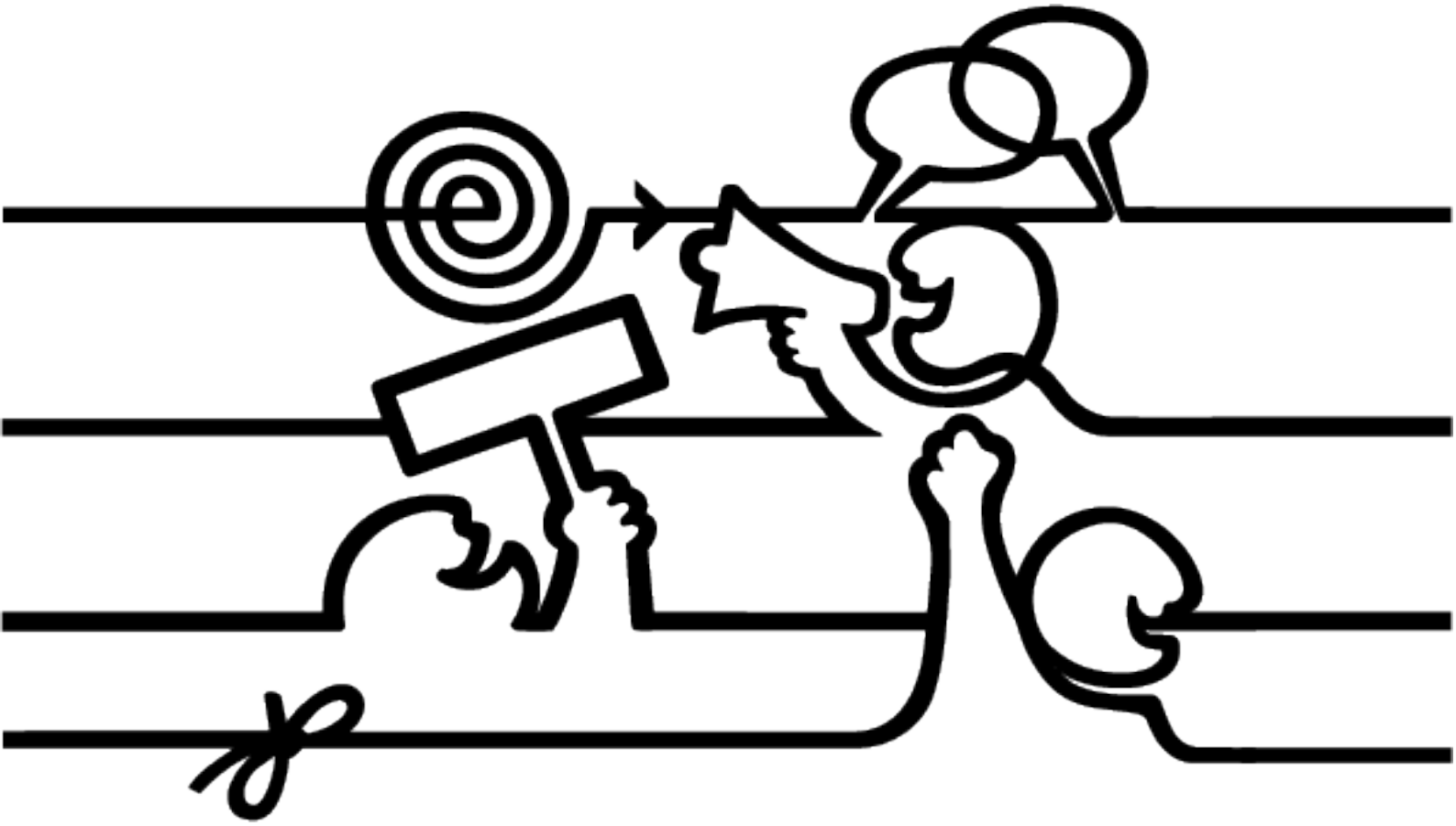
EUROPEAN UNION

COMMUNICATION FOR IMPACT

Enhance your impact with communication for every step in your project



Erasmus+

Enriching lives, opening minds.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Why Communication for Impact?

Communication, dissemination and impact are words you often hear in Erasmus+ projects. They are important but putting them into practice can be challenging. Many organisations work hard to share their activities and results. However, sharing information alone does not always lead to real change.

This guide introduces **Communication for Impact** and shows how communication can strengthen your project's contribution to impact. Communication is about more than promoting activities and outputs. It can inspire action, share learning, influence decision-makers and encourage others to contribute to broader, longer-term change.

The purpose of this guide is to help you use communication not only to share what your project does, but to strengthen its contribution to meaningful and lasting change. It will help you identify the right stakeholders, communicate what matters to them, and create opportunities for project learning and results to be used, shared and built on.

Erasmus+ is all about people connecting, learning and creating together. Across organisations, communities and countries, we share experiences, ideas and stories. Each of these connections adds another thread to something bigger: **a common thread.**

This common thread connects us, despite our differences. Together, we create the fabric of Europe, and beyond. Every person, project and story adds a thread, giving this fabric its texture and pattern.

Communication helps these threads travel. It connects experiences, shares learning and invites others to take part. A message, a story or a lesson learned can become part of something bigger and help the learning continue.

> "The more you think about impact, the more impactful your project will be."
>
> Erasmus+ testimonial — Finland

> "Communication for Impact makes people co-owners of the message: it becomes part of what they believe, and they can help by contributing to the change."
>
> Erasmus+ testimonial — Greece

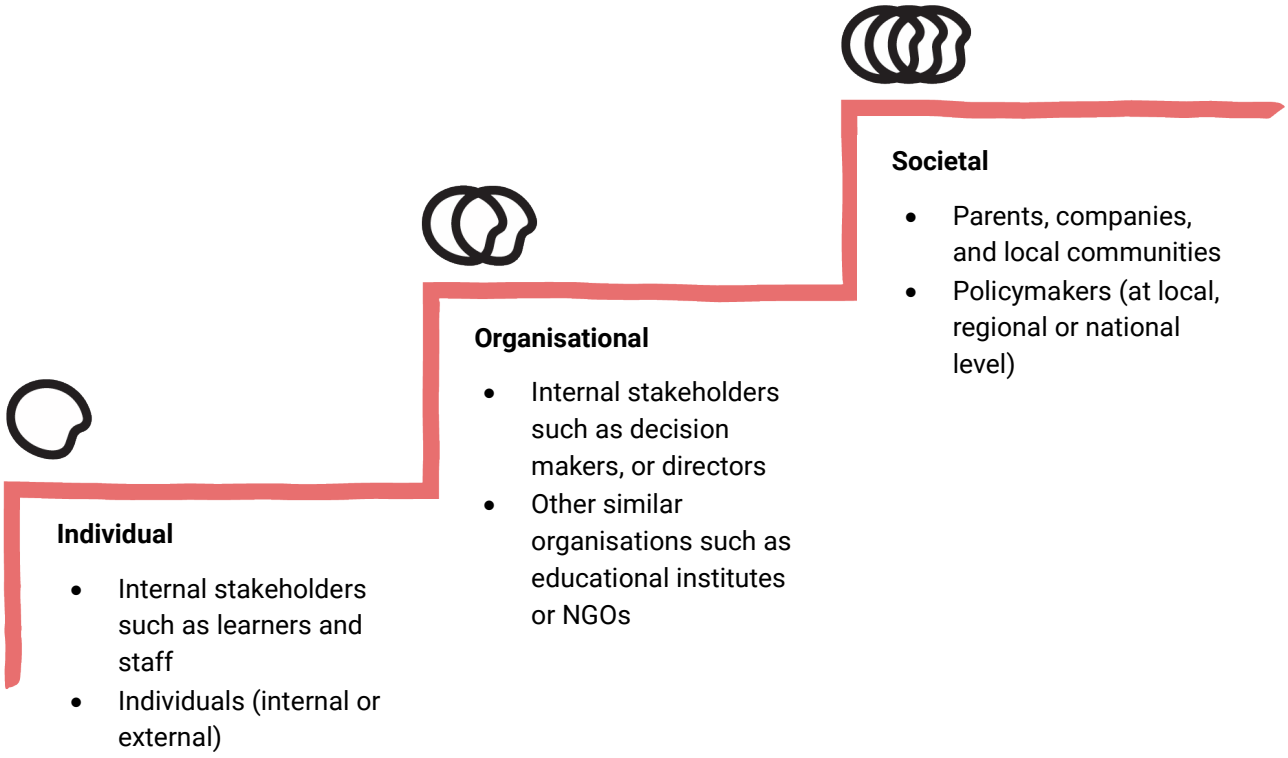
Every message, story and lesson learned is an opportunity to contribute to wider impact. Use communication not only to tell others what you have achieved, but to make your learning meaningful and useful to others. Invite them to add their own thread.

1.2 How does this guide work?

This guide helps you use communication to strengthen your project's contribution to impact at every step of your project cycle. But it is not the kind of guide where you must start at page one and go through all the pages. In fact, we encourage you to do the opposite! **Start where you want.** If you are at the beginning of your project, start at **Phase 1: Before the project**. If you are currently carrying out activities, go to **Phase 2: During the project**. Or go straight to, **Phase 3: After the project**. Choose the phase that is most useful to you.

How does this work in practice?

- Select where you are in the project cycle: before, during or after the implementation of your Erasmus+ project.
- Each phase follows the same structure. Start with the change you want to contribute to and identify the key stakeholders . Then, understand what is useful to them at this stage of the project cycle, and communicate in ways that help them use, share, adapt or build on the project's learning and results.
- The phases include examples, food for thought and good practices that help you adapt your thinking to the level of impact you want your communication to contribute to: individual, organisational or societal.



1.3 Who is this guide for?

This guide was developed with small and medium-sized Erasmus+ beneficiary organisations in mind.

For example, you might be a committed volunteer running an Erasmus+ mobility project for an environmental organisation, or a history teacher at a secondary school. In short, this guide is designed for small teams with limited communication capacity.

It can also be useful if you are an Erasmus+ project lead in a KA2 project, and have limited support from your communication team. It might inspire you, give you ideas and help your project move forward.

1.4 Another guide?

Yes! We developed this guide because your Erasmus+ project deserves effective communication. Whether you work on a KA1 or KA2 project, you can contribute to impact every day. However, communication can be challenging, especially when communicating about impact and for impact. This guide does not stand alone. Other useful guides, handbooks and tools are also available.

This guide builds on the following materials:

Erasmus+ Impact Handbook	Explains how to define, plan, monitor, evaluate and manage impact throughout Erasmus+ projects. Erasmus+ Impact Handbook You can also check the website of your National Agency for a translated version.
Erasmus+ Impact Toolkit	Provides practical tools to plan for, monitor and strengthen impact throughout the project cycle. Erasmus+ Impact Toolkit (website) + Impact Toolkit (PDF)
EU Communication Guide / CommsJourney Guide	Provides guidance on planning, implementing and evaluating general communication about projects and their results. How to communicate your project

In each chapter you will find recommendations for additional materials that provide further information, explanations, tools, and more.

1.5 Words matter

Over the years, different terms have been used in guidelines and handbooks. What communication means to you, might mean something else to others. The same applies to terms such as impact, outcome, output etc. Words matter.

For this reason, we have included a short list of terms used in this guide, to make sure we use and understand them in the same way. The list is based on what we learned from our research before developing this guide.

Glossary Annex 2

Acknowledgements

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Concept design: BRANDOUTLOUD
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2. Communication for Impact

2.1 What is Communication for Impact

Definition of Communication for Impact

Communication for Impact is the purposeful use of communication with stakeholders before, during and after a project, to enhance the impact of the project, through the provision of support or the wider uptake of results.

Communication for impact is about communicating meaningful change and using communication as a tool to strengthen your project's contribution to impact. It is a process of sharing and listening that helps stakeholders learn, think differently, and take action. Communication for impact focuses on what has changed (or will change) and how others can build on these changes and contribute to wider impact. In this way, communication becomes a tool that can contribute to impact.

The table below shows why Communication for Impact is more than just communication:

Usual E+ communication	Communication for Impact
What do we want to tell people?	What change do we want to contribute to?
Who is our audience?	Who can influence, use, adopt or scale our outputs generated by the project?
What channels will we use?	What relationship, message and format can move this stakeholder towards action?
How many people did we reach?	What did stakeholders understand, use, decide, adopt or do differently?
How do we promote our project?	How do we make our project outputs meaningful beyond the project?

