

Science Communication Plan of the COST Action - IGCOORD, CA20123

Each Action MC shall adopt a Science Communication Plan including a communication, dissemination, and valorisation strategy, as well as a plan to implement this strategy. The Science Communication Plan shall reflect the MoU in particular connecting to the aims and objectives of the Action. It is recommended that the Science Communication Plan is approved by the Management Committee not later than 6 months after the start date of the Action. It is recommended that the Science Communication Plan, including progress on implementation, is discussed on a yearly basis by the Action MC and reviewed or amended where necessary. (*Annotated Rules for COST Actions, article 5*)

This template is provided to COST Actions as a support for developing the Action Science Communication plan. Actions can adapt the plan structure and content according to their needs.

VERSIONS AND HISTORY OF CHANGES

Version	Date of adoption by MC	Notes (e.g. changes from previous versions)	Lead author(s)*
1	26.05.2022		Iveta Reinholde
2	05.08.2023	Adapting to the new version of the document, according to COST's new template	Mohammad K.
3	11.08.2023	Minor corrections	Anthony Murphy

** The Science Communication plan is developed, updated and its implementation monitored under the overall supervision of the Science Communication Coordinator, and in close collaboration with other relevant contributors.*

This document is based upon work from COST Action IGCOORD, CA20123, supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology).

COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a funding agency for research and innovation networks. Our Actions help connect research initiatives across Europe and enable scientists to grow their ideas by sharing them with their peers. This boosts their research, career and innovation.

1. SUMMARY

The aim of IGCOORD is to bridge disciplinary boundaries and thereby generate well-founded and practical hands-on knowledge on how to organize and improve intergovernmental coordination in multiple settings; to pass those insights on to policy-makers at all levels of government in European nation-states; and thereby enable them to tackle the challenges of coordination that arise from such complex tasks as optimizing resource allocation, strengthening the efficiency of decision-making processes or safeguarding the integrity of existing state architectures.

This will be achieved through the specific objectives, which must be further communicated to relevant stakeholders, but also to the general public through media outlets.

Accountability and lessons learned shall be shared with relevant stakeholders, as to be able to fruitfully implement the actions mentioned in the timeline of activities of IGCOORD. As the duration of the project qualifies as a medium-term implementation (2021 – 2024) all communication actions and processes must be accounted for in a yearly manner, as well as to be matched with an approved list of communication KPIs, established at the beginning of the communication process.

The present communication plan is implemented continuously and in a transverse manner, taking into account every stakeholder's needs and expectations – information board, digital communication, training – but also continuously delivering information and key messages to other equally important stakeholders – the general public and the media. The media has to be targeted per se, but also as a communication channel to the general public. Therefore, the media plays an important role while communicating the actions of the IGCOORDS project throughout its duration.

Smooth project implementation is ensured by the following management structures:

- > Management Committee (MC), responsible for decision-making
- > Core Group (CG), responsible for the coordination and management:
 - Action Chair
 - Vice-Chair and Grant Holder
 - WG Leaders and WG Vice-Leaders
 - STSM Coordinator
 - Training School Manager
 - Science Communication Manager
 - Innovation and Exploitation Manager
 - Peer-to-peer Learning Manager

Underpinned by the work of the Working Groups.

2. GENERAL AIM AND TARGET AUDIENCES

As stated in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), it is the aim of IGCOORD to bridge disciplinary boundaries and thereby generate well-founded and practical hands-on knowledge on how to organise and improve intergovernmental coordination in multiple settings; to pass those insights on to policy-makers at all levels of government in European

nation-States; and thereby to enable them to tackle the challenges of coordination that arise from such complex tasks as optimising resource allocation, strengthening the efficiency of decision-making processes or safeguarding the integrity of existing State architectures.

Key stakeholders are:

- academics (advanced as well as early career researchers) researching and/ or advising on intergovernmental coordination;
- policy-makers (politicians and public officials) at European, national, regional and municipal level charged with coordination tasks;
- policy advisers (think tanks, activists) and other multipliers counselling politicians and promoting best practices.

