

Fact Sheet 24: Communication

Version	Valid from	Valid to	Main changes
Version 1	29.06.11	25.10.23	N/A
Version 2	25.10.23		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Requirement for a special communication event for projects with a total budget exceeding €5 million. 2. Clarification of responsibilities for copyright violations. 3. Clarification regarding external digital project platforms. 4. Clarifications regarding branding and using the EU emblem and project logo.

CORE MESSAGE

Interreg North Sea funded projects are obliged to promote the visibility of their results and impacts as well as the EU funding. You must communicate your project's goals, activities, progress, and achievements effectively throughout the project lifetime. In addition, all project materials must include the EU emblem in a prominent way and clearly state that your project is funded by the European Union.

Background

Communication is of vital importance for your project to have the strongest possible impact. Also, communicating the EU funding makes clear to the public how EU funds benefit European citizens. The European Commission has adopted rules that guide your project to convey its aims, results, and the EU funding in a strong and effective way. Your project must follow all applicable publicity and communication requirements to ensure its costs are eligible. This fact sheet provides a summary of the main points.

Summary of key requirements

The list below is not exhaustive but includes some central requirements. Your project must:

1. Display the EU emblem and the EU funding prominently across all project materials.
2. Refer to the European Union and the Interreg North Sea Programme correctly and visibly in all project publications and materials.
3. Provide updated information about the project on your project website.
4. Make use of the project logo provided by the Joint Secretariat.
5. Ensure that each project partner puts up a project poster at their premises.
6. Put up a permanent billboard or plaque when a physical investment or purchase of equipment exceeds €100,000.

7. If your total project budget exceeds €5 million, your project must organise a communication event involving the Commission and the Interreg North Sea Programme in a timely manner.
8. Make all publicity materials including images available to the Interreg North Sea Programme and any EU institutions or agencies upon request, transferring all rights.

Using the EU emblem

The EU emblem (the EU “flag”) is a core visibility element and must be prominent across all project documents and materials, whether public or intended for project participants. This means that the viewer will easily and immediately notice the EU emblem. The emblem can be made prominent through its size and/or placement, and always at the top of all digital platforms (websites, mobile apps, etc.).

The emblem must be accompanied by the co-funding statement “Co-funded by the European Union”. The emblem usage must comply with all requirements presented in Annex IX of the Common Provisions Regulation (EU 2021/1060).

Reference to Interreg North Sea funding

You must include a statement highlighting the Interreg North Sea support in a visible way across all project documents and communication materials. This applies whether the material is intended for the public or only for project participants.

Interreg North Sea project logo

The Joint Secretariat provides each project with two project logos including your project acronym in the relevant priority colour. One is more elongated while the other is more compact. The compact logo comes in several colour versions.

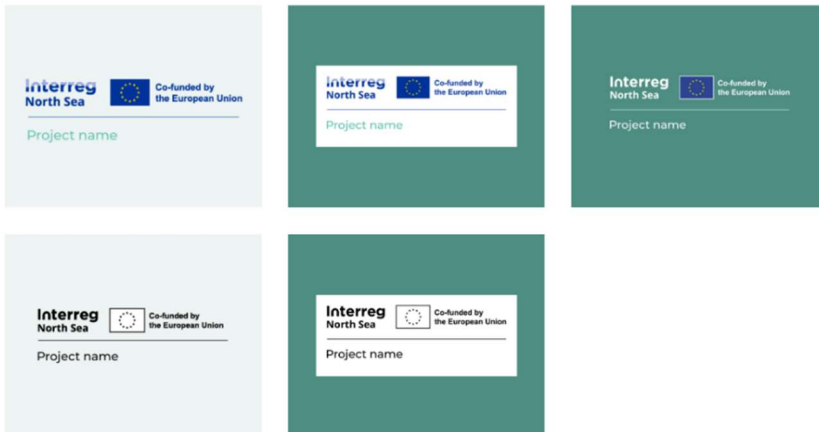
All your project materials must include a project logo. You may use different versions from your logo pack on different materials, depending on the design.



