

EU Structural Fund Management Communication Strategy 2004- 2008

1. Introduction

The EU Structural Fund management Communication Strategy 2004-2008 (further – Strategy) has been developed, based on Regula 1260/1999, which provides the general regulations for Structural Funds, Regula 1159/2000 about information and publicity measures that Member-States are to carry out with regard to assistance from Structural Funds and the 30th March, 2004 Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No.200 on European Structural Fund Management (further – CM Regulations No: 200), defining the institutions involved in Structural Fund management.

During the period of preparation for EU Structural Fund acquisition, in November 2003, a *Information and Communication Action Plan for the acquisition of EU Structural Funds in Latvia* was developed, outlining the general objectives of communication:

1. To increase awareness of Structural Funds, promote project identification and accelerate project commencement;
2. To ensure co-operation and partnership between the institutions involved in Structural Fund management;
3. To ensure access to information about Structural Funds to the whole community.

The Strategy has been developed for the next period of acquisition of EU Structural Funds – the project submission and implementation phase for 2004 - 2008 and programme evaluation after project implementation. The Strategy defines the common objectives and tasks of communication for the time period mentioned, defines the allocation of responsibilities and competences between the institutions involved in Structural Fund management and the coordination mechanism, as well as defining the necessary action-measure plan for the execution of communication objectives.

The EU Structural Fund Management Communication Strategy encompasses:

- The objectives of communication, target audiences, tasks and communication channels;
- Information and publicity measure plan;
- Indicative budget allocation;
- Management of the communication process in compliance with the Communication management scheme (Annex 1);
- Evaluation indicators for introduction of information and communication measures;
- EU structural funds crisis communication plan (Annex 2);
- Additional information (Annex 3).

2. Communication objectives for 2004- 2008

1. To promote society's understanding of the meaning of EU Structural Funds and the support for use of resources, ensure a regular and all-encompassing information about the pace of Structural Fund acquisition.
2. To promote a successful project submission of EU Structural Funds, commencement and implementation process, providing the necessary informative support to the project applicants and the community as a whole.
3. To promote co-operation between the institutions involved in Structural Fund management.

3. Communication Strategy

The objectives mentioned can be achieved making use of both direct and indirect communication channels, ensuring target groups receive information, disseminating information harmonised between institutions, as well as co-ordinating reaction to issues on the media agenda and crisis situations.

4. Target audiences

1. Society as a whole
2. Potential project applicants:
 - Local Governments
 - NGO, including social partners
 - Entrepreneurs
 - Education sector
 - Government institutions, etc.
3. Information mediators:
 - Regional Development Agencies
 - Information Centres (Saeima Information Centre, EU information centres, etc.)
 - Non-Government Organisation Centre
 - Local council libraries
 - Latvian Local Government Association / Local Governments
 - Large City Association
4. Mass media:
 - Regional
 - National
5. First and second level Intermediate Bodies involved in Structural Fund management, Grant Scheme administrators, Monitoring Committee, Paying Authority

5. Tasks over a time-scale:

Stage I, commencement of programme:

June – September 2004 – increasing public information level about EU Structural Funds and ensuring access to information for potential Structural Fund project applicants

1. To inform public about the possibilities and process of EU Structural Fund acquisition.
2. Ensure potential project applicants with detailed and simple information about possibilities for EU Structural Fund acquisition, regulations, procedure of document turnover, implementation mechanisms, etc.
3. Develop a united information network between websites of institutions involved in Structural Fund management.

Stage II, programme implementation:

September 2004 - 2008 – ensuring basic information: informing public of process of EU Structural Fund acquisition; ensuring information about project submission options, reporting procedure, etc., popularisation of best experience and practice, informing of first results achieved by implementing projects

1. Inform public of EU Structural Fund acquisition process and results – the effect on the economy and social development, as a whole.
2. Ensure regular information exchange measures with Structural Fund Beneficiaries.

3. Develop co-operation with information mediators, educating them about EU Structural Funds and providing all-encompassing information.
4. Regularly analyse target group informative needs and ensure supply of the necessary information.
5. Collate and popularise the most successful experience in informing community and target groups and disseminate among EU Structural Funds management institutions involved.
6. Carry out public opinion poll within the framework of UN development programme “Support to implementation of EU Structure Funds: consolidation of communication” for 2005.

Stage III, programme conclusion:

After 2007 – EU Structural Fund acquisition process evaluation, result analysis

After 2007, carry out quantitative and qualitative social attitude research.

General communication objectives:

1. Develop successful co-operation between institutions involved in Structural Fund management in ensuring the communication process; ensure information circulation and achieve mutually co-ordinated information flow.
2. React to media agenda issues, associated with EU Structural Funds, and individual opinions, expressed in the media with regard to EU Structural Fund issues.

