also potential presence and/or speakers etc.

The Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) Regulation invites Member States and the EC to engage in joint communication activities. Therefore, the EC encourages Member States to include in their strategic communication joint actions with the EC and its Representations. The Representation offices in Member States act as the EC's voice in their host country and can therefore act as the single entry point. Member States are also invited to select projects from their Recovery and Resilience Plan (RFF) which they intend to promote and communicate on more actively and in coordination with the EC.

What about the role of the Representations and cooperation with national authorities?

The Representations of the EC in Member States dispose of ample knowledge and experience in EU communication. Member States are encouraged to inform and involve the Representations in programme- and project-specific communication activities in the country. Heads of Representation are crucial in political outreach, the EC European Semester Officers work intensively on the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), on the cohesion policy funds and other EU funds, the Communications Teams are instrumental in reaching a broad range of stakeholders and the local Press Teams contribute to reaching the public at large via the media. Coordination is also ensured through the INFORM EU network (EU-wide network of communication officers responsible for communicating EU and Member State investments under shared management from major EU funds like European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Just Transition Fund (JTF), Cohesion Fund, European Social Fund+ etc.).

Three legislative acts explicitly mention the role of the Representations and EPLOs as potential communication partners for Member States:

Common Provisions Regulation (CPR)

TITLE IV

MONITORING, EVALUATION, COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

CHAPTER I

Monitoring

Article 48

Communication officers and networks

1. *Each Member State shall identify a communication coordinator for visibility, transparency and communication activities in relation to the support from the Funds, including programmes under the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) where that Member State hosts the managing authority. The communication coordinator may be appointed at the level of the body defined under Article 71(6) and shall coordinate communication and visibility measures across programmes.*

The communication coordinator shall involve in the visibility, transparency and communication activities the following bodies:

- a) *European Commission Representations and European Parliament Liaison Offices in the Member States, as well as Europe Direct Information Centres and other relevant networks, educational and research organisations;*
 - b) *other relevant partners referred to in Article 8(1).*
2. *Each managing authority shall identify a communication officer for each programme. A communication officer may be responsible for more than one programme.*
 3. *The Commission shall maintain the network comprising communication coordinators, communication officers and Commission representatives to exchange information on visibility, transparency and communication activities.*

Technical Support Instrument (TSI)

**CHAPTER II
TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

Article 10

***Information to the European Parliament and to the Council and
communication regarding cooperation and support plans***

3. *The Commission may engage in communication activities to ensure the visibility of Union funding for support measures envisaged in the cooperation and support plans, including through joint communication activities with the national authorities and the representation offices of the European Parliament and of the Commission in the Member State concerned. The Commission shall publish on its website a list of approved requests for technical support and shall regularly update that list. The Commission shall regularly inform the representation offices of the European Parliament and of the Commission of projects in the Member States concerned.*

**CHAPTER IV
TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS**

Article 18

Information, communication and publicity

2. *The Commission shall implement information and communication actions relating to the instrument, to actions taken pursuant to the instrument and to the results obtained, including, where appropriate and with the agreement of the national authorities, through joint communication activities with the national authorities and the representation offices of the European Parliament and of the Commission in the Member State concerned.*

Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

**CHAPTER VIII
COMMUNICATION AND FINAL PROVISIONS**

Article 34

Information, communication and publicity

3. *The Commission shall implement information and communication actions relating to the Facility, to actions taken pursuant to the Facility and to the results obtained. The Commission shall where appropriate inform the representation offices of the European Parliament of its actions and involve them in those actions. Financial resources allocated to the Facility shall also contribute to the corporate communication of the political priorities of the Union, insofar as they are related to the objectives referred to in Article 4.*

3.8. Remember that communication and visibility expenditure count among eligible costs

What kind of communication and visibility expenditure is eligible?

Expenditure related to communication and visibility is part of the action and is in principle eligible for EU funding provided they fulfill the eligibility criteria as any other cost incurred for the action. The detailed rules are laid down in the respective contractual document (e.g. the grant agreement).

Under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RFF), only communication costs directly linked to a measure is eligible for inclusion in a national recovery and resilience plan (e.g. in a measure financing energy-renovations of residential buildings, the cost for publicly advertising the renovation scheme would be eligible as part of the overall cost calculation for the measure.

3.9. Grant the EU the right to use communication material

What does this mean exactly? If a recipient of EU funding produces communication material, e.g. photos, video clips, testimonials, or press material, can the EC use this?

Across all programmes and management modes, the EU/granting authority has the right to use communication material produced by the recipients of EU funding. This right is granted in the form of a royalty-free, non-exclusive and irrevocable licence. The recipient of EU funding remains the owner of the communication material and is fully responsible for the clearance of all the necessary licenses and authorisations to this end. Some programmes may deviate from this rule, so the specific scope of the right of use needs to be checked against the corresponding legal act and financing agreement.

How do you define 'communication material' for which a license is granted?

