Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatization of the Slovak Republic

Evaluation of the communication and information activities in the programming period 2014 - 2020 (phase one)

Final Evaluation Report (Final version)

Tento projekt bol spolufinancovaný Európskou úniou.

KPMG Slovensko spol. s r.o.

31. 05. 2017

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1 Introduction

The presented document is the *Final evaluation report* within fulfilment of *Work part 1 Evaluation of the communication and information activities in the programming period 2014 – 2020 (phase one)* (hereinafter referred to as the "project" or "work") on the grounds of Partial contract agreement no. 690/2016 entered into on 26. 05. 2016 between the Government's Office of the SR as the Client and the consortium of firms KPMG Slovensko, spol. s r. o., Bratislava and stengl, a. s. as the Contractor.

In the course of the Project, partial reports were prepared, as follows:

- Initial report of 27 July 2016,
- Interim evaluation report - part 1 of 30 August 2016, and
- Interim evaluation report of 26 October 2016.

The Initial report contains, in addition to the technical parts such as description of the methodology used in the evaluation, Project timeframe, personnel resources, etc., an analysis and consolidation of the measurable indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the Communication Strategy of OP TA for PA for the years 2014 – 2020 (hereinafter referred to as the "ComS") and a methodology for a public opinion poll including the questionnaire itself.

The Interim evaluation report - part 1 contains an analysis of ComS and Annual communication plan for OP TA for PA per 2016 (hereinafter referred to as the "2016 ACP"), including a repeated assessment of the measurable indicators for monitoring and evaluation of ComS.

The Interim report deals with a detailed elaboration of the methodology for the theory of change (which is key for the conduct of evaluation within the Final evaluation report) and final configuration of the monitoring and evaluation system, including setting of the target values for measurable indicators.

The Final evaluation report reflects the process of evaluation and its individual sub-parts and presents all the important results, findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions ensuing therefrom.

The report contains the following subject-matter parts:

- interim evaluation results;
- an analysis and evaluation of the information activities performed in 2016;
- an analysis of the initial media campaign;
- an analysis and evaluation of the results of the public opinion poll;
- results of testing of a theory of change in the approach to information and communication within European Structural and Investment Funds (hereinafter referred to as the "ESIF");
- an analysis and evaluation of meeting of the 2016 ACP objectives;
- an analysis and evaluation of meeting of the ComS objectives;

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- answers to the evaluation questions;
- suggestions to refine the setting of the information and communication system at the PA SR level;
- findings, conclusions and recommendations.

From the perspective of evaluation tasks according to the specified work requirements, the tasks are processed in the report as follows:

Task no. 4.1.1 A suggestion for a methodology for interim evaluation of ComS and re-defined setting of the indicators

A ComS evaluation methodology was defined in the Initial report of this evaluation. The indicator settings were re-assessed continually during the evaluation, while the final indicator setting is specified in the Appendix J hereof.

Task no. 4.1.2 2016 ACP analysis

2016 ACP analysis was elaborated in detail in the Interim evaluation report - part 1, a summary of the analysis is also provided in chapters 6.1.6.5, 6.8 and 8 herein.

Task no. 4.2 Re-defined configuration of the information and communication system at the level of the Partnership Agreement of the SR

Elaboration of this task is subject of the chapter 6.8 herein.

Task no. 4.3 A questionnaire-based public opinion poll among the general public

In terms of the methodology of the public opinion poll (task no. 4.3.1), it is provided in the Initial report of this evaluation, the questionnaire itself is also contained in Appendix E hereof, including some methodical information. The public opinion poll has been assessed in chapter 6.3.3 and the detailed results are provided in Appendix F hereof (task 4.3.2).

Task no. 4.4 Interim evaluation of the conduct and fulfilment of ComS per 2016

Performance of this task is provided in the remaining chapters herein.

The Final evaluation report was discussed between the Client and the Contractor. When the Contractor presented the draft Final report and its outputs to the Client, the Contractor incorporated the Client's comments in the final version of the Final evaluation report.

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2 Summary

Background

Entities involved in implementation of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance (hereinafter referred to as the "OP TA") must ensure that information and communication comply with the relevant national and European legislation in relation to the target groups, aiming for a better, more efficient and transparent implementation of assistance from the European Structural and Investment Funds (hereinafter referred to as "ESIF") and emphasizing the contribution of the European Union (hereinafter the "EU") and its Cohesion Policy supporting economic growth, employment and mitigation of regional differences.

The basic strategic document of the information and communication policy at the level of Partnership Agreement of the SR for the years 2014 - 2020 (hereinafter referred to as "PA SR") is **the Communication Strategy of the OP TA for the PA for the period of 2014 - 2020** (hereinafter referred to as the "ComS"). The ComS is further specified in the **Annual Communication Plans**, which describe the planned information and communication activities per given year in detail.

Subject and purpose of evaluation

The overall subject and purpose of the evaluation conducted is the first interim evaluation of implementation of the ComS and 2016 ACP including the design of evaluation methodology which can be applied to the subsequent interim evaluations and recommendations for improved informing and communicating about ESIF.

The subject and purpose of this report is mainly the detailed analysis of information and communication activities performed on the basis of 2016 ACP, an analysis and assessment of their purpose and effectiveness with regard to the ComS objectives, addressing the evaluation questions, identification of suggestions to reassess the system of information and communication at the level of PA SR and formulation of findings, conclusions and recommendations for the conduct of information and communication going further.

Evaluation methodology

In terms of methodology, author of the report proceeded using standard methods, such as: desk research in the scope of analysis of relevant documents, semi-structured (in-depth) interview with relevant personnel engaged in information and communication at the GO SR; a comparative analysis as a tool for evaluation of the real versus planned performance of information and communication; a (questionnaire) opinion poll as an elementary tool for assessing the level of ESIF awareness among general public; an online (questionnaire) survey of professional public; a theory-based impacts evaluation testing functionality and effectiveness of relationships between inputs, outputs and results of a process; and a synthesis whereby outputs and findings of the aforementioned methods are used to formulate both general and specific conclusions and recommendations.

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Description of the monitored period

The monitored period started with the first implemented activity - a seminar named *GOING LOCAL "Act locally - Effective communication of the European Structural and Investment Funds in Slovakia* ", which was held on 16. 03. 2016 in Bratislava. The monitored period ended on 31. 12. 2016.

The Information and Publicity Department of the Slovak Government's Office implemented - either individually or as a partner - the following **activities in the monitored period**: initial media campaign on ESIF, operated portal www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk, operated a social network (Facebook) profile https://www.facebook.com/euuvsr/, supported issuing of information publications (a flyer on ESIF evaluation, a brochure about possibilities of ESIF support for entrepreneurs, Eurokompas magazine), organized promotional events (Roadshow - a series of promotional events at secondary schools together with a competition, a social and cultural event at the occasion of Europe Day), supported promotional events (providing prizes, sitting in the jury for the competition called Young European 2016), co-organized a professional seminar, ensured operation of the information center (answering questions addressed to a contact center by phone, email or in person), ensured production of promotional give-aways, organized two meetings of the working group for ESIF-related information and communication, issued press releases, organized a competition of videos for students and maintained a list of projects.

Summary of responses to evaluation questions

As per **first evaluation question** "*To what extent are the objectives of the communication strategy for the Partnership Agreement SR relevant to the needs?*", the response is that all of the specific ComS objectives are absolutely relevant to the needs. It means they meet the needs as objectives which are to be fulfilled by information and communication on ESIF in compliance with the relevant EU legislation, Slovak legislation and methodical documents of the Central Coordination Authority (hereinafter referred to as the "CCA"). At the same time they correspond with the subjective needs for ESIF information as expressed by the general and professional public.

As per **second evaluation question** "*To what extent have the objectives been met with respect to the communication strategy for the Partnership Agreement SR and the annual communication plan of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance for the Partnership Agreement SR?*", the objectives of the 2016 ACP cannot be evaluated univocally since they were defined broadly, insufficiently and non-complementarily with the ComS. ComS specific objectives were evaluated using defined indicators/criteria. In case of the first two objectives the progress of fulfillment of the relevant indicators (level of ESIF awareness, level of positive ESIF perception, both measured among general public) per 2016 was adequate (fulfillment reached about 90 %, or 79 % of the planned values), therefore interim fulfillment of objectives was adequate. In case of the next two objectives, these three criteria were assessed: quality of the information provided, correlation between information and success rate of projects/operational programmes and finally, the usefulness of information provided. Professional public respondents had a mostly positive view of quality aspects as well as usefulness of the information rendered via GO SR's activities. There was identified a positive correlation between successful implementation of projects or programmes and information activities of GO

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SR. However, it needs to be pointed out that the criteria are of a complex nature and were evaluated based on the subjective opinion of participants in the questionnaire survey, i. e. the results should be considered as a certain statistical trend and not an absolute causal link.

As per **third evaluation question** "*To what extent was the result of activities under the annual communication plan of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance for the Partnership Agreement SR affected by other factors which did not result directly from the implemented activities?*", a general principle of mutual influence prevails in information and communication activities by all entities (regardless of GO SR or MA), hence the results of the ESIF awareness level cannot be assigned to a single entity (a respondent's knowledge of ESIF, his perception of ESIF based on certain values or perception of ESIF transparency, etc. may have resulted from any entity's activity or any of the measures or a combination of both). Factors that could have a notable effect on the achieved results in 2016 include: information and promotion campaigns of other entities, problems in public procurement (the most important factor), parliament elections in March 2016 and separation of the IPD from the CCA. Among factors of lesser importance are information and consulting centers of the CCA in the regions (since they only started to operate in 2016).

As per **forth evaluation question** "*How did the implemented activities of the annual communication plan of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance fro the Partnership Agreement SR contribute to the real results? What types of activities make sense to implement in the future?*", the contribution of GO SR's activities towards fulfillment of the overall objectives is mostly evaluated as marginal or low. Most of the IPD GO SR activities have a marginal or low effect on the target group due to low numbers of people directly impacted by the IPD GO SR activities. Activites with a bigger impact include: portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk and a media campaign. A little less effective were Eurokompas magazine and the publication for entrepreneurs. A lower contribution of an activity to the fulfillment of the objectives is not a reason for their automatic irrelevance, since ComS objectives are defined in a very broad and complex manner (many entities and circumstances contribute to the fulfillment of an objective). Activities of IPD GO SR are horizontal in nature and are not replaceable by activities of individual OPs.

In terms of the future and the contribution to fulfillment of ComS objectives, it makes sense to implement, after certain improvements and optimization, most types of activities used to-date. With regard to the near-term future, activity on Facebook can be considered as less effective, unless there is a strategy change, e. g. a systematic promotion of posts and increased number of fans, as well as their engagement on the YouTube platform, if YouTube does not serve as a "hub" for the video content which will be further distributed on other web pages. Although the Work Group for information and communication and the professional seminar were relevant because of their exclusivity for information and communication, but not appropriate within the context of ComS implementation.

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Summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations

Overall evaluation of ComS

The structure of ComS framework can be evaluated as compliant with the EU legislation as well as requirements at the national level. In terms of content, the ComS contains sufficiently and relatively well described target groups, information and communication activities including their allocation to target groups. Less clear or insufficient parts include: unclear relation between the starting point and its influence on the design of ComS, insufficiently defined specific objectives as well as missing further detailed description. Allocated funds for the performance of central information and communication are higher compared to the PP 2007 - 2013. Allocation of increased funds can be regarded positively on one hand side since it allows for proper implementation of information and communication activity or implementation with increased intensity. On the other, it poses a risk due to past experience with potential under-drawing.

Overall evaluation of 2016 ACP

The 2016 ACP does not differ significantly from the requirements for ACPs defined in MI CCA no. 16 and it can be assessed as compliant with baseline requirements set out in MI CCA no. 16. In terms of content, it can be assessed as general, lacking a greater depth of detail in certain aspects (mainly specification of clear-cut objectives and a more detailed description of planned information activities), and that diminishes its adequacy for its use as a true annual planning document, but also its nature as a tool for implementing ComS.

Evaluation of implementation of the 2016 ACP

IPD **made an adequate use of current possibilities of information and communication**. Informing by IPD can be assessed as standard with the use of common communication means on one hand side, but without any innovative elements on the other.

Summary of findings of the initial media campaign in 2016

Professionally, **the initial media campaign** was handled **very well and corresponds with the standards of the advertising industry**. The campaign had a high potential to deliver its message and meet the campaign objectives. The campaign would have had even higher impact if television was deployed.

Based on the postbuy analysis, **the campaign had a potential to effectively reach** (it does not meant that it also automatically did reach, since e. g. a person read a certain daily but did not have to notice the specific ad):

- through press **58 %** of Slovak population (effective reach of the used periodicals);
- through radio **77 %** of Slovak population (effective reach of the used stations);

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- through internet **68 %** of Slovak population (68 % of Slovak population is online).

Summary of findings regarding the level and aspects of ESIF awareness

88.6 % of the approached respondents expressed their knowledge of the fact that the **EU provides financial means** for the development of various areas of economy of its member states, e. g. regional development. At the same time 48.6 % of the approached respondents said they had come across the topic of EU funds and their operational programmes. The second measured value is lower than the long-term average of the general knowledge of the EU funds existence among the Slovak public. This group probably does not include all the respondents who have some knowledge of the EU funds but only people who have come across the topic of the EU funds in some detail. Therefore it may be assumed that the general awareness of the existence of the EU funds is higher. **The level of public awareness of the possibilities of ESIF assistance** may be, based on the professional estimate, assessed at the level of **68 %**, i. e. as the mean value of "general" knowledge of the existence of the EU financial assistance (88.6 %) and a "more detailed" knowledge of the EU funds (48.6 %).

Knowledge of the fact that since 2014 **a new programming period** is underway for drawing ESIF was declared by the relatively low share of respondents, specifically 53.7 % of those who came across the topic of the EU funds. 29.8 % knew the Partnership Agreement SR for 2014 - 2020.

The most frequently used **source of information** about the EU funds by **the general public** was television (82.5 %), followed by press (52.1 %) and radio (51.0 %). Internet was quoted as a moderately used source of information (44.4 %; while 17.7 % respondents quoted the OP web page, 17.7 % the PA SR web page, 37.2 % other web page). The second most frequently identified source of information about the EU funds were "colleagues, friends, acquaintances" (with 64.0 %, following the television). "Project billboard or poster" also achieved high score which suggests that the public "fixes" the publicity elements of projects and therefore are relevant.

Overall, it may be stated that the public familiar with the EU funds is not principally unhappy with how they are informed about the EU funds. **A higher tendency towards discontent is among respondents who actively seek for ESIF information**, however, those are only about 1/10 of the public familiar with ESIF**.**

General as well as professional public (not only in relation to IPD) indicate that there is enough information, the problem is rather with **its comprehensibility**.

The **positive perception of the EU funds among the general public largely prevails,** seeing them as a unique opportunity for the development of the SR (rather yes and definitely yes, 81.5 % of those who have come across the topic of the EU funds). The perception of the impact of information provided via media to form the public opinion is largely positive (71.6 % of those who have come across the topic of the EU funds said that the information from media create a definitely positive or rather positive opinion).

Approximately **every 11th citizen of Slovakia who came across the topic of the EU funds**, takes an **active interest** in the EU funds at the same time. The share of actively interested respondents is unlikely to grow rapidly.

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Recommendations for the future

Recommendations regarding ComS

With regard to the fact that the document was approved at several levels, **author of the report recommends**, regardless of its drawbacks, **to update only particular items in ComS**, especially to consolidate measurable indicators including setting of target values for all indicators, ensure that all the publicity requirements are met (at the minimum the EU logo, reference to OP and the fund) and to remove potential basic factual discrepancies or inconsistency across chapters (use a consistent list of information activities). Additionally, the specific objectives should be worked out in greater detail and more precise.

Recommendations for the development of future ACP

As per formal side of the document it is certainly inevitable to comply with all the publicity principles and it is appropriate to improve the graphic layout of the document.

The ACP background analysis should have been based on an analysis of activities in the previous period. Recommended is to apply the following principles in formulation of the background analysis:

- in the beginning provide the context and reasons/purpose of the analysis;
- the background analysis should contain quantitative and/or qualitative evaluation of the activities in the previous period;
- the analysis should also contain a summary of how the findings contained therein will be applied to practice and how they would be reflected in performance of information and communication measures and activities in the future;
- analysis should serve as a supporting argument both for continuing and the same performance of activities (because they are successful and have a purpose) or for changing the performance (because they did not bring the expected result).

When formulating objectives, it is necessary to align them with the ComS's specific objectives and a greater itemization of the objectives at the operational level (objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, responsible and time-related).

When formulating a **communication plan**, or describing the planned information and communication activities, a greater depth of detail is necessary (not only a title or a brief factual statement), especially with regard to the activity objectives, its subject matter, scope, intensity, expected results and last but not least a description of which specific objective benefits from the given ACP activity.

Budgeting should be based on a better description of the planned activities and should take into account the experience from the previous programming period (prices of goods and services rendered).

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Recommendations for the performance of monitoring and evaluation of the measured indicators

Adhere to the monitoring system configured in the course of evaluation and annually record data including description of the values achieved (see Appendix J hereof). Appendix J hereof contains a complete evaluation of performance of the measurable indicators per 2016.

Recommendations for implementation of the information and communication activities in the next period for the purposes of improved effectiveness in fulfillment of objectives and anticipated results.

1. **Media campaigns** of several OPs should be implemented in such a manner that they are conducted one after another, not collaterally. Work group for information and communication should be the point where campaigns can be coordinated.
2. Replace the general promotion of the EU funds with a **promotion of positive impacts of the EU funds.**
3. In the case of activities implemented in a given region, it is desired to **inform about the impacts of the EU-funded support in that region**.
4. Prefer **presence at selected social and cultural events** e. g. by having a promotional stand at festivals, days of a town or village and other events rather than organizing separate "ESIF events".
5. More direct and intense of CCA into the process of central information and communication in line with its delegated responsibilities for PA implementation, management and coordination of using ESIF in SR as well as strengthening its capacity and professional resources in this area within the DPMOII organization structure.
6. Consider establishing of the **common management structure** for information and communication with the presence of management representatives of CCA, IPD, MA/IB and also with attendance of relevant specialists in order to ensure effective coordination, common methods and tools as well as control over their application and review of the agreed tasks.
7. With regard to the authorities of CCA and IPD and in order to avoid duplication of MA/IB activities they should focus more on the following:
   - providing information on PA SR progress and EUROPE 2020 strategy;
   - providing progress information about areas of implementation of OP's;
   - provide information about ESIF contribution and communicate horizontal areas or other subjects' areas not covered by the OP's;
   - more intensive involvement in maintaining the information and consulting centers.
8. The content and form of communication should be **made more accessible to disabled persons**, i. e. remove barriers in the access to information.
9. Amend the online communication strategy with **search marketing** (SEM and SEO).
10. **Make the portal** partnerskadohoda.gov.sk **more user-friendly for different needs of the target groups**, by changing the home page structure where a clear signpost for individual types of visitors with redirection to the relevant content and subsites of the web portal.

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11. **Information events** can be considered the type of an activity which **has the potential** to reach the general public target group. Always hold them in several or all the regions of Slovakia and run them jointly with a media campaign, at least in the regional media.
12. Align the media channels with the budget and objectives - in case of spreading **the most generic promotional information** with higher budgets the most appropriate media type is the **television**, possibly combined with out-of-door advertising. **The press and radio** are more adequate in communicating complex ideas. Obviously, internet cannot be omitted, in the medium-term its importance and thus its information weight will keep growing in the Slovak population, especially with younger target groups.
13. The creative component should be aligned with media type where it will be communicated.
14. With regard to a profile on the social network **Facebook** improve the creative component of the content and consider a strategy for further profile development.
15. Implementation of activities focused on students or the young seems to be **effective**.
16. Prepare **professional videos** (spots/stories), whether of informative, instructive or promotional character (project benefits, infographics of the implementation progress and the like), with the possibility of sharing via video magazine or on a YouTube channel.
17. Add a tool to the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk for **automatic generation of posters, placards and boards**, which the beneficiaries must create for their projects.
18. Compared to the video competition, a **photographic competition** seems to be a much simpler form with a greater potential of a more massive participation.
19. In communication with the public, attach specific **benefits** to the abstract figures, make use of **personal stories and emotional aspects**.
20. In order to evaluate the quality of activities, **collect feedback** from participants upon the completion of an activity.
21. It would be appropriate for the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk **to post not only publications** created upon the CCA or IPD's initiative, but also from **other OPs' initiative**.
22. Align the published **lists of projects** with the requirements of the general regulation.

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3 List of abbreviations

ACP	Annual communication plan
API	Application Programming Interface
Business ID	identification number of an organization
CATI	Computer-assisted telephone interviewing
CCA	Central Coordinating Authority
CF	Cohesion Fund
ComS	Communication strategy of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance for the Partnership Agreement of the SR for the years 2014 – 2020
CPC	Cost per Click
CPP	Cost per Point
CPT	Cost per Thousand
CSS	Cascading style sheets
CSV	Comma-separated values
CTR	Click-through Rate
DITMS	ITMS department at the Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatization of the SR
DMaCE	Department of methodology and coordination of entities at the Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatization of the SR
DPMOII	Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatization of the Slovak Republic
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EC	European Community
EK	European Commission
EMFF	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

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EP	European Parliament
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
ESO	Effective, reliable and open public administration
EU	European Union
FB	Facebook
GO SR	Government Office of the Slovak Republic
GRP	Gross rating point
HP	horizontal principle
IB	intermediary body
ICC	information and consulting center
IER	Interim evaluation report
IPD	Information and publicity department at the Government Office of the Slovak Republic
IROP	Integrated Regional Operational Programme
ITMS2014+	Information monitoring system 2014+
MA	managing authority
MC	monitoring committee
MF SR	Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic
MI CCA	methodical instruction of the CCA
MML-TGI®	Market & Media & Lifestyle – Target Group Index ® - ongoing research of consumer behavior, media and lifestyle
NC SR	National Council of the Slovak Republic
NFP	non-repayable Financial Contribution
NSRF	National Strategic Reference Framework

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OLAF	The European Anti-Fraud Office
OP	operational programme
OPEaSI	Operational programme Employment and social inclusion
OPEPA	Operational programme Effective Public Administration
OPF	Operational programme Fisheries
OPH	Operational programme Healthcare
OPHR	Operational programme Human Resources
OPII	Operational programme Integrated Infrastructure
OPIS	Operational programme Informatisation of Society
OPQE	Operational programme Quality of Environment
OPRaI	Operational programme Research and Innovation
OPT	Operational programme Transportation
OPTA	Operational programme Technical Assistance
PA SR	Partnership Agreement of the SR for the years 2014 – 2020
PO	programming period
PP	public procurement
PR	Public Relations
RP	Request for Payment
SEM	Search engine marketing (a form of internet marketing)
SEO	Search engine optimization
SK PRES	Slovak Presidency of the Council of the European Union
SMART	acronym giving criteria to guide in the setting of objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Responsible, Time-related)
SO	specific objective
SR	Slovak Republic

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SYSM ESIF	Management system of the ESIF
TA3	TA3 news channel
TASR	The News Agency of the Slovak Republic
TV	television
VAT	value added tax
XML	eXtensible Markup Language
ACP	Annual communication plan

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4 Legislative background

EU legislation

REGULATION (EU) No 1303/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 (hereinafter referred to as the „**CPR**“);

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) No 821/2014 of 28 July 2014 laying down rules for the application of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards detailed arrangements for the transfer and management of programme contributions, the reporting on financial instruments, technical characteristics of information and communication measures for operations and the system to record and store data (hereinafter referred to as the „**implementing regulation**“).

Slovak legislation

Act no. 211/2000 Coll on free access to information and on the change and amendment of several acts as later amended;

Act no. 292/2014 Coll. on the contribution granted from the European structural and investment funds and on the change and amendment of several Acts;

Act no. 122/2013 Coll. on the protection of personal data and on the change and amendment of several acts as provided by the Act no. 84/2014 Coll. (hereinafter the "Personal Data Protection Act");

Act no. 32/2001 Coll., which is a complete wording of the Act o the NC SR no. 212/1997 Coll. on mandatory hard copies of periodicals, non-periodic publications and copies of audiovisual works, as follows from changes and amendments laid down by Act no. 182/2000 Coll.;

Act no. 167/2008 on Periodicals and News Agencies and on changes and amendments to several acts (Press Act) as later amended;

Regulation of the Slovak Government no. 498/2011 Coll. laying down details on Reporting Contracts in the Central Register of Contracts and the Particulars of the Required Contract Information.

Others

Partnership Agreement of the SR for the years 2014 – 2020;

Operational programme Technical Assistance for the programming period 2014 – 2020;

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Management system of the European structural and investment funds for the programming period 2014 – 2020;

Methodical instruction of the CCA no. 16, version 1 for informing and communication about the ESIF;

Communication strategy of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance for the Partnership Agreement of the SR for the years 2014 – 2020;

Manual for informing and communication of 20 April 2015;

Annual communication plan of the Operational programme Technical Assistance for the Partnership Agreement per 2016;

Evaluation of information and publicity in programming period 2007 - 2013 (CCA, 2015);

Linda G. Morra Imas, Ray C. Rist: *The Road to results. Designing and Conducting Effective Development Evaluations.* International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, 2009.

Evalsed Sourcebook: Method and Techniques (September 2013).[1]

Evaluation of Selected Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund Interventions Using Counterfactual Impact Evaluation Methods. Final report. Government Office of the SR, Central Coordinating Authority, May 2015.[2]

[1] Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/guide/evaluation_sourcebook.pdf; 03. 06. 2016.
[2] Available from: http://www.nsrr.sk/sk/hodnotenie/programove-obdobie-2007---2013/, 03. 06. 2016.

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5 Evaluation methodology

From the time perspective and perspective of deployed research methods, the implementation was conducted in three connected phases:

1. **Preparation/initial phase**, where the Contractor performed an overall review of data, identified key resources and defined the evaluation methodology to be applied. In this phase the Contractor applied especially the method of desk research in the scope of mapping, summary and collection of the necessary documents.
2. **The phase of collecting data, analyses and the evaluation itself**, where the Contractor applied these research methods:
    a. ***desk research*** in the scope of analysis of relevant documents;
    b. **semi-structured (in-depth) interview**, a qualitative method aiming to find out more details about the recent progress and current status of delivering information and communication by CCA and IPD;
    c. **a comparative analysis** as a tool for evaluation of the real versus planned performance of information and communication; the comparison was conducted both from the qualitative and quantitative perspectives;
    d. **a (questionnaire) opinion poll** as an elementary tool for assessing the level of ESIF awareness among general public;
    e. **an online (questionnaire) survey of professional public**[3];
    f. **a theory-based impacts evaluation**;
    g. **a synthesis** whereby outputs and findings of the aforementioned methods are used to formulate both general and specific conclusions and recommendations.
3. **Preparation and finalization of evaluation reports**, which represent a formal drawing up of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The key part of the evaluation methodology approach is the theory of change and the story of contributions, provided in Appendix C hereof.

[3] The survey of the professional audience was not processed separately such as the public opinion poll in chapter 6.3.3 herein. The selected results of the survey among the professional audience are used as specific supporting arguments, the complete results together with a brief description of the survey are provided in Appendix H hereof.

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6 Evaluation results

6.1 Interim evaluation results

This chapter contains a **summary of findings** related to the two backbone documents for the evaluation that is the **Communication Strategy and the 2016 Annual Communication Plan**. The analysis and evaluation of both documents is provided in detail in the Interim evaluation report - part 1.

The second self-contained part which was analyzed prior to the evaluation itself is the **analysis and reassessment of the system of measurable indicators** of information and communication pursuant to MI CCA no. 16, ComS and 2016 ACP. This topic is covered by each of the earlier outputs – Initial report, Interim evaluation report - part 1 as well as the Interim evaluation report. **In the course of evaluation the measurable indicators were consolidated**, in the sense of defining them with a greater detail (since this was missing in both the ComS and the 2016 ACP) and setting their target values (since this was absent or inaccurate). The result of such changes in the monitoring system **is reflected by a comprehensive table of measurable indicators provided in Appendix J** hereof.

Overall evaluation of ComS

The structure of ComS framework can be evaluated as **compliant** with the EU legislation as well as requirements at the national level. **In terms of content**, the ComS contains **sufficiently and relatively well described** target groups, information and communication activities including their allocation to target groups. **Less clear or insufficient parts** include: unclear relation between the starting point and its influence on the design of ComS, insufficiently defined specific objectives as well as missing further detailed description. Allocated **funds** for the performance of central information and communication are higher compared to the PP 2007 - 2013. Allocation of increased funds can be regarded **positively** on one hand side since it allows for **proper** implementation of information and communication activity or implementation with increased intensity. On the other, it poses a risk due to past experience with potential under-drawing.

Overall evaluation of 2016 ACP

The 2016 ACP does not differ significantly from the requirements for ACPs defined in MI CCA no. 16 and it can be assessed as **compliant with baseline requirements set out in MI CCA no. 16**. In terms of content, it can be assessed as general, **lacking a greater depth of detail in certain aspects** (mainly specification of clear-cut objectives and a more detailed description of planned information activities), and that diminishes its adequacy for its use as a true annual planning document, but also its nature as a tool for implementing ComS.

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Summary of findings

Formal aspects of the 2016 ACP can be deemed as sufficient regarding the requirements for an ACP structure – it contains all the required parts according to the MI CCA no. 16, and insufficient regarding the overall formal and graphic arrangement of the document which makes the document less clear and less comprehensible.

Low formal and content quality in processing of the **background situation**. In terms of structure, appropriate parts are presented, i. e. analysis of the media environment in Slovakia and the results of a public opinion poll on awareness of the SF and CF, however, in terms of content, they are brief, general as if incomplete, without providing implications for the design of the 2016 ACP. The only obvious and direct reference to the background situation is the defined initial value of a measurable indicator regarding the level of ESIF awareness.

Setting of objectives in the 2016 ACP is deemed as generic, insufficient and non-complementary with ComS.

Setting of information and communication measures/tools/activities in the 2016 ACP is based on MI CCA no. 16, not directly on ComS. Regarding the text structure, the approach is different but not so in terms of the content. Especially in cases of complex activities, such as Country Tour, Roadshow, etc. a more detailed description of individual activities is missing.

Despite the framework definition of the three main **target group** categories in line with the ComS, the 2016 ACP uses in assigning target groups to the information and communication measures/tools/activities a more specified break-down of the target groups while their link to one of the three ComS categories is not always clear (e. g. grant applicants).

Budget for information and communication was adjusted in the 2016 ACP compared to the ComS budget - the unconsumed allocation for 2015 was distributed to the following years. However, the original overall allocation was not preserved with that adjustment (17,825,000 € vs. 18,350,750 € after the adjustment). With regard to the missing description and characteristics of individual information and communication activities it was not possible to clearly assess the relevance and adequacy of the planned financial resources. Regardless of that fact it can also be stated that the declared amount of the planned funds allows for implementation of all activities at a high qualitative level, possibly with high intensity (this is a gross estimate of the author of the report, because of missing detailed activity description).

The principal drawback, in addition to disarranged **measurable indicators**, is a failure to quantify indicator target values in the 2016 ACP. The target values for 2016 are set only for some measurable indicators of the 2016 ACP

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6.2 Analysis and evaluation of the information activities except the initial promotional media campaign

The chapter contains evaluation of implementation of individual activities which were planned for 2016 pursuant to 2016 ACP. There are evaluated all of the implemented activities in the chapter except activities related to the initial media campaign which are evaluated in chapter 6.3 hereof.

The following table contains an overview of activities in 2016, while other tables contain evaluation of the ones which were implemented. Activities, which were not implemented, were not evaluated.

Table 1 *Overall overview of activity implementation in 2016*

Activity planned according to 2016 ACP	Note
Internet and online communication - website, Facebook - creation of viral videos	 Implemented. Not implemented.
Advertising: - radio, press, internet - TV, out-of-home	 Implemented. Not implemented.
Professional publications	Not implemented.
Information publications - flyer "ESIF evaluation" - publication 'Entrepreneurs and EU funds for the period of 2014-2020" - magazine Eurokompas	Implemented.
Digital	Not implemented.
Information activities - Seminar "Act locally", Young European, Europe Day, Roadshow - Digital European, Country Tour, Annual conference OP TA	 Implemented. Not implemented.
Direct contact - professional counselling - questionnaires, newsletters	 Implemented. Not implemented.

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Promotional give-aways	Implemented.
Meetings of Work group for information and communication	Implemented.
PR activities - media relations/ press releases - media monitoring, press conferences, breakfasts with journalists	 Implemented. Not implemented.
Geographic map of successfully implemented projects	Not implemented (technical solution is ready but with regard to missing data - non-existence of projects - it has not been launched live yet).
Integrated network of information and consultation centers	Not implemented by GO SR, IPD. Implemented by DPMOII, CCA.
Other tools - marketing survey, displaying EU flag, competition of video stories and spots - special education activities for CCA	 Implemented. There were 2 specific trainings held, however, with a view to the fact that SO no. 5 is not subject to evaluation, these are not evaluated further.

Source: Contractor, May 2017

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Website www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk

Website www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk

1. Relevance to specific objectives in ComS[4]

Activity is fully relevant for fulfilment of ComS's specific objectives no. 1, 2, 3 and 4.

2. A brief activity description

Activity comprises operation of the website www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk, which serves as a joint web portal according to the CPR provisions and resulting from the PA SR as well. IPD GO SR is responsible for the portal content and its updates.

The portal contains horizontal menu with links to topical sub-pages (e. g. calls, news, CCA, operational programmes, ICC, partners, education of AC ESIF, documents to download, quick links, etc.). The portal contains a link to the Facebook profile and to YouTube, as well as e-versions of the Eurokompas magazine. The portal also contains an events calendar as well as a possibility to subscribe for latest information - Newsletter.

In terms of content, the portal contains all kinds of information in outline which are appropriate and necessary for fulfilment of the purpose of a joint information portal. There are parts adequate for professional public (calls, CCA, etc.) and parts adequate for the general public (photo gallery, etc.).

The content is regularly updated by IPD GO SR's staff, the CCA sub-page is updated by OMaCS DPMOII.

3. Activity outputs

Operation of the website www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk.

Measurable indicators:

Not relevant, never set.

4. Activity results

Measurable indicators:

Website traffic (14)

2016 ACP defines the target value at 25,000 accesses. Within IER of this evaluation, the metrics of this indicator was adjusted to the number of sessions and the target value for 2016 was also addressed, at the level of 1,415,116 sessions.

Value achieved in 2016: 1,477,435 sessions.

[4] Only relevance to the first 4 specific objectives in ComS is evaluated herein, since the SO no. 5 was evaluated as not relevant overall for ComS (see more detail in Interim evaluation report for this evaluation). Given the fact that the 2016 ACP objectives were defined as generic, insufficient and non-complementary with the ComS's specific objectives, relevance of activities for the purposes of fulfilment of the 2016 ACP objectives is not evaluated.

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Website www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk

5. Compliance with 2016 ACP

Activity timeline

Implementation of the activity was compliant with the 2016 ACP timeline, i. e. website was active and updated on an ongoing basis during the entire monitored period, i. e. year 2016.

Activity budget

According to the 2016 ACP, the indicative budget planned was EUR 75,000 (incl. VAT) for the activity "Internet and online communication". The 2016 ACP does not provide what portion of the budget should be dedicated to the content development of the website.

Expenses for website administration for 2016 paid from the ComS budget were EUR 0.

Activity scope

The activity was implemented in line with the planned scope, i. e. ongoing content creation for the website throughout 2016.

6. Projected activity impact (intermediary results of the activity)

Implementation of the activity has a positive effect on fulfilment of the defined intermediary results according to the appendices C and D hereof.

7. External factors/context for activity implementation

The implementation of the activity during the year was fluent and not affected by any factors with significant impact on the activity results. Timely and adequate updates of the portal depend on the delivery of information by MA/IB. Some MA/IBs are active and proactively communicate with IPD, others need to be requested by IPD to provide materials for the purposes of information updates.

Results related to the number of sessions could have been positively affected by the media campaign in progress, whereby the website was promoted (as a domain www.eufondy.sk which is linked to www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk; within the banner advertising which linked the banner to the said address www.eufondy.sk), this could have affected the web traffic positively. Banner ad received 42,997 clicks through the banner to the website, a part of them was recorded in the number of sessions.

8. Findings and recommendations

Findings:

portal contains all kinds of information, which is suitable and necessary for meeting the purpose of a joint information portal

visual and graphic design of the portal are clear with a neat outline, there is an initial slider with images on the home page which feels contemporary and aesthetic (but it misses any functionality)

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Website www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk

- the section of open calls on the home page is adequate - with clear outline and contains enough information; also the submenu in the right bar Operational programmes is well structured and clear
- technically speaking, it is a webpage with clear outline, design adequate to the purpose, the web is also responsive and adjusts to various window sizes, it is also optimized for mobile devices
- the portal is updated regularly

- the portal in its current structure provides information for both general and professional public, where especially an ordinary visitor may feel confused by complicated and hard-to-understand information; several elements make the website confusing for the general public - the website title Partnership Agreement is not generally well known and the visitor may not have an impression that he came to a website about the EU funds; menu is very extensive, it contains unfamiliar abbreviations (e. g. "CCA")
- contributions in the Photo gallery lack any structure of organization, topical categories, descriptions of individual contributions/ photos, can be confusing for a visitor
- displaying a logo "Partnership Agreement Government Office of the SR" and "Government Office of the SR" in the upper part of the home page does not fully correspond with reality, since the PA SR and related agenda is covered mainly by DPMOII
- EU logo does not link to the European Union or ESIF (regardless of the fact that creation of the portal was not paid from the ComS budget)
- files for download on the sub-page "Documents" are not clearly organized, without any logical order or topical categories
- the portal did not have a valid English version at the time of evaluation process (the site was under reconstruction)
- the portal contained a link to inactive profile on Facebook ("ckouvsr") which was changed to "Eurofondy""
- the Contacts sub-page contains only contacts of GO SR, however, the PA SR agenda is within DPMOII responsibility
- the link to YouTube redirects a user to the CCA profile on YouTube, however, it was last updated in June 2016, also in relation to PP 2007 - 2013 (there is another channel on the YouTube, "EUROFONDY", active since 2017, containing videos from various occasions across all programming periods)

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Website www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk

from the technical perspective, the website is not fully optimized esp. its loading time, it is also not optimized for SEO (search engine optimization)

Recommendations:

- since the portal target group is the professional as well as general public, and with a view to the fact that the current portal structure is not differentiated for individual target groups, it would be appropriate to determine the portal objectives and determine the persons. It means to consider several types of menu on the home page in the context of different target groups, e.g. a menu with links reflecting the target groups (general public, beneficiaries, applicants, etc.) which will allow to filter its content by target group or type of visitor and display only the content relevant for that target group
- add a note to the home page that it is the official website informing of the EU funds in the programming period 2014 - 2020
- amend the structure of Photo Gallery sub-page, e. g. by topic, region, etc., add descriptions of individual images
- add the DPMOII logo to the portal
- apply the correct format of the EU logo together with a reference to the fund(s)
- organize the documents for download in the sub-page "Documents" by content, document type, versions, date of issue, so that a visitor could scan the list quickly for the desired document
- ensure an English version of the portal
- place on the portal a link to the active Facebook profile
- update the link to YouTube channel "EUFONDY" https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIkvfXx9mkB2DLsnXv3-frQ and organize videos in the channel for a better overview by programming period and add to the video description what the spot is about and which programming period it concerns
- add relevant DPMOII contacts to the sub-page "Contact us"
- add the photo gallery to the sub-page for the general public
- consider installation of an online chat window to enable interactive online communication between the portal visitors and contact center staff
- once a month verify whether all the contact details and links in the home page and sub-pages are up-to-date
- technical aspect: optimize images, configure so-called cache support (storing data in the browser cache memory), make use of CSS and JavaScript minifiers
- SEO and browser optimization aspect: amend the titles of sub-pages so that they contain key words, improve internal links, add meta description, add alternative text to images, remove duplicate page titles
- set the initial slider so that it redirects to the displayed theme upon a click
- specify events in the calendar or describe its functionality in more detail
- make more use of infographics, animation, avoid abbreviations (e. g. "CCA")

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A profile on the social network Facebook

A profile on the social network Facebook
1. Relevance to specific objectives in ComS
Activity is fully relevant to meeting of the ComS specific objectives no. 1 and 2.
2. A brief activity description
This activity means a set up and administration of a user profile on the social network Facebook (since May 2012). In the course of evaluation process, the profile title was changed from the "Central Coordination Authority GO SR" (https://www.facebook.com/ckouvsr/) to "Eufondy" (https://www.facebook.com/euuvsr/), i. e. it represents a change from the institutional focus (CCA) to the subject-matter focus (EU funds). IPD via its social network profile communicates especially on: the current development (interesting information about GO SR or DPMOII developments), important information (updates, announcements, etc.), surveys and various competitions (e. g. Roadshow activity), interesting photographs (photographs from presentations, exhibitions, etc.) and video content (information and stories of various information activities, etc.). These include mainly links to the news posted on website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk. Posted information is current and briefly summarizes the content of a given piece of news. The nature of the posted contributions varies, the profile contains information relevant both for the general public (e. g. promotion of successfully implemented projects) as well as the professional public and potential applicants/applicants/beneficiaries (e. g. calls). Overall the profile's focus on general public remains consistent, i. e. majority of posts are relevant for the general public, the posts for the professional public only are fewer. Despite the fact that Facebook activity is a popular form of presentation as well as a wide potential of attracting the target group (general public, professional public, beneficiaries, etc.), impact on the target groups can be assessed as marginal (e. g. 487 fans in March 2017, after five years of profile existence). Profile content is generated and moderated daily by the IPD GO SR staff. On average, there are about 10 posts a week posted on the Eufondy page.
3. Activity outputs
Administration of the profile Eufondy on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/euuvsr/. **Measurable indicators:** Not relevant, never set
4. Activity results
Measurable indicators: *Facebook profile traffic* (15) 2016 ACP defines the target value at 19,500 (*Total reach* - impact and Number of views). Within IER of this evaluation, the metrics of this indicator was adjusted to the measuring unit number of users (measured via *Lifetime Post Total Reach*) and keeping the value at 19,500.

