

**«INNOVATIVE BUSINESS INFORMATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YOUNG
ENTREPRENEURS IN HERBS PRODUCTION AND ECO-TOURISM»**

**Communication activities for information and publicity - strategy,
plan, website developed**

**Responsible beneficiary:
Cluster Varna Business Consult**

**Project website:
<https://floreo-gr-bg.eu/>**

The Project is co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and by national funds of the countries participating in the Cooperation Programme Interreg V-A "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020"

This strategy has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of the strategy are the sole responsibility of the project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union, the participating countries, the Managing Authority and the Joint Secretariat.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY



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General information

Project name **Innovative Business Information and Support Services for Young Entrepreneurs in Herbs Production and Eco-Tourism**

Reference number	62 77
Subsidy contract:	B6.3a.19/13.04.2021
Consortium composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lead beneficiary: ZDRAVETZ ASSOCIATION /BULGARIA/ ➤ Beneficiary 2: FEDERATION OF TRADE PRODUCTIVITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP OF CENTRAL - EASTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE /GREECE/ ➤ Beneficiary 3: CLUSTER VARNA BUSINESS CONSULT /BULGARIA/
Total project budget	507 553,00 Euro
Start date	1.4.2021
End date	30.03.2023
Priority Axis	1. A Competitive and Innovative Cross-Border Area
Thematic Objective	03 - Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium sized enterprises, the agricultural sector (for the EAFRD) and the fisheries and aquaculture sector (for the EMFF)
Investment Priority	3a. Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, including through business incubators
Specific Objective	1.To Improve entrepreneurship SME support systems

Overall project objectives:

- To raise motivation, build knowledge and skills of entrepreneurs to innovate, create and take risks in starting business
- To facilitate the business of existing SMEs in the cross-border region.

Project activities

Accomplishing all project activities will lead to creation of new regional cross-border capacities to stimulate the self-employment and private business of young SMEs – both for brand new ventures and for existing ones. Project activities are divided in two phases:

I. The objective of the first phase is to review and evaluate existing policies for entrepreneurial support in the cross-border region. It includes the following activities:

1. Interviewing local stakeholders and future FLOREO SME trainees
2. Organising 2 local meetings with to-be-entrepreneurs from both herb production and tourism
3. Organising 2 study visits focusing on good practice case studies are planned
4. Development of 5 simulation models with training programs
5. Development of one portfolio of 12 skilled trainers/mentors
6. Development of one business tutorial for start-ups in the herbs production industry and ecotourism
7. Organising one international conference with participation of experts of previous cooperation projects, which have treated the same or related issues

II. The objective of the Second phase is to boost entrepreneurs' culture and support CB region entrepreneurs, as well as strengthen business survival rates as a whole. It includes the following activities:

1. Implementing an innovative algorithm for delivering the entrepreneurial education based on simulation models. It encompasses three components – CLASSROOM, ECO LAB and SCENE
2. Establishment of Business Information and Support Center to serve as an appropriate business infrastructure and information center
3. Rehabilitation of HERBS' ALLEY to be used as infrastructure for practicing new skills by FLOREO herbs and ecotourism entrepreneurs
4. Training of 35 entrepreneurs

5. Organising one final international conference
6. FLOREO website development

Communication strategy overview

This document represents a strategic tool, which contributes to achieving the objectives of the project *Innovative Business Information and Support Services for Young Entrepreneurs in Herbs Production and Eco-Tourism* for the period of 1.4.2021- 30.03.2023. The Communication strategy will ensure that the efforts of the project partners in tackling the issues identified by them will be properly disseminated and will reach the stakeholders and the wide audience. The document complies with the recommendations and requirements, defined in the Information and publicity guidebook for project beneficiaries under the Interreg V-A "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020" Cooperation Programme.

The communication strategy is the basis of the overall communication management of the FLOREO project and will serve as a roadmap for reaching the target groups in the most appropriate way. It will provide thorough analysis on the awareness rising and dissemination objectives, target groups, activities planned and tools, outlined in the communication strategy in the Application form.

Moreover, the document will serve as guidelines to all project team members during the preparation and implementation of all communication and dissemination activities under the project. On the other hand, it will support the project implementation process, ensuring that all project partners work according to the pre-set timesheets and communicate effectively in order to achieve the FLOREO objectives.