The licence covers the right to use non-sensitive information relating to the action and material and documents received from the beneficiaries for information, communication and publicity purposes during the action or afterwards. This could be, for example, summaries for publication or audio-visual material, on paper or in electronic form, in full or in part. The exact scope of the right to use is defined in the financing agreement.

Where do I find the relevant provisions?

The precise scope of this licence is defined in the respective financing agreement, usually in the overall Intellectual Property Rights part or in the communication and visibility part of the agreement.

How much does that cost?

Costs vary, depends on the source. For example, for photos, check popular photo stock platforms such as Fotolia, Shutterstock, Getty images. Please note that there are plenty of royalty-free materials available on the internet. Also note that beneficiaries are obliged to provide a list of all pre-existing rights they have used.

Can the cost for this licence be covered by EU funding?

In principle yes, as part of the eligible cost for communication and visibility, which are part of the action. This is normally laid down in the funding rules for each programme.

Who can make use of communication material produced by recipients of EU funding?

The licence is granted solely to the granting authority, who can decide on its use, in line with the applicable legal acts and financing agreements. This may include the possibility, among other, to make communication material produced by recipients of EU funding available to other EU institutions and Member States. Below you can find the relevant legal provisions for directly managed programmes (CMGA), shared-management programmes (CPR) and of the RRF financing agreement.

Directly managed programmes: art. 16.3 of the Corporate Model Grant Agreement (CMGA):

Art. 16.3 CMGA Rights of use of the granting authority for information, communication and publicity purposes

The granting authority has the right to use non-sensitive information relating to the action and material and documents received from the beneficiaries (notably summaries for publication, deliverables, as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material, in paper or electronic form) for information, communication and publicity purposes — during the action or afterwards.

The right to use the beneficiaries' materials, documents and information is granted in the form of a royalty-free, non-exclusive and irrevocable licence, which includes the following rights:

- a) use for its own purposes (in particular, making them available to persons working for the granting authority or any other EU service (including institutions, bodies, offices, agencies, etc.) or EU Member State institution or body; copying or reproducing them in whole or in part, in unlimited numbers; and communication through press information services)*
- b) distribution to the public (in particular, publication as hard copies and in electronic or digital format, publication on the internet, as a downloadable or non-downloadable file, broadcasting by any channel, public display or presentation, communicating through press information services, or inclusion in widely accessible databases or indexes)*
- c) editing or redrafting (including shortening, summarising, inserting other elements (e.g. meta-data, legends, other graphic, visual, audio or text elements), extracting parts (e.g. audio or video files), dividing into parts, use in a compilation)*
- d) translation*
- e) storage in paper, electronic or other form*
- f) archiving, in line with applicable document-management rules and*
- g) the right to authorise third parties to act on its behalf or sub-license to third parties the modes of use set out in Points (b), (c), (d) and (f), if needed for the information, communication and publicity activity of the granting authority.*

The rights of use are granted for the whole duration of the industrial or intellectual property rights concerned.

If materials or documents are subject to moral rights or third party rights (including intellectual property rights or rights of natural persons on their image and voice), the beneficiaries must ensure that they comply with their obligations under this Agreement (in particular, by obtaining the necessary licences and authorisations from the rights holders concerned).

Where applicable, the granting authority will insert the following information:

“© – [year] – [name of the copyright owner]. All rights reserved. Licensed to the [name of granting authority] under conditions.”

Shared management: Common Provisions Regulation:

Article 49 Responsibilities of the managing authority

6. *The managing authority shall ensure that communication and visibility material including at the level of beneficiaries is made available upon request to Union institutions, bodies, offices or agencies and that a royalty-free, non-exclusive and irrevocable licence to use such material and any pre-existing rights attached to it is granted to the Union in accordance with Annex IX. This shall not require significant additional costs or a significant administrative burden for the beneficiaries or for the managing authority.*

Annex IX

- 2 *The licence on intellectual property rights referred to in Article 49(6) shall grant to the Union at least the following rights:*
 - 2.1 *internal use i.e. right to reproduce, copy and make available the communication and visibility materials to Union's institutions and agencies, Member States' authorities, and their employees;*
 - 2.2 *reproduction of the communication and visibility materials by any means and in any form, in whole or in part;*
 - 2.3 *communication to the public of the communication and visibility materials by using any and all means of communication;*
 - 2.4 *distribution to the public of the communication and visibility materials (or copies thereof) in any and all forms;*
 - 2.5 *storage and archiving of the communication and visibility materials;*
 - 2.6 *sub-licensing of the rights on the communication and visibility materials to third parties.*

For the **Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)** Article 10.6 'Publication of information, visibility of EU funding and right of use' of the financing agreement stipulates that *"The Member State grants the Commission the right to use free of charge the communication materials relating to the RRF"*.

Are the communication materials, in particular photos, from projects/programmes available centrally?

Since November 2018 the Central Deposit of the EC AV library is mandatory for all EC services.

3.10. Expect financial reductions in case of non-respect of the requirements

Where do we find this provision?

Corporate Model Grant Agreement (CMGA)

Article 17.5 **Consequences of non-compliance**

If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 28).

Such breaches may also lead to other measures described in Chapter 5.

