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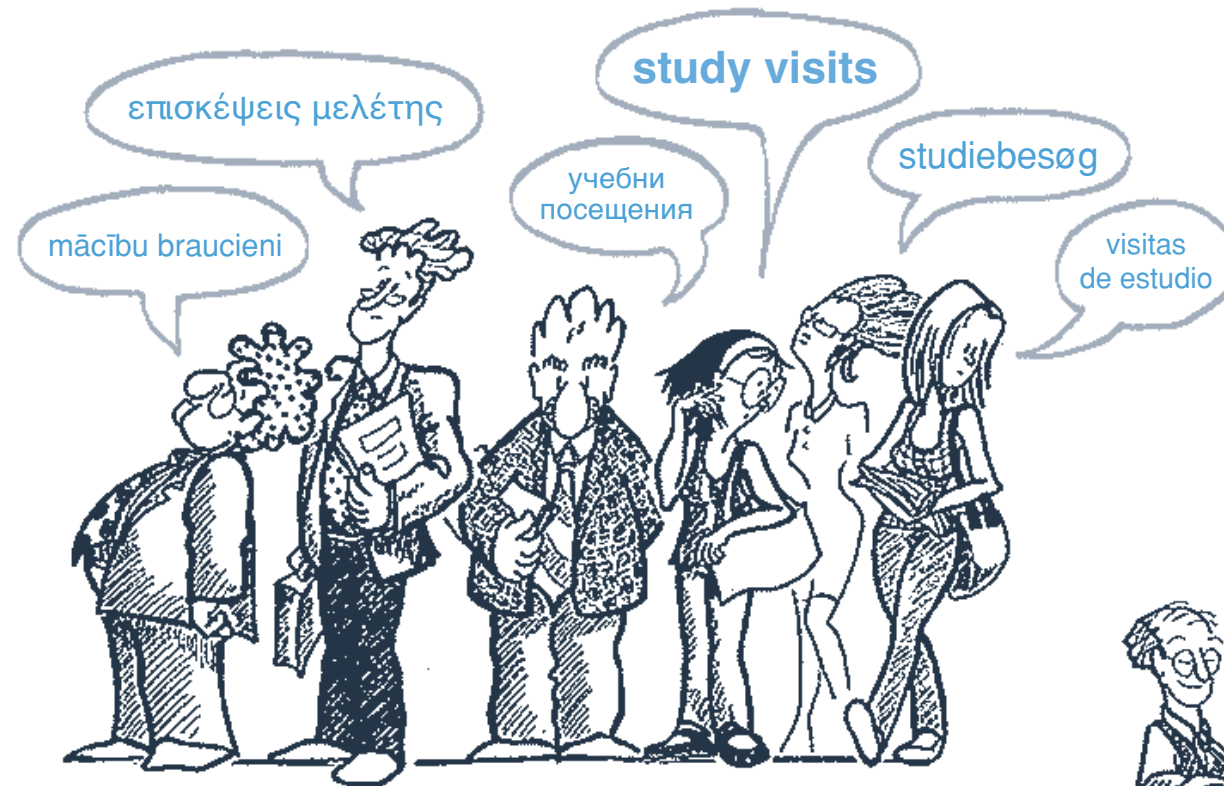


# CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training






Education and Culture DG  
Lifelong Learning Programme



# Study visits a guide to effective communication



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# Foreword

The study visits programme for education and vocational training specialists and decision-makers is part of the transversal programme of the lifelong learning programme (LLP). Cedefop, on behalf of the European Commission, has coordinated the programme at European level since 2008.

The study visits programme allows decision-makers and practitioners to explore education and vocational training issues with their peers from other European countries. It provides excellent opportunities for discussion, exchange of innovative ideas and practices, networking and future cooperation in education and vocational training. Outcomes of study visits have strong potential for informing European policy cooperation and development in lifelong learning.

Communication activities can help to spread the programme results and extend the impact of the programme beyond those directly involved in it. Targeted promotion of the programme will increase the participation of groups such as decision-makers at local, regional and national level and representatives of the labour market responsible for education and vocational training.

As part of its support to the quality of the programme, Cedefop has produced this guide to help those responsible for the study visits programme in the national agencies to disseminate the programme results and attract more applicants. We hope this guide will be a valuable tool to them when planning, running and following up their communication activities.



Christian Lettmayr  
Acting Director, Cedefop



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## Acknowledgements

This guide is the result of a team effort. It is based on ideas, reflections and examples of good practice from national agencies and Cedefop. Cedefop would like to thank the representatives of the national agencies from Croatia, Ireland, Lithuania, Romania, Sweden and the UK who participated in the focus group for preparing this guide. Thanks are also due to Cedefop colleagues who provided valuable feedback and contributed to this publication.

Cedefop would like to thank George Kostakis, expert in the study visits team, who drafted and supervised the preparation of this guide, and Ioanna Nezi, senior expert in Cedefop's external communication unit, who reviewed it. Finally, thanks to Christine Nychas from Cedefop for her technical support in preparing this publication.




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# 1. Introduction

The study visits programme, part of the transversal programme of the lifelong learning programme (LLP), allows decision-makers and practitioners to explore education and vocational training issues with their peers from other European countries. The programme provides excellent opportunities for discussion, exchange of innovative ideas and practices, networking and future cooperation in education and vocational training.

Communication activities can help to gain a bigger audience for the programme results and so spread the benefits.

As part of its support to the quality of the programme, Cedefop , has produced this guide to help those responsible for the study visits programme in the national agencies (NAs) to promote it to potential applicants and disseminate the programme results to its target groups.

**Communication matters** because it:

- makes the programme results known to more people;
- values the participant, host and organiser contributions to European exchange and cooperation;
- draws the attention of education and training policy and decision-makers to the programme;
- helps promote the programme and attract more applicants.

The guide is based on ideas, reflections and examples of good practice from NAs and Cedefop and is in line with Cedefop's overall communication policy. It briefly outlines how to plan communication activities, describes main target groups of study visits, main messages of study visits to put across and the available channels to reach the target audience, as well as how to assess the impact of the communication activities. The annexes include checklists, templates and other practical tools to support NAs in their communication activities.



**Cedefop (the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) has coordinated the programme at European level for the European Commission since 1 January 2008.**



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## 2. Strategic approach to communication

To communicate well, you need to answer **certain questions**:

- Who do you want to talk to?
- What do you want them to do?
- What will you say to them that will persuade them to do it?
- How will you reach them?
- How will you know that what you did worked?

In all stages of your communication from planning to its evaluation, you need to keep in mind what you want to achieve. Are your objectives clear? Are the choices you make concerning target groups, messages and channels consistent with your objectives?

**Your objectives need to be SMART :**

- **S**pecific;
- **M**easurable;
- **A**chievable;
- **R**elevant;
- **T**ime-bound.

For example, you may want to increase the participation of representatives of the social partners in the study visits programme to 5% in the next application round. Or you may want to organise two study visits on validation of non-formal learning in the next year because it is a national priority.

