Deliverable D.2.1 (D.2.1.1 & D.2.2.1)
"Communication Plan"

Within the framework of project "AQUA-LITY"
Interreg "Greece – Bulgaria 2014-2020"

Municipality of Oraiokastro – LB

Municipality of Dimitrovgrad

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https://www.aqua-lity.eu/

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1.1 The Programme “Greece-Bulgaria 2014 - 2020”

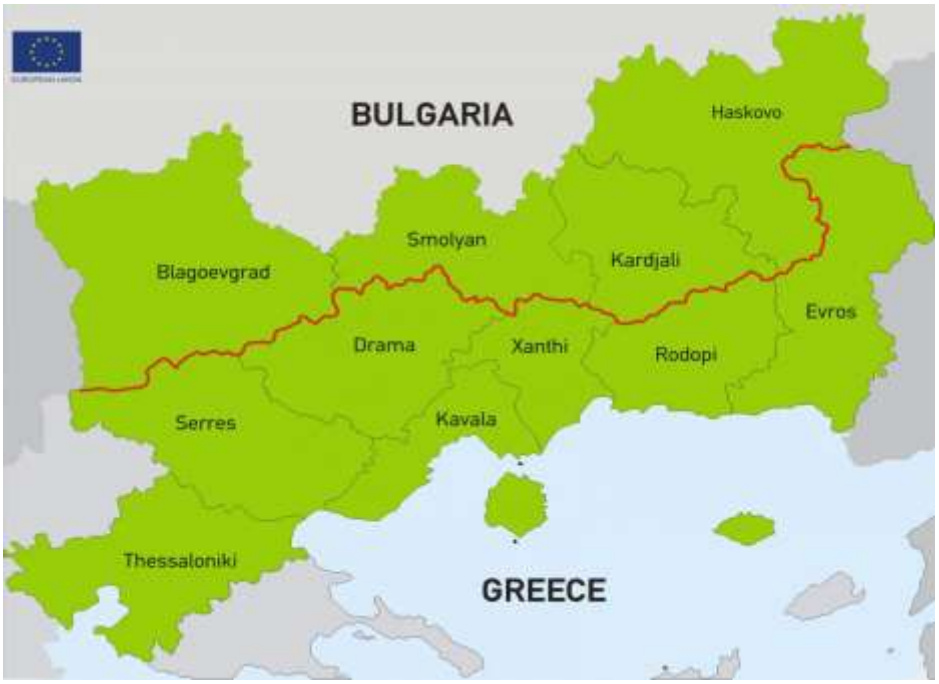
The Cooperation Programme “Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020” was approved by the European Commission on 13/12/2016 by Decision C(2016)8708.

Greece and Bulgaria, two neighboring countries with a rich past, since the end of the 1990s have entered an era of closer co-operation, due to the INTERREG Programme “Greece-Bulgaria”.

The main idea behind “INTERREG” is that countries have issues which can be better solved if they work together with their neighbors than if each one remains confined within its borders. So for this reason, in our Programme we promote activities that bring our people closer. One needs to look no further than the land and the rivers we share and move on to roads and then to culture, food and traditions. In every case what happens on the one side of the border affects the other side as well. The need for joint actions is gradually becoming the normal than the exception.

1.2 General Information of the cross-border area

The eligible area of the Programme consists of the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace (Prefectures of Evros, Kavala, Xanthi, Rodopi and Drama) and the Region of Central Macedonia (Prefectures of Thessaloniki and Serres) in Greece and the South-Central Planning Region and South-West Planning Region (Districts of Blagoevgrad, Smolyan, Kardjali and Haskovo) in Bulgaria.



The Greece-Bulgaria cross-border cooperation area for the programming period 2014-2020 is identical to the current ETC programme. It extends to 40.202 km2 and has a total population of 2.7 million inhabitants. It covers four territorial units at NUTS II level (Regions), and 11 territorial units at NUTS III level (Districts). The eligible area extends across the entire Greek-Bulgarian border and is neighbouring with Turkey (east) and FYROM (west), both countries aspiring to access to the EU. It is part of the most south-eastern non-insular area of EU, and it is situated between three seas: the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Ionian-Adriatic Sea. Finally, it sits at the crossroad of strategic fossil fuel pipelines supplying the EU market and TEN transport axes. The settlement structure of the area is characterized by the presence of 10 medium-large cities (>50.000 inhabitants) which accumulate 38,2% of total population, and 25 small cities (10.000-50.000 inhabitants). Despite the historically relatively small amounts of funds allocated, there is a long history of cooperation in the eligible area, which started with Community initiative INTERREG I (1989-1993).

