IPA 2010 Twinning Project
Strengthening administrative capacities in Information Society – Montenegro
No. MN 10 IB OT 01

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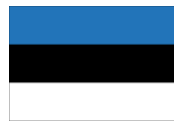### Plan for the long term promotion of the information Society service

Component no.: Activity 2.5 handbook for the training participant on the "preparation and implementation of a communication Plan on E-Government"

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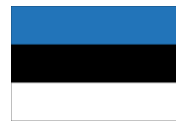Signature   Date:

IPA 2010 Twinning Project
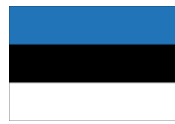"Strengthening administrative capacities in information society - Montenegro"

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Introduction

The current workplan is designed to offer the Ministry for Information Society and Telecommunications (MIST) staff and the participants of the training which was held in May in Podgorica on "how to prepare a communication Plan on e-Government" with a general overview on how to design and then implement a Communication campaign in order to promote eGovernment in Montenegro.

It frequently happens that communication campaigns are given in outsource to Public Relation (PR) agencies or media companies which are the in charge of implementing them. Even if they are implemented by external companies there is a need, by MIST staff, to control the quality of the activities planned and to judge the effectiveness of the actions implemented. MIST staff can do so only if they are aware of the basics of the communication campaigns, so that they can better control and provide the external companies with guidance on how to make the communication campaigns more profitable.

Furthermore communication is a key element in e-Government implementation and this is the reason why the MIST staff has been provided with targeted training on how to implement a communications campaign.

Communications campaigns, besides, requires that MIST staff adopts some decision related to which kind of target groups to reach, which strategies and tools to implement and which aims have to be reached.

The negative effects of a weak and inadequate campaign can lead to a lack of effectiveness of e-Government policies. In this context it also results that the allegiance with the media is crucial. A very well planned media strategy can be the key to success. Usually relationships with media are kept by the Ministry Press Office and so it is of vital importance that MIST Communication staff work in close cooperation with the Press Office staff work when planning a strategy directed to the media.

In addition to the media also interpersonal networks must be encouraged. The belief is that while media allows for the learning of new ideas, interpersonal networks encourage the shift from knowledge to continued practice.

The new forms of communication have to be seen as a way to amplify voice, facilitate meaningful participation, and foster social change.

An e-Government campaign has to be considered a social process based on dialogue using a broad range of tools and methods. It is also about seeking change at different levels including listening, building trust, sharing knowledge and skills, building policies, debating and learning for sustained and meaningful change. Such two-way, horizontal approaches to communication include public hearings, debates, deliberations and stakeholder consultations, participatory tools, community-based theatre, storytelling, and web forums.

Diffusion and participatory approaches should be integrated or adopted in parallel with all other e-Government initiatives. Such combinations allow for all those involved in the e-Government implementation promotion to reach broad audiences through large scale campaigns, while promoting local community development, empowerment and ownership through participation.

Communication also plays an important role in the good governance. A key aspect of governance is how citizens, leaders and public institutions relate to each other in order to make change happen. Without communication structures and processes which enable the two-way exchange of information between state and citizens, it is difficult to imagine how states can be responsive to public needs and expectations. Crucially, two-way communication allows citizens to monitor the

state's activities, to enter into dialogue with the state on issues that matter to them, and to influence political outcomes. Many political scientists believe this encourages the development of trust between state and society, and is a foundation of state legitimacy over the long-term.

E-government means transforming government to be more citizen-centered. Technology is a tool in this effort. **E-government success requires changing how government works**, how it deals with information, how officials view their jobs and interact with the public. Achieving e-government success also requires active partnerships among:

- Government
- Citizens
- The private sector.

The e-government process needs continuous input and feedback from the "customers"- the public, businesses and officials who use e-government services. Their voices and ideas are essential to making e-government work. E-government, when implemented well, is a participatory process.

In a e-Government communication campaign it is crucial to communicate the vision. Once the vision for e-government is established, it is crucial that leaders from government and non-government sectors communicate the vision and key objectives across government and to the public.

Establish a communications strategy to ensure that people understand the vision, the changes that will occur and the tangible benefits for them from e-government.

To communicate the e-government vision to the broadest possible audience, it is best to use the media most likely to reach target audiences. For the public and businesses, this might mean town meetings, newspapers, TV/radio broadcasts or Web sites. For civil servants, discussing the vision in speeches, department meetings or trainings might be effective.

The communication strategy will depend upon the circumstances of each society and the nature of the e-government application.

In addition, to the extent that increased transparency, accountability and predictability (of rules and procedures) are made priorities, e-government may offer a weapon against corruption.

E-government, however, does not guarantee the end of corruption. Officials who master technology-empowered processes can find new opportunities for rent seeking. Under such circumstances, e-government may simply cause an inter-generational shift in corruption toward younger, more tech-literate officials.

One especially sensitive issue, right from the start, is whether fighting corruption should be part of the e-government vision. Each society must answer that question for itself. For countries where corruption is a serious concern, this question should be considered when the e-government vision and priorities are discussed. If the answer is "yes," it will be important to decide what forms of corruption the e-government program will address and how it will be accomplished.

Publicize e-government's anti-corruption goals or not? If fighting corruption is included in the vision, the next key question is when to announce the anti-corruption goal to the public. If fighting corruption is publicly announced as a major part of the e-government agenda, it could help build coalitions and public pressure for anti-corruption results.
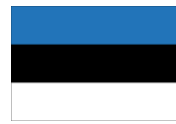
However, publicity too early in the e-government process runs the risk of causing fear and resistance from corrupt officials, who are likely to exert negative pressure even upon their uncorrupted colleagues.

Another option is to not publicize the anti-corruption goals of an e-government program but rather "sell" e-government (especially within the government) as a program to accomplish other goals such as:

- improving government services
- increasing attractiveness of the country for investment
- reducing costs to the public/business
- improving the competitiveness of the local private sector.

Given the sensitivity of these issues, involvement of non-government stakeholders in the discussion is important.

The Communication role

Communicating means being on citizens' side. It means seeing and telling the administration from citizens' point of view, which is to say on behalf of the beneficiary and not of the tool.

The main purpose of Communication is to transform the citizens from inactive beneficiaries of the information and communication actions into active and motivated actors.

So, if the beneficiary of the communication actions is the citizen and the final objective is the service which is provided to him, then Communication concerns the whole organisation and not only the Public Communicators.

Communication must be a reply to the new rights of citizenship, which thanks to new technologies and to the listening and to dialogue starts to re-design the relationships with the citizens and the enterprises.
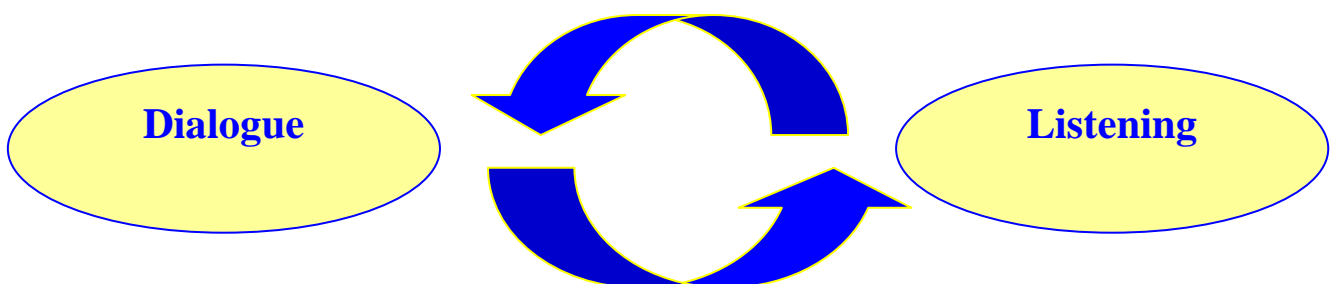
Communication should thus favour the following processes:

- Favour change
- Govern the territory
- Re-organise services
- Re-distribute resources
- Underline the work performed by single actors and organisations
- Revise procedures
- Simplify administrative procedures
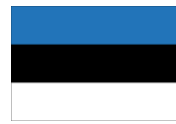
- Rationalise the use of administrative forms
- Simplify language
- Raise clear perception of the services offered, and not merely of the providing institutions
- Listen to citizens' needs
- Recover ethics and values
- Give an identity to citizens and to employees

Communication cannot thus replace poor or not existing services. Communication means in-depth examination of the core of the questions raised. It also means **being able to explain the delays in the service provision and Administrations' weaknesses**. Public communication has to transform inactive citizens who are the beneficiaries of information and communication actions into active actors motivated by specific interests.

All countries, even the most advanced, are learning how to encourage, organize and manage public participation. Public participation is an important element in many stages of the e-government process, from defining a society's vision and priorities for e-government to determining e-readiness and managing e-government projects. E-government is equal to participation, not automation.

The public - which includes the private sector, civil society groups and individuals - can participate in e-government affairs in many different ways by:

- commenting on e-government plans themselves;
- retrieving information (e.g., accessing information from government Web sites) or offering information (e.g., through public surveys, focus groups or emails);
- participating in dialogues, both public dialogues with the government and citizen-to-citizen (C2C) dialogues hosted by the government.

Include all types of public participation in e-government plans. Offer different types of participation to ensure that different voices are heard. Offer the public opportunities to participate in ways that matter to them. Citizens who choose to participate in public affairs must receive some "return on involvement." If they give their time and effort, they will want something in return. They will need to know that their input is taken into account, for example by acknowledging input that is used or even publicly rewarding especially useful recommendations or assistance from individuals.

On the other hand, participation requires collaboration. Being willing to collaborate with the private sector and civil society groups - who may possess much needed expertise and resources - is an important element of readiness.

Government must see itself as a facilitator and not simply a director of e-government projects. They should lead the e-government effort, but replace command-and-control with click-and-collaborate. E-government requires moving away from a government-centred viewpoint, but this does not mean that government must step aside entirely as there are certain roles that government must play and cannot delegate or outsource.

Citizens are the e-government experts. In the end, e-government is meant to serve citizens. Thus it

is critical, especially with projects designed to serve the public directly, to assess their needs and solicit their input. As importantly, all e-government services should be piloted with the full participation of citizens before a government invests in or embarks on a full-scale, nationwide version of the project. Without this pilot-and-citizen involvement scheme, any e-government project can be very risky.

Challenges and risks in Participation in an e-Government communication campaign

The need of involving citizens through participation however should not be a burden. Technology can be a powerful facilitator, allowing inexpensive and speedy channels of communication. In countries where Internet penetration is low, traditional methods of soliciting public opinion such as group meetings, surveys, focus groups, and other means can be used.

It is also important to guarantee the public that they can provide their input anonymously. This ensures that citizens evaluate government services and effectiveness openly. It is the only way that government will receive the information it needs to evaluate and improve its e-government programs and services, even improve policymaking.

Remember, however, that while citizens are experts, they may not demand a service until someone provides it to them first.

E-government is evaluated through public participation. Access to public services is a necessary part of e-government, but not sufficient. Facilitating, broadening and deepening openness and citizen involvement is fundamental to e-government. Evaluate the effectiveness or success of e-government through participatory dialogue and interaction.

Such participation can either be discreet, one-time participation or ongoing participation by individuals or community groups (e.g., some kind of "citizen steering committees" for e-government projects). The important thing is to ask the public for feedback, and ask regularly to get constant feedback from your customers. Interactive dialogues create greater accountability.

There is but a risk involving the public. When e-government enables the public to communicate with government, public participation often turns into a flood of communications, and often complaints. Managing public participation and processing government-to-public contacts are big challenges for e-government.

Make sure you have the resources, the staff, the possibilities of organising training and clear policies necessary for handling public communications, queries and complaints. Mismanagement of public participation risks alienating the public and creating greater dissatisfaction with government and the e-government programs it seeks to build. It may be helpful to strengthen "offline" systems for handling public complaints, employee grievances and reports to improve public confidence, even before online communications are offered. Yet, when e-government includes strong, responsive systems for "customer relationship management," e-government can be an extremely positive experience for citizens with benefits (for government, business and the public) that far
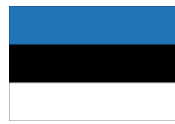
outweigh the risks.