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A profile on the social network Facebook

Value achieved in 2016: 144,795 users (*Lifetime Post Total Reach*) (value for posts published in 2016, 591 posts* 245 unique users per post).

5. Compliance with 2016 ACP

Activity timeline

Implementation of the activity was compliant with the 2016 ACP timeline, i. e. the Facebook profile was active (content generation and moderation) and updated on an ongoing basis during the entire monitored period, on average with 10 posts a week.

Activity budget

According to the 2016 ACP, the indicative budget planned was EUR 75,000 (incl. VAT) for the activity "Internet and online communication", including social networks. 2016 ACP does not provide what portion of the budget should have been dedicated to the content development and moderation of the Facebook profile.

Expenses for Facebook profile administration in 2016 paid from the ComS budget were EUR 0.

Activity scope

The activity was implemented in line with the planned scope, i. e. ongoing content generation and moderation of the Facebook profile throughout 2016.

6. Projected activity impact (intermediary results of the activity)

Implementation of the activity has a positive effect on fulfilment of the defined intermediary results according to the appendices C and D hereof, except for the following - improved qualification of the personnel involved in the preparation and implementation of projects, improved qualification of the personnel involved in management, implementation and control of ESIF, improved process of project preparation and implementation at the applicants/beneficiaries' side.

7. External factors/ context for activity implementation

This is a common profile without any special promo possibilities. The implementation of the activity during the year was fluent and not affected by any factors with significant impact on the activity results.

8. Findings and recommendations

Findings:

- the overall profiling of the content is compliant with the needs of the Facebook network community, i. e. the general public
- positive change of the profile name to a more acceptable name for the target group
- subject-matter and brief wording

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A profile on the social network Facebook
the profile content misses a creative element or copywriting - the profile photography does not feel professional, there are images from internet which are often not suitable - wrong trimming, or not representative picture, grammatical and stylistical errors low number of fans tab Information contains the contact details of GO SR and refers to the website www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk, without any notice of the DPMOII's role tab Information, part Story contains information rather determined for and comprehensible to the professional public **Recommendations:** - consider a strategy of profile development with a view to the target group specifics and specific features of promoted services - monitor statistics for decisions on further direction and optimization of profile-related activities - consider the possibility to entrust the content generation and profile moderation into the hands of marketing professionals - improve the creative aspect of the page - post a professional profile photography, e. g. use a PA SR logo since the content communicated is mainly under the umbrella of PA SR; consolidate the tab "Photos" which contains a plenty of various images of inconsistent quality - for the purposes of a wider reach of the posts and broader awareness of the page create better possibilities for fans to engage (e. g. add a question to each post, such as What was implemented in your neighborhood thanks to the funds support? or What type of investment would you like in your town/village? etc.).

Information publications

Information publications
1. Relevance to specific objectives in ComS
Activity is fully relevant to meeting of the ComS specific objectives no. 1, 2, 3 and 4.
2. A brief activity description
Information publications prepared and/or issued in 2016 include: **Flyer "ESIF evaluation"** The flyer in the form of a three-part single-leaf brochure was issued within the CCA's activities in the area of evaluating ESIF in Slovakia. It was prepared internally by CCA personnel (content

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Information publications

development - evaluation department of the monitoring and evaluation section) and IPD (desktop processing, graphic layout), mainly in 2016. The whole preparation and development of the flyer were completed in 2016, it was printed in December 2016. It is a full-colour flyer of the size 420x210 (3 both-page folios folded into the format of 420x210) printed in the volume of 6,000 pieces.

The cover page contains a title, thematic quote of Art. 54 (1) of the CPR, EU logo, reference to the EU, CCA logo, OP TA logo and a reference to the fund. The flyer content discusses what is a description, what is evaluation, process of evaluation, CCA activities in evaluation of ESIF in Slovakia, examples of professional evaluations. At the end, there is a mailing and e-mail address for CCA (section of monitoring and evaluation) as well as a link to eufondy.sk, partnerskadohoda.gov.sk and nsrr.sk (part Evaluation).

The flyer is determined for distribution via ICC (200 pcs per 1 ICC), conferences, seminars, MC meetings, for MA/IB. It is also published on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk, sub-page CCA, part Publications (http://www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk/publikacie/).

Publication "Entrepreneurs and EU funds for the period of 2014-2020"

The purpose of this information publication is to provide a brief overview of the possibilities of financial assistance from individual OPs funded by ESIF to the Slovak entrepreneurs, especially assistance determined for the business sector. The publication addresses each relevant OP and informs of the priority axes and specific objectives of OPs relevant for the entrepreneurs. The specific objectives are connected with eligible activities, eligible territory, defined eligible beneficiaries and contacts to the managing authorities or intermediary bodies per given OP. The publication further contains the procedure of submitting grant applications, grant approval terms, grant application and public procurement-related documents and reference to internet portals with ESIF information.

The publication was prepared internally by CCA staff (content - section of methodology and coordination of entities) together with the Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry, public procurement section of DPMOII and IPD (desktop processing, graphic layout), mainly in 2016. Nevertheless, the text had to be reviewed due to legislative amendments (Public Procurement Act) and the publication was printed in January 2017 (as opposed to the planned December 2016), otherwise the entire development process happened in 2016.

The brochure has 134 pages, it contains the EU logo, reference to the EU, OP TA logo and a reference to the fund. It was issued at the volume of 3,000 pieces.

The publication is intended for distribution primarily to entrepreneurs via Slovak Chamber of Commerce and industry, MAs and ICCs, 250 pcs are allocated for the CCA needs. It is also published on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk, sub-page CCA, part Publications (http://www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk/publikacie/).

Magazine Eurokompas

Eurokompas magazine is a publication which brings complex information on the ESIF area with clarity. ComS defines the magazine for target groups especially among the professionals but also for the general public. Eurokompas is intended to bring comprehensive and up-to-date information on the development of strategic documents and OP implementation within the PP 2014 - 2020.

Eurokompas magazine is issued in cooperation with MA as a quarterly with a 6,000 pcs circulation. It is also published on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk in a separate bookmark "Eurokompas magazine“ (http://www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk/publikacie/). As a hard copy it is distributed at the individual organized events and approx. 4,600 pcs go to 3,500

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Information publications

subscribing addresses comprising central and local public administration, self-governing bodies (regions, municipalities), scientific, academic and other organizations. A more massive distribution is anticipated in the future, also via information and consulting centers (about 150 pcs per 1 ICC).

The individual Eurokompas magazine issues in 2016 (4 regular and 1 extraordinary issued in December 2016) contained in about 30 pages current topics regarding the OP or PA SR implementation, news from that area, good practice examples, presentation of successfully implemented projects under individual OPs, interviews with MA/IB representatives and a summary in English. The publication is adequately processed both in terms of graphic design and content, well readable for all target group types. The cover page contains the EU logo, reference to the fund from which it is financed and the OP TA logo, the last page contains the logo and contact details of GO SR and website references eufondy.sk and nsrr.sk.

3. Activity outputs

Measurable indicators:

Number of issued professional and information publications (17)

Target value per 2016: 2016 ACP defines the target value at 6 publication types (professional and informative).

Value achieved in 2016: 6 publication types (flyer, 5 x magazine)[5], i. e. 100 % fulfilment of the target value of the measurable indicator per 2016 (including professional publications).

4. Activity results

Measurable indicators:

Number of distributed professional and information publications (13)

Target value per 2016: No target value defined in the 2016 ACP.

Value achieved in 2016: 25,000 pieces of publications[6] (flyer – 0 pcs, magazine 5 * 5,000 pcs).

With regard to the fact that there is no target value defined in the 2016 ACP, it is not possible to evaluate fulfilment of the target value.

Number of views or downloads of the flyer, publication and individual magazine issues from the web site is not available.

5. Compliance with 2016 ACP

Activity timeline

Implementation of the activity was not compliant with the 2016 ACP timeline, which projected the implementation once per quarter of the 2016 (March, June, September, and December). The 4 regular and 1 extraordinary issue were issued in the second half of 2016, the flyer was issued at the end of 2016 and the publication was printed no earlier than January 2017.

[5] The publication is evaluated in relation to 2016, however, because it was issued in January 2017, it should be included in the indicators per 2017.
[6] The publication is evaluated in relation to 2016, however, because it was issued in January 2017, it should be included in the indicators per 2017.

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Information publications

Activity budget

According to the 2016 ACP, the indicative budget planned for information publications was EUR 100,000 (incl. VAT) in total for flyers, brochures, compilations, handbook on the possibilities of drawing ESIF and for Eurokompas magazine. 2016 ACP does not provide what portion of the budget should be dedicated to specific information brochures.

Expenses for the flyer "ESIF evaluation" were paid from the ComS budget, in the amount of 746.50 EUR. Expenses for the publication "Entrepreneurs and the EU funds in 2014 - 2020" from the ComS budget were EUR 9,367.64. Expenses for the Eurokompas magazine, paid from the ComS budget, reached EUR 11,926/1 issue + EUR 12,000 the extraordinary issue, i.e. EUR 59,704 in total.

Expenses per information publications per 2016 paid from the COmS budget are EUR 69,818.14, i. e. the 2016 budget for information publications was drawn at approx. 70 % only.

Activity scope

The activity was implemented in partial accord with the planned scope, i. e. 4 regular and 1 extraordinary Eurokompas magazine issues and 1 flyer were published during 2016, and issuance of the publication was delayed until January 2017 due to objective reasons.

6. Projected activity impact (intermediary results of the activity)

Implementation of the activity has a positive effect on fulfilment of the defined intermediary results according to the appendices C and D hereof.

7. External factors/context for activity implementation

Implementation of the creative aspect of the activity is solved via contractors, i. e. a must to engage in public procuring, where the potential risks attached thereto include an effect on the delayed or cancelled public procurements and hence delays causing non-implementation on the side of the planned outputs. The process, administrative and organizational part are in the IPD competence.

The activity was proceeding during 2016 but the outputs were implemented in the second half of the year (delayed issuing of the Eurokompas magazine due to public procurement hold-ups, despite the fact that the first description of the subject of an order for procuring of the magazine was already prepared at the end of 2014, but the procurement itself was implemented and the contract with the contractor signed in 2016), or at the end of the year (flyer). Even more, the publication was issued in 2017 (due to correction of information as a result of legislative changes).

The delay of outputs affected the delayed achievement of results - distribution of publications - and a transfer of the substantial part of the distribution to 2017.

8. Findings and recommendations

Findings:

flyer, publication, magazine - posted on the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk to be freely downloaded

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Information publications
👍 flyer, publication, magazine - display of the EU logo, reference to the EU and ESIF were compliant 👍 flyer - this is an appropriate tool for presentation and explanation of the role of evaluation in the area of ESIF, intended largely for the professional audience 👍 flyer – relatively colourful design: use of coloured diagram, varied typography, various graphic elements, graphic illustration of key words (*word cloud*) 👍 publication - an appropriate choice of topic (support possibilities), adequate choice of target group (entrepreneurs as a specific segment within general public with the most significant potential to apply for a grant versus other segments) 👎 publication - issued with a mild delay (in January 2017) (non-compliance with 2016 ACP) 👎 publication - mainly text in tables, without graphic elements that would liven up the text, process diagrams are used as a graphic element only in the second part of the publication 👎 magazine - all issues including the extraordinary one were published in the second half of 2016 (non-compliance with 2016 ACP) **Recommendations:** - maximize attractive design of information publications with a view to the target groups (e. g. make use of infographics where possible or publish them in a video format) - flyer, publication, magazine - make reference to links eufondy.sk vs. partnerskadohoda.gov.sk more consistent in the future - post publications issued by other MAs on partnerskadohoda.gov.sk as these may be also interesting for the portal visitors

Information activities/ events

Information activities/ events
1. Relevance to specific objectives in ComS
Activity is fully relevant to meeting of the ComS specific objectives no. 1, 2, 3 and 4.
2. A brief activity description
Out of 7 information events planned in 2016 ACP the following 4 were held:

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Information activities/ events

Seminar Going Local "Act locally - Efficient communication of the European structural and investment funds in Slovakia"

The seminar was held on 16 March 2016 in the European Information Center under the auspices of EC, Representation of EC in Bratislava and GO SR. It aimed to enable the information and communication personnel from the area of implementing the communication on ESIF to discuss common problems, learn about best practice and enhance cooperation between the communication officers of ESIF, information centers Europe Direct and the Representation of EC in Bratislava. The participants presented their communication projects from the PP 2007-2013. Presentations were given also by the representatives of GO SR (Communication of OPIS and digitalization of the cultural heritage and OP TA - from small to big projects), OP EaSI (Campaign for employment) and OP T (Efficient small PR projects) EC representatives presented a new approach to ESIF communication for 2014-2020 and key investment priorities in the SR, principles of communicating the cohesion policy across EU and some proven practices. There were also external presenters with the topics: Lesson from the past - Evaluation of information and publicity in the PP 2007-2013, Current trends in marketing and Current trends in social media. The seminar participants further discussed on the ways how to cooperate in communication of the projects, programmes and priorities, shared and discussed their most successful communication activities from the past PP and communicate about the role of the internal communication network for the programming period 2014-2020.

Information about the seminar was also published on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk in the section "News", together with presentations of the conference participants. Photos from the seminar are published on the Facebook profile.

The seminar on 16 March 2016 was attended by 47 participants and 8 journalists.

Young European 2016

Tatras saw the final round of the 11th annual knowledge competition on 25 May 2016 "*Young European*". The winners received valuable prizes, such as an excursion to the EU institutions in Brussels, laptops or tablets, presented to them by the head of the Representation of EC in Slovakia, Mr. Dušan Chrenek. The final saw 13 teams (winners of regional rounds) from the secondary schools across Slovakia. The students pitted their wits in the areas of history, geography or curiosities and notable persons of the EU and its member firms. First ranked Gymnázium Partizánske, second Gymnázium Detva and the third was Gymnázium Zvolen (all secondary grammar schools).

Regional rounds were held from the 4 until the 29 April 2016. The first round of the regional competitions comprised a knowledge test of the EU. In the second round the competitors had to prove their language skills. The third round of the regional competitions was always for the best three teams, with knowledge questions and images. Regional winners then fought in the final national round. The competition was intended for the students of the 2nd and 3rd years of secondary grammar schools and secondary occupational schools from the entire Slovakia and the Representation of the EC in Slovakia organizes the contest together with 12 regional information centers Europe Direct.

The popular competition Young Europan was extended in 2016 with a new format - Young digital European. 1,854 girls and boys from 130 Slovak schools enrolled for the first edition of the knowledge competition for the students of the second and third years in secondary grammar schools and secondary occupational schools. The winners received their prizes on 23rd June 2016 in the European information center in Bratislava.

GO SR was a partner of the competition who prepared prizes within OP TA and its representatives sat on the jury.

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Information activities/ events

Photos from the competition were also published on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk in the section "News".

Europe Day 2016

GO SR, together with some MAs organized an event at the occasion of the Europe Day on 9 May 2016 together with an accompanying programme. It was attended by representatives of the following OPs: OP TA, OP E, OP EPA, OP HR, OP F, OPIS, OP RaI ad OP II, as well as Central contact department for OLAF. Participants could learn about the possibilities of support from individual OPs and about the results of successful projects with the EU assistance. The most attraction was given to the rescue and anti-flood machinery and equipment, intelligent police car equipped with a special console, demonstrations of customs officers' work with their four-legged friends. Customs officers showed their "catch" to the visitors, such as zebra skin, a trophy of lynx or forged money. Especially children could try the electronic hand for practicing fine motor activity, play human "ludo" and watch how guide-dogs are trained. A wheel of fortune with questions testing the knowledge of OP and EU enjoyed a huge interest.

Information about the event was published also on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk in the "News" section. Photos are posted under the Facebook profile.

The event was attended by approximately 2,500 participants.

Roadshow 2016

This activity was aimed to make the ESIF financial assistance more visible and to foster creative thinking in the regions in a form of a competition of project intents to draw funds from ESIF, prepared by the students of the third years of secondary schools from selected regions (pre-selected schools - 32 - from the least developed districts of Slovakia (18 towns)).

The activity comprised 2 rounds. The first round was informative, where the GO SR staff explained the contest conditions and possibilities of drawing ESIF to the students. The second round was competitive, where 4-member teams from the selected schools could present their project intents. In the end, 23 valid projects were enrolled in the competition. The projects were evaluated by the professional committee of the organizer (GO SR, OP TA, OP RaI, OP II, OP HR, and CCA).

GO SR announced the competition of 3 October 2016 on the internet portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk, deadline for submission of projects was 31 December 2016, results were announced and published on partnerskadohoda.gov.sk on 31 January 2017 and the ceremonial presentation of prizes was held on 22 February 2017 at the GO SR.

There were valuable prizes both for the students (4K television for the 1st place, tablet for the 2nd place and smart watch for the 3rd place) but also for the schools of the winning teams (goods at the discretion of the school up to EUR 10,000 for the 1st team, EUR 8,000 for the 2nd team and EUR 6,000 for the 3rd team's school.

3. Activity outputs

Organization of 2 events (Europe Day 2016, Roadshow 2016) and participation and support of further 2 events (Young European 2016, seminar "Act locally")

Measurable indicators:

Number of implemented information activities (3a)

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Information activities/ events
Target value per 2016: 2016 ACP defines the target value at 38 information activities[7]. Value achieved in 2016: 4 information activities[8] *Number of implemented information activities* (3b) Target value per 2016: The indicator is not defined in 2016 ACP. Value achieved in 2016: 1 information activity (seminar "Act locally") *Number of seminars, conferences and other events held* (3c) Target value per 2016: 2016 ACP defines the target value at 5 events. Value achieved in 2016: 35 events
4. Activity results
Measurable indicators: *Number of attendees at the implemented information activities* (4a) Target value per 2016: The indicator is not defined in 2016 ACP. Value achieved in 2016: 55 participants *Number of attendees at seminars, conferences and other information activities* (4b) Target value per 2016: 2016 ACP defines the target value at 5,000 participants. Value achieved in 2016: 5,529 participants.
5. Compliance with 2016 ACP
Activity timeline Implementation of information events was compliant with the 2016 ACP timeline, i.e. information events were implemented during 2016, from March to December 2016 (seminar 16.3.2016, Young European 25.5.2016, Europe Day 9.5.2016, Roadshow 2016 was planned in 2016 for September to October 2016 but it was implemented with a slight delay until December 2016 - a monthly delay due to delayed public procurement proceeding). **Activity budget** According to 2016 ACP an indicative budget of EUR 30,000 (incl. VAT) was planned for the seminar "Act locally - Efficient communication of the European Structural and Investment funds in Slovakia". Real expenses for the event were paid from the ComS budget in the amount of EUR 2,740.53, of which EUR 1,418.95 were incurred for organization of the event and costs for interpreting and presenters' fees were EUR 1,321.58.

[7] It concerns all information activities, not only events.
[8] This is a number of information activities/events, overall achieved value of the measurable indicator is specified in appendix J hereof,

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Information activities/ events

According to the 2016 ACP, there was planned an indicative budget of EUR 10,000 (incl. VAT) for the activity Young European. A part of the expenses concerned the PP 2017 - 2013 and a part of the promotional materials from PP 2014 - 2020 (prizes for contestants and promotional materials).

According to the 2016 ACP, there was planned an indicative budget of EUR 20,000 (incl. VAT) for the activity Europe Day. Actual expenses for the event in 2016 paid from the ComS budget were EUR 12,600.

The event Roadshow 2016 was planned with an indicative budget of EUR 100,000 (incl. VAT) according to the 2016 ACP. Actual expenses in 2016 were as follows: EUR 4,980.00 (promotional items), 20,398.,80 (organization by an external supplier), EUR 4,980.00 (lecturing fees), EUR 9,947.23 (prizes), 26,047.69 (other, sundry), in the total of EUR 63,353.72.

Activity scope

Information events were not implemented in compliance with the planned scope, i.e. in the course of 2016 there were implemented only 4 out of 7 information events planned in 2016 ACP (Annual OP TA conference - not implemented, since pursuant to chapter 1.2 indent 3d) System of ESIF management, version 3.0 the MA for OP TA was exempted - due to specific focus of the programme - from implementation of one major information activity whereby all the OP TA results are presented; Digital European; Country Tour - the public procurement process was not launched).

6. Projected activity impact (intermediary results of the activity)

Implementation of the activity has a positive effect on fulfilment of the defined intermediary results according to the appendices C and D hereof, except for the following - learn about current news within ESIF and their OPs, improved qualification of the personnel involved in the preparation and implementation of projects, improved process of project preparation and implementation at the applicants/beneficiaries' side.

7. External factors/ context for activity implementation

An overall result of the activity as a whole (all information events) could have been higher for 2016 since the Country Tour was not implemented, being a massive series of cultural and social events in the regions, central event in the 2016 plan, with potential reach of several thousand people.

The event of the GO SR at the occasion of Europe Day at Primacialne square in Bratislava was happening parallel with the event of EC representation on the Main square in Bratislava. Nevertheless, both events had a common branding while the advertising space was paid by the ComS budget and the development/production of advertising spots by the EC Representation. The result of the GO SR's event may have been affected by the parallel event running at a neighbouring square in Bratislava. On one hand side, the events may have been perceived as complementary and synergistic, on the other, some visitors may have perceived them as competing and excessive.

8. Findings and recommendations

Findings:

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Information activities/ events
seminar - an appropriate platform for exchange of experiences both on national and international levels seminar - publishing of presentations together with the news about the seminar on internet implementation of activities focused on students and the young support of activities carried out not in one location only (capital of SR) but also in the regions (Young European, Roadshow) out of 7 information events planned in 2016 ACP only 4 were held split events for Europe Day - parallel events of EC Representation and GO SR. **Recommendations:** - implement the Europe Day under one official programme - to increase the reach, organize Europe Day in several regions of Slovakia, not only in the capital - with a view to the public opinion poll results, continue in implementing if the information activities focusing on the young (results of the public opinion poll show some lower knowledge of EU funds among the group aged 18-30 compared to other age categories) - to not implement independent events with the topics of ESIF, but e. g. place an information stand of ESIF at other event (festival, "jarmok", days of the town/or village).

Direct contact

Direct contact
1. Relevance to specific objectives in ComS
Activity is fully relevant to meeting of the ComS specific objectives no. 1, 2, 3 and 4.
2. A brief activity description
Direct contact is a professional consulting at a personal meeting, over the phone or through e-mail. The function of the direct contact in the PP 2014 - 2020 is ensured by the **Information center Structural Funds for Slovakia.** The activity ensues from the PA SR. Role of the information center is performed by the IPD GO SR. IPD GO SR via its information center provides up-to-

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Direct contact

date and complex information about the possibilities of making use of the ESIF funds. It provides advice to all applicants of information, whether by email, in person, over the phone or by intermediation of phone contacts to the managers for information and publicity to the individual MA/IB. ComS defines the information center for target groups especially among the professionals but also for the general public. In practice, prevailing interest is driven by the professional public, quite a number of questions is asked by students.

IPD personnel directly respond to about 20 % of all questions, others are forwarded to relevant MAs who respond directly. If the questions relates to several OPs, IPD completes a joint response for all OPs covered. There is no legislatively given response due date unless the question is asked with reference to the Act on Free Information, however, the effort is made to respond within one month.

In 2016, information was provided via the following:

- 89 e-mail responses,
- 17 phone responses,
- 27 personal consultations.

Various printed materials were available to the public at the Information Center, issued by GO SR, MA of OP TA, other MAs and other relevant institutions, e. g. EC Representation in the SR, etc.

3. Activity outputs

Measurable indicators:

Not relevant, never set.

4. Activity results

Measurable indicators:

Not relevant, never set.

5. Compliance with 2016 ACP

Activity timeline

Implementation of the activity was compliant with the 2016 ACP timeline, i. e. consultations over the phone, e-mail or in person were provided by the information center during the entire monitored period, i.e. year 2016.

Activity budget

Pursuant to 2016 ACP a total indicative budget was planned in the amount of EUR 5,000 (incl. VAT) for the "Direct contact" information activity, which in addition to consultations over the phone, e-mail or in person included also implementation of questionnaires or publishing of a newsletter. However, the latter two were not implemented in 2016.

Expenses for this activity in 2016 paid from the ComS budget were EUR 0.

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Direct contact
Activity scope The activity was implemented in line with the planned scope, i. e. ongoing content provision of qualified consultations over the phone, by e-mail or in person throughout 2016.
6. Projected activity impact (intermediary results of the activity)
Implementation of the activity has a positive effect on fulfilment of the defined intermediary results according to the appendices C and D hereof.
7. External factors/ context for activity implementation
The implementation of the activity during the year was fluent and not affected by any factors with significant impact on the activity results. Usability of the information center can be assessed as low based on the number of questions asked.
8. Findings and recommendations
Findings: The information center meets its purpose although in comparison with previous years to a lesser extent (fewer queries). **Recommendations:** - step up promotion of the information center by providing contacts within every relevant activity/output or its graphic emphasis on the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk - an increased use of the information center could be supported by creating of a chat window on the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk - replace the title of the information center "for Structural Funds" to "EU funds", the latter being a more timeless name

Promotional merchandise

Promotional merchandise
1. Relevance to specific objectives in ComS
Activity is indirectly relevant to meeting of the ComS specific objectives no. 1 and 2.
2. A brief activity description
In 2016, the GO SR procured various promotional merchandise (giveaways) branded with the logos of OP TA, CCA and EU. In 2016 the IPD procured 4 sets of promotional items of which one was intended for the needs of SK PRES and one for Roadshow. These promotional items were used for activities implemented according to the ComS OPTA, i.e. at various conferences,

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Promotional merchandise
seminars, trainings, working group meetings, working meetings with representatives of other institutions involved in implementation of ESIF and EC representatives.
3. Activity outputs
Measurable indicators: Not relevant, never set.
4. Activity results
Measurable indicators: Not relevant, never set.
5. Compliance with 2016 ACP
Activity timeline Implementation of the activity was compliant with the 2016 ACP timeline, i. e. an ongoing use of the procured promotional items during the entire monitored period, i.e. year 2016. **Activity budget** According to the 2016 ACP, there was planned an indicative budget of EUR 100,000 (incl. VAT) in total for the purchase of promotional merchandise. In 2016 the IPD procured 4 sets of promotional items of which one was intended for the needs of SK PRES, one for Roadshow and a part for the video competition. Expenses for implementation of this activity per 2016 (expenses for Roadshow and video competition were included under expenses per given events) were EUR 80,296.32 EUR, i. e. 80.3 %. **Activity scope** The activity was implemented in line with the planned scope, i. e. ongoing use of the purchased promotional items throughout 2016.
6. Projected activity impact (intermediary results of the activity)
The implementation of the activity has a positive effect on achievement of the intermediary results according to the appendices C and D hereof, especially bringing to reminding/becoming aware of the existence of ESIF and the possibilities of drawing, serving as an initial impulse for seeking further information on ESIF, raising interest to obtain further information on ESIF, obtaining general information on ESIF.
7. External factors/context for activity implementation
The implementation of the activity during the year was fluent and not affected by any factors with significant impact on the activity results. An increased demand for the promotional items was noted as a result of SK PRES in the second half of the 2016, and hence a higher number of various information and presentation events with a window for the use of the promotional items.

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Promotional merchandise
The promotional items are often used in connection with activities for the professional public but they do not contribute to the fulfilment of SO 3 and 4 which are defined for the professional audience.
8. Findings and recommendations
Findings: - promotional items were used mainly to support the tools of direct communication, information events and in line with the consistent visual identity **Recommendations:** - N/A

Meetings of Work group for information and communication

Meetings of Work group for information and communication
1. Relevance to specific objectives in ComS
Activity is partly relevant to meeting of the ComS specific objectives no. 3 and 4.
2. A brief activity description
The activity means regular meetings of publicity representatives of the MAs/IBs, administrators of HP and CCA, the co-called Work group for information and communication, at least 2x a year. Members of the Work group are contact persons responsible for information and activity who were appointed by the MAs and HP administrators. The list of Work group members as well as its statute are published on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk, sub-page CCA, and section "Statutes and minutes". The Work group is, according to its statute, an active tool to ensure optimization and consistency of procedures in devising of the information strategy and ensuring the information and communication during the entire process of implementation and drawing of ESIF. The Work group met twice in 2016, 21. 10. 2016 and 8. 12. 2016. In the October session the members discussed conclusions of the last work group meeting held on 17. 12. 2015, about termination of activities and evaluation of information and communication activities in the PP 2007-2013, about the fulfilment of information and communication activities in the PP 2014-2020 per 2016, at the same time the IPD advised of the conclusions of the INFORM GROUP meeting in Slovenia (Portorož, 31. 5. - 1. 6. 2016) and the chairwoman proposed amendments to the Work group statutes. In the December session the Work group discussed fulfilment of conclusions from its session on 21. 10. 2016, conclusions from the INFORM GROUP session in Brussels (1. - 2. 12. 2016), information on the prepared training for the members of the Work group (12. 12. 2016) on the Public Procurement Act and its application within ESIF and the DITMS representative presented working with www.itms2014. sk /Calls by area of interest. With regard to this activity's character it may not be considered a typical information and communication activity.

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Meetings of Work group for information and communication

3. Activity outputs

Measurable indicators:

Not relevant, never set.

4. Activity results

Measurable indicators:

Not relevant, never set.

5. Compliance with 2016 ACP

Activity timeline

The activity was implemented in partial compliance with the ACP. Although it was held twice a year, it was held in October and December as opposed to the planned June and December terms.

Activity budget

According to the 2016 ACP, there was planned an indicative budget of EUR 1,000 (incl. VAT) to hold meetings of the Work group for information and communication.

Expenses for this activity in 2016 paid from the ComS budget were EUR 300 (refreshment).

Activity scope

The activity was implemented in line with the planned scope, i. e. two meetings of the Work group were held in 2016.

6. Projected activity impact (intermediary results of the activity)

It can be stated that the implementation of this activity has a positive effect on fulfilment of two defined intermediary results according to the appendices C and D hereof, namely improved qualification of the personnel involved in the preparation and implementation of projects, improved qualification of the personnel involved in management, implementation and control of ESIF, both only marginally.

7. External factors/context for activity implementation

The Work group is an information activity over and above the framework of information and communication activities/tools/measures according to MI CCA no. 16.

Implementation of the activity was negatively affected time-wise (delayed first meeting) due to an organizational change related to establishment of the DPMOII and separation of the CCA from the GO SR, however, with IPD remaining under the GO SR. The organizational change happened at the time when the first Work group meeting was originally planned (June 2016). At that time the IPD's priority was to deal with tasks immediately related to the organizational change and amendment of the System of ESIF Management.

According to the IPD representatives, activity of the Work group members was improved in 2016.

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Meetings of Work group for information and communication

8. Findings and recommendations

Findings:

discussion platform for exchange of information in the area of information and communication

uneven time periods between the sessions (December 2015, October and December 2016) (non-compliance with 2016 ACP, planned terms June and December)

the list of Work group members as well as its statute are published on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk, sub-page CCA, section "Statutes and minutes" - despite the title of the sub-page there are no minutes of the Work group meetings posted

the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk does not contain a separate sub-page dedicated to information and communication or publicity, the list of members as well as the statues of the work group are difficult to find on the website

the statutes of the work group which are published on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk, sub-page CCA, section "Statutes and minutes", do not contain the date of issue or approval, version/revision number (despite the fact that on the work group session on 21. 10. 2016 a proposed amendment to the statutes was discussed)

Recommendations:

- implement regular Work group meetings without asymmetrical gaps in between
- with a view to the nature of this activity it does not have to be stated in the ACP for subsequent years
- consider developing a separate sub-page dedicated to information and communication or publicity on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk
- rename the section "Statutes and minutes" to "Statutes" or publish also minutes from the work group meetings in this section and at the same time consider amending the title to include information of what groups/bodies do the statutes concerned
- together with the work group statutes or revision thereof publish also its number and the date of its issue/approval/validity
- adhere to the valid statues of the work group

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PR activities

PR activities
1. Relevance to specific objectives in ComS
Activity is fully relevant to meeting of the ComS specific objectives no. 1 and 2.
2. A brief activity description
PR activities pursuant to 2016 ACP include media relations, media monitoring, regular breakfasts with journalists, press releases and press conferences. There was an annual plan made for each of the activities mentioned. Media relations are understood as press releases. Of the said activities only press releases were implemented in 2016. Press releases are prepared by IPD GO SR and are distributed to press agencies by the press section of the GO SR. Press releases are also posted on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk, under "News" sub-page. The purpose of the press releases is to obtain publicity for products, services or events. IPD, by the press releases, announces planned events, competitions, competition results, information about individual OPs, information campaigns and brings many other information related to ESIF, drawing, implementation of PA SR and its OP, etc. The press releases published on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk contain a title, release date, brief text, relevant logos (OP, DPMOII etc.), information source and a link to a more detailed source if applicable. The press releases are ordered by time of release, the latest ones are the last. In 2016 TASR published 52 press releases, the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk did 408 (including the 52 for press agencies). In addition to their own press releases on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk, selected press releases are published under ESIF.
3. Activity outputs
Measurable indicators: *Number of published news, interviews, contributions and advertising in all media types* (16) Target value per 2016: 2016 ACP defines the target value at 250. There were 408 contributions (press releases/news) published in 2016.
4. Activity results
Measurable indicators: Not relevant, never set.
5. Compliance with 2016 ACP
Activity timeline Implementation of the activity was compliant with the 2016 ACP timeline, i. e. an ongoing implementation of PR activities during the entire monitored period, i.e. year 2016. **Activity budget**

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PR activities
According to the 2016 ACP there was a total indicative budget of EUR 15,000 (incl. VAT) planned for all PR activities, which in addition to press releases comprise media relations, media monitoring, regular breakfasts with journalists and press conferences, however, these were not implemented in 2016. Expenses incurred for this activity in 2016 were EUR 0. **Activity scope** The activity was not implemented in line with the planned scope, i. e. there were press releases published on an ongoing basis throughout the 2016 but media relations, media monitoring, regular breakfasts with journalists and press conferences were not implemented in 2016.
6. Projected activity impact (intermediary results of the activity)
Implementation of the activity has a positive effect on fulfilment of the defined intermediary results according to the appendices C and D hereof, except for the following - obtaining of professional information within ESIF, improved qualification of the personnel involved in the preparation and implementation of projects, improved qualification of the personnel involved in management, implementation and control of ESIF, improved process of project preparation and implementation with at the applicants/beneficiaries' side.
7. External factors/ context for activity implementation
The implementation of the activity during the year was fluent and not affected by any factors with significant impact on the activity results. Media monitoring with regard to the ESIF topics was not fully implemented in 2016 because there was not arranged any subscription of press services from press agencies.
8. Findings and recommendations
Findings: a number of PR activities - media monitoring, regular breakfasts with journalists, press releases and press conferences - were not implemented in 2016 although they are provided in the 2016 ACP **Recommendations:** - N/A

Competition of video spots and stories

Competition of video spots and stories
1. Relevance to specific objectives in ComS
Activity is partly relevant to meeting of the ComS specific objectives no. 1 and 2.

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Competition of video spots and stories

2. A brief activity description

This information activity is classified as "Other tools" in the 2016 ACP.

A competition named "How the EU funds helped my town 2016" was intended for students of the secondary schools and universities and its goal was to increase the visibility of the financial assistance from the EU Structural and Cohesion funds in the regions via original students' perspective, either in the form of a video spot (category 1) or video story (category 2). Competition goals included a support of the creativity of young people, possibility to present their abilities, talent and their town or region where they come from, where they live, study, etc.

The competition organizer was the IPD of GO SR. The competition was launched on 14 March 2016 by an announcement on the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk in the section "News" (together with the competition statutes). Subsequently a commercial spot presenting the competition was aired on TV channels Jednotka (24x in the evenings) Dvojka (24x in the evenings) and TA3 (40x in the mornings and afternoons) (second half of May 2016). The deadline for submissions was 31 May 2016. Prizes for both categories included an HD camera (1st place), 2 tickets to a music festival NOVAROCK 2016 in Austria (2nd place) and 2 tickets to a music festival Pohoda 2016 (3rd place).

13 entries were enrolled for the competition. Based on quality, there were the 2nd and 3rd places awarded in the Video spot category and 1st and 3rd places awarded in the Video story category. At the same time 2 special prizes were awarded (for editing, for original music production and technical rendition).

Names of the winners and awarded works were announced on 10 June 2016 on the website http://www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk/ in section "News", the winning entries were also published in the Video gallery at the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk and the You Tube channel "EUFONDY" (https://www.youtube. com/channel/UCIkvfXx9mkB2DLsnXv3-frQ).

3. Activity outputs

Measurable indicators:

Not relevant, never set.

4. Activity results

Measurable indicators:

Not relevant, never set.

5. Compliance with 2016 ACP

Activity timeline

Implementation of the activity was compliant with the 2016 ACP timeline, i. e. the video competition was implemented in May and June 2016, having met the plan.

Activity budget

According to the 2016 ACP, there was planned an indicative budget for the video competition, however, two amounts are provided in the ACP (EUR 20,000 and 30,000 incl. VAT). It is not clear which of them was planned for the competition.

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Competition of video spots and stories

Expenses incurred to implement this activity in 2016 totaled to EUR 2,074.88 EUR (ceremonial prize-giving, 2x camera with a bag, 4x tickets to "Bažant Pohoda 2016" (tickets to festival NOVA ROCK 2016 couldn't be obtained)).

Activity scope

The activity was implemented in line with the planned scope, i. e. implementation of the competition of video spots and stories.

6. Projected activity impact (intermediary results of the activity)

Implementation of the activity has a positive effect on fulfilment of the defined intermediary results according to the appendices C and D hereof, except for the following - obtain professional information within ESIF, improved qualification of the personnel involved in the preparation and implementation of projects, improved qualification of the personnel involved in management, implementation and control of ESIF, improved process of project preparation and implementation at the applicants/beneficiaries' side.

7. External factors/context for activity implementation

The implementation of the activity was not affected by any factors with unexpected impact on the activity results. The format of the activity requires a higher level of creativity and effort from the participants which can have a negative effect on the number of contestants.