Impact first

Communication for Impact is about communicating meaningful change. It is not just about reaching more people or using better communication tools. It starts with impact: the long-term change your project aims to contribute to for stakeholders, your organisation or your community. Ask yourself: “We do this, so what? What has changed or will change as a consequence of our actions?” Remember, even small changes can contribute to meaningful impact.

Communication is a two-way process

Makes sense, right? You communicate and want to see something happen. But that is not what we mean by two-way communication. It is the process of **sharing and listening, and vice versa.**

This means involving stakeholders from the very beginning, even before the application process. Rather than imagining what others want to hear, take time to understand their needs, listen to their ideas and act on their feedback throughout the project. Stakeholders are not simply receivers of a message: when they help shape it,

they become co-owners of it and are more likely to support it and take action. In this way, communication also strengthens the project itself, making it more relevant, useful and responsive to real needs. Communication for Impact is therefore a participatory process in which both the message and the stakeholders involved may change.

Communication has a purpose

Communication for Impact is about contributing to change. It aims to increase knowledge, change attitudes and encourage stakeholders to take action. Simply sharing your activities or project outputs is usually not enough. Think about what you want your stakeholders to know, feel or do. That is your **communication goal**.

A communication goal is not to make a video, website or social media post. These are **means of communication**. Social media, newsletters or events are **channels you can use to** reach your audience. The real goal is the change you want to contribute to when the message is understood, accepted and used by your stakeholders. By communicating with this change in mind, you can strengthen your project's contribution to impact.

Good communication always starts with a plan. It does not have to be long or complicated. It can be one page or a more detailed strategy. What matters is that it gives you a clear direction and helps you stay focused. Start by defining your communication goal, your audiences, and the means and channels you will use.

In Annex 1 of this guide, you find a Communication for Impact Canvas. This might help you in bringing together all the elements of this guide and in creating a practical plan.

Communication for Impact Canvas Annex 1

2.2 Your ambitions and key stakeholders

What is the change you want to see?

With Communication for Impact, we aim to **use communication to strengthen a project's contribution to impact**. What is the impact, change or effect you want to see? And how could communication help you contribute to it?

We want to engage stakeholders, influence attitudes and encourage action. Think about three steps: knowledge, attitude and behaviour. Changes in these areas can contribute to wider, longer-term impact.

For example: A local vocational institute runs a KA1 project. After a mobility programme, the teachers return to the institute and share what they have learned with the director. The director gains more knowledge, which changes the director's perception towards Erasmus+ and takes action, leading to an adapted curriculum. This change in curriculum is so-called organisational impact.

Communication can also contribute to influencing policy. Project experiences, evidence and lessons can help inform decisions, shape agendas or improve policies and practices. This does not mean simply sending material produced by the project to decision-makers. It means understanding what matters to them, sharing relevant and credible information at the right moment, and considering what could move them towards action. When influential stakeholders use your project's insights in their own work, communication becomes part of your contribution to wider impact.

Erasmus+ focuses on **four areas of impact**, also called programme priorities: **inclusion and diversity, digital transformation, environment and fight against climate change, participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement**. These priorities show the wider change Erasmus+ aims to achieve in society. Your project ambition may contribute to one or more of these priorities, while also addressing other meaningful changes relevant to your stakeholders and context.

You might wonder how your short mobility project contributes to these wider changes. Think about the combined contribution of all these Erasmus + mobility projects across the participating countries. Together, these projects can contribute to change at a societal level.

A strong, clear ambition helps you focus. Start with the change you want to contribute to and use this ambition to guide your project.

Key stakeholders

You have an ambition. Great! Now think about who can help you work towards it. Who are the people and organisations you should target in your communication for impact efforts? These are your key stakeholders.

In Erasmus+, target audiences are often defined as your direct (potential) participants or beneficiaries. For example, your project may aim to reach students, teachers, young people or other specific groups.

When you communicate for impact, you look beyond these groups. You need to focus on a broader group of stakeholders. The people and organisations who can support, influence, benefit from, or contribute to wider change.

What is a stakeholder?

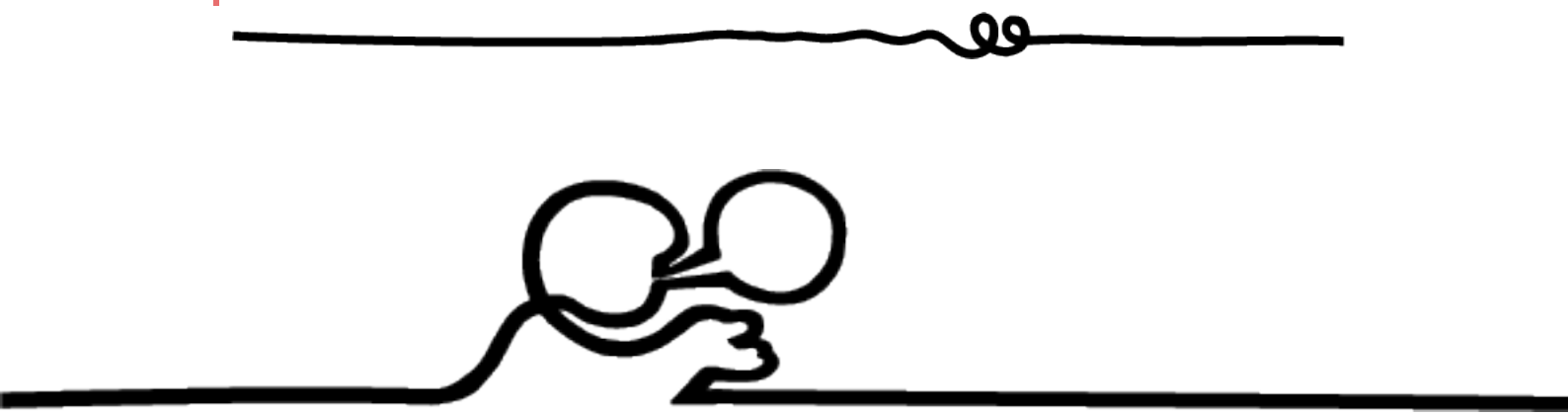
> A stakeholder is a person, group, community, or organisation that is affected by a project or can influence its success.

It is important to involve key stakeholders early and keep them engaged throughout the project. They can play a big role in the project and its contribution to meaningful change.

A stakeholder analysis matrix can help you identify your key stakeholders and understand their level of influence and interest. This helps you build support and respond to challenges more effectively.

Read more:

Impact Handbook	Chapter '2.1 Approach 1: From impact to activities'– Step 2
Communication Guide	Chapter 'Plan your #CommsJourney' - Define your target audience(s)



It's an invitation!

In your day-to-day work, you'll see first-hand changes in the people participating in your project, from young students to established professors. But change can also happen at other levels. Think about changes in your organisation or in the community around you. So, when setting your ambitions and identifying your key stakeholders, think big.

TIP! Join NA webinars and workshops. Use tools. And look at examples.

In summary

Communication for Impact is about communicating meaningful change and using communication to contribute to impact. It starts with **impact**, not with tools or channels. Think about what should change, and who can help contribute to that change.

It is a **two-way process** of sharing and listening. Involve stakeholders early and learn from their needs and feedback.

A clear communication goal helps you focus on changes in knowledge, attitudes and actions. Look beyond direct participants to **key stakeholders** who can influence, support or contribute to wider change.

And think big. Connect your project ambitions to the four Erasmus+ priorities: **inclusion and diversity, digital transformation, environment and fight against climate change, participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement**.

Phase 1: Before the project

What change do you want to support?

At the start of your project, before producing communication materials, take time to define the change you want your communication to support. Thinking about communication at this early stage will help you focus on the change you want to contribute to throughout the project.

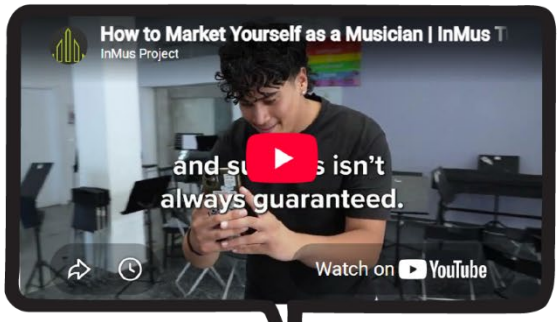
The scale of this change will depend on your project. For a KA1 project, the wider ambition may be modest but still meaningful, for example, your project may contribute by helping other schools improve how they prepare and support students taking part in international learning. For a KA2 project, the ambition may include encouraging organisations outside the partnership to use or adapt a method, toolkit, curriculum or partnership model, or to contribute to wider policy or practice.

The key is to focus not only on the story of what your project will do, but **on the change story**: who should understand, use, support or act on the learning, and what you hope will be different after the project.

See how communication can help turn Erasmus+ activities into meaningful change — for individuals, organisations and society.

EXAMPLE 1 – Be relevant

The project	Sistema Cyprus used its Erasmus+ InMus project to help young musicians with fewer opportunities develop the skills and experience needed to move towards professional careers in music**.**
Why is this a good example of Communication for Impact?	The project grew from conversations within the music community. Young musicians were asking for help with the practical demands of freelance work, such as invoicing and administration. Listening to them showed that musical skills alone were insufficient preparation for a professional career. InMus used this insight to shape its training and provide opportunities to learn directly from working musicians. The project also considered how to reach different people. Staff used familiar, trusted contact during lessons and rehearsals, alongside phone calls, mobile messaging apps for practical updates. This helped young musicians and families who were less active on public social media stay involved. Training and job-shadowing then created direct connections between aspiring musicians and professionals in the sector.
What is the effect?	By listening to young musicians and involving them in developing the project, Sistema Cyprus developed a project that addressed a real and relevant barrier to entering professional life. Communication therefore contributed to more than participation: it helped build trust, confidence and a sense of ownership among the young musicians, making it more likely that they would take part in the learning and apply it in their professional lives. Communication with professionals and other organisations also helped connect the young musicians with the wider music sector, which lead to new opportunities**.**
Link	https://www.sistemacyprus.com/inmus/ / https://www.youtube.com/@InMusProject



EXAMPLE 2 – Learn from users

The project	EcoSigns is a Greek Erasmus+ project that developed accessible environmental education materials for deaf and hard-of-hearing children, using sign language, storytelling, digital tools, games and interactive learning.
Why is this a good example of Communication for Impact?	The project considered communication and accessibility from the very beginning. Instead of developing standard educational materials and adapting them afterwards, the consortium designed the resources around the communication needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing learners. Sign language, visual communication, written language, spoken narration and interactive activities were included in the educational design from the start. Teachers, families and deaf education professionals were actively involved throughout the project and provided feedback along the way. In this way, communication was not simply about reaching people with a message; it was about removing barriers that could prevent some people from taking part in the learning.
A lesson from piloting	EcoSigns also shows how piloting can become a meaningful communication process. Rather than organising one single pilot session, the team made piloting part of real educational practice. The materials were used over two school years in a special kindergarten for deaf and hard-of-hearing children and in collaboration with other schools, mainstream kindergartens and primary schools (without hearing difficulties). Families were involved through presentations and practical activities, and educators, schools and parents were invited to share their experiences and feedback. This created repeated opportunities to see how the materials worked with different groups and in different settings, and to learn from the people who would actually use them. This project shows that piloting is not only about testing a product; it can also be a way to communicate with target groups and learn from their experiences.
What is the effect?	The approach contributed to more inclusive access to environmental education. The resources were used beyond the original target group, including by mainstream schools that used them to combine environmental education with learning about deafness, diversity and inclusion. The experience also changed how the organisation approaches future educational projects: accessibility is now seen not as an adaptation for a specific group, but as a principle that can improve the quality and usefulness of resources for everyone.
Link	https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2022-1-EL01-KA210-SCH-000082710

EXAMPLE 3 – Ownership of the story

The project	In the Erasmus+ project *Dreamlike Neighbourhood,* run in Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, the Netherlands and Slovenia, older people, including those of a very advanced age, meet regularly in informal neighbourhood groups. They support each other in discovering their talents, following their dreams, facing everyday challenges and contributing to their communities.
Why is this a good example of Communication for Impact?	The idea for the video came spontaneously during a storytelling café in Vienna. The goal was to show a positive and authentic image of older people and the valuable role they play in their communities. At first, the project team had some concerns. They did not want participants to feel pressured. But by keeping the process simple and low-pressure, three older women stepped forward and decided for themselves what they wanted to share, show and film. The result was a captivating video with a strong human voice.
What is the effect?	The video became part of the project's wider communication work. It is shared online and shown at presentations and networking events, giving audiences a vivid insight into the project and its contribution to impact. But the change story goes further. The experience built the team's confidence in using video. For the three women, it created pride and empowerment. They told their own stories and spoke for themselves - instead of being spoken about. That is Communication for Impact: giving people a voice and using their stories to contribute to change.
Link	www.dreamlike-neighbourhood.eu https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GlrLJ-_jcKY

You might say: 'Communication for impact? That sounds difficult for us. We can share what we are doing and what we hope to achieve.' Perhaps your project has limited resources, and focuses on just a few people, but think about what might change for those people as a result of taking part in the project. Your project may also contribute to changes you cannot yet predict at this stage. All these projects together contribute to the broader, long-term Erasmus+ priorities.