Why a Communication Plan

The MIST staff should first of all draw up a Communication Plan in order to enhance the communication efforts on e-Government. The Communication Plan is a written document which helps − if accurately drawn up – to identify the following essential communication elements:

- What you want to accomplish (your objectives),
- How those objectives can be accomplished (your goals or work programme),
- To whom your administration communications will be addressed (your audiences),
- How you will accomplish your objectives (tools and timetable)
- How you will measure your programme results (evaluation).

Furthermore, the Communication Plan can have three different aims:

- *Strategic*: as it can help Administrations implement their own policies
- *Convergence facilitation*: between the logics of internal and external Communication, trying to favour what we can define as "integrated Communication"
- *Bi-directional relationship activation*: between the Administration and its beneficiaries

Communication includes all written, spoken, and electronic interaction with the identified audiences. A Communication Plan encompasses objectives, goals, and tools for all communications, including but not limited to:

- Periodic print publications;
- On-line communications;
- Web 2.0 tools
- Meeting and conference materials;
- Media relations and public relations materials;
- Marketing and sales tools;
- Legal and legislative documents;
- Incoming communications, including reception procedures and voice mail contents;
- Committee and board *communiqués*;
- Corporate identity materials, including letterhead, logo, and envelopes;
- Surveys;
- Certificates and awards;
- Annual reports;
- Signage;
- Speeches and last but not least, "*invoices*".

The Communication Plan must also indicate a Communication Strategy that allows you to plan suitable guidelines for attainment of specific objectives that the organisation aims to reach, such as:

- administration presentation or
- promotion of a particular event to its potential users or beneficiaries.

The Communication Plan can be of three different kinds:

- **Communication Plan of the whole Organisation**: aimed at communicating all the actions/interventions envisaged by the Administration in general;
- **Sectoral or Policy Communication Plan**: aimed at communicating all the actions and interventions planned by a single sector/area within the concerned organisation.
- **Internal Communication Plan**: aimed at planning internal communication, interventions/actions.

> It is important to remember that there cannot be effective external Communication without effective internal Communication.

Internal Communication importance

Internal Communication should achieve the following objectives:

- Motivate staffs towards Administration strategies
- Strengthen the sense of belonging to the Administration
- Favour relationships among the involved Administration Departments
- Stimulate creativity
- Activate the different stages of the working activity
- Improve collaboration and synergy among all the concerned Departments
- Spread a positive image of the Administration through staffs' behaviours and attitudes
- Create an identity inside and outside the various institutions involved.

Internal communication also implies that MIST staff work in close cooperation with the Press office of the Ministry in order to agree on the actions and tools to be implemented and to enhance the communication efforts.

There are various tools which can be used to facilitate the "Internal Communication" which can be grouped into four categories – namely:

- Written tools
- Spoken tools
- Image tools
- Technological tools.

Internal Communication written tools are:
- *Magazines and newspapers*: through advertising, press releases and news which provide information on Administration strategies;
- *House-organs and newsletters:* which favour a continuity in the relationships with the staff;
- *Letters and bulletins:* which disseminate the information fast and cheap. Through letters to staffs, employers can provide notifications and suggestions;
- *Board and wall newspapers*: which disseminate information easily and simply;
- *Leaflets and Manuals:* which disseminate specific information and are devised for specific groups of employees;
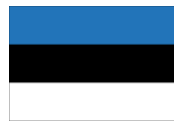
- *Questionnaires and surveys*: which help monitor the office work or specific sectors;
- *Press surveys:* which are a selection of articles of interest for the Administration;
- *Codes of behaviours*: which are useful to formalise a series of behaviours that staff must observe, but which can also turn into real internal behavioural manuals.

Internal Communication spoken tools are*:*

- *Meetings*: with groups or categories of employees. They are useful to inform, communicate, solve problems and collect opinions;
- *Team-briefing*: which, unlike meetings, do not envisage debates. They prove useful to evaluate events and fix new objectives;
- *Lessons and conferences*: useful to enhance the Administration's level of knowledge, acquire new techniques or activate new procedures;
- *Interpersonal communication*: meetings and informal speeches among the Head of Department, freelancers and staffs;
- *Conventions*: meetings involving both leadership and staffs or of a whole Department to communicate the state-of-the-art of a specific project or relatively to the future of the whole Administration.

Internal Communication image tools are:
- *Web TV*: is the union of two important technologies such Internet and TV: It enables users to see and listen to general and sectorial information in the form of periodical TV;
- *Social events*: allow socialisation and informal relationships among staffs

Internal Communication technological tools are:
- *Video and teleconferences*: useful for Administrations not equipped with premises located in different places;
- *Intranet*: internal network also capable of communicating with external networks,
- *News group*: virtual meeting where − in an equal relationship − it is possible to discuss, consult, acquire documentation to send and receive information and opinions;
- *E-mail*: a powerful communication tool overturning the barriers of interpersonal communication.

Communication Plan implementation

Some steps are necessary for implementing an effective Communication campaign. The implementation phase can be effectively managed through annual action plans, namely detailed month-by-month plans of the activities and related sequence. Action Plans offer an opportunity to identify main activities and develop the detail level required to effectively manage your communication plan at practical level and monitor its implementation.

The implementation phase envisages implementation of different activities, which all contribute to the success of the Information and Communication campaign.

The drawing up of the document must be considered as a cycle composed of six major steps, as shown in the figure below:
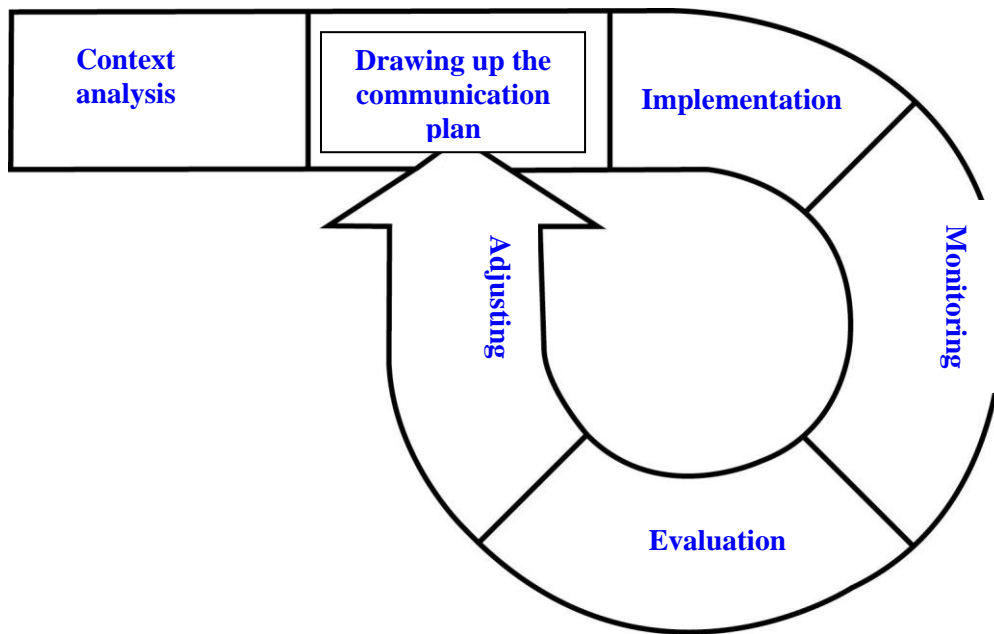
Phase 1 - Research-Communication Audit

It is suggested to firstly start performing research-communication audit, which helps evaluate your current Communication, underlining its strengths and weaknesses. To such end, some Administrations hire firms but the price for the objectivity of an external auditor may easily be high. So as to analyse your Communication potential, you should find out:
✓ What every staff person is doing within the Communication Department of the MIST;
✓ What each Communication activity is designed to achieve, and how effective each activity is or has so far been.

To get your answers, you need try to follow the following steps:

- Brainstorm with MIST communication staff,
- Talk to other Departments, notably those connected in some ways with your activity,
- Interview the Head of the Press Office of your Administration,
- Interview all the key actors involved in the e-Government implementation on your territory
- Talk to Communication committee members
- Host focus groups and query non-members.

Phase 2 - Objectives definition

Once you have obtained information from your audit, define your overall Communication objectives which should correspond to the e-Government objectives which the Ministry wishes to achieve.

E-government" can refer to many different things, and e-government plans come in all shapes and sizes. Thus, be sure to establish a clear vision for e-government and also to identify the main priority areas. As the purpose of government is to further the shared goals of a society it's important to start the planning process by establishing a broad vision of e-government that is shared by all stakeholders (citizens, businesses, officials, civil society groups and others). The broad vision should flow from the large goals or concerns of a society.

There are too many possible reasons and goals for e-government to list them all. First it is essential to identify a general objective like:

General Objective
Promoting awareness on e-Government in Montenegro by citizens.

Followed by other communication objectives supporting the main one like

More Specific Objectives

- Improving the availability of e-Government services to citizens;
- improving the awareness on the productivity (and efficiency) of government agencies;
- promoting e-Government by priority economic sectors;
- promoting e-Government by other public admnistrations
- increasing the awareness by the citizens about the improvement of the quality of life for disadvantaged communities due to e-Government implementation
- strengthening good governance and broadening public participation.

Each society's vision should also be accompanied by a short list of priority areas for the e-government program. In other words, the broad e-government vision flows from a society's main concerns, and the target areas flow from the e-government vision.

How the broad vision and priority areas for e-government are defined will depend upon the specific conditions and ambitions of a society. For example, a society's first concern might be "to create a more accountable government". Its e-government vision will reflect that. In that case, highest priority might be given to areas such as increasing transparency in the economic transactions of the public administrations.

Another society, however, might focus its ambition on developing itself into the business hub in its region. Its e-government vision might then highlight facilitating commerce and services for businesses online. Perhaps improving the investment regime or tax system could be priority sectors in this case.

> **Define a vision that represents the priority objectives of e-Ggovernment and the shared voice of all stakeholders and plan a communication strategy which can support this process.**

Once the vision for e-government is established, and the communication objectives have been identified it is crucial that leaders from government and non-government sectors communicate the vision and the key objectives across the whole government and to the public. Establish a communications strategy to ensure that people understand the vision, the changes that will occur and the tangible benefits for them from e-government. To communicate the e-government vision to the broadest possible audience, it is best to use the media most likely to reach target audiences and the other communications tools best fit for the identified target audnce. For the public and businesses, this might mean town meetings, newspapers, TV/radio broadcasts or Web sites. For civil servants it might be effective discussing the vision in speeches, organising department meetings or trainings.

The communication strategy will depend upon the circumstances of each society and the nature of the e-government application.

The identified objectives, in addition, should always be **SMART** be easily monitored and evaluated.

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Time-bound.

Phase 3 - Goals identification

Upon the stated objectives, and considering available human and financial resources, it becomes necessary to define goals – i.e. a sort of work programme for each objective. Goals include general programmes, products, or services you will use to achieve the stated objectives. For instance, if the objective is to increase citizen's awareness on the possibility offered by e-Government, goals might include the organisation of information events, media campaigns, etc.
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Phase 4 - Audiences identification

In audiences identification, it is important that MIST staff has to define with whom they wants to share information. These people are the target audiences. Most times, MIST staff will be communicating with a variety of audiences, both internally and externally. Furthermore, some audiences may be more important than others, therefore you will need to make such distinction (e.g. primary audience versus other audiences). Think broadly but realistically about whom you can inform and influence. List all the audiences involved in a e-Government communication campaign as well as other audiences you can contact, attempt to influence, or serve.

In identifying the target audiences it has to be remembered that the success can be obtained through the Building of Coalitions. Coalitions are structures of formal collaboration motivated by a common vision, seeking to attain common goals. Coalitions are based on the principle that collective action is more powerful than disparate efforts carried out by lone champions and loosely affiliated groups. Coalitions means research, networking, lobbying, and mass outreach activities.