**Effective communication depends on:**

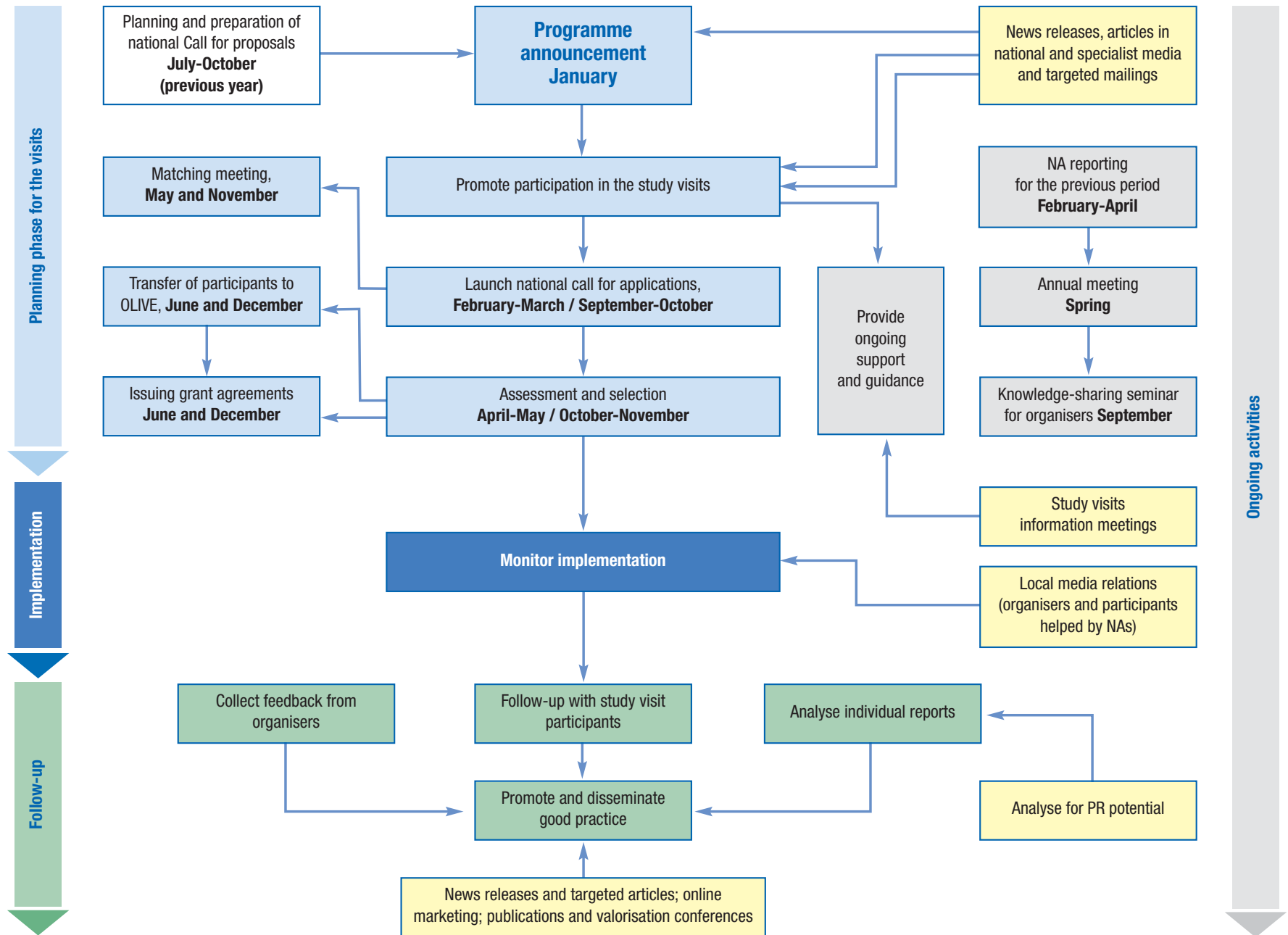
- good planning;
- regular and systematic activities throughout the study visits programme lifecycle.

[Figure 1](#) indicates the types and timing of communication activities and how they link to other NA activities. The communication activities are shown in light yellow boxes. The checklist in [Annex 2](#) will help you to build your communication plan, while [Annex 1](#) gives you a sample plan.



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Figure 1. **Communication related activities for NAs** (The communication activities are shown in light yellow boxes)



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## 3. Target audience for your communication

Participants of the study visits programme **belong to any of the following categories:**

1. education and vocational training specialists;
2. national, regional and local decision-makers responsible for education and training;
3. social partners (representatives of trade unions and employer organisations).

You will need to differentiate these groups, understand their information needs and interests, and choose your message accordingly. For example, your message to head teachers in special needs education will be different from the one you address to representatives of business and industry.

Segmentation will enable you to be effective and to cover all target groups.

To cover the full spectrum of these communication needs, you can organise a formal segmentation exercise. A simple and less time-consuming alternative is to organise a one-day workshop within your national agency, to focus on priority target groups for which you can achieve a maximum effect.

The following section briefly outlines the main information needs of the three categories of participant.

### 3.1. Education and vocational training specialists

The largest group of study visits participants comes from education and training. They are head teachers and teacher trainers, directors of educational and training institutions, directors of guidance and validation centres, educational and vocational training inspectors, pedagogical or guidance centres, and representatives of education and training networks and associations.

Some of them have a decision-making capacity in their organisation and they know how education and training works in the country. They might not be fully aware of European developments and cooperation in education and training but they are interested in meeting peers from other countries to discuss initiatives and policies on a specific theme. Others are education or vocational training practitioners interested in learning about examples of good practice that they can use to improve and/or facilitate their work.

For them, participation in a study visit is an opportunity to get involved in European exchange and/or set up cooperation projects with schools and training institutions in other countries.



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### 3.2. National, regional and local decision-makers

These participants make decisions about the education and training system: officials from ministries, inspectorates or national centres for monitoring and evaluation or agencies supporting the development of education and vocational training policies. Persons responsible for regional and local education and training are also well represented in the study visits programme because governance of education and training in many countries is decentralised.

Participating in a study visit, they understand education and vocational training policies in other European countries and learn about the latest European developments. From this, they can make better informed decisions on local, regional and national policies in their own countries.

Examples of good practice identified during study visits help them to understand better how successfully or not new approaches are applied in other countries and, as a result, more effectively apply them in their own context.

