

**Evaluation of Communication strategy, tools and publicity of the OP RDE**  
**Management Summary**

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## Summary

Evaluation of Communication strategy, tools and publicity of the OP RDE was undertaken in compliance with current version of the Evaluation plan of the OP RDE, which was authorized by the Monitoring Committee on 11th October 2017. In line with article No. 116 of the Common Provisions Regulation, which determines the obligation to process the communication strategy, was the evaluation carried out by the functionally independent Evaluation Unit of the OP RDE (O435). Requirement of independence of the evaluation subjects is also given by the Common Provisions Regulation, article 54(3).

This evaluation was primarily undertaken by using desk research of secondary sources (Annual Communication Plans and their evaluation, internal documentation of the Managing Authority (MA) of the OP RDE, Common Communication Strategy and also outputs of other evaluation projects). Also, quite large amount of primary sources was used – especially materials focused on the evaluation of media campaign, which were based on different types of survey and on the media coverage analysis, which was done by the analysis of unrestricted media list on the basis of searching of predefined key words. Primary sources were added by the surveys within other evaluations done by the MA OP RDE, eventually from the evaluation activities of the Ministry of Regional Development – National Coordination Authority. One of the inputs to the evaluation is also rather complementary practical verification of the functionality of web pages of the MEYS (its section dedicated to the European Funds).

Thematic focus of the publication and communication activities has to be different in early stage of implementation of the OP, than later in full realization period of the supported projects, which already deliver first outputs. Department of Publicity is very good aware of this fact and for this reason **the chosen communication mix seems to be set properly.**

The necessity to adjust the communication activities and publicity to the implementation phase of the OP RDE (as well as particular projects) appropriately was confirmed by the evaluation.

Despite some negatives (e. g. insufficient methodical guidance, delays in public procurements) it is possible to say, that **overall conditions for preparation and realization of Annual Communication Plans (ACP) are properly set and allow the appropriate presentation of the OP RDE.** Based on the analysis of selected tools of publicity and communication it is obvious, that responsible civil servants are aware of options and benefits of different communication tools – on the one side, high quality of the OP RDE Newsletter should be mentioned, on the other side attractiveness of the OP's Facebook profile could be increased, which could increase the impact of information provided through it.



An important activity was also the preparation and realization of the media campaign of the OP RDE (split into four phases). The aim of the campaign called “We are helping to help” was to show to the professional, as well as wide public, how the European Structural Fund can help to the joint inclusive education (which is already quite common in many Czech schools). This campaign in printed media was followed by the TV campaign called “We are helping to help, teach and research” in October 2016.

The results of the Media Cover Analysis show, that the most positive tonality had the articles informing about particular projects in regional media – the attention should be paid especially on the propagation of particular projects in the place of realization, when creating positive media image.

Between half of April and June 2016, the campaign with the topic of joint/inclusive education was released in printed media, namely in Deník ČR, Právo and Učitelství noviny. It was followed by the TV campaign from October 2016, containing 6 thematic advertising spots with different OP RDE related topics – broadcasting of the advertisement is planned till 2018 on different TV channels, namely on TV Nova, ČT1 and Prima. Parts of the media campaign (in printed and on-line media) were not implemented as intended, anyway, these parts were implemented later in 2017. The results of the evaluation of the media campaign (Initial evaluation of the media campaign, 1<sup>st</sup> Post test of the campaign) show, that **the OP RDE is the best known Operational Programme** in the Czech population (15+) at the moment, as well as in the target group *professional public*. Moreover, overall knowledge of the OP RDE is quite high – 42 % of the Czech population and 62 % of the target group knows the OP RDE. Target group *professional public* has not only higher knowledge of the OP RDE, but also the other Operational Programmes in general. Quite logically, professional public has also higher awareness about particular projects, which can be supported from OP RDE - this awareness about particular projects increased after the campaign significantly (the difference of 4 p. p. between Initial evaluation and 1<sup>st</sup> Post test). On the other hand, the awareness of the OP RDE among general public remains the same after the campaign – from this point of view, the goals of the campaign were fulfilled only partly. The goals towards the target group professional public were fulfilled, those to the general public were not.

One of the unfulfilled goals of the campaign was to support the interest of the applicants in the use of subsidy. Share of people from target group, who intent to ask for subsidy from the OP RDE dropped after the campaign for 6 p. p. Although this is not statistically important difference, it would be appropriate to change the creative idea for the next phase of the campaign to support the interest about the OP RDE subsidy in the future, as it was one of the goals of the campaign. Interest of applicants is of course also influenced by other factors (for example filling of absorption capacity), however these factors were not evaluated.

In the area of factual communication of the MA OP RDE with beneficiaries and applicants (which is not within the competence of the Department of publicity O413) is the evaluation based on the outputs from different evaluation activities. Evaluation was in this case focused on “popularity” of different types of information transfer, information availability, intelligibility and their uniformity. From the main findings it is possible to mention **the need of uniformity of information provided by the different departments of the Managing Authority** and possible change of the content of the seminars for



applicants and beneficiaries in the way that the seminars should be much more focused on specific and practical questions (sent to the MA in advance, if possible).

The findings of this evaluation show a limited number of rather general recommendations focused on better overall performance of the OP RDE. The recommendations given at the beginning of the year 2017 within the Assessment of publicity and communication activities (elaborated for the needs of Annual Report of the OP RDE) remains valid also after this evaluation. Early communication of possible subsidy under particular Calls can help to secure sufficient number of high quality project proposals, which will lead to meaningful drawing of allocated funds. Again, focusing propagation on outputs and outcomes of individual projects will increase the visibility of the OP RDE and its benefits among general public and providing of the comprehensive and unified information to the professional will help to cooperate to all partners included. Future development can be done in the area of on-line communication - except putting the OP RDE website into operation there is some space for improvement of communication through Facebook profile, Youtube channel and also by using other social platforms.

