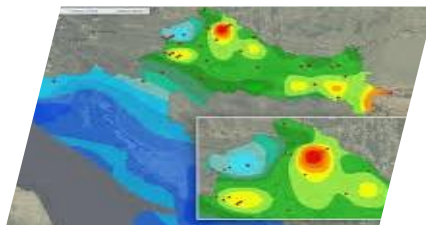


# COMMUNICATION PLAN

## for the Energy and Climate Change Programme

WITHIN THE EEA FINANCIAL MECHANISM AND THE NORWEGIAN  
FINANCIAL MECHANISM 2014-2021 IN CROATIA



November 2020

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## Introduction

On 3rd of July 2018, The Republic of Croatia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 and EEA financial mechanism 2014 - 2021. The overall objectives of the Mechanism are to contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area and to strengthen bilateral relations between the Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) and the Beneficiary States through financial contributions in the priority sectors.

The MoU sets the basis for the implementation of the EEA grants in Croatia, determining **Energy and Climate Change (ECC)** as one of the programmes to be established. The Programme is developed and will be implemented by the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds, Directorate for European Territorial Cooperation, acting as Programme Operator, Energy Institute Hrvoje Požar acting as a Programme partner in partnership with Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate (NVE), acting as Donor Programme Partner.

Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds (MRDEUF) is a central state administration body responsible for regional development of all parts of Croatia and coordination of activities related to the management of the European Cohesion Policy Programmes on the national level which includes European Territorial Cooperation.

According to the Croatian Government Regulation on the bodies within the management and control systems for implementation of programmes supporting the goal "European Territorial Cooperation" in the financing period 2014 – 2020, central state administration body responsible for regional development and EU funds has the role of National Authority for implementation of the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) Programmes.

At the moment, the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds of the Republic of Croatia (Directorate for European Territorial Cooperation) is hosting:

- National Authority for 11 ETC programmes
- First level control body for 11 ETC programmes
- Management Authority for 2 ETC programmes
- Certifying Authority for 2 Interreg IPA programmes

In practice, the Directorate carries out various tasks in the scope of ETC Programmes, inter alia:

- representation of the Member State in the Programme management bodies;
- coordination of the tasks related to the programme, financial, audit and irregularity issues
- management of TA budget;
- verification of costs etc.

Apart from sufficient experience in Programme and project management, it is to be noted that the Operator has the experience in managing projects in the field of environmental protection and energy efficiency, as the environmental issues have been covered in the EU regulation relevant for the 2014-2020 financial period in the scope of ETC programmes. The Sector for Coordination of the European Territorial Cooperation Programmes and Macro-Regional

Strategies on behalf of MRDEUF is actively performing the role of the leader of Work Package 5: Coastal and Maritime Tourism in the project PANORAMED.

As the Programme Operator for the Energy and Climate Change Programme, the Directorate has the objective to increase the use of less carbon intensive energy as well as to increase security of the supply. The Programme therefore provides financing for the implementation of measures for near-zero emissions buildings as well as various renewable energy projects, including geothermal energy. The selection procedure for these projects will be organized through Calls for Proposals and Small Grant Scheme, as suggested in the Programmes Concept Note and furthermore defined in the PA supplementary information.

## Financing schemes for the ECC Programme

Title of the Call / SGS	Estimated date	Expected no. of users	Planned amount in EUR	Eligible applicants
<b>Energy production from the sea, Increased solar energy production capacity</b>	Q2 / 2021	TBD	<b>8.934.000</b>	Any entity, public or private, commercial or non-commercial and non-governmental organisations established as a legal person In Croatia
<b>Technical documentation for geothermal energy</b>	Q2 / 2021	TBD	<b>3.000.000</b>	Any entity, public or private, commercial or non-commercial and non-governmental organisations established as a legal person In Croatia
<b>Increased geothermal energy production capacity</b>	Q3 / 2021	TBD	<b>4.956.000</b>	Any entity, public or private, commercial or non-commercial and non-governmental organisations established as a legal person In Croatia
<b>Shallow geothermal energy database, Deep geothermal energy database (SGS)</b>	Q4 / 2021	TBD	<b>400.000</b>	Any entity, public or private, commercial or non-commercial and non-governmental organisations established as a legal person In Croatia