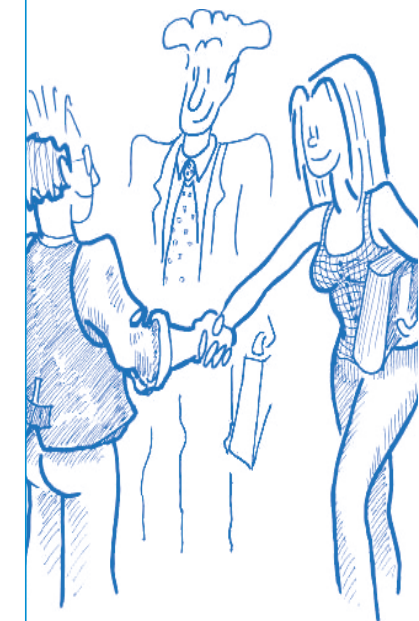
### 3.3. Social partners

Representatives of trade unions and employer organisations are a smaller group in terms of participation but equally important for the study visits programme. As representatives of the labour market they are interested in how education and training prepare young people and adults for employment. Especially in vocational education and training they play several key roles: developing national and regional policies and methodologies; defining qualifications standards, profiles and curricula at sectoral level; and participating in certification processes and validation of non-formal and informal learning.




Social partner organisations usually have European umbrella organisations that consist of national or regional branches. There are also sector-specific organisations (banking, transport, tourism, automotive, agriculture, etc.). You should identify persons responsible for education and training in these organisations in your country.

The programme offers them a unique opportunity to get in contact and exchange views with education leaders and decision-makers, stimulating cooperation between education and training and the world of work.

You need to focus your communication activities to increase social partner participation in the programme, either as participants or hosts to make them better informed and stimulate their involvement in education and vocational training.






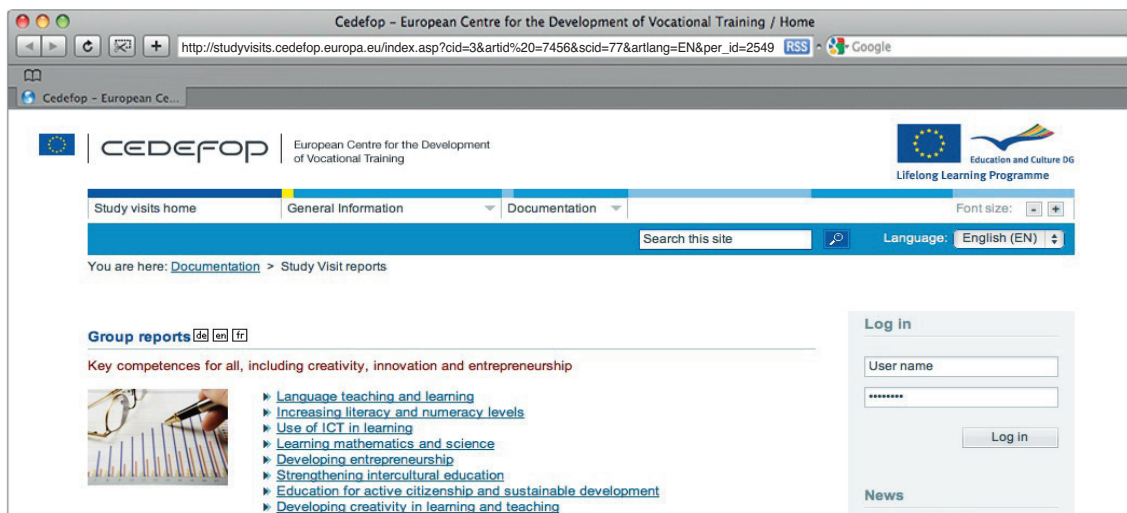
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## 4. Persuasive messages


Your messages should get your audience’s attention, stimulate their interest and make them act the way you want (for example, to apply for a study visit). To do this your messages must:

- 1. appeal to the audience’s interests:**  
for example, improving their professional skills, setting up a cooperation project;
- 2. be credible:**  
for example using data from a survey you carried out on the impact  of the programme on study visits participants.

The [study visit group reports](#) contain a wealth of examples of good policies and practices, interesting approaches and initiatives in education and training in different countries that were discussed during the study visits. Use them as an inspiration for your messages and as a valuable source of information to promote the programme and show its added value to your target audience.



Study visit group reports

It is best to support your messages with **stories from individuals** who talk about their study visit experience. This requires additional resources to identify such case studies as you will need to follow up on the participants’ reports or even use a ‘news hunter’  to identify participants’ articles in the local and regional press and in expert magazines. Such material, once identified, may also be reused for your own communication activities.



Every year Cedefop assesses the impact of the programme on participants and their organisations and can provide you with interesting data.



The Lithuanian NA is using an external company for media monitoring that looks for news related to study visits on the internet, in newspapers and on TV.




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Figure 2 presents some key messages for study visits. These can be customised depending on the target group you want to approach and the objective you want to achieve.

Figure 2. **Study visits audiences, messages and communication channels**

Study visits audiences	Key messages	Communication channels
<b>All potential participants and organisers</b>	Learn about education and training policies and practices across Europe and establish new contacts for further cooperation and exchange.	Publications Conferences NA networks Website Local and national media
	Organising a study visit will generate spin-offs beneficial to yours and other institutions in your region: new networks, partnerships and cooperation projects with the participants and their institutions.	
<b>Education and vocational training specialists</b>	Study visits uncover a lot of interesting material about education and training systems across Europe and ways of dealing with common challenges that you can transfer to your professional environment.	Targeted mailing Publications Website NA networks
	The experience gained during the study visit is used to improve institutional practices such as school leadership and management, curriculum development, and teaching methods.	
<b>National, regional and local level policy- and decision-makers</b>	The study visits programme allows you to see what happens on the ground and witness how education and training policies are implemented and compare to the way it is done in your country (region, municipality).	Targeted mailings Publications Websites NA networks
	Good examples of policies and practices in other European countries showcased during a study visit will help you make more informed decisions on education and training issues.	
<b>Social partners</b>	This programme offers you the opportunity to gain greater insight and knowledge on training issues that matter to your organisation.	Targeted mailings Publications Newsletter Social Partner conferences Websites
	The study visits programme will show you the value of partnerships with education and training institutions to expand the learning opportunities of the workforce.	
<b>Wider public</b>	This is an interesting EU programme supporting lifelong learning and improving the quality of education and training systems in Europe.	Local and national media Websites Social media

# 5. Communication channels

The basic principle of reaching audiences is to go where they are. If you know they read specific journals or publications or if they are registered in specific mailing lists and newsletters, use them to deliver your message.

The screenshot shows the Cedefop website's 'SETUP News' page. The page title is 'ETUI Education/Newsletters/'. The main heading is 'SETUP News'. Below this, there is a paragraph explaining that SETUP news is the heir of the former ETUI Education newsletter 'Trainers' Digest', which since 1994 has been providing information to ETUC affiliates on EU grants, related to different areas of interest for trade unions. It states that SETUP news is published on an occasional basis, highlighting particular EU Calls for Proposals and funding opportunities of interest to trade unions, within the ETUI's strategy in this area of work. There is also a section for 'Trainers' Digest archives' and a subscription notice: 'Subscribe to SETUP news You will receive an email everytime SETUP news is issued. Please note that this service is mainly intended for the trade unions affiliated to ETUC. You do not need to subscribe to SETUP news if you were already entitled to receive Trainers' Digest.'