The following questions can help you think about the change your project aims to contribute to. Discuss them with your colleagues or project partners to get different perspectives.

- What problem or opportunity does your project respond to?
- What will the project learn, test or produce?
- To whom may this matter, other than the direct participants, and why?
- Which Erasmus+ priority does it connect to?

If you would like to explore your impact ambition in more detail, have a look at:

Impact Handbook	Chapter '2.1 - Describe your dream/vision'
Impact toolkit	Chapter 'Stage 1 – Define your impact goal'

Who needs to act, use, support or decide?

Now that you have a better idea of your communication ambition, the next question is: Who has the power, role or motivation to use your project outputs, support your work or contribute to change? Your stakeholders may be at different levels, depending on the change you want to contribute to. In Erasmus+ projects, change can take place at individual, organisational or societal level.

Different groups of stakeholders may have different needs, interests and roles. To make your communication relevant, think about who these stakeholders are and how you might need to communicate with them differently. Use the questions below to explore your stakeholders. If your answers are too general, try dividing a group into smaller subgroups. Reflective questions to explore your stakeholders:

- Stakeholders: who has the power, role or motivation to use the project outputs, support your work or contribute to change? Can you divide them into smaller groups?
- What are the characteristics of each subgroup: what is their role, and what challenges do they face?
- Create personas: can you describe one or two typical people, either fictional or real, who represent each group?

You may be tempted to write:

Our communication should reach students and make them enthusiastic about joining an Erasmus+ mobility.

This is a good start, but it is still too general. Not all students have the same questions, needs or barriers. Different groups of students may think, feel and act differently. To make your communication more effective, break the group down into smaller subgroups.

For example:

Individual stakeholders

Broad stakeholder group: **students**	Broad stakeholder group: **teachers/professors**
Students who already want to go abroad	Teachers who encourage students to take part
Students who are interested but unsure	Teachers who prepare and support students
Students who believe Erasmus+ is not for them	Teachers who are interested but lack time or support
Students who have already participated	Teachers who use students' experiences in teaching

Organisational stakeholders	Societal stakeholders
Broad stakeholder group: **Internal decision makers**	Broad stakeholder group: **Parents, companies and local communities**
Board members or directors who need to understand the added value of Erasmus+ for the institution	Parents or families who can support participation, inclusion or follow-up at home or in the community
Senior managers who can continue to support Erasmus+ projects and allocate time, staff or resources	Local companies or employers who can support learning, work-based opportunities, sustainability or social inclusion
Policy, quality or curriculum leads who can adjust internal policies, procedures, curricula or structures	Community organisations, NGOs or local initiatives with similar goals that can help connect the project to wider community needs
Broad stakeholder group: **Other similar organisations**	Broad stakeholder group: **Policymakers**
Educational institutions, NGOs or youth organisations facing similar challenges	Local policymakers working on education, youth, inclusion, sustainability, digital transition or democratic participation
Organisations in the same country or abroad that could use lessons learned or project products in their own work	Regional education authorities that can support wider usage or alignment with regional priorities
Associated partners or network members who can help test, use, adapt or spread the materials produced by the project	National policymakers or agencies that can use project learning to inform educational policies or programme

Create personas

You can then create one or two simple personas. You do not need to create a persona for every subgroup. Use personas only for the groups that are most important for the change you want to contribute to or for groups you do not yet understand well. A persona is useful when it helps you move from a vague description, such as “organisations are our intended stakeholders for communication” to more specific communication choices. One subgroup may need practical tools. Another may need strategic arguments. Another may need an invitation to test, adapt or share the materials produced by the project.

For smaller projects, one or two personas may be enough. For larger projects, you may want to create personas for the most important stakeholder groups, especially when they have different needs or barriers.

Persona 1: Sara, 17, interested but unsure

Sara likes the idea of going abroad, but she is nervous about the language, the costs and being away from home. She does not need a long explanation of the Erasmus+ programme. She needs to hear from another student who also had doubts and still had a positive experience. She also needs clear information about practical and financial support.

Persona 2: Tomas, coordinator in a similar organisation

Tomas works in another organisation with a similar target group. He is interested, but only if the materials produced by the project are practical and relevant for his context. He needs to know what problem the project addresses, what has been tested, and how he could adapt the materials.

Persona 3: Amira, local youth policy officer

Amira works for the municipality and is responsible for youth participation. She is aware that some young people are less involved in local decision-making, but she does not yet know how your Erasmus+ project connects to this issue. Her attitude may be open, but she needs to see a clear link with local priorities before she invests time. Her behaviour is shaped by policy planning, meetings with local partners and available budget.

What do they need to know, feel or do?

Think back to your ambition. Informing your stakeholders about the project and its outputs, is one thing you can do, but this may not be enough to contribute to the change you want to see.

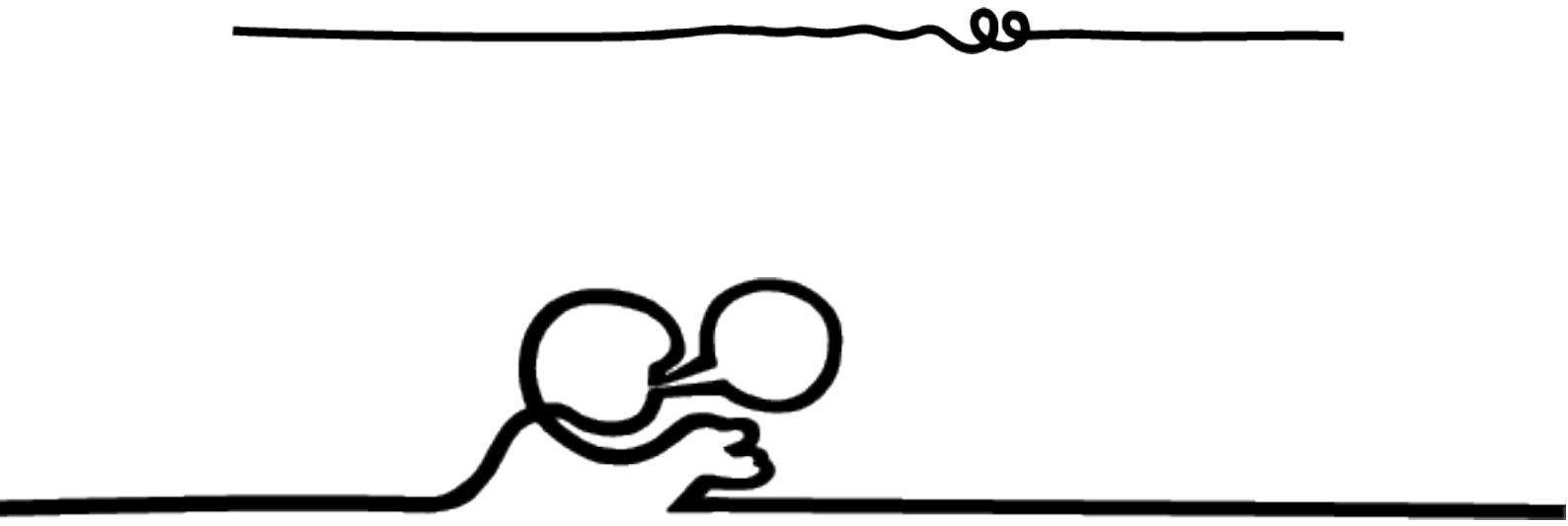
You can have:

- excellent implementation;
- high participation;
- positive feedback scores;

…and your stakeholders may still not know what meaningful change the project aims to contribute to.

Your projects will have a variety of results. For a clear definition of the results, have a look at:

Impact Handbook	Chapter '1 Understanding Impact'



By placing your results in a **pathway**, you can see more clearly how activities, outputs and outcomes connect to the wider impact your project aims to contribute to. See the example below.

ACTIVITY **What we do**

"20 students take part in an Erasmus+ mobility."

OUTPUT **The products, services, or other direct results of the activities**

"Students have developed stronger intercultural and communication skills."

OUTCOME **Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes or behaviour that the project contributes to**

"Students engage more confidently with people from different backgrounds and use their intercultural and communication skills at school and in daily life."

IMPACT **The broader, longer-term change to which the project contributes**

"The school community becomes more open, inclusive and internationally minded."

At this stage of the project cycle, try to think beyond the direct outputs of your activities and explore your project's pathway towards meaningful change. Saying that '20 students will take part in an Erasmus+ mobility' tells people what will happen, but not why it matters. The stronger story is what may follow: students may become significantly more confident in engaging with people from different backgrounds and bring this experience back into school life, contributing over time to a more open and inclusive school community. This is the change story behind your project. It can become a key message that you use and build on in your communication throughout the project.

Discover your change

At this stage of the project cycle, look at the expected activities and outputs of your project, and ask: **SO WHAT?** Then ask it again. And again. This question helps you to move beyond what your project does or produces and makes you think about why it matters.

FOOD for THOUGHT

The examples on the next pages show how communicating meaningful change can better engage specific audiences.

Update on social media

Option A:

We are going on a trip to Spain for Project X-001234 of Erasmus+, funded by the European Union. We will visit two basketball teams in France and Spain and then we will visit the city, enjoy some good food, and maybe even swim in the sea!

Option B:

What helps young athletes feel part of a team, especially when they train, travel or play in a new environment? During our Erasmus+ exchange, our Finnish basketball team will visit partner teams in France and Spain. Together, we will explore how young players build trust, communicate with each other and support each other on and off the court. We hope this exchange will help our players become more aware of what makes a team inclusive and supportive. We will share questions, reflections and small lessons during the visit. What makes you feel welcome and supported in a team?

What is the key difference between these approaches? Parents or friends may like to read about the Spanish paella, but the first message mainly tells them what the project will do. It does not explain why the project matters or what change it hopes to contribute to. Option B also informs stakeholders, but it goes further by explaining the change. This may be more relevant to stakeholders who share a similar interest. The question at the end also invites them to respond, making communication a two-way process.

Item in newsletter

Option A:

Dear colleagues, we have received funding for the Erasmus+ project X-001234 and therefore, over the coming months we will work together with partner organisation Y on an inclusion checklist. Therefore, we will do activity 1…, 2 …, and 3… For more information, get in touch …

Option B:

Dear colleagues, do you sometimes find that participants feel left out? Together with organisation Y we will work on an inclusion checklist tailored to our type of work. It should help us create more inclusive activities and contribute to an inclusive environment. If you would like to share your ideas, get in touch! We are planning a webinar in month Z so we will keep you posted.

Do you see the difference? Option A is informative and specific, which is fine, but does little to encourage engagement. Option B goes further by linking the project activities to the wider change the project aims to contribute to. It does this by **describing the problem and the change** the project hopes to support: a more inclusive environment. The question at the end is a first, small step in making them involved.

Email to local policymaker

Option A:

Dear Mr. / Ms., We are pleased to inform you that our organisation has received European Union funding for Erasmus+ project X-001234Together with our partners in Austria and Finland, we will develop a toolkit on youth participation. The project will include three partner meetings, one training activity and a final event. We will also publish the toolkit on our website at the end of the project.

We thought this might be of interest to you. We will keep you informed about the project activities and results.

Option B:

Dear Mr. / Ms., In our work with young people, we have noticed that many of them care about local issues, but do not always know how or where they can make their voices heard. This is especially true for young people who are less often involved in formal participation structures.