## The situation analysis

### STRENGTHS

- Great experience in financing various programmes and projects dealing with these topics
- Experience in programme coordination and verification of costs for 11 ETC Programmes on National level (National Authority, First Level Control) and management of 2 ETC Programmes funded by the EU.
- The Programme is in line with the EIHP's usual activities and priorities, familiar to all employees and the potential beneficiaries
- Excellent knowledge about the legal framework and market situation
- Familiarity of all key stakeholders
- Availability of information
- Experience in organising of information meetings, workshops, conferences and other events at national, regional or local level
- PR experience and good cooperation with local and national media
- Good cooperation with DPP

### WEAKNESSES

- Demanding procedures in all stages of a project; from preparation and application, to implementation (for example, local and national administration)
- Relatively short deadline for project implementation and achievement of the planned outcomes (until 2024)

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Increasing the overall awareness of target groups about the importance and benefits of the Programme;
- "Opening doors" for new possibilities of financing projects of potential project promoters, through effective communication;
- Possibility to build trustful relationship between NFP, Programme Operator, Donor Programme Partner and all project promoters through systematic mediation of information and responsible implementation of communication and publicity measures;
- To contribute to the positive image of the EEA grants and the Program Operator

### THREATS

- (In)stability of the economic environment due to COVID-19 pandemic
- Non-utilisation of potential and information character of Programme;
- In general, low interest in EEA Grants
- Low interest of target groups in planned information and publicity activities

## The communication objectives

- provide clear and detailed information about the Programme and the available financing opportunities to defined target groups, to increase their knowledge and encourage their successful application (at least 50 people)
- disseminate and highlight the results of the projects on the website and in the media, mostly through best practise examples (at least 5 articles), to increase the awareness of the general public about the benefits of EEA grants' support

- make sure the project promoters are being „on brand“
- enable the possibilities of networking to encourage bilateral cooperation (at least 2 activities)
- take part in the communication network of the NFP

## Target audiences

### 1. Potential Project promoters

Potential Project Promoters must become familiar with the Programme. Through various events (meetings, round tables, workshops and conferences) and direct communication, we plan to present and discuss the Programme into more details. In order to include more potential users, the events will take part on various locations in Croatia. On these occasions we plan to inform potential users about the scope of the programme, funding opportunities, application procedure, criteria for evaluation and selection of projects, communication activities... etc. Regarding COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, if events cannot be organized in-person, all meetings, round tables, workshops and conferences will be organized on-line which will significantly reduce management costs.

Access to relevant information should be transparent and permanent, which is why all relevant information will be published on the webpage of the Programme.

Target groups identified as potential project promoters in this Programme are:

- Small, medium and large enterprises
- Regional and municipal authorities
- Scientific Community (Academic and educational institutions)
- NGOs
- Potential partners from donor countries

### 2. Project Promoters

Project promoters whose projects have been selected and approved shall sign a project contract with the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds, which will contain the provision to ensure that obligations regarding information and communication are complied with.

The aim is to encourage the beneficiaries to communicate and to jointly highlight the results/impacts of the Programme, to generate awareness and to ensure the long term sustainability of the projects.

#### ***\*Being on brand***

Project promoters have to develop and include the communication plan in their project application and report to the PO on information and communication obligations.

One of the important tasks of a Programme Operator is making sure that project promoters are „on brand“ by communicating the EEA Grants and Norway grants correctly and in line with the Communication Plan. Therefore, the communication material developed by the Project Promoters

during the projects' implementation phase is to be submitted to the PO for approval prior to their launch.

Detailed technical requirements on the use of logos, visual identity elements as well as billboards, plaques, posters, publications, websites and audio-visual material and will be shared by the PO to project promoters, upon signing the funding agreement.

Additionally, other from Project Promoters selected through Call for Proposals or Small Grant Scheme, project promoter of Predefined project (EIHP) will also have to develop and include the communication plan in their project applications and report to the PO on information and communication obligations.