Below the text is a table titled 'Download SETUP news' with columns for 'Nr', 'Title', and 'PDF'. The table lists 9 items:

Nr	Title	PDF
1	Call for proposals for Innovative actions "Active Citizens for Europe" Europe for Citizens Programme (July 2009)	
2	The new European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) (October 2009)	
3	Call for proposals 2010 - Life Long Learning Programme (October 2009)	
4	Call for proposals: Europe for Citizens Programme (2007-2013)	
5	Budget heading 04.03.03.01 "Industrial relations and Social Dialogue"- Call for proposals 2010 (February 2010)	
6	Budget heading 04.03.03.02 "Information and training measures for workers' organisations" Call for proposals 2010 (February 2010)	
7	Budget heading 04.03.03.03 "Information, consultation and participation of representatives of undertakings" - Call for proposals 2010 (February 2010)	
8	Call for application 2010/11 - Study visits in the field of education and training - Opportunities for social partners (September 2010)	
9	Call for proposals 2011 - Life Long Learning Programme (December 2010)	

The European Trade Union Institute distributes electronic newsletters to its affiliates announcing the study visits call for applications.

For example, social partners will often have a newsletter and might have regional/local branches through which you may promote the study visits programme. Be aware that readers' attitudes to communication channels differ depending on the country and the target group. In some countries, for example, more people read a local newspaper than a national paper.

Many channels of communication are used by most of the NAs to promote the study visits programme: leaflets, publications, newsletters, conferences and exhibitions. The audiences that use these channels are usually already engaged with European programmes and know where to find the information they need. To reach a wider audience you may need to use other forms of communication such as websites and the media.



An example of a study visits article in the journal of one of the German national agencies for the LLP in BIBB (see p. 30).



The 2011/12 study visits call for applications is promoted in the newsletter of the German employers' organisation for vocational and further training.



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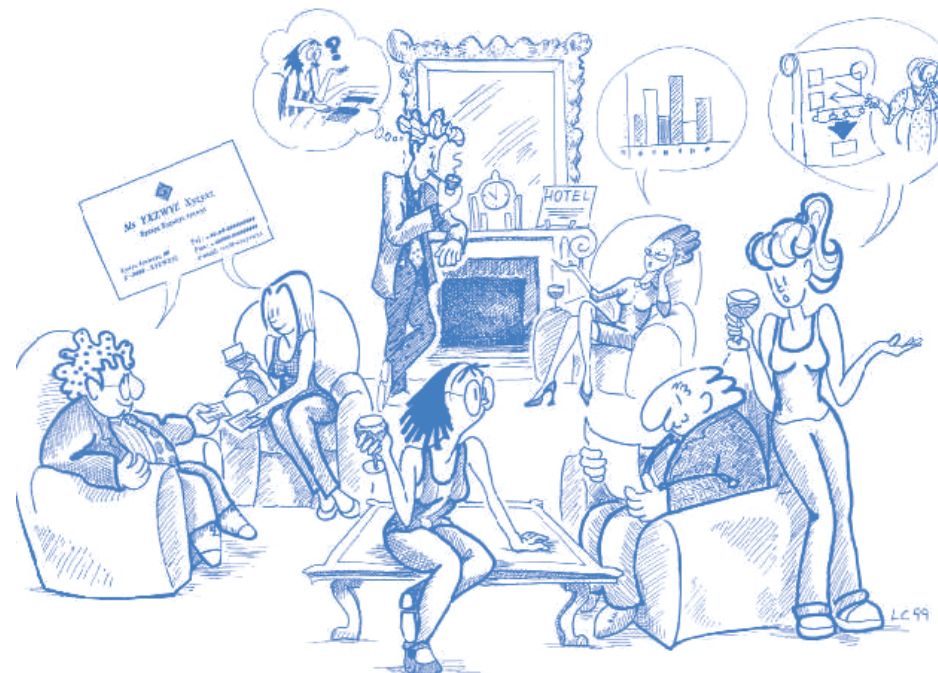
Here are possible channels for reaching your target audiences:

## Conferences and valorisation events

You may organise conferences to allow former participants to share their study visit experience with others and discuss the lessons they learned and the impact the visit had on their work and personal development. It is advisable to present study visit results at **information meetings**, **thematic monitoring conferences** and **valorisation events** of other LLP actions as these events address the same target groups you are aiming at. You may consider organising study visit valorisation events in cooperation with national agencies from other countries.


## Publications

Most NAs make participant study visit experience available through case studies and **individual testimonies** and include **articles** with good examples 📍 of policies and practices in **promotional leaflets**, **periodicals** and **magazines**. You should also identify, through your study visits participants, other publications in which good examples from study visits can be presented.




An example of a Cedefop publication based on group reports 2008-09 on the quality and efficiency of education and training is available in English, German, French and Spanish.

## Networks

You may use information gathering networks like **Refernet** and **ENIC-NARIC** or other expert networks like **Euroguidance** to promote study visits and disseminate the programme results .

<b>Refernet</b>	<a href="#">Refernet</a> is a network created by Cedefop to provide information on national vocational education and training (VET) systems and policies in EU Member States, Iceland and Norway.
<b>NARIC</b>	The <a href="#">NARIC</a> network provides information concerning the recognition of diplomas and periods of study undertaken in other European countries as well as advice on foreign academic diplomas in the country where the NARIC is established.
<b>Euroguidance</b>	The <a href="#">Euroguidance</a> network promotes mobility, helping guidance counsellors and individuals to understand better the opportunities available to European citizens throughout Europe.

You should encourage visit participants and organisers to develop **thematic networks**  at national and European level to stay in contact after their study visits, to compare their experiences and maximise their learning. Study visit results can be disseminated to a wider audience who participate in these networks and will stimulate debates expanding the impact beyond the study visits.



The outcomes of a study visit for guidance counsellors that took place in May 2010 in Sweden and Denmark were published in the [Euroguidance newsletter](#)

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## Word of mouth

Participants in study visits can be very convincing speakers for spreading the word on the value of the programme. You should encourage and **support them to disseminate their learning** 👁 to their colleagues, at conferences and seminars and to incorporate best practice into future professional development opportunities.

You can **organise competitions** to award 👁 participants and organisers who actively disseminated their study visit results and invite them to speak at the programme information meetings and valorisation events about what they learned from their visit and what they did with their learning.

## Electronic channels

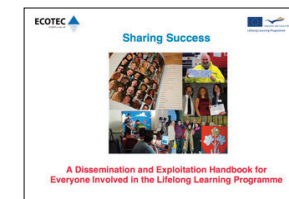
You may raise awareness and increase participation in the study visits programme by using your agency's **newsletter** to send information about the programme, news, events and articles on the programme results to subscribers.

Use targeted mailings and send **customised emails** to programme target groups at local, regional and national level, indicating the selected study visits that may be of interest to them and encouraging them to apply for a visit.



Cedefop on Facebook

Those of you who use **social media** (for example, Facebook 👁, Twitter) can post examples of good policies and practices or quotes of study visits participants to raise awareness about the programme.



The UK national agency produced a **dissemination handbook** for LLP beneficiaries (see p. 10-14 for study visits).