Objectives

The communication strategy`s objectives will ensure that external stakeholders are well informed about the progress, outcomes and impacts of the FLOREO project.

- To ensure timely, targeted and coordinated project communication activities throughout the whole project cycle
- To raise awareness and disseminate project results to the population in the cross-border region of both countries with special emphasis on the project target groups

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- To acknowledge the role and support provided by the Interreg V-A "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020" Cooperation Programme
- To ensure that the population of the region is aware of the role of the project partners in implementing the project activities and in promoting entrepreneurship.

Target groups

The communication activities will address two main target groups, and the general public. For the two specific target groups, objective is twofold: to inform and to engage. For each group, adequate tools & indicators for achievement are defined. For this reason, the strategy is developed through an informative and awareness raising process.

Communication activities are developed at a scale that covers the regional/ national /EU level (regional/ national media/ website).

1. **Starting entrepreneurs in herb production and tourism** at local, regional, cross-border level represent the main target group addressed. Message concerns activities put in place within the project and benefits of the cross-border cooperation process, on one hand and risks and opportunities offered by the management of fragile rural entrepreneurial ecosystem, on the other hand.
2. **Economic operators in the field of herb production and ecotourism** will be softly reached during the 1st year and more intensely during 2nd, when the message of *new opened opportunities* after launching the business information and support center is shared, for helping the implementation phase and dissemination & sustainability of results.
3. **Civil Society and general public** will to be reached through the media which will always be invited at the project events.

Key message

Key message to the main target group – the starting entrepreneurs in herb production and tourism at local, regional, cross-border level will be:



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IT'S EASIER THAN YOU THINK!

A mix of communication tools will be used to inform that in the business and information center FLOREO all the help needed is available for the start-ups.

Communication Tools

The mix of communication tools to implement this strategy takes into account the project`s objectives in order to be fully relevant. It strictly follows the requirements of the communication documents under the Interreg V-A "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020" Cooperation Programme. A communication plan with milestones is presented as Annex A to this strategy.

Media relations

The communication with and via the mass media represents essential tool for reaching the general public. In this relation, each partner shall establish contacts with relevant local, regional and national media – TV, radio, written, online. In this respect, contact database of relevant contact persons/journalists shall be developed containing e-mails and telephone numbers. The lists shall be used to send information about the project`s development and planned forthcoming activities. Every partner is obliged to prepare media invitation before the events and disseminate it in order to ensure media coverage of the event. After each event information to media shall be spread as well in order to ensure maximum dissemination of the project results and messages. Media monitoring shall be prepared after that for reporting purposes.

The Project Beneficiaries must inform in advance both the Communication Officer and the Project Officer of the Programme for any of the aforementioned activities.

Website development

Main part of the publicity measures will take place online due to COVID-19 reasons. This will be achieved through the project website, which has already been launched - <https://floreo-gr-bg.eu/>. The website is in English, Bulgarian and Greek. It will be offered as a media for internet presentation of different herb producers and tourism services providers. It will not only contain information about the project and its progress, but will freely provide the open educational resources, which will be

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developed under the activities. It will also ensure sustainability of the project. In this respect, the partners will publish and update information in the next 2 years after finishing the project at their own expense.

Logo and online banners

The project`s logo has been developed in line with all requirements set in the Information and Publicity Guidebook.

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Printed materials

Printed materials will be elaborated only for the international conferences. Project leaflets are envisaged, containing important information and main milestones of FLOREO project. There will be 100 leaflets elaborated for each conference.

Rest of the promotional materials will be elaborated for digital use – different types of banners on the website and for the social media account.

Promotional materials

Construction sign will be elaborated according to the requirements of the Information and publicity Guidebook.

Social Media

From the social media, only FACEBOOK will be used.

The Communication manager will elaborate a FB page of the project where different news about the project progress, opinions and posts from participants will be available, project trainings and events will be promoted etc.

It will be a main tool for engaging the local community and to-be-entrepreneurs to enroll in the trainings during implementation. After the project end this FB page will remain active for the Innovative business information and support center FLOREO,



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where sustainable services for young entrepreneurs in herbs production and eco-tourism will be granted.