6. Communication Channels:

- Web page www.esfondi.lv administered by the Ministry of Finance
- Web page www.esflatvija.lv administered by the Ministry of Welfare
- 2nd Level Intermediate Body and Grant Scheme administrator web pages (practical information for project applicants);
- 1st Level Intermediate Body web pages (information about national programmes and branch policy);
- special radio and / or TV broadcasts;
- Seminars, conferences;
- Mass media;
- Information mediators;
- Experts

7. Plan of Information and Communication Measures

STAGE 1 Programme commencement		
	STAGE 2 Programme implementation	
		STAGE 3 Programme conclusion
20042008		

Stage 1: Programme commencement: June – December 2004

Measure type	Objectives and contents	Target groups	Implementation institutions
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Measure 1 – Relations with the mass media			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information to the press ▪ Information to radio and TV ▪ Interviews ▪ Press conferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Structural Fund objectives ▪ Accessibility to Structural Funds ▪ Programme commencement ▪ Programme priorities ▪ Branch development in the context of EU Structural Fund acquisition ▪ National programmes, open project contests, grant schemes ▪ Accessibility of financing ▪ Amount of financing ▪ Implementation ▪ Contact information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Society as a whole ▪ Finance Beneficiaries ▪ Information mediators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing Authority ▪ First Level Intermediate Bodies / Branch Ministries ▪ Second Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Grant Scheme Administrators
Measure 2 – Publication of Informative Materials			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Materials for distribution taking into account guidelines for visual publicity measures for institutions involved in EU Structural Funds management and beneficiaries of financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contents appropriate for target groups ▪ Publication of programme document SPD ▪ Publication of additional program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Beneficiaries of financing ▪ Institutions involved in EU Structural Funds management ▪ Information mediators ▪ State administration institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing Authority ▪ First Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Second Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Grant Scheme Administrators
Measure 3 –development of a Single Information Network between home pages of institutions involved in Structural Fund management; collation of united contact information for all institutions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ formation of Single Information Network ▪ collation of united contact 	For informative needs of Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Beneficiaries ▪ Information mediators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing Authority in cooperation with Second Level Intermediate Bodies, Grant

information for all institutions			Scheme Administrators, First Level Intermediate Bodies
Measure 4 – Organisation of Informative Measures for Beneficiaries			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seminars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to assistance ▪ Suggestions on preparation of Project applications ▪ Procedure for Project approval ▪ Contact information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Beneficiaries, particularly in rural areas ▪ Information mediators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Second Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Grant Scheme Administrators ▪ Regional Development Agencies

Stage 2: Programme implementation: January 2005 – 2008

Measure type	Objectives and contents	Target groups	Implementation institutions
Measure 5 – Co-operation with mass media			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information to the press ▪ Information to radio and TV ▪ Interviews ▪ Press conferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programme implementation ▪ Current affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Society as a whole ▪ Beneficiaries ▪ Information mediators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing Authority ▪ First Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Second Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Grant Scheme Administrators
Measure 6 – Specialised information dissemination			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Articles in specialised publications ▪ TV and radio programmes/discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programme implementation process and results ▪ Examples of successful Projects ▪ Experience in Project implementation ▪ Amendments to SPD and PC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Society as a whole ▪ State Administration Bodies ▪ Information mediators ▪ Social partners ▪ Beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing Authority ▪ First Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Second Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Grant Scheme Administrators

Measure 7 – Placement of Information Stands and permanent information plaques and posters			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information stands and plaques at places of implementation of Structural Fund co-financed Projects ▪ Informative posters 	Information about ES co-financed Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Society as a whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Second Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Grant Scheme Administrators
Measure 8 – Up-dating of Internet Home pages			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Internet Home pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up-dating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Beneficiaries ▪ Information mediators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing Authority ▪ First Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Second Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Grant Scheme Administrators
Measure 9 – Organisation of Informative measured for the beneficiaries			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seminars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programme implementation process ▪ Project implementation experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Second Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Grant Scheme Administrators

Stage 3: Programme conclusion: after 2007

Measure type	Objectives and contents	Target groups	Implementation institutions
Measure 10 – Relations with mass media			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information to the press ▪ Information to radio and TV ▪ Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current Affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Society as a whole ▪ Beneficiaries ▪ Information to mediators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing Authority ▪ First Level Intermediate Bodies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Press conferences 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Second Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Grant Scheme Administrators
Measure 11 – Specialised publications			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Articles in specialised publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EU Structural Funds Target programme I result 2004 – 2006 effect and indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Society as a whole ▪ Final Beneficiaries ▪ State Administration ▪ NGO sector ▪ Social and economic partners ▪ Information mediators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing Authority ▪ First Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Regional Development Agencies
Measure 12 – Up-dating of Internet Home pages			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Internet Home pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current Affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Beneficiaries ▪ Information mediators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing Authority ▪ First Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Second Level Intermediate Bodies ▪ Grant Scheme Administrators
Measure 13 – Quantitative and qualitative research			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information and communication measure Program I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Society as a whole ▪ Institutions in involved in EU Structural funds management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing Authority

8. Information and publicity budget allocation from Technical Assistance

Institutions involved in Structural Fund management receive Technical Assistance funding, in order to guarantee informative activities associated with Fund acquisition.