The Building of Coalitions requires the identification of individuals, groups and organisations whose goals and values are similar to those of MIST. An effective e-Government Coalition helps build and maintain momentum by promoting a participatory approach that relies on dialogue among stakeholders.

Building a Coalitions requires effective communication which may include:

- Networks with like-minded political elites
- Fostering dialogues and debate among key stake-holders
- Measuring and informing public opinion
- Building support among diverse interest publics and the general citizens

How to perform Target segmentation

There are different ways to perform Public target segmentation. The choice is influenced by the type of Communication strategy we choose both at strategic and operational level. The most traditional segmentation ways to be also used in an integrated manner are the following:

- **_Geographic segmentation:_** target groups are divided according to area of geographic origin (countries, regions, headquarters, areas), population numbers, city centre dimension, climate environment);
- **_Socio-demographic segmentation_**: the Target group is divided on the basis of demographic variables, such as age, sex, family size, income level, occupation, educational level, religion, etc.;
- **_Psycho-graphic segmentation_**: target groups are divided according to their lifestyles, user status and main characteristics;
- **_Segmentation based upon service use_**: target groups are divided on the basis of their frequency in the use of a specific service offered, and level of trust in the Administration providing that specific service, awareness of the value of the service used and behaviour to that specific service;
- **_Segmentation based upon required benefits_**: target groups are divided by advantages for users in the use of a specific service.

Geographic and socio-demographic segmentations are usually the most used as they are easier and simpler to be adopted.

Stakeholders' role

E-government should be the result of a shared vision. Encourage stakeholders - government and non-government - to participate in defining the vision. If the public and private sectors are consulted only after e-government plans have been developed and implementation has begun, e-government programs risk being underused or even irrelevant. A shared vision ensures that key constituents and communities will "feel that they are committed" and support e-government programs from beginning to end. A shared vision of e-government means a shared stake in the outcome.

Involving key stakeholders like citizen groups, associations, businesses, government officials, NGOs, unions and other civil society groups, does not mean that all decisions on e-government must await broad public or across-government consensus. The definition of the vision and the selection of priority areas need input from stakeholders, and not only a few elite experts or officials. To ensure that the public and stakeholders will be partners in the e-government effort, it is important to try to build trust in government. Lack of trust by the public can lead to the failure of or serious delay in e-government initiatives.

The mechanisms for receiving input from various stakeholders will vary, but making an effort to include non-government stakeholders in building the vision for e-government will reward the effort. Governments must give serious consideration about who should help define the e-government vision and how to secure their input. This can be done through the organization of public meetings or of polls of citizens (and businesses or officials). In others, citizens and the private sector are included in committees that develop an e-government plan in an open, collaborative way.

Key stakeholders will also help us disseminate the contents of our Communication initiatives.

In the stakeholder analysis you can use a few questions in order to identify them:
- ❑ What is the position of each stakeholder on the initiative?

- ❑ How do you expect each stakeholder to react to what you are doing?
  - ✦ Your previous experiences with each stakeholder
  - ✦ What you expect them to be outspoken
  - ✦ Their attitude to the media trying to understand if they might express their concerns privately or whether they are more likely to use the media.

- ❑ In addition, you should decide how you might use the support of those you expect to react positively, such as for instance:
  - ✦ Attendance at a potential media event
  - ✦ Supportive quote in media materials;
  - ✦ Local angle on the announcement.

- ❑ How can you mitigate the concerns of those you expect to react negatively?
  - ✦ Can you brief them in advance?
  - ✦ Can you consult with them on what you are doing before announcing it widely?
  - ✦ How will you respond to their concerns if you cannot mitigate them?

One of the most common mistakes is the lack of identification of potential negative reactions – perhaps due to ignorance of how stakeholders feel about what you are doing. The suggestion is to involve them both when drawing up the Communication Plan and, whereby it has not been done, involve them at the very beginning of the implementation of Communication actions. Co-shared decisions are less likely to be objected.

> **One thing is for sure though – if you know a person or group will react negatively to what you are doing, ignoring them is a very bad idea!**

Other potential key audiences

Besides key audiences and key stakeholders, there are other potential audiences that need to be identified – i.e.:
- ✦ Opinion leaders
- ✦ Professional groups
- ✦ Governments (other Ministries or other branches of Public Administrations)
- ✦ Industry analysts
- ✦ Administration employees
- ✦ On-line audiences (the recent trend is to communicate news within social networks , niche communities or bloggers)
- ✦ Interest groups
- ✦ Media (both a target group and a tool).

If you intend to use bloggers or online communities for your Communication campaign, do not send them press releases as you would do with media. Try, instead, to figure what they want and

identify their perspectives and whether you should approach them on an individual basis. Furthermore, tailor your message onto their characteristics, trying to emphasise the topic(s) that can most raise their interest.

Phase 5 – Identification of the right strategy for the identified Target Groups

Strategies help frame future decisions. Once objectives have been identified, the strategy simply helps you picture how you will reach such aims.

The strategy may be formal, informal, educational or funny, detailed or broad, depending on the needs of your campaign and the target to be reached. The choice could for instance consist in adopting integrated multimedia communication and networking with institutions and partners (defining different roles and information flows).

Strategies should be constantly updated according to experiences, results, mistakes, and new events. In defining a strategy, it is necessary to indicate how to reach the aims previously identified.

A Communication strategy can be identified in relation to:
- The Public
- Relationships between those who issue the message and those who receive it (issuing and receiving)
- Contact mode
- Communication style and tone.

Strategy choice in relation to the Public:
As the Public can be widely diversified, we have to choose among:

- Non-differentiated strategy
- Differentiated strategy
- Concentrated strategy.

- **Non-differentiated strategy**: you will use a single message for all the identified Target Groups without any difference. It is less expensive but also the least effective strategy in terms of message impact on Target Groups, as it is less flexible and too general;
- **Differentiated strategy:** foresees a different kind of message depending on the Target Group we want to reach. It is more expensive but also more effective from a Communication point of view.
- **Concentrated strategy**: it is an evolution compared to the differentiated strategy. Once the Target Groups you want to reach have been identified, you will select the one on which to concentrate your message. The concentrated strategy offers a well-targeted message but it penalises the other identified Target Groups.

Relationships between those who disseminate the message and those who receive it: in such option, the message is adapted to the feed-back we wish to receive on the final beneficiaries of the message. In this respect, the following choices can be made:

- ▪ Propaganda
- ▪ Persuasion
- ▪ Facilitation.

❑ **Propaganda**: provides the message unidirectionality. The Administration enforcing such strategy enables no feed-back from citizens

❑ **Persuasion**: is based on the idea citizens must take a position versus the policy adopted by a given Administration. Message receivers have to choose between good and bad, right or wrong. Persuasion tries to direct towards a single point of view and thus allows little differentiation.

❑ **Facilitation**: assumes the presence of different Beneficiaries of public Communication choices. They all have their own lifestyles and may follow (or not) the policy undertaken by the Administration. Facilitation tries to train citizens leaving them free to choose and providing them with clear messages aiming to protect their own individuality and choice.

A Communication Plan drawn up by a Public Administration should always follow the facilitation option although sometimes persuasion options may be adopted.

The strategy choice in relation to the contact mode: in this case the target audience can be reached in two different ways:
- ✚ Direct interaction or through the adoption of a filter – namely, another tool or another target;
- ✚ Actions on a large or small scale.

The strategy choice in relation to Communication style and tone: you can choose among:
- ✚ *Educational style*: the communicator plays an educational role and is therefore able to train the end-user on the message content;
- ✚ *Informative style*: the communicator is neutral in disseminating the message and just provides useful information, data and news;
- ✚ *Entertainment style*: the communicator provides the information while trying to amuse the end-user;
- ✚ *A mix of the previous categories:* derives from a mix of the above mentioned styles. It uses some combinations of the above categories' entertainment/informative styles or educational/informative/entertainment styles.

Phase 6 – Creating the right message for the identified Target Groups

Once the analysis has been carried out, the Communication strategy adopted and target audiences identified, it is time to devise the message. Messages help you communicate the right things to the right people. As messages permeate all the Communication activities, they attract wide attention from decision makers. It is therefore important to spend time on this section.

The message must be visible, clear and easily identifiable. Its validity depends on the possibility to be adapted to the different Communication forms and tools. Originality helps capture the audience – humour as well as metaphors help increase noticeability.
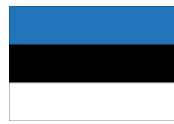
Therefore, key messages should:

- Communicate what you are going to do and why you are doing it
- Communicate what will be different from the current situation
- Fit with your objectives
- Speak to all audiences.

As follows, some good advice:

- Focus on main points
- Be brief
- Write in a simple way so that anyone can understand
- Do not take anything for granted, explain each term that does not belong to common language
- Highlight the positive sides of what you are doing
- Decide what stories are to be about and focus on that.

As for audiences, it is easier to understand what you are doing if you can give them some context. In this case, use concrete examples and support the messages with facts, if available.

When writing messages, you also have to choose between:

OPTION 1 Write a set of messages for each initiative, adjust them onto each initiative and change them according to each purpose	**OPTION 2** Create one long list that addresses anyone

The suggestion, in such case, is:

Look at audiences in turn and produce messages that meet their respective needs.

Phase 7 - Tools identification

The most important decisions concern what tools will be used to accomplish the stated goals. The selected tools depend on strategic goals, Communication programme objectives, target audience profile, advantages and disadvantages of each tool, and Communication budget.

Whichever tools are used, it is important to maintain consistency as to aesthetics, linguistic style and tone, and message (including facts, figures, slogans, quotes) used in all Communication products for a single campaign. Without such consistency, the message will not be equally effective, even if the target audience is exposed to several Communication products. Even worse,

lack of consistency may confuse or distract the target audience.

Tools can range from a simple flyer to a glossy magazine. Don't overlook less obvious tools such as posters, report covers and websites. Brainstorm ideas with your staffs. Think about some innovative tools like social media. Use your creativity still trying to remain objective.
An effective Communication programme will combine some or all of the following tools to communicate the intended message to the target audience.

Publications and other printed material

The many advantages offered by printed publications make them one of the most used Communication tools in outreach campaigns. Publications can reach large audiences with more targeted, technical and detailed information than through press release advertisements. Publications are handy educational tools that remain with the target audience for future reference and consultation. An obvious disadvantage of publications is the cost of their mailing and printing. Perhaps a more important disadvantage for publications is that they are only as effective as their distribution. Appropriate mailing lists and distribution at special events and key locations are essential to the success of publications. Publications and other printed materials include:

News
Communication among experts is different from Communication with the Public. Communication among experts entails readers' complete attention: they are already interested in the information as they need it. On the contrary, non-expert readers (or listeners, viewers, visitors, etc.) usually do not have any particular reason for paying attention to what is being said. They do not have to listen. Their attention must be won, otherwise any effort becomes useless.
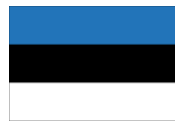
In writing news, for instance, some rules should be kept in mind:

- Is it news? (it must be new: not known before)
- Fascination or surprise (can your topic make imagination fly?)
- Natural Public size (how many people are potentially interested in the subject?)
- Directly important to the audience (how pertinent is it to everyday life?)
- Importance (why do people need it?)
- Expectations (and what happens now?)
- Comprehensibility (can it be easily understood?)
- Service (which service can be offered to the public?).

Newsletters

Newsletters are a very effective communication tool. They can be monthly, quarterly or annual. The strength of a regular newsletter is that it can develop a new theme for every issue and focus a number of articles on such theme.

Newsletters also allow the Communication managers to write about projects, update readers about any news, new initiatives, reform undertaken, events and highlighting interesting case-studies. It is also a way to record all the initiatives implemented during the communication campaign.

To be successful, the newsletter should be the result of joint work between the MIST staff, the Press office of the Ministry, with the involvement of external bodies, such as local politicians, NGOs or other social partners who can contribute with articles or editorials.

If the budget is limited, instead of being printed, newsletters can be published in electronic format and made available through the website or e-mail.