Events

Press-conference

A press conference will take place after the kick off meeting for launching the themes and challenges to the wide public.

Local dissemination events

Each partner will organise two local dissemination events (within the SCENE in the 3rd education module), whose scope will be partly informative and partially cross-border exchange oriented.

Interregional conferences

The objective of the conferences is to ensure communication activities at interregional level. Two conferences are planned:

- The first one will take place at the end of 1st year. It will promote the partial and final project results and will present the cross-border education programs among business support services and mentors. It will be organized with participation of experts of previous cooperation projects which have treated the same or similar issues.
- The second – high-level conference - will take place at the end of the project. It will underline the cooperation benefits and the EU support while gathering in one place policy makers, public organizations and economic actors, including herb production and ecotourism sector discuss about the sustainable business support and information services and the entrepreneurial ecosystems as a driver for regional development and competitiveness. At this conference project related evidences from existing best EU practices will be discussed and promoted as well.

This conference will inform the public about the results achieved during the Project implementation. This activity will include press release available in English, Greek and Bulgarian and audiovisual material.

Online events

Two online information events will be organised in each region aimed at updating about project progress and relevant news.

For all above mentioned events **press releases** will be elaborated and distributed among media directly, as well as through own information channels – FB and website.

Forums

The project envisages 7 forums for presenting project results to local authorities and representatives of local and regional GR-BG Economic development agencies, municipalities, business support organizations and other stakeholders from both countries. The events will take place online and in person - at the CLASSROOM and ECO LAB premises. The trained teams will present results of their work to trainers, project team and interested stakeholders (Labor Offices, Branch Associations, Employers, other SMEs).

FLOREO Guidelines

In this section general and detailed guidelines will be provided concerning FLOREO`s communication activities.

Visual identity

Project beneficiaries must always use the provided by the Lead beneficiary visual identity elements – logo, posters, presentations` templates and others without applying any kind of changes without prior notice and approval by the Communication manager.

Reference

Project partners must always include textual reference to the sources of financing in publication related to the project.

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Disclaimer

In FLOREO publications and official documentation partners must always include disclaimer. It should appear on all documents, publications, presentations, or other materials made available during events as well.

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- ***The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union, the participating countries and the Managing Authority.***

Official notifications

FLOREO partners must inform in advance (at least 10 days before the set date) both the Communication Officer and the Project Officer about any public event related to the Project's activities. If possible, staff members of the Joint Secretariat and/or the Managing Authority will participate to these events and offer promotion material (e.g. Programme banners or posters). The Communication Officer of the JS and the Managing Authority can be contacted for any open questions or doubts.

In addition, the Programme offers Project beneficiaries the opportunity to promote their project's activities, events and achievements through the Programme website as well, apart from their project website, in an attempt to achieve further dissemination. Thus, Project Beneficiaries are encouraged to send to the JS Communication Officer short articles about their projects in English in order to be published on the Programme website. Pictures and/or videos from these activities may be attached to the articles, always in compliance with the GDPR.

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Project partners` websites

All partners should inform about the project on their websites. In addition, they are recommended to include information about the project on their own websites. The information has to include:

- Short description of project, incl. incl. aims and results, financial support
- Link to the FLOREO project website.
- Periodical updates.

Event materials

Event materials such as posters, banners, roll-up, stands etc. should contain at least the following on all event materials:

- The Interreg project logo;
- The textual reference to the sources of financing;
- The link to the project website.

The location where the event is hosted must be marked with the logo for the duration of the event. The partners have to retain photos and videos (where applicable) or other evidence, which proves marking of events.

Press Releases/Publications/ Announcements

Press Releases, publications and announcements shall be developed in coordination with the Communication manager and disseminated after her approval. They shall contain disclaimer and textual reference to the sources of financing

Promotional items

Promotional items (such as T-shirts, caps, pen etc.) should be distributed when specified in the communication strategy of a project. The promotional items should be clearly identified with the Interreg project logo and slogan (in case of existence). On certain promotional items (e.g. pens, key-holders), where it is not possible to include all information, at least the EU flag should appear. Before taking any decision on the production of such items project beneficiaries will consult the project communication manager and she will contact the JS Communication Officer for receiving approval.