Article 28 **Grant reduction**

28.1 Conditions

The granting authority may — at beneficiary termination, final payment or afterwards — reduce the grant for a beneficiary, if:

- a) the beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed:*
 - i. substantial errors, irregularities or fraud or*
 - ii. (ii) serious breach of obligations under this Agreement or during its award (including improper implementation of the action, non-compliance with the call conditions, submission of false information, failure to provide required information, breach of ethics or security rules (if applicable), etc.), or*
- a) the beneficiary (or a person having powers of representation, decision-making or control, or person essential for the award/implementation of the grant) has committed — in other EU grants awarded to it under similar conditions — systemic or recurrent errors, irregularities, fraud or serious breach of obligations that have a material impact on this grant (see Article 25).*

The amount of the reduction will be calculated for each beneficiary concerned and proportionate to the seriousness and the duration of the errors, irregularities or fraud or breach of obligations, by applying an individual reduction rate to their accepted EU contribution.

28.2 Procedure

If the grant reduction does not lead to a recovery, the granting authority will formally notify the coordinator or beneficiary concerned of the reduction, the amount to be reduced and the reasons why. The coordinator or beneficiary concerned may — within 30 days of receiving notification — submit observations if it disagrees with the reduction (payment review procedure).

If the grant reduction leads to a recovery, the granting authority will follow the contradictory procedure with pre-information letter set out in Article 22.

28.3 Effects

If the granting authority reduces the grant, it will deduct the reduction and then calculate the amount due (and, if needed, make a recovery; see Article 22).

Common Provisions Regulation (CPR)

Article 50

Responsibilities of beneficiaries

2. *Where the beneficiary does not comply with its obligations under Article 47 (Emblem of the Union) or paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article, and where remedial actions have not been put into place, the managing authority shall apply measures, taking into account the principle of proportionality, by cancelling up to 3 % of the support from the Funds to the operation concerned.*

What are the modalities and practical consequences of non-compliance with this obligation for Member States? How will this be applied in practice?

As the case is with any other breach of contractual obligations, recipients of EU funding who are in breach of their communication and visibility obligations, may be subject to a reduction of the EU's financial contribution, provided this is set out in the rules applicable to the programme. Guidance for its practical application is planned by the horizontal services, building on experience and best practice in several DGs. However, the individual reduction decision remains within the remit of the responsible authorising officer following a case-by-case assessment.

What would be the EC's assessment of the compliance of the beneficiaries of the funds with their obligation to communicate?

For most programmes, communication and visibility will be monitored and evaluated in the same way as the fulfilment of other contractual obligations of the programme by the competent EC services.

Will more precise reference to sanctions be made in specific sections of the financing agreements?

The EC does not have the intention to issue guidelines on the methodology of establishing the scope of violation or the amount of the corrections. Concerning the CPR funds, when needed, the Member State should proceed with the corrections in the same manner as with any other financial corrections applied in accordance with Article 103.CPR on Financial corrections by the Member States.

4. Programme-specific questions

4.1. Common Provisions Regulation (CPR)³

Where do I find the legal requirements on visibility and communication set out in the [Common Provisions Regulation \(CPR\)](#)?

**TITLE III
PROGRAMMING
CHAPTER I**

General provisions on the Funds

**Article 22
Content of programmes**

1. *Each programme shall set out a strategy for the contribution of the programme to the policy objectives or to the specific objective of the JTF and the communication of its results.*
2. *A programme shall consist of one or more priorities. Each priority shall correspond to a single policy objective, the specific objective of the JTF, or to technical assistance implemented pursuant to Article 36(4) or Article 37. A priority may use support from one or more Funds unless it receives support from the JTF or concerns technical assistance implemented pursuant to Article 36(4) or Article 37. A priority corresponding to a policy objective shall consist of one or more specific objectives. More than one priority may correspond to the same policy objective or to the specific objective of the JTF.*

For programmes supported by the AMIF, the ISF and the BMVI, a programme shall use support from one Fund and consist of specific objectives and of technical assistance specific objectives.

3. *Each programme shall set out:*

(...)

- (j) *the envisaged approach to communication and visibility for the programme through defining its objectives, target audiences, communication channels, including social media outreach, where appropriate, planned budget and relevant indicators for monitoring and evaluation;*

³ Common Provisions Regulation on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy

CHAPTER III
Visibility, transparency and communication

Section I
Visibility of support from the Funds

Article 46
Visibility

Each Member State shall ensure:

- a) the visibility of support in all activities relating to operations supported by the Funds with particular attention to operations of strategic importance;*
- b) communication to Union citizens of the role and achievements of the Funds through a single website portal providing access to all programmes involving that Member State.*

Article 47
Emblem of the Union

Member States, managing authorities and beneficiaries shall use the emblem of the Union in accordance with Annex IX when carrying out visibility, transparency and communication activities.