8. Findings and recommendations

Findings:

general promotion of the EU funds as a side effect of the advertising campaign of the competition

publishing the awarded works on internet

short interval between announcement of the situation (13 March 2016, or campaign advertising the competition on TV in the second half of May 2016 and deadline for submission of entries 31 May 2016)

According to the 2016 ACP, there was planned an indicative budget for the video competition, however, two amounts are provided in the ACP (EUR 20,000 and 30,000 incl. VAT) and it is not clear which was planned for the competition

Recommendations:

- extend the promotion phase or launch the promotion campaign earlier before the planned deadline for entries so that the contestants have sufficient time to prepare their entries
- with a view to the target group (students of secondary schools and universities) run the promotion of the competition using other communication channels than an advertising

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Competition of video spots and stories
campaign on national TV channels (which is more suitable for the group of general public and promoting other content than a specific competition), such as student magazines and radios, internet pages focused on students or young people

List of projects

List of projects
1. Relevance to specific objectives in ComS
Activity is fully relevant to meeting of the ComS specific objectives no. 1, 2 and 3.
2. A brief activity description
The activity reflects the duty of a member state or MA to maintain a list of projects pursuant to art. 115 par. 2 and appendix XII of the CPR which should be made available from the joint website, in the SR context it is the portal www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk. The portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk refers two links on the "CCA" tab: a "List of implemented projects" and a "List of completed projects" with links to the relevant web pages of ITMS2014+. The list is published with as a form environment at the relevant page of the ITMS2014+ tab. Both lists can be filtered by OP, place of implementation (self-governing region and district), business license no./name of the beneficiary, legal form of the beneficiary, code/title of the call and code/name of the project). Further information is also available on the projects: basic information, assistance provider, beneficiary and partners, a brief project description, amount of project funds, project implementation timeline, indicators/data of the project, place of project implementation, grant agreements, categorizations per EC regulations.
3. Activity outputs
Measurable indicators: Not relevant, never set.
4. Activity results
Measurable indicators: Not relevant, never set.
5. Compliance with 2016 ACP
Not relevant, activity was not mentioned in the 2016 ACP. Implementation of this activity ensues directly from the CPR.
6. Projected activity impact (intermediary results of the activity)
The implementation of the activity has a positive effect on achievement of the intermediary results according to the appendices C and D hereof, especially bringing to reminding/becoming

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List of projects
aware of the existence of ESIF and the possibilities of drawing, obtaining general information on ESIF, obtaining professional information on ESIF, learning of the current news on ESIF and their operational programmes, obtaining information on how ESIF aided SR/regions, obtaining inspiration for own projects.
7. External factors/context for activity implementation
Implementation of this activity depends on the technical solution within or resulting from ITMS2014+. According to the IPD information, currently there is a solution in progress via ITMS 2014+ Open Data API
8. Findings and recommendations
Findings: lists are available from the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk (compliant with the CPR) lists provide all he required categories (compliant with the CPR) lists are updated on an ongoing basis based on the version updates of ITMS2014+ together with the date thereof there is not a single list for all projects but there are two - one for completed projects and projects underway (non-compliance with the CPR) category titles are not provided in an additional EU official language other than Slovak (non-compliant with the CPR) lists are not published in the form of data in calculation tables (recommended formats are CSV or XML), but directly as a form environment at the relevant page of the tab. This makes sorting, search, extraction and comparison more difficult, while this is the very purpose of publishing project lists (non-compliance with the CPR). **Recommendations:** - harmonize the published lists with the CPR requirements, i. e. provide category titles in an additional official EU language other than Slovak, obviously the most appropriate seems English, and enable a possibility to generate a list of projects with all required categories pursuant to appendix XII of the CPR in the form of data in calculation tables (recommended CSV or XML formats).

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6.3 Analysis and evaluation of the initial media campaign and the public opinion poll

The initial media campaign ran from **18 July 2016 to 31 August 2016** and it was implemented by an advertising agency. The communication made use of **print ads, radio commercials and online** display ad formats. The **objective** of the campaign was to raise awareness of ESIF, sensitize the public for new programming period and focus attention to the new possibilities of drawing ESIF under the PA SR. In terms of marketing typology the campaign can be defined as an **information** campaign. The target group comprised mainly the Slovak population aged 15+ including non-governmental organizations and applicants/beneficiaries.

The media campaign consisted of the following media services (visuals of the print ads and online banners are in Appendix B hereof):

- 3 variations of half-minute radio spots;
- 6 variations of ½ page color advertising in the press (dailies, weeklies and monthlies), placed on the editorial page or a standard inside page;
- 4 variations of dynamic web banners linking to www.eufondy.sk.

6.3.1 Qualitative evaluation of the creative component of the campaign.

Qualitative evaluation of the creative component comprises **two levels**. **On the first level, the** campaign is evaluated **as a whole**, especially from the aspect of the central communication idea and its capacity to deliver and explain the message to the target group. **On the second level,** assessed is the **adaptation of the campaign for individual media types**, especially with regard to the specific requirements of the individual media. Specific requirements are considered according to various ways of creative design of the campaign - the way how the message is delivered to the target group, e. g. different particulars apply to the radio or e. g. prints. The campaign should be aligned with the central communication idea but adjusted at the level of individual media types.

When assessing advertising which is not an exact discipline and a desired result may be achieved in various ways, an evaluator may tend to prefer his personal taste. To eliminate the subjective factor, evaluation criteria and scale need to be defined and the advertising needs to be evaluated against the set criteria. The criteria which are a standard in assessing advertising in business practice as well as creative competitions were applied to evaluate the campaign:

- Creative interpretation of a message/power of a creative idea. In case of a campaign appealing to the consumer's rationality which is the case here, the creative idea should primarily draw attention to and amplify the strength of the rational information communicated in the campaign.

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- The ability of the advertising campaign to deliver a message about a product to the target group, i.e. whether the target group can understand the communicated benefits of a product/service.
- Professional interpretation and aesthetics of the visuals/spots, i. e. how the campaign is processed in terms of technical, technological, textual and artistry aspects.

Evaluation of the campaign as a whole

The creative idea of the campaign was based on a simple metaphor of the change of Slovakia and the life of its population with the contribution from ESIF. The metaphor was used to demonstrate, with a series of visuals, in what areas the operational programmes can help and thus "Create together a better and prettier Slovakia" was one of the campaign's headlines. **The campaign's "*call to action*" factor** called for participation in the support from the operational programmes with the headline "Choose a new programme".

Criterion 1: Creative interpretation of the message/ strength of the creative idea – **80% of 100%**

The use of the change metaphor in the sense of "old vs. new" (mainly in prints by using two graphic images side by side, one representing the "old" and the other representing the "new") is a standard tool in advertising and not an innovative element that would differentiate the campaign. **Hence the campaign idea can be evaluated as average, however, appropriate with a view to the target group, "product" and campaign type.** The campaign's objective was to inform about a service which the public is not sufficiently aware of and the interest in it is rather passive. Therefore the use of more sophisticated creative messages could be counterproductive and lead to misunderstanding of the message. **Quite rightly the simple and illustrative aspect were given priority over an effort to differentiate the communication and catch attention at all costs.**

Criterion 2: Ability of the advertising campaign to deliver the message about the product to the target group – **85% out of 100%**

Visually, the advertising campaign illustrates the potential/desired benefit from ESIF in various areas of the society and refers the basic information source on ESIF and the support possibilities in PP 2014 - 2020 (website) and at the same time it contains a "*call to action*" headline "Choose a new programme". With a view to the campaign's objectives (raising awareness of ESIF, sensitization for a new PP and focusing attention to the new drawing possibilities) it can be stated that **the campaign had a high potential to deliver its message across and meet the campaign's objectives**. **On the other side** it needs to be said that the visuals and spots refer the website, nevertheless, the website contains a huge amount of mainly technical and administrative information which makes it difficult to use as an information source for the public. At the same time the conversion rate from the print or radio to online (i. e. the per cent of people who really visit the web site based on the read or heard reference) is marginal with this type of campaigns.

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Criterion 3: Professional interpretation and aesthetics of visuals/spots – **85% of 100%**

Professionally, the media campaign was handled **very well** and corresponds with the standards of the advertising industry. Some minor deficiencies related to the adaptation for individual media types are mentioned in the next part of the evaluation.

Evaluation of the print campaign

The print campaign can be considered **as handled well**. Print visuals form a backbone supporting the creative idea. The choice of print as a central medium is correct because the printed media are able to deliver a more complicated advertising message, thanks to the fact that contrary to online or out-of-home media they allow the consumer to spend a longer time over the ad.

Evaluation of the online campaign

Advertising was placed on the portals with the highest traffic and visibility. The selected format (300x300px) of dynamic banners is one of the common and basic online formats. Online part of the campaign was based on the creative idea context in the print (the same visuals were used). Online campaign suppressed the metaphor of "old vs. new" because it uses only one part of the visual ("new"). **Creative idea was weakened as a result.** The "*call to action*" factor was preserved with the headline of "Choose a new programme".

Contrary to the printed media, the banner advertising has only a limited room to communicate more complex information. In this case they should be accompanied by a website which the banner refers. Despite the fact that the banner contained a link to a website, the call to click it wasn't emphasized in any way, e. g. by a *button* "learn more". **A drawback is a failure to use the full potential of redirecting the user directly to the website eufondy.sk**.

Evaluation of the radio campaign

The radio campaign consisted of three variations of the information commercial: "Do you want a better and prettier Slovakia, too?", "Do you want to know more of the new drawing possibilities?" and "Bring your vision to life." The central creative idea could not quite be implemented into this communication channel, which can be considered as the right step, with regard to the limited space for its interpretation (audio recording only can be used here). The campaign uses the radio only as a frequency medium delivering basic information about ESIF and the reference to the website as a source of more detailed information **The radio commercial has a clear and comprehensibly communicated message and contains a "*call to action*" to visit the website.**

Evaluation of the campaign as a whole

The campaign as a whole can be assessed as **well handled in terms of creativity**. Despite that, it would be appropriate to emphasize the educative dimension in the future waves of the campaign, so that the campaign communicates ESIF benefits to an ordinary

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citizen in a comprehensible manner. **Mandatory requirements of displaying the EU logo and reference to the EU/fund were complied with fully in all media types.**

6.3.2 Postbuy analysis and evaluation of the campaign

The chapter concerned is divided in three sub-chapters by media types, each of the subchapters contains **evaluation of relevance** of the media used with regard to their market share and **evaluation of campaign implementation**. Delivery of the campaign was verified using AdEx TNS database (TNS provides independent monitoring of advertising in TV, print and radio). Online data were delivered by the provider of the media campaign. Media indicators were calculated on the basis of a MML-TGI survey.

6.3.2.1 Print

Most of the print media used ranks among TOP in the Slovak market in terms of readership. With a view to the fact that the media campaign was targeting the entire population of Slovakia (i. e. no specific target group), the **media choice reflects the common media practice**. The size of the potential target group which the campaign can potentially reach by dailies, weeklies and monthlies is 93 % of the entire population older than 14 years of age [9] (93 % of people have read a daily, weekly or monthly). At the same time 64 % of population over 14 years of age read the last issue of a daily, weekly or monthly, so it is possible to assume they are regular readers of the press.[10]

Relevance of the chosen titles, based on their readership, is shown in the following graphs, **emphasized in dark blue are the titles of the used print media**.

Of the **dailies**, advertising was deployed in Nový čas, Sme, Pravda, Plus jeden deň and Hospodárske noviny. Although Šport and Korzár have a higher readership than Hospodárske noviny, the decision not to choose them because of their focus (sport, region of East Slovakia) **is correct**.

[9] Source: MEDIAN SK, MML- TGI, 2nd quarter 2016 and 3rd quarter 2016
[10] A daily was read at an unspecified time in the past by 88 % people, the last issue of a daily was read by 29 %. A weekly was read at an unspecified time in the past by 86 % of people, the last issue of a weekly was read by 39 %. A monthly was read at an unspecified time in the past by 72 % people and the last issue of a monthly was read by 44 %.

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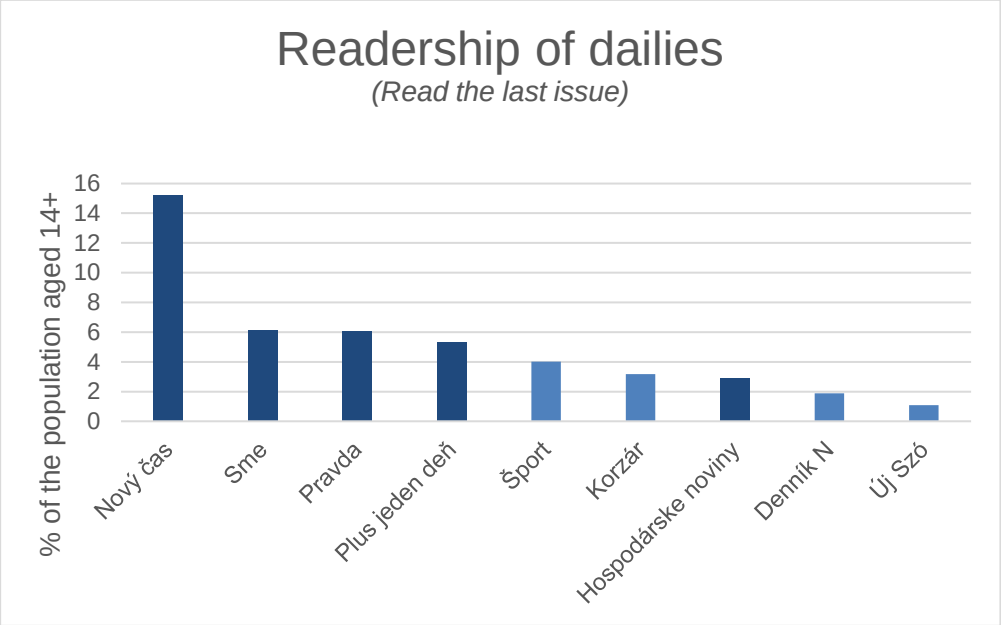
Graph 1 Readership of dailies[11]



Source: MEDIAN SK, MML- TGI, 2nd quarter 2016 a 3rd quarter 2016

Of the **weeklies**, advertising was deployed in Plus 7 dní, Život, Nový čas pre ženy, Báječná žena and Eurotelevízia. These rank among the most widely read weeklies. Inclusion of Trend magazine with a relatively low readership can be evaluated **positively**, since the weekly targets a more sophisticated group which is not reached by major weeklies.

[11] The graph illustrates readership of individual titles in the market. The standard indicator of readership is the parameter "read the last issue", when the respondents are asked to identify the titles of which they read the last issue. The interviewing is conducted with a population older than 14 years of age (included). The date is provided as a per cent of population aged 14+.

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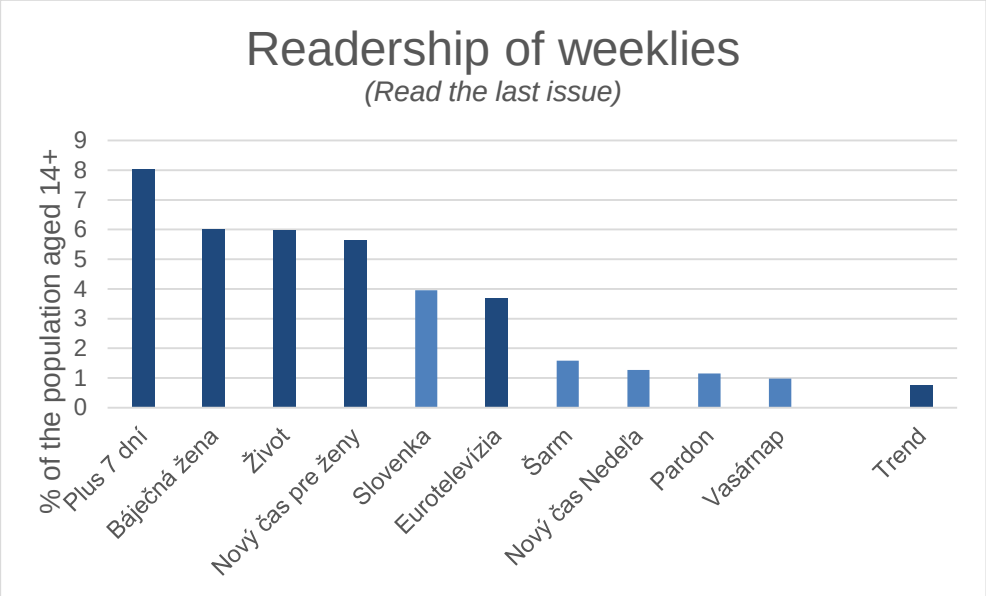
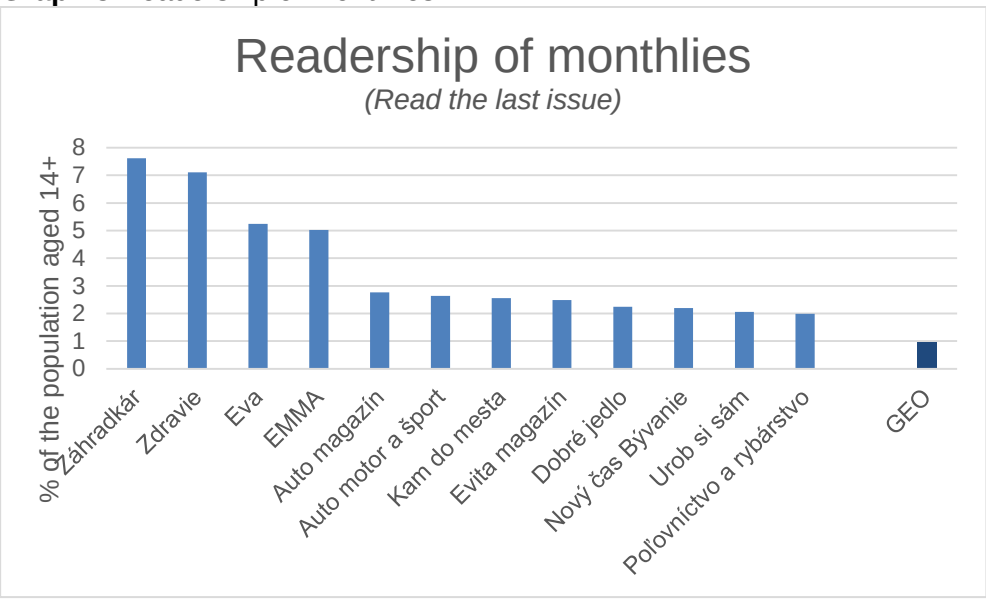
Graph 2 Readership of weeklies



Source: MEDIAN SK, MML- TGI, 2nd quarter 2016 a 3rd quarter 2016

Of the **monthlies** only GEO was used, with one published advertising only.

Graph 3 Readership of monthlies



Source: MEDIAN SK, MML- TGI, 2nd quarter 2016 a 3rd quarter 2016

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Evaluation of the print campaign

There were a total of **165 ads** ordered in print media and all were published as well. **The reach of print media used in the campaign** was **almost 69 % of the entire population of Slovakia**. Advertising was evenly distributed among individual periodicals except SME, i. e. 31 ads in dailies (SME 4 only), 6 in weeklies and 1 in a monthly.

From the point of view of media, interesting is also the **indicator of effective reach**. Effectively reached are deemed the people who came across the given medium at a certain minimum number of times. The minimum frequency of an effective reach is specific for each media type and varies between individual advertising campaigns. In printed advertising generally, effectively reached are considered people who came across the same periodical at least three times (it can be assumed that people who were reached at least 3 times by a title, can really remember the content). In terms of the evaluated campaign, **effectively reached** can be considered **58 % of population**.

Advertising generated together **1,120 GRPs**, significant majority of which was generated by dailies. The GRPs indicator shows the sum of readership of all advertising in an advertising campaign (e. g. a campaign had 3 ads, one was seen by 3 % of population, second by 11 % and third by 9 %. So the campaign had a total of 3 + 11 + 9 = 23 GRPs.). GRPs is a basic media unit which indicates an overall value (strength) of a media campaign.

Division of GRPs by a per cent of reach (1,120/69) represents an **average frequency** at the level of 16.5. It means that every reached person came across the campaign on average 16.5 times. That corresponds with the **massive deployment of the campaign**.

CPP is a price indicator which determines the price for reaching 1 % of the target group - based on this value the overall cost effectiveness can be assessed. From the point of view of cost effectiveness, most effective are the periodicals with wide target audience, such as Nový Čas with CPP 299 €. On the contrary, a specialized periodical such as Trend or GEO reach smaller target group (which however is not easy to reach by generic targeting) and that is reflected in higher CPP. **All CPP values are adequate to price list standards**.

A more detailed evaluation of the campaign in the print media is shown in the table below.

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Table 2 Evaluation of the campaign in print

	PLAN	REALITY					
Medium	**Ad quantity**	**Ad quantity**	**GRPs[12]**	**Reach (%)**	**Effective reach (3+) (%)**	**Price (less VAT)**	**CPP[13]**
Báječná žena	6	6	36.01	14.81	2.90	14,825.70 €	411.68 €
Eurotelevízia	6	6	22.06	7.13	2.47	10,299.96 €	467.01 €
GEO	1	1	0.95	0.95	0.00	1,487.50 €	1,569.75 €
Hospodárske noviny	31	31	88.97	8.15	6.50	60,206.96 €	676.69 €
Nový Čas	31	31	472.33	39.99	35.75	141,507.25 €	299.59 €
Nový Čas pre ženy	6	6	33.83	13.49	2.57	15,215.82 €	449.76 €
Plus 1 Deň	31	31	165.37	19.66	16.73	70,148.97 €	424.20 €
Plus 7 Dní	6	6	48.16	24.74	4.42	18,727.20 €	388.83 €
Pravda	31	31	187.31	17.07	14.50	81,759.71 €	436.49 €
SME	4	4	24.62	13.98	2.99	11,860.56 €	481.73 €
Trend	6	6	4.60	2.79	0.29	10,573.02 €	2,300.96 €
Život	6	6	35.85	19.07	3.05	18,259.02 €	509.26 €
Total	**165**	**165**	**1,120.06**	**69.30**	**57.70**	**454,871.67 €**	**487.33 €**

Source: Partial implementation contract on the rendering of media services no. 743/2016 and no. 756/2016; database AdEx TNS, MEDIAN SK, MML-TGI 2nd and 3rd quarters 2016; Government's Office of the SR

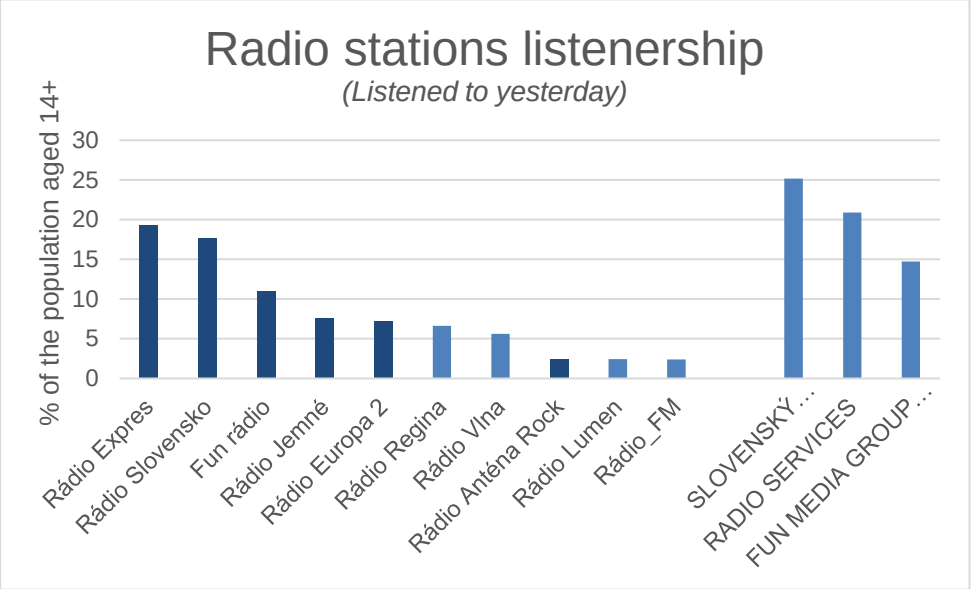
[12] The GRPs indicator shows the sum of readership of all advertising in the advertising campaign (e. g. campaign had 3 ads, one was seen by 3 % of population, second by 11 % and third by 9 %. So the campaign had a total of 3 + 11 + 9 = 23 GRPs.).
[13] Price for reaching 1 % of the target group.

6.3.2.2 Radio

An overall potential of the radio is 96 % of the population 14+, i. e. 96 % have a possibility to listen to a radio[14]. **66 %** of people listened to the radio yesterday, which represents the maximum **daily reach by the radio** (i. e. it is possible to reach 66 % of population by radio on a single day).

The campaign was deployed on the radio stations Expres, Slovensko 1, Fun rádio, Jemné, Európa 2, Rádio_FM and Devín. The first five of these radios rank **among the most-listened-to radio stations in the market**.

Graph 4 Radio stations listenership



Source: MEDIAN SK, MML- TGI, 2nd quarter 2016 a 3rd quarter 2016

Evaluation of the radio campaign

The campaign on the radio lasted **from 18 July 2016 until 31 August 2016**. During this period 1,660 spots were to be aired. According to TNS monitoring, amended with data from the Government's Office of the SR, all of the 1,660 spots were aired. Overall, **the reach by the radio stations used** achieved the level of **77 % of the Slovak population**. The campaign generated **3,571 GRPs** (sum of listenership of the radio spots), with the most significant share of Slovenský rozhlas. The average **frequency** of listening reaches 42 which means **frequent repetition and massive deployment.** That correlates with the **effective reach score**, which was overall on the level of **77 %**. In case of the radio the reach frequency is at least 6 times (whereas with print the effective reach starts at three times - considered is the fact that the memorability of visual inputs is higher than with acoustic - this fact needs to be borne in mind also when comparing the indicators

[14]Source: MEDIAN SK, MML- TGI, 2nd quarter 2016 and 3rd quarter 2016

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between individual media types). **Almost all of the reached individuals encountered the campaign 6 times at the minimum.**

In terms of **cost efficiency, Rádio Europa 2** proved to be the most efficient with the lowest CPP. **Rádio_FM** scored **the highest CPP** which is given by a relatively low listenership and a very specific target group. Also in this case the **achieved CPP scores do not differ from the usual price list values**.

A more detailed evaluation of the campaign in the radio is shown in the table below.

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Table 3 Evaluation of the campaign in the radio

	PLAN	REALITY					
Medium	**Ad quantity**	**Ad quantity**	**GRPs[15]**	**Reach (%)**	**Effective reach (3+) (%)**	**Price (less VAT)**	**CPP[16]**
Rádio Expres	300	300	1,075,35	34.70	34.70	154,377.00 €	143.56 €
Fun rádio	200	200	377.05	23.13	23.13	51,978.00 €	137.85 €
Rádio Jemné	320	320	378.59	16.70	16.70	17,376.00 €	45.90 €
Europa 2	320	320	365.09	15.27	15.27	16,928.00 €	46.37 €
Slovenský Rozhlas	320	320	1,053.45	29.88	29.88	89,817.60 €	85.26 €
Rádio_FM	100	100	31.79	5.87	1.90	8,770.00 €	275.87 €
Rádio Devín[17]	100	100	-	-	-	2,330.00 €	-
Total	**1,660**	**1,660**	**3,571.70**	**77.29**	**76.94**	**341,576.60 €**	**95.63 €**

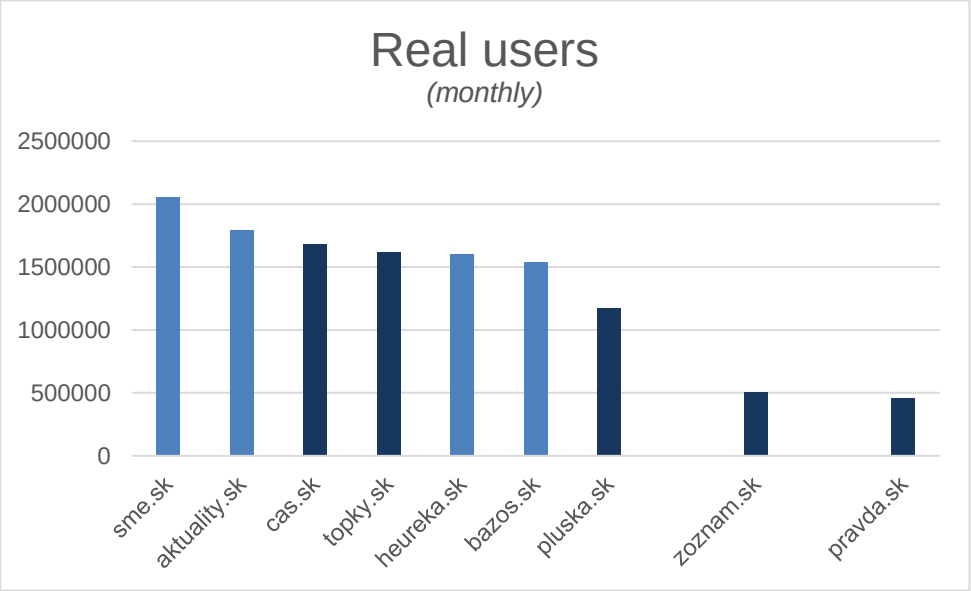
Source: Partial implementation contract on the rendering of media services no. 743/2016 and no. 756/2016; database AdEx TNS, MEDIAN SK, MML-TGI 2nd and 3rd quarters 2016; Government's Office of the SR

[15] The GRPs indicator shows the sum of listenership of all advertising in the advertising campaign (e. g. campaign had 3 ads, one was listened to by 3 % of population, second by 11 % and third by 9 %. So the campaign had a total of 3 + 11 + 9 = 23 GRPs.).
[16] Price for reaching 1 % of the target group.
[17] Radio Devin has a statistically irrelevant listenership therefore it is not included in the MML-TGI metrics.

6.3.2.3 Online

A total of **68 % of the Slovak population is online**, at the same time **47 % of people** were online on the **past day**[18]. Online campaign ran also on the most frequently visited news portals, specifically cas.sk, pravda.sk, topky.sk, zoznam.sk, atlas+centrum+pobox and pluska.sk. The graph below shows the monthly web traffic of the TOP Slovak webs at the time of the campaign. Web traffic is measured as the number of unique visitors, i.e. number of people who visited the web during the given month, free of duplicities.

Graph 5 Internet portals traffic



Source: AIMmonitor, July 2016

Evaluation of the online campaign

A total count of impressions[19] scored **29,962,950 impressions**, which represents 101.64 % of the scope ordered. The highest share of impressions was on the portals zoznam.sk and topky.sk, the lowest on pluska.sk. **Number of clicks** through ad banners reached **42,997**, of which the highest score was on zoznam.sk and topky.sk, the lowest on pluska.sk.

Performance of individual websites per a given campaign can be evaluated by **a click-through rate (CTR[20])**. CTR at 0.28 %, which was scored on **topky.sk**, can be considered as **very successful**. On the contrary CTR on zoznam.sk reached 0.11 %,

[18]Source: MEDIAN SK, MML- TGI, 2nd quarter 2016 and 3rd quarter 2016
[19] Number of ad impressions to the users.
[20] The rate of clicks to impressions determines the success rate of online advertising (but only if the goal is to have people click on the banner). If the CTR equals 0.14 %, it means that about 14 out of 10,000 people clicked on the ad.

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which is a low number compared to topky.sk, but it is considered an average performance for such a format in the market. It needs to be emphasized that the click-through rate (CTR) was not a primary objective of the campaign.

Cost effectiveness in online is assessed on the basis of several factors. One of the possible indicators is **CPC (cost per click)**, which scored an average value of 3.02 €, i. e. one click on the ad cost 3.02 €. It needs to be borne in mind that the campaign's objective wasn't clicks on a link but raising awareness. Therefore a more **appropriate indicator is CPT (cost per thousand impressions)**, since seeing the ad itself may foster awareness. Based on CPT the **most effective was the ad on pluska.sk, 1.60 € per 1,000 impressions**. CPT on cas.sk (7.32 €) and pravda.sk (6.20 €) is quite costly considering the format, nevertheless, it is still below the set pricelist levels. **Average CPT was at the level of 4.33 €**.

The aforementioned data are graphically displayed in the table and graphs below.

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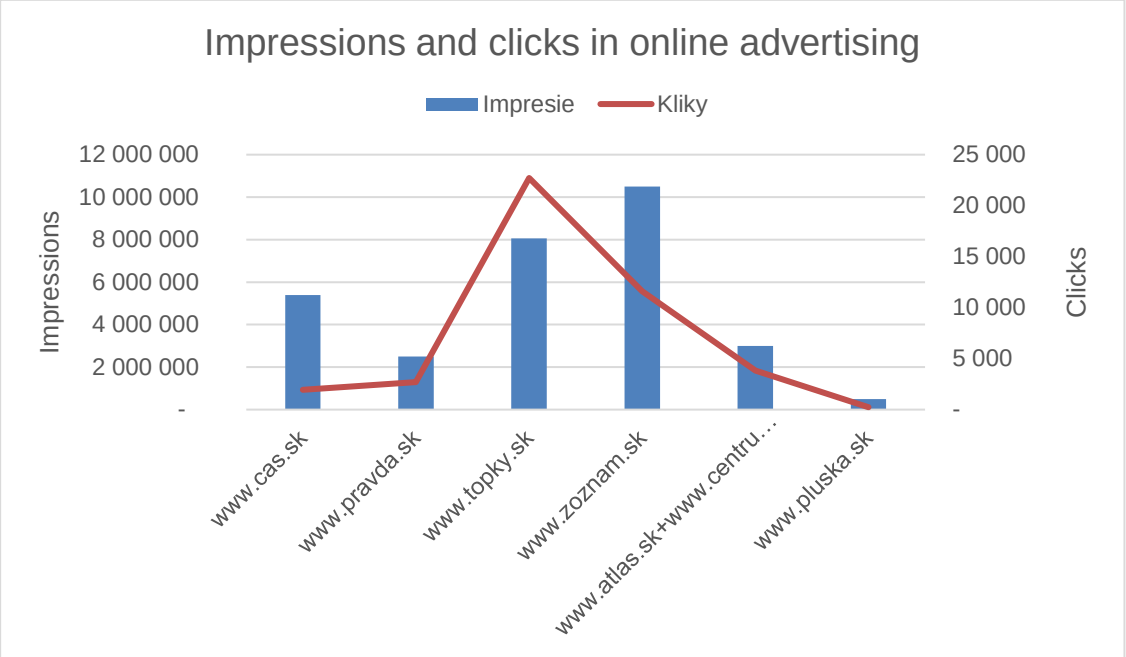
Table 4 Evaluation of the online campaign

	PLAN	REALITY					
Portal	**Impressions**	**Impressions**	**Clicks**	**CTR[21] (%)**	**Price (less VAT)**	**CPT[22]**	**CPC[23]**
www.cas.sk	5,000,000	5,399,343	1,936	0.04	39,500.00 €	7.32 €	20.40 €
www.pravda.sk	2,500,000	2,501,540	2,699	0.11	15,500.00 €	6.20 €	5.74 €
www.topky.sk	8,000,000	8,060,688	22,711	0.28	29,360.00 €	3.64 €	1.29 €
www.zoznam.sk	10,480,000	10,501,038	11,595	0.11	31,649.60 €	3.01 €	2.73 €
www.atlas.sk+www.centrum.sk+www.pobox.sk	3,000,000	3,000,173	3,822	0.13	12,990.00 €	4.33 €	3.40 €
www.pluska.sk	500,000	500,168	234	0.05	800.00 €	1.60 €	3.42 €
Total	**29,480,000**	**29,962,950**	**42,997**	**0.14**	**129,799.60 €**	**4.33 €**	**3.02 €**

Source: Partial implementation contract on the rendering of media services no. 743/2016 and no. 756/2016; Government's Office of the SR

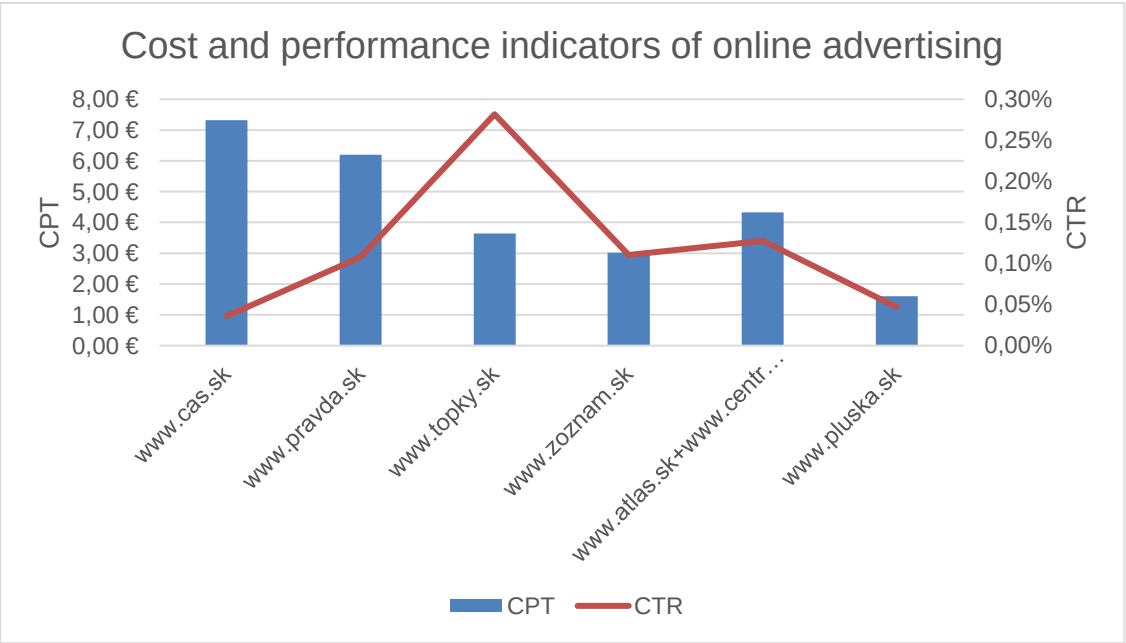
[21] Rate of clicks to impressions
[22] Cost per 1,000 impressions.
[23] Cost per click

Graph 6 Impressions and clicks in online advertising



Source: Partial implementation contract on the rendering of media services no. 743/2016 and no. 756/2016; Government's Office of the SR

Graph 7 Cost and performance indicators of online advertising



Source: Partial implementation contract on the rendering of media services no. 743/2016 and no. 756/2016; Government's Office of the SR

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6.3.3 The analysis and evaluation of the public opinion poll

The data were collected in the public opinion poll in the period from **22 September until 7 October 2016** at a representative sample of **1,000** respondents aged 18+ by quota sampling (age, sex, education, size of domicile town and region). The respondent sample is **representative** of the adult population of SR. The questionnaire is contained in Appendix E and complete survey results are provided in Appendix F hereof. The survey was conducted using CATI method[24].

The questionnaire questions are evaluated according to individual topics and order in the questionnaire, there is a graph prepared for majority of questions with quantities of respondents/base of a given question[25] and a brief verbal description of the data obtained. There is conducted the **first-tier** data sorting (a question is evaluated at the level of the entire sample/sub-sample), or **second-tier** sorting by data (the question is evaluated by quotas or criteria such as social and economic status and access to internet). The **third-tier** sorting is based on the two criteria: 1) the nature of interest in the ESIF matters, i. e. it concerns the **comparisons of attitude between those with active vs. passive interest;** 2) campaign reach, i. e. **comparison** of attitudes between those who **were exposed** to the campaign vs. those who **were not exposed** to the campaign.

The size of the basic selected sample (1,000 respondents) allows to generalize the basic results of the survey (first-tier data) to the entire population of SR aged 18 plus with a interval of about ±3 % at the 95 % confidence. However, it needs to be emphasized that a number of questions is evaluated on the basis of a lower count of the sub-sample, hence the variation is increasing with decreasing quantity of the sub-sample.

In **interpretation of the achieved survey results** it is necessary to bear in mind that the results may be biased to a certain extent especially for questions regarding the campaign, since the interviewing was conducted one month after the campaign and there were other media campaigns by other MAs which could have affected the responses. The fact that 2016 is the year when programming periods are practically overturning also needs to be considered. Therefore many public attitudes cannot be assigned to the effect of PP 2014-2020 but rather to the PP 2007 - 2013. **Overall,** it is appropriate **to perceive the** presented **figures** as **statistical "trends" in attitudes** among the public.

[24] CATI method (*Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing*) is one of the methods of data collection. In CATI questioning all the questions as well as answer options are prepared electronically, whereby all the *skips* are configured in advance. Questions and responses are displayed on the terminal screen and responses obtained from respondents are continually processed while the interview is in progress.
[25] Not all of the questions are evaluated on the entire sample of the respondents.

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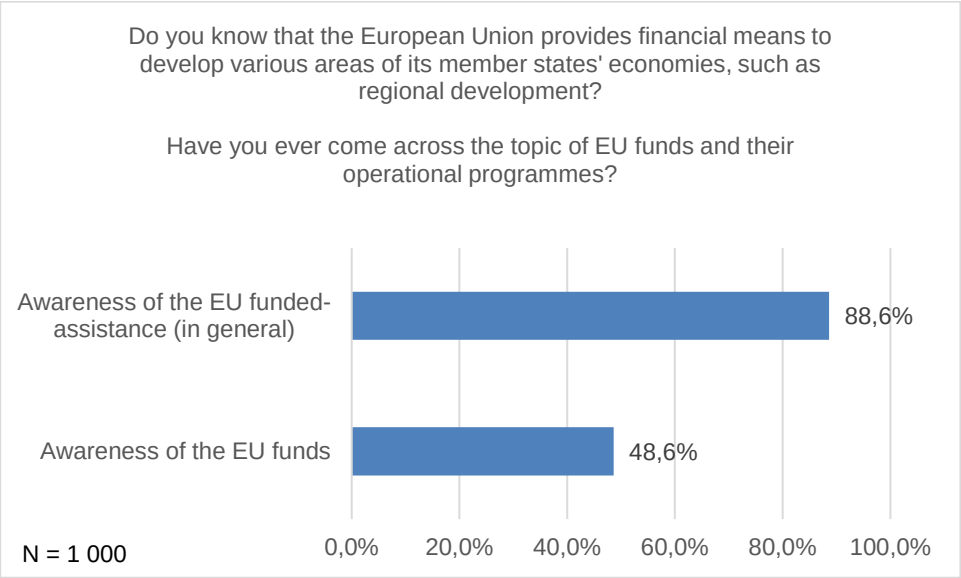
6.3.3.1 *Results of the public opinion poll*

Awareness of the EU role and EU-funded assistance

Awareness of the financial assistance from the EU role and EU funds

88.6 % of the approached respondents expressed their **knowledge of the fact that the EU provides financial means** for the development of various areas of economy of its member states, e. g. regional development. At the same time **48.6 % of the approached respondents said they had come across the topic of EU funds and their operational programmes**.