Marking objects

The project logo must be placed on an object financed from the Programme funds immediately after acquiring it. The marking of objects must remain legible and correct for at least five years after the last eligible date of the Project activities. Partners have to retain a sample copy of all information and publicity materials, advertisements and other similar objects to prove correct marking.

In case construction or other activities are carried out within the Project, the object must be marked with the logo immediately after starting the activities.

Means for marking objects

1. Sticker

The Project Beneficiaries are recommended to mark the objects financed from the "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020" Cooperation Programme funds with a sticker of the logo as follows:

- Small objects (office equipment, furniture items, smaller means of work etc) with a waterproof/ weatherproof sticker of approximately 50×20 mm;
- Larger objects (equipment etc.) with a waterproof/weatherproof sticker of approximately 120×50 mm.
- Vehicles with a special sticker covering at least 30% of the area where it will be put (i.e. door, window, etc.)

Stickers on the objects may not be used, in case there is an information sign in the same room as the object(s) financed from the Programme funds, concerning the co-financing of all objects/ material in the room in total. Additionally, stickers may not be used in case the logo has been placed on the object(s) during production. In this case the JS is to decide on the means of marking the object(s) or on minimum measures of marking an activity.

Stickers must remain legible and correct for at least five years after the last eligible date of the Project activities. In case stickers are damaged or wear out the Project Beneficiary must replace them. Please consult the Communication Officer of the Programme.

2. Information sign

For the facilities which will be rented and built and furnished under the FLOREO`s activities, an information sign with the logo will be placed in a visible location in

these facilities or in a place related to these. In case of the information sign, separate stickers do not have to be used to mark single objects.

Recommended size of the information sign – at least 200 X 150 cm.

In case of infrastructure or construction with public contribution below € 500.000,00 which is the case of FLOREO, installed information signs must remain legible and correct for at least five years after the last eligible date of the Project activities. Please consult the Communication Officer of the Programme.

Photos

Before and after pictures shall document the progress of FLOREO`s activities and results, this applies explicitly to the Establishment of Business Information and Support Center and to the Rehabilitation of HERBS` ALLEY. The pictures chosen should:

- be those which best illustrate the project
- contain, when possible, the project and programme logos in the background
- include a caption
- mention the name of the organization or person that owns the copyright alongside the picture
- comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The object must be marked with the logo immediately after starting the activities.

General guidelines for project deliverables

All project deliverables should be in English. In case a deliverable is produced in the official language of one of the participating countries, the existence of an English abstract is mandatory. All project deliverables should include the following:

- The project logo. The project logo should be bigger in size than any other logo (i.e. Project Beneficiaries` logos) that appears in the same page with it. In general, the EU flag, which is part of the Interreg project logo, should be bigger in size that any other emblem used in the same page with it.
- The textual reference to the sources of financing
- The disclaimer

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Gender equality and non-discrimination

Project partners must ensure that all project activities, including the dissemination and communication activities meet the objective of non-discrimination refers to the prohibition of any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation stated in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Examples of promoting accessible and inclusive communication at Project level can be found in the Information and publicity guidebook.

In addition, partners shall promote equality between men and women in all project activities and project management.

Reporting

The communication activities are an integral part of the project activities, hence reporting on them follows the same rules as the other project activities. For the communication and dissemination activities the partners should monitor the number and kind of target groups reached. The use of the communication tools and their role in reaching the communication objectives of the activities need to be duly

described and kept for reporting purposes, as well as for tracking the progress in reaching the communication indicators.

All deliverables produced in the framework of FLOREO should be kept free of all rights and be stored for at least 3 years after the closure of the project. All copies should be available for a period of 2 years after the contractual end of the project.

Partners must collect all the deliverables developed/produced, which will be made available for use and download on the project websites. The deliverables should be organised following the structure of the project's work plan in the Application Form.