Article 48
Communication officers and networks

- 1. Each Member State shall identify a communication coordinator for visibility, transparency and communication activities in relation to the support from the Funds, including programmes under the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) where that Member State hosts the managing authority. The communication coordinator may be appointed at the level of the body defined under Article 71(6) and shall coordinate communication and visibility measures across programmes.*

The communication coordinator shall involve in the visibility, transparency and communication activities the following bodies:

- a) European Commission Representations and European Parliament Liaison Offices in the Member States, as well as Europe Direct Information Centres and other relevant networks, educational and research organisations;*
 - b) other relevant partners referred to in Article 8(1).*
- 2. Each managing authority shall identify a communication officer for each programme. A communication officer may be responsible for more than one programme.*
 - 3. The Commission shall maintain the network comprising communication coordinators, communication officers and Commission representatives to exchange information on visibility, transparency and communication activities.*

Section II
Transparency of implementation of the Funds and communication on programmes
Article 49

Responsibilities of the managing authority

1. *The managing authority shall ensure that, within 6 months of the decision approving the programme, there is a website where information on programmes under its responsibility is available, covering the programme's objectives, activities, available funding opportunities and achievements.*
2. *The managing authority shall ensure the publication on the website referred to in paragraph 1, or on the single website portal referred to in point (b) of Article 46, of a timetable of the planned calls for proposals, that is updated at least three times a year, with the following indicative data:*
 - a) *geographical area covered by the call for proposal;*
 - b) *policy objective or specific objective concerned;*
 - c) *type of eligible applicants;*
 - d) *total amount of support for the call;*
 - e) *start and end date of the call.*
3. *The managing authority shall make the list of operations selected for support by the Funds publicly available on the website in at least one of the official languages of the institutions of the Union and shall update that list at least every 4 months. Each operation shall have a unique code. The list shall contain the following data:*
 - a) *in the case of legal entities, the beneficiary's and, in the case of public procurement, the contractor's name;*
 - b) *where the beneficiary is a natural person the first name and the surname;*
 - c) *for EMFAF operations linked to a fishing vessel, the Union fishing fleet register identification number as referred to in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/218 (47);*
 - d) *name of the operation;*
 - e) *the purpose of the operation and its expected or actual achievements;*
 - f) *start date of the operation;*
 - g) *expected or actual date of completion of the operation;*
 - h) *total cost of the operation;*
 - i) *fund concerned;*
 - j) *specific objective concerned;*
 - k) *Union co-financing rate;*
 - l) *location indicator or geolocation for the operation and country concerned;*
 - m) *for mobile operations or operations covering several locations the location of the beneficiary where the beneficiary is a legal entity; or the NUTS 2 level region where the beneficiary is a natural person;*
 - n) *type of intervention for the operation in accordance with point (g) of Article 73(2).*

For data referred to in points (b) and (c) of the first subparagraph, the data shall be removed 2 years from the date of the initial publication on the website.

4. *The data referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Article shall be published on the website referred to in paragraph 1, or on the single website portal referred to in point (b) of Article 46 of this Regulation, in open, machine-readable formats, as set out in Article 5(1) of the Directive (EU) 2019/1024 of the European Parliament and of the Council (48), which allows data to be sorted, searched, extracted, compared and reused.*
5. *The managing authority shall inform the beneficiaries that the data will be made public before the publication takes place in accordance with this Article.*
6. *The managing authority shall ensure that communication and visibility material including at the level of beneficiaries is made available upon request to Union institutions, bodies, offices or agencies and that a royalty-free, non-exclusive and irrevocable licence to use such material and any pre-existing rights attached to it is granted to the Union in accordance with Annex IX. This shall not require significant additional costs or a significant administrative burden for the beneficiaries or for the managing authority.*

Article 50
Responsibilities of beneficiaries

1. *Beneficiaries and bodies implementing financial instruments shall acknowledge support from the Funds, including resources reused in accordance with Article 62, to the operation by:*
 - a) *providing on the beneficiary's official website, where such a site exists, and social media sites, a short description of the operation, proportionate to the level of support, including its aims and results, and highlighting the financial support from the Union;*
 - b) *providing a statement highlighting the support from the Union in a visible manner on documents and communication material relating to the implementation of the operation, intended for the public or for participants;*
 - c) *displaying durable plaques or billboards clearly visible to the public, that present the emblem of the Union in accordance with the technical characteristics laid down in Annex IX, as soon as the physical implementation of operations involving physical investment starts or purchased equipment is installed, in respect of the following:*
 - i) *operations supported by the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund the total cost of which exceeds EUR 500 000;*
 - ii) *operations supported by the ESF+, the JTF, the EMFAF, the AMIF, the ISF or the BMVI the total cost of which exceeds EUR 100 000;*
 - d) *for operations not falling under point (c), displaying at a location clearly visible to the public at least one poster of a minimum size A3 or equivalent electronic display with information about the operation highlighting the support from the Funds; where the beneficiary is a natural person, the beneficiary shall ensure, to the extent possible, that appropriate information is available, highlighting the support from the funds, at a location visible to the public or through an electronic display;*
 - e) *for operations of strategic importance and operations the total cost of which exceeds EUR 10 000 000, organising a communication event or activity, as appropriate, and involving the Commission and the responsible managing authority in a timely manner.*

Where an ESF+ beneficiary is a natural person or for operations supported under the specific objective set out in point (m) of Article 4(1) of the ESF+ Regulation, the requirement set out in point (d) of the first subparagraph shall not apply.