Brochures

Brochures have to be succinct in language and eye-catching in design. Compared to a flyer or handbill, a brochure usually uses higher-quality paper, more colour, and is folded. The most common types of single-sheet brochures are bi-fold (a single sheet printed on both sides and folded into halves) and tri-fold (the same, but folded into thirds). A bi-fold brochure results in four panels (two panels on each side), while a tri-fold results in six panels (three panels on each side). Brochures contain more information than leaflets and can provide beneficiaries with specific information.

Other Printed Materials

Posters, bookmarks, calendars, postcards and other print materials can contribute to awareness raising activities without incurring huge costs. The more attractive materials are, the more people will desire to use them and the more they will be reminded of the campaign message. It is therefore important to carefully choose the type and style of print product to be given away to the Target audience. Publicity deriving from the use of posters and leaflets is the cheapest and most immediate. It allows elaborating simple messages and use images, colours and texts at the same time. It is located on the spot for a long time and thus allows people to read it more than once.

Leaflet allows for message dissemination in more locations on a single day, thus making the message available to more citizens.

Leaflets and posters contain general information and are meant for the general public by attracting their attention to a specific message.

Some tips for Poster creation:

1) Keep the Communication objectives, target audience and message in mind throughout the poster design process. This will help include only essential information to attract the target audience and get the main message across. Catchy slogans that effectively communicate the essence of a message to the target audience are particularly important in the creation of effective posters.
2) Choose quality images that will attract the target audience. If the budget is too small to purchase such images, consider sponsoring a photo/painting/drawing contest that can provide original artwork for the poster.
3) Use other graphic elements that can convey the message link to E-Government issues at hand.
4) When deciding on the poster dimensions, consider both how the poster will be distributed (make sure it can fit into standard poster tubes or be easily folded into a standard envelope) and how it may be displayed (e.g. in a standard-size frame).

As already mentioned, publications are only as effective as their distribution. Having a clear idea of what the target audience is for a specific publication and where its members can be reached is key to effective distribution strategy. The strategy will pinpoint the specific places where the target audience is likely to see and pick up a publication copy. Common means of distribution for publications include:

- Websites (downloadable PDFs should be available not only at the websites of the publishing organisations but also at other related websites that the target audience is likely to visit)
- Fairs, exhibitions, trade shows, concerts and other events attended by the target audience
- Direct mailings
- Specific institutions, clubs, and associations addressed to the same target audience (including, trade associations, universities, museums, inventors clubs, etc.).

Internet

The Internet is a powerful and rapidly expanding means of Communication and offers numerous many advantages for transmitting messages as:

- its global reach can be easily tracked.
- costs per person reached can be very low.
- it enables interacting with audiences and learning more about them (through on-line questionnaires, forums, and e-mail).

Messages can be quickly changed and adapted to keep campaigns fresh and interesting.
The Internet enables creating a website or using social networks and to increase e-participation through web 2.0 tools.

E-Government Website

A website is first of all a communication tool, as it provides individuals and organisations based in remote locations with a way to share and exchange information over the internet.
More specifically, and from the point of view of its owner , an e-government website can fulfil one or more of the following functions:

- it can be a **publishing tool** , similar to a newspaper, a magazine, a book or a radio/TV broadcast (example: a website that illustrates governmental programmes, or reports on parliamentary and agency activities);
- it can be a **marketing tool**, providing agencies with a way to publicise and promote their services and activities as they would by buying advertising space in the press, or producing a brochure or other promotional materials; an e-government website may be used for building or enhancing the profile and image of public institutions (example: increasing the trust of the public for a new regulatory authority), or to actually promote commercial services (example: websites that promote state library and documentation services, or the activities of a statistical office, or sites that invite investment in public bonds or other publicly-managed financial instruments);
- it can be a **transactional tool**, when they allow the users and the public agency to exchange all the information necessary to support a transaction of any kind (e.g. registering complaints, requesting licences, but also more complex transactions, like paying tax, or

managing tenders and contracts);
- it can be a **work tool**, allowing a public agency to exchange information with its employees and/or other stakeholders in the organisation, and therefore facilitate professional activity in general (e.g. a website with restricted access that provides police authorities with access to vehicle registration databases managed by transport authorities, or a site designed to make medical knowledge resources available to doctors based in remote rural locations).

Government agencies may be interested in one or more of the possible functionalities described above and, if planned and realised appropriately, a website can represent a relatively inexpensive and efficient solution if compared to other ways of communicating. But it's important to understand that having a website will not solve all the communication needs of an organisation, and that there are advantages and disadvantages to using the web as a communication tool.
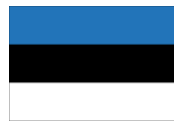
A website is only one of a variety of communication tools potentially available to governmental organisations, and - like other media applications - it has its advantages and disadvantages, or consequences.
Agencies considering investing in a website should therefore first evaluate whether communicating through a website is an appropriate and sustainable way to address their communication needs.

The following are some examples of the advantages and the disadvantages of having a website.

- **Advantages**
  - **Cheaper:** a website can be a very cost-effective way to exchange information, both for its owner and its users. A website can reduce the number of enquiries the Ministry staff has to deal with, by providing answers to the most common questions or queries (also known as FAQs, Frequently Asked Questions) it normally receives, and therefore reduce the amount of staff effort and cost needed to respond to them. In general, a website makes it possible to publish extensive information on regulations, procedures and other aspects of an Institution work, which would otherwise need to be disseminated through direct human intervention. Websites also represent a cheaper alternative to the production and dissemination of printed materials, like leaflets, letters and so on, but building and maintaining a website also has its costs so when planning to use a website to try to cut staff costs you should always make sure that the savings obtained do offset the cost in terms of staff and money necessary to build and maintain a web application. A website can also represent a cheaper communication alternative from the users' point of view, especially if they are located in remote regions or abroad, as a phone call to an internet provider is often cheaper than a long-distance call, or a physical visit to the agency.
  - **Quicker:** web publishing is immediate, and this enables agencies to introduce changes to their public literature easily and relatively quicker than with traditional and more costly methods depending on print. The immediacy of web publishing also allows the fast release of news and other information items to the public, which an agency may find useful to, say, respond to promptings from the media, or act in moments of crisis. In addition to this, if maintained properly a website provides information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week , and can therefore cater for the parts of the population either that find it hard to visit the agency in person (including, for instance, the disabled) or to contact it during working hours. This can extend to providing the possibility to
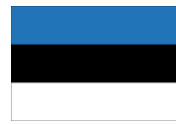
conduct transactions (e.g. requesting a licence) outside working hours and/or without visiting government offices, which can be useful in countries or regions where travel is slow, costly or generally not easy. Conducting transactions online is also generally faster, as data can be recorded and transferred very quickly, as opposed to what happens with other, more traditional ways of handling bureaucratic procedures (e.g. paper-based forms, manual input by officials, etc.).

- **Better:** websites can provide better ways to manage information compared to traditional means. Hypertext enables you to provide access to complex sets of information in relatively easy and user-friendly ways and, combined with databases, it can also provide users with ways to interact directly with the data, i.e. consult it, update it and/or send it to other destinations: in other words, a website can enable users to initiate and/or complete service transactions without recourse to human intervention. The absence of a gate-keeping role on the part of humans not only saves time and money, but it is also likely to help reduce and prevent phenomena such as corruption and bribery, by potentially cutting out "middlemen", websites represent a relatively transparent way of administering services and information, in comparison to traditional means. Having a website also provides governmental bodies with an opportunity to systematically collect information about their clients and users: this includes running surveys, asking users to share their personal data in order to register for specific services (and therefore easily create and maintain a database of users of these services), and generally monitoring the behaviour of visitors to the site (e.g. through statistical analysis, which can be used to establish what information users are most interested in).

- **New:** a website provides a new, additional point of contact for the growing part of the population that uses the web. It should be considered that the percentage of internet users in developing countries is very often significantly lower than in developed countries (though it will increase, albeit slowly, in the years to come). This means that agencies with international audiences (e.g. donors, international institutions, and governments of other countries) may be in a better position to exploit the potential of communicating on the web than those who deal directly with the local population. Implementing the use of e-mail and/or online forms through a website also offers a fast and efficient alternative communication method for those who prefer indirect contact to communicating in person or on the phone (for time or personal reasons). Ultimately, a website can generally introduce new ways of doing things, or new services altogether (e.g. paying your tax by credit card, which may have been too expensive via traditional channels because of the expenses connected to having card-reading machines, etc.). Finally, a website also represents an innovative tool for staff recruitment, providing agencies with a way to advertise vacancies to a wide audience relatively cheaply, and therefore enlarge the potential base of recruitment, with the added bonus that those who apply via a website are likely to be in possession of computing and web skills that could be put to good use in the organisation.

Disadvantages (or "Consequences")

- **Websites cost**. Building and maintaining governmental websites can require quite a lot of time and money. Apart from technical costs, there are also important human resource costs: any existing or new staff working on the web must be trained both on the technical and communicational aspects of the new technologies they are to use.
- Implementing the use of e-mail through an e-government website potentially leads to a

new flow of enquiries from the public , through a different channel: agencies should therefore ensure their organisational structure is capable of dealing with these communications in a timely and efficient way, especially considering that web users often expect quicker reaction and communication than those who communicate with traditional methods. It is hardly acceptable to adopt e-mail as an additional, fast method of communication and then leave e-mails unanswered for long periods of time.

- **Web publishing** usually represents an **alternative and additional source of information to print publications**, press releases and media broadcasts: it is essential that the entire information output by a governmental organisation is consistent and not contradictory, and adding an extra source like a website makes this even more complex, especially considering the immediacy of web publishing. This is particularly so when it comes to information with legal value (e.g. laws or contracts), where discrepancies can cause serious issues.

- Publishing information of legal value or granting access to information databases through a website can pose **security dangers** to governmental organisations, as malicious users (also known as hackers) can break into website systems through the internet and access, modify or delete information (up to and including making a website inaccessible, or deleting it completely). Defending your website from the attacks of hackers should be a priority, especially if it carries or gives access to legal or confidential information. All this leads to more costs in terms of software and expertise.

- **A website does not reach the entire population**, but only the part of it that has access to the web. This is especially a problem in developing countries, where access to the internet is still often limited to a very small part of the population. Websites should therefore be considered only as alternative means of communication, and traditional methods of exchanging information should also be offered and maintained, at least until they become redundant (as was recently the case with the telegraph).

Government institutions can reap the benefits of having a website and reduce the impact of the disadvantages outlined above in making a good planning If web projects are planned and funded appropriately, they usually have higher chances of being a success.

Website promotion

Having a well-designed website full of useful information will make little difference in a Communications strategy unless the website is properly promoted. The first step in promoting a website is to include its URL address in all promotion materials, including publications, posters, press releases, business cards, letterhead, etc.

Another efficient way of promoting a website is to contact other national, regional and international websites dealing with e-Government issues to inform them of the new site and request that they include its URL in their list of "related links". If the new site has particularly strong information addressed to a specific group (say, SMEs), it may be wise to consider extending such contacts to other websites that also target the same group, adding different, complimentary information.

Social networks

Social media play an important role in online interaction and knowledge. Social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are dominant players in social media space.
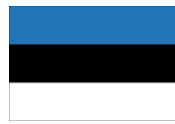
Governments in general operate in a centralized, hierarchical manner, whereas the general public work through networks to share information and solve problems. Social media facilitates public to work in a networked manner. More importantly, since, relationships are foundation of social media; it provides an effective way to connect with communities. However, despite social media's strength, some governments are slow in adopting it.

A social network is a social structure made of nodes (which are generally individuals or organisations) tied up by one or more specific forms of interdependency such as values, visions, ideas, financial exchange, friendship, kinship, dislike, conflict or trade. Social network analysis social relationships in terms of nodes and ties. Nodes are the individual actors within the networks, and ties are the relationships among the involved actors. Research in a number of academic fields has shown that social networks operate at many levels − from families up to the level of nations − and play a critical role in determining the way problems are solved, organisations are run, and the degree to which individuals succeed in achieving their goals.