Project name



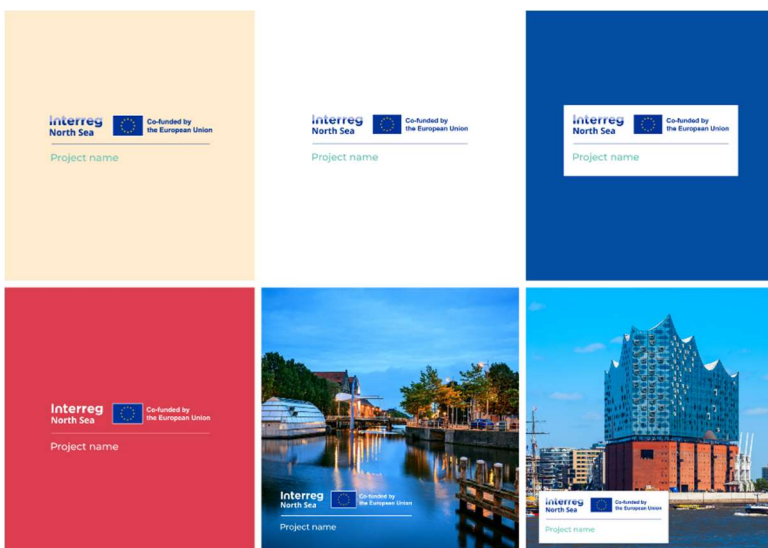
Your compact project logo is available in several colour versions, as shown below. The standard brand is the full-colour version which should be used on light backgrounds. When the background is dark, you should use the logo placed in a white rectangle or the logo with white letters and transparent background.



The following ground rules apply to the use of the project logos provided by the secretariat:

- **Colour choice:** The logo versions using reflex blue in the EU emblem are preferred. The full-colour logo must be used at the top of all digital platforms. The monochrome version in black and white may only be used when strictly dictated by the design.
- **Contrast:** There needs to be enough contrast between the background and the logo to make all the elements inside the logo (text, lines, EU emblem) clearly visible.
- **No changes allowed:** Do not manipulate the logo files provided by the Joint Secretariat. All colours, fonts, and elements must stay the same. You must use the files exactly as they are, and you may not create any alternative versions yourself.

Below are some illustrations of project logos used on a light, dark, and busy background, respectively.



Additional project-specific logos and visual elements

Your project may develop its own logo or visual and use it in addition to the official project logo to enhance your project’s visibility. Also, you may include additional logos, such as partner logos, in your materials.

When including a special project logo/visual, partner logos, or any other logos, you need to ensure that:

1. The EU emblem (“flag”) remains prominent.
2. The project name or additional project logo is never placed above the Interreg logo.
3. No institutional logo is both taller and wider than the largest EU emblem in the material. Institutional logos refer to an organisation, such as a partner organisation. If the institutional logos are too large compared to the largest EU emblem, you may achieve compliance by either resizing the project logo versus the institutional logos or by adding a separate, larger EU emblem.

Please note:

- An additional project visual is not an institutional logo and may therefore be larger than the EU emblem. Nonetheless, the EU emblem must remain prominent.
- You may only use the EU emblem to highlight the support from the European Union. You may not use any other logo or visual identity for this purpose.

Priority brand elements and Interreg co-branding

Your project receives a project logo pack, a set of priority icons, a presentation template and a poster template from the secretariat. Your project logo, presentation template and poster template all use the specific colour of your priority theme.



PRIORITY 1

Colour codes:
RGB: 141/183/225
CMYK: 43/18/0/0
HEX: #8DB7E1



PRIORITY 2

Colour codes:
RGB: 251/176/64
CMYK: 0/35/85/0
HEX: #FBB040



PRIORITY 3

Colour codes:
RGB: 0/116/144
CMYK: 90/40/30/10
HEX: #007490



PRIORITY 4

Colour codes:
RGB: 113/125/153
CMYK: 60/48/25/2
HEX: #717D99

While you must use your project logo across all materials (see above), the priority colour, icons, and templates are optional.

You can choose to which extent you want to use your priority colour, however please note that the priority colour for your project name in your official logo cannot be changed.

Using the North Sea Starfish

The North Sea Starfish is a unique identifier used by the North Sea Programme. Since your project is supported by the programme, you may use the priority-colour starfish visual included in the presentation template we have provided to you if you want to.

Note: You are not allowed to use any other colours than your priority colour for your starfish visual. This is to avoid confusion between the programme and projects, for example about who is the sender/author of various communication products.



Project website

Throughout the project lifetime, your project must inform the public about its scope and the EU support through a dedicated project website provided by the Joint Secretariat. Your project website is embedded in the main Interreg North Sea website and automatically displays the official Interreg North Sea project logo in full colour at the top of all web pages, including the EU emblem and the EU co-funding statement.

You can add news and events, content, sections, links, photos, and graphics to your project website. You are obliged to keep your project website up to date on a regular basis, including news, events, activities, important milestones, achievements, and results.