By derogation from points (c) and (d) of the first subparagraph, for operations supported by the AMIF, the ISF and the BMVI, the document setting out the conditions for support may establish specific requirements for the public display of information on the support from the Funds where this is justified by reasons of security and public order in accordance with Article 69(5).

2. *For small project funds, the beneficiary shall comply with the obligations under Article 36(5) of the Interreg Regulation.*

For financial instruments, the beneficiary shall ensure by means of the contractual terms that final recipients comply with the requirements set out in point (c) of paragraph 1.

3. *Where the beneficiary does not comply with its obligations under Article 47 or paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article, and where remedial actions have not been put into place, the managing authority shall apply measures, taking into account the principle of proportionality, by cancelling up to 3 % of the support from the Funds to the operation concerned.*

According to CPR, the Managing Authority is obliged to publish on the website a list of operations with precisely defined content. One of the requirements is the publication of the first name and surname (if the recipient is a natural person), which, however, after two years from the initial publication on the website shall be removed. Why just after two years and not after the operation? (NB: Article 49, paragraph 3)

The provision in Article 49(3) CPR provides coherence with Article 38(6) of the Financial Regulation as requirements under shared management programmes should not be stricter than those under direct or indirect management.

The amendment in the Financial Regulation was introduced by the Omnibus Regulation. Personal data referring to natural persons should not be publicly available for longer than the period during which the funds are being used by the recipient and should therefore be removed after two years.

The change of the rules related to publication of data of beneficiaries for natural persons was triggered by the judgment in Volker und Markus Schecke GbR and Hartmut Eifert v Land Hessen in the context of Common Agricultural Policy.

According to CPR, the Managing Authority may cancel up to 3% of the fund support for the affected operation in case of non-compliance of the rules. Will it be determined which kind of non-compliance could result in a reduction of fund support and in what amount, or partial limits? Will these rules be uniform for all Member States or is it within the competence of each Member State to reduce the amount in the context of a breach of the rules set separately?

The EC does not have the intention to issue guidelines on the methodology of establishing the scope of violation or the amount of the corrections. The Member States should proceed with corrections in the same manner as with any other financial corrections as applied in accordance with Article 103 CPR on the Financial corrections by the Member States.

How concretely does the EC plan to be involved in the visibility of operations of strategic importance and operations the total cost of which exceeds EUR 10 million?

The minimum requirement set out in Article 50(1)(e) CPR is organising a communication event or activity, as appropriate, and involving the EC and the responsible managing authority in a timely manner. This means informing these actors about future visibility activities already in the planning phase in order to secure potential presence and/or speakers etc. The EC will endeavour to monitor compliance with the communication and visibility requirements as much as possible (e.g. through regular reporting in the Monitoring Committees), not only through its services at the headquarters but also with the help of the Representations in the Member States, which act as the EC's voice in their host country and can therefore act as the single entry point.

We would welcome, if the new communication rules could reduce the possibilities of local government leaders to 'flaunt' constructions, buildings in the area of cities or municipalities of their competence without mentioning EU funding. From our point of view, the obligation to indicate the use of EU funding should be included in a comprehensive way – also during the initial and final stage of the beneficiaries communication. Not only in the (formal) external signage of constructions/reconstructions.

The fulfilment of communication and visibility requirements will be monitored and evaluated in the same way as the fulfilment of other aspects of the programme by the competent EC services.

We would like to draw your attention to the duration for which the billboard is put up. Namely, defining the period for which the permanent billboard is installed on the basis of the visibility of the impacts of the project is, in our opinion, a loose category. It might be more relevant to define the period with regard to the amount or type of investment.

For the cases provided by Article 50(1)(c) CPR, the durable plaques or billboards, clearly visible to the public, should be displayed as soon as the physical implementation of operations involving physical investment starts or purchased equipment is installed.

In this context, 'durable' is to be understood as existing and remaining for the period of time in which the relevant physical object, infrastructure or construction physically exists and is being used for the purpose for which it was funded.

For operations supported by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), the Internal Security Fund (ISF) and the Border Management and Visa Policy (BMVI), the rules under Article 50(1) point (c) are subject to derogation provided by the last sub-paragraph of Article 50(1).

4.2. Recovery and Resilience Facility (RFF)

Where do we find the legal requirements on visibility and communication that are applicable to the RRF and which further guidance is available?