Secondary stakeholders are:

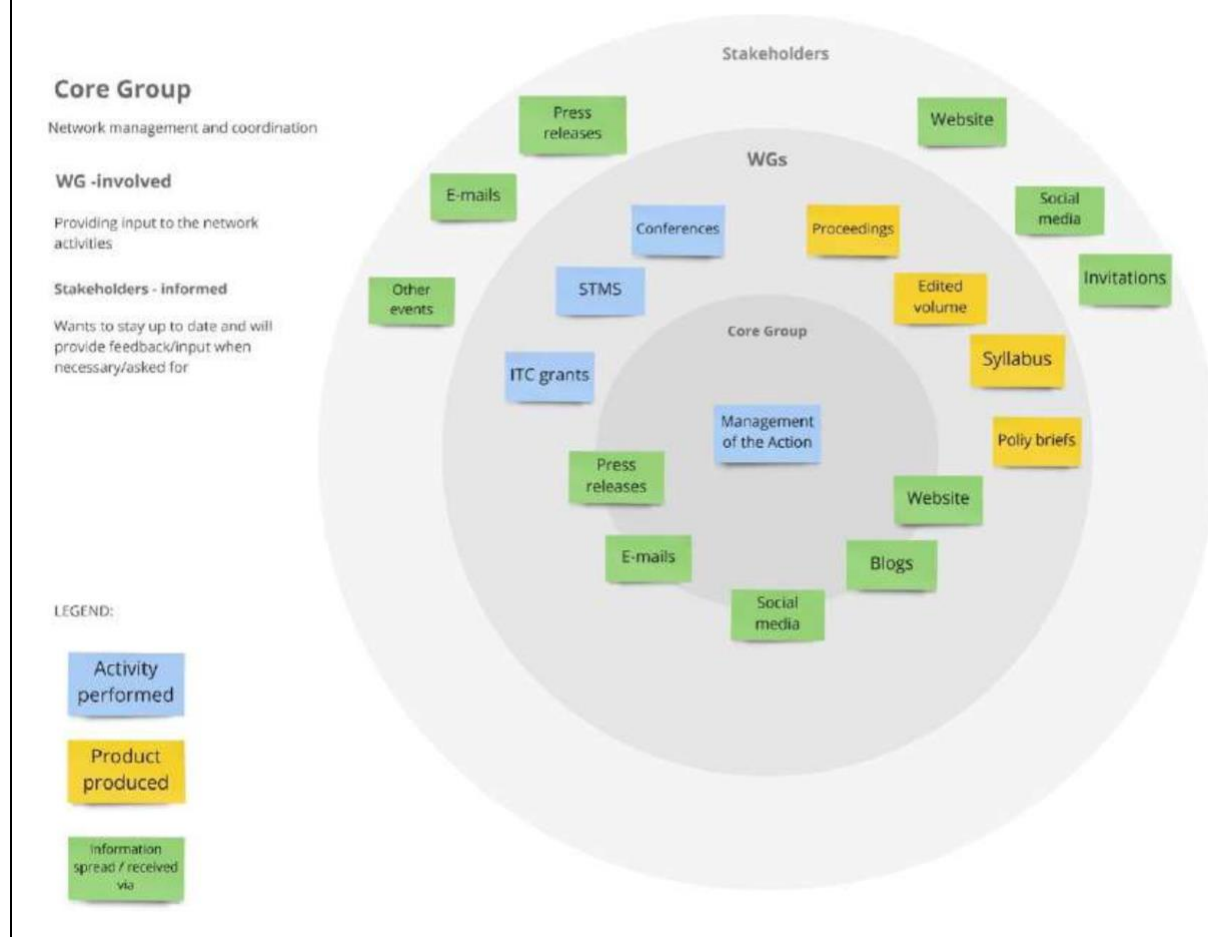
- civil society organisations – Non-governmental organisations dealing with research and education as well as intergovernmental coordination;
- graduate students – in the fields related to the topic of the Actions, namely Social Sciences;
- media – key in the dissemination to the overall society, media engagement is one of the most relevant aspects of a successful dissemination strategy;
- civil society in general.