The Lithuanian and Slovenian national agencies organise national awards for study visits participants and organisers.



follow us on **twitter**

visit us on **facebook**

Cedefop uses **Facebook** and **Twitter** to promote the call for applications and publish news about study visits.

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## Internet

All NAs use the Internet to make available information related to calls for applications and calls for proposals; most of them **publish online group reports** and even individual reports from participants.

Others make available on their website **videos** 📺 and **testimonials** 🗣 of study visit participants. You should maintain the study visits content on your website in such a way as to retain the interest of those it wishes to address so that they return to it. However, the existence of a website does not guarantee its use and you should use other means to **drive traffic to your website**:

- mention the address of your website in all your printed material (leaflets, publications, letters, etc.);
- encourage your partners (for example, Ministry of Education and Employment) to provide in their websites clickable links to your study visits pages;
- enhance the traffic to the study visits webpages through meta-tagging, search engine optimisation or banner advertising on relevant sites.

## External media

News around education and training are likely to attract the interest of external media if an interesting story is presented to them. You could get their attention if you **use a story mentioned during a study visit** using a catchy title like '8 out of 10 students graduating from colleges in our region found a job within six months'. Such a story could be published because it has a local angle and could generate more follow-up stories and comments, letters to the editors, tweets, etc.

Any story is also more likely to be published if you accompany it with audiovisual material (photos, podcast, video). For data protection reasons, you should inform study visit participants that they may be shown in A/V material. Make sure your photos are clearly labelled and that your podcasts and video are not overly long.

**Press releases** are the main tools for communicating with the media and press agencies. You increase your chances of getting media coverage if you do part of their work. You will find in [Annex 3](#) guidelines on how to write a news release and prepare for an interview.



The UK national agency produced videos and stories of participants and hosts, available online.



The Irish national agency makes available testimonials of Irish participants and quotes of participants in Irish study visits.

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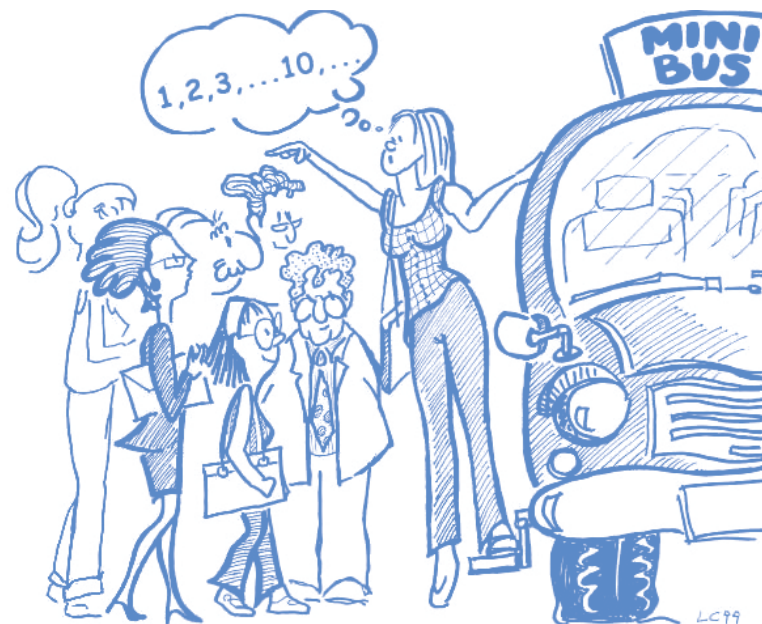
There are different types of media.

**Local and regional media** are mainly local newspapers and radio stations. Local media will often be willing to cover an event attended by education and training specialists from a number of European countries taking place in their area. Getting local media coverage offers many benefits as it gives visibility to the host institution, to the participants and to the topic of the visit. Local media typically have few resources to go to a site and prepare a story and for that reason will welcome a ‘story on a plate’.

**National media** include the national TV channels 🗣 and the national newspapers. The national media are becoming increasingly fragmented and specialised with dedicated TV channels on education in some countries and periodic education supplements in newspapers 🗣.

**Trade/professional media** encompass numerous titles, some of which could be in the field of the study visit. For example: [Training Journal](#) (dedicated to workplace learning).

**Online Media** are instantly available and people/self-journalism is a big part of their operation. It is relatively easy to get online through blogs, websites, electronic newsletters, etc., to communicate the visit or to discuss the visit theme in these.



You can often find statistics on newspaper readership for your own country with the aid of Google. The [European Journalism Centre](#) offers a top level overview of the media landscape for each European country.






The Maltese NA hosted a weekly TV programme entitled ‘EU passport’ on National Television, and one story was focused on study visits and its contribution to education and training.




[Le Monde, Espace éducation](#)



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## 6. Partners for success

Work closely with the **communication experts** in your national agency for an efficient use of the available channels. They can help you with:

- preparing news releases;
- ensuring regular presence in your agency’s electronic newsletter;
- linking your stories to other websites;
- reviewing coverage  of study visits in the press and online media.

Cedefop, as coordinator of the study visits programme at European level, can play a key role in helping you to **promote study visits**. We can for example:

- share with you our experience in promoting the programme at European level;
- give you some practical examples of promotion and dissemination activities in other countries;
- make available on our website all group reports, publications and findings of the study visits programme;
- link to your study visits’ webpages.

You may discuss with your **study visits colleagues**  in other national agencies how they promote the programme in their countries. You should contact them to:




- find more details on the interesting initiatives that are mentioned in this guide;
- discuss your ideas with them and learn from their experiences during the annual meeting of the study visits programme.




You may use **Google Alerts** a free media monitoring service offered by the search engine Google to monitor any content from news, web, blogs, video and/or discussion groups that matches the term “study visits” in your country.



**Study visits colleagues in the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian national agency meet every year to discuss their experience in managing the programme and exchange examples of good practices related to monitoring, evaluation and dissemination activities.**

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Another useful partner is the **Communication unit of DGEAC** which:

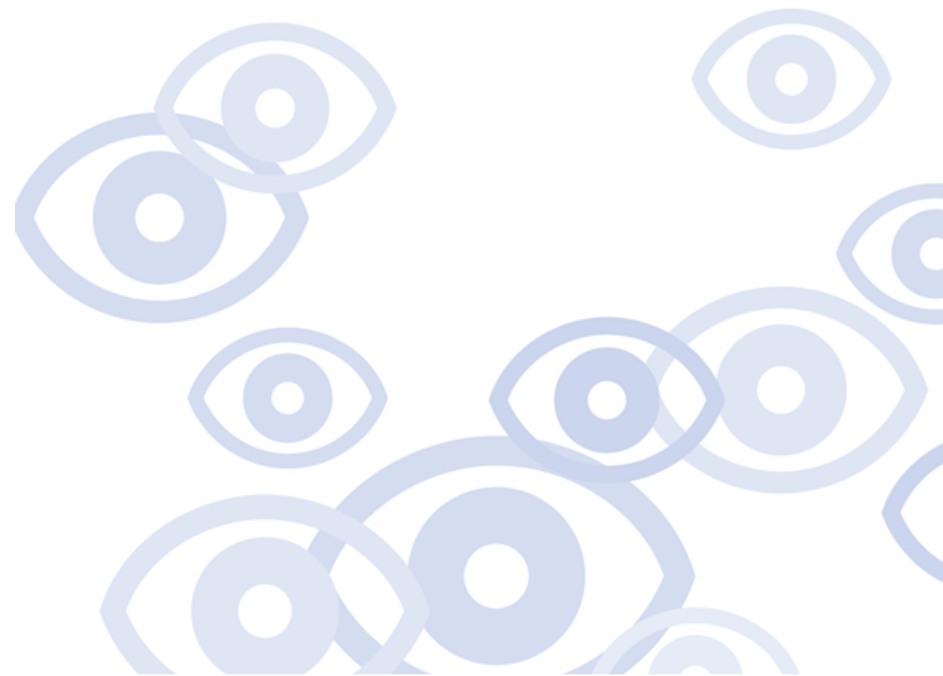
- publishes press releases;
- produces [video clips and testimonials](#) on success stories that illustrate participants' experiences from projects financed through EAC programmes;
- makes available [EVE](#) , the electronic platform for the dissemination and exploitation of results of projects financed through EAC programmes.




You can have access to these examples and get ideas on how to produce similar ones using cases and data that are of interest to the study visits target group in your local and national context. The communication officers in your national agency can provide you with more information on these as they participate in meetings once or twice a year with the communication unit of DGEAC.

Study visits participants and organisers are the ambassadors of the study visits programme in your country and valuable partners in your communication activities. You should **maintain a contact database** and **build ongoing relationships** with them through inviting them to participate in conferences and valorisation events and asking them to promote the programme to their colleagues and networks. [Annex 4](#) gives you a few tips on how to create and maintain a contact database.



European Commission,  
Eve, DGEAC



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## 7. Evaluating communication activity

After carrying out a communication activity, you need to determine the impact of each of the channels and techniques you have used and make sure your effort is being used in the most effective way. It will make planning the next cycle much easier and it will also provide you with the evidence of justifying resource, whether staff time or budget.

Typically evaluation of a communication programme takes place at three levels – product, result and impact (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Levels of evaluation

	Level	Content	Evaluation
<b>Reliability of association with communication diminishes</b>	<b>Product</b>	Delivery of actions against an agreed programme	Review of quality and timing and cost
	<b>Result</b>	The audiences' response to specific communication activities	Questionnaires after events or with publications, media evaluation, attitude surveys
	<b>Impact</b>	The audiences' response to your communications in terms of change of behaviour and attitude	Rate and effectiveness of change, levels of ongoing support and advocacy

Source: Adapted by Cedefop from information received from the UK Central Office of Information.

**Product** consists of determining whether you did what you planned and were on budget. What you will assess will depend on the activity you choose but it may include such factors as:

- Did you get the news release out on time?
- Did you hold the event?
- Did you get the number of attendees you wanted?

Product is fairly straightforward and low cost and should be part of your project management process.

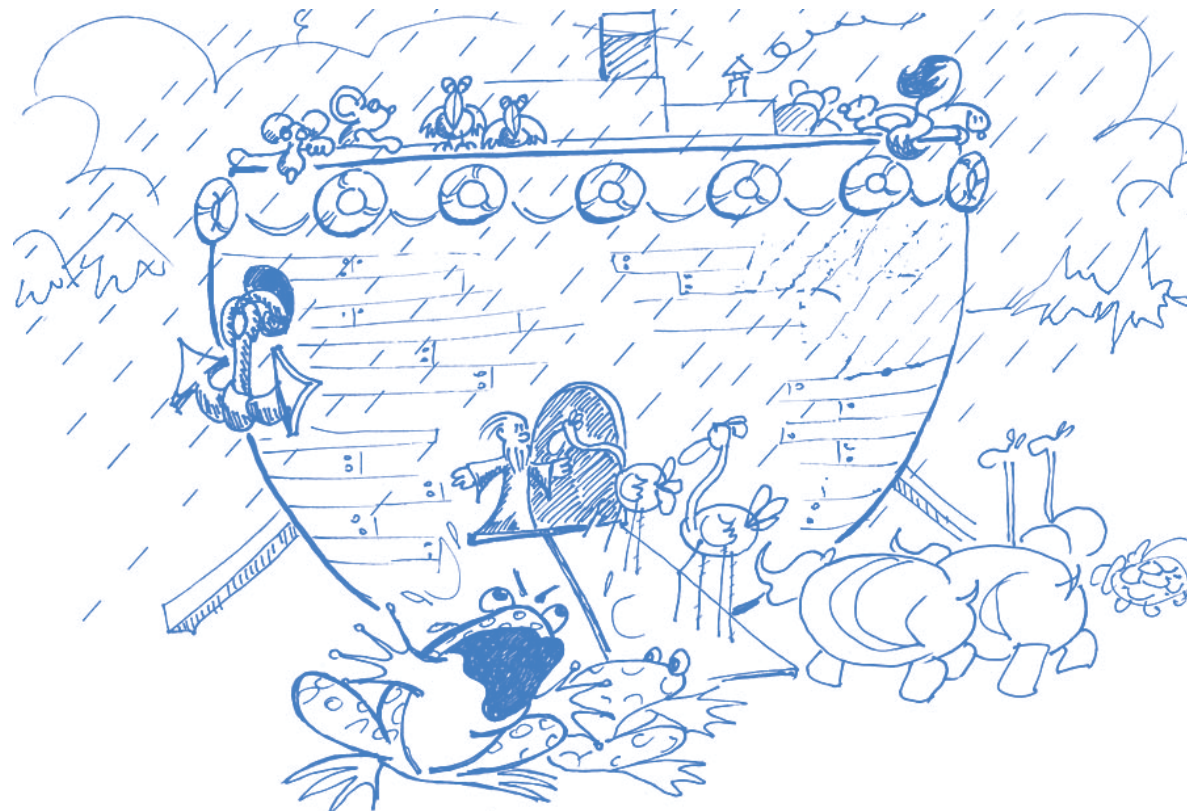
**Result** is about determining what people thought of your communication. Typically the tools used for this are questionnaires after events or accompanying publications, review of media coverage and more formal and expensive attitude surveys.

**Impact** addresses the key question of whether your target group did what you wanted them to do and whether your activity influenced them. To reply to these questions you can carry out a follow-up survey to assess the reach of your promotional material and the impact it had on the recipients.





# 8. Risk assessment

Risk assessment gives you an opportunity to take a step back, look critically at your communication activities and consider what could go wrong. Your activity will be planned on the basis of some assumptions, for example, the available resources. You should consider related risks, such as not enough personnel, assess the probability that attributed resources may not be available (for any reasons), think of their likely impact on the communication activity and the actions to deal with the risks.