Additional digital platforms

You can create an additional digital platform, if strictly needed. E.g., you may need advanced features that are not available in the standard project website. Before you proceed with any such project, we recommend you check with your project advisor if an additional site is an eligible cost.

Please note:

- An extra website does not exempt you from keeping your allocated project website updated.
- Your official website provided by the programme remains the go-to website for your project, and you must manage and promote it that way. Any additional site must complement – not replace - your project website.

- Any content that is possible to provide through your main project site must be provided there as your first choice.
- You must strive for the content on your additional site to be clearly different from the content on our main project site. As part of this, you should avoid duplicating content from your official project website, except for very short snippets such as news teasers.
- You must create prominent crosslinks between your official project website and any external sites.
- Please note that the retention time for all materials produced by your project, described in Fact Sheet 13, also applies to any external digital platforms that you may create.

Social media

We strongly encourage your project to make use of relevant social media to engage with relevant stakeholders and disseminate your messages, progress, and results. The Joint Secretariat monitors social media and to the extent possible, we will share project communication to boost your reach and impact.

Partner websites

Each partner must present the project on their official website, accompanied by the Interreg project logo including the co-funding statement and the project acronym. The project description must at minimum include the project's aims and results. It must also highlight the financial support from the Interreg North Sea Programme.

Project poster

Each project partner must put up a poster at their premises, informing about the project and making the EU emblem and the Interreg North Sea funding visible.

- The poster must be in size A3 or larger.
- The poster may be in digital format as long as the screen is in sufficient size and the poster is on permanent display.

You can generate and customise a ready-made poster in the Online Monitoring System. However, using the template is not mandatory. Your project is free to develop its own poster.

Permanent plaques and billboards

For investments in physical infrastructure or objects with a total budget exceeding €100,000, your project needs to display durable plaques or billboards clearly visible to the public as soon as the physical execution starts, purchase of equipment starts, or purchased equipment is installed. The plaque or billboard must present the EU emblem and the co-funding statement "Co-funded by the European Union" in accordance with the Common Provisions Regulation (EU 2021/1060) Annex IX.

Copyright and licenses

Any material – photos, illustrations, videos, graphic elements, presentations, etc. - that you upload to your project website and social media channels or otherwise make publicly available must respect all copyrights or license agreements and it is your own responsibility that it does so. As part of this, you must provide credits wherever this is required. For example, by identifying the photographer directly on or below the image: *Image: John Doe/Smith Stockphoto*. Any violations of content copyright or license agreements are the sole responsibility of your partnership; this includes liability for any penalties.

CASE: COPYRIGHT VIOLATION ON PROJECT WEBSITE LEADS TO PENALTY FINE

The following anonymised example is based on a real case: A project has uploaded a presentation to its website, provided by an invited speaker at one of the project's events. Several years later, the North Sea Programme receives a request for payment of a penalty of €300 for violating the copyright of an image included in one of the slides. The request comes from a legitimate company specialised in copyright law and acting on behalf of the image author. The project is liable for the copyright violation, so the partners have to cover the fine.

Note: Such fines are paid per image, so the amounts involved can potentially become very large and it is up to the project partnership to cover the costs. We recommend including provisions for this in an annex to the partnership agreement.

Requirement to share all materials

Upon request, you must make all project publicity and visibility materials available to the Interreg North Sea Programme as well as any EU institution, office, or agency. The materials must be delivered with a royalty-free, non-exclusive, and irrevocable license to use such material. You must grant any pre-existing rights to the European Union in accordance with Article 49.6 and Annex IX of the Common Provisions Regulation (EU 2021/1060).

Citing your project in academic publications

Citations of your project in academic publications must refer to the co-funding by the European Union and the Interreg North Sea Programme. In addition, we encourage you to add the project acronym in the citation. Below is an example of a citation which is in line with these requirements:

This research was supported as part of [ACRONYM], an Interreg North Sea project co-funded by the European Union.



Legal framework

The following regulations provide the framework for communication in the 2021-2027 programming period:

The EU Interreg regulation (EU 2021/59)

Article 36 describes key communication and visibility requirements applying to Interreg project partners.

[View and download the regulation](#)

The EU Common Provisions Regulation (EU 2021/1060)

Annex IX describes the rules applying to the use of the EU Emblem and details the requirements for beneficiaries of EU funding to deliver publicity materials, including all rights, upon request.

[View and download the regulation](#)