The priority axes are:

PA 1: A Competitive and Entrepreneurship Promoting Cross-Border Area

PA 2: A Sustainable and climate adaptable Cross-Border area

PA 3: A better interconnected Cross-Border Area

PA 4: A socially inclusive Cross-Border area

PA 5: Technical Assistance

Budget

The total budget (ERDF and national contribution) for the European Territorial Programme "Greece-Bulgaria 2007-2013" is €130,262,835.00 .The total financing consists of €110.723.409,75 (85%) ERDF funding and €19.539.425,25 (15%) national contribution.

General Level of Development

The Greece-Bulgaria cross-border cooperation area is one of the poorest in the European Union, as the GDP per capita is below 50% of the E28 average. This has not changed considerably in the last 10 years, even though short-lived improvements were noted during 2002-2004 and then again in 2006-2009. The CB area is also characterized by large internal disparities, especially as it concerns the dichotomy between Bulgarian and Greek territories. Bulgarian districts exhibit a much lower level of economic development (below ¼) than their Greek counterparts, mainly attributable to the fact that

Bulgaria has long been a transition economy. The 2006-2009 period was marked by economic growth on both sides of the border, as was the general trend all over Europe. After 2009, the global recession effects resulted in slowing down the growth rates in the Bulgarian part (0,25% annually) and in negative growth rates in the Greek part (-9% annually).

Economy

Even though the CB area has been gradually converting from an agricultural/industrial economy to an industrial/service economy, this conversion has been rather slow. Compared to EU28, the economy remains considerably more agricultural, less industrial, and more service-dependant. However, this is far from being homogeneous. The Greek CB-area is considerably less agricultural and industrial than the BG CB-area part, and more service-oriented. This heterogeneity is even more pronounced at district level. We can discern 2 types of districts in the BG part, and 3 types of districts in the GR part:

- Blagoevgrad/Haskovo: industry and trade dominated
- Smolyan/Kardzhali: industry and agriculture dominated

- Exros/Drama/Thessaloniki: public administration and industry dominated
- Xanthi/Rodopi: public administration and agriculture dominated, and
- Kavala/Serres: industry and public administration dominated.

More than half of GVA produced in the CB area (59%) is produced in the district of Thessaloniki. All other areas exhibit low percentages. Particularly low percentages are observed in the Bulgarian districts Haskovo, Smolyan and Kardzhali (1-2%). Some of the noteworthy intra-territorial structural developments that have taken place recently include:

- A gradual conversion between the two parts in terms of the portion of GVA attributable to the primary sector. Still, there remains a large differential between the two sides, with the Bulgarian territories being more heavily agricultural than the Greek territories, and even more heavily agricultural than the national (BG) average.

- A significant diversion between the two parts in the secondary sector, mainly attributable to the considerable losses of industrial activity experienced in the Greek part after 2006 (mainly due to relocations of labour-intensive industries in cheaper neighbouring countries). Total labour productivity in the CB area is significantly lower than the EU28 avg. (approx. 1/5) and exhibits high differentials between the Greek (32800€/employee) and Bulgarian (5800€/employee) parts. CB area productivity is also below the respective national averages for both parts:
  for the Bulgarian part: ranging from 60% to 78% of the BG national average, and
  for the Greek part: ranging from 60% to 84% of the GR national average.

Tourism – and especially eco-tourism - has long been heralded as the “growth-industry” of the CB area, as it includes a significant number of pristine areas of high ecological value. Yet, it has a rather modest number of accommodation establishments compared to its population (43 establishments/100.000 inhabitants, when the EU28 average is 111), and unevenly distributed. The largest concentrations of accommodation establishments and beds are in the districts of Kavala, Thessaloniki and Smolyan.