Some PR experts have foreseen that social network tools such as *Facebook* will replace e-mail and help create and maintain relationships between journalists and PR professionals, as well as provide up-to-date contact information.
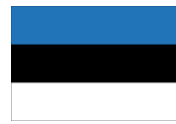
For instance, a *Facebook* group has recently been created by journalists, for journalists. The question is how journalists can effectively use *Facebook* for their benefit. One way is that potential story ideas can be posted for discussion to gain knowledge and feedback. Companies can also use *Facebook* groups as an open forum to interact with consumers and professionals. Private feedback can also be sent as a *Facebook* message to the author of the post just as easily as they can send an e-mail. Of course, e-mail is still convenient and fast, and at this point more professional. However, if the author's contact information is unknown, using a *Facebook* message would make contacting that person easier. The use of tools such as *Facebook* as a business application does not come without concerns. **Credibility** is one of such major concerns. As a social networking site, nearly anyone can join *Facebook*, enter or create groups, and post messages. As with blogging, this will make it very hard to tell legitimate sources from unknown authors such as "Peter, Paul, or Mary", etc. These social network tools are becoming more popular. One of the things people love about them is how personal they can be, but their growing commercialisation could make it lose its appeal. Another risk is that social networks such as other web tools **do not reach all audiences**. Make a study and verify whether your target audience regularly uses the internet tool. Another concern regarding social networks is tied **to their management**. If we decide to use social networks for communicating with the public we must make sure that we have special dedicated staff in charge of viewing, checking and replying to the questions which can be raised.

Public service broadcasts, Videos and audiovisual tools
Audiovisual products, such as televised public service announcements (PSAs), films and videos, can be particularly effective in attracting the attention of, and communicating a message to, target audiences. Their development, however, usually requires the services of experienced professionals. Therefore, the production of effective PSAs and videos does need a substantial investment, although their distribution may be obtained for free.

Public Service Announcements (PSAs)
PSAs are advertisements printed or broadcast free of charge. Some media groups are willing to broadcast or print the PSAs of qualifying non-profit organisations that provide a service to the community such as United Nations agencies and non-governmental organisations. PSAs can reach a large audience with a carefully crafted message unaltered by the media distributing it (unlike press releases and the news stories they generate). But media not being paid to broadcast or print the

announcement means that there is little control as to when, where and how often the advertisement appears. PSAs can be either used to increase awareness about an organisation and its mission, or disseminate a message on a specific issue or event. PSAs with a thematic message rather than the simple promotion of a specific organisation are often more successful at securing free broadcasting and printing.

Before developing the message and distribution strategy for a PSA campaign, it is essential to have available enough information on the target audience and media requirements/interests. For the latter, keep in mind: media priorities in terms of issues, preferred commercial lengths, format requirements, best time of the year for distribution, and any other issues that may influence if and how much the different media use a PSA.

Videos

Videos are lengthier than PSAs, which allows them to go into greater depth and better explore the issues at hand. Videos can be used at conferences or seminars, and they can also be streamed on websites to increase their reach. If the video quality is very good and the subject matter is sufficiently topical or interesting, national TV networks could be interested in airing it. Networks may also be particularly interested in airing a series of videos rather a single video.

Audiovisual tools

The most common audiovisual tools to utilise are:

- *TV commercial*: which can be used for publicising the corruption prevention campaign. It offers numerous PR opportunities among the different TV programmes. The audience depends on the type of show and broadcasting time.
- *Radio commercial*: the radio allows us to spread the message more frequently compared to TV commercials, and at lower costs.

In commercial broadcasting, particular attention should be devoted to regional media, which are much cheaper and undergo wider local dissemination. It also depends, of course, on the identified target groups, and on whether they are located at regional or national level.

Events

Events may be of different types and can take the following forms:

Special Days

The use of a special day (or week) to commemorate a specific issue year after year can be particularly effective in raising awareness on a specific issue. Such days provide an opportunity for different stakeholders interested in the issue to promote a single message related to that issue through activities and events taking place in a limited period of time. Such events tend to generate extensive media interest, thus multiplying the message being transmitted by the different events and activities.

Awards

Awards provide incentives and rewards for people who adopt the behaviour being promoted in an outreach campaign. Furthermore, award ceremonies tend to attract media attention and thus draw more attention to an outreach campaign. Thus, awards represent a cost-effective means of

promoting a wider knowledge and understanding of the issue being promoted.

Exhibitions

Exhibitions enable the showcasing of e-Government issues related to an outreach campaign in a way that can be easily related to by the public. As with any other communication tool, in order to ensure a successful exhibition, its Communications goals and target audiences must be properly identified before any work is begun. Clear understanding of the pursued goal(s) and audience(s) facilitates choices in terms of theme, content, and location of the exhibition.

Seminars

Seminars are a good communications tool for promoting e-Government issues. They are very targeted events with a captive audience, and can provide immediate feedback to the communicator. As seminars are usually delivered to a small number of people with similar interests and concerns, the information presented over such events can be much more detailed and technical than the one used with other communications tools. Again, such information should be tailored according to the needs and expectations of the target audience. The Communication manager might plan to divide the seminars according to the specific Target Groups identified (e.g. regional and local administrations, NGOs, etc.). In such cases the information delivered differs according to the Target Group involved.

Info-days

Info-days are very useful for publicising for example some specific reforms which have been adopted by the Government to promote more actively e-Government and any other relevant information. They are also a good means for generating interest among stakeholders, and stimulating them to contribute with new ideas.

Conferences

A conference can be described as any meeting of people that "confer" about a given topic and is organised for the purpose of networking education or discussing such topic with a selection of speakers.

Workshops

Workshops are also training sessions, which may last several days. They emphasise problem solving, hands-on training and require participants' involvement.

Promotional Items

Small items such as pens, USBs, cups, office calendars, mouse pads, T-shirts, etc. can be distributed during events. All the items shall bear the logo and slogan of the Communication campaign. However, while going for promotional items, make sure you choose your target market and launch the campaign in a systematic way.

Direct Communication

Direct Communication can be made through the set up of hotlines.

- *Hotlines*: are special telephone numbers, where the calling party is not charged for the call. Instead the called party pays all of the charges for the call. They can collect e-Government problems in anonymity and help to tackle the problem from the general public point of view.

An efficient hotline needs to rely on well trained operators and must be provided with an accurate monitoring system.

The listening phase is not to be intended as claim management. Instead, it has to become a strategic administration moment allowing you to:
- adapt the services level to the changes occurring in citizens' needs
- adapt the quantity of services to available financial and human resources
- strengthen the citizen-user logic
- bring citizen "voice" inside the administration
- define quality service monitoring methods in order to improve it
- transfer methodologies and tools to the administration internal staffs.

The listening phase must be functional for achieving the following objectives:

Service Checking   **Service Improvement**   **Identification of new Needs**

Spokespersons

Spokespersons (or figure-heads) can be particularly effective in communicating e-Government issues by putting a face on what can sometimes be difficult concepts to grasp. The visible and known characteristics of a spokesperson, and the way how the target audience perceives them, provide tangible clues for understanding the issues being communicated.

In selecting a spokesperson for a particular campaign, three factors should be considered.

Namely:

- **appeal**: the spokesperson must appeal to the target audience
- **in-depth experience**: in order to be credible, the spokesperson should have relevant experience and/or expertise.
- **media attraction power**: although the spokesperson is not famous, he/she must have some sort of media appeal (e.g. an interesting story to tell, excellent communications skills, etc.).

e-Government has a big relevance in all economic sectors and professions can be used to identify a variety of potential spokespersons for delivering different messages to different media and target audiences. Potential "e-Government" spokespersons can be found among scientists, engineers, inventors, entrepreneurs, and business tycoons.
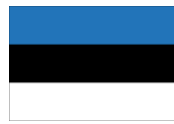
There are various ways in which spokespersons can be part of an awareness-raising campaign on e-Government. They may appear in public service announcements (PSAs), make personal appearances and deliver speeches on the occasion of press conferences and other events (e.g. awards, symposiums, exhibitions, etc.), release media interviews, and even be part of a prize. The more spokespersons do for a campaign, the clearer their connection to the issue will become and, therefore, the more effective their participation will be.

Celebrities

Celebrities are the most sought after spokespersons. Instant recognition attracts the attention of the target audience and makes whatever they are promoting more visible. Target audiences tend to have a higher recall and be more persuaded by advertisements featuring celebrities. Some even believe that the positive attitudes and feelings that the target audience has for the involved celebrity may be transferred to whatever that celebrity sponsors. Besides raising awareness, celebrities can also use their talents to raise funds for a cause they believe in.

In choosing celebrity spokespersons for an IP campaign, the following points should be considered:

- *Appeal to the target audience*. The chosen celebrity should have high appeal and credibility with the target audience. For instance, a music star may be a good celebrity choice when raising piracy awareness among young people; whereas a successful entrepreneur may be better suited to communicate the benefits of e-Government measures aimed at SMEs.
- *Personal interest, knowledge, and experience in the issue*. The chosen celebrities should be interested in, and ideally have a certain level of knowledge or a personal experience related to the issue addressed by the e-Government campaign. Furthermore, the celebrity's personal interest/experience in the issue is key to ensuring that enough attention is drawn to the issue so that the celebrity will not eclipse it.
- *Commitment to the campaign*. A celebrity may command the necessary attention and have a personal interest in the subject being promoted. Yet, so as to be effective, the celebrity must also be willing to commit a specific amount of time to the campaign. To avoid any misunderstandings, the celebrity must know (and agree) from the start the amount of time, duties, and responsibilities the campaign will demand. An early commitment to

the campaign demands can lead to a long and fruitful cooperation between the celebrity and the campaign organisers.

- *Other sponsorship commitments*. Celebrities are in high demand as spokespersons; therefore it may be difficult to find a very famous celebrity who is not already sponsoring another cause, product or service. Obviously, these other sponsorships should not be in any way contradictory to the message of the e-Government communication campaign. Furthermore, if a celebrity is already sponsoring more than three other causes, products and/or services, additional assignments as a spokesperson may not be very effective. Not only will the celebrity be unlikely to ensure substantial time commitment to the new cause, but his/her image may also be overexposed and the target audience may question his/her real interest in the new cause.

Using celebrities for communication campaigns also exposes to other potential risks. The positive attention generated by affiliating a celebrity with a campaign may turn sour if the celebrity becomes involved in a scandal. Though not fool proof, it is wise to look at celebrities as a whole to try to weigh up the chances of a scandal ruining the potential relationship between the given celebrities and the campaign. The solution is in choosing the diversification option. Diversification is a tool to reduce scandal risks. The more celebrity spokespersons are involved in a campaign, the less a scandal for any of them is likely to affect it. In addition, using multiple celebrities in a campaign would increase its appeal to more than one target audience. Opting for spokescharacters is certainly another way to avoid the risks of celebrity scandals.

Spokescharacters

Cartoon characters can be created to fit the message perfectly and attract the target audience of a specific outreach campaign. Unlike spokespersons, they can be totally controlled by campaign managers. Specially created spokescharacters offer the added advantage of being exclusive to the campaign. Cartoon characters can be particularly effective when communicating to children.

Media relations

There is a high correlation between a free press and e-Government, but a free press also has some negative effects. If increased information about e-Government appears in the press but not much happens to people when they try to approach e-Government services, negative reaction may increase because the message is that the suggested service is fake and so difficult to be accessed.

Media coverage, in addition, offers the twofold advantage of being cost-free and carrying more credibility than paid advertisements. The downside is that there are no guarantees as to when, how, or even if the media will cover a story. The nature and extent of the media coverage that an e-Government awareness campaign will attract largely depends on:

- the relationship with the press;
- targeting the message to the appropriate outlet;
- and effectively interacting with the media.
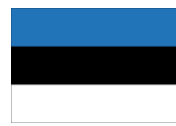
The Press Office role is crucial in building relationships with the media, as it is:

> ❑ the most effective way of reaching large audiences
> ❑ cheap and credible
> ❑ easy to monitor.