National Programme "Other Technical Assistance measures for ESF administration"

Project	Indicative Costs TOTAL LVL	%	MoF	ST	Mo W	Mo ES	Mo A	NV A	PIAA	LA D	SIF	Social Assistance Fund
2004	167007	20	7794 9	8626	1410 2	1533 1	6323	9531	14283	1507 6	3569	2216
2005	167007	20	7794 9	8626	1410 2	1533 1	6323	9531	14283	1507 6	3569	2216
2006	167007	20	7794 9	8626	1410 2	1533 1	6323	9531	14283	1507 6	3569	2216
2007	167007	20	7794 9	8626	1410 2	1533 1	6323	9531	14283	1507 6	3569	2216
2008	167007	20	7794 9	8626	1410 2	1533 1	6323	9531	14283	1507 6	3569	2216
TOTAL	835035	52	3897 4	4313 1	7051 0	7665 6	3161 7	4765 7	71416	7537 9	1784 4	1107 8

National Programme "Other Technical Assistance measures for ERDF administration"

Project	Indicative Costs TOTAL	%	RAP LM	Mo C	Mo E	ISB	Mo T	Mo Env	Moh	CFL A	VR AA	LID A
5.2.1 INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY												
2004	72304	20	1622	384	9019	1476	1381 4	5026	1381	1900 0	1842	1874 0
2005	72304	20	1622	384	9019	1476	1381 4	5026	1381	1900 0	1842	1874 0
2006	72304	20	1622	384	9019	1476	1381 4	5026	1381	1900 0	1842	1874 0
2007	72304	20	1622	384	9019	1476	1381 4	5026	1381	1900 0	1842	1874 0
2008	72304	20	1622	384	9019	1476	1381 4	5026	1381	1900 0	1842	1874 0
TOTAL	361521	15	8110	1920	4509 5	7380	6906 9	2513 2	6905	9500 0	9210	9370 0

9. Management and monitoring of the Communication process

In compliance with the CoM regulations No.200 and according to the Programme Document and Complement, the First Level Intermediate Bodies (Ministry of Economy; Ministry of Education and Science; Ministry of Culture; Ministry of Welfare; Ministry of Regional Development and Local Government Affairs; Ministry of Transport; State Chancellery; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Environment; Ministry of Agriculture) ensure the management of activities and informative measures financed by Structural Funds according to

Branch policy and priorities defined in the Programme Documents. The Ministries ensure that Target Groups are informed about activities to be supported within the branch and explain their importance in the context of branch development. Taking into account that each EU Structural Fund activity implementation is managed by several Ministries simultaneously, the primary informative responsibility of Ministries is to provide information about activities under their supervision, the pace of implementation and results in the context of the branch policy realised by the Ministry. Joint information that covers activities supervised by several Ministries as part of one Structural Fund must be mutually coordinated and supplementary.

Informative work associated with Project applicants (Structural Fund or grant Final Beneficiaries), is carried out by the Second Level Intermediate Bodies (The Central Finance and Contract Agency; Rural Support Service; State Employment Agency; Professional Education Development Programme Agency) and Grant Scheme Administrators (The Latvian Investment and Development Agency; State Regional Development Agency; Social Integration Fund; Social Assistance Fund). The Second Level Intermediate Bodies and Grant Scheme Administrators provide information about project competitions, carry out the necessary informative work associated with promoting project application and ensure explanation of procedures.

The Managing Authority (in the Ministry of Finance) is responsible for the implementation of the Information and Communication Measure Plan and provides general information about Structural Fund acquisition process results as a whole. Communication process monitoring is ensured by the EU Structural Fund Monitoring Committee, which approves the information for annual and the final report on the execution of the Information and Communication Measure Plan, and the Communication Steering Group.

Summary of responsibilities and competences of institutions involved in Structural Fund management:

Institution	Primary target groups	Primary responsibility
Monitoring Committee	Institutions involved in EU Structural Fund management	Approval of EU Structural Fund management's Communication Strategy for 2004- 2008
Managing Authority	Society	Execution of Programme as a whole
1 st Level Intermediate Body	Society	Implementation of branch policy; execution of Programme Complement activities supervised
2 nd Level Intermediate Body, Grant Scheme Administrators	Final Beneficiaries	Information and administrative servicing of Project applicants

The institutions involved in EU Structural Fund management create the Communication Programme independently, assessing the existing resources and experience of each institution. But it must be in compliance with the approved Single EU Structural Fund management Communication Strategy and Management Scheme. If information provided by an institution exceeds the competence defined in the Management Scheme and affects the operation of another institution, then the information must be mutually coordinated.