Graph 8 Comparison of awareness the EU funded-assistance (in general) and awareness of the EU funds



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

The difference of 40 p. p. between the level of "general" awareness of the existence of the financial assistance from the EU (88.6 %) and "specific" knowledge of the EU funds (48.6 %) is probably caused by the fact that the latter group managed to catch only respondents who had a "closer contact" with the EU funds, since the value is lower compared to results of similar queries in the long-term[26]. It may be assumed that the **true**

[26] 74 % (per question: Have you ever heard of the European Union structural funds?, public opinion poll conducted in September/October 2014, appendix no. 6 MI CCA no. 16) or 67 % (average of regular Eurobarometer survey per question: Europe provides financial support to the regions and cities. Have you ever heard of a project co-financed by the European Union, aiming to develop the region where you live? (Source: Flash Eurobarometer 423 (June 2015), 384 (September 2013) and 298 (June 2010)).

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share of the public familiar with the existence of the EU funds is higher, at the level of about 68 %, i. e. mean value between 88.6 % and 48.6 %. With regard to socio-economic categories, the result manifested most notably in the group of respondents with "elementary or secondary education without school-leaving examination", in particular 51.1 p. p. (82.5 % vs. 31.4 %), in the group aged 61+, at the level of 54.1 p. p. (93.4 % vs. 39.3 %) and in the group of retirees, 55.1 p. p. (91.4 % vs. 36.3 %).

In terms of knowledge of the EU financial assistance in general and the EU funds, there may be correlations identified especially in categories of the size of settlement, socio-economic status and education, i. e. **with increasing size of the settlement, socio-economic status and higher academic achievements a higher awareness of the EU funds was noted**.

Without any doubts **the positive trend** has been confirmed in connection with **access to internet** (e. g. knowledge of the EU financial assistance in general: 90.0 % vs. 80.8 % in favour of the people with internet access; as per knowledge of the EU funds matters: 48.9 % vs. 17.9 % in favour of the people with internet access).

Two of the best known ESIF are deemed **the European Regional Development Fund** (69.1 % of those familiar with the EU funds) and **the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development** (61.9 % of those familiar with the EU funds), followed by the European Social Fund (38.5 %), Cohesion Fund (22.0 %) and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (6.6 %).

From the regional viewpoint, there was a **relatively low** level of awareness of the EAFRD in the Žilina region (only 52.2 %), ERDF in the Nitra region (59.3 %), CF in the Žilina region (10.1 %), or rather **relatively high** level of awareness of ESF in the Košice region (49.3 %), CF in the Bratislava region (30.0 %) and EMFF in the Košice region (10.4 %).

As per **settlement size,** it is interesting that **awareness of the size of settlement seems irrelevant to the knowledge of EAFRD**, which could be expected with regard to the fund's focus on rural areas. The most significant correlation between the size of settlement and the knowledge of funds was visible with CF and ESF, where **a significantly better knowledge of CF among the respondents from settlements of 50,000+ inhabitants, and ESF among respondents from settlements of 5,000+ inhabitants as opposed to smaller settlements**.

With regard to **sex**, **all funds** scored a **slightly better knowledge among men** (on average by 5.3 p. p.), only in case of **ESF among women** (34.6 % vs. 42.9 % in favour of women).

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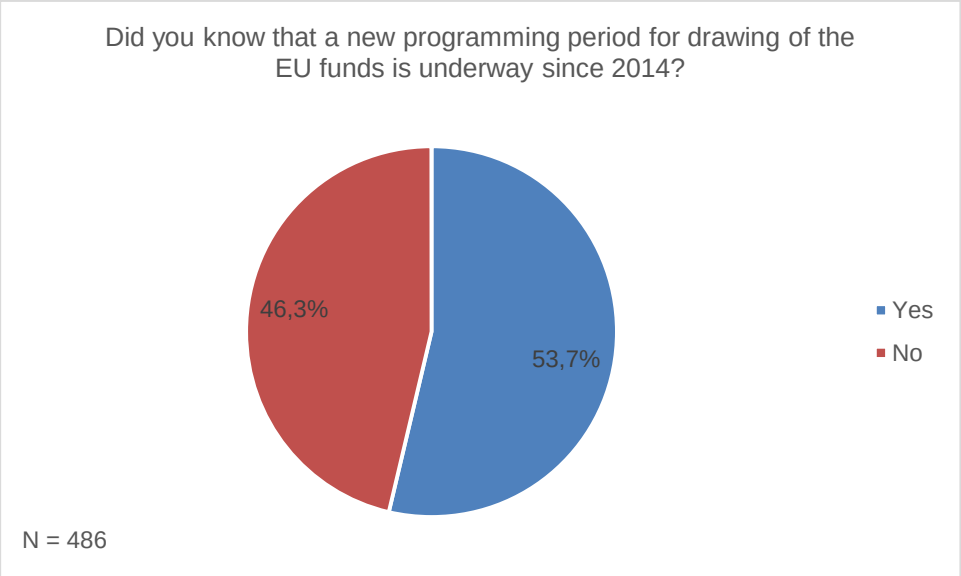
Awareness of the Partnership Agreement of the SR for the period of 2014-2020 and its operational programmes

Awareness of the existence of PP 2014 - 2020

Knowledge of the fact that since 2014 a new programming period is underway for drawing ESIF was declared by the relatively low share of respondents, specifically **53.7 %** of those who came across the topic of the EU funds.

Graph 9 Awareness of the existence of PP 2014 - 2020



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

An obvious correlation of the **knowledge of the PP 2014-2020** occurred in the **age category** - the level of awareness was growing with the age (from 44.0 % among the 18 – 30 years old to 66.3 % among 61+ years old). Interesting is the **inversely proportional** correlation with a view to **internet access**, where **higher level of awareness of the existence of PP 2014 - 2020** was noted **among respondents without internet access** (64.3 % vs. 53.1 % among respondents with access to internet).

An interest in the EU funds is a **major factor** for being aware of the existence of the PP 2014 - 2020 (86.0 % among those with active interest vs. 50.6 % of the respondents with passive interest in the EU funds). On the contrary, the **factor of being reached by the campaign** has a minor effect on the awareness of the existence of PP 2014 - 2020 (56.9 % vs. 51.6 %; among those exposed vs. not exposed to the campaign).

Awareness of the Partnership Agreement of the SR for the period of 2014-2020

29.8 % of respondents familiar with the EU funds matters said they **knew** the Partnership Agreement of the SR for the period of 2014-2020.

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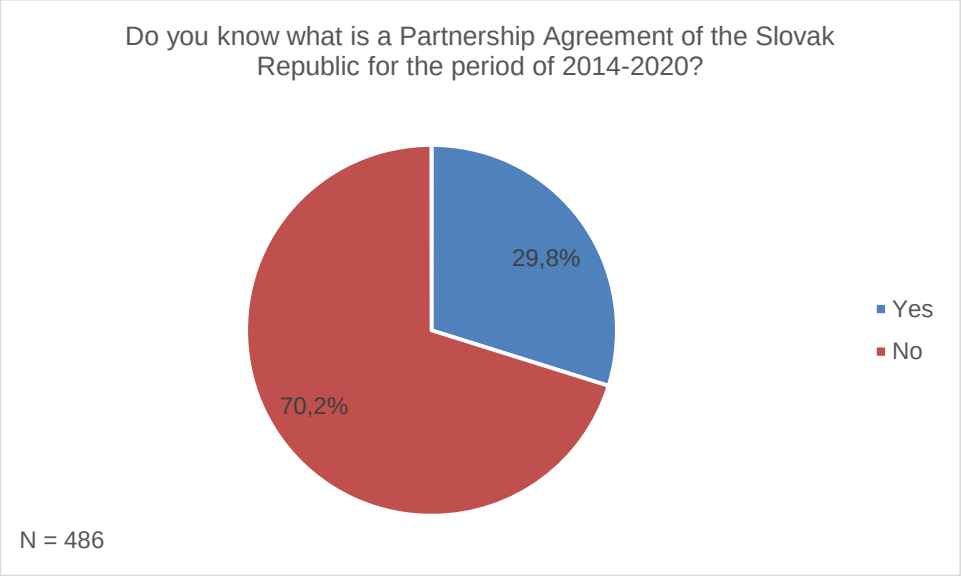
Graph 10 Awareness of the Partnership Agreement of the Slovak Republic for the period of 2014-2020.



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

A mild correlation of the **knowledge of the PA** occurred again in the **age category.** That is the level of awareness was growing with the age (from 26.8 % among the 31 – 45 years old to 28.2 % among the 18 - 30 years old, up to 35.8 % among the 61+ years old). A similar **directly proportional tendency** as with the age criterion was noted with the **education** criterion. Similarly to the knowledge of PP 2014-2020, an **inversely proportional** correlation demonstrated with a view to **internet access**, where **higher level of awareness of the existence of PA** was noted **among respondents without internet access** (42.9 % vs. 29.0 % among respondents with access to internet).

An interest in the EU funds is a **major factor** for being aware of the existence of the PA (58.1 % among those with active interest vs. 27.1 % of the respondents with passive interest in the EU funds). **The factor of being reached by the campaign** had a minor effect on the awareness of the existence of the PA (36.5 % vs. 25.3 %; among those exposed vs. not exposed to the campaign).

Recognition of the operational programmes

Spontaneous knowledge of an OP was expressed by **26.1 %** of the respondents **familiar with the EU funds topic**, which represents **12.7 % of the entire sample**. The scores achieved also showed a positive correlation between the spontaneous knowledge of any of the OPs and a factor of interest in the EU funds or a factor of campaign reach, approximately **twice as high as the level of spontaneous recognition of an OP in respondents reached by the campaign or those with an active interest in the EU funds matters**.

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The level of **supported** recognition of a given OP was **on average 6 times higher** as opposed to the **spontaneous** recognition of the same OP (from 4.5 to 10.2-multiple).

A detailed comparison is illustrated in the following graph.

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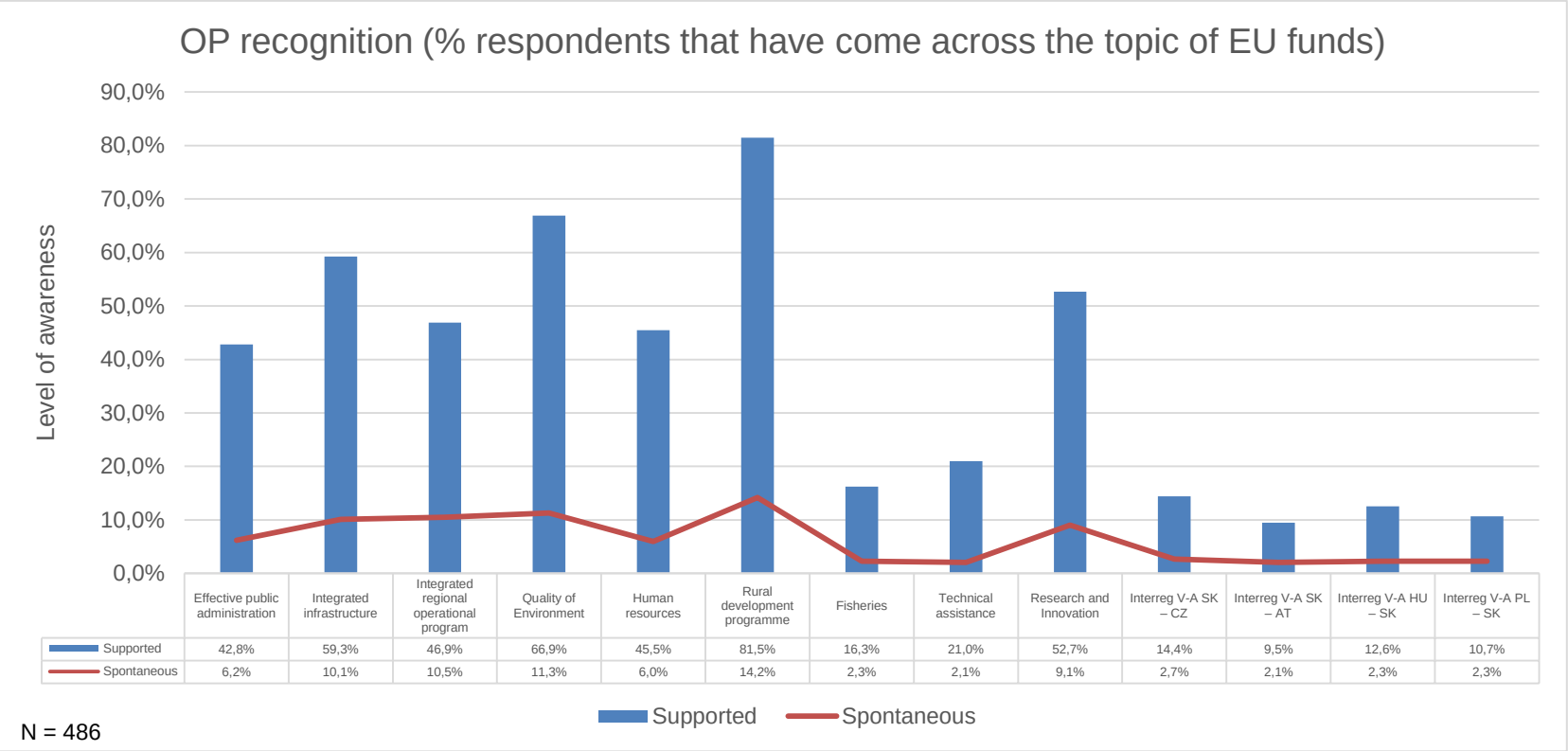
Graph 11 OP recognition (% respondents that have come across the topic of EU funds)



	Effective public administration	Integrated infrastructure	Integrated regional operational program	Quality of Environment	Human resources	Rural development programme	Fisheries	Technical assistance	Research and Innovation	Interreg V-A SK – CZ	Interreg V-A SK – AT	Interreg V-A HU – SK	Interreg V-A PL – SK
Supported	42,8%	59,3%	46,9%	66,9%	45,5%	81,5%	16,3%	21,0%	52,7%	14,4%	9,5%	12,6%	10,7%
Spontaneous	6,2%	10,1%	10,5%	11,3%	6,0%	14,2%	2,3%	2,1%	9,1%	2,7%	2,1%	2,3%	2,3%

N = 486

Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

The following findings can be emphasized based on the OP recognition scores:

- absolutely best known is the Rural Development Programme;
- relatively high level of recognition noted with the OP Effective public administration (despite the fact that it is a new OP and there wasn't any massive information campaign to promote it; this may be caused by a long-term information activity regarding the ongoing ESO reform of the public administration which is terminologically identical with the notion of "effective public administration");
- relatively high recognition of the OP Technical Assistance (with a view to a specific nature of this OP the general public does not have many possibilities to become more familiar with it) and OP Fisheries (it is a marginal OP with small allocation).

Recognition of projects

68.7 % of those familiar with the EU funds said they know some project supported by the EU funds. 1 of 3 among those familiar with the EU funds were sure that the project was supported within ESIF 2014 - 2020. **Given the starting stage of project implementation within the PP 2014 - 2020, the score may be more relevant to the previous programming period**.

Almost 80 % knowledge of projects was achieved in the Žilina region, the lowest score of a little below 60 % was among respondents from the Banská Bystrica region. In terms of settlement size, about an average of 12 % difference was noted in recognition of projects in settlements of 5,000+ inhabitants vs. smaller settlements. Again, a **strong correlation** was confirmed between the **factors of campaign reach or nature of interest in the EU funds and the knowledge of projects**.

Based on the identified areas of supported projects it follows that the respondents very likely included 2007 - 2013 projects in their responses, some of which were still being implemented in 2015, since the projects under PP 2014 - 2020 were not significantly implemented at the time when the survey was conducted. **Therefore these results should not be considered as relevant to the PP 2014 - 2020 but rather as related to projects supported by the EU funds in general**.

Majority of respondents are familiar with the projects in general terms only, or recognize them as a project implemented where they live or according to the information board/poster for a project. Only every tenth respondent knows a particular project in detail (11.4 % of those familiar with the EU funds topic).

Awareness of a list of projects

The existence of a **list of projects** was known to **56.4 %** of those familiar with the EU funds, while **every fourth of them knew where to look for it** (27.7 % of those familiar with the existence of such a list).

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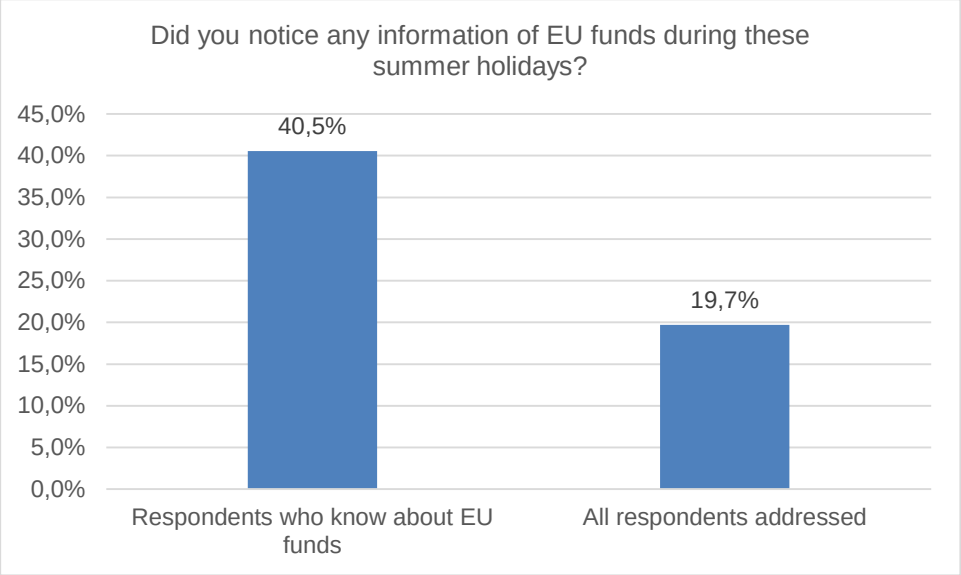
Again, with regard to the minimum rate of project implementation at the time of survey it is necessary to consider the aforementioned data as **pertinent to the PP 2007 - 2013**, not specifically to PP 2014 - 2020.

Media campaign

Exposure to the campaign

Exposed to the campaign were 40.5 % of those familiar with the EU funds topic, which represents 19.7 % of the entire sample. The lowest awareness of the campaign was in the Banská Bystrica (33.9 %) and Prešov (33.3 %) regions. Respondents most aware of the campaign were in the Nitra (50.0 %) and Trenčín (49.2 %) regions.

Graph 12 Exposure to the campaign (% respondents)



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

With regard to the social and economic status **a significantly higher awareness of the campaign** was shown in comparison with the overall level (40.5 %) in the categories "**self-employed**, freelance, private farmer" (52.9 %) and "**entrepreneur**" (65.2 %).

Share of individual media types in the campaign

3 of 5 exposed respondents (59.9 %) noted the campaign on the radio, 2 of 5 (41.6 %) noted it in the press or on internet. In the context of the entire sample the campaign on the radio was noted by 11.8 % of the respondents asked, in the press by 8.2 % and on internet 8.2 %.

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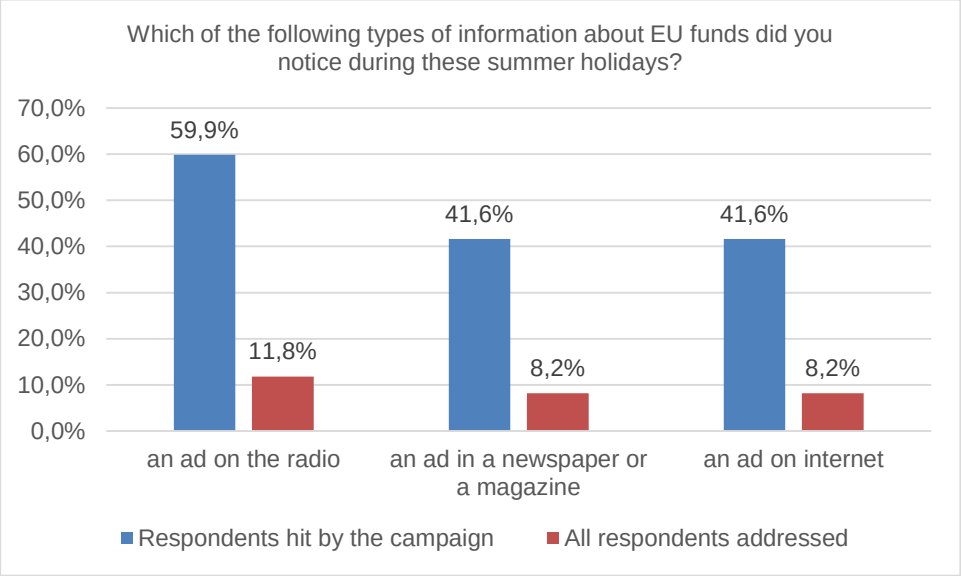
Graph 13 Share of individual media types in the campaign (% respondents who identified a given media type)



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

With a view to the **age**, a significant correlation occurred between the age and noting of the campaign **in the press**, where **the level of campaign awareness is growing with the age** (23.6 % aged 18 – 30 vs. 62.5 % aged 61+).

With regard to the **sex**, men were more exposed to the campaign via radio and internet, women via printed media.

As per interest in the EU funds, the campaign resonated more with those with active vs. passive interest, on average by 18 p. p..

Exposure to individual media

Those who noted the campaign on the radio most often identified Slovenský rozhlas (56.8 %) and Rádio Express (35.6 %), the least mentioned stations were Rádio Devín (8.5 %) and Rádio_FM (7.6 %).

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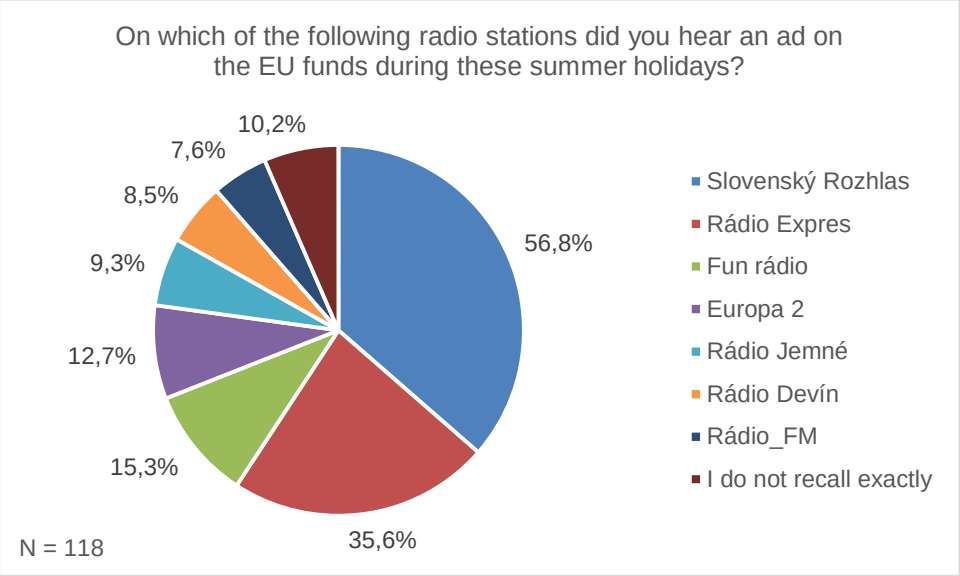
Graph 14 Shares of identified radio stations in the campaign (% respondents who noted the campaign on the radio)



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

Those who noted the campaign in the press most often identified **dailies** in the following order: Pravda (36.6 %), Hospodárske noviny (31.7 %), Nový čas (22.0 %), SME (18.0 %) and Plus 1 deň (7.3 %). The **weeklies** scored in the following order: Plus 7 dní (22.0 %), Život (11.0 %), Trend (8.5 %), Nový čas pre ženy (4.9 %), Báječná žena (3.7 %) and Eurotelevízia (2.4 %). **The monthly** GEO scored an insignificant share (1.2 %).

Reach by the printed periodicals is shown in the graph below. **With regard to the market share** of a given periodical, interesting is the result scored by the daily **Hospodárske noviny** and weekly **Trend** (**significantly higher** than expected on the basis of the market share) and **Plus 1 deň** (**significantly lower** than expected on the basis of its market share). **With a view to low deployment** of the campaign, an interesting, **relatively high result** was scored by the daily **SME**.

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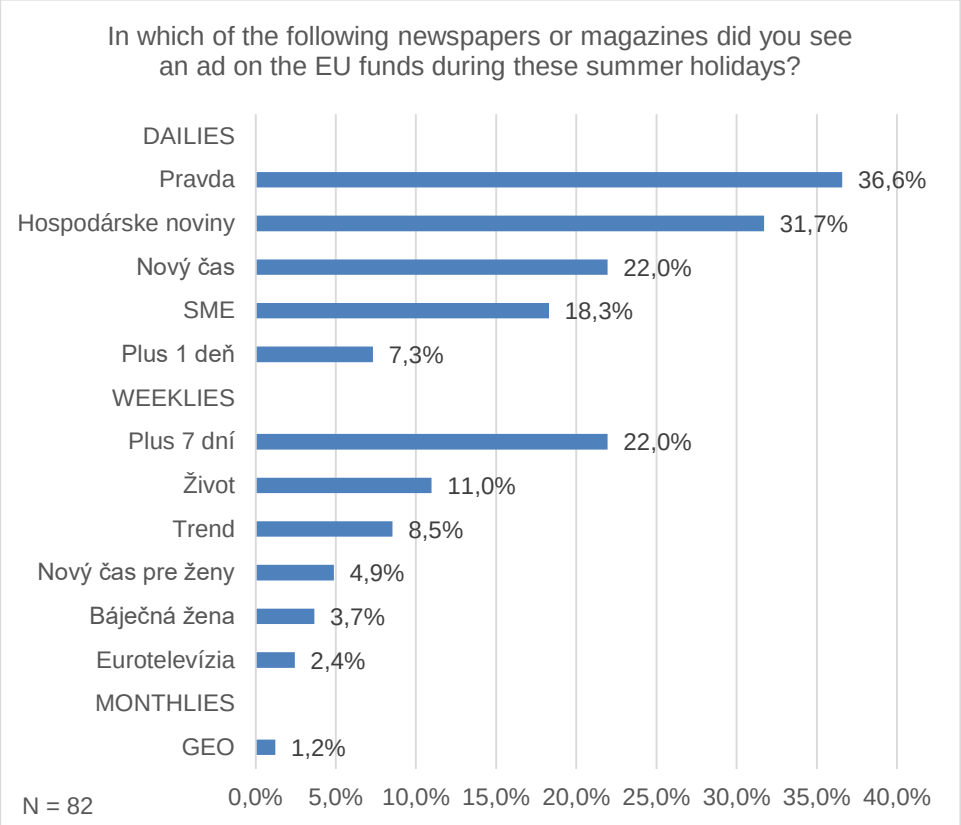
Graph 15 Shares of identified periodicals in the campaign (% respondents who noted the campaign in the press)



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

The most often quoted portal where respondents noted an advertising on the EU funds were **topky.sk and pravda.sk**. Relatively **substantial part of respondents** (23.2 %), the third biggest share, **did not remember a particular portal**.

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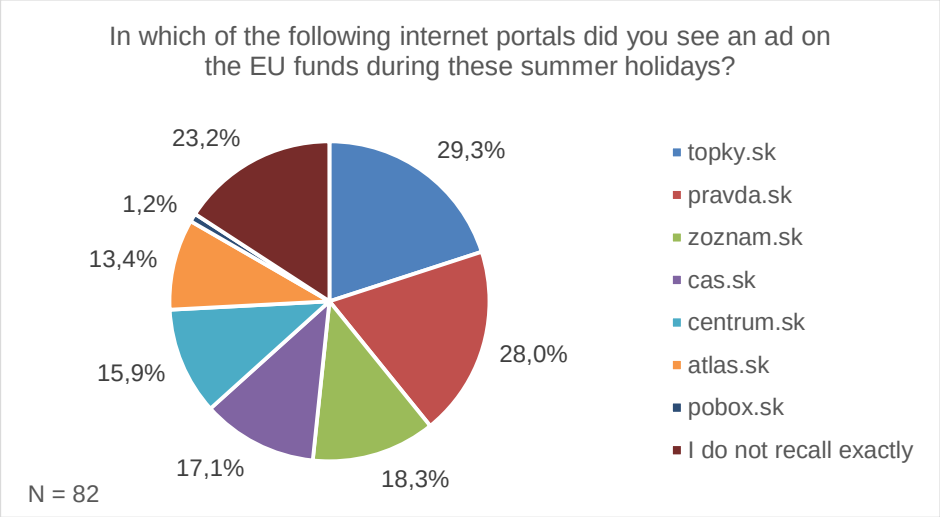
Graph 16 Shares of identified portals in the campaign (% respondents who noted the campaign on internet)

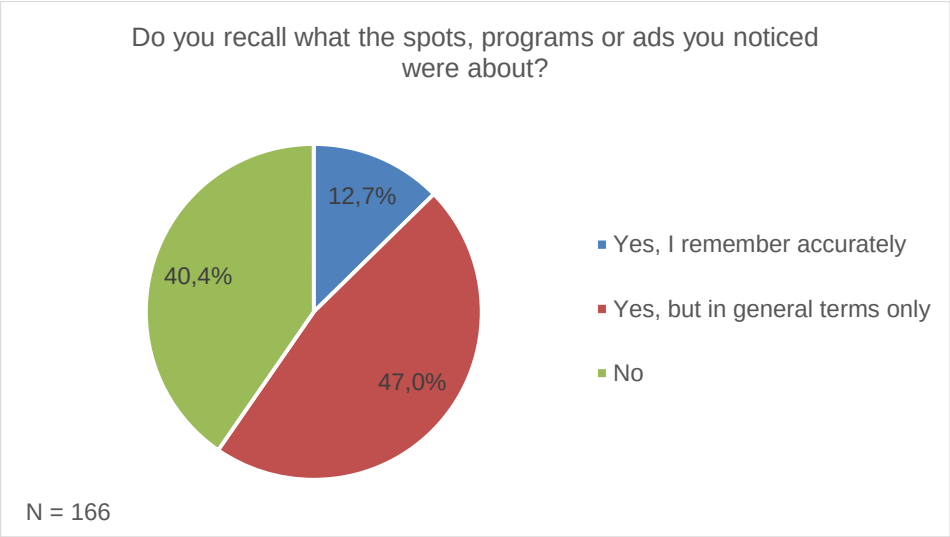


Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

Memorability of the campaign message

A slight majority of respondents who noted the advertising campaign **did remember the advertised content or message** (59.6 %), while 12.7 % remembered exactly and 47.0 % only in general terms. 40.4 % did not remember the advertised content.

Graph 17 Memorability of the campaign message (% of respondents exposed to the campaign)



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

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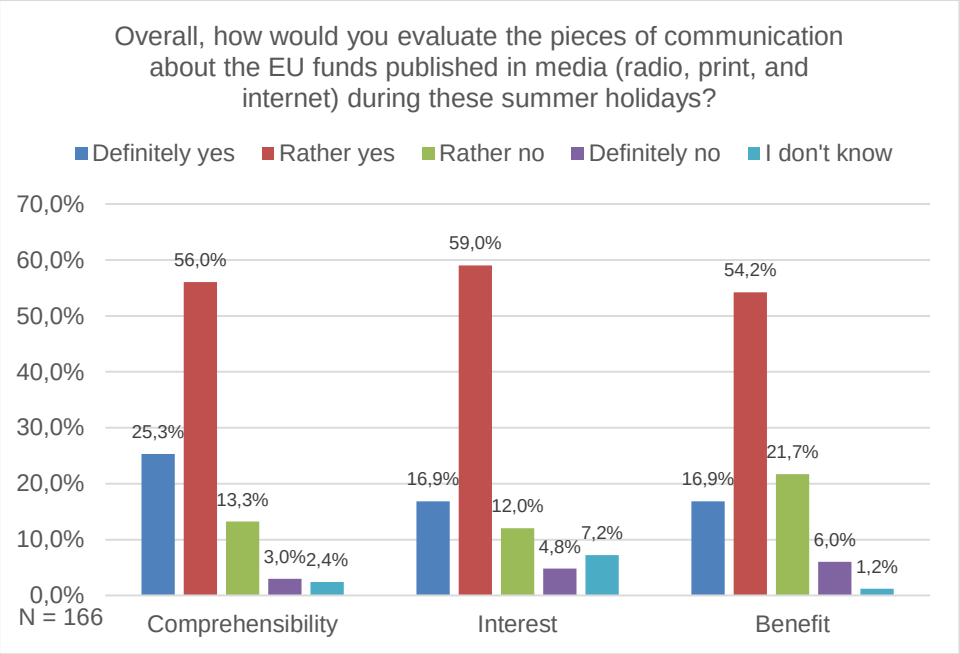
Subjective evaluation of the quality of contributions in the campaign

Graph 18 Subjective evaluation of the quality of contributions in the campaign (% of those exposed to the campaign)



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

Subjective evaluation of the qualitative parameters of the campaign showed a prevailing **positive attitude of respondents** to individual parameters. Campaign contributions were assessed as **rather or definitely comprehensible** by **81.3 %** of those exposed to the campaign, rather or definitely **interesting** by **75.9 %** and rather or definitely **useful** by **71.1 %**. On the other hand, **27.7 %** of respondents said that the campaign was **rather or definitely useless** for them.

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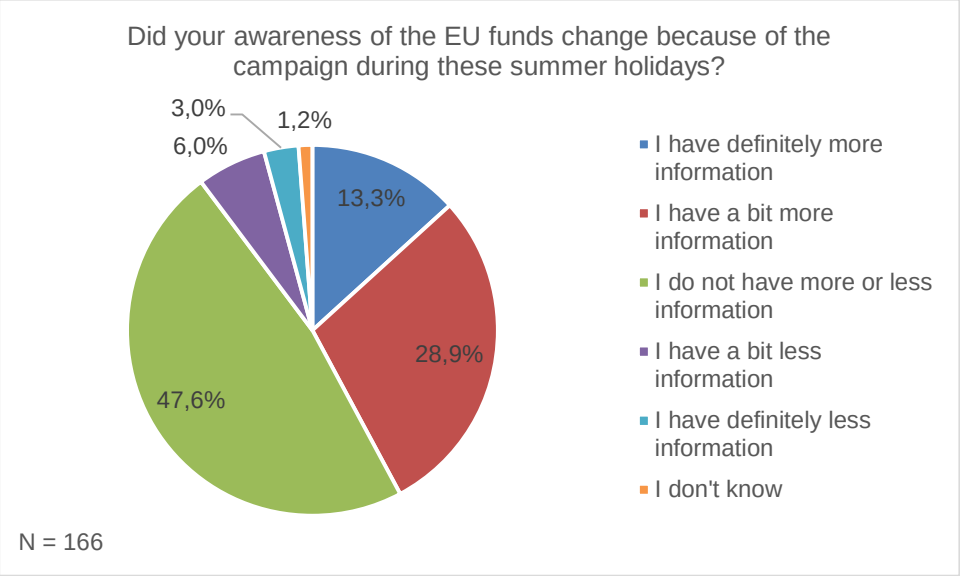
Graph 19 Usefulness of the campaign with a view to the changed level of awareness (% of those exposed to the campaign)



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

In terms of awareness level, the **majority of respondents** considered the campaign **information neutral** (**47.6 %** respondents said "I do not have more or less information"), **42.2 %** respondents said that thanks to the campaign they **have more or definitely have more information**.

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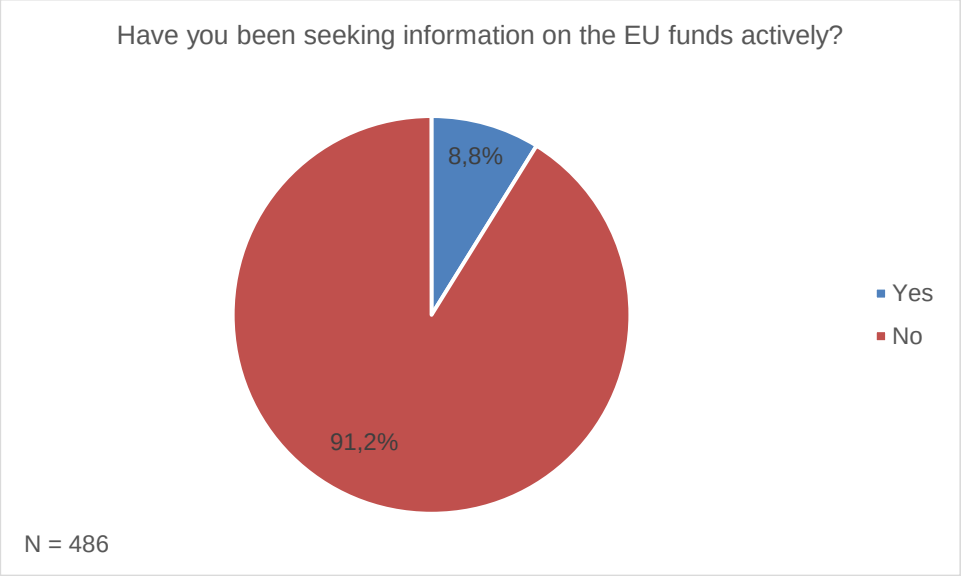
Information sources and the content of information provided

Interest in the EU funds

Graph 20 Interest in the EU funds (% of those who have come across the topic of the EU funds)



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

Only 8.8 % of the respondents familiar with the EU funds expressed an **active interest in the EU funds**. **On the scale of the entire sample,** this means only **every 23rd respondent**.

From a regional perspective, there were significant differences between the regions (from 5.0 % to 14.5 %), however, without any obvious correlation. **Above average** active interest in the EU funds was noted in three regions only, on average level of about **13.8 %**: **Trnava, Nitra and Košice regions**. Other regions scored only **under-average rates of** active interest in the EU funds, at the level of about **5.8 %**.

Once again a **correlation occurred in the category of internet access** (higher share of actively interested respondents in the group without internet access - 17.9 %) than in the group with access to internet - 8.3 %).

Sources of information about the EU funds

The sub-sample of respondents familiar with the EU funds topic chose television (82.5 %) as the **most frequently used** information source on the EU funds out of the four basic media types, followed by the **press** (52.1 %) and **radio** (51.0 %). **Internet** was quoted as a **moderately used source of information** (44.4 %; while 17.7 %

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respondents quoted the OP web page, 17.7 % the PA SR web page, 37.2 % other web page). **The second most frequently identified** source of information about the EU funds were "**colleagues, friends and acquaintances**" (with 64.0 %, following the television). "**Project billboard or poster**" also achieved a high score which suggests that the public "is fixing" the publicity elements of projects and therefore they are relevant. Professional publications, competition, professional information events, information and consulting center in a given region and Eurokompas magazine can be deemed as **marginal sources** of information about the EU funds. (Refer blue columns in graph no. 21).

When **comparing the attitudes of respondents with active vs. passive interest in the EU funds**, the trend of frequenting individual information sources by the **passive respondents follows the overall sample trend** (refer green curve in graph no. 21). Regarding those with **active interest** (refer red curve in graph no. 21), the order of frequenting individual information sources is **principally different from those with passive interest**. Sources such as **television, billboard/poster, radio and newspapers and magazines are used less frequently by the active respondents compared to the passive ones** , whereby the most significant difference was noted with the television (62.8 % vs. 84.4 % to the disadvantage of the active ones) and the radio (41.9 % vs. 51.9 % to the disadvantage of the active ones). In a contrary comparison - **higher frequency of use among the active respondents** - the most significant difference was shown with the **OP website** (4.2 times higher; 13.8 % vs. 58.1 %), **information and consulting centers in the region** (3.4 times higher; 6.8 % vs. 23.3 %) and **competitions** (3.0 times higher; 9.3 % vs. 27.9 %). In addition, a similar huge difference was noted with the seminars, trainings, workshops and conferences; PA SR website, professional publications and other web pages.