Through our Erasmus+ project, we will work with partners in Spain and Finland to explore practical ways to make youth participation more accessible and meaningful. We hope the project will help us, and possibly other local organisations, strengthen the way young people are involved in decisions that affect them.

As your work also involves youth participation and local democratic engagement, we would value a short conversation with you at the start of the project. We would like to better understand what is already happening in the municipality, what challenges you see, and how our project could connect to local priorities.

Option A is informative and gives the policymaker the basic project facts. That is useful, but it does not yet show why the project matters for local policy or wider change. Option B starts with a wider issue: young people care about local issues, but not all of them have access to meaningful participation. **It links the Erasmus+ project to a wider change**, namely stronger and more inclusive democratic participation. It also invites the policymaker into an early conversation, before the outputs are ready. This makes the policymaker more likely to see the project as relevant and may create opportunities for future uptake, support or policy dialogue.

When engaging in Communication for Impact, a first email does not need to “sell” a project. The purpose of communication is to open a conversation around a shared issue and share something that is useful to the reader and makes them want to know more. By thinking early on about what you would like your stakeholders to know, feel or do at this stage of the project cycle, you can involve them more effectively as the project develops. Make sure to check your ideas with your stakeholders to understand what they need.

Map your objectives

The table below can help you to go a step further, moving beyond 'raising awareness'. The examples are there for inspiration.

Stakeholder	Know	Feel	Do
Internal colleague	What the project is about and how it links to the organisation's work with students, learners, staff or participants.	Curious about what the project may bring back to the organisation and how it is relevant to their daily work.	Show interest, ask questions or join a first exchange.
Similar organisation	Understands how the toolkit works	Trusts that it is practical and tested	Uses or adapts the toolkit
Local policymaker	Understands the local relevance	Sees the project as evidence for policy	Invites you to contribute to policy dialogue

What communication action is useful at this moment in the project cycle?

You now know who you would like to reach and why you want to reach them. Choosing how you will reach them, is the next step. There are many channels you can use to share your message.

You can explore several options in:

> **Communication Guideline** Chapter 'Share your project results'

Before you choose your channels, ask yourself: what relationship, message and format can encourage this stakeholder to take action? For instance, social media or an internal newsletter may not be the best channel if you want the board to change a procedure. When you want to encourage action, building a good relationship can be important. At this stage, talking to individual board members over a cup of coffee might be more effective.

Be inclusive

The following tips can help make your communication more inclusive and effective:

1. **Use clear and simple language**
   Write in a way that is easy to understand. Avoid jargon, technical terms, and complicated sentences whenever possible.
2. **Make your content accessible**
   Use readable fonts, clear layouts, and add captions to videos. This helps more stakeholders access and understand your message.
3. **Represent different stakeholders and perspectives**
   Use images, stories, and examples that reflect the diversity of the communities involved in your project.
4. **Choose inclusive words**
   Use respectful and welcoming language that makes everyone feel valued and included, regardless of their background or experience.
5. **Listen and adapt**
   Invite feedback from your target groups and stakeholders. Their input can help you improve your communication and better meet the needs of different groups.

Planning

Before the project starts, use communication to build a sense of ownership and prepare for future use of project outputs. Involve the stakeholders who may later need to support, use or make decisions about the project results, both inside your own organisation and, where relevant, in similar organisations. Agree early on who is responsible for communication, so it remains part of the project throughout. The aim is not yet to present final outputs, but to agree on why the project matters, how learning will be captured, and how outputs could later be used or adapted by others.

Individual level

- organising a short internal meeting to agree on the change the project aims to contribute to, taking into account possible new developments in your context;
- mapping stakeholders who could use support or influence the project outputs. For KA2 projects, the period before the project starts is a good time to reach out to potential users. Involve them while resources are being developed, rather than asking them only to test the final version. This gives them an opportunity to help shape the outputs from an early stage;
- speaking with students, learners, staff, parents, partner organisations or community stakeholders to understand their needs;
- identifying existing channels, events and meetings where Erasmus+ impact can later be shared;
- preparing reflection questions, feedback forms or story templates to collect evidence during the project (see the link below);
- planning who will capture stories, quotes, photos, examples and lessons learned;
- preparing GDPR forms and consent forms for the use of videos and photos;
- planning when these actions can take place or be included in existing meetings, events, partner meetings, or annual plans.

Organisational level

- organising a short internal kick-off with management and key colleagues to agree on the intended impact of the project, taking into account possible new developments in your context;
- mapping internal stakeholders and similar organisations that could use or support the outputs. For KA2 projects, the period before the project starts is a good time to reach out to potential users and involve them while resources are being developed. This gives them an opportunity to help shape the outputs, rather than only testing the final version ;
- identifying existing opportunities to share learning later, such as staff meetings, network meetings, sector events or peer exchanges;
- involving associated partners early, especially if they can help test, adapt or share project outputs;
- agreeing who will collect organisational-level evidence during the project;
- planning how project outputs may be used, adapted or shared after the project.

Societal level

- mapping external stakeholders who could use or support the project outputs or influence the wider change the project aims to contribute to. For KA2 projects, the period before the project starts is a good time to reach out to potential users and involve them in developing the outputs. This gives them an opportunity to help shape the outputs, rather than only testing the final version;
- identifying existing networks, events, platforms or meetings where outputs could later be shared;
- checking which local, national or sector priorities the project connects to;
- identifying policy windows, sector events or community events where the project could be relevant later;
- planning how the project will collect evidence that external stakeholders will find credible;
- preparing different messages for different stakeholder groups;
- deciding whether a final event, policy brief, toolkit, learning note, webinar, peer exchange or online post would be useful later.

For examples of micro follow-up surveys or other ways of collecting evidence, have a look at:

Impact toolkit Chapter 'Stage 2.1 – Monitor Impact' or 'Phase 4: Report Impact'

How will you know your communication is effective?

Opens, clicks, attendees and views: these metrics can be useful, but they do not tell you whether your communication is contributing to meaningful change.

Checking whether the right stakeholders are receiving, understanding, using and sharing your messages, does not mean that you need a complex communication evaluation system. You don't need to measure everything. Even before the project starts, you can identify simple signs that will help you understand whether your communication is reaching the right stakeholders and encouraging engagement.

Individual level

- a stakeholder asks a more informed question after receiving your message;
- a colleague shares the project learning in a team meeting;
- a participant explains the learning to someone else; or
- feedback shows that stakeholders understand the message differently than intended, so you can adjust your communication.

Organisational level

- a manager asks how the result could be used more widely;
- another organisation asks to test your tool or method;
- a partner adapts one of your ideas to their own context; or
- feedback shows that stakeholders understand the message differently than intended, so you can adjust your communication.

Societal level

- a stakeholder asks a more informed question after receiving your message;
- a policymaker asks for evidence, examples or a follow-up conversation; or
- feedback shows that stakeholders understand the message differently than intended, so you can adjust your communication.

You can make these signs more useful by deciding in advance **when you will look for them**. Build a few milestones or review moments into your communication plan, for example after an event, halfway through the project or before a major decision. You can also turn some signs into simple qualitative or quantitative indicators, see the link below to the Impact Handbook. This helps you assess your communication more systematically and adjust it when needed.

Remember the pathway of change? Linking these signs to this pathway can help you see how communication may contribute to change:

- **Communication output:** Returning students share their experiences and learning with other students.
- **Early sign of change:** Other students show interest and ask questions about taking part in a future mobility.
- **Stronger sign:** More students who would not normally consider participating in international mobility, apply.
- **Outcome:** more diverse students take part in international learning.

Be clear about what you know, what you see, and what you expect
You might say that we cannot prove this change at outcome level or impact level, which is true. However, if you want to tell a credible story, you do not need to wait until everything can be proven. Be transparent about what your evidence allows you to claim.

OUTPUT — We KNOW

We have credible evidence that this change has happened.

OUTCOME — We have INDICATIONS

Qualitative, emerging or partial evidence suggests that change is happening.

IMPACT — We EXPECT

This change is part of our expected contribution.

If you want to know more about how to measure impact of your project, read up on it in:

Impact handbook	Chapter '3. Monitoring & Evaluation of Impact'

In summary

Before the project starts, use communication to prepare the ground for your project's contribution to impact. Define the meaningful change you hope to contribute to, identify the stakeholders who can contribute to that change, and understand what matters to them.

Think beyond broad target groups and consider what each stakeholder may need before they can support, use or build on the project.

Choose appropriate messages, relationships and channels, involve stakeholders early, and decide how you will recognise whether communication is beginning to contribute to change.

Phase 2: During the project

What change do you want to support?

Your project is underway and perhaps you are beginning to see the first signs of what stakeholders are learning. Perhaps you have already shared some updates about your activities, together with some nice photos or you recorded in your mid-term report how many people attended. Nice! But let's see if we can go a step further and look beyond your activities and explore how they may contribute to outcomes and wider impact.

Individual level

The key question is:
How can communication during the project help participants / staff / volunteers understand, use and share what they are learning?

During the project, you may already begin to see change at an individual level. Stakeholders may be gaining new knowledge, developing skills, changing attitudes, building confidence, or becoming more open to new perspectives.

Communication can strengthen these changes. For example, communication can help individuals recognise what they are learning, or share their experience with others, or feel proud of their contribution.

Organisational level

How can communication help actors within the organisation to implement or support further organisational change measures? Communication for Impact in this case means going beyond informing management or other organisations. You go a step further and encourage them to understand, use or support what the project is learning.

During the project, you may already begin to see change at an organisational level. Colleagues may become more interested in Erasmus+. Managers may see how the project can support organisational priorities. Partner organisations may start testing new tools or methods. Other organisations may become curious about what you are developing.

Communication can help make this learning visible and useful.

Societal level

How can communication help external stakeholders to enhance their own practices and/or develop related policies? Change at a societal level does not necessarily begin only after the project has finished. You may already see early signs of this change during the project, when external stakeholders start to understand the issue better, recognise their own role, join a conversation, give feedback or consider how the learning could influence their own choices, practices or policies.

For example, parents may start to understand why international mobility can benefit learners with fewer opportunities. A local company may see how it can support work-based learning. A community group may become more open to young people's ideas. A policymaker may become interested in early lessons from the project because these relate to wider educational priorities.

The following guiding questions can help you define a clear **goal** for Communication for Impact and shape your communication accordingly. Discuss them with your colleagues or project partners to generate new ideas and gain insights.

- What are participants beginning to understand, practise or do differently?
- What changes in confidence, motivation, behaviour or conversations are already visible?
- What is our organisation learning, and which new methods, tools or ideas are being tested?
- What could be useful for the wider team, managers or decision-makers to understand during the project?
- Why does this learning matter beyond the direct stakeholders, and who else could benefit?
- What can we learn from partner organisations, and are similar organisations showing interest?
- What do external stakeholders need to understand, and which early lesson or story could show the project's relevance?
- Which Erasmus+ priority does our project connect to?

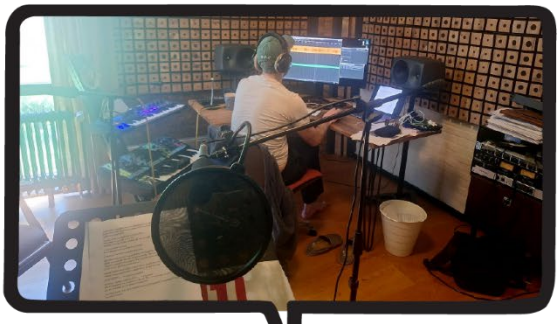
If you would like to explore your impact ambition in more detail, have a look at:

Impact Handbook	Chapter '2.1 - Describe your dream/vision'
Impact toolkit	Chapter 'Stage 1 – Define your impact goal'

See how communication can help turn Erasmus+ activities into meaningful change — for individuals, organisations and society.