A more detailed allocation of responsibilities and competences of institutions involved in the EU Structural Fund management is defined in the Communication Management Scheme (Annex 1)

10. Information and Publicity Activities Performance Indicators

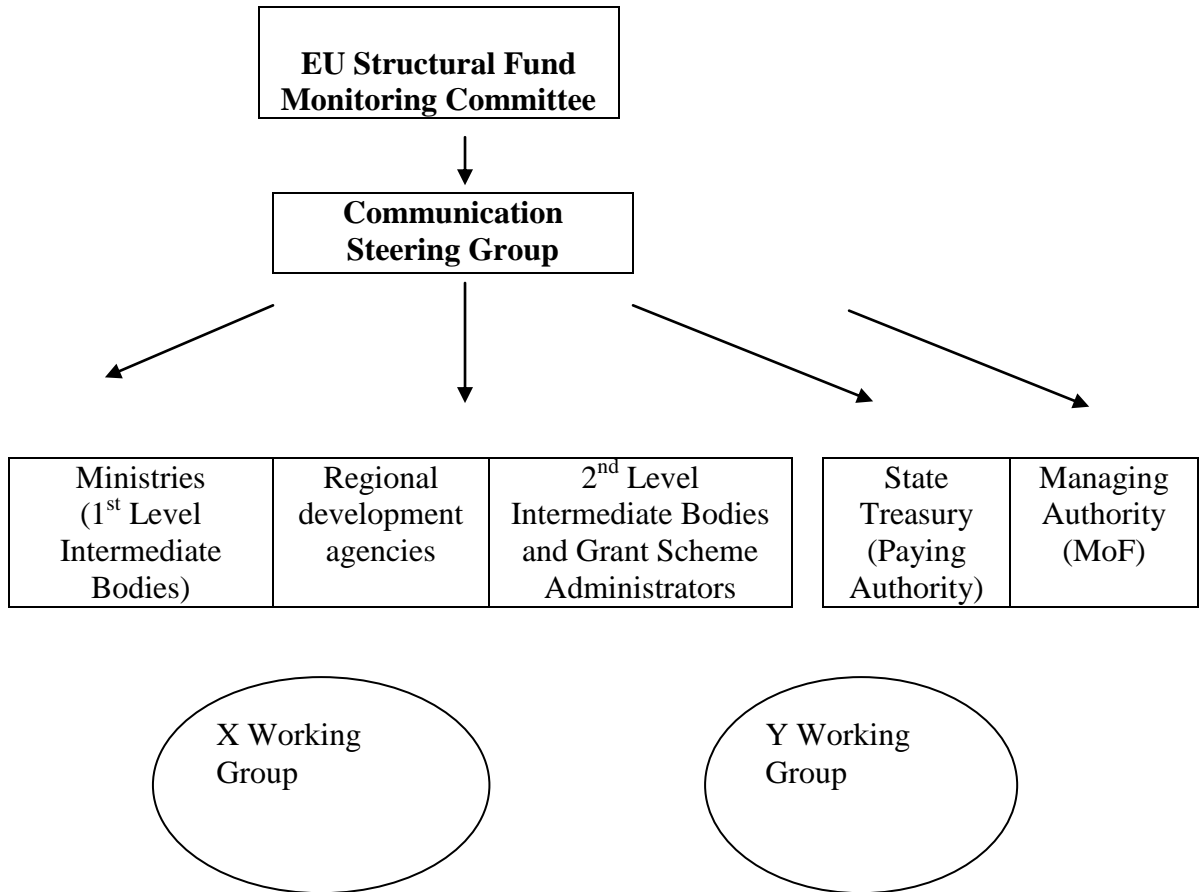
Result indicators:

- Level of being informed among beneficiaries (source – public opinion poll)
- Information dissemination effectiveness – correspondence of chosen communication channels to the needs of target groups (source – public opinion poll)
- Public support to the obtained results by Structural Funds (source – public opinion poll)
- Manner of Structural Funds coverage (+, -, neutral) in mass media (source – media content analysis)

<i>Measure</i>	<i>Output indicators</i>
Internet Home Page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of users - Number of publications - Number of requests received for electronic information - Registration for receipt of electronic information
Information to the press	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of press releases - Coverage of news in national and local mass media (number of publications)
Press conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of press conferences - Coverage of news in national and local mass media (number of publications)
Seminars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of seminars - Audience covered (number of participants) - Territory covered
Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of conferences - Audience covered (number of participants) - Territory covered
Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of publications, newsletters etc. - Audience covered - Territory covered

Annex 1.

**Communication management scheme for
EU Structural Fund implementation**



Communication process management

The Communication Process management scheme has been developed with the aim to regulate the responsibilities and competences of institutions involved in EU Structural Fund management in the area of information provision. Leading authority is responsible for communication management.

The EU Structural Fund Monitoring Committee (strategic level)

The EU Structural Fund Monitoring Committee is the main institution responsible for ESF implementation communication strategic issues. The Monitoring Committee is chaired by the Chair of the Managing Authority

Responsibilities:

1. Approve ESF communication strategy for 2004 – 2008;
2. Approve information for yearly and final report about fulfilment of ESF information and publicity plan;
3. Approve conceptual changes in strategy concerning changes of communication strategy and budget.