More precisely:

- the shared folder should be named with the project acronym and its MIS code, example: FLOREO_MIS_0000



➤ each file should be named following the example:

1. Del. 1.2.3 - name
1 = S/N (Serial/Number)

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Del. = Deliverable

1. = number of the Work Package

2. = Project Beneficiary (i.e. PB2 in the AF)

3. = number of the deliverable

Name = name of the deliverable

Type of deliverables and format of submission:

- Reports, surveys, studies, educational material etc.: should be in English or with an English abstract attached in case it is in Bulgarian or Greek and should be saved in .pdf format
- Promotional material: should be in .pdf format and in all available languages produced. In case of gadgets and stationary pictures should be provided with them marked with the project logo or sticker.
- Equipment: pictures of the equipment installed and marked appropriately with the project logo or sticker should be provided.
- Events (seminars, info days, press releases etc.): a separate .pdf file should be prepared with the following: the invitation, the agenda, the announcements (press releases) published prior and after the retaliation of the event, pictures from the event (respecting the GDPR), links to available

- press publications and/or videos, presentations of the event, evaluation of the event in case of existence etc.
- Construction sites: pictures/videos before, during and after the construction works, information signs/ billboards/ boards of gratitude in .pdf format produced for the construction site and pictures from the site proving their installation, publications (articles, announcements, press releases) made for the launch and the conclusion of the construction works, etc.
- Online tools/applications/platforms: a report including the link to access the deliverable, a description of the deliverable (need, purpose, solution offered, outcome, evaluation of the tool's operation/functionalities, number of installations/users etc.), a user manual in case of existence. In case of an application, the .exe file for installing the application should be provided.

Completion of the communication objectives

Completion of the communication objectives will be done through establishing and monitoring communication and dissemination indicators, including qualitative and quantitative. Through them the communication manager and local coordinators will monitor the progress towards achievement of the communication objectives. They will demonstrate whether the planned activities have been effective in reaching the targeted audience. They will also allow the project team to make necessary adjustments, if needed. After the project's end, evaluation report of the communication and dissemination activities will be elaborated.

Some of the indicators to be tracked include:

Quantitative indicators	Base unit	Target unit
Number of websites	0	1
Number of logos produced	0	1
Number of project leaflets produced	0	100
Number of press-releases produced	0	15
Number of press-conferences held	0	1
Number of local dissemination events organized	0	6
Number of interregional conferences organized	0	2

Number of online events held	0	2
Number of forums organized	0	7
Number of unique website visits	0	600
Number of participants to the events	0	150
Number of press publications	0	50
Number of media appearances	0	60

Provisions for feedback

In order to provide feedback regarding project activities qualitative indicators will be used. They will be measured through questionnaires after the dissemination events, including yes and no questions, satisfaction scales, performance scales, disconfirmation scale and others. The objective will be to assess whether the communication and dissemination activities have reached the strategy`s objectives and will measure the impact of the activities on the participating organisations, participants and general public. In addition, questions will also gauge the overall quality of the organisation of the dissemination events.

Media monitoring

Media monitoring is an important part of monitoring the Strategy`s objectives of the communication strategy. While reporting on the success of media relations, the partners need to keep a copy of any articles (scanned article with a visible date and source, image clip of an online article with a link and date, or similar). These will be uploaded to the project website library for display and monitoring.

Resources

Human resources

Members of the management team responsible for communication activities

The communication strategy has been elaborated by the Communication Manager with the collaboration of the Local coordinators and the Project coordinator in the beginning of the project activities.

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Communication manager (CM) has the overall responsibility for managing, guiding and coordinating the project`s communication and dissemination activities. Communication manager of FLOREO is Kristiana Kazandzhieva, appointed by the Cluster Varna Business Consult. She is responsible for preparation and implementation of the communication strategy. In order to ensure maximum efficiency of the planned activities she will work in tight contact with the Project manager (PM) in order to coordinate the project progress with the planned communication activities. She will also coordinate with the Local coordinators in order to be promptly informed of project`s progress and achievements.

Local Coordinators (LCs) are appointed by all partners. They will act in liaison with the CM for implementing both interregional and local dissemination and visibility activities.

Person/ days required to implement the communication activities

Budget allocated to staff costs implementing the information and publicity activities of FLOREO amounts to EUR 15.715.

Financial resources

Work package 2 Communication and dissemination costs amount to EUR 77.757. However, other project activities, distributed in the other work packages can be considered as dissemination activities, thus increasing the costs for communication and dissemination measures incurred under the project.