EXAMPLE 1 - Students taking the lead

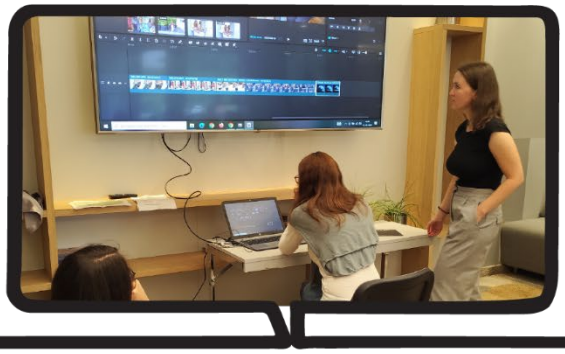
The project	During the Belgian Erasmus+ project *Building Peace by Watching History Through Several Eyes*, students created the podcast *The Great War Through Several Eyes*. Students from Belgium, North Macedonia, Italy, Germany and the Czech Republic compared different perspectives on the First World War. They explored how the war is remembered and taught in different European countries.
Why is this a good example of Communication for Impact?	An international educational project was brought to life through an engaging story. The podcast was not only a communication or dissemination tool. It was also a meaningful project activity. Communication and project learning came together in one activity. And there is more. Students took the lead. They researched, interviewed people and compared different perspectives. Together with an award-winning professional radio maker, they developed the podcast. They were at the centre of the storytelling and had an active voice.



	In doing so, they practised thinking critically about information, understanding different perspectives and taking part in respectful dialogue. The result? An inviting and engaging podcast, with carefully chosen music and a strong student voice. The students were proud to share it with their families, friends and wider community.
What is the effect?	A focused communication strategy, using different formats and channels, helped the project reach beyond the participating schools. Freely available on several streaming platforms, the podcast can continue to reach new audiences and share the project's learning beyond the participating schools.
Link	https://www.facebook.com/TheGreatWarthroughseveraleyes?locale=nl_BE

EXAMPLE 2 - Turning mobility learning into everyday practice

The project	ZISS Slovenia is the national association of adult education and guidance centres. Through its Erasmus+ staff mobility activities, ZISS brings new knowledge, methods and tools back to its member organisations and creates opportunities for others to learn about and apply them.
Why is this a good example of Communication for Impact?	ZISS does not let learning stay with the people who took part in a mobility. After each mobility, participants reflect on what they learned and select approaches that could be useful to others. These are then shared through an annual training event, where colleagues do not simply listen but practise the new methods themselves. For example, in a workshop on creating promotional videos, participants developed a video from idea and script to filming and editing, supported by colleagues who had gained the relevant skills through mobility.
What is the effect?	The learning is put into everyday practice. Staff in member organisations have started using new methods and tools in their regular work, including producing promotional videos for their educational activities. ZISS also uses feedback from the workshops to improve future sessions. This creates a cycle of sharing, practising, applying and improving — helping Erasmus+ learning continue to provide value after the mobility itself.
Link	https://www.ziss.si/erasmus/namen-in-cilji/



EXAMPLE 3 – Community talks through humour

The project	A Finnish school used an Erasmus+ student mobility to explore climate change with students from four European countries. As part of their learning, the students created a "Snowmen Demonstration", placing snowmen with climate-related messages beside a busy road where passing drivers and pedestrians could see them.
Why is this a good example of Communication for Impact?	The students did not simply communicate what they had learned through a presentation or social media post. They turned their learning into a creative communication activity in a public space. The location was deliberately chosen to reach people beyond the Erasmus+ participants and the school community. The local newspaper also interviewed students and teachers, while the school shared photographs and explanations on social media. Different communication channels therefore helped share the students' learning with people beyond the original project audience.
What is the effect?	The snowmen caught people's attention and brought the climate message into everyday public space and the community started talking about it. They created an opportunity for people in the local community to think and talk about climate change. The newspaper article and social media helped the message reach even more people. In this way, a simple student activity helped start a wider conversation about climate change beyond the Erasmus+ project.
Link	https://peda.net/ylivieska/peruskoulut/kaisaniemi/hankkeet2/koh/active-citizen-towards-sustainable-europe

Who needs to act, use, support or share?

Now that you have defined your communication goals, the next step is to identify which stakeholders can help your project contribute to wider, longer-term change.

In the previous phase, you identified and analysed your stakeholders, divided them into relevant groups and created stakeholder personas to help you plan your communication.

Return to exercise Phase 1 – Before the project: Who needs to act, use, support or decide?

During the project, you do not need to repeat this whole exercise. Instead, return to your stakeholder analysis and ask:

- Are these still the right stakeholders to focus on?
- Are some stakeholders becoming more important as the project develops?
- Are there new stakeholders, teams or organisations that could use, share or support the learning that is emerging?
- Do some stakeholders need different communication now that there are early experiences, stories or outputs?

The following groups are especially important:

Individual level

Individuals directly involved in the project	Individuals not yet involved, but potentially interested
These may include learners, students, young people, staff, volunteers, teachers, trainers, youth workers or community members. They need communication that helps them reflect on their learning and see how it connects to the wider purpose of the project. They can also become important messengers. Their stories, examples and reflections can make the project more real and credible for others.	These may include other learners, colleagues, staff members, volunteers, parents, young people or professionals who are not part of the project yet. They may become interested when they see that people like them are learning something useful, gaining confidence, or experiencing something meaningful.

Organisational level

Internal organisational stakeholders	Other similar organisations
These may include board members, directors, managers, team leaders, coordinators, colleagues, communication staff or other staff who can support the project or help embed its learning. They need communication that helps them understand what the project is contributing to the organisation. They may also need to see what the project needs, for example time, visibility, management support, internal coordination or space to test new ways of working.	These may include schools, sports clubs, youth organisations, NGOs, public institutions or other organisations working on similar challenges. They may become interested when they see that your project is testing something useful, developing a practical tool, or learning something that could also help them.

Societal level

Parents, companies and local communities	Policymakers
These may include parents, families, employers, local businesses, community organisations, youth groups, neighbourhood initiatives, cultural groups or local media.	These may include local, regional, national or European policy makers, public authorities, education boards, municipalities, ministries, agencies or advisory bodies.

They need communication that helps them understand what the project is about, why it matters to them, and how they can support or engage with it.

They need communication that clearly connects what the project is learning to their current priorities, policy agendas and decision-making responsibilities.

What do they need to know, feel or do?

Keep your communication goal in mind. Sharing information with your stakeholders about the project is only the first step. You can have:

- excellent implementation;
- high participation;
- positive feedback scores;

…and your stakeholders still don't know whether meaningful change is happening.

Your project will have a variety of results. For a clear definition of results, have a look at:

Impact Handbook	Chapter '1 Understanding Impact'

By placing your results in a pathway, you can see more clearly how your project activities and results connect to the wider change you aim to contribute to.

ACTIVITY **What we do**

"10 school managers attending leadership training."

OUTPUT **The products, services, or other direct results of the activities**

"A set of practical leadership tools and resources is developed and shared with school managers."

OUTCOME **Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes or behaviour that the project contributes to**

"School managers involve teachers more actively in school decision-making."

IMPACT **The broader, longer-term change to which the project contributes**

"Schools have a more inclusive organisational culture."

At this stage of the project cycle, look beyond what you are doing and start paying attention to what is changing. Try to think beyond the direct outputs of your activities and explore your project's pathway towards meaningful change. This will probably interest your stakeholders more than simply saying that '10 school managers were trained'. Attending a training is not an outcome in itself. Improved skills however, are an important outcome and may contribute to further change. For example, if you explain how improved leadership skills can help school managers involve teachers more actively in decision-making, contributing to a more inclusive organisational culture in schools, you are telling a much stronger story!

Discover your change

At this stage of the project cycle, have a look at the (early) outputs of your project, and ask: **SO WHAT?** Then ask it again. And again. This question helps you move beyond the immediate outputs and think about the wider change they may contribute to.

FOOD for THOUGHT

The examples on the next pages show how communicating meaningful change can better engage specific audiences.

Update email to parents

Option A:

Last week, our basketball team continued its Erasmus+ exchange with teams from France and Spain. Participants trained together, played matches and shared ways of working. The activity helped participants learn more about teamwork and intercultural cooperation.

Option B:

Last week, our basketball team continued its Erasmus+ exchange with teams from France and Spain. One small practice is already making a difference: before training, players and coaches now take a moment to check in with each other. The team first observed this habit during the exchange and decided to try it themselves. Some say it helps them feel more connected before playing together. The coaches are now exploring whether this simple practice could become part of the team's regular routine.

Do you see the difference?
Option A tells stakeholders that the exchange is taking place. It is clear, but it mainly describes the activity. Option B shows what participants noticed, what they started to try, and what may change in their behaviour. It also shows that the project is not only providing an international experience, but may influence how team members connect with each other and teams from other countries in daily practice.

During the project, look for these **small signs of change.** They may later become strong change stories, especially when you can show how the changes continued, were shared with others or led to further change, contributing over time to wider impact.

Item in newsletter

Option A:

Dear colleagues, we are currently implementing an Erasmus+ project on environmental sustainability in youth activities. As part of the project, we are testing different approaches to reduce waste during events. We are working with partners from three countries and will share the final outputs at the end of the project. We thought this might be interesting for your organisation and will keep you informed.

Option B:

Dear colleagues, we are currently testing simple ways to reduce waste during youth activities as part of our Erasmus+ project on environmental sustainability. One early lesson is that small changes before an event can make a real difference. For example, asking participants in advance about food preferences and expected attendance has already helped us reduce food waste in two pilot activities.
We are now improving a short practical checklist for event organisers. Since your organisation also runs youth activities, we thought this might be useful for you. Would you be interested in giving feedback on the checklist, or testing one or two ideas in one of your upcoming activities? Your experience would help us make the tool more practical for organisations like ours.

Option A is informative and specific, which is fine, but it does little to encourage engagement. Option B goes further by sharing an early lesson and showing the change the project aims to contribute to. The question at the end is a first, small step towards involving the other organisation.

Email to local employers

Option A:

As part of our Erasmus+ project, we are working to strengthen the connection between education and the labour market. To make this work relevant to local needs, we would like to involve local employers more directly in our activities. We would value your input on the skills and competences that are most relevant in your sector. We would also welcome opportunities for short visits, feedback on our training approaches, or participation in small-scale pilot activities.

Option B:

Dear local employer,
Through our work on the Erasmus+ project, we are learning that closer cooperation between VET providers and employers can help learners develop skills that are more relevant to today's labour market. We are also seeing that employers often have valuable insights into emerging skill needs, but these are not always reflected in training programmes.

Your experience can help us better understand which skills are most needed, how learners can be better prepared for the workplace, and how cooperation between education and employers can be strengthened. Would you be open to a short exchange next month to discuss how we can work together to improve the connection between training and the workplace?

Option A is clear and invites local employers to contribute, but it focuses mainly on what the VET provider would like from them.
Option B explains what the project is learning, why this matters to the local employer, and how they can contribute. It connects the project to a wider issue: bringing education and labour market needs closer together.

Map your objectives

The table below can help you to go that extra step, moving beyond 'raising awareness'. The examples are there for inspiration.

Stakeholder	Know	Feel	Do
Participants directly involved	What they are learning, why it matters, and how it connects to the project's wider impact.	Motivated, confident and proud of their progress.	Reflect on their learning, apply it, give feedback, and share examples.
Internal decision makers	What the project brings to the organisation and how it links to the mission, strategy or duties.	Feel sure that the project is useful and worth supporting.	Stay informed, remove problems, give support, and think about how outputs can be used later.
Local communities	What the project is trying to change and why this matters locally.	Included, respected and curious.	Join conversations, respond to participants' ideas, support local activities or share learning.

What communication action is useful at this moment in the project cycle?

You now know who you would like to reach and why you want to reach them. Choosing how you will reach them, is the next step. There are many channels you can use to share your message.

You can explore several options in:

> **Communication Guideline** Chapter 'Share your project results'

During a project, many things happen: meetings, workshops, exchanges, products, challenges, feedback, photos, quotes and reports.

A useful principle is: **share what is useful, not everything you know.**

So ask yourself:

- Who is this message for?
- What do they need to understand?
- What do we want them to do, use, support or share?
- What information is really needed for that?
- What can we leave out?

For example:

Individual level

Parents do not need to know every detail of a workshop agenda. They may need to understand what their child learned and how they can continue the conversation at home.

Colleagues do not need a full activity report. They may need to know what method worked well, what participants struggled with, and whether they can use the same method in their own work.

Organisational level

Internal decision-makers do not need updates on every project meeting. They may need to understand what useful outputs the project is producing, what early results are relevant to them, and what support may be needed to continue the work later.

Similar organisations do not need a full technical description of your project management process. They may need to know what you are testing, what early lessons could be useful to them, and how they can give feedback, try out a tool or join a future exchange.