The table of the main tools reaching out to key users and stakeholders is presented below:

	Action's webpage	Training schools	STSMs	Conferences	Other events (exhibitions, videos, posters and brochures, 1-on-1 meetings, info days, lectures, festivals and special events)	PR	PB
Academics, scholars	X	X	X	X	X		X
Policy makers	X	X		X		X	X
Policy advisers	X	X		X		X	X
Graduate Students	X	X	X	X	X		
Civil Society Organisations	X			X	X		X

Media	X			X	X	X	X
Civil Society in General	X				X	X	

Stakeholders Map:



3. PLAN FOR THE COMMUNICATION OF ACTION RESULTS

For the implementation of the action, all communication objectives will follow in line with the MoU of the Action in a logical and consistent manner. The visual identity of IGCOORD will be used in all communications and in full compliance with COST visual identity as set forth in the COST Brand Book. A dedicated Science Communication Manager will be appointed.

Communication will consist of two parts – internal and external communication.

Internal communication:

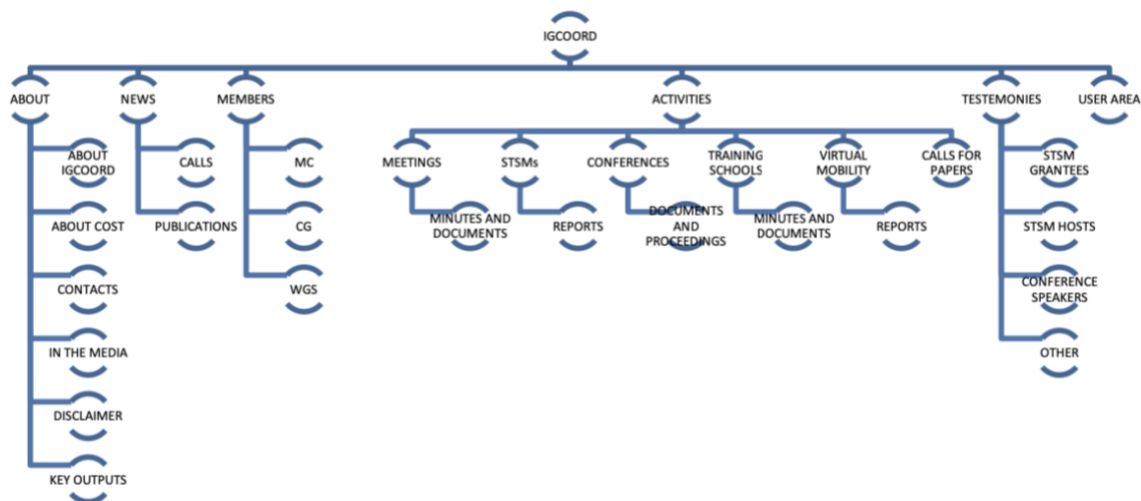
- E-COST platform: E-cost is the formal platform of EU COST with official information such as MoU, members, project proposals, minutes of MC meetings, etc. By this

application also costs are reclaimed, and invitations are sent. Each member should insert personal data into the platform

- IGCOORD Website user area: The user Area will be accessible only through an authorized login and will provide access to restricted information such as project documentation – published preferably in PDF format as well as serve as a platform for discussion and exchange of information, when necessary.
- Meetings of the Management Committee: Following COST rules, the Action’s MC shall convene at least once per year. The MC will be consulted for all necessary decisions regarding the functioning and implementation of the Action. Meetings will be documented and minutes made available on the Action’s website.
- Meetings of the Core Group: The Core Group of the COST Action also holds regular meetings online in which the plans of the Action are discussed. It is agreed in the first meeting of the Management Committee that the Core Groups will meet online every 6 months and in-person yearly. Meetings will be documented and minutes made available on the Action’s website.
- Meetings of the WGs: Working Groups shall meet, in person, at least once per year, as per the decision of the WG leadership. Each Group shall establish its own methods of working and periodicity of online meetings. Meetings will be documented and minutes made available on the Action’s website.