Three main sources set out the legal visibility and communication requirements applicable to the RRF:

Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation (RFF)

CHAPTER VIII COMMUNICATION AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 34

Information, communication and publicity

1. *The Commission may engage in communication activities to ensure the visibility of the Union funding for the financial support envisaged in the relevant recovery and resilience plan, including through joint communication activities with the national authorities concerned. The Commission may, as appropriate, ensure that support under the Facility is communicated and acknowledged through a funding statement.*
2. *The recipients of Union funding shall acknowledge the origin and ensure the visibility of the Union funding, including, where applicable, by displaying the emblem of the Union and an appropriate funding statement that reads 'funded by the European Union – NextGenerationEU', in particular when promoting the actions and their results, by providing coherent, effective and proportionate targeted information to multiple audiences, including the media and the public.*
3. *The Commission shall implement information and communication actions relating to the Facility, to actions taken pursuant to the Facility and to the results obtained. The Commission shall where appropriate inform the representation offices of the European Parliament of its actions and involve them in those actions. Financial resources allocated to the Facility shall also contribute to the corporate communication of the political priorities of the Union, insofar as they are related to the objectives referred to in Article 4.*

COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING DECISION

on the approval of the assessment of the recovery and resilience plan of each Member State

Monitoring and implementation

(recital on communication)

Member States should ensure that financial support under the Facility is communicated and acknowledged in line with Article 34 of Regulation (EU) 2021/241. Technical support may be requested under the Technical Support Instrument established by Regulation (EU) 2021/240 of the European Parliament and of the Council to assist Member States in the implementation of their RRFs.

Article 10 of the RRF financing agreement

Article 10

Publication of information, visibility of Union funding and right of use

1. *Without prejudice to Article 34 of the RRF Regulation, Member State information, communication and publicity for funding in implementation of the RRP shall be at least of the same level as that required by the rules of the Member State for public funding without contributions from the Union budget.*
2. *In order to respect its obligations under Article 34(2) of the RRF Regulation, and in particular to ensure provision of coherent, effective and proportionate targeted information to multiple audiences, including the media and the public, the Member State shall:*
 - a) *Have a strategy at Member State level to raise awareness and ensure recognition of the RRF's contribution to Europe's recovery and, in particular, the twin green and digital transitions.*
 - b) *Where applicable, correctly and prominently display in all communication activities at project and Member State level the EU emblem with an appropriate funding statement that reads (translated into local languages where appropriate) "funded by the European Union – NextGenerationEU".*
 - c) *Establish and maintain a single web space providing information on the RRP and related projects and communicate the dedicated web link to the Commission.*
 - d) *Ensure that the final recipients of Union funding under the RRF acknowledge the origin and ensure the visibility of the Union funding.*
3. *When displayed in association with another logo, the European Union emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos. The emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands or text. Apart from the emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EU support.*
4. *Any communication or dissemination activity that relates to the RRP and is made by the Member State in any form and using any means shall use factually accurate information.*
5. *Where applicable, the Member State shall indicate the following disclaimer (translated into local languages where appropriate): "Funded by the European Union – NextGenerationEU. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the European Commission can be held responsible for them."*
6. *The Member State grants the Commission the right to use free of charge the communication materials relating to the RRP.*

The EC's guidance to Member States also covers the area of communication and sets out further best practice for communicating on the RRF.

Which funding statement do we have to use for RRF-financed projects? Will the EU emblem be available with the funding statement 'Co-funded by the European Union' and 'NextGenerationEU'?

As set out in Art. 34(2) of the RRF Regulation, recipients shall ensure the visibility of the EU funding by displaying the emblem of the EU and the funding statement 'funded by the European Union – NextGenerationEU', (translated into local languages where appropriate).

The EU emblem and the funding statement are available on the EC [download centre for visual elements](#).

Do we need a communication strategy for the RRF?

Yes, the financing agreement (Art. 10.2.a) sets out that Member States shall have a communication strategy for the RRF.

The strategy shall raise awareness and ensure recognition of the RRF's contribution to Europe's recovery and in particular the twin green and digital transitions. It is expected that Member States develop this strategy on the basis of the outline that they have provided with their national recovery and resilience plan.

As suggested in the Guidance to Member States, they are encouraged to also indicate selected projects for reinforced communication. These projects should be RRF 'success stories' with a strong communication impact.

As part of their strategy, Member States are also encouraged to engage in joint communication activities with the EC, e.g. through collaboration with the EC Representation in the Member State.

Do we need a website for the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP)?

Yes, the financing agreement (Art. 10.2.c) indicates that Member States shall establish and maintain a single web space providing information on the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) and related projects and communicate the web link to the EC.

What are good practices in Member States?

Each Member State is encouraged to appoint a national RRF communication coordinator and submit his details to the EC. The EC will include this coordinator in its RRF-specific INFORM EU forum.

RRP communication strategies differ a lot from Member State to Member State. Some stand out for being quite detailed and acknowledge the need to coordinate communication on RRF and other funding streams. Similarly, a visual identity guide for beneficiaries and a list of minimum communication activities are useful good practices for others to follow.

Best practice examples also present concrete suggestions for cooperation with the Representations of the EC and even joint communication activities. The management authorities of different EU funds should be in regular contact with the Representations to jointly communicate the benefits of EU funding. For example, in one Member State this year, a series of TV spots has been launched, where the most suited projects are jointly identified by national management authorities and the Representation. In this Member State, the Representation is in contact with the Finance Ministry to identify one or more examples to be highlighted in a TV spot that will be broadcast on a national TV. Regular meetings involving the management authorities of all EU funding programmes and the Representation are held to agree on communication actions.