Societal level

Policymakers do not need a full report on all project activities. They may need to know what early lessons are emerging from practice, why these lessons matter for current education or youth priorities, how these insights align with or support their own policy agendas, and what kind of support, guidance or follow-up could help more stakeholders use or build on the learning.

Planning

The following actions may be useful:

Individual level

- **Ask participants to reflect during or after activities**. Short reflections help participants become aware of what they are learning and help you understand what they found meaningful or useful. Example: participants can keep a simple online diary during the activity, using a tool such as Padlet, where they write down what they learned, what surprised them, and what they may do differently.
- **Collect short stories or learning snapshots**. These show what is changing for participants, not only what activities took place. They can also show what participants have understood and how they explain it in their own words. Example: Create a learning wall where participants post one insight, question or useful method after each project activity.
- **Use quotes from participants, staff or volunteers**. Quotes make the learning concrete, personal and credible. They can also show which parts of the project message stakeholders connect with most.
- **Record short video or audio reflections**. These help people explain in their own words what they learned, what changed for them, or what they want to do differently. They can also give people an opportunity to share the learning with others.
- **Share focused internal updates with colleagues**. These help share useful learning inside the organisation while the project is still active. Notice whether colleagues ask questions, reuse an idea, contact a participant, or ask how they can get involved. Example: Create a "try this" corner where staff share one project method colleagues can test in their own work.

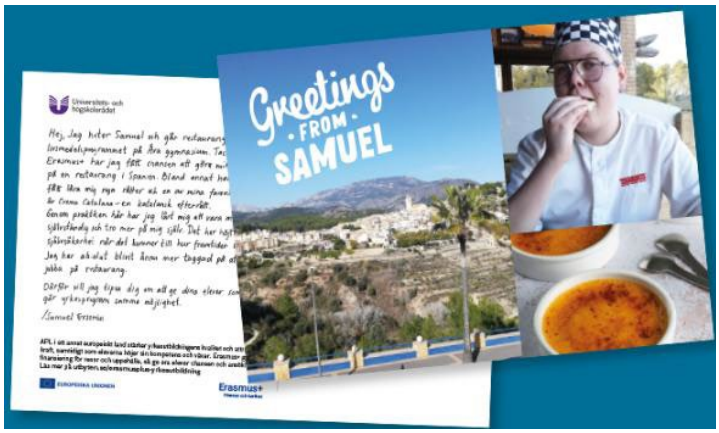
Organisational level

- **Create a small "try it yourself" moment.** Instead of only presenting what the project is developing, invite colleagues, partners or similar organisations to experience it. Example, organise a 20-minute mini-lab where they test one activity from your toolkit, use one question from your checklist, or work through one realistic case with your new method. Ask them afterwards: "Could this work in your organisation? What would you adapt?"
- **Share short internal updates with managers or decision-makers.** Focus on what useful outputs and early results are emerging from the project, why they matter to the organisation, and what support may be needed later. Note what questions, decisions or offers of support follow from these internal updates.
- **Capture learning after key activities.** Do not only record what happened. Note what the organisation learned, what worked well, what was difficult, and what may need to change.
- **Organise short internal sharing moments.** Invite colleagues to hear what is being tested, try out a new tool or method, and discuss how it could be useful in their own work.
- **Use partner reflection moments to compare learning.** Ask partners what they are noticing in their own contexts, what they are adapting, and what others could learn from their experience.

- **Share draft tools, methods or products for feedback.** This helps to make the outputs more practical and increases the chance that others will use them later. Track what stakeholders find useful, unclear or worth adapting.
- **Communicate early lessons externally.** Share a short example, article or message with similar organisations, showing what you are testing, what you are learning, and how they can give feedback, try something out or join an exchange. Notice whether these organisations ask for more information, offer feedback or suggest collaboration.

Societal level

- **Create moments for dialogue with external stakeholders.** Invite parents, companies, community groups or local stakeholders to respond to emerging lessons, questions or tools. Example: organise a small "community listening circle" where stakeholders discuss one practical question from the project.



- **Use simple briefing notes for policymakers.** Focus on one issue, one early lesson from practice, and one reason why it may be relevant for policy or support measures.

  Example: You could create a "one-page policy postcard" with one story, one insight and one question for policymakers.

- **Invite companies or community stakeholders to test one small idea.** For example, ask an employer to comment on a skills checklist, host a short learning visit, or give learners feedback on a real-life task.
- **Share practical messages through channels stakeholders already use.** This could be a school newsletter, parent meeting, local network, employer platform, municipality update or community event. Make the message easy to share and discuss, for example by adding one clear question people can discuss at home, at work or in their network.
- **Collect questions and reactions from external stakeholders.** Use these to improve your messages and understand what stakeholders outside the project need before they can support or use the learning. Example: create a "question wall" at an event where parents, employers or community members can post questions they still have.

Some general tips:

Think about privacy	When communicating about your project and its contribution to impact, make sure you respect people's privacy and applicable data-protection rules. This is particularly important when using names, photographs, videos, testimonials or other personal information. Check that you have an appropriate basis for using and sharing this information and, where required, obtain informed consent. For more information, visit Erasmus+ Programme Guide, chapter 'Other important provisions / Data protection'.
Be inclusive	For exploring how you can make your communication messages inclusive and thus more effective, visit Phase 1 - What communication action is useful at this moment in the project cycle?
Impact toolkit	For **examples of micro follow-up surveys**, have a look at: the Impact toolkit, chapter 'Stage 2.1 – Monitor Impact'.

When stakeholders resist change

Not every decision-maker or policymaker will immediately support, adopt or act on your project results. Resistance does not always mean that they disagree with the project. They may have other priorities, lack time or resources, question whether the materials produced by the project will work in their context, or be concerned about the risks and consequences of change.

Communication for impact starts by understanding what is behind the resistance. Listen to stakeholders' concerns and consider what they need to take the next step.

Useful approaches include:

- **Ask questions before presenting solutions**: What concerns them? What would make the project outputs more relevant or practical?
- **Connect the project learning** to their existing priorities, responsibilities and challenges.
- Use **credible evidence and concrete examples**, but avoid overwhelming them with information.
- Propose **a manageable next step**, such as discussing, testing or adapting one element rather than adopting everything at once.
- **Keep the conversation open**. Change may require several conversations and support from more than one person.

The aim is not to convince everyone immediately, but to build understanding and trust, and show how the project is relevant in practice. This can help stakeholders consider taking the next step.

How will you know your communication is effective?

Opens, clicks, attendees and views can be useful metrics, but they do not tell you whether your communication is contributing to meaningful change.

Checking whether the right stakeholders are receiving and understanding your messages, does not mean that you need a complex communication evaluation system. You don't need to prove everything. During the project, simple signs can already help you understand whether your communication is reaching the right stakeholders and encouraging engagement or action.

Useful signs can include:

Individual level

- a stakeholder asks a more informed question after receiving your message;
- a colleague shares the project learning in a team meeting;
- a participant explains the learning to someone else;
- feedback shows that stakeholders understood the message differently than intended, so you can adjust your communication.

Organisational level

- a manager asks how the result could be used more widely;
- another organisation asks to test your tool or method;
- a partner adapts one of your ideas to their own context;
- feedback shows that stakeholders understood the message differently than intended, so you can adjust your communication.

Societal level

- a stakeholder asks a more informed question after receiving your message;
- a policymaker asks for evidence, examples or a follow-up conversation;
- feedback shows that stakeholders understood the message differently than intended, so you can adjust your communication.

You can make these signs more useful by deciding in advance **when you will look for them**. Build a few milestones or opportunities to review your communication into your communication plan, for example after an event, halfway through the project or before a major decision. You can also turn some signs into simple qualitative or quantitative indicators, see the link below to the Impact Handbook. This helps you assess your communication more systematically and adjust it when needed.

Remember the pathways of change? Linking these signs to the pathway can help you to see how communication may contribute to change:

- **Communication output**: 8 school leaders attend a webinar.
- **Early sign of change:** several attendees request the methodology.
- **Stronger sign**: three schools test the methodology.
- **Outcome:** two schools integrate it into their regular practice.

Be clear about what you know, what you see, and what you expect

You might say that we cannot prove this change at outcome level or impact level, which may be true. However, if you want to tell a credible story, you do not need to wait until everything can be proven. Be transparent about what your evidence allows you to claim.

OUTPUT	We KNOW

We have credible evidence that this change has happened.

OUTCOME	We have INDICATIONS

Qualitative, emerging or partial evidence suggests that change is happening.

IMPACT	We EXPECT

This change is part of our expected contribution.

If you want to know more about how to measure impact of your project, read up on it in:

Impact handbook	Chapter '3. Monitoring & Evaluation of Impact'

In summary

During the project, communication helps you notice, support and share the changes that are already beginning to happen. Look beyond activities and participation numbers to the early signs of meaningful change: what people are learning, trying, using or doing differently. Revisit your stakeholder analysis as the project develops, adapt messages to what matters to them, and invite feedback, dialogue and testing. Share what is useful, not everything you know. Use early evidence, stories and reactions to improve your communication and explore how the project may contribute to wider change.

Phase 3: After the project

What change do you want to support?

Your project has ended or is coming to an end. You may have final activities to report, a nice set of photos, participant numbers, evaluation forms, or final products to share. Great! But let's see if we can go a step further and think about what happens after the project.

Individual level

After the project, individual change should not simply stop. Stakeholders may have gained new knowledge, developed skills, changed attitudes, built confidence, or become more open to new perspectives. The question now is how they can continue to use and build on this learning.

Communication can help individuals recognise the value of what they have learned and see how they can continue to use it. It can also encourage them to share their experience with others, apply new skills in their work or studies, or inspire others to get involved in Erasmus+.

At this stage, the focus is no longer on early signs of change, but on supporting continued use, sharing and learning beyond the project.

Organisational level

After the project, organisational change may still be developing. A new method might be used by more colleagues. A checklist may be included in regular procedures. A training module may become part of staff induction. A lesson learned from the project may influence how future activities are designed. A similar organisation may decide to use your toolkit or contact you to explore collaboration.

Communication can help make this possible. It can show the added value of the project, explain what was learned, and make it easier for others to use the outputs. It can also help decision-makers understand why the outputs deserve continued attention, time or resources.

At this stage, the focus is no longer on developing or testing outputs, but on helping them become part of organisational practice, systems, routines or future work.

Societal level

Your project has ended, or is coming to an end. But change at societal level may still be developing. A local community may become more open to inclusion. Parents may better understand the value of international learning. Companies may see how they can support young people, learners or trainees. Policymakers may use project learning to inform future decisions, support measures or educational practices.

Communication can contribute to these developments. It can show why the project matters beyond the stakeholders who directly took part. It can turn project outputs into stories, evidence, examples or recommendations that are understandable and useful to stakeholders outside the project.

At this stage, the focus is not only on sharing what the project achieved. It is also about using communication to help the learning contribute to wider attitudes, conversations, decisions, practices or policies.

The following questions can help you clarify your Communication for Impact ambition. Discuss them with your colleagues, project partners or participants to gain different perspectives and ideas.

- What learning, skills, attitudes or ideas are worth continuing to use and share after the project?
- What stories or examples show how participants, staff or volunteers have changed, and how could these inspire others?
- Who else could benefit from this learning, and what would help participants share it?
- What project outputs, methods or lessons could become part of the organisation's regular work, procedures, training or decision-making?
- What organisational changes or support are needed for the outputs to be used more widely and consistently?
- Which similar organisations could use, adapt or build on the project's outputs, and what practical guidance would they need?
- What wider attitudes, conversations, practices or policy decisions could the project help influence, and what would make its learning credible to others?
- Which Erasmus+ priority does this learning connect to?

If you would like to go a bit deeper with defining your Impact ambition, have a look at:

Impact Handbook	Chapter '2.1 - Describe your dream/vision'
Impact toolkit	Chapter 'Stage 1 – Define your impact goal'

See how communication can help turn Erasmus+ activities into meaningful change — for individuals, organisations and society.

EXAM PLE 1 – Creative voices

The project	As part of KA1 mobility projects at ETIC in Portugal, students document and reflect on their Erasmus+ experience throughout their three-month internship abroad. The journals travel with them throughout the mobility, capturing their personal and professional journey as it unfolds. After returning home, students turn their experiences into a creative project. They are free to choose the format and approach, turning their journey into a story that can inspire others.