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ANNEX 1

# Sample communication plan

## Introduction

This sets out the plan for promoting the study visits programme within my country in 2011/12.

The aim of the plan is to:

**Increase the number of social partner representatives in the study visits programme in my country.**

**The plan is based on the following assumptions** (examples of assumptions):

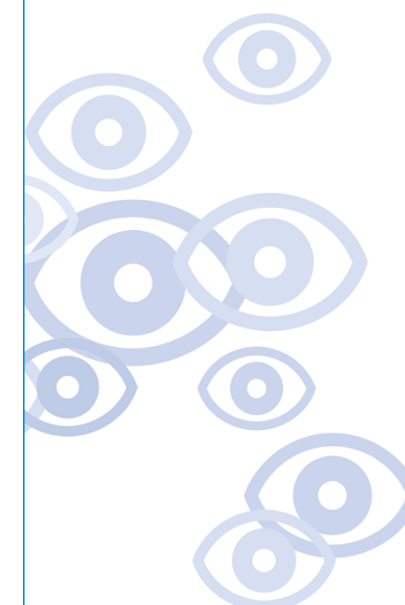
- I will be able to put 10% of my time into implementing it;
- Administrative support equivalent to 0.15 full time staff member will be available;
- An operating budget of EUR XXXX will be available;
- Cooperation from other LLP programmes will be available.

The plan was written by: my name, my contact details.

## Objectives and target groups

This section sets out the SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) objectives of the plan.

Target audiences	Objective
Representatives of employer organisations responsible for training in their organisations	A minimum of 30 representatives of employer organisations apply to participate in a study visit by October 2011
other (e.g. trade union representatives)	.....



## Messages and channels

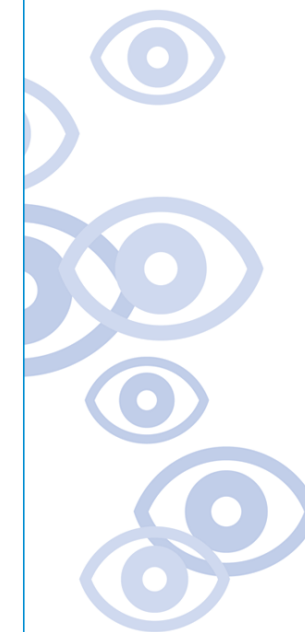
This section describes messages and channels we will use to achieve the objectives.

Objective	Message	Channels
A minimum of 30 representatives of employer organisations apply to participate in a study visit by October 2011	Apply for an EU grant and discover how to expand the learning opportunities of your employees. The study visits programme offers five visits on work-based learning to other European countries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send email to all representatives of employers organisations who have participated in study visits in the past, asking them to recommend the study visits to a colleague.</li> <li>• Use the newsletter of the national confederation of employers to disseminate descriptions of the five study visits on work-based learning.</li> <li>• Present study visits in conferences related to training organised by the confederation of employers in your region.</li> </ul>
	.....	.....

## Evaluation

This section sets out the evaluation strategy for your communication activities:

Objective	Activity	Evaluation
A minimum of 30 representatives of employer organisations apply to participate in a study visit by October 2011	Targeted mailing to all representatives of employer organisations who have participated in study visits in the past, asking them to recommend the study visits to a colleague	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of representatives of employer organisations applying.</li> <li>• Number of representatives of employer organisations who said a colleague of theirs recommended the study visits (from survey of participants).</li> <li>• Response rate to email (if applicable).</li> </ul>
	.....	.....



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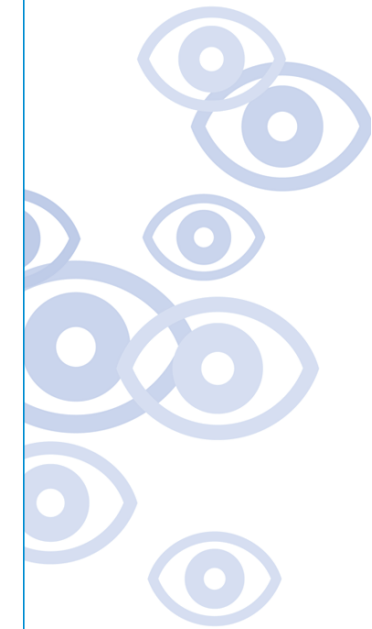
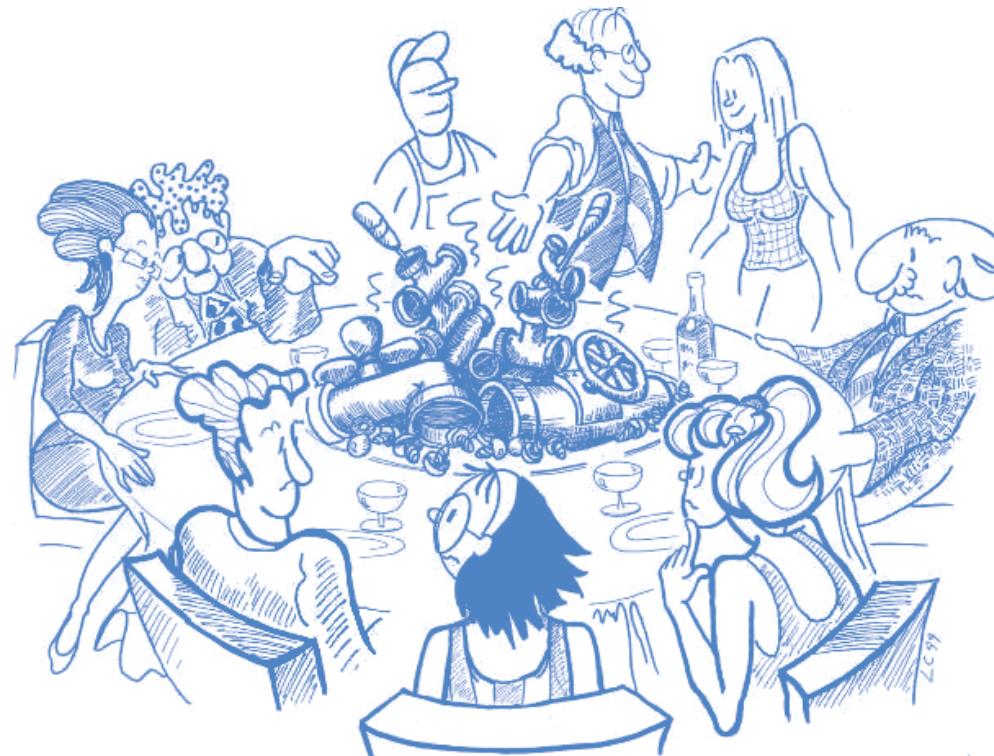
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## Risk assessment

This section sets out the plan to deal with the risks for your activity.