External communication

- Website: The website of the IGCOORD is accessed at: <http://www.IGCOORD.eu>
The website is updated on a continuous basis and has distinct sections (mapped below). Network members’ information disclosed on the website are regulated by a “Privacy notice” and explicit consent collected through the online “Consent Registration Form” all participants are requested to submit.



- Policy briefs: The policy reports and policy briefs will provide rigorous, evidence-informed materials to inform policymakers as well as to serve as a tool for advocacy and lobbying.
- Social media accounts: IGCOORD is present in the following social media platforms:
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/igcoord/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/IGCOORD>
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/igcoord>
- Other external communication tools – **newsletter, photos, videos, podcasts, press releases: they** will present the project, explaining what the COST Action IGCOORD aims at, **as well as its** potential societal impact. **All our digital content** will be used to communicate the outcomes of our work **and is set** to be released either on social media or on the website.

4. PLAN FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF ACTION RESULTS

Dissemination will be carried out through our online platforms (website, newsletter and social media, as well as through e-mails to network members and stakeholders). Developing digital content from the action results is key to engaging stakeholders across our online presence, with social media serving as a key component for sharing such content (photos, videos etc.), in addition to press releases and briefings. Conferences, STSMs and other activities are to be highlighted with a special focus on the reputational transfer from key stakeholders to our action, in an effort to reach out to the general public. The IGCOORD website and newsletter will also host such content, as will other channels that ought to be determined on a case by case basis. All scientific publications will follow an open access policy so that the knowledge output of the action will be made available to the widest possible audience.

More details regarding activities and information tools are presented in the table below:

Activity	Information tools (min)
MC meetings, WG meetings, Core Group meetings.	Briefing, press releases and regular posts (featuring original content: e.g., photos) on our online platforms (website, social media, newsletter)
Conferences	<p>Open call on social media, website, e-mail to the network members and stakeholders;</p> <p>Invitation sent directly to key stakeholders;</p> <p>Press releases and invitation to the local media to attend;</p> <p>Results disseminated through conference proceedings, as well as the IGCOORD website, social media and newsletter.</p>
STMS + VM.	<p>Open call on social media, website, e-mail to the network members and stakeholders;</p> <p>Results disseminated through digital content (blogs, photos, videos) posted across our online platforms (website, social media, newsletter).</p>
ITC + DISSEMINATION	<p>Open call on social media, website, e-mail to the network members and stakeholders;</p> <p>Results disseminated through digital content (blogs, photos, videos) posted across our online platforms (website, social media, newsletter).</p>
Training schools	<p>Open call for both Trainers and Trainees on social media, website, e-mail to the network members and stakeholders;</p> <p>Results disseminated through digital content (blogs, photos, videos) posted across our online platforms (website, social media, newsletter).</p>

The results with the deadlines are presented below:

Producer/author of the scientific product	Scientific product/results	Activity	Target audience	Deadline
WG1	Conference proceedings	Yearly meeting WG Conference Training school	Research community; Policy makers and advisers; Students; CSOs; CS	M19- Conference proceeding (WG1)
WG2, WG3, WG4	Conference proceedings	Yearly meeting WG Conference; Training school.	Research community; Policy makers and advisers; Students; CSOs; CS	M30- Conference proceeding
WG5	Syllabus, textbook, edited volume	Yearly WG meeting; Conference	Research community; Policymakers and advisers; Students.	M48
WG5	Research methodology	University Course on Intergovernmental Cooperation / Syllabus	Research community; Students.	M48
WG5	Dataset	University Course on Intergovernmental Cooperation / Syllabus	Research community; Students.	M48
STSM	Report + Video	Grant	Research community; Policy makers and advisers; Students; CSOs; CS	Recurring

VM GRANTS	Report + Video	Grant	Research community; Policy makers and advisers; Students; CSOs; CS	Recurring
ITC + DISSEMINATION	Abstract + Report + Video	Grant	Research community; Policy makers and advisers; Students; CSOs; CS	Recurring