Why is this a good example of Communication for Impact?	The creative projects go beyond traditional reporting and give students an opportunity to share their experiences in their own way. They bring together the values of the student, ETIC and Erasmus+. Students have creative freedom and take ownership of their story. The final work also becomes part of their professional portfolio, which can support their future studies and careers. The projects can also contribute to wider change. New students can see real experiences from their peers and may feel more confident about applying for the programme. The journals and creative projects have become a peer-to-peer way to share experiences, build confidence and encourage others to take part.
What is the effect?	What started as a way to monitor and reflect on the mobility has grown into much more: a way for students to learn from their experiences, for ETIC to learn from the students, and for Erasmus+ to reach and inspire new audiences. The creative projects are now an important part of ETIC's communication and dissemination approach, putting students' own experiences and perspectives at the centre.
Link	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5uW9cR9Ppg + https://etic.pt/erasmus/

EXAMPLE 2 – Focus on the human side

The project	Ura Basket is a Finnish basketball club that used Erasmus+ Sport mobility opportunities to support wider organisational development. Through study visits to basketball organisations in Spain, France and Denmark, coaches and staff explored new approaches to coaching, club management and community building.
Why is this a good example of Communication for Impact?	Ura Basket did not see the Erasmus+ project as only an international experience for the people who travelled. The club was already facing challenges: its administrative systems no longer matched its growth, and it wanted to improve the way it supported coaches and players. The mobility visits became a way to bring back new ideas and share them within the organisation and beyond. In a podcast series, they shared lessons from the project, focusing on the human side of their experiences and challenging themselves to be 'anything but boring'.
What is the effect?	The project contributed to concrete organisational change. Coaches gained new perspectives and skills, new ideas were introduced, and international partnerships continued beyond the mobility visits. Communicating these developments also helped Ura Basket strengthen its position as a trusted organisation in the local community. This can provide a stronger foundation for engaging with local decision-makers and advocating for better conditions for sports clubs and volunteers in Kaarina.
Link	https://www.oph.fi/fi/uutiset/2026/toinen-perhe-koriskentalla-koripalloseura-ura-basket-haki-euroopasta-evaat-uuteen Podcast: https://soundcloud.com/ura-basket

EXAMPLE 3 – Visible social change

The project	The Primary School of Kouloura in Greece used its Erasmus+ project to develop teachers' and students' skills through European mobilities and turn this learning into a community initiative. The "More than Bus Stops...Life Attitudes" project turned local bus stops into shared public spaces promoting inclusion, environmental awareness, creativity and active citizenship.
Why is this a good example of Communication for Impact?	The school used communication not only to promote the final result, but also as a way to build support and encourage involvement throughout the process. From the beginning, the school shared its ideas, plans and ambitions with students, parents, residents, local authorities, artists and educational partners. Through meetings, presentations, local media, social media and dialogue, communication helped build trust and encouraged others to contribute. Students were actively involved in shaping the messages and designs, while external partners became co-creators rather than simply supporters. In this way, communication became a process of listening, collaboration and shared ownership.
What is the effect?	The project contributed to change beyond the participating students and teachers. The community became involved in improving and valuing public space, and the bus stops became visible reminders of shared values such as inclusion, sustainability and participation. The initiative strengthened partnerships between the school, local organisations and authorities, and inspired further actions in the wider community. It shows how communication during a project can help turn Erasmus+ learning into lasting social change.
Link	Primary School of Kouloura: https://faretra.info/2025/05/30/dimotiko-scholeio-koulouras-staseis-zois-giorti-chromaton-from-rock-to-blues-deftera-2-iouniou/ Podcast: https://www.iky.gr/erasmus-pos-borei-na-allaxei-ena-scholeio/

Who needs to act, use, support or share?

After the project, communication for impact is not only about deciding who should receive information. It is about identifying the stakeholders who can help the project's learning and outputs contribute to further change. These impact stakeholders may use the outputs themselves, share them with others, integrate them into regular practice, adapt them to a new context, or use them to influence wider conversations and decisions.

It is useful to think about the different roles stakeholders can play after the project.

Individual level

Who?	Possible role after the project
Stakeholders who directly took part in the project	They have experienced the learning themselves and can help make the change visible through their stories, examples and reflections.
Stakeholders who can apply the learning in their daily work, study or community	They can help the learning continue by using a method, tool, product, idea or approach developed by the project.
Stakeholders who can influence their peers	They can help share the learning with others because people may relate more easily to the experiences of their peers
Stakeholders who were not involved, but could benefit from the learning	They can become new users, learners or supporters when the project outputs are shared in a way that is relevant to them.

Organisational level

Who?	Possible role after the project
Internal decision makers	They can support continued use of the project outputs by giving time, space, resources or approval. This may include boards, directors, senior managers or coordinators.
Managers or team leaders	They can help turn project outputs into regular practice, for example by including a tool, method or lesson in team routines, planning, training or quality processes.
Colleagues who can use the outputs in their work	They can apply the project learning in daily practice, adapt it to their context, and give feedback on what helps or what needs adjustment.
Colleagues responsible for learning, quality, communication or strategy	They can help keep the outputs visible and useful after the project, for example by including them in staff induction, internal knowledge platforms, future project design or organisational learning processes.
Similar organisations	They can use, adapt or share the project outputs in their own organisation, especially if they face similar challenges or work with similar target groups.
Networks, platforms or umbrella organisations	They can help share the outputs more widely by sharing them with a wider group of organisations or by creating space for exchange and learning.

Societal level

Who?	Possible role after the project
Parents and families	They can help build support around learners, young people or participants, especially when the project touches on topics such as inclusion, participation, mobility, sustainability or wellbeing.
Local community members or community groups	They can help make the project learning visible and meaningful in the local context, for example by joining conversations, supporting activities or changing how they understand the issue.
Companies and employers	They can use project learning to better support learners, trainees, young people or future employees, for example through placements, mentoring, inclusive practices or sustainability choices.
Local services or public organisations	They can connect the project learning to wider support systems, such as youth work, education, employment, social support, culture, sport or community development.
Policymakers at local, regional or national level	They can use project learning, stories or recommendations to inform decisions, support measures, educational policies or future programmes.
Media, networks or public platforms	They can help the learning reach a wider audience and create opportunities for public discussion, visibility or exchange.

What do they need to know, feel or do?

Keep your communication goal in mind. Sharing information about your project is only the first step. You can have:

- excellent implementation;
- high participation;
- positive feedback scores;

…and your stakeholders may still not know whether meaningful change has happened.

Your project will have a variety of results. For a clear definition of the results, have a look at:

Impact Handbook	Chapter '1 Understanding Impact'

By placing your results in a pathway, you can see more clearly where the change of your project becomes visible.

ACTIVITY **What we do**

"The project organises a dialogue session with young people and local policy makers."

OUTPUT **The products, services, or other direct results of the activities**

"Policymakers gain clearer insight into barriers young people face in participating in local decision-making."

OUTCOME **Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes or behaviour that the project contributes to**

"Policymakers involve young people more actively when developing local youth policies."

IMPACT **The broader, longer-term change to which the project contributes**

"Local decision-making becomes more inclusive and better reflects young people's needs and perspectives."

At this stage of the project cycle, look beyond what was delivered and ask what changed afterwards. It is useful to report that the project organised a dialogue with young people and local policymakers, but the more important story is whether that dialogue influenced what happened next. Did policymakers use the insights? Were young people involved more actively in a later consultation or decision-making process? This will make your story stronger.

Discover your change

At this stage of the project cycle, have a look at the outputs of your project, and ask: **SO WHAT?** Then ask it again. And again. This question helps you look beyond what the project did and think about what changed afterwards.

FOOD for THOUGHT

The examples below demonstrate how different communication approaches can better engage specific audiences.

Creative communication idea

Imagine an Erasmus+ project in which pupils travelled by bike as part of a green mobility activity. The project is now over. You want to share what they learned with other pupils, parents and staff.

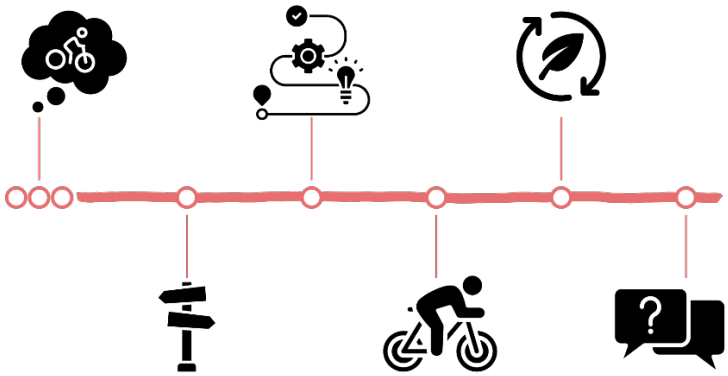
Option A:
The pupils completed a green mobility activity by cycling across borders as part of their Erasmus+ project. They learned about sustainability, transport, teamwork and intercultural exchange.

Option B:
Create a visual **"Journey Map"** called: *What we learned on the road*

The map shows the cycling route and includes short stops along the way:

- Before leaving: "I thought travelling by bike would be too difficult."
- After the first day: "I realised that the journey itself can be part of the learning."
- Crossing the border: "We noticed that cycling habits and road safety rules are different in each country."
- Meeting our partner school: "We discussed how young people can make more sustainable choices."
- Back home: "I now see cycling as a real option for short journeys, not only as a sport."
- Our challenge to you: "Could you replace one short car journey this week by cycling, walking or public transport?"

The **Journey Map** can be shared as a poster in the school, a carousel on social media, or a short presentation led by the pupils themselves.



Do you see the difference?
Option A tells stakeholders that the activity took place. It is clear, but it mainly describes the project. Option B helps stakeholders understand what participants learned and how their thinking changed . It also invites others to connect the learning to their own choices.
After the project, look for communication ideas that make the learning easy to recognise, remember and use. A good message does not just say: "This is what we did." It also helps stakeholders see: "This is what changed, and this is how it could matter to me too."

Short internal presentation

Option A:

Our Erasmus+ project has received the Erasmus+ "Good Practice" label. The project was recognised for its contribution to teaching excellence in VET education. The project results are available on our website.

Option B:

Create a short exchange session. It can be organised during a faculty meeting, teaching and learning day, staff development session or peer exchange between higher education institutions. It can be called:
Three ideas that we can use in our teaching practice
The session includes:

- one short explanation of why the project was recognised as a good practice;
- three practical ideas or resources from the project that teachers can use or adapt;
- one example of how a teaching team could use these ideas in course design, student support or peer learning;
- one discussion question: "Which of these ideas could strengthen our own teaching practice?"
- one concrete next step: "Choose one idea to test in your next course or teaching team meeting."

Do you see the difference?
Option A communicates recognition. This is useful, but it mainly says that the project was successful. Option B uses the recognition as a starting point for organisational learning. It helps teachers, academic managers or similar institutions see what they can actually do with the project outputs.
After the project, recognition can open doors. But communication for impact starts when you use that recognition to encourage others to engage with the project results: What can others learn from this? What can they try? What could become part of regular teaching practice?

From project story to public conversation

Imagine an Erasmus+ project that helped young people with fewer opportunities take part in international learning activities. The project has ended. You want to communicate the outputs to parents, local community members and local policymakers.

Option A:

Our Erasmus+ project supported young people with fewer opportunities to take part in international learning activities. Participants developed confidence, intercultural skills and new perspectives. The project contributed to inclusion and active participation.

Option B:

Create a short public story series called:
What changed when young people crossed borders
The story series can be shared through a community event, school newsletter, local youth platform, municipal meeting, social media carousel or short video.
The series includes three short stories:

- one young person explaining what made them hesitate before joining;
- one parent explaining what helped them trust the process;
- one youth worker explaining what support made participation possible;
- one simple message for the wider community: “International learning is not only for the most confident young people. With the right support, more young people can benefit.”
- one invitation for local stakeholders: “What can we do locally to make these opportunities easier to access?”

Do you see the difference?
Option A tells stakeholders that the project supported inclusion. It is clear, but it mainly describes the project results. Option B helps stakeholders understand what inclusion means in practice: hesitation, trust, support and access. It also opens a wider conversation about what parents, youth workers, communities or local decision-makers can do differently.

Map your objectives

The table below can help you go a step further and move beyond “sharing final outputs”. The examples are there for inspiration.