What is the role of the INFORM EU network?

Launched in 2021, [INFORM EU](#) is an EU-wide network of communication officers responsible for communicating EU and Member State investments under shared management covering the following EU funds:

- Regional Policy: European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Just Transition Fund (JTF) and Cohesion Fund (CF);
- Social Policy: European Social Fund (ESF+);
- Home Affairs: Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), Border Management and Visa Instrument (BMVI) and Internal Security Fund (ISF);
- Maritime Affairs: European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF).

In addition, the INFORM EU Network covers the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF).

The network's goal is to foster the expertise of Member States and regions in the field of EU communication, visibility and transparency whilst establishing a cooperation platform between the EC and EU programmes under shared management. It aims to enhance the visibility of EU actions at the national, regional and local level.

The EC takes a pro-active stance and strongly encourages Member States to participate in the INFORM EU network and involve RRF colleagues in the national communication networks. Member States are also encouraged to inform and involve the EC Representations in programme- and project-specific communication activities in each country and, in this context, coordination is also ensured through the INFORM EU network. Several activities are tailored to the RRF, such as dedicated sessions at the six-monthly plenary meetings, stocktaking meetings aimed at exchanging best-practices and the monthly virtual communication clinic with Member States. In addition the INFORM EU network organises seminars and training. Member States have already been informed about this possibility in a letter from the Directors-General of SG-RECOVER and DG ECFIN, dated 14 September 2021.

[A new call for application under a national recovery and resilience plan will be released for solar panels and energy modernisation, the beneficiaries are natural persons and the implementation sites are private buildings and estates. What type of plaques or billboards ought to be put up, in such cases, and which information do they need to contain? Is it acceptable that in case of natural persons as beneficiaries, smaller \(A4 or A5\) plaques would be sufficient? Which information would have to be stated on the plaques?](#)

The RRF financing agreement stipulates that Member States shall, where applicable, correctly and prominently display in all communication activities, at project and Member State level, the EU emblem with an appropriate funding statement that reads (translated into local languages where appropriate) 'Funded by the European Union – NextGenerationEU'. Member States shall also ensure that the final recipients of EU funding under the RRF acknowledge the origin and ensure the visibility of the EU funding. When displayed in association with another logo, the EU emblem must be displayed at least as prominently and visibly as the other logos. The emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by adding other visual marks, brands or text. Apart from the emblem, no other visual identity or logo may be used to highlight the EU support.

In the case at hand, where the beneficiaries are natural persons and implementation sites private buildings and estates, it is suggested to use smaller posters (A4 or A5) showing the emblem of the EU and the statement acknowledging the origin of the EU funding, provided in particular that the above-mentioned provisions of the financing agreement (e.g. on the size of the EU emblem in relation to other logos, etc.) are complied with.

I have a question. How can I contact you?

The EC stands ready to support Member States in communicating on the RRF. Questions can be sent to EC-RECOVER@ec.europa.eu.

In addition, we strongly encourage Member States to participate in the [INFORM EU](#) network, the joint forum bringing together communicators on EU funding of the EC and Member States. Several activities in INFORM EU are tailored to the RRF, such as dedicated sessions at the six-monthly plenary meetings, stock-taking meetings to exchange best-practices, or a monthly virtual communication clinic with Member States to discuss communication-related questions. In order to participate in INFORM EU, please contact your national INFORM EU coordinator.

SG-RECOVER has set up a [website](#) which contains questions and answers related to the RRF. Although not publicly available it is accessible to staff in national administrations with a webgate access password.

4.3. Agricultural policy and rural development

Where do I find the legal requirements on visibility and communication that are applicable to agricultural policy?

The Regulation establishing the rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) is the basic act for the CAP Strategic Plans 2023-2027

Article 110(2)(j) and (k) of the draft regulation lays down the basic provisions with obligations for communication and visibility of the managing authority:

Article 110 **Managing Authority**

2. *The Managing Authority shall be responsible for managing and implementing the CAP Strategic Plan in an efficient, effective and correct way. In particular, it shall ensure that:*
 - j) *beneficiaries under interventions financed by the EAFRD, other than area- and animal-related interventions, acknowledge the financial support received, including the appropriate use of the Union emblem in accordance with the rules laid down by the Commission in accordance with paragraph 5;*
 - k) *publicity is made for the CAP Strategic Plan, including through the national CAP network, by informing potential beneficiaries, professional organisations, the economic and social partners, bodies involved in promoting equality between men and women, and the non-governmental organisations concerned, including environmental organisations, of the possibilities offered by the CAP Strategic Plan and the rules for gaining access to the CAP Strategic Plan funding as well as by informing beneficiaries and the general public of the Union support for agriculture and rural development through the CAP Strategic Plan.*

For support financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) as appropriate, Member States shall provide for the managing authority to use the visibility and communication tools and structures used by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

Moreover, the EC may adopt implementing acts laying down uniform conditions for the application of the information, publicity and visibility requirements:

5. *The Commission shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 138, supplementing this Regulation with detailed rules on the application of the information, publicity and visibility requirements referred to in points (j) and (k) of paragraph 2. Those implementing acts shall be adopted in accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 139(2).*

We are in a transitional period until end of 2022, with all current rules continuing to apply. The implementing act is currently under preparation by the EC services.