BUT

> ❑ **Control is not always possible**
> ❑ **Media are not always interested, especially in positive stories**
> ❑ **Even when messages are reported, they may be misinterpreted.**

Establishing a good relationship with key media contacts is probably the most critical factor in obtaining media coverage. The Communication staff should work in close cooperation with the Ministry Press Office when approaching the media, in order to provide the Press Office with the right information and with the contents of the communication campaigns.

Below are some basic steps to developing media relationships:

- *Identify your media contacts*. Check media sources to identify which journalists cover the issues related to e-Government issues. If the coverage on this particular issue is scarce, expand the search to journalists covering related issues such as business news, new technologies, innovation, etc. Make a contact list of all such journalists and keep it updated. This list should include, at a minimum, the name, title, media organisation, and address (including phone, fax and e-mail) of each journalist.
- *Research media organisations*. Call each media organisation in the above list to find out about: deadlines for stories, schedules for shows, specific guidelines for submitting press releases and advisories, schedules and deadlines for specialised supplements, acceptance criteria for public service announcements (PSAs), preferred format for delivery of information and visuals (e-mail, fax, etc.), circulation, and audience profiles. Use such information to communicate news to the media with sufficient time for it to be broadcast or published. Respecting media deadlines and format requirements can be a decisive factor on whether or not the information will be broadcast and/or published. In addition, the information on circulation and audience profile will help identify the best media organisation with which to reach the target audience.
    - *Observe media contacts*. Observe how journalists in the above list cover their stories. What kinds of visuals (photos, graphs, etc.), if any, do they tend to use? What kinds of examples do they favour? Look out for points of view and biases. By understanding the styles used by different journalists, you will be able to pitch a story to them more effectively by matching the information to their needs and expectations.
    - *Introduce yourself, your organisation and your initiative*. Even before you have a campaign or outreach programme to promote, it is important to provide journalists with
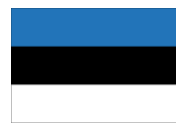
basic information about your organisation. Also give them a list of e-Government issues on which you or other experts from your organisation can provide comments and/or complementary information if and when the need arises. Build your reputation as a reliable source on e-Government issues by keeping your media contacts updated with solid and reliable facts. Media kits are a good way to contact the media for the first time. Such kits should include: fact sheets about your organisation and its programmes/services, basic information on the initiatives you are undertaking, success stories related to the campaign you will be promoting, statistics, visuals (photos/graphics/charts), and your business card.
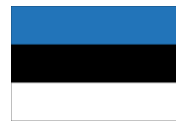
- *Offer training.* The complexity of the e-Government issue functioning may discourage many journalists from writing about them. Providing basic training or briefings to key journalists can help solve this problem. Such training can help clarify issues and controversies, and reveal the increasing importance of corruption prevention in different sectors of society.
- *Keep track of media coverage.* This will assist in determining which sorts of stories are more likely to receive media coverage in future. It will also give help identify journalists who regularly publish your information, and give you a chance to address any issues that have been highlighted in the media coverage.
- *Enlist professional help* to make stories more newsworthy.
- *Shape stories around concrete events* highlighting local realities or human interest rather than abstract trends.
- *Cultivate relationships with the media* and ensure they are well briefed.
- *Provide useful info*, clear background, contacts etc., through straightforward language.
- *The press (national and regional) is interested in* e-Government issues. To make a story more attractive you need to give it a local anchorage, visual images and people to talk to.
- *Partnerships and local networks* facilitate telling the story.
- *Close collaboration with other key stakeholders* can make your job easier.

> ❏ While **reporters** often **lack depth** or the ability or time to investigate a **story thoroughly,**
> ❏ quite often the **problem is with the source.**

SO

> **You must not only be able to communicate your story, you must also be able to create an interesting story that is worth telling.**

In order to try to gain their interest, awards can be settled to gain their attention and to make them your allies.

Communicating with the Media

Having established good relations with the media and determining which media to target, it is time to choose which tool to use to promote the campaign to the media. The choice will depend on the news/event to be promoted, as well as the time and other resources available.

Press releases

A news release, press release or press statement is a written or recorded communication directed at members of the news media for the purpose of announcing something claimed as having news value. Press releases are the standard tool for releasing information about your campaign to the media. These are faxed or e-mailed to a contact person at each media organisation and preferably followed up with a telephone call. When e-mailing press releases, keep in mind that many journalists prefer to receive the text in the e-mail body, rather than as an attachment, in order to reduce the risk of computer virus transmission. Follow-up calls will ensure that the release is not lost among the hundreds of press releases received by the media every day. Sometimes, news releases are sent for the purpose of announcing press conferences.

Some tips for the creation of Press releases are here provided:

- Create a short and eye-catching headline. The headline should contain the heart of your message.
- Keep the text short and simple (1-2 pages). Use short paragraphs.
- Provide clear answers to the usual "who, what, when, where, why and how" questions. Always ensure that the information you provide is accurate.
- Avoid legal and other technical jargon. Use acronyms sparingly and always provide the full name in parenthesis the first time an acronym is used in the text.
- Personalise the message with real-life examples.
- Use interesting facts and figures.
- Provide good quotes from a well-known spokesperson.
- Include contact details of a spokesperson that can provide additional information.
- Visual material attracts attention and makes your press release more lively and interesting. Consider photographs, graphs, and other quality illustrations.
- Include a separate fact sheet on your organisation and e-Government basics relevant to the subject of your press release. Journalists can use such fact sheets for additional background information, if needed.

News advisories

Provide advance information to the media of an event or press conference that will be held. News advisories briefly inform what the event is about, where/when it will take place, and who will be speaking. Be sure to include the name and phone number of the contact person for the event. While providing enough information to create interest, news advisories refrain from telling the whole story in order to ensure that the press will show up at the event and not simply write a story based on the advisory.

Press conferences

The press conference is a media event where newsmakers invite journalists to hear them speak and, more often, ask questions. There are two major reasons for holding a press conference.

- a newsmaker who receives many questions from reporters can answer to them all at once rather than answering dozens of phone calls.

+ someone can try to attract news coverage for something that was not of interest to journalists before.

These events require careful planning and are usually limited to big and important stories (not routine issues) that cannot be properly covered with a standard press release. It also helps when conferences have some sort of visual appeal for cameras and photographers. Examples of events and stories worthy of press conferences include the launch of a new, high profile initiative, the release of major information, an awards ceremony or a highly visual event. Press packets – which include a press release about the event (written in the past tense), important facts and figures, basic information, and business cards – are handed out before the start of the conference event and sent to media contacts who could not attend the press conference.

At the beginning of the conference, a moderator usually reads an introductory statement before introducing other speakers or starting the special event. Once all the speakers have spoken and/or the special event is finished, the floor is opened to questions from members of the media. It is imperative that both the moderator and all speakers be prepared to respond confidently and accurately to these questions. In order to increase the chances of press conference attendance and coverage by the media, it is wise to try to schedule it in such a way as not to conflict with other big news events.
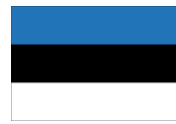
Press briefings

Press briefings are informal meetings with individual or a small group of journalists. Such briefings are useful for discussing complicated issues, providing background data, and improving communication with journalists who have previously misreported e-Government issues. It is important that the person conducting the press briefing be thoroughly prepared with tangible facts, figures and reliable information. It is important to underline that different media have varying needs for details depending on the amount of time/space that they have to report on issues. Tailor the information to the needs of the journalists attending the briefing. For example, provide enough information for a reporter writing an in-depth magazine article, or boil down the issue into a few key facts and figures for radio journalists who only have a few seconds to tell the story.

Interviews

The interview is a conversation between two or more people (interviewer and interviewee) where questions are asked by the interviewer to obtain information from the interviewee. Broadcast interviews have the advantage of letting you transmit the message yourself. To arrange such interviews, first identify the broadcasters and shows that could be interested in your campaign. Contact the producer and provide a briefing about the campaign. Keep in mind that radio and television interviews can become more lively and interesting when there is more than one guest present, so be ready to suggest another guest with e-Government success story relevant to the campaign that could also join you in the programme. Also mention your availability for telephone interviews, as this may be more practical for some broadcasters. On the interview day, make sure that you and the other guest are properly prepared with the main points you want to make, background information, interesting facts and figures, and answers to a list of potential questions.

Letters to the editor

The can be used to clarify issues or introduce a new dimension to an issue presented in previously printed articles. The key to such letters is to stick to the issue at hand and present new information

in a clear and precise manner. The letter should be signed with both your name and affiliation. Also include contact details in case the editor needs to contact you. Finally, since letters to the editor respond to a specific article from a particular newspaper, magazine, or journal, they should only be sent to the publication in question.

Reality shows

Reality shows can be very effective in providing a human context to complex issues thereby making them easier to understand. They can also have a much bigger and more targeted impact than advertising or news stories. The first step in this case is to identify a show that could easily incorporate e-Government issues. Meet with the producers and writers of that show to present your ideas for different e-Government related story lines. It could help if such options could be (at least loosely) based on real-life examples. Your story line may be so complete that it could end up as a completely new show.

News article

A news article is a compilation of facts developed by journalists published in the news media, whereas a news release is designed to be sent to journalists in order to encourage them to develop articles on the subject. A news release is generally biased towards the author objectives.

Media list

It is the management of fixed contacts with communication tools external to the organisation. A database of contact persons with the different media will be created and constantly updated, in order to distribute information to the media in the quickest and most efficient possible way.
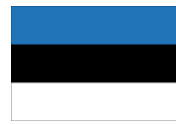
Press survey

A press survey is a constant check of facts and events relevant to our Programme. It is very helpful for the monitoring phase.

Phase 8 – Preparing a timetable

Once objectives, goals, audiences, and tools have been identified, the Communication staff will need to quantify the results in a calendar grid that roughly outlines which projects will be accomplished and when. Separate objectives into logical time periods (i.e. monthly, weekly, etc.). Tasks and Timing involves mapping out the tasks to be performed, their timelines, and who will be responsible for each of them.

Choosing activities means that for each initiative it is necessary to specify:

- Who is responsible for implementing each activity
- When the activity has to be implemented
- What costs are associated with each activity.

A GANTT Chart helps us keep the implementing phases under control.

- It is a popular type of bar chart that illustrates a project schedule.
- It illustrates the start and finish dates of the terminal elements and summary elements of a project.
- Terminal elements and summary elements comprise the work breakdown structure of the project.

Some GANTT charts also show the activities inter-dependence (i.e. precedence network).

Phase 9 - Preparing the Budget

Budget is a critical factor in communication plans. When working on it make sure that the budget is adequate to achieve the desired objectives. If the budget assigned to the Communication Plan is decided in advance, tailor the Plan to fit within it. All Plan parties must be aware of what can realistically be delivered for the available budget.
If the budget is inadequate and cannot be increased, review your objectives and bring them back to an achievable level.

Phase 10 - Monitoring and evaluating the results

Although correlated, monitoring and evaluation are different activities implemented by different bodies in different phases through Plan implementation.
- *Monitoring* consists in systematic and continuous collecting, analysis and use of information for the purpose of management and decision-making.
- *Evaluation*, instead, is a periodic assessment of the efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and relevance of a project in the context of stated objectives. It is usually undertaken as an independent examination with a view to drawing lessons that may guide future decision-making.

Monitoring
Results measuring is the final phase of a Communication campaign. Lack of analysis can damage the Communication Plan validity, compromising, as a consequence, its efficiency and effectiveness.

Monitoring is important, as:

- It is essential to effective programme and project management – i.e. it identifies what is

working well and the areas requiring remedial actions.
- It proves evidence on if the programmes are achieving their objectives, and penalties can be applied if not effectively performed.
- It is the basis for programme review and evaluation.
- It influences future decisions on e-Government prevention issues.

The Communication campaign has to foresee which Communication objects we want to evaluate.

There are three levels of Plan Measuring:
- ***Communication Out-put***: tells us whether the message has reached the Target Group;
- ***Communication Out-take***: tells us whether the Target Group understood the message;
- ***Communication Out-come***: tells us whether a message has produced a change in the opinions and behaviours of the given Target Group.