5. PLAN FOR THE VALORISATION OF ACTION RESULTS

As explained in the MoU, the network will make use of its existing channels: the home institution's social media, website, mailing lists, networks, etc., in order to reach the maximum number of stakeholders. Existing networks and associations of municipalities, cities and regions will also be used in order to convey IGCOORD's message and create synergies. As already mentioned, all scientific publications will follow an open-access policy. The Action, and especially the policy reports and policy briefs, will provide rigorous, evidence-based materials to inform policymakers as well as to serve as a tool for advocacy and lobbying.

Scientific, technological, and/or socioeconomic impacts (including potential innovations and/or breakthroughs) are visible in the table below:

Expected Impact	Scientific	Technological	Socio-Economic/Political
Short-term	Boosting academic creativity leading to joint publications, triggered by availability of comparative evidence, by interdisciplinary discourse and by the structural analogy of situations to date unrelated to each other.	Development and implementation of a web-based information and exchange forum; improvement of planning and using those forms of crowd-sourced knowledge accumulation, transfer and information networking.	Raising awareness among practitioners at all levels of government for the relevance of intergovernmental coordination; triggering mutual learning, also across countries, State traditions, governmental levels and policy sectors.

Long-term	Developing an encompassing theoretical framework on intergovernmental coordination spanning the local, regional, national and supranational levels informing future research; emergence of new research cooperation and acquiring of funding across (sub-)disciplines and countries.	Broad use of the web- based platform for providing and disseminating information, enabling knowledge exchange, networking and advising; use of crowd- source techniques to keep the platform content up to date.	Advising and influencing policy-makers on institutional design or reform ('best practices'/lessons learned'), improving intergovernmental coordination at all levels and dimensions; possible spill-overs to countries not currently involved in the Action.
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The breakdown by audience, channel/format, tools and events, as formed in the MoU, is visible below.

Audience	Channel/Format	Tools	Events
Scientific community, industry, other organisations	Online/Digital format	Action website + project visual identity Link in the sites of the host institution of participants; Presence in social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn); Publications: blogs, e-newsletters, e-books, scientific articles, magazines targeting industry; Videos and Podcasts	Exhibitions; Conferences; Workshops; Seminars and congresses; Videos; Posters and brochures; 1-on-1 meetings Info days; Lectures; Festivals and Special events

<p>Policymakers, national authorities</p>	<p>Online/ Digital format Print / Paper format</p> <p>TV/ Radio / Audio and Video Format</p>	<p>Articles for EU policy/research websites & magazines, in national/local media;</p> <p>Policy briefs and press releases;</p> <p>Interviews, videos and television channels;</p> <p>Open Access E- books;</p> <p>Articles for national and/or regional/local press, dailies, weeklies,</p>	
<p>Civil Society</p>	<p>Online/ Digital format Print / Paper format</p> <p>TV/ Radio / Audio and Video Format</p>	<p>Social media;</p> <p>Educational material: videos, multimedia, video interviews, success stories;</p> <p>Press releases;</p> <p>Articles for national and/or regional/local press, dailies, weeklies, television, radio</p>	