Communication Steering Group
(administrative level)

The Communication Steering Group is the main institution responsible for securing and coordinating the communication process. The Communication Steering Group is chaired by the Director of the Ministry of Finance EU Fund Department. The Communication Steering Group comprises of representatives of the Intermediate Bodies, Grant Scheme Administrators and Paying Authority from:

1. The Ministry of Finance
2. The Ministry of Regional Development and Local Government Affairs
3. Ministry of Economy
4. Ministry of Welfare
5. Ministry of Education and Science
6. Ministry of Agriculture
7. Ministry of Transport
8. Ministry of Environment
9. Ministry of Health
10. Ministry of Culture
11. State Chancellery
12. State Treasury
13. Central Finance and Contract Agency
14. State Employment Agency
15. Rural Support Service
16. Professional Education Development Programme Agency
17. Social Integration Fund
18. Social Assistance Fund
19. Latvian Investment and Development Agency
20. State Regional Development Agency
21. Riga Regional Development Agency
22. Kurzeme Regional Development Agency
23. Vidzeme Development Agency
24. Zemgale Development Agency
25. Latgale Regional Development Agency.

Responsibilities:

1. Planning of Communication process:
Coordinates communication activities of institutions involved in EU Structural Fund management, ensuring regular quarterly activity plan development and coordination.
2. Management and monitoring of the Communication process:
 - 2.1. Coordinate the EU Structural Fund management Communication Strategy, amendments to be made;
 - 2.2. Coordinate joint information measures (special topical TV / radio programmes, etc.);
 - 2.3 Plan experience exchange seminars, discussions.
3. Monitoring of Information and Communication Measure Plan execution:

- Regularly (once quarterly) assess progress of the communication process and if necessary, decide on making amendments to quarterly activity plans;
- Review cases when a single visual style in informative materials has not been observed (visual identity guidelines have been defined for publicity measure implementation for institutions and Structural Fund Beneficiaries involved in EU Structural Fund management);
- Analyse crisis situation or its threats and express proposals to avoid consequences or carry out preventive measures.

Responsibility

1. The Communication Steering Group is responsible for securing and coordinating the communication process – reports on the execution of the Information and Communication Measure Plan to the Monitoring Committee.
2. Is responsible for assessment of crisis situations and prevention of consequences.
3. Representatives of the Communication Steering Group are responsible for ensuring informative feedback between the management of institutions represented and the Communication Management Group.

Organisation of Communication Steering Group activities

Work is organised and technically guaranteed for the Communication Steering Group by the Ministry of Finance EU Fund Department Information and Publicity Division. This includes:

- Organisation of monthly Communication Steering Group meetings, preparation of agendas, taking minutes;
- Preparation of materials necessary for draft documents and other work processes, utilising information submitted by institutions involved;
- Control of execution of Communication Steering Group decisions.

Working Group

(comprises of representatives of the 1st and 2nd Level Intermediate Bodies, Grant Scheme Administrators, on the principle of topic)

Work coordination and planning as well as execution is done on the Working Group level. Working Groups are formed according to current needs. For example, the Working Group may:

- Collate and analyse best practice in all institutions involved in EU Structural Fund management and organise experience exchange seminars;
- Decide about objectives, dead-lines, set responsibility for joint tasks to be carried out;
- Assess proposals submitted to the Communication Steering Groups;

Allocation of responsibilities and competences of institutions involved in EU Structural Fund management

Managing Authority

1. Responsible for execution of Information and Communication Measure Plan and prepares annual reports for the Monitoring Committee.
2. Ensure access to general information about Structural Funds and Single Programme Document (SPD) implementation, control and monitoring.

3. Inform about EU Structural Fund acquisition process results at the State economic indicator level and from the viewpoint of overall State policy implementation.
4. Announces ESF Monitoring Committee and Steering Committee opinion about issues reviewed.
5. Ensures information renewal in the Home page www.esfondi.lv administered by the Ministry of Finance, as well as the formation of the single information network with institutions involved in Structural Fund management.

1st Level Intermediate Bodies

1. Are responsible for the execution of the Information and Communication Measure Plan in the Ministry and prepare information for the Management Authority for preparation of the annual report.
2. Inform about Programme Complement activities under their supervision, incl. about EU Structural Fund National Programmes.
3. Ensures publication of information about ESF national programmes.
4. Inform about the branch's development in the context of EU Structural Fund acquisition
5. Ensure the continuation of necessary information for the Single Information Network in own institution's Home Page.
6. Participate in activities of the Communication Steering Group and Working Group.

2nd Level Intermediate Bodies and Grant Scheme Administrators

1. Responsible for execution of Information and Communication Measure Plan and prepare information for the Information Steering Group for preparation of annual report.
2. Responsible for placement of information stands and permanent information plaques in locations of Structural Fund co-financed Projects ensuring visual identity guidelines for publicity measure implementation for institutions and Structural Fund Beneficiaries involved in EU Structural Fund management are observed
3. Responsible for informative servicing of Structural Fund Final Beneficiaries. This includes:
 - Complete Project application documentation (guidelines, Project application forms) in Home pages;
 - Information about Project competitions advertised and approved Projects;
 - Answering EU Structural Fund project applicants and Final Beneficiary questions;
 - Providing information to Structural Fund project applicants.
4. Ensure publication of information about ESF co-financed open competition or grant scheme projects according to guidelines about publication of information about ESF financed projects including information about total number of supported projects, total financing.
5. Ensure the continuation of necessary information for the Single Information Network in own institution's Home Page.
6. Participate in activities of the Communication Steering Group and Working Group.