No.	Risk	Assessment of risk probability	Assessment of impact	Proposed actions to deal with the risk
1	I do not get the administrative support as planned	High	Medium	Start the activity earlier
2	Dissemination event is at same time as other events	Medium	High	Thorough check of calendar of events
3	Other risks			



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ANNEX 2

# Communication plan structure checklist

Section	Key elements	Checkbox
<b>Introduction</b>	1. The purpose of the plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2. Any assumptions and constraints	
	• Staff allocation	<input type="checkbox"/>
	• Budget	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3. Who wrote it, including contact details	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Objectives and target groups</b>	4. Any background you think might be useful	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5. Objective(s) for each target group	<input type="checkbox"/>
	6. Each objective is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Messages and channels</b>	7. Message for each target audience	<input type="checkbox"/>
	8. Message discussed and agreed with study visits colleagues within the NA	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9. Channels selected for each audience and message	<input type="checkbox"/>
	10. Channels consistent with available resources	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Evaluation</b>	11. Evaluation plan in place	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Managing risk</b>	12. Risks identified	<input type="checkbox"/>
	13. Actions to mitigate risks in place	<input type="checkbox"/>





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ANNEX 3

# Media relations tools

## Writing a news release

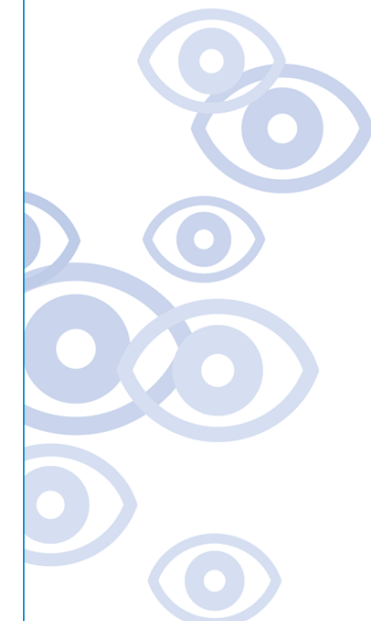
News releases can either be published as a story or they can attract journalists to contact the writer of the release to obtain more details, an interview, etc.




It is best to work with a communication specialist in your national agency to write your news releases; if you have not got that level of support here are some tips to drafting your own.

Each news release needs to contain (ideally in the first paragraph) answers to the following **six questions that every journalist asks**. For example:

<b>Who</b>	Representatives of trade unions
<b>What</b>	Apply for a study visit
<b>Where</b>	Online on Cedefop’s website
<b>When</b>	Until 14 October 2011
<b>Why</b>	Learn about validation of prior learning in other European countries
<b>How</b>	Get an EU grant

The structure of a news release can be that the first paragraph answers the above six questions, the second paragraph can contain a quote from a former study visit participant, the third paragraph can give more details on the study visit themes, the fourth paragraph can describe the organisation sending out the news release including the contact details of someone who will be contacted to give further details if necessary.



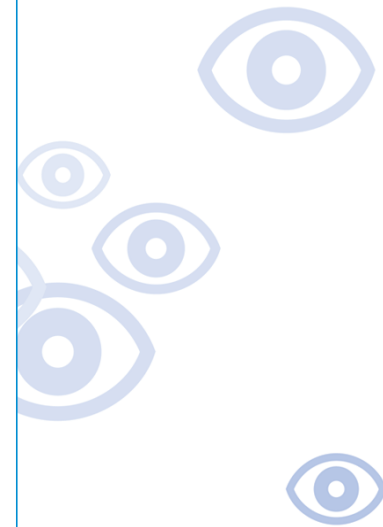
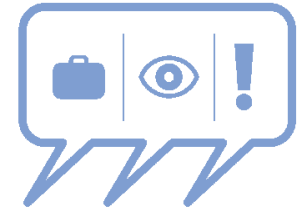
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Other points to consider when writing a **news release** include:

- giving a short, unambiguous title to the news release;
- asking ‘what do I want this release to do?’;
- adapting the narrative to suit the readership of the targeted medium;
- writing a short, opening paragraph of 20-35 words summing up the whole story;
- keeping sentences and paragraphs short and clear;
- provide some hard data: readers like graphs and statistics;
- trying to keep the news release to one A4 page;
- if there is room, use double spacing so sub-editors can write their instructions in the spaces;
- use your institution’s headed paper if you have it;
- sending it to a named journalist if you can;
- make sure to include your own contact details.

Timing can make the difference between success and failure. Think about times of the day when news is thin and you are likely to get more attention. For example, early mornings are a good time to contact newspapers. Try to avoid Friday afternoons or the day before public holidays.

Sometimes, it may be appropriate to invite journalists to come and ‘see’ the story themselves. If it is a study visit or a conference which involves visual aspects (for example, unemployed people in training, an award-winning project), journalists would have more reasons to attend.



## Preparing a good interview

The following **tips** can help you or your spokesperson to get your story across, whether talking to a newspaper reporter or being interviewed in front of the camera:

- choose a suitable time and place for the interview;
- prepare your agenda and select three key points to mention during the interview;
- find out about the publication and person doing the interview;
- during the interview, you can guide the discussion and suggest the questions to be asked by saying ‘if you were to ask me why someone should participate in a study visit, it is because...’;
- don’t avoid questions, but don’t get drawn off message;
- bridge back to your key points;
- it is courteous to: be prepared; be on time; recognise that reporters need to learn a new story every half hour; and be clear – don’t expect journalists to know your acronyms or terms;
- don’t treat journalists as adversaries, even if they ask difficult questions. They are only doing their job.



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ANNEX 4

# Creating a contact database

A contact database is a very important tool in **building relationships** with the programme’s target group.

You may keep in it the details of:

- participants who expressed willingness to be further involved in the programme and/or host a study visit;
- participants who prepared group reports;
- organisers of good study visits;

The first thing to do is to approach your institution’s communication team and see if there is a **corporate contacts database** you can use. If not, you may easily create one by using a simple Excel spreadsheet which may include:

1. Name
2. Contact details including title and email
3. Category of target group
4. Area of interest
5. Visit attended (if applicable)
6. Any notes
7. Date last used or checked

You should be the ‘owner’ of this database and check/update it regularly.





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# CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

The **European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training** (Cedefop) is the European Union's reference centre for vocational education and training. We provide information on and analyses of vocational education and training systems, policies, research and practice. Cedefop was established in 1975 by Council Regulation (EEC) No 337/75.

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Education and Culture DG

## Lifelong Learning Programme

The study visits programme for education and vocational training specialists, part of the lifelong learning programme (2007-13), is an initiative of the European Directorate-General for Education and Culture.

Cedefop coordinates the programme at the European level, whereas the national agencies implement the programme in the participating countries.

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<http://studyvisits.cedefop.europa.eu>

## Study visits: a guide to effective communication

The **Study visits communication guide** should support those responsible for the study visits programme in national agencies to promote the programme to potential applicants and disseminate the results to target groups.

The main focus is providing practical advice and examples of good practice to spread the results and extend the impact of the programme beyond those directly involved in it.

The guide briefly outlines how to plan communication activities, describes main target groups of study visits, main messages of study visits to put across and the available channels to reach the target audience, as well as how to assess the impact of communication activities.

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