Respondents using **internet** to search for information on the EU funds **use** news portals **in the first place** (3 of 4 respondents), followed by social networks (2 of 4), blogs and **the least often the official websites of the EU funds/OPs (only 1 of 3)**. When comparing the active vs. passive respondents, there appears almost the same level of frequenting individual internet sources, the only major difference being in the use of **official websites of the EU funds/OPs** (**61.3 % with active vs. 28.6 % with passive respondents**).

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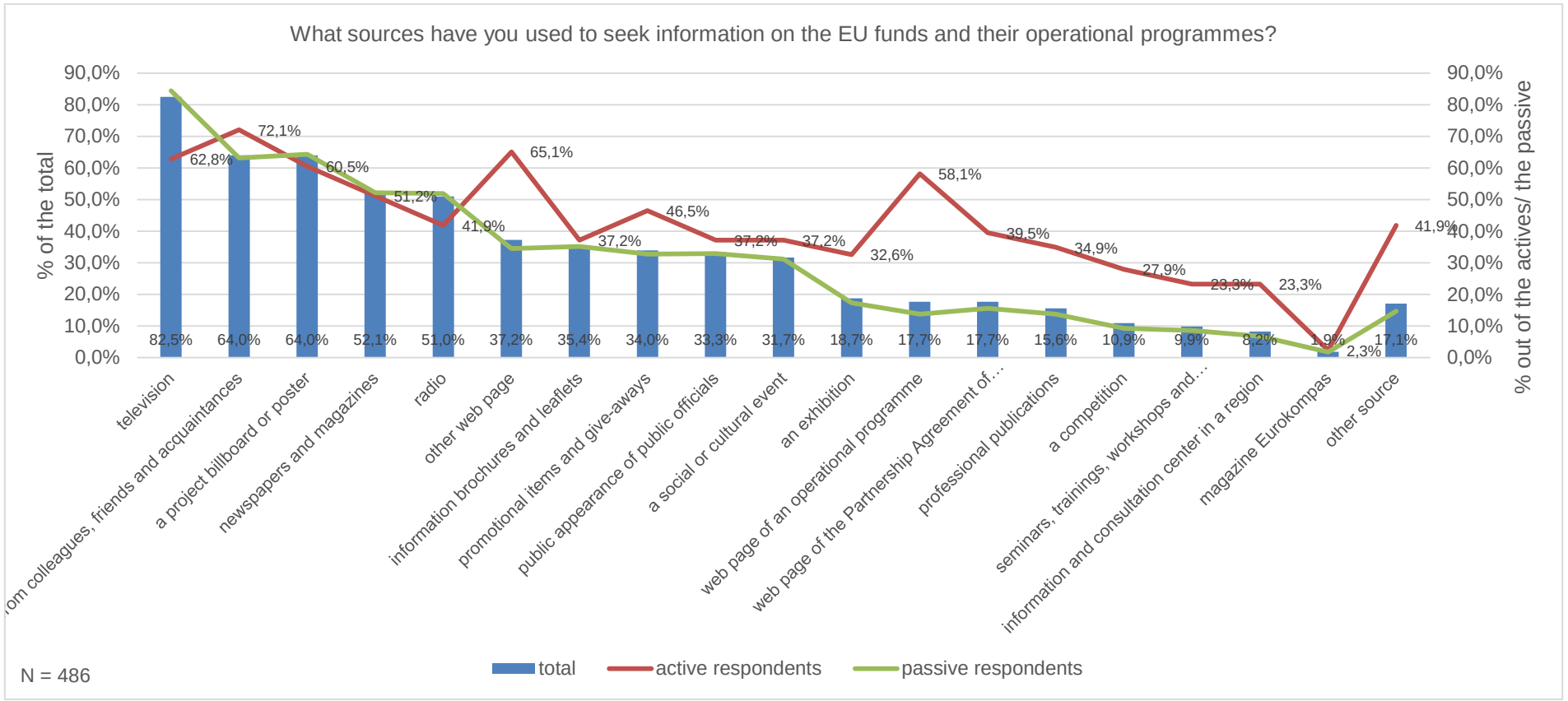
Graph 21 Comparison of usability of information sources on the EU funds between respondents with active vs. passive interest in the EU funds



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

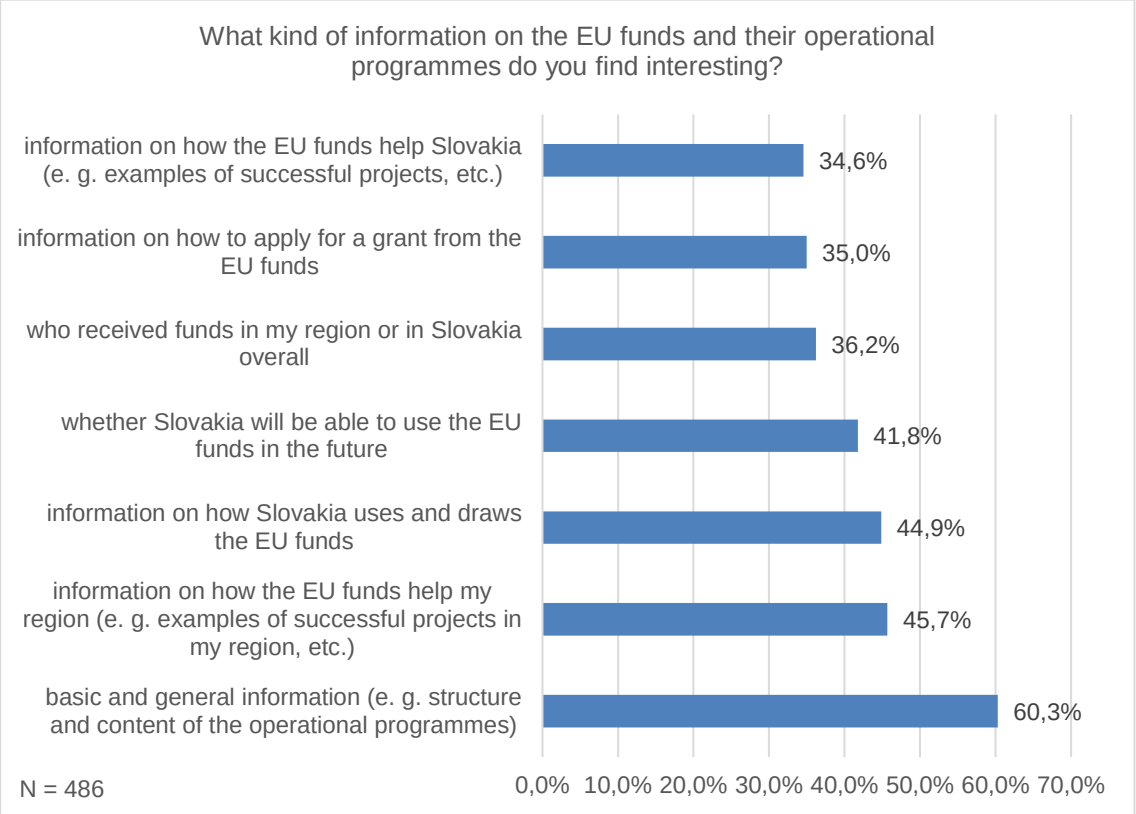
Information needs

In respect of the needs, the general public seems to **appreciate most the general information** about the EU funds (**60.3 %** of those familiar with the EU funds topic). **The least preferred** information type is information on **how the EU funds help Slovakia (34.6 %) and how to apply for a grant from the EU funds** (**35.0 %**). At the same time it may be stated that the public seems a little more interested in the information related to their surroundings/region (45.7 %) in comparison to information about the effect on the development of Slovakia as such (34.6 %).

When adding a **regional** aspect to the analysis of the interest in information, a surprising finding is a relatively low interest in information on how to apply for a grant in the Bratislava region (only 16.7 %). That probably relates to significantly restricted possibilities of drawing the funds in the Bratislava region.

With growing **age** the interest in information on how to apply for a grant is decreasing (42.7 % of those aged 18-30 vs. 18.9 % with those aged 61+).

Graph 22 Information needs (% respondents familiar with the EU funds)



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

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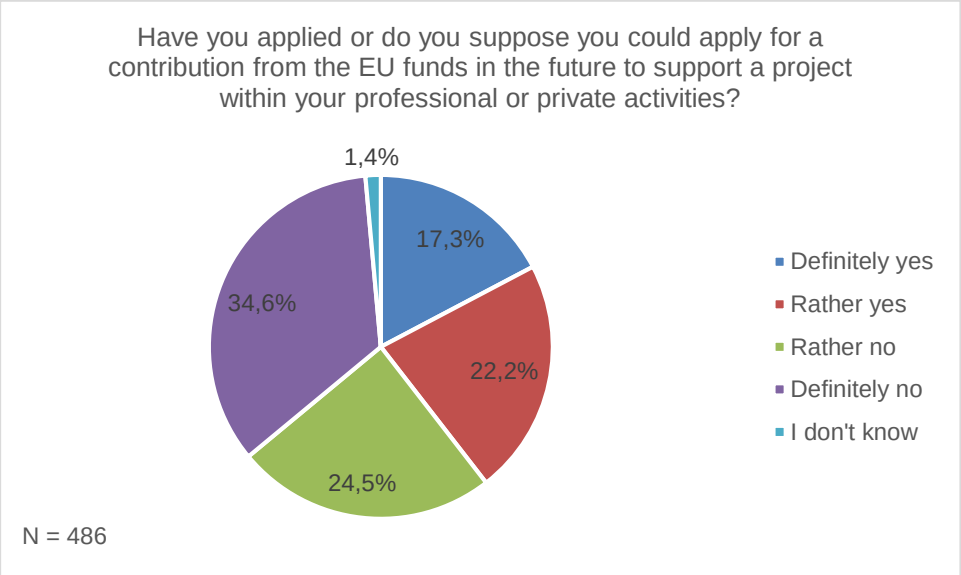
Interest in a contribution from the EU funds

A past experience or a potential interest to apply for a contribution from the EU funds were expressed by 39.5 % of those who came across the topic of the EU funds (17.3 % definitely yes + 22.2 % rather yes). On the contrary, **almost 60 % said they were not interested in applying for financial means from the EU funds.**

Graph 23 Interest in a contribution from the EU funds (% respondents familiar with the EU funds topic)



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

The rate of the interest to draw EU funds **seems to correlate most with age**: **the most interested** is the group **aged 18-30** (definitely applied or would rather or definitely apply; 57.3 % of those familiar with the EU funds), followed by the group aged 31-45 (47 %), group aged 45-60 (35.2 %) and **the least interested** in drawing EU funds are the respondents aged **61+** (11.6 %).

The declared interest in drawing the EU funds **does not seem to depend on the size of the settlement** where the respondents live; results sorted by settlement size varied from 35.4 % to 44.1 % of those who were familiar with the EU funds in a given region. **In a regional comparison the differences seem to be bigger,** from 31.5 % in Trenčín and 33.3 % in Bratislava regions to 46 % in Prešov and 47.8 % in Košice region.

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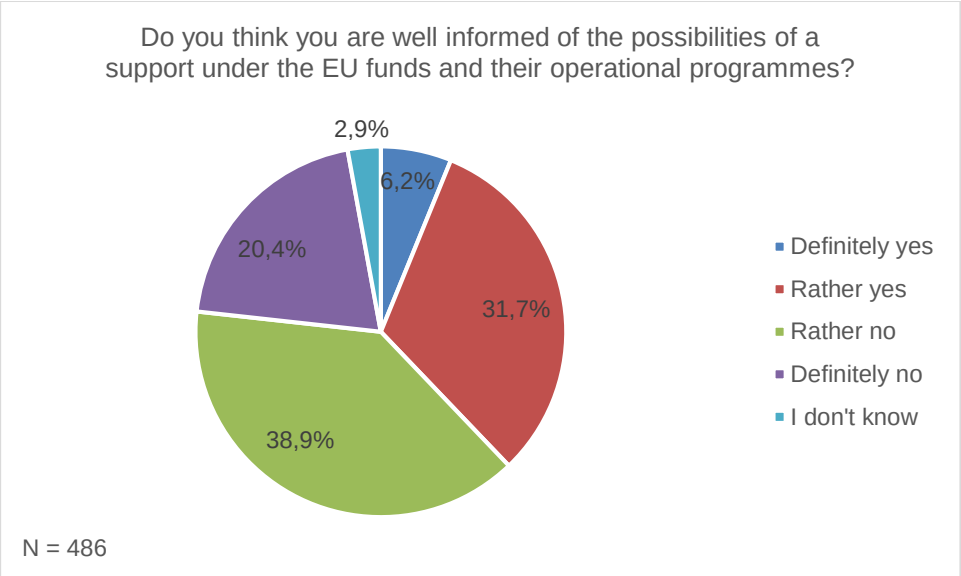
Subjective evaluation of being informed about the EU funds

37.9 % of those familiar with the EU funds considered themselves well informed about the possibilities of a support from the EU funds (**very well or rather well informed**). On the contrary, 59.3 % respondents considered themselves poorly informed (rather not or definitely not well informed).

Graph 24 Subjective evaluation of being informed about the EU funds (% respondents familiar with the EU funds)



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

From the **regional viewpoint,** relatively **large differences** were found. **The best informed** consider themselves the respondents from the **Trenčín** (**50.0** %, very well or rather well informed), Nitra (44.1 %) and Trnava regions (43.6 %). In their own view the **most poorly** informed were the inhabitants of the **Bratislava region** (only **26.7** %, very well or rather well informed), Prešov (28.6 %) and Banská Bystrica (32.2 %) regions.

From the **age** perspective, it may be said that **the older respondents (46+) consider themselves better informed than** the younger ones (18-45). Males from the sex perspective.

With a view to the nature of interest in the EU funds or exposure to campaign, there was found a **positive correlation**, i. e. those who declared an active interest in the EU funds or were exposed to the campaign **did consider themselves** as very well or rather well **informed more often** (58.1 % among the active vs. 35.9 % among the passive group; 44.7 % among the exposed vs. 33.2 % not exposed to the campaign).

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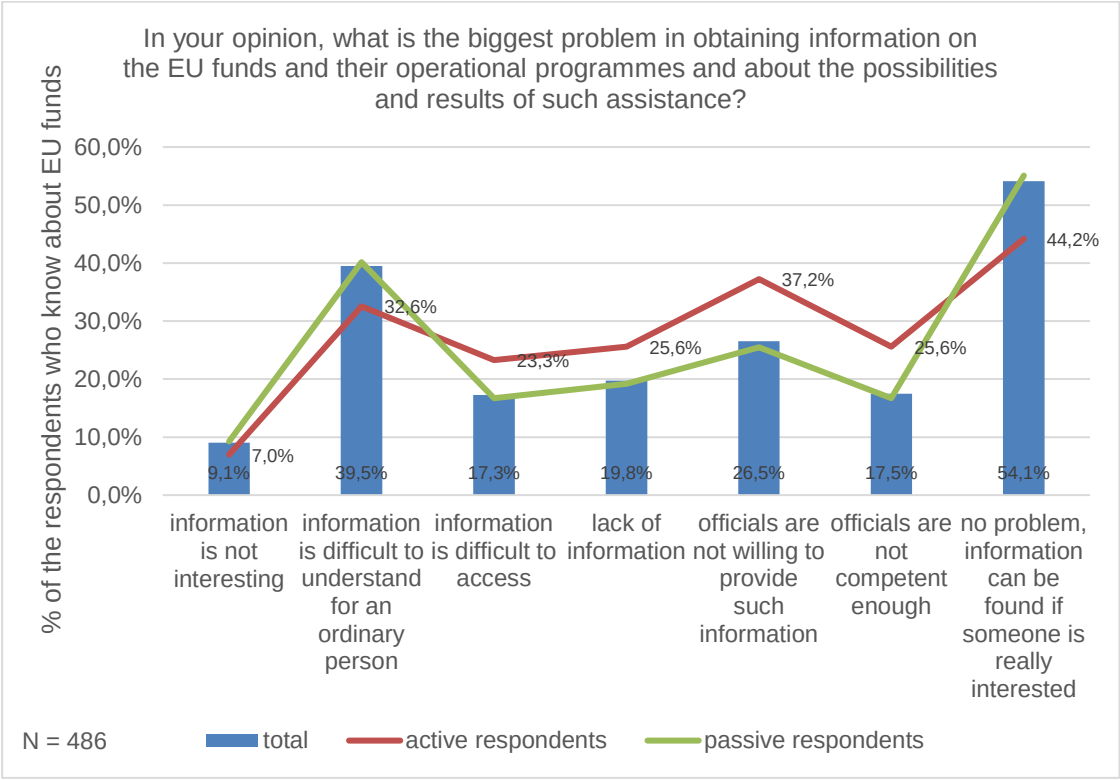
Problems in obtaining information on the EU funds

54.1 % respondents familiar with the EU funds topic said that they **do not see any problem in obtaining information**, "information can be found if one is interested". Of those who specified a problem, **the most frequent** was **incomprehensibility** of information for ordinary people (39.5 % of those familiar with the EU funds), followed by **officials unwilling to** share information (26.5 %). Perceived as the **least problematic** aspect is low attractiveness of information (9.1 %) and bureaucracy (0.6 %). Refer blue columns in graph no. 25 for more detail.

As for respondents not happy with access to information on the EU funds, **those with active interest are obviously more concerned** compared to those with passive interest, i. e. a bigger share of dissatisfied among the active respondents as opposed to the passive ones. Specific issues quoted are: information is difficult to access, there's a lack of information, officials unwilling to provide information and insufficient qualification of the officials. Refer the red and green curves in graph no. 25.

Graph 25 Problems in obtaining information on the EU funds



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

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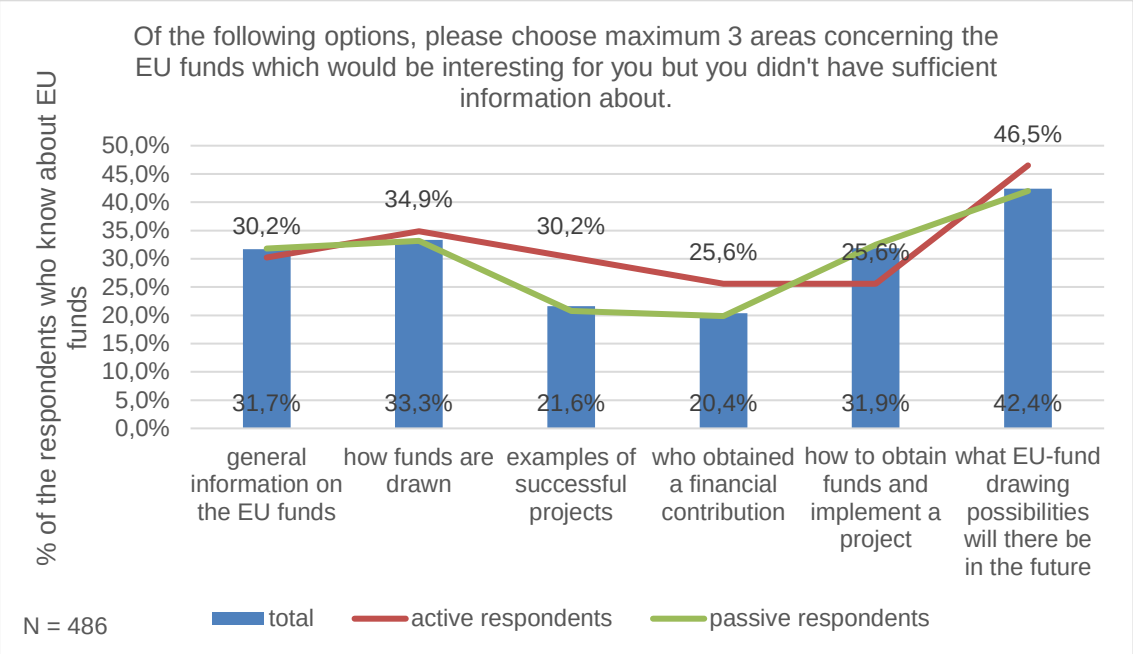
Lack of information

Graph 26 Information deficit



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

Two areas of declared biggest interest with perceived lack of information are the future of the EU funds (42.4 % of those familiar with the EU funds) followed by drawing of the EU funds (34.9 %). Compared to the overall results or results among the respondents with passive interest, **the respondents with active interest expressed a slightly higher level of information deficit** in two areas: **examples of successful projects** and **who was awarded a financial contribution**

Overall attitude to the EU funds

81.5 % of those familiar with the EU funds replied **definitely yes or rather yes** to the question "Do you believe that **the assistance from the EU funds represents a unique opportunity for development** and improved living standards in Slovakia?".

With regard to the individual categories there was a significant deviation from the overall tendency noted with e. g. respondents from the Nitra region (88.5 %), group aged 61+ and retirees (90.5 % or 89.5 %), entrepreneurs (65.2 %).

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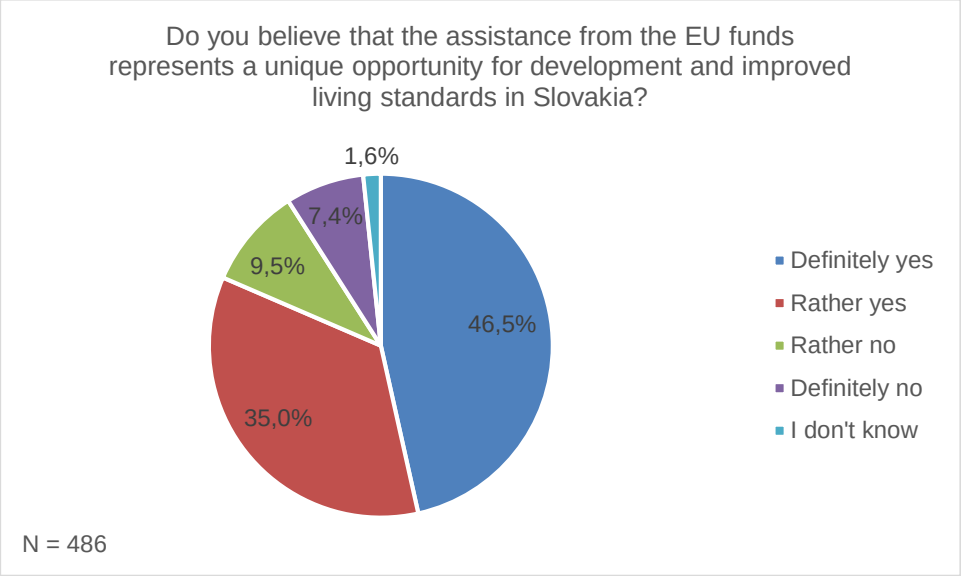
Graph 27 Overall attitude towards the EU funds (% respondents familiar with the EU funds topic)



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

Evaluation of the impact of informing about the EU funds in media to form the public opinion

The perception of the impact of information provided via media to form the public opinion is largely positive (**71.6 %** of those who have come across the topic of the EU funds said that the information from media create **a definitely positive or rather positive opinion**).

With a view to the individual criteria, **some deviations were noted** compared to the overall positive perception (71.6 %): **lower share of positive responses** in respondents **with active interest in** the EU funds (62.8 %), **among entrepreneurs** (52.2 %), **bigger share of** positive responses among the **unemployed** or those at home (including persons on maternity/parental leave) (93.9 %), **difference** in the share of positive responses **between men and women** (66.9 % of men vs. 77.0 % of women).

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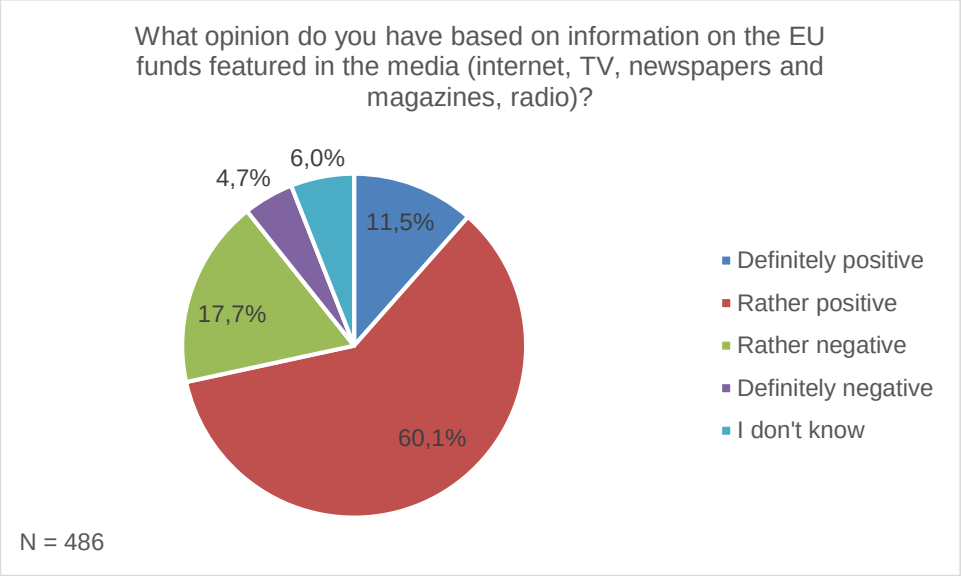
Graph 28 Evaluation of the impact of informing about the EU funds in the media to form the public opinion (% respondents familiar with the EU funds)



Source: Contractor, September/October 2016

Reasons driving the positive opinion of the EU funds included: EU funds help Slovakia (73.6 % of those who declared a rather or definitely positive opinion), they help the region where the respondent lives (60.3 %) and respondent's project was awarded a grant (7.8 %).

When considering the individual criteria, **certain deviations** from the overall level were noted: a **significant scatter** in response "**the EU funds help to develop the region where I live**" **depending on the size of settlement**, that is from about **47 %** in settlements of 20,000 to 49,000 and 100,000+ inhabitants to about **79 %** in the category of 5,000 to 19,999 inhabitants.

The most frequent reason for the negative opinion of the EU funds was the **non-transparent allocation of grants** (49.5 % of those who expressed somewhat or completely negative opinion of the EU funds), followed by the complicated and non-transparent nature of the entire EU funds system (42.2 %) and support of inappropriate projects (36.7 %).

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6.3.4 Summary of findings and conclusions from evaluation of the campaign and public opinion poll

Findings and conclusions

Summary of findings and conclusions from the qualitative analysis and postbuy analysis of the campaign (chapters 6.3.1 and 6.3.2 hereof)

1. **The idea of the print campaign** (comparison of "old vs. new") can be assessed as average but **appropriate** with regard to the target group, product and campaign type. It was only right for the campaign to focus the attention to the new possibilities of drawing of ESIF by a headline "Choose your new programme" and a link referring to eufondy.sk ("call to action" factor). Online campaign suppressed the metaphor of "old vs. new" because it uses only one part of the visual ("new"). The creative idea was weakened as a result.
2. A drawback in **online** is a failure to use the full potential of redirecting the user to the address eufondy.sk. Despite the fact that the banner contained a link to a website, **the call to click wasn't emphasized** e.g. by a button "learn more" or similar.
3. The campaign had a **high potential to deliver its message** and meet the campaign objectives.
4. **Professionally**, the initial media campaign was handled **very well** and corresponds with the standards of the advertising industry.
5. Based on the postbuy analysis, **the campaign had**, depending on individual media types and deployed titles/periodicals/stations, **a potential to effectively reach**[27] (it does not meant that it also automatically did reach, since e. g. a person read a certain daily but did not have to notice the specific ad):
   - through press **58 %** of Slovak population (effective reach of the used periodicals);
   - through radio **77 %**of Slovak population (effective reach of the used stations);
   - through internet **68 %** of Slovak population (68 % of Slovak population is online).
6. **The selection of individual media** was, given the goals and the desired general reach of the campaign and with a view to their position in the market, **correct** (highest readership, highest listenership, highest web traffic).
7. With a view to the achieved values of the media indicators in the *postbuy* analysis, the **campaign deployment** can be assessed as **massive and intense**.
8. **The cost efficiency** of the campaign, expressed by media indicators, **reflects pricing standards** or cost are lower than official media pricelists.

[27] Effectively reached are deemed the people who were exposed to the advertising at least 3 times in the press or 6 times on the radio.

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Summary of findings and conclusions from evaluation of the public opinion poll (chapter 6.3.3 hereof)

I. **88.6 %** of the approached respondents expressed their knowledge of the fact that the **EU provides financial means** for the development of various areas of economy of its member states, e. g. regional development. At the same time 48.6 % of the approached respondents said they had come across the topic of the EU funds and their operational programmes. The second measured value is lower than the long-term average of the general knowledge of the EU funds existence among the Slovak public. This group probably does not include all the respondents who have some knowledge of the EU funds but only people who have come across the topic of the EU funds in some detail. Therefore it may be assumed that the general awareness of the existence of the EU funds is higher. **The level of public awareness of the possibilities of ESIF assistance** may be, based on the professional estimate, assessed at the level of **68 %**, i. e. as the mean value of "general" knowledge of the existence of the EU financial assistance (88.6 %) and a "more detailed" knowledge of the EU funds (48.6 %).

II. **With growing size settlement, socio-economic status or higher education as well as access to internet, a higher level of the EU funds awareness was noted**.

III. **Order of the funds** was as follows: European Regional Development Fund (69.1 % of those familiar with the EU funds) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (61.9 %), followed by the European Social Fund (38.5 %), Cohesion Fund (22.0 %) and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (6.6 %).

IV. **Knowledge** of the fact that since 2014 **a new programming period is underway** for drawing ESIF was declared by the relatively low share of respondents, specifically **53.7 %** of those who came across the topic of the EU funds. **29.8 %** of respondents familiar with the EU funds matters said **they knew the Partnership Agreement of the SR** for the period of 2014-2020.

V. The **young** could have been approached more by the television and internet rather than printed periodicals in the campaign. With regard to the **sex**, men were more exposed to the campaign via radio and internet, women via printed media.

VI. **A slight majority** of respondents who noted the advertising campaign did remember **the advertised content or message** (**59.6 %**), while 12.7 % remembered exactly and 47.0 % only in general terms.

VII. Subjective **feedback of the campaign** by the respondents can be considered as **positive** (**81.3 %** of respondents thought the campaign was rather or definitely **comprehensible**, **75.9 %** rather or definitely **interesting** and **71 %** rather or definitely **useful**), the least positive feedback received the parameter of **usefulness** (**27.7 %** of respondents felt the campaign was **rather or definitely not useful**).

VIII. In terms of awareness level, the **majority of respondents** considered the campaign **information neutral** (**47.6 %** respondents said "I have neither more nor less information"), **42.2 %** respondents said that thanks to the campaign they **have more or definitely have more information**.

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IX. Approximately every 11th citizen of Slovakia who came across the topic of the EU funds, takes an **active interest** in the EU funds at the same time. On the scale of the entire sample, this means only every 23rd respondent.

X. **The sub-sample of respondents familiar with the EU funds topic** chose **television** (82.5 %) as the **most frequently used** information source on the EU funds out of the four basic media types, followed by the **press** (52.1 %) and **radio** (51.0 %). **Internet** was quoted as **a moderately used source of information** (44.4 %; while 17.7 % respondents quoted the OP web page, 17.7 % the PA SR web page, 37.2 % other web page). **The second most frequently identified source** of information about the EU funds were "**colleagues, friends, and acquaintances**" (with 64.0 %, following the television). "**Project billboard or poster**" also achieved high score which suggests that the public "fixes" the publicity elements of projects and therefore are relevant.

XI. **The public sees** the professional publications, competition, professional information events, information and consulting center in a given region and Eurokompas magazine as **marginal sources** of information about the EU funds.

XII. There is a different preference of information sources between respondents with active vs. passive interest in the EU funds. **People with passive interest tend to prefer classic media, whereas those with active interest tend to prefer internet.**

XIII. A past experience or a potential interest to apply for a contribution from the EU funds were expressed by 39.5 % of those who came across the topic of the EU funds (17.3 % definitely yes + 22.2 % rather yes). On the contrary, **almost 60 % said they were not interested in applying for financial means from the EU funds**. **A contrary ratio** (60 : 40 in favour of interested) was seen in the target group of **entrepreneurs/self-employed**.

XIV. **37.9 %** of those familiar with the EU funds considered themselves well informed about the possibilities of a support from the EU funds (**very well or rather well informed**). On the contrary, 59.3 % respondents considered themselves poorly informed (rather not or definitely not well informed).

XV. **54.1 % respondents familiar with the EU funds topic** said that they **do not see any problem in obtaining information**, "information can be found if one is interested". Of those who specified a problem, **the most frequent** was **incomprehensibility** of information for ordinary people (39.5 % of those familiar with the EU funds), followed by **officials unwilling to** share information (26.5 %). Perceived as the **least problematic** aspect is low attractiveness of information (9.1 %) and bureaucracy (0.6 %). Overall, it may be stated that the **public familiar with the EU funds** is not principally **unhappy** with **how they are informed** about the EU funds. **A higher tendency** towards discontent is among respondents who **actively seek** for ESIF information.

XVI. The **positive perception of the EU funds** among the general public **largely prevails**, seeing them as a unique opportunity for the development of the SR (rather yes and definitely yes, **81.5 %** of those who have come across the topic of the EU funds). The perception of the impact of information provided via media to form the public opinion is largely positive (**71.6 %** of those who have come across the topic

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of the EU funds said that the **information from media create a definitely positive or rather positive opinion)**.

XVII. **Men tend to** perceive the EU funds **a little more negatively than women** (e. g. a lower share of men considers the EU funds as a unique opportunity for the development of SR (76.9 % vs. 86.7 %); lower share of men considers the impact of information about the EU funds provided through the media on positive attitudes (66.9 % vs. 77.0 %).

XVIII. Interesting **correlations** occur from the viewpoint of **access to internet**. With the **first two questions** about the awareness of financial assistance by the EU or whether the respondents ever came across the topic of EU funds, a **positive trend** was confirmed without doubt, depending on **access to internet** (e. g. knowledge of financial assistance by the EU 90.0 % vs. 80.8 % in favour of those with internet access; as per knowledge of the EU funds matters: 48.9 % vs. 17.9 % in favor of those with internet access). On the contrary, with other questions given only to respondents familiar with the EU funds topic a negative tendency was found, i. e. better awareness of a given item in respondents without internet access compared to respondents with internet access (e. g. knowledge of existence of the PP 2014 - 2020, knowledge of PA SR for 2014 - 2020, knowledge of projects, active interest in the EU funds, subjective feeling of being better informed about the EU funds).

It follows from the comparison above that **internet** is **a positive determinant of the basic awareness of the EU funds** (whether they exist or not), but internet does not prove to be a factor for further deeper and more detailed knowledge of the EU funds.

XIX. In a number of examined aspects a **negative correlation was shown between the age and knowledge** of the EU funds, i. e. younger age groups had less knowledge (e. g. general knowledge of the EU funds, knowledge of individual EU funds, awareness of existence of the PP 2014 - 2020 and PA SR).

XX. The public opinion poll confirmed the correlation between an interest in the EU funds and the campaign reach and the awareness of the EU funds. Awareness of the individual EU funds was on average higher by 7.6 p.p. with those exposed to the campaign in comparison with those not exposed to the campaign. Similarly the level of awareness of the EU funds was on average higher by 9.6 p.p. with those who declared an active interest in the EU funds in contrast to those who declared a passive interest in the EU funds. That leads to a conclusion that **implementation of information media campaigns is relevant with regard to improving the awareness of the EU funds.**

Recommendations

Provide **more text** to **explain the** campaign message directly in the ads (relevant especially for the **print advertising**).

Consider **the use of formats with higher impact** with a view to the campaign objective (raise awareness). Such formats include TV commercials, out-of-home advertising, online videos or online formats, e. g. branding.

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Consider **a more precise targeting**, especially in the online environment – i. e. identify the needs of specific target groups, customize the headline and further narrow down the media targeting.

An autonomous approach to online creative should maximize the potential of this medium. In addition to banner advertising, **make use of contemporary formats** (e. g. online video), which are capable of raising awareness and educate remarkably better than a banner.

Focus in particular on the target group of the young up to 30 years of age, who are less aware of the existence of the EU funds compared to other age groups and at the same time they were less responsive to the media campaign (which could have been caused by its timing for the summer holidays). Younger respondents also consider themselves less informed than the older age groups (45+).

Public **presentations by the public officials, or social and cultural events** proved to be a **moderately used source** of information about the EU funds. Therefore the **information events may be considered the type of activity with the potential** to reach the general public target group. In terms of impact maximization, it appears that rather than organizing events independently, it is more effective to **join selected social and cultural events** e. g. by promotion stands at festivals, days of a city or village and other events, making use of attendance at such events without too much effort on the IPD side to attract visitors as in the case of a single independently organized activity.

Differentiate the campaign also regionally – make use of regional media and adjust the campaign content per region - inform of projects/impacts within a given region. The public seems to prefer information related to their surroundings/region in comparison to information about the effect on the development of Slovakia as such.

Align the media channels with the budget and objectives - in case of spreading **the most generic promotional information** the most appropriate media type is the **television**, possibly combined with out-of-home advertising. **The press and radio** are more adequate in communicating complex ideas. The public opinion poll showed that the traditional media types seem to be the most frequently used information sources about the EU funds for the general public as a whole. Obviously, internet cannot be omitted, in the medium-term its importance and thus its information weight will keep growing in the Slovak population, especially with younger target groups.

6.4 Results of testing a theory of change in the approach to information and communication within ESIF

Methodology of the theory of change as well as its graphic visualisation are described in Appendices C and D hereof. The purpose of formulating a theory of change is verification of its validity and causal relationships between inputs, activities/outputs and results in the real environment, and at the same time identification of the contribution of implemented interventions to overall results and finding factors with influence over results achieved.

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The policy of information and communication within ESIF can fully meet its objectives, if

A. the practical implementation of activities is planned with regard to the defined objectives and expected results,

B. the implementation itself is conducted in compliance with the defined plan,

C. conditions for successful information and communication are met,

D. potential show-stoppers are mitigated at the same time,

E. and there are available sufficient human, organizational and financial resources.

Ad A. Evaluation of planning of activities with regard to achievement of planned objectives and expected results

Activities, as planned in the 2016 ACP, **had a potential to contribute adequately** to achievement of specific objectives of ComS and their expected results.

Ad B. Evaluation of the implementation progress in terms of compliance with the defined plan

From the viewpoint of assessing activities against the set plan, **three aspects** need to be considered, a timeline, a budget and an activity scope.

Timeline

As per time aspect, it may be stated that 1) most activities were implemented in compliance with the timeline, 2) a part of the activities was delayed a few weeks or months, 3) some activities were performed in time (publication published) but the results will come within the next year (distribution of the published publications) and 4) some activities, even key ones, such as Country Tour (a series of a number of social and cultural events in the regions of Slovakia) were not implemented at all.

Budget

Generally speaking, it may be said that the expenses paid from the ComS budget for implemented activities either did not exceed the planned budget or achieved a significantly lower amount, without negative effect on their contribution to the overall objectives and expected results.

Scope

If activities were implemented, they were performed in the planned scope. As per activities which were not implemented at all, it can be said that they were not implemented in the given scope.

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Ad C. Evaluation of achievement of prerequisites for successful communication in the monitored period

1. There is an interest in the target groups in the information provided.
Rather achieved A significantly lesser part of the general public (about 1/10) can be deemed as taking an active interest in the ESIF matters. The professional audience is expected to be interested in information by default simply because of nature of this target group. At the same time the role of the member state to promote ESIF extensively needs to be taken into account, i. e. pro-actively inform and communicate the ESIF matters and the EU to the target groups.
2. There are sufficient sources (information, organizational-personnel and financial) for activities and measures in information and communication activities.
Neither achieved or failed Based on the statement by the IPD officials, it may be said that human resources (9 persons including the head of the IPD) are sufficient. The ComS budget is also sufficient and enables adequate possibilities for intense implementation of information and communication. In the first half of 2016 the processes were slowed down due to redistribution of competences in the area of information and communications which in short term relates to the fact that the organizational change in state administration connected with delimitation of departments always results in processes slowing down for a few months or stopped completely.
3. Timely and fully implemented public procurement of external suppliers of goods and services.
Rather not achieved The public procurement process and related problems (re-drafting of competition materials, delayed launch of the PP, repetition of PP, etc.) are a proven high-risk factor with a largely negative effect on ensuring the information and communication activities scaling from a delay of activity implementation, change of delivery, questionable quality of the winning bid to not implementing the activity at all.
4. Bad experience from the previous period is eliminated.
Neither achieved or failed An example of achieved elimination of bad experience is the change of configuration of the technical assistance projects, specifically breaking up one big into a number of smaller, more specifically oriented projects which enable better flexibility despite the cost of increased administration. An instance of failed elimination of bad experience is continued issues in public procurement as well as institutional and organizational changes which interfere with due progress of processes. However, it needs to be said that these issues are not specific to the area of information and communication but for ESIF as such.