Crisis communication is managed according ESF crisis communication action plan (Annex 2).

Annex 2 ESF crisis communication action plan

Crisis communication action plan was developed to reveal potential risks – both informative and technical and to act in a uniform manner both during crisis risk period, crisis and after crisis period.

1 Aim and objectives of Crisis plan

Aim – ensure successful and continuous ESF management communication and decrease threat of potential crisis.

Objectives:

1. Recognise ESF management process communicative risks, analyse and limit them;
2. Fast and purposeful reaction to risk or crisis, creation of communication during crisis;
3. Coordinate ESF managing organisations communication according to order set up in management scheme;
4. Prevent formation of a negative image of ESF management.

2 Essence of crisis

- obstacles for announcing open project competitions and grant schemes;
- questioned and threatened projects included in national programmes;
- EU financing not implemented due to technical errors, staff errors, management errors;
- Political changes affect ESF management institutional scheme including responsible officials;
- Questioned honesty and transparency of ESF managing institutions;
- Threatened or interrupted ESF implementation process.

3 Crisis indications

Primary:

- media publications (news agencies, newspapers, TV, radio);
- ESF managing institutions correspondence (public appeals of public and professional organisations, claims, proposals concerning public interests);
- Reports or ESF managing institutions staff and ESF communication officials;
- Claims from applicants of approved / rejected projects;
- Expert's opinions, ESF implementation data analysis results.

Secondary:

- repeated announcement of project competitions and grant schemes, incidence of project application, productivity of evaluation process;
- state budget, state budget change preparation stages, when interest about amount of ESF co-financing increases;
- public activities of Parliament commissions concerning ESF management;
- activities of 1st level Intermediate bodies while preparing national programmes, programme attachments, open competition project and grant scheme guidelines;
- informal information about different political position on ESF implementation issues;
- public, professional organisations and pressure groups conscious public activities to reach certain aims;

- relation of certain events to ESF management system and attempts to influence it;
- inaccurate and unconfirmed information about ESF from information brokers (consultation companies, etc.);
- contradicting and changing information about ESF from different ESF management institutions.

4 Crisis risk factor analysis

In general ESF implementation problem situations reflect broader problems in the country in political level – for example, lack of administrative capacity (insufficient staff competence, frequent staff turnover in state administration institutions, lack of cooperation, low professional qualification) as well as state policy non transparency, low political involvement, lack of state strategy and planning problems.

4.1 Initially predictable risks

This is threat, which already exists and the society has identified it. Any of the mentioned factors interacting with the others may cause a potential problem. Threat is classified according to the parties involved in the implementation of ESF and Latvian geographic factors are considered.

Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Little knowledge and understanding of ESF management process from journalists, which results in information errors. - ESF implementation process reflected by many journalists, difficult to identify leading journalist of the branch. That increases number of information errors. - Turnover of journalists writing about ESF. - Purposefully maintained editors views dominate. - Use of sensations / negative news. Media show ESF implementation as a problem and negative publicity follows.
NGO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of co-financing and pre-financing for project implementation. - Not much uniform programme document activities within framework of which it is possible to apply for ESF financing. - Professional association pressure to enforce political, economic, etc. interests.
Local governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Problems with co-financing and pre-financing together with limited credit amounts available for local governments. - Human resource and social capacity problems for small local governments. - Low quality and non-competitive projects, especially for small local governments. - Great expenses for project preparation and inability to implement it. - Lack of long term development plans, not clear to which competitions projects should be prepared.
Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non compliance to unified programme document activities, questioning them. - Low quality of project implementation. - Planned support from ESF is not received or is delayed. - ESF financing in some of the activities is implemented too fast. - Great expenses for project preparation and inability to implement it. - Branch in which the business is operating does not fall into any of

	ESF supported activities, therefore dissatisfaction.
Geographical regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principle of regional equality is not observed in implementation of financing. Winners will be those who already are in a better geographic and social position and are economically stronger. - ESF financing may increase differences between regions, territories and social economic participants of the market. - Lack of regional planning and co-ordination may cause situation where very many similar projects are submitted. - Lack of information in the regions. Specifics of regional communication are not observed.
Institutions involved in ESF management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Great number of institutions involved in ESF management. - Inaccurate, wrong and contradicting information from different institutions involved in ESF management - Badly co-ordinated communication between institutions involved in ESF management and reflexive reaction on public interest – “answer if asked”. - Week co-operation between institutions. - Unclear ESF administration issues.
State institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State owned companies reproaching for not being included in the national programme and not receiving financing from ESF.

4.2 Predictable risks in ESF implementation process

- Badly co-ordinated activities and information activities of institutions involved in ESF management;
- Complicated language in documents, problems with project preparation;
- Insufficient state co-financing, makes impossible to implement the planned ESF resources;
- Questioning project evaluator’s professionalism and objectivity;
- Lack of professionalism of consultation companies or inaccurate layout of information;
- Ethics breaches;
- Lobbying consultation companies, projects;
- Purposeful, co-ordinated campaigns of interest groups;
- Reviewing already accepted decisions for political reasons.