Will the new visibility and communication rules also be applicable to the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund & the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development given their specific legislation?

The transitional provisions for support from the EAFRD have extended the application of Regulation No 1303/2013 and, consequently, the current rules on information and communication on support from all ESI Funds, ie the obligation for beneficiaries to acknowledge support by displaying the EU emblem and a reference to the Fund (statement currently used for EAFRD funded projects: *'The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas'*).

As regards the NGEU funds (EUR 8 billion from the EU Recovery Instrument, EURI) to be implemented in the rural development programmes that have been extended to cover the transitional period 2021-2022, in terms of visibility requirements, once included in the rural development programmes, these funds are to be considered EAFRD funds and thus to be implemented in accordance with the existing rules indicated above, i.e. no changes or specific visibility requirements for those funds.

4.4. Other programmes

Bearing in mind that the MEDIA section of the Creative Europe programme keeps a specific logo for the 2021-2027 programming period, could a logo 'Co-funded by the European Union/Creative Europe' be used to communicate on the sections of Creative Europe other than MEDIA for the sake of coherence? Would the EC provide this logo in all official languages or allow national desks create them themselves?

The case of the MEDIA strand of the Creative Europe programme is exceptional among the legal instruments adopted in the context of the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework inasmuch as its specific logo has been maintained, which is not the case for the other two strands of the programme, the CULTURE strand and the CROSS-SECTORAL strand.

On these grounds, the following approach has been adopted:

Acknowledgement of funding – all beneficiaries:

- CULTURE strand and CROSS-SECTORAL strand = 'co-funded by European Union' > funding statement exists in all languages
- MEDIA strand = 'co-funded by / MEDIA logo' > funding statement exists in all languages.
- When all three strands are concerned, a 'mixed logo' is to be used = 'co-funded by European Union + MEDIA logo' > exist in all languages (see below)

Co-funded by
the European Union



Creative
Europe
MEDIA

- This is explicitly laid down in Annex 5 of the legal agreement with beneficiaries.

Communication by the CREATIVE EUROPE desks (CEDESKS)

- Communication about the CULTURE strand, the CROSS-SECTORAL strand or all three strands together: **CEDESKs** are allowed to use '*Creative Europe*' as a title/heading, but **without** the EU emblem (cfr. the visual identity and the visuals that were established for the launch of the Creative Europe programme).
- When **CEDESKs** communicate about the MEDIA strand only, the MEDIA logo and MEDIA visual identity apply.
- **For CEDESKs to identify their entity and Creative Europe network role**, the EC and EACEA are processing to add the logo in Annex 5, as displayed in the image below.



Creative
Europe
Desk (+Country name)

5. Relevant links

[10 ways for recipients of EU funding to communicate and raise EU visibility](#) (public information on the Europa.eu website about funding and tender opportunities)

[Download centre for visual elements](#) (this is the online generator of the EC for the EU emblem and the funding statement)

[Visual guidelines on the use of the EU emblem in the context of EU programmes 2021 - 2027](#)

Support Kit for EU visibility 2021-2027 - Brand book for managing authorities and project beneficiaries produced by EC DG REGIO (available soon)

[INFORM EU network: this is an EU-wide network of communication officers responsible for communicating EU and Member State investments under shared management.](#)

6. Contacts

Council Working Party on Information (WPI): the Working Party on Information handles issues regarding transparency, public access to documents and member state communication on the EU. It had discussions on the implementation of the communication and visibility rules, and Member States' delegates submitted numerous questions to the EC via its secretariat that are answered in this document. The secretariat of the WPI can be reached at the following email address: information.wp@consilium.europa.eu

EC SG RECOVER: EC department responsible for the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RFF) under the umbrella of NextGenerationEU: EC-RECOVER@ec.europa.eu

EC DG REGIO: EC department responsible for EU policy on regions and cities. It coordinates the implementation of the EU funds governed by the Common Provisions Regulation and the related communication and visibility rules: REGIO-EXTERNAL-COMMUNICATION@ec.europa.eu

EC Central Intellectual Property Service is located within the Joint Research Centre (JRC): EC-IPR@ec.europa.eu

EC DG COMM Visual Identity: The Directorate-General for Communication provides support and advice on the use of the EU emblem and the EC's corporate and visual identity: COMM-VISUAL-IDENTITY@ec.europa.eu

EC DG COMM Visibility Requirements: The Directorate-General for Communication provides support and advice on the corporate EU communication and visibility rules under EU funding programmes and NextGenerationEU: COMM-VISIBILITY-REQUIREMENTS@ec.europa.eu