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5. Information has an adequate format (visual, sound, text) and is rendered by the right communication tool.
Rather achieved Information had an adequate format and was communicated by the right communication tool.
6. Information is rendered in a timely manner.
Neither achieved nor failed Activities to render information were in some instances delayed against the original timeline, however, from the view of overall achievement per given year the deadline was met.
7. Information is correct/clear/unambiguous.
Rather achieved Aspects of information quality were perceived positively by majority of general public as well as majority of professional audience. It needs to be mentioned here that the quality of information provided by IPD activities often depends on MA/IB from whom the information comes.
8. Information is of sufficient quality.
Rather achieved Aspects of information quality were perceived positively by majority of the general public as well as majority of the professional audience. Hence may be deduced that the quality of information corresponds with expectations of the target groups. It needs to be mentioned here that the quality of information provided by IPD activities often depends on MA/IB from whom the information comes.
9. Information corresponds with the needs of the target groups (scope, content, etc.).
Achieved Refer evaluation question no. 1, chapter 6.7 hereof.
10. Information is up-to-date.
Rather achieved Fresh information is a priority, especially for the needs of the professional audience. This aspect of information, provided by IPD activities, was perceived positively by a majority of the professional public (70.6 % of respondents said "rather" or "definitely" positive; n = 109). It needs to be mentioned here that the quality of information provided by IPD activities often depends on MA/IB from whom the information comes.

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11. There is enough information.
Achieved "Lack of information" was the least often quoted problem by the general public in obtaining information about the EU funds and their operational programmes and about the possibilities and results of such support. The aforementioned does not apply to IPD activity only but extends to information and communication within ESIF ensured by responsible entities in general. The prevailing majority of the professional audience said that they had all the information necessary (70.6 % of respondents; n = 125).
12. Information is comprehensible.
Rather not achieved "Information is difficult to understand for an ordinary person" was the most often quoted problem by the general public in obtaining information about the EU funds and their operational programmes and about the possibilities and results of such support. The aforementioned does not apply to IPD activity only but extends to information and communication within ESIF ensured by responsible entities in general. The professional audience had a largely positive opinion of the comprehensibility of information provided via IPD activities, however, on the other hand, it was the second least positively perceived quality parameter out of five.
13.Information can be easily accessed by public and is published in a user-friendly form.
Accessibility - rather achieved **User-friendly format - neither achieved or failed** "Information is difficult to access" was the least often identified problem by the general public in obtaining information about the EU funds and their operational programmes and about the possibilities and results of such support. The main information tool - the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk - is available on internet without any restrictions. The user-friendly format of measures has certain reserves, e.g. content too professional (technical) and the structure of the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk with regard to the general public needs.
14. The creative aspect of activities and measures in information and communication is performed by personnel with sufficient qualification, i.e. professionals in the areas of media, marketing, PR, communication, etc..
Rather achieved The creative of several activities was contracted externally (e. g. the creative of the campaign, organization of the Roadshow activity).

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Ad D. Evaluation of root-cause elimination of the potential show-stoppers

1. Late communication.
This factor occurred partially. Some planned activities were performed with delay although still in the same planned year, some were not performed at all and were transferred to the next year. Implementation of the media campaign in 2016 as an initial media campaign with the launch of the PP 2014-2020 may seem late, nevertheless, with a view to the delayed progress of OP implementation its timing was adequate.
2. Insufficient communication.
This factor was not manifested.
3. Incomprehensible and unclear information.
This factor occurred partially. "Information is difficult to understand for an ordinary person" was the most often quoted problem by the general public in obtaining information about the EU funds and their operational programmes and about the possibilities and results of such support. The aforementioned does not apply to IPD activity only but extends to information and communication within ESIF ensured by responsible entities in general. The professional audience had a largely positive opinion of the comprehensibility of information provided via IPD activities, however, on the other hand, it was the second least positively perceived quality parameter out of five.
4. Out-dated information.
This factor was not manifested. Freshness of information is a priority mainly for needs of the professional public. This aspect of information, provided by IPD activities, was perceived positively by a majority of the professional public (70.6 % of respondents said "rather" or "definitely" positive; n = 109). It needs to be mentioned here that the quality of information provided by IPD activities often depends on MA/IB from whom the information comes.
5. Inaccurate information.
This factor was not manifested. General public is not competent sufficiently to evaluate information accuracy. This aspect was perceived positively by a majority of the professional public (69.7 % of respondents said "rather" or "definitely" positive; n = 109). It needs to be mentioned here that the quality of information provided by IPD activities often depends on MA/IB from whom the information comes.

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6. Information not accessible.
This factor was not manifested. "Lack of information" was the least often quoted problem by the general public in obtaining information about the EU funds and their operational programmes and about the possibilities and results of such support. The aforementioned does not apply to IPD activity only but extends to information and communication within ESIF ensured by responsible entities in general. The prevailing majority of the professional audience said that they had all the information necessary. At the same time the accessibility aspect was perceived as the most positive one by the professional public.
7. Inappropriate information content.
This factor was not manifested.
8. Information overload.
This factor was not manifested.
9. Ignoring the provided information by information recipients based on past prejudice.
This factor was not manifested.
10. Other campaigns may contribute to the overall awareness of the EU.
This factor was manifested. Other information campaigns were in progress during the campaign but also immediately before or afterwards, to promote the following OPs: OP II, OP HR, IROP and OP QE and also the campaign in connection with the Slovak Presidency in the Council of the EU (SK PRES).
11. Vis major (weather, institutional/organizational changes)
This factor was manifested. In the middle of 2016 the CCA was transferred organizationally from the Government's Office of the SR to the Deputy Prime Minister's office for Investments and Informatization, while the IPD remained in the structure of GO SR. In short term it relates to the fact that the organizational change in state administration connected with delimitation of departments always results in processes slowing down for a few months or stopped completely.
12. Insufficient staffing of activities and measures for information and communication.
This factor was not manifested. Based on the statement by the IPD officials, IPD human resources are sufficient. The creative of activities is usually contracted and delivered by external professional agencies.
13. Failure to apply the current trends in information and communication.
This factor was not manifested.

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14. Failure to use all of the current communication possibilities.
This factor was manifested. Within the initial media campaign not all of the campaign possibilities were used, especially the television campaign. With a view to the general potential of the television to attract the public, as well as the fact that it is the most frequently declared source of information about the EU funds by the general public, it may be assumed that failure to utilize television could have affected lower campaign exposure rate.
15. Use of inappropriate communication channels/tools.
This factor was not manifested. The deployed communication channels/tools are considered adequate, however, for activities aimed at a specific target sub-group the communication channels typical for that sub-group should be used (e. g. if the target is school students, the communication channel can be student media or media focusing on the young).
16. Negative perception of the financial assistance from the EU in general (corruption, scandals, etc.)
This factor was not manifested. The public perception of the EU funds is largely positive. Over 80 % of those who came across the topic of the EU funds consider them a unique opportunity for the development of Slovakia and over 70 % have a positive opinion of the EU funds thanks to the information provided via media.

Ad E. Evaluation of sufficient human, organizational and financial resources.

Personnel capacities (quantitative sufficiency and stability of qualified and experienced staff) were considered by the IPD as **"sufficient"**. The IPD staff comprises 9 people, of those 1 head of IPD. The average work experience of a manager for information and communication is around 5 years.

Organizational prerequisites (clear organizational structure with clear responsibilities and competence to fulfil ComS) were **negatively affected** in the monitored period. In the middle of 2016 the DPMOII was established, where the CCA was transferred while the IPD remained within the GO SR's structure. Immediate short-term negative effect of the organizational change meant suspension of processes for a few months.

Financial allocation is set in ComS and OP TA, while the allocation set for 2016 and overall can be deemed **sufficient**.

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6.4.1 Evaluation of activities' contribution to the achievement of objectives and expected results

The chapter contains evaluation of the contribution of activities to achievement of goals and expected results of ComS, taking into account prerequisites from the earlier 5 blocks A through to E, findings of the qualitative and quantitative evaluation of all information activities as well as results of the public opinion poll and a survey of opinions in the professional public.

The following two tables contain:

1) displayed effect of activities on immediate as well as intermediary results according to the defined theory of change (table no. 5);
2) displayed effect of activities performed in 2016 on results defined in ComS (table no. 6).

The narrative following the tables evaluates and describes the contribution of activities to the achievement of objectives and expected ComS results, in connection with the matrix provided in table no. 6.

In respect of **results defined in a complex way** such as awareness of ESIF, positive opinion of ESIF or interest in ESIF support it is necessary to remember that **it is not possible to identify a clear-cut and exact amount of contribution of the IPD activities** to the results achieved, as the awareness of the EU funds has been developing over long time and the IPD's activity is happening in the information and communication environment with a presence of all other OPs and other entities.

When evaluating the portion of a contribution, the reviewer proceeded based on its estimate, taking into account all the known facts about a given activity.

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Table 5 Matrix of the activities' impact on achievement of immediate and intermediary results

Activity	Web site	Facebook	Advertising campaign	Flyer „Evaluation"	Publication for entrepreneurs	Eurokompas	Seminar „Act locally"	Young European	Europe Day	Roadshow	Direct contact	Promotional merchandise	Work group	PR activities – press releases	Video posts competition	List of projects
ComS specific objective	1,2,3,4	1,2	1,2	3,4	1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4	3,4	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,2,3,4	1,2	3,4	1,2	1,2	1,2,3
IMMEDIATE RESULTS																
Spreading general information on ESIF and OPs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Spreading professional information on ESIF and OPs	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓			✓
Spreading the news (text, audial, visual and video information) on ESIF and OPs	✓	✓				✓					✓			✓		✓
Provide contact details/links for further (specific) information on ESIF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Promotion of ESIF and their operational programmes (EU role, drawing possibilities, benefits, etc.)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Spread information/message to enhance positive perception of ESIF	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Obtain new contacts (networking)	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			

Activity	Web site	Facebook	Advertising campaign	Flyer „Evaluation“	Publication for entrepreneurs	Eurokompas	Seminar „Act locally“	Young European	Europe Day	Roadshow	Direct contact	Promotional merchandise	Work group	PR activities – press releases	Video posts competition	List of projects
ComS specific objective	1,2,3,4	1,2	1,2	3,4	1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4	3,4	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,2,3,4	1,2	3,4	1,2	1,2	1,2,3
Obtain addresses and contacts on institutions providing advisory in preparation and implementation of projects	✓					✓					✓					
Obtain information about the ESIF source, i. e. EU	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Promotion of successfully implemented projects	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	✓
Learn about best practice examples	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
INTERMEDIARY RESULTS																
Remind or learn about ESIF existence and a possibility their drawing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Obtain initial impulse to seek for further information on ESIF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Elicit interest to seek further information on ESIF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Obtain general information within ESIF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	

Activity	Web site	Facebook	Advertising campaign	Flyer „Evaluation“	Publication for entrepreneurs	Eurokompas	Seminar „Act locally“	Young European	Europe Day	Roadshow	Direct contact	Promotional merchandise	Work group	PR activities – press releases	Video posts competition	List of projects
ComS specific objective	1,2,3,4	1,2	1,2	3,4	1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4	3,4	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,2,3,4	1,2	3,4	1,2	1,2	1,2,3
Obtain professional information within ESIF	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓			✓
Learn about current news within ESIF and their OPs	✓	✓				✓					✓			✓		✓
Obtain information how ESIF helped SR/ regionally	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Improvement of the professional qualification of personnel involved in project preparation and implementation	✓			✓	✓	✓					✓					
Improvement of the professional qualification of personnel involved in ESIF management, implementation and control	✓			✓			✓				✓		✓			
Get inspiration for an individual (own) project	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Improvement of project preparation and implementation processes at the applicants/beneficiaries' side	✓					✓					✓					

Source: Contractor's proprietary analysis

Table 6 Matrix of the activities' impact on achievement of ComS results per 2016

Result	Web site	Facebook	Advertising campaign	Flyer „Evaluation“	Publication for entrepreneurs	Eurokompas	Seminar „Act locally“	Young European	Europe Day	Roadshow	Direct contact	Promotional merchandise	Work group	PR activities – press releases	Video posts competition	List of projects
Level of awareness of the possibilities of support from ESIF (1) (SO 1, 2)	*	*	**			*		**	**	**	*	*		*	*	*
Interest in ESIF support (6a) (SO 1)	*	*	**			*		*	*	*						
Perception of transparency of the provided ESIF information (19) (SO 2)	*	*	*			*		*	*	*	*			*	*	*
Level of overall positive perception of the EU role in the SR (7) (SO 2)	*	*	**			*		**	**	**	*	*		*	*	*
Number of partners engaged in information and communication activities (18) (SO 4)						*		*	*							
Number of attendees at the implemented information activities (4a) (SO 4)							***						***			
Number of attendees at seminars, conferences and other information activities (4b) (SO 1, 2, 3, 4)	*						*	***	***	***				*		

Result	Web site	Facebook	Advertising campaign	Flyer „Evaluation“	Publication for entrepreneurs	Eurokompas	Seminar „Act locally“	Young European	Europe Day	Roadshow	Direct contact	Promotional merchandise	Work group	PR activities – press releases	Video posts competition	List of projects
Number of distributed professional and information publications (13) (SO 1, 2, 3, 4)	*					***										
Website traffic (14) (SO 1, 2, 3, 4)	***	*	*			*		*	*	*		*				
Facebook profile traffic (15) (SO 1, 2, 3, 4)	*	***	*			*		*	*	*		*				
Level of quality of the provided information on ESIF (SO 3)	**					*	*				*					*
Level of usefulness of the information provided (SO 4)	***					*	*				*		*			

Source: Contractor's proprietary analysis

Legend:

empty cell - performance of an activity is/was not relevant to achievement of the given result

* none or marginal contribution ** low or medium contribution *** major contribution

The narrative following the tables evaluates and describes the contribution of activities to the achievement of objectives and expected ComS results, in connection with the matrix provided in table no. 6. The aforementioned applies to the evaluation of contribution to achievement of objectives and expected results by ComS, not to evaluation of the conduct and purpose of the activities as such.

Internet

Web site

It is of relevance for achievement of all 4 specific objectives, however, with the current structure and content **it rather contributes and will be contributing to achievement of the objectives no. 3 and 4**, since from the perspective of a common visitor the portal's content can seem too complicated and incomprehensible. With regard to achievement of the objectives no. 3 and 4 in the monitored period, the **contribution of the activity** can be deemed as mediate, since it serves e.g. to present a cross-section managing and methodological documentation (SYSM ESIF, methodical instructions, examples, guidance, etc.) and at the same time, from the professional public's side, it is largely perceived as a rather or definitely useful information source. For the purposes of meeting objectives o. 1 and 2, internet has a minor effect on contribution (since the portal is among the less preferred public information sources).

Facebook

It is of relevance for achievement of all 4 specific objectives, however, with the current structure and content of its posts **it rather contributes and will be contributing to achievement of the objectives no. 1 and 2**. Although the number of fans cannot be considered as the objective and the success indicator of the profile, a little below 500 fans is a too low number if the posts in the profile should have a more massive impact in the Facebook community. **An overall contribution** of this activity to the meeting the said objectives in the monitored period is marginal.

Internet as an information source for obtaining information about the EU funds was declared by 44.4 % of those who came across the topic of the EU funds, while 1/3 of them quoted the official websites including the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk, 1/2 social networks and almost 3/4 news portals. Such distribution indicates that the **extent of contribution** of internet resources **for the purposes of meeting objectives no. 1 and 2** is in the following **order** (from the highest potential): **news portals**, **social media** and the portal **partnerskadohoda.gov.sk**.

As per **professional public** the **internet is the most frequented** information source, while **web pages of the operational programmes** are perceived as the most important and useful ones, **followed by the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk**. Social networks and other web pages are of lesser importance for the needs of the professional audience.

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Advertising campaign

Activity is relevant to meeting of the specific objectives no. **1 and 2**. The results achieved within these objectives were synergistically affected by the advertising media campaigns of other OPs, conducted before and parallel to the campaign. **Contribution** of this activity to achievement of the said objectives in the monitored period can be deemed as medium, since television was not deployed while it belongs among the most important information sources quoted by the general public (8 of 10 respondents familiar with the EU funds identified the television as a source of information about the EU funds). At the same time, there were other campaigns of specific OPs running shortly before and during the campaign, which could have affected the results achieved.

Flyer "ESIF evaluation"

Activity is relevant to meeting of the specific objectives no. **3 and 4**. The flyer is very specific in terms of content, usable only by the professional public and even a very narrow part of it. **The contribution** of this activity in the monitored period may not be assessed as the flyer was not distributed to the target groups in the same period.[28]

Publication for entrepreneurs

Relevant for the achievement of **all 4** specific objectives. The publication provides complex information about the possibilities of drawing ESIF as well as framework information about the project cycle of projects with ESIF funding. The publication is **useful** especially for **potential applicants** of a vast group of eligible beneficiaries of ESIF (**entrepreneurs**), who are not a target group of ComS however. **The contribution** of this activity in the monitored period may not be assessed as the flyer was not distributed to the target groups in the same period.[29]

Magazine Eurokompas

Relevant for the achievement of **all 4** specific objectives. Despite appropriate distribution of the magazine (to subscribers' addresses, about 3,500 various central and local offices across Slovakia), appropriate magazine content and under the condition that the addressees of the magazine displayed the hard copies at publicly accessible places in their offices, **contribution** of this activity to meeting of objectives no. 1 and 2 in the

[28] Level of awareness/ use of the flyer in the professional audience was low in the first quarter of 2017 (about 9 % of the approached respondents, n = 124). The contribution of this activity in the first quarter of 2017, when the professional audience was surveyed (March and April), can be deemed as marginal. The potential of a higher contribution to meeting of the objectives is in the possibility of its free download from the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk.

[29] Level of awareness/ use of the publication in the professional audience was low in the first quarter of 2017 (about 20 % of the approached respondents, n = 124). The contribution of this activity in the first quarter of 2017, when the professional audience was surveyed (March and April), can be deemed as minor. The potential of a higher contribution to meeting of the objectives is in the possibility of its free download from the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk. At the same time it needs to be emphasized that this type of a publication seems to be useful for the needs of the target group of entrepreneurs/self-employed, since this group showed a level of past experience or potential interest in drawing ESIF at 61 % (compared to a little below 40 % across the entire sample).

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monitored period can be considered marginal (not even 2 % of those familiar with the EU funds topic declared the Eurokompas magazine as a source of information on the EU funds). Contribution to achievement of the specific objectives no. 3 and 4 is medium (it ensued from the professional audience survey that more than 60 % of respondents came across the magazine, it was among the less used information resources on ESIF, with a medium importance and usefulness). At the same time it was the third most frequently identified information source by the professional audience per 2016 (following the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk and the advertising campaign). The implementation of this communication tool ensues directly form the PA SR.

Promotion events

Seminar "Act locally"

Activity is relevant to meeting of the specific objectives no. **3 and 4**. With a view to the fact that this seminar has a very specific content and is organized for the personnel responsible for information and communication of individual OPs, **the contribution** of this activity to achievement of the said objectives in the monitored period can be assessed as marginal.

Young European

Activity is relevant to meeting of the specific objectives no. **1 and 2. An overall contribution** of this activity to the meeting of the said objectives in the monitored period is marginal. Contribution of the activity itself (participating students of secondary schools in the regional rounds) can be deemed marginal, although emphasized by media promotion in the regions.

Europe Day

Activity is relevant to meeting of the specific objectives no. **1 and 2. An overall contribution** of this activity to the meeting of the said objectives in the monitored period is low. The contribution of the event itself (about 2,500 participants in the Slovak capital) can be deemed marginal but emphasized by a supporting media campaign.

Roadshow

Activity is relevant to meeting of the specific objectives no. **1 and 2. An overall contribution** of this activity to the meeting of the said objectives in the monitored period is low. Contribution of the event itself (about 1,000 students of secondary schools in the various regions of the SR) can be deemed marginal, although emphasized by many contributions informing of the competition in various media. The particular benefit of this activity is not a quantitative increase in ESIF awareness but a qualitative aspect (participating students learn significantly deeper information about ESIF when compared to other activities).

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Direct contact

Relevant for the achievement of **all 4** specific objectives, depending on the demand/query (background of the people contacting the information center). With a view to the number of queries addressed to the information center (several hundred a year) **the contribution** of this activity to the meeting of the said objectives in the monitored period can be assessed as marginal but with regard to the standard basic communication channels of any organization **this is a necessary tool**.

Promotional merchandise

Activity is relevant to meeting of the specific objectives no. **1 and 2. Given the fact that the promotional merchandise is usually not distributed separately but jointly with another activity whereby ESIF information is provided, the merchandise itself does not contribute to the achievement of the particular** objectives. They are a merely complementary communication tool, nevertheless they are an inevitable part of building the ESIF *corporate identity*.

Work group

Activity is relevant to meeting of the specific objectives no. **3 and 4**. With a view to the fact that this a technical work group of personnel responsible for information and communication of individual OPs, **the contribution** of this activity to achievement of the said objectives in the monitored period can be assessed as marginal.

PR activities - press releases

Activity is relevant to meeting of the specific objectives no. **1 and 2**. With a view to the low number of the official press releases (about 1 per week) and bearing in mind the spreading of the news via mass communication media, **the contribution** of this activity to the achievement of the objectives in the monitored period can be assessed as low.

Video competition

Activity is relevant to meeting of the specific objectives no. **1 and 2**. **Contribution** of the activity (low enrolment) to the achievement of the said objectives in the monitored period can be deemed marginal, but emphasized by a media advertising campaign as well as featuring the winning spot in a subsequent commercial.

List of projects

Activity is relevant to meeting of the specific objectives no. **1, 2 and 3**. Within the general public, 56.4 % of those familiar with the EU funds were also aware of the publicly accessible list of projects. **A contribution** of this activity to the meeting the said objectives in the monitored period can be deemed marginal but this is a mandatory activity with a notable transparency element. Among the professional audience 62.4 %

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of the approached respondents (n = 125) said they were aware of the publicly accessible list of successful beneficiaries.

The order of activities according to their contribution to achievement of the specific objectives:

With a view to the fact that it is impossible to exactly identify the extent of contribution of individual activities, it is also impossible to determine an exact hierarchical order of activities by their significance. Activities by their contribution extent can be grouped into 3 framework groups.

A group of activities 1 with a medium contribution

- Advertising campaign - with a view to the massive scope of the campaign and use of media of mass communication
- website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk - due to the portal's position as a signpost for all information on ESIF

A group of activities 2 with a lower contribution

- Eurokompas - because of a relatively high recognition among the professional audience
- Publication for entrepreneurs - because of the edition, possibility of a free download from the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk and relevance for the target group needs as potential beneficiaries (note: potential in 2017 since it was printed in 2017)

A group of activities 3 with the lowest contribution

- Flyer "Evaluation"
- PR activities - press releases
- Facebook
- Roadshow
- Young European
- Europe Day
- Video competition
- Promotional merchandise
- List of projects
- Direct contact
- Seminar "Act locally"
- Work group

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The author of the report classified these activities as having the lowest contribution to the achievement of ComS objectives due to their low reach of a target group, i. e. low number of reached persons compared to the size of the entire target group.

6.4.2 Factors with impact on achieved results

Below are described individual factors which the author of the report identified in his analysis in 2016 as facts that did or could have affected the results of activities within 2016 ACP:

1. **parliamentary elections in March 2016** as a cause of (anticipated) potential personnel changes at the positions of state officials slowed down or stopped some processes (such as stopping the public procurement process for the complex activity Country Tour, thus lower achieved results of the activity Information events) = **major factor**;
2. **organizational change in the middle of 2016** - transfer of the CCA to a newly established DPMOII, while IPD remained under the GO SR; complication in the area of mutual communication = **major factor**;
3. **information and promotion media campaigns** before and during the initial media campaign on ESIF – there may have been a positive bias in respect of the ESIF awareness; and a negative bias could have been caused by the fact that the campaign on TV wasn't launched (to avoid competing with the SK PRES campaign) and hence the most important communication tool for the general public wasn't deployed = **major factor**;
4. **delay of public procurements**, with subsequent delay of outputs and results, or fulfilled in the next year (number of distributed publications - the result depends on timely publishing of the publications, for instance the evaluation flyer was published in 2016 (December), but its result formulated as the quantity of distributed pieces will only start to be in 2017 = **major factor**;
5. **dependence of a due implementation of the activity List of projects on functionality of ITMS2014+** (publishing and regular update of the list of projects in calculation tables as required by Appendix XII of the CPR) - IPD, also with regard to being outside of the organizational structure of CCA and DPMOII where is the department responsible for ITMS2014+, does not have a possibility to directly ensure that requirements for the list of projects are met = **major factor**;
6. **ICCs working in the regions**, which perform the activities of information and communication, are not within the IPD's competence but directly under the CCA (IPD cooperated only to the extent of delivery of information materials - Eurokompas, brochure about the ESIF support possibilities for entrepreneurs) = **less important factor**;
7. **non-implementation of an activity with regard to overall delay of the implementation of the programming period 2014 - 2020** – a map of projects is designed and has ready-to-launch technical solution in place, but there is no content yet (only a few projects were implemented in 2016) = **less important factor**.

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6.4.3 A summary of the contribution story

In respect of identified contribution of activities of IPD to the achievement of ComS objectives and results in connection with the aforementioned parts of chapter 6.4 per 2016 the following may be stated:

1. **Planning** of activities per 2016 was **adequate** for meeting the objectives.
2. Most activities were implemented according to the timeline. A part of the activities was delayed by several weeks or months. Some activities were performed in time (publication published) but the results will come within the next year (distribution of the published publications). Several activities, even key ones, such as Country Tour (a series of a number of social and cultural events in the regions of Slovakia) were not implemented at all. Therefore the **contribution to meeting of the objectives was lower than if it were duly implemented**. The use of **TV** in the initial media campaign and implementation of the activity **Country Tour could have increased the results**.
3. **Pre-requisites for successful information** and communication **were rather fulfilled**. The failed conditions for successful communication in 2016 included: delays in public procurement (delayed implementation, lower quality) and incomprehensibility of information (which is overall the most often quoted problem of informing about ESIF). **Causes**, which could potentially affect the achieved results whether directly or indirectly (and were not eliminated), in 2016 included: delays or transfers of activities to the next year, organizational changes that made the communication of the involved entities more difficult (GO SR and CCA), insufficient information declared by the professional public, missing out some of the communication possibilities/opportunities and parallel media campaigns.
4. Human and financial **resources** were **sufficient**. A number of activities were ensured **externally by professionals** in the field of information and communication, which can be viewed **positively**. The organizational change appears to be a negative factor.

6.5 Analysis and evaluation of meeting of the 2016 ACP objectives

Setting of objectives in the 2016 ACP is deemed generic, insufficient and non-complementary with ComS.

The 2016 ACP contains only tasks, or generic objectives and the purpose of information and communication in the context of OP TA, i.e. the 2016 ACP objectives **are defined on the strategic level only** (taken from the managing documentation of ESIF, ComS or OP TA) and **are not further elaborated at the operative level**, which is desirable with a view to the fact that it is an annual planning document.

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Ambiguous terminology – to define objectives there is used the terminology of objectives, expected results and tasks of GO SR as the CCA and MA for OP TA; thus causing duplicated content.

A clear structure of objectives is absent – the 2016 ACP objectives are not structured in any way (neither numerically, nor hierarchically or in relation to the target groups).

No linking to the ComS specific objectives – the 2016 ACP does not provide any specific objectives or a semantic or content equivalent comparable with the specific objectives of ComS.

There is missing a specification of 2016 ACP objectives and target groups – similar to ComS, since the objectives are not equally applicable to all target groups, the missing specification of the link between the objectives and target groups can be considered as a deficiency.

The aforementioned reasons make it impossible to evaluate meeting of the 2016 ACP objectives.

6.6 Analysis and evaluation of meeting of the ComS objectives

Evaluation of meeting of the ComS objectives is provided in the context of indicators and criteria defined within the theory of change (appendix C hereof, table no. 8, third column). It is a comparison of the progress status as at 31 December 2016 and the target value if defined. Further aspects of evaluation of the objectives and achievement of the results are analyzed in chapter 6.4 Results of a theory of change test in the approach to information and communication within ESIF.

Specific objective 1 Increase public awareness of the Partnership Agreement and possibility to draw ESIF[30]

Progress as at 31. 12. 2016:

Based on the public opinion poll results from October and November 2016 (refer chapter 6.3.3 hereof for more details) it can be said that **the public awareness of the ESIF support possibilities reached the level of 68 %**.

The current score of the indicator for Level of awareness of the possibilities of support from ESIF (1) **means progress towards the target value** (76 % per 2016) **at the level of 90 %**.

[30] The expected result is to achieve the public awareness of the possibilities of ESIF funding at the level of 80% at the end of the programming period (2023). The level of awareness is meant as the level of elementary knowledge of the existence of ESIF, i. e. what part of the public came across the topic of ESIF. This is measured by a public opinion poll and evaluation of the polling question: Have you ever come across the topic of the EU funds and their operational programmes?

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Comment:

88.6 % of the approached respondents **expressed** their knowledge of the fact that the **EU provides financial means** for the development of various areas of economy of its member states, e. g. regional development. At the same time 48.6 % of the approached respondents said they had come across the topic of the EU funds and their operational programmes. The latter measured level is lower than the long-term average of the general knowledge of the EU funds existence among the Slovak public. This group probably does not include all the respondents who have some knowledge of the EU funds but only people who have come across the topic of the EU funds in some detail. Therefore it may be assumed that the general awareness of the existence of the EU funds is higher. **The level of public awareness of the possibilities of ESIF assistance** may be, based on the professional estimate, assessed at the level of 68 **%**, i. e. as the mean value of "general" knowledge of the existence of the EU financial assistance (88.6 %) and a "more detailed" knowledge of the EU funds (48.6 %).

Specific objective 2 Raising positive awareness of the Communities among the citizens[31]

Progress as at 31. 12. 2016:

Based on the public opinion poll results from October and November 2016 (refer chapter 6.3.3 hereof for more details) it can be said that the public awareness of the ESIF financial assistance for the development and increased living standards in the SR reached the level of 39.6 %, i. e. 39.6 % of the approached respondents gave a positive answer (rather or definitely yes) to the polling question "Do you think that the support from the EU funds is a unique opportunity to develop and improve the living standards in Slovakia?".

Current score of the indicator Level of overall positive perception of the EU role in the SR (7) **means progress towards the target value** (50 % per 2016) **at the level of 79.2 %**.

Comment:

The measured value of the indicator is **slightly below the planned value**. **On the other hand** it needs to be emphasized that **the level of a positive perception among the respondents familiar with the EU funds** achieved **a high score of 81.5 %**. It is reasonably expected that the overall awareness of ESIF will be growing. In case of preserving the same share of population with a positive opinion of ESIF of those who are familiar with ESIF, the achievement of the planned value of the indicator and meeting of the objective should not be endangered.

[31] The expected result is declaring a positive attitude towards financial assistance from ESIF for the development and increased living standards in the SR from the majority of the public during the programming period (during the programming period the share of the public with a positive opinion of ESIF financial assistance for the development and increased living standards of the SR shouldn't drop below 50 % of the entire population). This is measured by a public opinion poll and evaluation of the polling question: **Do you think that the support from the EU funds is a unique opportunity to develop and improve the living standards in Slovakia?**

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Specific objective 3 Provision of good professional information about implementation of the individual operational programmes and projects under ESIF

Progress as at 31. 12. 2016:

Criterion 1: Level of quality of the provided information as perceived by the professional audience

Based on the performed online survey of the opinions among the professional audience (see appendix H hereof) **the positive perception** of individual aspects of the quality of provided information **highly exceeds the negative one**. **The most positively** rated aspect is **the accessibility** (85.2 % of professionals who declared an "encounter" with at least one information activity by IPD in 2016, said the information was rather or definitely accessible), **followed by up-to-date and timely aspect** (70.4 % said the information was rather or definitely up-to-date and timely), **accuracy** (69.4 % as rather or definitely accurate), **comprehensibility** (64.8 % said rather or definitely comprehensible) and **sufficient** (63.9 % said rather or definitely sufficient).

Comment:

Results of the professional audience survey allow to generalize the trend of perception of the **quality** of the information provided as **positive in a significant majority of the professional audience**. It ensues from the data obtained that an **absolute majority of professionals** (about 85 % of approached respondents, n = 109) consider the ESIF-related information **accessible**. **Further 4 qualitative aspects** can also be considered **as positively perceived by a prevailing majority** of the professional public, although in this case the majority expressing a positive attitude is **smaller by 15 to 20 p. p..**

Specific objective 4 Detailed information and education of entities involved in the implementation process of the Partnership Agreement and Operational Programmes in order to increase successful implementation of the EU support

Progress as at 31. 12. 2016:

Criterion 1: The correlation between the successful implementation of projects/OP and informing/ educating the professional audience and entities involved in ESIF implementation

When comparing the opinions of respondents who believe their project/OP was successfully implemented and those who believe their project/OP was not successfully implemented, a **positive correlation** seems evident between a participation/use of an output of information activities ensured by IPD and a success of an implementation (bigger share of respondents declaring successful implementation of an OP/project with respondents exposed to information and communication activities by IPD versus respondents who did not participate or make use of any output of any information or communication activity by IPD).

On one hand, only 7.4 % of respondents who declared successful implementation of a project/OP said they did not attend any information activity arranged by IPD of the Government's office of the SR in 2016. On the other hand, in case of respondents with declared unsuccessful implementation of projects/OP, 30.8 % said they did not make use of any of the IPD's information activities in 2016.

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Criterion 2: Usefulness for successful implementation of projects/OP

With regard to the overall evaluation of the benefit/usefulness of the information obtained through IPD information activities and measures, 77.1 % of the professionals considered them **useful** (24.8 % definitely useful, 52.3 % rather useful) for the overall implementation of projects or implementation of operational programmes funded by ESIF.

Comment:

Results of the professional public survey **indicate** that the information and communication are **useful** in improving the success rate of implementation of an EU funding.

The success rate of implementation of the EU funding, as well as the first two criteria, are complex indicator, dependent on and affected by many other factors and influences. Therefore the results discussed above may not be considered as a direct effect of the IPD activities only. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to say that the information activities as such do not determine but rather contribute to the overall successful implementation of projects/OP.

6.7 Answers to the evaluation questions

Evaluation question no. 5.1: To what extent are the objectives of the communication strategy for the Partnership Agreement SR relevant to the needs[32]?

The needs within assessment of this evaluation question were defined as follows, refer Appendix I hereof for more details:

- **objective information needs**, i. e. information which should be provided and communicated to the respective target groups and which ensues from the tasks and duties of a member state or MA defined in the EU legislation, especially the CPR;
- **subjective information needs**, i. e. information which is considered by the target groups themselves as interesting, necessary and useful.

[32] Needs refer to the needs analysis, one of the ComS bases. This means especially the objectives which are to be fulfilled by information and communication on ESIF in compliance with the relevant EU legislation, Slovak legislation and methodical documents of the CCA.

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Evaluation of the question

#1 Increase public awareness of the Partnership Agreement and possibility to draw ESIF

Relevance of the objective to the needs: fully relevant

Comment: Raising awareness of PA and thus of ESIF in the SR and the possibilities of drawing ESIF among the general public as the target group appears to be **absolutely adequate** , firstly **with a view to the objective information needs** and secondly as **results of the public opinion poll**, resp. the level of elementary knowledge of ESIF.

Despite long-term presence of the EU funds in Slovakia, which could lead to an assumption of high awareness of the EU funds, it is still **relevant** to perform information and communication **activities aiming to raise awareness**, not only from the **quantitative aspect** (reach the biggest possible share of the public familiar with the EU funds) but also from the **qualitative aspect** (depth and extent of knowledge). Despite the fact the goal beyond the raised public awareness does not have to mean a 100% elementary knowledge of ESIF (I do/do not know about the existence of ESIF), it follows from the conducted public opinion poll that to maintain and raise even an elementary awareness of the EU funds (that they actually exist), **their constant and wide-reaching promotion is inevitable**.

#2 Raising positive awareness of the Communities among the citizens

Relevance of the objective to the needs: fully relevant

Comment: The positive attitude of the public is a general expectation with regard to the objectives of ESIF funding. At the same time it ensues from a member state's responsibilities to inform of the successes of the EU cohesion policy.

#3 Provision of good professional information about implementation of the individual operational programmes and projects under ESIF

Relevance of the objective to the needs: fully relevant

Comment: Information of sufficient quality and professional value is a logical and inevitable prerequisite for correct and efficient implementation of ESIF. However, the sufficiency as a quality criterion is the least positively perceived aspect by the professional audience.

#4 Detailed information and education of entities involved in the implementation process of the Partnership Agreement and Operational Programmes in order to increase successful implementation of the EU support

Relevance of the objective to the needs: fully relevant

Comment: The successful implementation of the EU support and a maximization of its efficient use is a general expectation with a view the objectives of ESIF support. As

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with any other activity, the successful implementation of the operational programmes is determined by professional qualification and competence of personnel capacities of all the entities involved in managing, implementation and ESIF control, whether on the side of the providers or beneficiaries of the assistance. Therefore enhancing of the professional and knowledge base of the professional audience is certainly one of the key success factors.

#5 Education and support of the beneficiaries with the aim of successful project implementation

Relevance of the objective to the needs: fully relevant N/A

Comment: Not evaluated.

Evaluation question no. 5.2: To what extent have the objectives been met with respect to the communication strategy for the Partnership Agreement SR and the annual communication plan of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance for the Partnership Agreement SR?

Evaluation:

Since the setting of objectives in the 2016 ACP may be deemed generic, insufficient and non-complementary with ComS, it is not possible to evaluate achievement of 2016 ACP objectives.

Meeting of the ComS objectives measured by measurable indicators was **a little below the planned value**, that is **at the level of 90 %** (Level of awareness of the possibilities of support from ESIF (1)) for SO no. 1 and **79.2 %** (Level of overall positive perception of the EU role in the SR (7)) for SO no. 2.

The evaluation criterion for the SO no. 3 was the level of quality of the provided information as perceived by the professional audience. Based on the performed online survey of the opinions among the professional audience **the positive perception** of individual aspects of the quality of provided information **highly exceeds the negative** one.

There were two criteria set for the SO no. 4, specifically 1) correlation between the successful implementation of projects/OP and informing/educating the professional public and entities involved in implementation of ESIF and 2) usefulness for the successful implementation of projects/OP. Criterion 1: A **positive correlation** was observed between the participation at/making use of an output of information activities provided by IPD and a successful implementation. Criterion 2: **A prevailing majority** (77.1 %) of respondents among the professional public perceived the IPD activities as **prevailingly useful.** Among reasons why they believed so were: practical usability in preparation of projects, in implementation, at work, raised knowledge, complexity, up-to-date aspect.

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Comment:

Level of knowledge about the possibilities of ESIF support, the level of positive perception of the overall EU role for SR, all three criteria above are complex indicators, determined and affected by many factors and influences. Therefore the **results discussed above may not be considered as a direct effect of the IPD activities only**. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to say that the **information activities as such do not determine but rather contribute** to the overall successful implementation of projects/OP, overall positive perception of the EU in SR, perception of quality of information and successful implementation of project/OPs. Refer chapters 6.5 and 6.6 hereof for more detail.

Evaluation question no. 5.3: To what extent was the result of activities under the annual communication plan of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance for the Partnership Agreement SR affected by other factors which did not result directly from the implemented activities?

Evaluation:

Factors which the author of the report identified in his analysis in 2016 as facts that did or could have affected the results of activities within 2016 ACP include: 1) the **major factors**: parliamentary election in March 2016; organizational change in the middle of 2016; information and promotion media campaigns before, during and after the initial media campaign; delayed public procurements; dependence of due conduct of the activity List of Projects on functioning ITMS2014+; 2) the **less significant factors**: operation of ICC in the regions; non-implementation of an activity with a view to the overall delay of implementation of the programming period 2014-2020.

Comment:

Refer chapter 6.4.2 hereof for more detail.

Evaluation question no. 5.4: How did the implemented activities of the annual communication plan of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance fro the Partnership Agreement SR contribute to the real results? What types of activities make sense to implement in the future?

Evaluation:

In most cases **the contribution of the IPD activities** to the overall results is assessed as marginal or low (refer chapter 6.4.1 hereof for more detail), however, that automatically does not mean irrelevance or uselessness of their implementation as such. A bigger contribution can be observed with the activities as portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk and a media campaign. A lower contribution can be observed

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with activities Eurokompas and the potential of the publication for entrepreneurs. The author of the report classified all other activities as having the lowest contribution to the achievement of ComS objectives due to their low reach of a target group, i. e. low number of reached persons compared to the size of the entire target group.

Comment:

In assessing the contribution of the IPD activities it is necessary to bear in mind that the IPD activities are carried out alongside activities of other OPs as well as other entities' activities. A mix of these activities has a mutual synergic effect in the first place, thus in results of a complex nature (such as the level of knowledge of ESIF, positive opinion of the EU financial assistance or an interest in ESIF support) it is not possible to determine exact impact of individual entities.