#### *a. Information multipliers*

**Institutions** which can take part in these programs and/or benefit from the funding should be involved in the dissemination of the Programme. They will be sent targeted information, invited to meetings and will also be involved in various information activities.

Special attention will be given to the **media**: the local press can have a multiplying effect on the inhabitants of the intervention areas and the national media can be helpful in informing our target audiences as well as in raising awareness of the general public about the EEA contribution and the Fund's role in the Programme.

#### *b. People who can benefit from these projects*

To bring the Programme closer to the public and show how it can improve its' life conditions, the messages will be simple, easily understandable and brief.

### **3. Donors, FMO, the Embassy and NFP**

The Directorate, as the Programme's PO will cooperate with the Donors, through the FMO, DPP and the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Zagreb.

We plan to have a close cooperation with the NFP, which includes a regular communication and occasional meetings. In order to raise the visibility of our financial schemes, relevant information will be shared on the official web site [eeagrants.hr](http://eeagrants.hr) and via other electronic means of dissemination (e-mail...).

All relevant stakeholders will be informed and invited to the dedicated events of the Directorate and kept up to date with the activities and the achievements of the Programme.

We also plan to take part in other events and communication activities of the EEA mechanism, in order to jointly present our Programme to the public.

To ensure a strong bilateral cooperation, we plan to communicate regularly with our DPP through the Cooperation Committee. The aim is to stimulate long-term cooperation and partnership at project level.

## Main communication activities and tools

The main purpose of this Communication Plan is to establish and engage a set of communication tools and principles for successful interaction with specific target groups vis-a-vis implementation of projects financed through the EEA and Norway Grants. Furthermore, the communication plan aims at highlighting the Donor States' positive contribution to the achievement of the desired outputs and outcomes.

### The initial phase

The focus of the initial phase of the communication activities is to raise the awareness of the potential beneficiaries about the EEA and Norway Grants and to inform them on how to apply for available funding, as well as to raise the awareness of the general public about the programme.

### The implementation phase

In the implementation phase, the main focus of communication shall be on two priorities:

1. implementation rules and procedures which we have to clarify to our Project promoters through dedicated workshops. The goal is to make sure their projects are compliant with the Regulation<sup>1</sup>.
2. projects, their goals, progress and main achievements, which we plan to communicate through sharing the stories of the programme's best practice projects. The goal is to introduce the results of the Programme to general public and other stakeholders.

These objectives will be achieved using a variety of **communication tools**, which will be described further, such as:

- The use of promotional materials
- Two major events
- Multiple local events: workshops, roundtables and similar activities
- Press releases
- Participation to the events organised by NFP
- Participation on other events, press events and workshops organised for the purpose of promotion of the Financial Mechanisms
- Other activities as appropriate

### Web page

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021.



- within official web site eeagrants.hr, all relevant information will be shared to public and potential beneficiaries such as information about the Programme, its financing schemes, press releases and news regarding the Programme and other relevant documents and materials
- Calls for proposal and Small Grant schemes will be published on the eeagrants.hr website, with the relevant documents and files

### Promotional materials

- Promotional materials will be developed and used (disseminated) at our events, in order to increase the visibility of the EEA grants. For example, that could be branded notebooks or similar material, compliant with the Communication and Design Manual.

### Events<sup>2</sup>

- Upon signing of the Program Agreement, an official **launch conference** will be held, with the participation of Donor States' Entities, potential Project Promoters and other relevant stakeholders. The conference's purpose is to create awareness of the existence of the Programme and to mobilize potential Project Promoters to participate.
- **A closing conference** will be held at the end of the Programme, presenting all the good practices and results/impacts of the Programme. The invites will include the relevant stakeholders as well as project promoters and their partners.
- In between these events, we plan to have a series of **workshops**, which should help us reach potential project promoters and inform them about the programme, funding, procedures and other elements they could find relevant. Due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, one info-session for the potential beneficiaries will be pre-recorded and made publicly available on the programme web page.
- For calls with low expected number of users, we plan to distribute information through e-mails, and afterwards have thematic **meetings**, if needed (for further clarification). Upon selecting the project promoters, we also plan to have **programmatic (implementation) workshops**, through which we plan to inform them about their financial, technical, procurement and communication obligations, in more details.
- **Bilateral events** will be planned and organized with the DPP, in order to increase the bilateral cooperation between the countries and their entities.