Monitoring requires definition of two conditions:
- That data are treated from an analytical point of view;
- That the final aim of such data collection and manipulation is to inform the decisional process.

Monitoring key elements are:
- It is an internal management responsibility
- It measures progress in relation to the budget foreseen by single activities
- It identifies problems and thus allows looking for solutions
- It uses both formal and informal methods for data collection
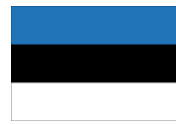- It is a key source for evaluation.

Correct monitoring requires:
- Drawing up a summary of the pursued objectives
- Choosing the indicator to be used for the established objectives
- Defining the target to be used to verify and report on the progress achieved
- Deciding the method and system for data collection (e.g. database).

Evaluation

Evaluation can take the form of a monthly report on work in progress, formalised department reports for presentation at staff meetings, periodic briefings of chief staff executive and department heads, and a year-end summary for the annual report.

Evaluation of Communication campaigns provides an opportunity to improve interventions as well as conduct theoretically interesting research. As public Communication campaigns continue to grow in scope and level of sophistication, the task of evaluating campaigns becomes increasingly complicated. Decisions about the standards against which to measure campaign successes, strategies for separating campaign effects on outcomes from those of other sources of influence, and expectations for differential campaign effects across subpopulations are only a few examples

of the complexity faced by researchers seeking to evaluate Communication campaigns.

Evaluation is the moment in which you stop, take your time and think about what has been done and what has been achieved and the reasons why all that has been made possible.
The problem lies within what has to be evaluated.
The evaluation process consists in the verification of the correspondence between planning and implementation of what was originally foreseen in the Plan.
Communication Plan evaluation cannot merely consist in the analysis of its adequacy and correct drawing up; it shall instead include the analysis of the efficiency and effectiveness and the Communication processes set up by the Communication Plan itself.

The followings items are usually the main evaluation subjects:

- The **Communication Plan itself**: in the correctness of its structure
- The **Communication which is the object of the Plan**: how it has been drawn up, efficiency and effectiveness of its implementation processes, etc.

Both the above mentioned levels must always be kept into consideration.

More precisely, we need to consider the Plan as such, in relation to:
- Its correct drawing-up: (i.e. verify that correct methodological criteria have been used)
- Its real implementation through the phases it foresees
- Its real innovation tool function within our Administration
- Its real capacity of promoting involvement, connection and motivation for the whole Administration, with its different Department and functions.
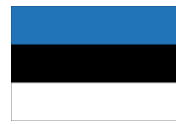
So as to verify the Plan relatively to its real implementation capacity − notably its effectiveness − the following elements must be considered:
- Aspects linked to internal Communication: relationships within the Administration
- Aspects linked to external Communication: relationships with citizens.

Evaluation tools

Evaluation tools can be divided into three different categories:

- **Evaluation based on second level data**: use of already existing statistical data (i.e. financial, physical, working and demographical data). Such kind of evaluation is of immediate management, cheap enough, but not very productive from a knowledge capacity point of view as it does not work out specific or whole data in relation to the Communication Plan;
- **Evaluation techniques to ask people**: it deals with all the techniques typical of sociological surveys (e.g. questionnaires, interviews, opinion polls)
- **Evaluation techniques to ask experts**: experts can be particular professional witnesses, operators, decision-makers, as well as context beneficiaries after the issue into which to investigate.

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As to the latter method, it can be:
- Quantitative

Or
- Qualitative.

The **Quantitative Method** utilises statistics tools
Most frequent tools are:

- Historical series constructions
- Trend distributions constructions
- Construction of series
- Construction of frequency distributions
- Construction of graphs of trends of a variable
- Calculation of averages
- Calculation of difference
- Study of correlations so as to make predictions
- Research sample
- Statistical analysis of variance in flows of repetitive tasks to separate anomalies from systems
- Probability calculations.

The **Qualitative Method** is based on the judgment of a big expert and/or on the interpretation process. The tools hereby utilised are:
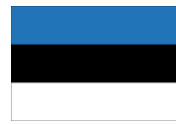- Individual or group interviews
- Questionnaires
- Surveys
- Direct observation of the Project and its context
- Focus group
- Delphi technique
- Brainstorming.

Individual or group interviews: allow you to gain deep knowledge of individual positions in relation to Communication strategies, but it requires time and adequate financial resources.

Group interviews: right opposite of individual interviews.

Questionnaires: have a more rigid structure then interviews. Their validity is linked to the number of questions, contents, sequence, and coverage extent of the given subject. The use of questionnaires is suggested for analysis of more specific and technical subjects and issues.

Surveys: consist of either closed questions (with multiple answers) or binary character (true/false) and can be useful to make constant checks on a specific issue over the monitoring and ex-ante evaluation phases. They are fast and immediate, but have no analytical capacity. Within Plan evaluation, it is useful to verify how many users have perceived the message.

Direct observation: refers to the perception of facts, actions and events that hit visually or through other sensory signals. It can be used to attain global knowledge and impressions on the overall situation and direction in which a phenomenon is evolving, providing evidence on what to set the analysis evaluation in order to validate the awareness already acquired. This kind of observation does not produce valid scientific results, but it is useful in framing a situation, especially at the beginning of the evaluation process and during the crucial moments of formal view of the total evaluation
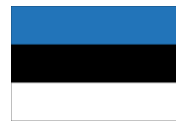
Focus group: A focus group is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their attitude towards a product, service, concept, advertisement, idea, or packaging. Questions are asked in an interactive group setting where participants are free to talk with other group members. Focus groups allow interviewers to study people in a more natural setting than a one-to-one interview. In combination with participant observation, they can be used for gaining access to various cultural and social groups, selecting sites to study, sampling of such sites, and raising unexpected issues for exploration. Focus groups have a high apparent validity - since the idea is easy to understand, the results are believable. Also, they are low in cost, one can get results relatively quickly, and they can increase the sample size of a report by talking with several people at once.

Variants of focus groups include:

- **Two-way focus groups** - one focus group watches another focus group and discusses the observed interactions and conclusion
- **Dual moderator focus groups** - one moderator ensures the session progresses smoothly, while another ensures that all the topics are covered
- **Duelling moderator focus groups** - two moderators deliberately take opposite sides on the issue under discussion
- **Respondent moderator focus groups** - one or more of the respondents are asked to act as the moderator temporarily
- **Client participant focus groups** - one or more client representatives participate in the discussion, either covertly or overtly
- **Mini focus groups** - groups are composed of 4 -5 members rather than 8-12
- **Teleconference focus groups** - telephone network is used
- **Online focus groups** - computers connected via the internet are used.

The focus group is used for the Plan Evaluation to perceive the data related to its feasibility, organisational reference, and users expectations.

The *Delphi method* is a systematic, interactive forecasting method which relies on a panel of independent experts. The carefully selected experts answer questionnaires in two or more rounds. After each round, a facilitator provides an anonymous summary of the experts' forecasts from the previous round as well as the reasons they provided for their judgments. Thus, experts are encouraged to revise their earlier answers in light of the replies of other members of their panel. It is believed that, during this process, the range of answers decreases and the group converges towards the "correct" answer. Finally, the process is stopped after a pre-defined stop criterion (e.g. number of rounds, achievement of consensus, stability of results) and the mean or median scores

of the final rounds determine the results.

The Delphi method is based on the principle that forecasts from a structured group of experts are more accurate than those from unstructured groups or individuals. The technique can be adapted to face-to-face meetings, and is then called mini-Delphi or Estimate-Talk-Estimate (ETE). Delphi has been widely used for business forecasting and has certain advantages over another structured forecasting approach, prediction markets.

The following key characteristics of the Delphi method help participants to focus on the issues at hand and separate Delphi from other methodologies:

- **Structuring of information flow**: the initial contributions from the experts are collected in the form of answers to questionnaires and their comments to these answers. The panel director controls the interactions among the participants by processing the information and filtering out irrelevant content. This avoids the negative effects of face-to-face panel discussions and solves the usual problems of group dynamics.

- **Regular feedback:** participants comment on their own forecasts, the responses of others and the progress of the panel as a whole. At any moment they can revise their earlier statements. While in regular group meetings participants tend to stick to previously stated opinions and often conform too much to group leader, the Delphi method prevents it.

- **Anonymity of participants**: usually all participants maintain anonymity. Their identity is not revealed even after the completion of the final report. This stops them from dominating others in the process using their authority or personality, frees them to some extent from their personal biases, allows them to freely express their opinions, encourages open critique and admitting errors by revising earlier judgments.

- **Role of the facilitator**: the person coordinating the Delphi method can be known as a facilitator, and facilitates the responses of their panel of experts, who are selected for a reason, usually that they hold knowledge on an opinion or view. The facilitator sends out questionnaires, surveys etc. and if the panel of experts accept, they follow instructions and present their views. Responses are collected and analysed, then common and conflicting viewpoints are identified. If consensus is not reached, the process continues through thesis and antithesis, to gradually work towards synthesis, and building consensus.

For what concerns the Communication Plan its use is particularly useful to evaluate the technical aspects of Communication.

Brainstorming is similar to focus group method. It is a group creativity technique designed to generate a large number of ideas for the solution of a problem. Although traditional brainstorming does not increase the productivity of groups (as measured by the number of ideas generated), it may still provide benefits, such as boosting morale, enhancing work enjoyment, and improving team work. In the ex-ante evaluation phase it is useful to support the programming phase of the Communication activities.

Evaluation requires three phases:
- *ex ante*: before the beginning of the activities
- *in itinere*: during the implementation phase
- *ex post*: at the end of our information campaign.

This timing allows us, in case of problems identification, to make changes and corrections to the initial plan.

The Evaluator role

Evaluation tools can use different patterns:
- The evaluator creates the tool for operators and then trains them to use it
- The evaluator creates the tool which is then used by companies specialised in market research
- The evaluator creates and uses the evaluation tools himself.

Evaluation grids examples

The following are an example of indicators which could be used for monitoring and evaluating Communication activities:

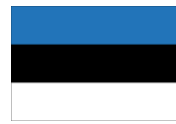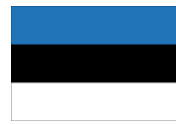| Communication tool	Target group	Output/implementation indicator	Result indicators	Impact indicators
Press office activities (interviews, press releases, news articles, media lists, press surveys Training sessions)	All target groups	N of interviews arranged N of press releases issued N of training sessions organised *Sources: press monitoring agencies* *Ministry press office,* *Communication staff*	N of press interviews N of TV interviews N of radio interviews N of articles published N of journalists attending the training sessions *Sources: press monitoring agencies* *Ministry press office*	Change in public awareness of the programme by beneficiaries of the e-Government measures and the general public *Source: surveys* *opinion polls* Number of good TV and radio interviews broadcasted *Source: surveys* *opinion polls, TV and Radio's share audience analysis* N of positive articles published N of correct content of the published articles *Source: surveys* *of press monitoring agencies* Increase in the media coverage year after year *Sources: External Evaluator*
Press Conference	All target groups	N. of journalists contacted N. of journalists invited N. of telephone calls made N. of press kits prepared *Sources: press monitoring agencies* *Ministry press office*	N. of journalists attending N. of press kits distributed N. of articles published *Sources:* *Ministry press office*	N. of positive articles versus N. of negative articles *Source: External evaluator* Frequency of good coverage on media *Source: surveys* *of press monitoring agencies*

Web site	All target groups	N of pages created *Source: website statistics*	N of users/visitors *Source: website statistics*	Increase in the website access *Source: surveys opinion polls*
		N of databases *Source: website statistics*	N of registered users *Source: website statistics*	Increase of the number of the registered users *Source: surveys opinion polls*
		N of DB records (contents) *Source: website statistics*	N of page views *Source: website statistics*	Increase in the number of application packages downloaded
			N of application packages downloaded *Source: website statistics*	Change in public awareness of the programme
			N of other documents downloaded *Source: website statistics*	*Source: surveys opinion polls*
Events (conferences, info-days, seminars, workshops)	All target groups	N of events organised/ vs. N of events planned *Source: Communication staff*	N of invitations sent N of invitations responded *Source: Communication staff*	Change in public awareness of the programme *Source: surveys opinion polls* Number of good quality projects implemented *Source: Communication staff*
		N of planned participants	N of actual participants *Source: Communication staff*	Change in public awareness of the programme *Source: surveys opinion polls* Increase in e-Government projects *Source: Communication staff*