From the perspective of meeting the ComS objectives **the following activities are reasonable** to implement in the future:

1. **web portal** after diversification of the content according to target groups and further amendments and improvements, this activity ensues from the CPR and the PA SR
2. **advertising campaign** as well as **other activities of a media nature** (press releases) with an emphasis placed on communicating the positive benefits and impacts of implementation of the EU funds
3. **information publications of a general nature** (for efficiency reasons these should include only simple formats, e. g. a flyer with general and promotional information which would refer the people with an active interest to appropriate websites)
4. **information publications of a more professional cross-section nature** together with their publishing on the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk
5. magazine **Eurokompas**; this activity ensues from the PA SR
6. **information (social and cultural) events** in connection with a media promotion, held across the Slovak regions, where a participation at general events appears to be more efficient than organization of independent "ESIF" events
7. operate a **contact center** with a more prominent promotion e. g. graphically emphasized on the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk; this activity ensues from the PA SR
8. **promotional merchandise**, despite not having any direct contribution to the results and achievement of objectives, they help to enhance the ESIF branding and building of its *corporate identity*
9. **list of projects**, which is a mandatory information activity pursuant to the CPR, serving as a transparency element

Less relevant activities may be considered:

10. **Facebook activity**, unless the strategy is changed, e. g. systematic promotion of posts and increased number and engagement of fans
11. **YouTube activity**, unless the YouTube channel becomes a platform for sharing videos, which are primarily referred to at other thematic web pages, thus serving as a "hub" for video content that will be further distributed through other web pages

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12. **work group and a professional seminar** (exclusive for the area of information and communication only)

Although the following activities were not implemented in 2016, their implementation appears to be reasonable in the future:

13. prepare **professional videos** (spots/stories), whether of informative, instructive or promotional character (project benefits, infographics of the implementation progress and the like), with the possibility of sharing via video magazine or on a YouTube channel

6.8 Suggestions to adjust the setting of the information and communication system at the level of the Partnership Agreement of the SR based on the evaluation performed

Analysis of the development of the EU and SR legislation as at 31. 12. 2016

Legislative conditions for information and communication **were not amended** during the monitored period.

Corrigendum of the CPR of the 26. 07. 2016 provides only formal changes in Art. 115 and in the appendix XII of the Regulation of the EP and the European Council (no. 2015/1839 and 2016/2135) which amended the CPR did not specify provisions regarding the conduct of information and communication.

The implementation regulation has not been changed or amended.

Re-definition of the setting of the information and communication system at the level of the Partnership Agreement of the SR

The author of the report recommends the following to adjust the information and communication at the level of the PA SR:

1. More direct and intense of CCA into the process of central information and communication in line with its delegated responsibilities for PA implementation, management and coordination of using ESIF in SR as well as strengthening its capacity and professional resources in this area within the DPMOII organization structure.
2. Consider establishing of the **common management structure** for information and communication with the presence of management representatives of CCA, IPD, MA/IB and also with attendance of relevant specialists in order to ensure effective coordination, common methods and tools as well as control over their application and review of the agreed tasks.
3. a more intense involvement of CCA and IPD in the operation of the integrated network of information and consulting centers.

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Recommendations for a potential adjustment/change of the wording of the methodical documentation, ComS and ACP

Recommendations for amendment of the methodical documentation

The author of the report formulated recommended amendments to the **MI CCA no. 16** and communicated them to the IPD in December 2016. As the next step, IPD processed the proposed revision of the MI CCA no. 16.

Recommendations for amendment of ComS

With regard to the fact that the document was approved at several levels, **author of the report recommends**, regardless of its drawbacks stated in the Interim evaluation report – part 1 of this evaluation, **to update only particular items in ComS**, especially to consolidate measurable indicators including setting of target values for all indicators (amended wording is provided in further detail in the initial report of this evaluation), ensure that all the publicity requirements are met (at the minimum the EU logo, reference to OP and the fund) and to remove potential basic factual discrepancies or inconsistency across chapters (use a consistent list of information activities). Additionally, the specific objectives should be worked out in greater detail and more precise.

Recommendations for amendment of ACP

Based on the 2016 ACP analysis (refer the Interim evaluation report - part 1 hereof), the recommendations provided below are drawn, which **can be reflected in preparation of ACPs in the future** and which will enable elimination of potential qualitative deficiencies in ACPs in the subsequent years.

As per formal side of the document it is certainly inevitable to comply with all the publicity principles and it is appropriate to improve the graphic layout of the document.

Analysis of 2016 ACP background is specific since this is chronologically the first ACP in the PP 2014-2020. The content requirements for the background analysis in subsequent ACPs are - according to the MI CCA no. 16 - different and the background analysis of subsequent ACPs should be based on the analysis of activities of the preceding period. **With a view to the deficiencies in 2016 ACP, the author of the report recommends to apply the following principles in formulation of the background analysis**:

- in the beginning provide the context and reasons/purpose of the analysis, to give a clear reason why information is provided;
- the background analysis should contain quantitative and/or qualitative evaluation of the activities in the previous period drawing a firm line of how the implemented activities contributed to the achievement of the objectives/measurable indicators of ComS;
- the analysis should also contain a summary of how the findings contained therein will be applied to practice and how they would be reflected in performance of information and communication measures and activities in the future (e. g. should

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it occur in the future that the general public is poorly aware of ESIF, the background analysis should contain a description of the particular situation, root-cause analysis and proposed remedial measures);

- analysis should serve as a supporting argument both for continuing and the same performance of activities (because they are successful and have a purpose) or for changing the performance (because they did not bring the expected result).

When formulating objectives, it is necessary **to align them with the ComS's specific objectives** and **a greater itemization of the objectives** at the operational level, since this is an annual planning document and the objectives should be aligned with the intents to be achieved in the given year. The media practice often applies the SMART principle (or analogic procedure), which serves as an aid to determine the relevant objectives. In according to this principle, objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, responsible and time-related. SMART objectives can be clearly evaluated.

Clear setting of the measurable indicators will require a clear structure, removal of duplicate indicators and setting target values per given year for all MIs with a view to their scores in the previous year.

When formulating a **communication plan**, or describing the planned information and communication activities, **a greater depth of detail is necessary** (not only a title or a brief factual statement), especially with regard to the activity objectives, its subject matter, scope, intensity, expected results and last but not least a description of which specific objective benefits from the given ACP activity.

Budgeting should be based on a better description of the planned activities and should take into account the experience from the previous programming period (prices of goods and services rendered).

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7 Findings and conclusions

Overall evaluation of ComS

The structure of ComS framework can be evaluated as **compliant** with the EU legislation as well as requirements at the national level. **In terms of content**, the ComS contains **sufficiently and relatively well described** target groups, information and communication activities including their allocation to target groups. **Less clear or insufficient parts** include: unclear relation between the starting point and its influence on the design of ComS, insufficiently defined specific objectives as well as missing further detailed description. Allocated **funds** for the performance of central information and communication are **higher** compared to the PP 2007 - 2013. Allocation of increased funds can be **regarded positively** on one hand side since it allows for **proper** implementation of information and communication activity or implementation with increased intensity. On the other, it poses a risk due to past experience with potential under-drawing.

Overall evaluation of 2016 ACP

The 2016 ACP does not differ significantly from the requirements for ACPs defined in MI CCA no. 16 and it can be assessed as **compliant with baseline requirements set out in MI CCA no. 16**. In terms of content, it can be assessed as general, **lacking a greater depth of detail in certain aspects** (mainly specification of clear-cut objectives and a more detailed description of planned information activities), and that diminishes its adequacy for its use as a true annual planning document, but also its nature as a tool for implementing ComS.

Summary of findings

Formal aspects of the 2016 ACP can be deemed as sufficient regarding the requirements for an ACP structure – it contains all the required parts according to the MI CCA no. 16, and insufficient regarding the overall formal and graphic arrangement of the document which makes the document less clear and less comprehensible.

Low formal and content quality in processing of the **background analysis**. In terms of structure, appropriate parts are presented, i. e. analysis of the media environment in Slovakia and the results of a public opinion poll on awareness of the SF and CF, however, in terms of content, they are brief, general, as if incomplete, without providing implications for the design of the 2016 ACP. The only obvious and direct reference to the background situation is the defined initial value of a measurable indicator regarding the level of ESIF awareness.

Setting of objectives in the 2016 ACP is deemed generic, insufficient and non-complementary with ComS.

Setting of information and communication measures/tools/activities in the 2016 ACP is based on MI CCA no. 16, not directly on ComS. Regarding the text structure, the approach is different but not so in terms of the content. Especially in cases of complex activities, such as Country Tour, Roadshow, etc. a more detailed description of individual activities is missing.

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Despite the framework definition of the three main **target group categories** in line with the ComS, the 2016 ACP uses in assigning target groups to the information and communication measures/tools/activities a more specified break-down of the target groups while their link to one of the three ComS categories is not always clear (e. g. grant applicants).

Budget for information and communication was adjusted in the 2016 ACP compared to the ComS budget - the unconsumed allocation for 2015 was distributed to the following years. However, the original overall allocation was not preserved with that adjustment (17,825,000 € vs. 18,350,750 € after the adjustment). With regard to the missing description and characteristics of individual information and communication activities it was not possible to clearly assess the relevance and adequacy of the planned financial resources. Regardless of that fact it can also be stated that the declared amount of the planned funds allows for implementation of all activities at a high qualitative level, possibly with high intensity (this is a gross estimate of the author of the report, because of missing detailed activity description).

The principal deficiency, in addition to disarranged **measurable indicators**, is a failure to quantify indicator target values in the 2016 ACP. The target values for 2016 are set only for some measurable indicators of the 2016 ACP.

A summary of findings and conclusions per individual information and communication **activities** in 2016

1. IPD **made an adequate use of current possibilities of information and communication**. Informing by IPD can be assessed as standard with the use of common communication means on one hand side, but without any innovative elements on the other.
2. **Portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk** contains all areas of information which are appropriate and necessary to fulfil the purpose of a joint information portal. The visual and graphic design of the portal is relatively clear and compliant with current trends. The portal in its current structure provides information for both general and professional public, where especially an ordinary visitor may feel confused by complicated and hard-to-understand information.
3. **The Facebook profile** is set up as a common user profile without any special promotion features. It has a low number of fans (below 500) and the *reach* of individual posts is low as well (on average only about 245 unique users).
4. The planned **information publications** were successfully published, although in the second half or even at the end of 2016, in one case even at the beginning of 2017. All the publications were of adequate creative and graphic quality. Publications are available at the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk.
5. Not all of the planned **information events** were implemented, including the main information activity per 2016, a series of social and cultural events in the towns and villages of Slovakia (Country Tour). The reason was a failure to run a public procurement. A part of the implemented information activities was focused on the general public, a part on the professional audience, where in one instance an activity

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was held in the Slovak capital only (Europe day) and in one instance in the Slovak regions (Roadshow).

6. **The information contact center** (e-mail, phone, in person) was operated although it was used very little for queries.
7. **PR activities** were narrowed down to issuing press releases only. Other PR activities and activities focused on media were not implemented (e. g. breakfasts with journalists, press conferences and briefings, media relations).
8. **The video competition** appears to be inefficient given the demanding conditions to participate (creation of a video). The timing of the promotion of the competition was inappropriate (2 and a half months before the deadline for the submission of videos on partnerskadohoda.gov.sk and 2 weeks on TV).
9. **Lists of projects** are not published in the form of data in calculation tables (recommended formats are CSV or XML), but directly as a form environment on the page of ITMS2014+. This makes sorting, search, extraction and comparison more difficult, while this is the very purpose of publishing project lists (non-compliance with the CPR).
10. A special care was given to the **target group of students and young people**, for which the following activities were intended: Young European, Roadshow, a competition of video stories and spots.
11. Apart from the initial media campaign and web portal www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk the activities implemented by IPD in 2016 had a marginal or low **contribution** to the overall fulfilment of the objectives and expected results of ComS. On the other side it needs to be emphasized that the IPD activities were implemented parallel to the activities of individual OPs and other entities which jointly contribute to the objectives and results defined in ComS.

Summary of findings and conclusions regarding the initial media campaign in 2016

1. Professionally, the **initial media campaign** was handled very well and corresponds with the standards of the marketing industry. The most serious deficiency was failure to use the television. The campaign had a high potential to deliver its message and meet the campaign objectives.
2. Based on the postbuy analysis, **the initial media campaign had,** depending on individual media types and deployed titles/periodicals/stations, **a potential to effectively reach** (it does not meant that it also automatically did reach, since e. g. a person read a certain daily but did not have to notice the specific ad):
    - through press **58 %** of Slovak population (effective reach of the used periodicals);
    - through radio **77 %**of Slovak population (effective reach of the used stations);
    - through internet **68 %** of Slovak population (68 % of Slovak population is online).
3. Taking into account a finding that the **television** is absolutely most often used source of information on the EU funds for the public, it is reasonable to assume that

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a higher awareness of the EU funds can be achieved with the use of TV (despite the fact that the EU funds are more or less known to the public for over a decade).

Summary of findings and conclusions on the level and aspects of ESIF awareness

1. **88.6 %** of the approached respondents expressed their knowledge of the fact that the **EU provides financial means** for the development of various areas of economy of its member states, e. g. regional development. At the same time 48.6 % of the approached respondents said they had come across the topic of the EU funds and their operational programmes. The second measured value is lower than the long-term average of the general knowledge of the EU funds existence among the Slovak public. This group probably does not include all the respondents who have some knowledge of the EU funds but only people who have come across the topic of the EU funds in some detail. Therefore it may be assumed that the general awareness of the existence of the EU funds is higher. **The level of public awareness of the possibilities of ESIF assistance** may be, based on the professional estimate, assessed at the level of **68 %**, i. e. as the mean value of "general" knowledge of the existence of the EU financial assistance (88.6 %) and a "more detailed" knowledge of the EU funds (48.6 %).
2. **Knowledge** of the fact that since 2014 **a new programming period** is underway for drawing ESIF was declared by the relatively low share of respondents, specifically 53.7 % of those who came across the topic of the EU funds. 29.8 % of respondents familiar with the EU funds matters said they knew the Partnership Agreement of the SR for the period of 2014-2020.
3. The most frequently used **source of information** about the EU funds by **the general public** was television (82.5 %), followed by press (52.1 %) and radio (51.0 %). Internet was quoted as a moderately used source of information (44.4 %; while 17.7 % respondents quoted the OP web page, 17.7 % the PA SR web page, 37.2 % other web page). The second most frequently identified source of information about the EU funds were "colleagues, friends, and acquaintances" (with 64.0 %, following the television). "Project billboard or poster" also achieved high score which suggests that the public "fixes" the publicity elements of projects and therefore are relevant.
4. Internet **is a positive determinant of the basic awareness of the EU funds** (whether they exist or not) among the general public, but internet does not prove to be a factor for further deeper and more detailed knowledge of the EU funds.
5. **The public** sees the professional publications, competition, professional information events, an information and consulting center in a given region and Eurokompas magazine as marginal sources of information about the EU funds.
6. Based on the attitudes among the **professional public** (n = 124) it may be said that in 2016 the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk resonated the most (about 80 %) (at the same time it scored high levels of perceived importance and usefulness), followed by the initial media campaign, Eurokompas magazine, the media campaign „How the structural funds helped my neighbourhood", Facebook and the publication for entrepreneurs (significantly lower, about 35 to 20 %). Other activities - all the

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information events, flyer ESIF Evaluation and a regional information center scored below 10 % in respect of the usefulness aspect.

7. **A slight majority of the** respondents from the general public familiar with the EU funds topic, said that they **do not see any problem in obtaining information**, "information can be found if one is interested". Of those who specified a problem, the most frequent was incomprehensibility of information for ordinary people (39.5 % of those familiar with the EU funds), followed by officials unwilling to share information (26.5 %). **Overall**, it may be stated that the public familiar with the EU funds is not principally unhappy with how they are informed about the EU funds. **A higher tendency towards discontent is among respondents who actively seek for ESIF information**, however, those are only about 1/10 of the public familiar with ESIF.
8. General as well as professional public (not only in relation to IPD) indicate that there is enough information, the problem is rather with **its comprehensibility**.
9. The **positive perception of the EU funds among the general public largely prevails,** seeing them as a unique opportunity for the development of the SR (rather yes and definitely yes, 81.5 % of those who have come across the topic of the EU funds). The perception of the impact of information provided via media to form the public opinion is largely positive (71.6 % of those who have come across the topic of the EU funds said that the information from media create a definitely positive or rather positive opinion).
10. Approximately every 11th citizen of Slovakia who came across the topic of the EU funds, takes an active interest in the EU funds at the same time. That **needs to be reflected in the gravity of the information and communication activities relevant for the active and passive** population of Slovakia. The share of actively interested respondents is unlikely to grow rapidly.

Evaluation of meeting of the ComS objectives

1. **Meeting of the ComS objectives** measured by measurable indicators was **a little below the planned value**. **Further evaluation criteria** (quality of the information provided, its usefulness and the correlation between information and success rate of projects/operational programmes) reached **a largely positive score**.
2. **The most serious** factor affecting the implementation of information and communication activities is the **public procurement**, which requires planning and design of an activity well in advance which can further lead to a delay in implementation of an activity or a failure to implement if, or it can negatively affect the quality of outputs (the lowest price is the deciding element).
3. With a view to implementation of the IPD activities in a complex and dynamic environment of ESIF, which contains many entities informing about ESIF, **it is not possible to give an exact estimate of the extent how the particular IPD activities contributed to** the complex objectives and anticipated results such as the level of ESIF awareness, level of a positive perception of the EU and ESIF among the public, the level of perceived transparency of information, etc..

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8 Recommendations

Recommendations regarding ComS

With regard to the fact that the document was approved at several levels, **author of the report recommends**, regardless of its drawbacks stated in this report, **to update only particular items in ComS**, especially to consolidate measurable indicators (amended wording is provided in further detail in the initial report of this evaluation) including setting of target values for all indicators, ensure that all the publicity requirements are met (at the minimum the EU logo, reference to OP and the fund) and to remove potential basic factual discrepancies or inconsistency across chapters (use a consistent list of information activities). Additionally, the specific objectives should be worked out in greater detail and more precise.

Recommendations for the development of future ACPs

Based on the 2016 ACP analysis, the recommendations provided below are drawn, which can be reflected in preparation of ACPs in the future and which will enable elimination of potential qualitative deficiencies in ACPs in the subsequent years.

As per formal side of the document it is certainly inevitable to comply with all the publicity principles and it is appropriate to improve the graphic layout of the document.

Analysis of 2016 ACP background is specific since this is chronologically the first ACP in the PP 2014-2020. The content requirements for the background analysis in subsequent ACPs are - according to the MI CCA no. 16 - different and the background analysis of subsequent ACPs should be based on the analysis of activities in the preceding period. With a view to the deficiencies in 2016 ACP, the author of the report recommends to apply the following principles in formulation of the background analysis:

- in the beginning provide the context and reasons/purpose of the analysis, to give a clear reason why information is provided;
- the background analysis should contain quantitative and/or qualitative evaluation of the activities in the previous period, drawing a firm line of how the implemented activities contributed to the achievement of the objectives/measurable indicators of ComS;
- the analysis should also contain a summary of how the findings contained therein will be applied to practice and how they would be reflected in performance of information and communication measures and activities in the future (e. g. should it occur in the future that the general public is poorly aware of ESIF, the background analysis should contain a description of the particular situation, root-cause analysis and proposed remedial measures);
- analysis should serve as a supporting argument both for continuing and the same performance of activities (because they are successful and have a purpose) or for changing the performance (because they did not bring the expected result).

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When formulating objectives, it is necessary to align them with the ComS's specific objectives and a greater itemization of the objectives at the operational level, since this is an annual planning document and the objectives should be aligned with the intents to be achieved in the given year. The media practice often applies the SMART principle (or analogical procedure), which serves as an aid to determine the relevant objectives. In according to this principle, objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, responsible and time-related. SMART objectives can be clearly evaluated.

A clear setting of the measurable indicators will require a clear structure, removal of duplicate indicators and setting target values per given year for all MIs with a view to their scores in the previous year.

When formulating a **communication plan**, or describing the planned information and communication activities, **a greater depth of detail is necessary** (not only a title or a brief factual statement), especially with regard to the activity objectives, its subject matter, scope, intensity, expected results and last but not least a description of which specific objective benefits from the given ACP activity.

Budgeting should be based on a better description of the planned activities and should take into account the experience from the previous programming period (prices of goods and services rendered).

Recommendations for the performance of monitoring and evaluation of the measured indicators

Adhere to the monitoring system configured in the course of evaluation, refer **Appendix J hereof**.

Record data annually including **description of the values achieved** (sheet Values_2016_explanation per given year in the table provided in the Appendix J hereof).

Recommendations for implementation of the information and communication activities in the next period for the purposes of improved effectiveness in fulfilment of objectives and anticipated results.

1. Parallel media information campaigns of individual OPs have a synergic effect on the level of ESIF awareness (each of them has an effect on increased awareness of the existence of the EU funds as such). In order to take a true advantage of the information and promotion potential of the media campaigns it appears effective to run the **media campaigns of several OPs one after another, not side-by-side**. **Work group** for information and communication should be the point where campaigns can be coordinated. With a view to the fact that a given OP's promotion is also promoting the EU as such and its role, the subsequent media campaigns can sustain the momentum and maintain the ESIF awareness among the general public at a higher level. This would help eliminate an undue information overload from a number of OPs at the same time and fill the gaps when no campaign is underway.
2. At the same time it will be desired in the future **to replace a generic promotion** of the EU funds with **promoting the positive impacts of the EU funds**.
3. In case **that results are conditioned by activity outputs** (e. g. a number of issued publications as an output and the number of distributed publications as a result), **avoid leaving the achievement of the output of an activity till the end of a given**

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year. In case of an implementation at the end of the year it may happen that the output will be observed in the given year but achievement of a complementary result will be transferred to the next calendar year. This is not a critical problem within the same programming period (because the number of distributed publications can be captured in the evaluation of the ACP in the following year). The problem may become more prominent in the last year of the programming period (2023) when publications issued later in 2023 were not distributed in time before the end of the same year and thus would not contribute to fulfilment of objectives and results of ComS.

4. In case of activities performed in a given region, it is appropriate to **inform of the impact of the assistance from the EU funds in that region**, since the public seems to prefer information related to their region compared to information related to the entire Slovakia.
5. In terms of impact maximization, it appears that rather than organizing events independently, it is more effective to **join selected social and cultural events** e. g. by promotion stands at festivals, days of a city or village and other events, making use of attendance at such events without too much effort on the IPD side to attract visitors than in the case of a single independently organized activity.
6. More direct and intense of CCA into the process of central information and communication in line with its delegated responsibilities for PA implementation, management and coordination of using ESIF in SR as well as strengthening its capacity and professional resources in this area within the DPMOII organization structure.
7. Consider establishing of the common management structure for information and communication with the presence of management representatives of CCA, IPD, MA/IB and also with attendance of relevant specialists in order to ensure effective coordination, common methods and tools as well as control over their application and review of the agreed tasks.
8. With regard to the authorities of CCA and IPD and in order to **avoid duplication of the MA/IB OP activities**, they should focus on the following:
    - Inform about the progress of PA SR and the Europe 2020 strategy;
    - Inform about the progress in the areas of OP implementation;
    - Inform about the benefits of ESIF for Slovakia and communicate cross-section topics as need be, or topics of the CCA or other entities which are not covered by any OP.
9. For PP 2014 – 2020, there is a horizontal principle of equality of men and women and non-discrimination (Art. 7 of the CPR) in place. At the same time ComS must provide a description of materials which will be available in formats accessible for disabled people. Therefore it will be necessary to **make the content and form of information and communication** more adjusted to disabled persons[33], i. e. remove

[33] The main principles, rules and requirements for ensuring the accessibility of information are contained in the regulation of the MF SR no. 555/2014 Coll. on the standards for information systems in the public administration. National program of development of the living standards of the disabled for the years 2014 - 2020 also contains measures for ensuring accessibility of information.

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barriers in the access to information. In practical terms, such measures may include e. g. videos with subtitles for people with impaired hearing, audio recordings for people with impaired sight, adhering to the rules of website accessibility. In this regard it is necessary to cooperate with professional organizations that work with such a target group and that will enable further spreading of information.

10. **Amend the online communication strategy with search marketing disciplines (SEM and SEO)**. In search marketing focus on people in the so-called active stage, in this case those who decided to take interest in ESIF for various reasons. Such people are worth targeting but it doesn't mean that they will be directed to partnerskadohoda.gov.sk by an advertising campaign. Since internet search engines (Google primarily) are definitely a first choice to find out this type of information, the communication strategy for online should absolutely include a search strategy optimizing the ranking of the web page in the Google search results. The author of the report is not aware of the existence of such strategy and in testing several key words in the internet search (while the website partnerskadohoda.gov.sk was not displayed at any of the interesting positions in Google search results) he assumes it has never been devised.
11. **Make the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk more user-friendly for different needs of the target groups**, by changing the home page structure where a clear signpost would be created for individual types of visitors with redirection to the relevant content and subsites of the web portal (e. g. by a menu in the bars or by buttons; a visitor from the general public group should be directed to the general content, a potential applicant to the content related to the possibilities of obtaining a grant, etc.).
12. Public **presentations by the public officials or social and cultural events** proved to be a **moderately used source** of information about the EU funds. Therefore the **information events may be considered the type of activity with the potential** to reach the general public target group.
13. Align the media channels with the budget and objectives - in case of spreading **the most generic promotional information** the most appropriate media type is the **television**, possibly combined with out-of-home advertising. **The press and radio** are more adequate in communicating complex ideas. The public opinion poll showed that the traditional media types seem to be the most frequently used information sources about the EU funds for the general public as a whole. Obviously, internet cannot be omitted, in the medium-term its importance and thus its information weight will keep growing among the Slovak population, especially with younger target groups.
14. **Information events should always be implemented in several or all the regions of the SR**, and at the same time **support them by a media campaign**, whether in national or regional media, specific for a given target group. Information impact of the activity will thus not be restricted to the participants only but also to the consumers of contributions informing about a given activity, before or afterwards.
15. With regard to a profile on the social network **Facebook improve the creative** component of the content and **consider a strategy for further profile development** with a view to the target group specifics and specifics of promoted services.

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16. Among **the young people** (aged 18 - 30), a **lower awareness of the EU funds was found** when compared to other age groups. Therefore **it appears effective to implement activities targeting students** or the young.
17. Prepare **professional videos** (spots/stories), whether of informative, instructive or promotional character (project benefits, infographics of the implementation progress and the like), with the possibility of sharing via video magazine or on a YouTube channel.
18. Within catering for the cross-section topics, **add a tool to the portal partnerskadohoda.gov.sk** for **automatic generation of posters, placards and boards**, which the beneficiaries must create for their projects. The said measure would help to eliminate deficiencies and inconsistent processing among the beneficiaries. Examples of such generators are available at http://dev.cmg.hu/tablagenerator/#nogo or https://publicita.dotaceeu.cz/gen/krok1.
19. The student video competition appears to be inefficient given the demanding conditions to participate (creation of a video story/spot). **A photographic competition** may be a much simpler form with a potential of a far more massive participation compared to the video competition.
20. **In communication with the public**, link specific benefits with the abstract figures, make use of personal stories and emotional aspects.
21. For the purposes of quality assessment of activities, **collect feedback** from the participants/visitors whether by a questionnaire (paper or online) or by a side tab on the home page allowing to share suggestions, compliments or report issues.
22. It would be appropriate for partnerskadohoda.gov.sk as an ESIF "home" portal to **post not only publications created upon the CCA or IPD's initiative**, but also from other OPs' initiative, if they are interesting and relevant for the portal visitors.
23. Harmonize the published **lists of projects** with the CPR requirements, i. e. provide category titles in an additional official EU language other than Slovak, obviously the most appropriate seems English, and enable a possibility to generate a list of projects with all required categories pursuant to appendix XII of the general ruling in the form of data in calculation tables (recommended CSV or XML formats).
24. When **processing the ACP** for a given year and planning activities, consider the achieved status in the previous year and define more specific objectives attainable in the given year. Avoid vague and generic formulations.

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A Estimated development of the web site traffic at www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk

Table 7 Estimated development of the website traffic www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk

Month. year	Sessions (monthly)	Month. year	Sessions (monthly)[34]	Month. year	Sessions (monthly)	Month. year	Sessions (monthly)	Month. year	Sessions (monthly)
1.15	n/a	1.16	**66,934**	1.17	**190,914**	1.18	*135,000*	1.19	*110,000*
2.15	n/a	2.16	**87,143**	2.17	**237,457**	2.18	*135,000*	2.19	*110,000*
3.15	n/a	3.16	**124,944**	3.17	*135,000*	3.18	*135,000*	3.19	*110,000*
4.15	n/a	4.16	**99,645**	4.17	*135,000*	4.18	*135,000*	4.19	*110,000*
5.15	n/a	5.16	**131,073**	5.17	*135,000*	5.18	*135,000*	5.19	*110,000*
6.15	n/a	6.16	**109,271**	6.17	*135,000*	6.18	*135,000*	6.19	*110,000*
7.15	n/a	7.16	**129,387**	7.17	*140,000*	7.18	*135,000*	7.19	*110,000*
8.15	n/a	8.16	**126,719**	8.17	*140,000*	8.18	*135,000*	8.19	*110,000*
9.15	n/a	9.16	**125,503**	9.17	*140,000*	9.18	*135,000*	9.19	*110,000*
10.15	**559,49**	10.16	**105,475**	10.17	*140,000*	10.18	*135,000*	10.19	*110,000*
11.15	**296,86**	11.16	**166,795**	11.17	*140,000*	11.18	*135,000*	11.19	*110,000*
12.15	**26,874**	12.16	**204,546**	12.17	*140,000*	12.18	*135,000*	12.19	*110,000*

[34] **Bold** are the true data recorded on the basis of the Client's materials, the estimate of the future values by the Contractor is in *italics*.

Month. year	Sessions (monthly)	Month. year	Sessions (monthly)[34]	Month. year	Sessions (monthly)	Month. year	Sessions (monthly)	Month. year	Sessions (monthly)
1.20	*100,000*	1.21	*70,000*	1.22	*60,000*	1.23	*50,000*	n/a	n/a
2.20	*100,000*	2.21	*70,000*	2.22	*60,000*	2.23	*50,000*	n/a	n/a
3.20	*100,000*	3.21	*70,000*	3.22	*60,000*	3.23	*50,000*	n/a	n/a
4.20	*100,000*	4.21	*70,000*	4.22	*60,000*	4.23	*50,000*	n/a	n/a
5.20	*100,000*	5.21	*70,000*	5.22	*60,000*	5.23	*50,000*	n/a	n/a
6.20	*100,000*	6.21	*70,000*	6.22	*60,000*	6.23	*50,000*	n/a	n/a
7.20	*100,000*	7.21	*60,000*	7.22	*50,000*	7.23	*40,000*	n/a	n/a
8.20	*100,000*	8.21	*60,000*	8.22	*50,000*	8.23	*40,000*	n/a	n/a
9.20	*100,000*	9.21	*60,000*	9.22	*50,000*	9.23	*40,000*	n/a	n/a
10.20	*100,000*	10.21	*60,000*	10.22	*50,000*	10.23	*40,000*	n/a	n/a
11.20	*100,000*	11.21	*60,000*	11.22	*50,000*	11.23	*40,000*	n/a	n/a
12.20	*100,000*	12.21	*60,000*	12.22	*50,000*	12.23	*40,000*	n/a	n/a

Source: Client's materials, processed by the Contractor, September, 2016

B Advertising campaign visuals

Visuals of the print ads

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Visuals of the online banners

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C Theory of change in the approach to information and communication within ESIF

A general characteristics of the theory-based impact evaluation

The description of the methodology approach described below, **a theory-based impact evaluation** has been processed on the basis of the EC document *Evalsed Sourcebook: Method and Techniques* (September 2013).[35]

The importance of theory-based impact evaluation arises from the fact that a lot of other information, apart from the quantifiable effect induced in a causal relationship, is useful for the policy-makers to decide which policy needs to be implemented and to be accountable to the citizens. A question why a set of interventions induces effects, how, for whom and under what conditions, intended or not, is at least – if not more – as relevant, important and equally difficult as the question "whether a change was achieved". The result of such an approach is not only a quantifiable estimate of impact but also a *story (narrative)*. From the theory-based impact evaluations a valuable and rare information can emerge, an insight why things do or do not work and under what circumstances. The main focus is not laid on the counterfactual comparison ("how would it be without") but rather on the theory of change ("it works as expected to achieve the desired change"). The main importance of the theory of change is the reason why this approach is called a theory-based impact evaluation.

The usual methods include research of literature, analyses of administrative data, case studies, interviews and surveys, which all aim to reconstruct and verify the intervention logics. Often quoted approaches include realistic evaluation, general elimination methodology, contribution analysis and evaluation of participation. A good evaluation of this type does not have a problem with pointing at unintentional effects. Such effects and understanding of their mechanisms may be equally as important as the intended intervention logic.

The theory-based impact evaluation comprises two main components. One is conceptual, the other empirical. The conceptual aspect expresses the theory of a given policy or programme. The empirical aspect focuses on the testing of the theory.

A theory of a given policy expresses its intervention logic: implementation of activities which have allocated funding (inputs) leads to achievement of outputs which are meant to achieve the planned results in the form of a progress and changes to be made. In addition to the elementary intervention logic of inputs-outputs-outcomes, assessment of the efficiency of a given policy takes regard to the so-called "mechanisms" which relate to the decision-making processes affecting the behaviour of people (e. g. personal values, desires, knowledge) as well as the context of policy implementation (related programs, policies, institution capacities, cultural and socio-economic trends).

[35] Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/guide/evaluation_sourcebook.pdf; 03. 06. 2016.

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If the evaluation is to correctly assess the intervention impact, is it necessary to understand the elementary operation of mechanisms and answer these questions:

What mechanisms cause the intervention to work?

How plausible it is that the mechanisms really work well and as anticipated?[36]

From the possible methods of theory-based impact evaluation the following ones can be applied in the implementation of this project: Contribution Analysis and the Theory of Change.

Contribution Analysis

When assessing results of any activity, a description and a summary of the results is one part of the evaluation, the other is an analysis of causal relationships and an explanation between the observed change (achieved result) and specific activities. In essence, the contribution analysis looks how programme interventions contributed to the achieved results.

Methodological steps within contribution analysis include:

1) **Define causes and effects**

   In this step it is important to answer questions such as:

   Do the anticipated interventions contribute to the solution of a problem?

   Which intervention aspect or context leads to the contribution in solving a problem?

   What will be a proof that the intervention caused an obvious contribution?

   Is the expected contribution plausible with regard to the nature of the intervention and the problem to be solved?

2) **A proposed theory of change**

   This step represents formulation of a theory of change, for more detail refer below the part Theory of change.

3) **Assess the resulting contribution story**

   This step includes evaluation of links and plausibility of assumptions for the theory of change, evaluation of its consistency and weak spots.

4) **Gather evidence for the theory of change**

   In this step existing data are gathered, as well as information related to the theory of change, with the purpose to provide empirical evidence for the theory of change and the contribution story: evidence of implemented activities, achieved results, about assumptions and relevant external factors.

[36] Evaluation of the selected interventions of SF and CF making use of the method Counterfactual Impact Evaluation. Final Report. Slovak Government's Office, Central Coordination Authority, May 2015, p. 136. Available from: http://www.nsrr.sk/sk/hodnotenie/programove-obdobie-2007---2013/, 03. 06. 2016.

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5) **Re-assess the contributions story**

   The plausibility of the theory of change can be critically assessed in the light of obtained evidence: assessment of the logic of links in the theory of change, plausibility of the overall contributions story, gaps in the theory, external impacts and validation of the story by stakeholders.

6) **Seek for additional empirical evidence**

   Identification of new necessary data and gathering of further evidence.

7) **Review and enhance the contributions story**

Theory of change

The theory of change method is defined as a "way of describing the set of assumptions which explain mini-steps leading to long-term goals and connections between the policy and program activities and outcomes achieved in every step".

These steps are followed in formulating a theory of change:

1) define a long-term or ultimate goal (vision, structural change, etc.) which is usually beyond the program timeframe;
2) define results to be achieved at the end of the program;
3) define outputs and short-term goals as interim steps in achieving the long-term objectives (determine the right activities and interventions which are to deliver the desired change);
4) define sources for implementation of the interventions (human, organizational and financial).

Application of the methodological approach in the project

The afore mentioned method has been applied within evaluation as follows.

1) **Intervention logic of ComS and ACP for a given year**, amended with potential further assumptions, **will represent the theory of program/policy processed as a theory of change and the contributions story**, in a brief narrative and a visual scheme as well.
2) The defined **theory of change/contribution story will be tested/verified on the basis of evidence** obtained from empirical research (the previous as well as the planned public opinion poll), case studies or in-depth interviews with stakeholders. The public opinion poll will help to obtain supporting quantitative data which will be serving to test and verify causal links and logical assumptions (relationships between the ComS objectives/objectives of information and communication, outputs and results) defined in the theory of change and reconstructed in the contribution analysis.
3) **Subsequently the contribution of the given interventions to the achieved results will be judged, including assessment of possible external impacts on the achieved results**.

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4) In addition to the achieved values of the result indicators, further possible results of 2016 ACP will be judged, if they provide evidence of the monitored effects. There should be demonstrated a way (causal relationships) how the ACP activities contribute to the observed changes in the scope of ComS objectives and also the indirect and wider effects ensuing from increased level of awareness about the assistance provided via ESIF as the ultimate ComS objective. Therefore it is necessary to consider, in addition to the set indicators, other parameters within the implemented ACP activities which do or do not confirm the individual elements and links within the theory of change. At the minimum, the answer is required to say which activities are beneficial, which are less beneficial and what the context is (assumptions and external factors), affecting the communication success.

Theory of change in the approach to information and communication within ESIF

The **Theory of change in the information and communication approach within ESIF**[37] (hereinafter referred to as the "theory of change concerned") described below is based on the transfer model of communication[38], also taking into account the communication context, communication intent, communication noise and other features of the successful communication in the ESIF environment. **It expresses a general intervention logic: implementation of activities which have allocated funding (inputs) leads to achievement of outputs which are meant to achieve the planned results as a progress and changes to be made.** In addition to the elementary intervention logic of inputs-outputs-outcomes, assessment of the efficiency of a given policy takes regard to the so-called "mechanisms" which relate to the decision-making processes affecting the behaviour of people (e. g. personal values, desires, knowledge) as well as the context of policy implementation (related programs, policies, institution capacities, cultural and socio-economic trends). The conditions for a successful or causes for an unsuccessful implementation of a policy are also taken into consideration.

According to the methodological approach specified in the Initial report of this evaluation, a theory of change should be formulated in **4 steps**:

1) define a long-term or ultimate goal (vision, structural change, etc.) which is usually beyond the program timeframe;
2) define results to be achieved at the end of the program;
3) define outputs and short-term goals as interim steps in achieving the long-term objectives (determine the right activities and interventions which are to deliver the desired change);
4) define sources for implementation of the interventions (human, organizational and financial).

[37] The policy of information and communication within ESIF is deemed as the setting and implementation of information and communication pursuant to ComS.
[38] Lasswell's formula: Who said what to whom by what channel with what effect?

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The purpose of formulating a theory of change is verification of its plausibility and causal relationships between inputs, activities/outputs and results in the real environment.

Step 1) Long-term objective of the information and communication policy within ESIF corresponds with the ComS global objective.

The global objective of the communication strategy is to ensure a good overall awareness among the EU citizens about the role of the Communities and about the assistance provided via ESIF.

It may be assumed that the attitudes to the policy of cohesion and financial assistance via European structural and investment funds partially influence the overall attitude of the general public to the European Union.

Step 2) Results which are to be achieved at the end of implementation of the information and communication policy within ESIF and which represent the contribution to the global objective are the results devised from the specific ComS objectives and materialized in the result indicators.

Table 8 A characteristics of the anticipated results at the end of implementation of the ESIF information and communication policy

ComS's specific objective	Characteristics of the anticipated results [39]	Result indicator[40]
#1 Increase public awareness of the Partnership Agreement and possibility to draw ESIF	Interpretation of the objective: The expected result is to achieve the public awareness of the possibilities of ESIF funding at the level of 80% at the end of the programming period (2023). The level of awareness is meant as the level of elementary knowledge of the existence of ESIF, i. e. what part of the public came across the topic of ESIF. This is measured by a public opinion poll and evaluation of the polling question: "Have you	The following indicators are assigned to this objective according to ComS: Level of overall public awareness on the EU role possibility drawing of ESIF (5a)[41] Interest in ESIF support (6a) Level of awareness of the possibilities of support from ESIF (1) According to the Initial report of this evaluation, it was proposed to
Programme level[42]		
Target group: public		

[39] This is an interpretation of a specific objective by the Contractor, i. e. definition of anticipated results for the purposes of clear cut evaluation, since a more detailed description of the specific objectives is not provided in ComS.
[40] This is an assignment of result indicators by the Contractor, applicable to evaluation of fulfilment of ComS specific objectives.
[41] The figure in brackets is the indicator code, referring to earlier reports constituting a part of this evaluation.
[42] **Programme level** represents objectives focused largely on information regarding the Partnership Agreement and ESIF funds as a whole. CCA communicates cross-section topics related to all the programmes together.