4.3 Sudden technical risks (related to technical and substantial faults in the process of implementing ESF)

- ESF management information system problems;
- Physical damage (for example, fire) in some institution involved in ESF management.

5 Risk or crisis factor identification

Risk or crisis factors identify:

- ESF managing institutions staff and officials involved in ESF communication process;
- ESF communication steering group;
- ESF monitoring or steering committee representatives.

6 Risk / crisis communication

Taking into account ESF implementation specifics and crisis identifications as well as action planning, the following levels of activity are recognised:

1. Institutional level (risk concerns one institution);
2. Interinstitutional level (risk/crisis concerns several institutions);
3. System level (crisis affects ESF management system in general).

Risk communication on institutional level

Aim: while implementing daily activities on one institution level, purposefully prevent the risk factors turning into crisis as much as possible in the area of communication

Responsible: Communication specialist or employee of institution

Objectives:

- Identify risk factors;
- Inform institution management;
- Give immediate, continuous and open information to the involved target groups and media;
- Inform officials and institutions involved in the process

Tactics: (concrete steps see in picture No: 1) Communication is done according to identified risk factors and possible crisis indications (information to press, press conference, seminar, discussion, etc.)

- Ministry of Finance EU fund department Information and publicity unit and if necessary communication management group are informed;
- Communication work group is created if necessary.

Action scheme if the risk is for one institution

Crisis communication on interinstitutional level

Aim: while implementing daily activities on one institution level, purposefully prevent the risk factors turning into crisis as much as possible in the area of communication

Responsible: Communication specialist or employee of institutions involved, Ministry of Finance ESF department Information and publicity, communication management group.

Objectives:

- Timely identify risk factors;
- Ensure involved institution exchange of information and coordination;
- Give immediate, continuous and open information to the involved target groups and media;
- Inform officials and institutions involved in the process

Tactics: (concrete steps see in picture No: 2)

- Communication is done according to identified risk factors and possible crisis indications (information to press, press conference, seminar, discussion, etc.)
- Interinstitutional work group for risk factor prevention is created;
- Purposeful and co-ordinated flow of information for risk factor prevention is created;
- Communication management group and ESF management committee if necessary are informed about implemented activities.

Crisis communication on a system level

Crisis communication on a system level is only realized when risk factors have overgrown into an all encompassing crisis that threatens the process of ESF implementation in general.

Aim: purposefully prevent development of crisis, limit its consequences and renew ESF implementation in case crisis has gone beyond communication level and has reached financial, political, legal, social etc., level.

Responsible: Communication management group, ESF monitoring committee.

Objectives:

- Identify risk factors;
- Create crisis work group;
- Accept necessary strategic decision for limitation of crisis, as well as immediate, continuous and open information to the involved target groups, media and society;
- Renew and ensure the continuity of ESF implementation;

Tactics: (concrete steps see in picture No: 3)

- When risk factors grow into crisis when ESF implementation process is under threat or it is stopped due to mechanic, politic, financial etc. reasons, then a work group appropriate for the crisis specifics is formed.
- ESF Monitoring Committee is informed about the situation.

7 Basic principles of risk or crisis communication:

1. Single view on the problem, process, event;
2. Purposeful and co-ordinated flow of information for the public (target groups, media, NGO, etc.);
3. Broad information and explanations on ESF implementation process, its development;
4. Co-operation between institutions involved in ESF management;
5. Transparency of information about ESF implementation possibilities and principles;
6. Recognition of the problem, if necessary - admitting faults and errors;
7. Realistic ways to solve the problem and their explanation.

8 Risk or crisis communication basic principles in relations with the media

In a situation of increased risk or crisis it should be taken into account that media are interested and present in the processes. Often the media may become an ally in solution of a crisis but by being afraid and acting inadequately also it is possible to place media in an opposition to organisation, process or persons (officials, staff, politics, etc.). Sometimes it is the media that identifies risk factors (insufficient, corrupt, false or contradicting information, etc.). In general media in the process of risk identification and crisis situation are important and if information possibilities are used skilfully the crisis may be averted and its potential influence on the process and development diminished.

It is possible to identify basic principles that should be observed to form successful relations with the media:

1. Be the first to inform the media if possible;
2. Always answer journalists questions;
3. If not possible to answer immediately, ask for time to prepare information as comprehensive as possible;
4. Supply media with continuous and purposeful flow of information;
5. In case of necessity involve media in the solution of crisis;

6. Don't become unceremonious ("I might say something but it is not meant to be published...");
7. Be honest and open in the process of providing information;
8. Don't lie and withhold information;
9. Don't use professional jargon;
10. Don't release contradicting and unprepared information;
11. Don't teach the journalists to write "correctly";
12. Don't blame journalists and media for all problems.

9 Risk or crisis communication evaluation

9.1 Risk / crisis communication effectivity description:

- Positive attitude of the public and target groups (media, potential beneficiaries, NGO) towards ESF implementation process;
- Main activity – preventive and energetic, preventing the problems turning into crisis;
- In a situation of crisis – the crisis is limited fast and timely;
- ESF implementation process continuity and succession is ensured;
- The decision taking process is open and transparent.