ANNEX 1

TABLE 1. COMMUNICATION – DISSEMINATION – VALORISATION

	COMMUNICATION	DISSEMINATION	VALORIZATION
Objectives	<p>Promotion of the Action and its results. Raise awareness about the topic.</p> <p>Inform, promote and communicate – Visibility</p>	Public disclosure about the Action results only.	Make concrete use of results for research, knowledge transfer or commercial use.
Expected Impact	Show the success of research collaboration. Engaging with society to show how it can benefit from the Action results.	Maximise result's impact. Allow researchers to go a step forward. Make Action results a common good.	For socio-economic purposes, further research, market validation, licencing, norms setting, standardisation. Represents society's direct & indirect return on the public sector's investment in research.
Audiences	Reaching multiple audiences from general public, citizens, civil society, and mass media.	<p>Groups that may use the results in their own work including peers, industry, stakeholders.</p> <p>Regarding policymakers, engage and share evidence-based results during the legislative process.</p>	Not only researchers: incubators, venture capital, local, national or EU-related innovation ecosystems including policy-makers, industry, SMEs, sector of interest, civil society.
Languages	Non specialist language, layman – avoid jargon. Be understandable.	Scientific and specialist language/jargon.	Combines both general and technical language to present reports, results, prototypes, software, data, etc.
Channels & Tools	<p>Public debate, TV channels, radio, newspapers, websites, social media targeting general public.</p> <p>Leaflet/brochure, infographics, multimedia (podcast, webinars, videos)</p>	<p>Peer-review journals, scientific or stakeholder conferences, online repository of results, etc.</p> <p>Leaflet/brochure, infographics, multimedia (podcast, webinars, videos)</p> <p>EU related platforms and services such as Open Research Europe, European Open Science Cloud.</p>	<p>Stakeholder groups and events, industry publications/reports.</p> <p>EU related platforms and services such as CORDIS, Horizon Results Booster, Innovation Radar, Horizon Results platform, European Patent Office.</p>

TABLE 2. THE 5 W TO STRUCTURE YOUR PLAN

<p>WHY It is relevant to communicate about the Action?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research has been scattered across Europe; • There is still no systematic connection between the various research communities dealing with the issues from their separate perspectives, such as federalism, European governance or local and regional governance scholars; • Achieving coordination between executive actors of territorial units is one of the major challenges of today's politics; • There is still a serious lack of knowledge among scholars and practitioners on how to organize and process intergovernmental coordination in various instances; • Raise awareness; • Bring added value of belonging to a multidisciplinary network involving numerous countries; • To spark new collaborations.
<p>WHAT is the key message?</p>	<p>IGCOORD aims at connecting those different strands of research to provide systematic and comparable insights in the institutions, mechanisms and processes of intergovernmental coordination in the horizontal and in the vertical direction, across levels of government, policy sectors and territorial units. More specifically, it aims at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collecting comparative evidence, • distilling basic mechanisms and causal explanations from analytic comparison, • developing new collaborative research questions and • disseminating those insights and results to inform real-world policy-making.
<p>WHO is the target audience?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific community, Scientists, Academia; • Industry; • other organisations, such as NGOs and Citizen organisations; • Policymakers (local, regional, national, European and international), national authorities; • Civil society.
<p>WHERE and how to communicate & disseminate?</p>	<p>Use the tools and channels to convey the key message of your network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions webpage; • Training schools, courses; • STSMs; • Conferences; • Other events (workshops, festivals and special events, videos, posters and brochures, 1-on-1 meetings, info days, lectures); • PR; • PB.
<p>WHEN it is appropriate to start communicating & disseminating?</p>	<p>Communication will be continuous – from the start to the end.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The communication plan is implemented continuously and in a transverse manner, taking into account every stakeholder's needs and expectations – information board, digital communication, training – but also continuously delivering information and key messages to other equally important stakeholders – the general public and the media.

- The media has to be targeted per se, but also as a communication channel to the general public. Therefore, media plays an important role while communicating the actions of the IGCOORDS project throughout its duration.

Main outcomes and tools are presented below:

- The deadline M19-Conference proceeding (WG1) is set for conference proceedings, under WG1. Activities include yearly WG meeting, conference and training school;
- The deadline M30-Conference proceeding is set for conference proceedings, under WG2, WG3 and WG4. Activities include yearly WG meeting, conference and training school;
- The deadline M48 is set for syllabus, textbook, edited volume, under WG5. Activities include yearly WG meeting and conference.
- The deadline M48 is also set for research methodology, under WG5. Activities include University Course on Intergovernmental Cooperation and Conference.
- The deadline M48 is, lastly, set for dataset, under WG5. Activities include University Course on Intergovernmental Cooperation/Syllabus.
- There will also be recurring activities under grants. Such activities include Report + Video material (STSM and VM Grants); and Abstract + Report + Video material (ITC + dissemination).