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	ever come across the topic of the EU funds and their operational programmes?"	not monitor the indicator 5a within measuring of information and communication ComS OP TA at the level of Partnership Agreement SR, rather monitor only indicator 1 instead which is the OP TA indicator.
#2 Raising positive awareness of the Communities among the citizens Programme level Target group: public	Interpretation of the objective: The expected result is declaring a positive attitude towards financial assistance from ESIF for the development and improved living standards in the SR from the majority of the public during the programming period (during the programming period the share of the public with a positive opinion of ESIF financial assistance for the development and improved living standards in the SR shouldn't drop below 50 % of the entire population). This is measured by a public opinion poll and evaluation of the polling question: Do you think that the support from the EU funds is a unique opportunity to develop and improve the living standards in Slovakia?	The following indicators are assigned to this objective according to ComS: Level of overall positive perception of the EU role in the SR (7)
#3 Provision of good professional information about implementation of the individual operational programmes and projects under ESIF Programme level Target group: professional public, media and entities involved in ESIF implementation	Interpretation of the objective: Contribute to the successful implementation of the operational programmes within ESIF by providing information of sufficient quality and professionally relevant information regarding the implementation of the individual operational programmes under ESIF. Assessment of the said objective will be conducted on the basis of verification of the opinion among the target groups in respect of the information provided in the context of ComS fulfilment.	The following indicators are assigned to this objective according to ComS: Number of external professional papers and materials on ESIF (issued outside of the organizations involved in ESIF implementation) (8) A proposed criterion to measure/judge the achievement of the objective: It may be assumed that information of good quality and professionally relevant information, in addition to many other factors, contribute to the successful implementation of ESIF

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	Measuring is done by a survey of the relevant target groups.	operational programmes. Examined will be the respondents' opinions on the individual criteria of the quality and professional aspects: accessibility, freshness and timeliness, accuracy, comprehensibility and sufficiency. The opinions are established using a questionnaire-based survey among the relevant target groups.
#4 Detailed information and education of entities involved in the implementation process of the Partnership Agreement and Operational Programmes in order to increase successful implementation of the EU support Project level[43] Target group: professional public, media and entities involved in ESIF implementation	Interpretation of the objective: Improve the implementation success rate by providing detailed information and educating entities involved in the process of implementation of the Partnership Agreement and operational programs. The success rate of implementation of the EU assistance is specified for the purposes of goal evaluation as a comparison of successful implementation of projects among entities that were exposed to information and communication activities and those who were not. The second level of the evaluation is the subjective level of usability of the information obtained by the recipient of such information. Measuring is done by a survey of the relevant target groups.	The following indicators are assigned to this objective according to ComS: Number of implemented information activities (3b) Number of attendees at the implemented information activities (4a) A proposed criterion no. 1 to measure/judge the achievement of the objective: The correlation between the successful implementation of projects (without irregularities and with met measurable indicators) and informing/ educating the professional audience and entities involved in ESIF implementation that was funded by OP TA, in particular comparison of the success rate of the projects implemented with involvement of professional audience representatives/ entities involved in ESIF implementation with completed training/ information support and without any training/information support. The correlation is found out using a questionnaire-based survey among the relevant target groups. Proposed criterion no. 2 to measure/judge the achievement of the objective:

[43] **Project level** is, on the contrary, focused on successful implementation of projects.

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		A share of respondents who say that they found the information obtained within information and communication according to ComS/ACP beneficial for successful implementation of projects. The share is found out using a questionnaire-based survey among the relevant target groups. To evaluate fulfilment of the specific objective one or both criteria can be applied.
#5 Education and support of the beneficiaries with the aim of successful project implementation Project level Target group: beneficiaries	Interpretation of the objective: Contribute to successful project implementation by providing education and support of the beneficiaries.	The following indicators are assigned to this objective according to ComS: Number of implemented educatory activities (9) Number of attendees at the implemented educatory activities (10) Project success rate (11) – according to the Initial report of this evaluation, it was proposed to not monitor this indicator. Respecting the view to the Client, this objective and indicators will not be evaluate since they will be removed shortly within the ComS revision.

Source: Contractor's analysis, September 2016

In fulfilment of the objectives specified above, further indirect and wider effects can be identified, which can be attributed to the communication policy implementation:

- a more effective management and implementation of the operational programmes;
- submission of better projects in terms of material quality;
- a higher absorption (higher interest in funds from ESIF).

Step 3)

Definition of this block includes identification of activities set pursuant to ComS/ACP and their respective outputs, immediate as well as intermediary results contributing to the overall ComS objectives.

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Table 9 Overview of activities, outputs and their results in the policy of ESIF information and communication

Activity / output[44]	Immediate result[45]	Partial step/ intermediary result[46]
Operation of the website www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk	Spread general information on ESIF and OPs	Inform of/ remind/ realize the ESIF existence and a possibility their drawing
Activity on the social networks (https://www.facebook.com/ckouvsr/)	Spread professional information on ESIF and OPs	Learn of ESIF existence and a possibility of drawing them
Publishing contributions/ spots/ advertising (independently or withing a media campaign): - TV - radio - Internet - Press - out-of-home	Spread the news (text, audial, visual and video information) on ESIF and OPs	Obtain initial impulse to seek for further information on ESIF
	Provide contact details/links for further (specific) information on ESIF	Elicit interest to seek further information on ESIF
		Obtain general information within ESIF
	Promotion of ESIF and their operational programmes (EU role, drawing possibilities, benefits, etc.).	Obtain professional information within ESIF

[44] Paraphrasing activities of ComS and 2016 ACP.
[45] Immediate results (as defined by the Contractor) that will occur after implementation of an activity/output.
[46] Interim results of activities leading to fulfilment of expected results pursuant to ComS specific objectives.

Publishing and distribution of professional publications Publishing and distribution of information publications Digital media (web applications, DVDs) Information activities (conferences, trainings, seminars, workshops, etc.) designed per target groups Direct contact (in person, over the phone or e-mail) Production and distribution of promotional merchandise Meetings of Work group for information and communication Conduct of PR activities	Spread information/message to enhance positive perception of ESIF. Obtain new contacts (networking) Obtain addresses and contacts on institutions providing advisory in preparation and implementation of projects Obtain information about the ESIF source, i. e. EU Promotion of successfully implemented projects Learn about best practice examples	Learn about current news within ESIF and their OPs Obtain information how ESIF helped SR/ regionally Improvement of the professional qualification of personnel involved in project preparation and implementation Improvement of the professional qualification of personnel involved in ESIF management, implementation and control Get inspiration for an individual (own) project Improvement of project preparation and implementation processes at the applicants/beneficiaries' side

- Media Relations - press releases - press conferences - media monitoring - breakfasts with the journalists Collaboration in running of the integrated network of information and consulting centers. Organize educatory activities (contained in ComS/2016 ACP but this activity will not be considered, with a view to the planned deletion of the specific objective no. 5 from ComS) Processing and update of the Project map Other tools		

Source: Contractor's analysis, September 2016

To fulfil the information and communication process it is necessary that individual target groups are conveyed adequate information (scope, content, etc.) in an adequate manner (form of information, selected communication tool, timing, information life expectancy, etc., and all of that in the most cost-efficient manner possible (expediency, economy, effectiveness, efficiency).[47]

Prerequisites for successful communication can be defined as follows:

1) There is an interest in the target groups in the information provided.
2) There are sufficient sources (information, organizational-personnel and financial) for activities and measures in information and communication activities.
3) Timely and fully implemented public procurement of external suppliers of goods and services.
4) Bad experience from the previous period is eliminated.
5) Information has an adequate format (visual, sound, text) and is rendered by the right communication tool.
6) Information is rendered in a timely manner.
7) Information is correct/clear/unambiguous.
8) Information is of sufficient quality.
9) Information corresponds with the needs of the target groups (scope, content, etc.).
10) Information is up-to-date.
11) There is enough information.
12) Information is comprehensible.
13) Information can be easily accessed by public and is published in a user-friendly form.
14) The creative aspect of activities and measures in information and communication is performed by personnel with sufficient qualification, i.e. professionals in the areas of media, marketing, PR, communication, etc.

Causes of potential show-stoppers:

a) Late communication.
b) Insufficient communication.
c) Incomprehensible and unclear information.
d) Out-dated information.
e) Inaccurate information.

[47] MI CCA no. 16, p. 6.

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f) Information not accessible.

g) Inappropriate information content.

h) Information overload.

i) Ignoring the provided information by information recipients based on past prejudice.

j) Other campaigns that may contribute to the overall awareness of the EU.

k) Vis major (weather, institutional/organizational changes)

l) Insufficient staffing of activities and measures for information and communication.

m) Failure to apply the current trends in information and communication.

n) Failure to use all of the current communication possibilities.

o) Use of inappropriate communication channels/tools.

p) Negative perception of the financial assistance from the EU in general (corruption, scandals, etc.)

Step 4)

To perform the interventions of the information and communication policy, sufficient resources are necessary - human (quantitative sufficiency and stability of professionally qualified staff), organizational (clear cut organizational structure with clear responsibilities and competences to fulfil the ComS) and financial (sufficient funding). Their real allocation is as follows:

The responsibility for implementation and fulfilment of ComS and the relevant ACP is within competencies of the Information and publicity department of the Slovak Government's Office, which is organizationally incorporated under the Office of the Head of the Government's Office. In terms of human resources it comprises 1 director and 9 managers of information and communication. The IPD director performs the role of an information and communication officer, in line with Art. 117 par. 1 of the CPR. The job description of a manager for information and communication is defined in MI CCA no. 16, ComS and internal rules of IPD. The average work experience of a manager for information and communication is around 5 years. Financial allocation is set in ComS and OP TA, while the set allocation can be deemed sufficient (for more detail, refer the Initial report of this evaluation).

Collaborating units within the GO SR

The Section of operational programmes, Section of economy and technical administration, Department of public procurement, Department of education of the administrative capacities, Press department of the Government's Office of the SR.

Collaborating units within DPMOII

Department of monitoring and evaluation, Department of methodology and coordination of entities, Department of Cohesion Policy, ITMS department.

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Other collaborating entities

The main collaboration platform between the individual managing authorities and national information and communication officer is, in line with art. 117 par. 2 of the general regulation, the Work Group for information and communication of the EU funds for the programming period 2014-2020 (hereinafter referred to as the "Work group").

Professional entities selected through the public procurement process may also be engaged in the information and communication activities. Such entities are involved in the preparation and implementation of information campaigns, planning and purchase of media space, creative and graphic design work, electronic, print and other production, in organizing information events and other activities requiring professional delivery in the area of information and communication

The policy of information and communication within ESIF can fully meet its objectives, if

A. the practical implementation of activities is planned with regard to the defined objectives and expected results,
B. the implementation itself is conducted in compliance with the set plan,
C. the conditions of successful information and communication are met,
D. potential causes of show-stoppers are eliminated,
E. and there are available sufficient human, organizational and financial resources.

Map of identified theory of change in the ESIF information and communication policy, representing a visualization of relationships in the process of information and communication, is contained in Appendix D hereof.

The defined theory of change in the ESIF information and communication policy serves **to verify** the efficiency of the practical conduct of the ESIF information and communication.

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D A Map of identified theory of change in the approach to information and communication within ESIF

Refer a separate file in electronic version.

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E Public opinion poll – questionnaire

Questionnaire for the public opinion poll for the project of "Evaluation of the communication and information activities in the programming period 2014 - 2020 (phase one)"

„Hello, my name is (name surname). At present, a survey is run by the Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatization of the Slovak Republic focused on awareness of EU funds among Slovak citizens. We are interested to hear your opinion in the interview. May we ask you for an interview on this topic?“

Questions for quota sampling

Let me ask you first a few questions for statistical purposes:

S1. In which region of Slovakia do you live?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

a) Bratislava Region
b) Trnava Region
c) Trenčín Region
d) Nitra Region
e) Žilina Region
f) Banská Bystrica Region
g) Prešov Region
h) Košice Region

S2. What is the population of the town/village where you live?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

a) up to 999 inhabitants
b) from 1,000 to 1,999 inhabitants
c) from 2,000 to 4,999 inhabitants
d) from 5,000 to 19,999 inhabitants

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e) from 20,000 to 49,999 inhabitants
f) from 50,000 to 999,999 inhabitants
g) more than 100,000 inhabitants

S3. How old are you?

Progr.: NUM value. Then assign the quota sampling category.

.....

a) 18 – 30
b) 31 – 45
c) 46 – 60
d) 61 plus

S4. What is your highest level of your educational achievement?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

a) elementary or secondary without GCSE
b) secondary with GCSE
c) higher education

S5. *INTERVIEWER: MARK THE RESPONDENT'S SEX!*

Progr.: SP

a) male
b) female

Thematic questions

Area "Awareness of the EU role and EU-funded assistance“

[*Question given to all respondents.*]

1. Do you know that the European Union provides financial means to develop various areas of its member states' economies, such as regional development?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

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a) yes

b) no

[*Question given to all respondents.*]

2. Have you ever come across the topic of the EU funds and their operational programmes?"

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) yes

b) no

[*If the respondent responds to this question according to b) "no", continue with questions no. 35, 36.*]

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer "yes" to the question no. 2 according to a).*]

3. Which European Union funds do you know?

INTERVIEWER: READ THE OPTIONS OUT!

INTERVIEWER: MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE!

a) European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

b) European Regional Development Fund

c) European Social Fund

d) Cohesion Fund

e) European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

f) other

g) none Progr.: SP *INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT!*

Area „Partnership Agreement of the Slovak Republic for the period of 2014-2020 and its operational programmes“

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

4. Did you know that a new programming period for drawing of the EU funds is underway since 2014?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

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a) yes

b) no

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

5. Do you know what is a Partnership Agreement of the Slovak Republic for the period of 2014-2020?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) yes

b) no

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

6. Do you know any of the operational programmes for the period of 2014-2020?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) yes

b) no

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 6 with a) "yes".*]

7. Which ones?

Progr.: MP

INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT, CODE THE RESPONSE!

INTERVIEWER: SEVERAL RESPONSES POSSIBLE!

Scale for response categories INTERVIEWER: do not read out, use as a code frame only. A respondent can use an abbreviation, e.g. IROP, KŽP, etc. or can use a descriptive form or a slightly changed title, not absolutely identical, e.g. operational program to support quality of environment or to support human resources or to support public administration development – include such responses in the relevant option.

a) Effective public administration

b) Integrated infrastructure

c) Integrated regional operational programme

d) Quality of Environment

e) Human resources

f) Rural development programme 2014-2020

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g) Fisheries 2014-2020

h) Technical assistance 2014-2020

i) Research and Innovation

j) Interreg Slovakia - Czech Republic 2014-2020

k) Interreg Slovakia - Austria 2014-2020

l) Interreg Hungary - Slovakia 2014-2020

m) Interreg Poland - Slovakia 2014-2020

n) operational programme of the programming period 2007-2013

o) other

Option n) - include responses where a respondent mentions operational programmes from the previous 2007-2013 programming period (attribute "2007-2013" is provided to differentiate in OPs with a direct "successive" OP in the programming period 2014-2020):

OP Bratislava Region

OP Transportation

OP Informatisation of Society

OP Competitiveness and Economic Growth

OP Technical Assistance 2007 – 2013

OP Education

OP Research and Development 2007 – 2013

OP Employment and Social Inclusion

OP Healthcare

OP Environment 2007 – 2013

Regional OP 2007 – 2013

Rural Development Programme 2007 – 2013

OP Fisheries 2007 – 2013

Program of cross-border cooperation Slovakia - Czech Republic 2007-2013

Program of cross-border cooperation Hungary - Slovakia 2007-2013

Program of cross-border cooperation Austria - Slovakia 2007-2013

Program of cross-border cooperation Poland - Slovakia 2007-2013

National Strategic Reference Framework

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[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

8. Have you heard of any of the following operational programmes?

Progr.: SP for each programme

INTERVIEWER: GRADUALLY READ OUT ALL THE OPTIONS!

a) Effective public administration 2014 – 2020 [*yes/no*]
b) Integrated infrastructure 2014 – 2020 [*yes/no*]
c) Integrated regional operational programme 2014 – 2020 [*yes/no*]
d) Quality of environment 2014 – 2020 [*yes/no*]
e) Human resources 2014 – 2020 [*yes/no*]
f) Rural development programme 2014 – 2020 [*yes/no*]
g) Fisheries 2014 – 2020 [*yes/no*]
h) Technical assistance 2014 – 2020 [*yes/no*]
i) Research and Innovation 2014 – 2020 [*yes/no*]
j) Interreg Slovak Republic - Czech Republic 2014-2020 [*yes/no*]
k) Interreg Slovak Republic - Austria 2014 – 2020 [*yes/no*]
l) Interreg Hungary - Slovak Republic 2014 – 2020 [*yes/no*]
m) Interreg Poland - Slovak Republic 2014 – 2020 [*yes/no*]

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

9. Do you know any project or projects supported by the EU funds in the programming period 2014-2020?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ ALOUD!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) yes
b) yes, but I am not sure if it relates to the programming period 2014-2020
c) no

[*This question is given to respondents who in question no. 9 said a) "yes" or b) "yes, but I am not sure if it relates to the programming period 2014-2020".*]

10. What implementation area does the project concern?

Progr.: MP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE!

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a) building and modernization of roads, highways or railways
b) education support
c) environmental protection
d) building and development of sewerage, sewage treatment, etc.
e) healthcare development
f) repair of cultural and historical monuments
g) support of agriculture, forestry or fisheries
h) development of employment
i) support of tourism
j) technical assistance
k) municipality and region development
l) support of disadvantaged Roma communities
m) support of housing and house repairs
n) support of research and development
o) support of industry and entrepreneurship
p) cultural development
q) support of informatisation of society
r) working with disabled people
s) development of sport
t) support of internet implementation
u) development of social inclusion
v) other
w) I do not remember exactly Progr. SP *INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT!*

[*This question is given to respondents who in question no. 9 said a) "yes" or b) "yes, but I am not sure if it relates to the programming period 2014-2020".*]

11. How do you know that particular project/projects?

Progr.: MP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE!

a) I know the project in very general terms only (heard of it, basic information only, etc.).
b) I know the project quite well (more details).
c) The project was done in our village/town.

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d) I know the project because I use it actively (e.g. constructed highway, sewerage, etc.).

e) I noticed an information poster/board about the project.

f) In other connection, please specify: ..... [*Open response.*]
INTERVIEWER: NOTE THE RESPONSE IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE!

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

12. Do you know that there is a list of projects available on internet which were supported from the EU funds?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) yes, I know where to look for it

b) yes, but I don't know much about it

c) no, I don't

Area "Media Campaign"

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

13. Did you notice any information of the EU funds during these summer holidays?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) yes

b) no

If the respondent answers question no. 13 with b), DON'T ASK questions no. 14 to 22.

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 13 with a) "yes".*]

14. How often did you get information about the EU funds from the media (radio, print, and internet) during these summer holidays?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) regularly and repeatedly

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b) occasionally

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 13 with a) "yes".*]

15. Which of the following types of information about the EU funds did you notice during these summer holidays?

Progr.: SP for each source

INTERVIEWER: GRADUALLY READ OUT ALL THE OPTIONS!

a) an ad on the radio [*yes/no*]

b) an ad in a newspaper or a magazine [*yes/no*]

c) an ad on internet [*yes/no*]

d) other, please specify what type and where: ..... [*Open response.*]

INTERVIEWER: NOTE THE RESPONSE IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE!

INTERVIEWER: IF THE PRE-DEFINED OPTIONS APPLY TO THE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER, MARK THE RELEVANT OPTION!

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 15 a) with a "yes".*]

16. On which of the following radio stations did you hear an ad on the EU funds during these summer holidays?

Progr.: MP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE!

a) Radio Express

b) Funradio

c) Rádio Jemné

d) Europa2

e) Slovenský Rozhlas

f) Rádio FM

g) Rádio Devín

h) I do not recall exactly Progr.: SP *INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT!*

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[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 15 b) with a "yes".*]

17. In which of the following newspapers or magazines did you see an ad on the EU funds during these summer holidays?

Progr.: MP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE!

a) Hospodárske noviny
b) Trend
c) Nový Čas
d) Nový čas pre ženy
e) Život
f) Eurotelevízia
g) Plus 7 dní
h) Plus 1 deň
i) Pravda
j) GEO
k) Báječná žena
l) SME
m) I do not recall exactly Progr.: SP *INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT!*

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 15 c) with a "yes".*]

18. In which of the following internet portals did you see an ad on the EU funds during these summer holidays?

Progr.: MP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE!

a) zoznam.sk
b) topky.sk
c) cas.sk
d) pravda.sk
e) atlas.sk
f) centrum.sk
g) pobox.sk
h) I do not recall exactly Progr.: SP *INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT!*

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[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 15 a) or b) or c) with a "yes".*]

19. Do you recall what the spots, programs or ads you noticed were about?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) yes, I remember accurately
b) yes, but in general terms only
c) no

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 19 with a) or b).*]

20. Please specify what the recalled spots, programs or ads were about?

..... [*Open question.*]

INTERVIEWER: NOTE THE RESPONSE IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE!

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 15 a) or b) or c) with "yes".*]

21. Overall, how would you evaluate the pieces of communication about the EU funds published in media (radio, print, and internet) during these summer holidays?

21 a. Comprehensibility of the information provided

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) definitely comprehensible
b) rather comprehensible
c) rather incomprehensible
d) definitely incomprehensible
e) I don't know *INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT!*

21 b. Was the information provided interesting?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

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a) definitely interesting
b) rather interesting
c) rather uninteresting
d) definitely uninteresting
e) I don't know

21 c. Was the information provided beneficial?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ ALOUD!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) definitely beneficial
b) rather beneficial
c) rather not beneficial
d) definitely not beneficial
e) I don't know *INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT!*

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 15 a) or b) or c) with "yes".*]

22. Did your awareness of the EU funds change because of the campaign during these summer holidays?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) I have definitely more information
b) I have a bit more information
c) I do not have more or less information
d) I have a bit less information
e) I have definitely less information
f) I don't know *INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT!*

Area "Information resources and the content of information provided"

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

23. Have you been seeking information on the EU funds actively?

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Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) yes

b) no

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

24. What sources have you used to seek information on the EU funds and their operational programmes?

Progr.: SP for each source

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

a) television [*yes/no*]

b) radio [*yes/no*]

c) newspapers and magazines [*yes/no*]

d) web page of the Partnership Agreement of the SR for the period of 2014 – 2020 [*yes/no*]

e) web page of an operational programme [*yes/no*]

f) other web page [*yes/no*]

g) information brochures and leaflets [*yes/no*]

h) professional publications [*yes/no*]

i) magazine Eurokompas [*yes/no*]

j) seminars, trainings, workshops and conferences [*yes/no*]

k) promotional items and give-aways [*yes/no*]

l) a project billboard or poster [*yes/no*]

m) public appearance of public officials [*yes/no*]

n) a social or cultural event [*yes/no*]

o) a competition [*yes/no*]

p) an exhibition [*yes/no*]

q) from colleagues, friends and acquaintances [*yes/no*]

r) information and consultation center in a region [*yes/no*]

s) other source [*yes/no*]

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[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the previous question with "yes" in options d) or e) or f).*]

25. If you use internet to find information on the EU funds, it is mainly...

Progr.: SP for each source

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

a) official web pages of EU funds, e. g. www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk or www.eufondy.sk [*yes/no*]

b) news portals [*yes/no*]

c) social networks [*yes/no*]

d) blogs [*yes/no*]

e) other [*yes/no*]

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

26. What kind of information on the EU funds and their operational programmes do you find interesting?

Progr.: MP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE!

a) basic and general information (e. g. structure and content of the operational programmes)

b) information on how to apply for a grant from the EU funds

c) information on how Slovakia uses and draws the EU funds

d) information on how the EU funds help Slovakia (e. g. examples of successful projects, etc.)

e) information on how the EU funds help my region (e. g. examples of successful projects in my region, etc.)

f) who received funds in my region or in Slovakia overall

g) whether Slovakia will be able to use the EU funds in the future

e) other, please specify:..... [*Open response.*] *INTERVIEWER: NOTE THE RESPONSE IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE!*

INTERVIEWER: IF THE PRE-DEFINED OPTIONS APPLY TO THE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER, MARK THE RELEVANT OPTION!

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

27. Have you applied or do you suppose you could apply for a contribution from the EU funds in the future to support a project within your professional or private activities?

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Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) definitely yes
b) rather yes
c) rather not
d) definitely not
e) I don't know *INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT!*

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

28. Do you think you are well informed of the possibilities of a support under the EU funds and their operational programmes?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ ALOUD!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) definitely yes
b) rather yes
c) rather not
d) definitely not
e) I don't know *INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT!*

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

29. In your opinion, what is the biggest problem in obtaining information on the EU funds and their operational programmes and about the possibilities and results of such assistance?

Progr.: MP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE!

a) information is not interesting
b) information is difficult to understand for an ordinary person
c) information is difficult to access
d) lack of information
e) officials are not willing to provide such information
f) officials are not competent enough

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g) no problem, information can be found if someone is really interested

h) other, please specify:.....*INTERVIEWER: NOTE THE RESPONSE IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE!*

INTERVIEWER: IF THE PRE-DEFINED OPTIONS APPLY TO THE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER, MARK THE RELEVANT OPTION!

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

30. Of the following options, please choose maximum 3 areas concerning the EU funds which would be interesting for you but you didn't have sufficient information about.

Progr.: MP MAX 3 ANSWERS!

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: MAX 3 ANSWERS POSSIBLE!

a) general information on the EU funds

b) how funds are drawn

c) examples of successful projects

d) who obtained a financial contribution

e) how to obtain funds and implement a project

f) what EU-fund drawing possibilities will there be in the future

g) other, please specify:..... *INTERVIEWER: NOTE THE RESPONSE IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE!*

INTERVIEWER: IF THE PRE-DEFINED OPTIONS APPLY TO THE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER, MARK THE RELEVANT OPTION!

Area "Attitude to the EU funds activities in the Slovak Republic, perception of the EU funds"

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

31. Do you believe that the assistance from the EU funds represents a unique opportunity for development and improved living standards in Slovakia?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) definitely yes

b) rather yes

c) rather not

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d) definitely not

e) I don't know *INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT!*

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 2 with a) "yes".*]

32. What opinion do you have based on information on the EU funds featured in the media (internet, TV, newspapers and magazines, radio)?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) definitely positive

b) rather positive

c) rather negative

d) definitely negative

e) I don't know *INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT!*

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 32 with a) or b).*]

33. Why is your opinion of the EU funds positive?

Progr.: MP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE!

a) EU funds contribute to the development of Slovakia

b) EU funds contribute to the development of the region where I live

c) my project received a grant

d) other reasons, please specify:..... *INTERVIEWER: NOTE THE RESPONSE IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE!*

INTERVIEWER: IF THE PRE-DEFINED OPTIONS APPLY TO THE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER, MARK THE RELEVANT OPTION!

[*This question is given to all respondents who answer the question no. 32 with c) or d).*]

34. Why is your opinion of EU funds negative?

Progr.: MP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: MULTIPLE RESPONSES POSSIBLE!

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a) I myself do not feel any direct positive impact of drawing of the EU funds
b) my project did not receive a grant
c) the EU funds system is too complicated and not transparent
d) lack of information about the EU funds
e) non-transparent allocation of financial assistance
f) inappropriate projects are supported
i) other reasons, please specify:..... *INTERVIEWER: NOTE THE RESPONSE IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE!*

INTERVIEWER: IF THE PRE-DEFINED OPTIONS APPLY TO THE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER, MARK THE RELEVANT OPTION!

Questions regarding the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample

[*Question given to all respondents.*]

35. What professional status category is applicable to you?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) a student, an apprentice
b) a retiree
c) an unemployed or at home (including maternity leave)
d) an employee
e) a self-employed, freelancer or private farmer
f) an entrepreneur
g) other
h) I do not want to respond *INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ OUT!*

[*Question given to all respondents.*]

36. Do you have internet access?

Progr.: SP

INTERVIEWER: READ OUT!

INTERVIEWER: ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE ONLY!

a) no
b) yes, both at home and at work

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c) yes, at home only

d) yes, at work only

e) yes, at public places only

f) I do not want to respond *INTERVIEWER DO NOT READ OUT!*

That was my last question, thank you for your time and have a nice day, good bye.

Questions 11, 15, 20, 26, 29, 30, 33, 34 contain **an option with an open answer** by the respondent. At present, the areas of possible answers cannot be defined. **We suggest** that we sort the answers after the survey is completed and once we deliver the classification, you will be able to numerically process and incorporate the questions in the overall survey outcome.

Matrix of basis for individual questions

NOTE The table serves to define bases for calculation of answer shares in questions and it **is not identical with "skips"** marked in blue italics above each question (in questions no. 7 and 8).

#	Respondents answering the given question	#	Respondents answering the given question	#	Respondents answering the given question
Q1	To be responded by all.	Q13	Q2 a)	Q25	Q24 d) – yes or e) – yes or f) – yes
Q2	To be responded by all.	Q14	Q13 a)	Q26	Q2 a)
Q3	Those who answered Q2 with a).	Q15	Q13 a)	Q27	Q2 a)
Q4	Q2 a)	Q16	Q15 a) - yes	Q28	Q2 a)
Q5	Q2 a)	Q17	Q15 b) - yes	Q29	Q2 a)
Q6	Q2 a)	Q18	Q15 c) - yes	Q30	Q2 a)
Q7	Q2 a)	Q19	Q15 a) – yes or Q15 b) – yes or Q15 c) – yes	Q31	Q2 a)
Q8	Q2 a)	Q20	Q19 a) or b)	Q32	Q2 a)

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Q9	Q2 a)	Q21	Q15 a) – yes or Q15 b) – yes or Q15 c) – yes	Q33	Q32 a) or b)
Q10	Q9 a) or b)	Q22	Q15 a) – yes or Q15 b) – yes or Q15 c) – yes	Q34	Q32 c) or d)
Q11	Q9 a) or b)	Q23	Q2 a)	Q35	To be responded by all.
Q12	Q2 a)	Q24	Q2 a)	Q36	To be responded by all.

Requirements for third-level sorting

Results of the public opinion poll will be sorted on first level (entire sample) and second level (level of quotas and socio-demographic characteristics according to questions no. 35 and 36). On the third level, the results will be sorted as follows:

Depending on answers to question **no. 23** – an active (response a) / passive (response b) interest in the EU funds - questions no. 3 to 12, 15, 21, 22, 24 to 26 and 28 to 36 will be evaluated.

Depending on answers to question **no. 13** – hit (response a) / not hit (response b) by the campaign - questions no. 3 to 12 and 23 to 26 will be evaluated.

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F Public opinion poll – results

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G A survey of attitudes of the professional public – questionnaire

A questionnaire on the area of information and communication in ESIF in the programming period 2014 - 2020

An advisory company KPMG in Slovakia was appointed by the Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatization of the SR / the Government Office of the SR to evaluate information and communication in the area of European Structural and Investment funds in Slovakia in the programming period 2014-2020.

A **professional public survey** is a part of the evaluation process. The survey aims to map attitudes and opinions in the professional public in relation to information activities within ESIF in the programming period 2014-2020.

We would be grateful if you could join the survey and complete the questionnaire to express your opinion.

It should take no more than 10 minutes.

The questionnaire is intended for the employees of your organization who participate in implementation of operational programmes or projects funded by ESIF in PP 2014-2020.

The questionnaire needs to be completed by **31. 03. 2017**, it is fully anonymous.

Thank you in advance for your time and willingness to participate.

(To be responded by all)

1) What type of organization do you represent?

a) a public administration body (managing authority, intermediary body, national authority, national contact point, certification authority, audit authority or a horizontal principle administrator)

b) a public administration body (other)

c) a body of regional or local administration (higher territorial unit or a city as an intermediary body)

d) an advisory or consulting company providing services in relation to ESIF (including regional development agencies, information centers, etc.)

e) other (please specify) (open response)

(To be responded by all)

2) Please specify the region and the population of the municipality where your organization is based.

Please choose 1 region and 1 municipality size:

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Region

a) Banská Bystrica
b) Bratislava
c) Košice
d) Nitra
e) Trenčín
f) Trnava
g) Prešov
h) Žilina

Municipality size by population

a) up to 999 inhabitants
b) 1,000 - 1,999 inhabitants
c) 2,000 - 4,999 inhabitants
d) 5,000 - 19,999 inhabitants
e) 20,000 - 49,999 inhabitants
f) 50,000 - 99,999 inhabitants
g) more than 100,000 inhabitants

(To be responded by all)

3) In terms of your project or majority of your projects funded by ESIF or an operational programme you participate to implement, has it been successfully implemented, i. e. without any notable irregularities and with objectives achieved?

a) yes
b) no
c) I don't know

(To be responded by all)

4) What information sources do you use to seek necessary information on ESIF? Please mark only the sources you have used so far. "1" means the most important and most beneficial for your needs, "5" means least important and least beneficial.

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	1	2	3	4	5
internet – www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
internet - web pages of the specific operational programmes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
internet - social networks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
internet - other (e. g. news portals, professionally focused portals, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
personal, phone and e-mail consultations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
promotion events - seminars, trainings, workshops and conferences	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
promotion events - other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
professional publications (e. g. manuals, handbooks and guidelines)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
television	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
radio	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
newspapers and magazines	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
information brochures and flyers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
magazine Eurokompas	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
information and consultation center in a region	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
advisory or consulting companies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
other entity (e. g. regional development agency)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
colleagues, friends and acquaintances	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
exhibition	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
a project billboard or poster	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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(To be responded by all)

5) What types of information on ESIF do you find interesting? (several options possible)

a) professional information necessary for proper management, implementation, control and audit of an OP

b) basic and general information (e. g. OP focus, institutions responsible for OP implementation, etc.)

c) the information about how to apply for and information on how to receive a financial contribution from an OP (where, when, for what activities and under what circumstances, etc.)

d) information on how to implement a project correctly

e) information on drawing of ESIF (e. g. method of drawing, current drawing status, etc.)

f) information on the benefits of ESIF assistance (e. g. examples of successful projects, list of beneficiaries, evaluations, etc.)

g) information on how the EU-funded support impacts national and regional development of Slovakia

h) if the EU funds will exist in the future and in what form

i) other (please specify) (open response)

(To be responded by all)

6) What types of information related to obtaining and drawing of ESIF support have you been missing?

a) none, I had all the necessary information

b) I missed the following types of information: (open response)

(To be responded by all)

7) Do you know there exists a freely accessible list of beneficiaries receiving ESIF assistance?

a) yes

b) no

(To be responded by all)

8) What information activities related to ESIF - co-organized or implemented by the Deputy Prime Minister's office for Investments and Informatization of the SR - have you joined or come accross in 2016? (several options possible)

a) I visited the web page www.partnerskadohoda.gov.sk, or www.eufondy.sk

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b) I saw posts by the Central Coordination Authority, or EU funds profile on Facebook

c) I noticed a promotion campaign in the media in summer 2016 (prints, radio, internet)

d) I noticed a campaign *How the structural funds helped my neighbourhood* (summer 2016)

e) I read a flyer *Evaluation of ESIF*

f) I saw an informative publication *Entrepreneurs and EU funds for the period of 2014-2020*

g) I read Eurokompas magazine (at least one issue from volume 2016)

h) I attended a seminar Going Local *(Act locally - "Efficient communication of the European structural and investment funds in Slovakia")* (March 2016)

i) I attended an event *Europe Day 2016* (May 2016)

j) I attended/know an event *Young European 2016* (May 2016)

k) I attended/know an event *Roadshow 2016* (autumn 2016)

l) I received give-aways branded by Partnership Agreement of the SR for the period of 2014 – 2020

m) I made use of a contact center of the Government Office of the SR (email, phone)

n) I do not recall if the concerned activity related to the Deputy Prime Minister's Office for Investments and Informatization of the SR / the Government Office of the SR

o) none of the above

For any responses, except n) or o), continue to question 9.

For responses n) or o), skip to the end of the questionnaire.

(To be responded by those who answer the question no. 8 with any option except n) or o).)

9) As for information provided within the DPMOII/GOSR information activities in 2016 which you have noted - how do you feel about its quality?

	definitely yes	rather yes	rather no	definitely no	I don't know
Accessibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Freshness and timeliness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Accuracy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Comprehensibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sufficiency	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

(To be responded by those who answer the question no. 8 with any option except n) or o).)

10) In terms of information provided within the DPMOII/GOSR information activities in 2016 which you have noted - did you use it in practice?

a) definitely yes

b) rather yes

c) rather no

d) definitely no

e) I don't know

(To be responded by those who answer the question no. 8 with any option except n) or o).)

11) In terms of information provided within the DPMOII/GOSR information activities in 2016 which you have noted - do you feel it was beneficial for successful implementation of projects or implementation of operational programmes funded by ESIF?

a) definitely yes

b) rather yes

c) rather no

d) definitely no

e) I don't know

(To be responded by those who answer the question no. 11 with any option except e).)

12) Why in particular do you consider the provided information beneficial or not beneficial at all? (Open response)

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H A survey of attitudes of the professional public – results

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I Information needs of the target groups

The **objective** information needs **at the level of a member state** may include [48]:

- **information about the political priorities of the EU**, if they relate to the general objectives of the CPR;
- **availability of a joint web page or a web portal**, which provide information of all the OPs **including the list of operations** supported under each OP;
- **informing the EU citizens about the role and successes of the Cohesion policy and the EU funds** via information and communication measures rendering **information about the results and impact of the partnership agreements, OPs and projects**;
- information **how the EU financial resources are invested**.

The **objective** information needs **of the general public** may include [49]:

- **information about the launch of an OP** or programs via organization of the major information activity;
- **information of the support of opportunities in the area of funding, implemented strategies and information about OP successes** or of program successes including big projects, joint action plans and other examples of projects via organizing a single major information activity per year;
- **recognition of the EU emblem** by its display in the building of each MA;
- **information about projects** via electronic publishing of the list of projects in compliance with the CPR;
- **information about project examples by operational programmes** on a single web page or an OP web page with access from a single web portal; the examples should be also in a widely used official EU language other than the official language in the Slovak Republic;
- **updated information about implementation of an operational programme and its main successes** should be on a single web page or an OP web page with access from a single web portal.

The **objective** information needs **of the potential applicants and beneficiaries** may include [50]:

- information on the OP strategy and objectives and its drawing possibilities offered within the joint assistance from the EU and SR;
- information on the funding possibilities and the beginning of application submissions;

[48] Based on the Appendix XII of the CPR.
[49] Based on the Appendix XII of the CPR.
[50] Based on the Appendix XII of the CPR.

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- information on the conditions for eligible expenses which need to comply with OP support requirements;
- described processes for examination the applications for funding and relevant periods/deadlines;
- criteria for selecting projects to be awarded by a contribution,
- contacts at the national, regional or local level who can provide information about the OP;
- information on the obligations of the potential beneficiaries to inform the general public about the project goal and received contribution from the EU funds in compliance with indent 2.2 of the appendix XII of the CPR.

The aforementioned information needs **of the potential applicants and beneficiaries** are relevant in respect of communication strategies of the specific OPs and the responsibility of MAs. **The aforementioned information needs of the potential applicants and beneficiaries are irrelevant with regard to the IPD activities in the context of ComS.**

The objective information needs **of the beneficiaries** may include[51]:

- **information that acceptance of a financial contribution means also a consent to be included in the list of projects**, which is published in compliance with art. 115 par. 2. of the CPR;
- **information including templates in electronic form with the aim to comply with their obligations** of beneficiaries specified **in indent 2.2 Appendix XII of the CPR.**

The preferred **subjective** information needs **of the public** include:

- general and basic information,
- information how the EU funds help a region,
- information how the EU funds are used including the drawing status.

Information a) how to apply for a contribution, b) how the EU funds help Slovakia and c) about specific beneficiaries belongs to the least preferred areas of interest.

The preferred **subjective** information needs **of the professional public** or entities involved in implementation of OPs or projects include:

- professional information necessary for proper management, implementation, control and audit of the OP,
- information about how to apply for and information on how to apply for and obtain a grant from an OP,

[51] Based on the Appendix XII of the CPR.

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- information on how to implement a project correctly,
- information about drawing of ESIF,
- the future of EU funds,
- general and basic information.

The least preferred areas of interest included information about the benefits of ESIF assistance and impacts of the EU assistance on the development of SR.

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J Overview of fulfilment of information and communication indicators as at 31 December 2016

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