

EVALUATION OF COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES OF OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME EMPLOYMENT 2014 - 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Communication activities are an integral part of the implementation of the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Operational programme Employment (OPE) in the Czech Republic. The success and the effectiveness of their implementation has a major influence on the perception of OPE for target groups, both in the role of clients – potential applicants, applicants, recipients, and the end users – and the general public, including the media. It's not just about what appears in the press and how social media users react, but, above all, that the applicants get easily to the information and that the information is easy to understand.

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs as the Managing Authority of the OPE asked for the evaluation of communication activities in order to assess the implementation of the communication and publicity of the OPE in the core areas such as online communication and direct communication with the use of appropriate evaluation tools. In addition to its expertise covering publicity of the EU Structural Funds, user experience (UX), social media and media relations the evaluator carried out a research on the target groups related to their experience with the selected communication tools. **The output of the evaluation is then not only to get feedback, but also to gain specific recommendations on improving activities in cases where the evaluator identified possibilities for improvement.** The evaluation was conducted by the Czech consultancy Naviga4.

Portal www.esfcr.cz

The portal www.esfcr.cz is **perceived by its users mostly positively. Required information can easily be found in most cases.** Visitors appreciate the **complexity and the availability of the information provided.** Half the users evaluate the search on the portal [esfcr.cz](http://www.esfcr.cz) as easy, which is important because the difficulty of finding information on the portal has a significant effect on the perceived overall satisfaction with the portal. The vast majority of users consider the **information provided as clear.** The approach of those who already have some experience with the EU grants is more tolerant than in the case of the general public.

The structure of the portal is satisfactory for the target group of applicants and recipients. They understand the terminology and do not have a problem with navigation. The general public has difficulty at first understanding what is behind each of the terms, but after a short time they get the meaning. The structure of the Portal allows easy navigation for the users and the layout of the content of the site is clear, the info blocks are logically separated and organized.

More than half the users of the portal [esfcr.cz](http://www.esfcr.cz) visit its discussion forum. **The Forum is for half of the users considered to be straightforward and the required information they find without major problems.**

The popular search engines display in most cases relevant results on the primary keywords. After a user enters the related expression the search engine shows a relevant result, and a link to the portal appears in the first position in search results. A significant part of users, returning visitors, uses the search engine for repeated access to the portal.

Internet Campaign

The Internet campaign has been set up to inform about the possibilities of OPE for potential applicants. Campaigns **managed to meet all the parameters** with the required guarantee of performance of more than 100%. The campaign took place on the most visited websites in the Czech Republic that appeal to 5 124 000 people from the Internet population aged over 20 years which represents 91.6% of this target group. **Individual parts/campaign formats in the specifications have been well chosen**, especially by choosing the largest possible banner areas, aiming to be the most visible.

Facebook profile "Better chance to find a job"

The effectiveness of the Managing Authority on Facebook as another communication tool is visible, which is ensured by regular and relatively frequent insertion of contributions (posts) that are relevant and attractive for visitors of the profile. **Facebook profile has a relatively high number of fans – over 40 000** (considering it belongs to an institution of state administration). Most of the fans are in the age range 25-34 years with a large predominance of women, most of them from large Czech cities. **Users are mostly interested in the posts about work and job opportunities.** The second most represented category is **posts with all sorts of advice, tips and news.** The users are **mostly satisfied** with the content of the profile.

Press releases

Issued press releases concerning the OPE supported an increase in publicity of the operational program. From the perspective of the impact in the Czech media the Internet media significantly outweigh the print titles. The issued press releases were almost exclusively used in the news media – the published news reached the neutral, informational tone. Compared to other operational programmes, the Managing Authority of the OPE actively focuses on the search for specific positive stories and themes (within the supported projects) that have the potential to significantly improve the awareness of effective impact of the OPE funds on the society. Such stories can be successfully published in weekly and lifestyle media. Among the most successful press releases (in terms of the number of published articles) were the ones informing about particular events and allocated support. The clarity of message creates another important aspect that is crucial for deciding whether the issued press releases will be published. Majority of the press releases tried to meet the criterium.

The evaluator notes that the communication of OPE is conducted on a sufficient level and fully corresponds to the objectives set out in the OPE's communication plans and communication strategy of the European OPZ structural and investment funds in the Czech Republic. In addition to the implementation of the standard tools of communication in an environment of state administration Managing Authority of OPE proactively works with "stories of projects" to strengthen the positive awareness of OPE implementation for the target groups. On the basis of their expertise and research the evaluator has identified a few suggestions that will help further improve and develop the communication of the Managing Authority in relation to its target groups.