Stakeholder	Know	Feel	Do
Stakeholders who were not involved, but could benefit from the learning	What the project achieved and how the learning could be relevant for them.	Curious, included and able to see a connection with their own life, work, studies or community.	Read, listen, attend, try out, share, or join a follow-up activity or future Erasmus+ opportunity.
Networks, platforms or umbrella organisations	What outputs could be useful for a wider group of organisations.	Convinced that the learning is worth sharing more broadly.	Share the outputs, host an exchange or connect organisations around the learning.
Media	What is new, relevant or human about the project learning.	Interested in sharing a story that matters to a wider audience.	Share the story, invite discussion, or connect the project learning to a wider public topic.

What communication action is useful at this moment in the project cycle?

You now know who you would like to reach and why you want to reach them. Choosing how you will reach them is the next step.

After the project, communication is not only about announcing that the project has ended. It is about helping stakeholders find, understand, use and share what the project has produced or learned.

You can explore several options in:

> **Communication Guideline** Chapter 'Share your project results'

Planning

Individual level

- **Use your evidence collected for your reporting.** Draw on focus groups, interviews or other reporting tools to identify stories and examples of change that can be used in your communication.
- **Ask participants to share what they still use.** A few weeks or months after the project, ask what they have continued to apply. Use these examples in short stories, videos, presentations or social media posts.
- **Invite peer-to-peer sharing.** Ask participants to explain or demonstrate what they learned to others, for example through a Journey Map, a short presentation or a practical demonstration.
- **Create a "try it yourself" moment.** Invite people who were not directly involved to experience one useful result from the project.
- **Link the project to future opportunities.** Show how participants and other interested stakeholders can stay involved through follow-up activities, peer exchanges, communities of practice or new Erasmus+ opportunities.

Organisational level

- **Organise a short internal session** on how to use the outputs. Explore with managers, team leaders and colleagues where the results could fit into existing routines, training, procedures or planning.
- **Create a simple support package**. Make it easy for others to use the outputs by providing, for example, a short introduction, practical example, checklist, facilitator note or step-by-step guide.
- **Connect the results to organisational priorities**. Show how they support existing goals such as inclusion, sustainability, digital transition, participation or internationalisation.
- **Plan how the results will be used** inside your organisation. Make sure the results move beyond the project team to colleagues who can continue to use them in their regular work.
- **Invite similar organisations to try one result**. Ask them to use or adapt one tool, activity or method and learn from their experience.

Societal level

- **Turn outputs into messages for specific external groups**. Adapt the message so parents, companies, communities or policymakers can quickly understand why the learning matters to them.
- **Organise a local conversation**. Bring relevant stakeholders together to discuss one practical question arising from the project.
- **Prepare a short learning note** for policymakers or public organisations. Summarise the issue, what the project learned, key evidence and what could improve practice or policy.
- **Invite companies or local organisations to act on one lesson**. Give stakeholders a concrete way to respond to what the project has learned.
- **Connect the project learning to existing public events and networks**. Use relevant events, meetings, sector platforms or networks to bring the learning into wider conversations.

For examples of micro follow-up surveys and other ways of collecting vidence, have a look at:

Impact toolkit	Chapter 'Stage 2.1 – Monitor Impact' Or 'Phase 4: Report Impact'

Across all levels: make your results easy to understand and use, share lessons as well as successes, and stay connected with stakeholders who can help share the learning more widely. Keep the basic evidence and communication materials accessible after the project ends — contact lists, key stories, photos with permissions, outcome data and links to outputs.

When stakeholders resist change

Not every decision-maker or policymaker will immediately support, adopt or act on your project outputs. Resistance does not always mean that they disagree with the project. They may have other priorities, lack time or resources, question whether the materials produced by the project will work in their context, or be concerned about the risks and consequences of change.

Communication for impact starts by understanding what is behind the resistance. Listen to stakeholders' concerns and consider what they need to take the next step.

Useful approaches include:

- **Ask questions before presenting solutions**: What concerns them? What would make the result more relevant or realistic?
- **Connect the project learning** to their existing priorities, responsibilities and challenges.
- Use **credible evidence and concrete examples**, but avoid overwhelming them with information.
- Propose **a manageable next step**, such as discussing, testing or adapting one element rather than adopting everything at once.
- **Keep the conversation open**. Change may require several conversations and support from more than one person.

You don't need to convince everyone immediately, but try to build trust and understanding, and show how the project is relevant in practice. This can help stakeholders consider taking the next step.

How will you know your communication is effective?

Opens, clicks, attendees and views: these metrics can be useful, but they do not tell you whether your communication is contributing to meaningful change.

Checking whether the right stakeholders are receiving, understanding, using and sharing your messages, does not mean that you need a complex communication evaluation system. You don't need to prove everything. After the project, simple signs can already help you understand whether your communication is encouraging stakeholders to use, share and build on the project's learning and outputs.

Useful signs can include:

Individual level

- a participant shares what they learned with classmates, colleagues, friends or family;
- someone uses a project tool, activity, checklist, story or method after the project has ended;
- stakeholders ask where they can find the project product or how they can use it;
- a learner, staff member or volunteer says they have continued to apply something from the project;
- a project story is shared by stakeholders outside the original project group;
- someone joins a follow-up activity or asks about future Erasmus+ opportunities.

Organisational level

- a manager, coordinator or decision maker asks how the materials produced by the project could be used in regular work;
- a team discusses the project outputs in a meeting, planning session or learning activity;
- colleagues use or adapt a project tool, method, activity, checklist or case study;
- a project result is included in staff training, induction, quality processes, procedures or future project design;
- a similar organisation downloads, requests, shares or adapts your project product;
- a network or umbrella organisation shares your outputs with its members;
- an organisation contacts you to ask for an exchange, presentation, collaboration or follow-up activity.

Societal level

- parents, companies, community members or public organisations ask informed questions about the project learning;
- a local stakeholder invites the project team to present or discuss the outputs;
- a company, public organisation or community group offers support, a connection, a placement, mentoring or another follow-up action;
- a policymaker refers to the project learning in a meeting, note, discussion or decision-making process;
- a project recommendation is included in a local plan, support measure, programme discussion or funding conversation;
- media, networks or public platforms share the project story with a wider audience.

You can make these signs more useful by deciding in advance **when you will look for them**. Build a few milestones or opportunities to review your communication into your communication plan, for example after an event, halfway through the project or before a major decision. You can also turn some signs into simple qualitative or quantitative indicators, see the link below to the Impact Handbook. This helps you assess communication more systematically and adjust it when needed.

Remember the pathway of change? Linking these signs to the pathway helps you see how communication may contribute to change:

- **Communication output:** The school shares evidence and student experiences from its mobility project with local education networks and municipal stakeholders.
- **Early sign of change:** Other schools and local decision-makers show interest and ask for more information about the approach.
- **Stronger sign:** Several schools start discussing or adapting similar mobility and inclusion practices.
- **Outcome:** Local education stakeholders give greater priority to inclusive international mobility in their policies, partnerships or funding decisions.

Be clear about what you know, what you see, and what you expect

You might say that we cannot prove that this change has happened at outcome or impact level. That may be true. However, if you want to tell a credible story, you do not need to wait until everything can be proven. Be transparent about what your evidence allows you to claim.

OUTPUT	We KNOW
We have credible evidence that this change has happened.	

OUTCOME	We have INDICATIONS
Qualitative, emerging or partial evidence suggests that change is happening.	

IMPACT	We EXPECT
This change is part of our expected contribution.	

If you want to know more about how to measure impact of your project, read up on it in:

Impact handbook	Chapter '3. Monitoring & Evaluation of Impact'

How long should you continue communicating?

Some of the most meaningful changes may only become visible months or even years after the project has formally ended. A new practice may take time to become embedded, another organisation may adopt your approach later, or your project experience may gradually influence wider decisions or policy.

You will not always be able to plan or budget for communication over such a long period. But follow-up becomes much easier if, during the project, you have already communicated clearly about the change you hoped to contribute to. Stakeholders then know what to look for, and it becomes more natural to share later developments when they occur.

This does not mean continuing a full communication campaign indefinitely. It may simply mean keeping relevant networks informed, sharing an important follow-up result when it emerges, or returning to the story when there is new evidence of change.

In summary

After the project, communication helps support continued use, sharing and adaptation of what the project produced and learned. Look beyond final activities and outputs to what has changed afterwards: what people still use, what organisations embed in their regular work, and what wider conversations, practices or policies may be influenced. Make results practical and easy to use, stay connected with relevant stakeholders, and keep sharing new evidence when meaningful change becomes visible. Communication does not need to continue forever, but it can help the project's learning and results continue to contribute to wider change long after it ends.

Annex 1- Communication for Impact Canvas

1 THE CHANGE What meaningful change do we want to contribute to? At individual, organisational and/or societal level?

2 CONTRIBUTION TO PRIORITY

- inclusion and diversity
- digital transformation
- environment and fight against climate change
- participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement

3 THE STAKEHOLDERS Who can use, support, share, adapt or influence this change?

4 THE CHANGE PATHWAY From activity-output-outcome-impact? Keep asking: *So what*?

5 THE MESSAGE & APPROACH What message, relationship, format and channel fit best?

6 TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION How will we listen, involve and respond?

7 THE SIGNS How will we know our communication is having an effect?

Annex 2 – Glossary

This glossary explains the key words used in this guide. It also includes common communication terms that you may find in other guides, tools and resources. Learning these words will help you better understand the extra information and materials mentioned in this guide.

PROJECT	
Project cycle	**Sequence of stages** a project moves through, from the first idea and preparation, through implementation and monitoring, to completion, evaluation and follow-up. In this guide, we use a simplified project cycle with three phases: **before, during and after**. This makes it easier for both KA1 and KA2 project teams to recognise where they are in the project cycle.
Before phase	In a typical Erasmus+ project, the **before** phase includes, for example: • **Planning:** deciding what is needed, setting goals, defining the project and learning outcomes, choosing activities, and making a timeline. • **Preparation:** organising activities, creating a work plan, making practical arrangements, confirming who will take part, and agreeing on roles and tasks with project partners.
During phase	In a typical Erasmus+ project, the **during** phase includes carrying out project activities, engaging stakeholders, collecting learning and feedback, and sharing emerging results.
After phase	In a typical Erasmus+ project, the **after** phase begins when the project is coming to an end or has ended. It includes evaluating the project's overall achievements and contribution to impact, and sharing and using its learning and results.
IMPACT	
Impact	**Desired impact (goal, overall objective, general objective):** The long-term change your project aims to contribute to for people, organisations or society. Your project can contribute to this change, but it cannot achieve it on its own. Examples include more active citizens, better job opportunities, stronger communities or changes in policies. These long-term changes are called impact.
Outcome	**Expected impact** (**specific objective, project purpose, strategic objective):** A change in what people think, feel or do that your project contributes to. For example, students work together more, teachers use new skills, or schools start using new digital tools. Outcomes can include changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes or behaviour.
Output	**Deliverable, milestone (results, intermediate results):** products, services or other direct results of a project, such as training materials or digital tools.
Input	Resources used to carry out the project, such as time, money, staff, knowledge and materials.

Results	Erasmus+ projects can lead to a variety of results: **outputs** and **outcomes** that contribute to longer-term **impact**.
Stakeholders	A person or organisation that is interested in or affected by your project.
COMMUNICATION	
Channels	**Places or platforms:** ways to share your message, such as email, newspapers or meetings
Communication	A **two-way process** of sharing information and exchanging ideas, data and messages through appropriate channels to reach specific target audiences.
Dissemination	**Sharing project outputs (knowledge sharing, promoting results):** Sharing your project outputs and making them available for others to use. This includes reaching people who can benefit from your work, such as experts or professionals in your field. Outputs can be an e-book, guide or curriculum.
Goal	**Objective:** What you want to achieve with your communication. Your communication objectives should guide your future communication activities. Examples include raising awareness, promoting societal value or influencing policies
Indicators	A **way to measure:** how well your communication is working. For example, website clicks, social media statistics, or feedback from a survey. These indicators help you track your progress and see what works well.
Key message	**Main message (key idea, hook):** The most important thing you want to say. It should catch your audience's attention and be easy to remember.
Means	The tools and formats used to communicate a message, such as email, videos, websites, newsletters, social media posts or meetings.
Target audience	**Target group (specific group):** the specific people you want to reach with your communication.