9.2 Risk / crisis communication effectivity evaluation criteria:

- Timely identification of risk or crisis factor (time when risk factors were identified, how far events had developed, how many media reflect the information, etc.);
- Purposefulness of risk or crisis factor prevention / limitation (how effectively are identified target groups, how reports are prepared, what methods used, etc.);
- Risk or crisis communication precision and co-ordination (co-ordination of communication between institutions involved in ESF implementation, report harmonisation, time for interinstitutional activity co-ordination);
- Risk or crisis monitoring (risk or crisis development, analysis, limitation, time factor).

Annex 3 Additional information

In becoming a Member State of the European Union (EU), Latvia has access to EU Structural Fund financing. EU regional policy assistance instruments are four EU Structural Funds – the European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund, European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund and Fisheries Instrument for Financial Guidance. Their objectives are to decrease economic and social differences between EU Member States. As Latvia is defined as a single NUTS II¹ territory, where the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) per capita is less than 75% of the European Union average indicator, in the programming period from 2004 to 2006, all Latvia is classified as an Objective 1 programme territory for receipt of Structural Funds.

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

The Single Europe Act paragraph 130 c specifies that "the European Regional Development Fund was developed to help even out the main regional inequalities

¹ Territorial statistics unit nomenclature

within the Association, participating in the promotion of backward region development and structural evening-out, as well in the conversion of those industrial regions where economic conditions are worsening."

ERDF was formed in 1975. As part of this Fund, assistance is given to less developed regions, mainly concentrating on productive investments, infrastructure improvement and single market development.

The European Commission's Regula 1783/1999 defines that the Fund gives support for the following activities:

- For the readjustment of the business environment and increasing competitiveness, particularly emphasizing assistance to small and medium enterprises;
- For the development of local economy and employment, including promotion of employment in the tourism and cultural areas;
- Development of research and technology;
- Development of local, regional and trans-Europe transport, telecommunication and energy networks and underlying infrastructure;
- Environmental protection and development;
- Guaranteeing equality between men and women in the sphere of employment.

European Social Fund (ESF)

The ESF was developed to eradicate all forms of discrimination and inequality in the labour market, as well as develop human resources, promote the development of an information society. With the support of ESF, the introduction of the European Employment Strategy, Annual Employment Guideline and National Action Plan development is being implemented.

ESF promote and support member-state activities in labour market and human resource development, particularly if these activities are included in the member-state's multi-annual human resource development plans developed. ESF financing can be channelled to the following activities:

- development and promotion of an active labour market, to encourage employment, eliminate long-term unemployment for women and men, promote integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market and support young persons' professional integration;
- equal opportunity promotion in the labour market, paying particular attention to those social risk groups under threat of becoming social outcasts;
- training, education, consultation system improvement for promotion of life-education with the aim to promote and improve access and integration into the labour market, as well as encourage mobility of the labour-force;
- development of a qualified, educated and adaptable labour-force, promotion of creativity and adaptability, promotion of an environment favourable to the creation of business and new work-places, increased employee skills and potential in areas of research, science and technology;
- activities that promote women's participation in the labour market.

European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF)

The Fund supports agricultural re-structuring and rural development promotion activities. Within the present policy framework, financing is accessible for:

- income support for agriculture and viable agrarian community maintenance in mountainous or agriculturally less favourable areas;

- support for new farmers to begin farming;
- improvement of farm effectiveness;
- development of producer association;
- agricultural product diversification and quality improvement;
- rural infrastructure development;
- investments for tourism development;
- other activities – such as prevention/elimination of effects of natural catastrophes, renewal of rural communities, rural heritage protection, foresting, research and development activities, environmental and rural protection and financial services.

Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG)

The Fund was developed in 1993 with the aim to ensure structural activities in the fishing and water management branches, as well as the processing of these products in industry and marketing.

The objective of activities supported by FIFG is to:

- help achieve a steady fish-farming resource and utilisation balance;
- strengthen structures for the development of structures for competitive and economically stable branch enterprises;
- improve fish-farming and water management product market supply and added value;

promote renewal of those areas that are dependent on fish-farming and water management.

In the programming period from 2004 to 2006, the Structural Fund financing base document is the Single Programme Document (SPD), which has been prepared in partnership with social and economic partners and regional representatives. In the Programming period from 2004 to 2006, Latvia will have access to EU Structural Fund financing to the scope of 625 million Euro, for which State co-financing will be guaranteed (from the State Budget, Local Government Budgets and private financing) to the scope of approximately 204.96 million Euro.

Four thematic priorities are defined in the SPD, as well as Technical Assistance:

Priority	Title	Structural Fun	% of SF
1.	Promotion of balanced development	ERDF	32,58 %
2.	Promotion of entrepreneurial activity and innovation	ERDF	25%
3.	Promotion of human resource development and employ	ESF	21,22 %
4.	Promotion of agricultural, rural and viable fishery deve	EAGGF un FIF	18.49%
5.	Technical Assistance	ERDF, ESF, EAGGF	2,71 %