### Press releases

- Press releases will be formed depending on the program activities and will be usually used to inform the public on events that have been held, calls that have been published or closed or just to inform the public about an outstanding result obtained by a beneficiary.
- A statement of a Programme official will be presented on press releases or press conferences.

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<sup>2</sup> Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all events could be organized in on-line format

## Key messages

The slogan of the Energy and Climate Change Programme is derived from the main slogan of the EEA financial mechanism: „**Working together for a Green Europe**“. The slogan reflects the main objectives of the Programme and shall be used on all promotional materials.

Other than that, our key messages are:

- Through this Programme, EEA grants support the sustainable development of Croatia
- Low energy construction is not the future, but the now
- Croatia has to increase the use of its significant renewable energy potential

## Visual identity

The visual identity of the Programme is determined within the visual identity of the Financial Mechanisms in Croatia, developed by the National Focal point.

The logo of EEA grants will be used on all communication material, in combination with the MRDEUF logo (co-branding), in accordance to the Communication and Design Manual.

The same rule will be mandatory for Project Promoters as well.

## Timeline

ACTIVITY	2020.	2021.	2022.	2023.	2024.
Conference		X			x
Workshops		X	X	X	
Webpage under the website eagrants.hr	Continuosly				
Press releases		X	X	X	X
„Ad hoc“ meetings (conferences, seminars, workshops)	As needed				

## Communication budget

This Plan will be implemented using the planned budget of **77,341.20 euro**.

## Activities summary

<i>Communication goal</i>	<b>Primary target groups</b>	<b>Communication tools</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Evaluation/monitoring</b>	<b>Planned achievement</b>
<b>Provide clear and detailed information about the Programme to defined target groups</b>	Potential Project promoters Other stakeholders	Conferences Workshops Website E-mails Meetings	2021/2022 Depending on the planned calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Attendance lists from the events (if applicable)</li> <li>○ Feedback questionnaire for the participants</li> </ul>	Inform and educate at least 50 people
<b>Disseminate and highlight the results of the projects and bilateral initiatives</b>	The media	Website Press releases	Depending on the calls and the planned dynamics of projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Media monitoring of national media</li> <li>○ Monitoring the website visits</li> </ul>	Distribute at least 15 press releases and have at least 20 press clippings
<b>Make sure the project promoters are being „on brand“</b>	Program promoters	E-mails Workshops Website	Upon the signing of the financing agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Attendance lists from the events (if applicable)</li> <li>○ Sent e-mails</li> <li>○ Media monitoring</li> </ul>	Distribute the instructions for project promoters through e-mail, have at least 20 promoters on programmes workshops
<b>Enable the possibilities of networking</b>	Potential program promoters Program promoters	Networking events such as study trips and conferences	As agreed with the DPP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ attendance lists from the events (if applicable)</li> <li>○ feedback questionnaire for the participants</li> </ul>	At least 1 bilateral events

**Take part in the communication network of the NFP**

General public and other relevant stakeholders	Various events	As needed	○ Reports from the organizer	-
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## Evaluation and monitoring

The communication plan will be implemented by the Publicity Officer alongside the Programme Officer and other parts of the team (relevant for certain topics); in cooperation with the communication expert of the the National Focal Point.

For the evaluation purposes, the following monitoring activities are planned:

- media monitoring of national electronic and paper media
- attendance lists from the events (if applicable)
- feedback questionnaire for the participants of our events;
- interview or a questionnaire for potential Project Promoters
- monitoring the website visits in cooperation with NFT

## Contact person:

Stella Arneri

Head of Directorate

[stella.arneri@mrrfeu.hr](mailto:stella.arneri@mrrfeu.hr)

+385 1 6400 609