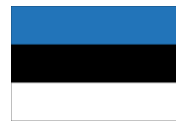| | | | N of requests for further information *Source: Communication staff* | Increase in the number of further information parallel to an increase of good projects submitted *Source: Communication staff* |
			Feedback from participants *Source: questionnaires distributed by Communication staff*	Good feedback from the participants parallel to an increase of good projects submitted *Source:: Communication staff*
Direct communication	Programme beneficiaries	N of phone calls received *Source: Hotline operators*	N of answers given *Source:: Hotline operators*	Good feedback from direct communication parallel to an increase of good projects submitted *Source:: Hotline operators* Improvement in the kind of questions raised *Source:: Hotline operators* Change in public awareness of the programme *Source: surveys opinion polls*
			Level of satisfaction by the information provided *Source:: Hotline operators*	Good feedback from direct communication parallel to a decrease of problems raised *Source: Hotline operators* Change in public attitudes to programme *Source: surveys, opinion polls*
Publications (Posters, leaflets and brochures)	All target groups	N of copies printed *Source:: Communication staff*	N of copies distributed in paper format *Source: Communication staff*	Change in public awareness of the programme *Source: surveys opinion polls*

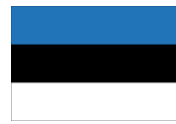|			N of copies downloaded from the website *Source: Website statistics*	Change in public attitudes towards corruption prevention issues *Source: surveys, opinion polls*
Newsletter	All target groups	- N of newsletters published on the website *Source: ACS staff*	N of subscribers *Source: Communication staff website statistics*	Increase in the number of subscribers *Source: website statistics* Change in public awareness of the programme *Source: surveys opinion polls*
			N of newsletters sent by email *Source : Communication staff website statistics* N of newsletters downloaded *Communication staff website statistics*	Increase in the number of newsletter sent by email and downloaded *Source: Communication staff website statistics* Change in public attitudes to programme *Source: surveys, opinion polls*
Audiovisual Tools (TV and radio commercials)	All target groups	N of audiovisual commercials produced *Source: Communication staff , PR agency reports*	N of audiovisual commercials shown *Source: TV and radio monitoring*	Change in public awareness of the programme Increase in the number of users during the TV and Radio Commercials *Source: surveys opinion polls, TV and Radio's share audience analysis*
			Frequency of broadcasting *Source: TV and radio monitoring*	Increase in the number of users during the broadcast *Source: surveys opinion polls, TV and Radio's share audience

			N of people seen the broadcasts *Source: TV and radio monitoring*	*analysis* Change in public attitudes to programme *Source: surveys, opinion polls, TV and Radio's share audience analysis*

The following is a chart which can be used for assessing quality indicators after the objectives and the target group have been identified.

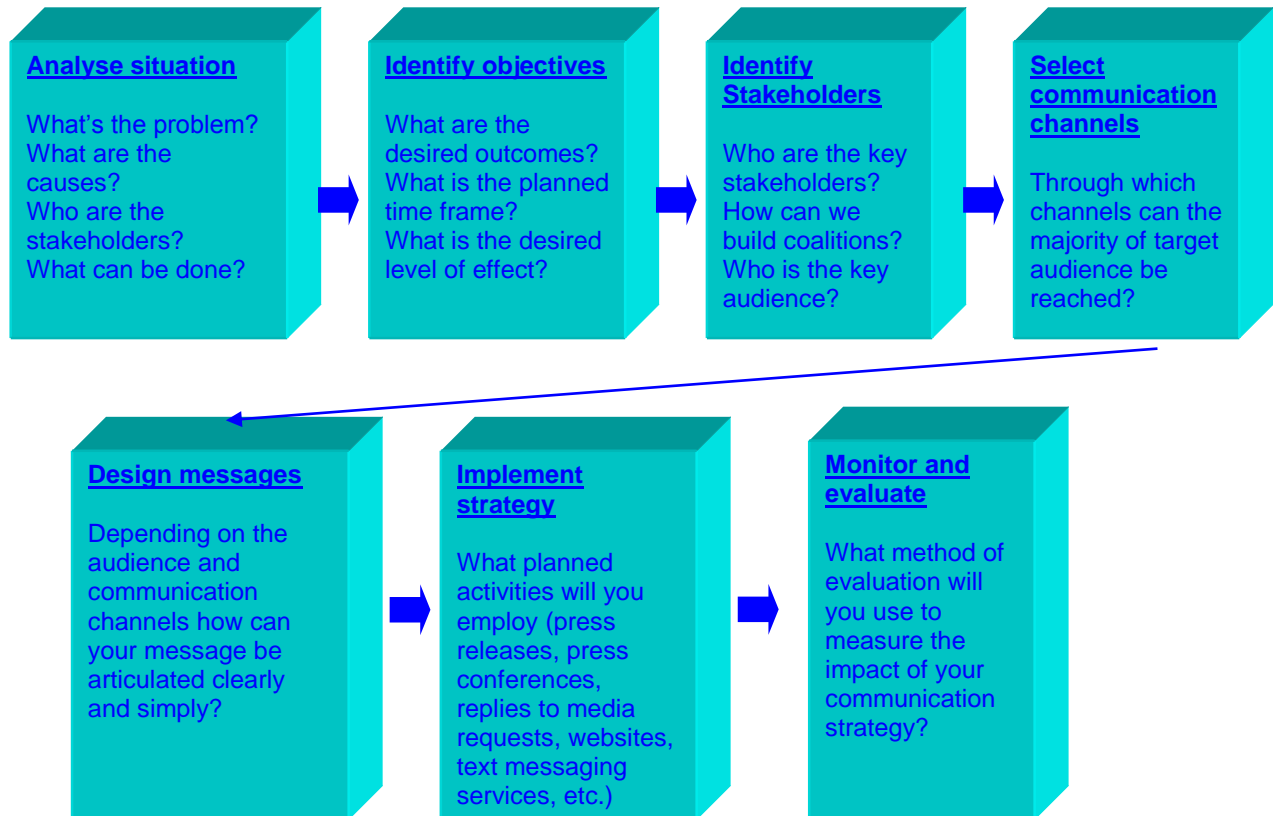| Communication tool	Target group	Quality indicators	Source of information
Website	All target groups	Accessibility User friendliness Exhaustiveness of information Clarity of information	Surveys among Internet users Opinion polls Questionnaires
Events (conferences, info-days, seminars, workshops)	All target groups	Quality of organisation (location, timing; quality of catering; quality of seminar premises and equipment) Quality of content (exhaustiveness of speeches delivered; importance of speakers; relevance of the information delivered; clarity of speeches; quality of documentation disseminated)	Feedback questionnaires filled in by the participants
Direct communication	General Public	Quality and exhaustiveness of the information delivered (via e-mail or phone calls)	Phone survey, e-mail survey
Publications (Posters, leaflets and brochures)	All target groups	Relevance to the different target groups Clarity	Surveys

		Usefulness of information	
		Completeness of information	
		Attractiveness, balance between text and pictures	
Newsletter	General public Potential beneficiaries Beneficiaries	Exhaustiveness of the basic information and data	Surveys
		Attractiveness and clarity	
		Vision – balance between text and picture	
		Relevance to the target groups	
		Usefulness of information	
Audiovisual Tools (TV and radio commercials)	All target groups	Quality of the audiovisual materials – attractiveness of commercial, clarity of commercial	Surveys
		Good identification of the timing for commercial broadcasting	
		Good identification of media for broadcasting	
Press office activity (Press conferences, interviews, press releases, news articles, media lists, press surveys)	All target groups	Balance between media planning and awareness obtained on corruption prevention issues by the target groups	Media surveys
		Usefulness of information to the media	
		Correspondence of press releases with the articles published	
		Completeness and clarity of the information delivered	

Conclusions

Communication staff, before starting planning a communication campaign should follow the following scheme:

Analyse situation

What's the problem?
What are the causes?
Who are the stakeholders?
What can be done?

Identify objectives

What are the desired outcomes?
What is the planned time frame?
What is the desired level of effect?

Identify Stakeholders

Who are the key stakeholders?
How can we build coalitions?
Who is the key audience?

Select communication channels

Through which channels can the majority of target audience be reached?

Design messages

Depending on the audience and communication channels how can your message be articulated clearly and simply?

Implement strategy

What planned activities will you employ (press releases, press conferences, replies to media requests, websites, text messaging services, etc.)

Monitor and evaluate

What method of evaluation will you use to measure the impact of your communication strategy?

Recommendations to help improve the role of communications in good governance include:

- Fit communications strategies to a particular context. This applies to politicians, donors, and communication specialists.
- Research the interests of different readers, listeners, and viewers. Are assumptions made about people's information needs?
- Show success stories about the impact of responsible media organisations on democracy.
- Improve the rule of law in general, so that media freedom laws and freedom of information acts cannot be easily overridden.
- Establish a legal framework that allows for, and protects, free media and civil society organisations. Open up policy processes to scrutiny at the national level.
- Build the capacity of civil society, the media and public institutions; many officials are not aware of their responsibilities.

E-Government - the application of ICTs to improve the activities of public sector organizations – is widely seen as a means to promote efficiency in public administration. As various studies have shown, e-Government goes beyond the introduction of technology. It calls for a paradigm shift reforms in organizations, new forms of leadership, and transformation of public-private partnerships - to make its impact effective.

e-Government means changing process, which means changing policy. A change in policy results in changing the way people do things, which in turn changes culture. A major challenge, therefore, is for e-Government projects to consider the context in which they will be implemented.

One key idea underlying this public sector reform movement is service orientation. In an attempt to make government more "customer-friendly" and "service-conscious", public administrations must try to reinvent their service delivery models. Instead of designing programmes from the perspective of the service providers (notably government officials and agencies) and managing them through existing bureaucracies, reformers should turn the system on its head and try to put the service recipients (mainly citizens and businesses) first. Instead of starting out by asking what services government agencies can provide, they must start with what the "citizens really need". In other words, there has been a distinct shift from an "agency centric" model to a "citizen centric" model.

Government-to-Citizen (G2C) initiatives, designed to facilitate citizen interaction with government online, is what some industry observers perceive to be the primary goal of e-Government. However, this is not entirely true. Not all government information and services can be provided online as the targeted users may face different obstacles in making full use of such resources. These obstacles include areas such as inadequate infrastructure, low PC penetration, less than widespread use of the Internet, varying literacy levels and physical constraints to certain demographic groups (e.g. the elderly, children or those with disabilities).

To be practical in reaching out to the broadest citizen base as possible, G2C communication initiatives should be conceived with a balanced selection of multi-channel access. While the Internet and information kiosks are popular modes of online government service delivery, channels such as the telephone, postal mail and face-to-face contact remain just as important in G2C interaction. Information kiosks are particularly useful in rural areas of developing economies, where the populace may not have the means to own PCs or be linked to online channels. In more modern societies with greater mobile computing usage, governments are also experimenting with provision of information and services via various mobile and wireless devices. G2C should offer multi-channel access:

- PC/Internet
- Call center,
- Telephone,
- Postal Mail
- Face-to-Face
- Information Kiosk
- Apps for Mobile Phone

One aspect of citizen-centricity in e-Government is making it easy for the citizen to find what they are looking for, whether information or services, in the myriad collection of government websites. In this regard, portals should offer single points of entry to the multiple agencies and afford citizens the opportunity to interact easily and seamlessly with different parts of the government. Instead of focusing on what agencies intend to deliver, portals enable the government to focus on what citizens wish to achieve. Although individual agency or ministry websites are still important, it has now been generally accepted that e-Services portals are becoming the preferred online format for governments to present their informational and service offerings to constituents.

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