Innovation

Both Greece and Bulgaria have outlined national or regional strategies for innovation in the context of “smart specialization”. Yet, Bulgaria is lagging far behind the other EU countries and is listed as a “modest innovator” in the 2014 “Innovation Union Scoreboard”, while Greece, although in a somewhat better position, falls below the EU average and is listed as a “moderate innovator”. Yet, the CB area possesses significant research facilities currently which are however not collaborating with each other or with the business community. It also possesses similar productive systems, therefore exhibiting important opportunities for coupling entrepreneurship initiatives with innovation. The critical mass of research centres and other academic structures is located in Thessaloniki with the following fields of excellence: biotechnology, advanced production systems for chemical processes, energy and environmental technologies, information processing, virtual reality, security services, etc. R&D activities in East Macedonia and Thrace are concentrated in the public sector and particularly in the Demokritos University of Thrace (with a unique Genetics Department) and to a lesser degree in the Technical Education Institute (TEI) of Kavala. On the Bulgarian part, most important research infrastructure is located outside the CB area (mainly in Sofia and Plovdiv) and only Blagoevgrad seems to have any significant research structures. The South-West University “Neofit Rilski”- with nine faculties[1] – offers PhD programmes in many liberal arts fields (Education and Pedagogy, Literary Studies and Linguistics, History and Archaeology, Social Sciences, Law, etc. and Arts - with a specializations in choreography and cinema). Of particular importance for the CB area are the programmes in Economics (with a specialization in Tourism), Geography and Environmental Sciences, and IT technologies. Also, in Smolyan there are branches of the In Smolyan there are branches of the "Paisii Hilendarski" University of Plovdiv with its Technical College and the Varna Free University "Tchernotisets Hrabar".

Climate change

According to the ESPON-CLIMATE project, the programme area is substantially more vulnerable to climate change both compared to EU 28 and the Greek and Bulgarian national levels as well. The districts with the highest vulnerability are Thessaloniki, Serres, Kardzhali and Haskovo. Climate change will have major negative impacts to the CB area. It is estimated that it will affect the majority of the urban centers, by rising the number of heat-wave days to

more than 50 by 2071-2100. Natural hazards in the area include flood risk zones (mainly in the vicinity of Nestos/Mesta and Evros/Maritza rivers), wildfire risk areas (mainly in the mountain ranges) and erosion risk areas (especially on the coast). Floods and wildfires can quickly spread across borders and their effective management is of cross border importance. Finally the areas with the highest risk of landslides are located in the basin of Maritsa East and in the coal development area in the South-west region. The largest studied landslide is located in the district of Smolyan at the location "Smolyan's Lakes".

In addition, the combined adaptive capacity of the CB area to climate change is similar to the national levels and the lowest in Europe. On the Greek side the district of Thessaloniki and on Bulgarian side the district of Blagoevgrad show a rather high adaptive capacity relative to the national values but still lower than the EU28 average.

Environment

The CB area is characterized by many and important natural resources, including a large number of protected natural sites (86 Natura 2000 areas, 5 Ramsar wetlands, etc.), many of which are of pristine character. The CB landscape consists of densely forested mountains, straits of rivers, valleys, plains, lakes, coastal wetlands, seasides and river deltas. The area comprises the mountain ranges of Rila, Pirin and Rhodopi, featuring outstanding forests, the cross-border rivers Strymon (Struma), Nestos (Mesta), Ardas (Arda) and Evros (Maritsa) and more than 400 kilometers of coastline. These important natural resources have not been sufficiently exploited for development purposes in the past. In terms of the state of the environment, industry is among the major polluters on both parts of the border, and pollution hot-spots are concentrated in southwestern Bulgaria and near the Kavala urban area. Both cross-border rivers - Nestos and Evros - are polluted with urban as well as industrial effluents (e.g. BOD). The major problems in the management of urban wastewater result from the lack of sewage treatment infrastructure in settlements between 2,000-10,000 inhabitants. The problem is more acute on the Bulgarian portion of the CB area. In Bulgaria only 46% of the population is covered by wastewater treatment systems and most of the treatment capacity (71%) is located in the Danube and Black sea river basins (which are outside the CB area). On the Greek portion 88% of the population is covered by wastewater treatment systems.

Accessibility

The area possesses significant transport infrastructures. It is served by three ports of national/international importance (the Thessaloniki port, the double port of Kavala and the port of Alexandroupolis) and three main airports (the International Airport “Makedonia”, at Thessaloniki, the Airport “Great Alexander” at Kavala and the Airport “Democritus”at Alexandroupolis), all of them on the Greek side. The most important transport infrastructure is the road network and overall connectivity has improved significantly in the past:

- with the construction of the Egnatia motorway and several vertical axes connecting Greece to Bulgaria and
- The construction of large portions of motorways A3 and A4 in Bulgaria.

Nevertheless, lower-level roads are at various stages of disrepair (especially on the Bulgarian part) making interconnections difficult and reducing mobility especially in the mountain ranges. At the same time, several Egnatia vertical axes as agreed in the Transnational Agreement between Greece and Bulgaria in 1998 still missing or under construction (such as the connection of II-86 to the Greek transport system) and the motorways on the Bulgarian part are incomplete. The area is deficient in terms or railway and multi-modal infrastructure (despite the existence of important ports and airports). Both Greece and Bulgaria have been recently investing in the CB area railway network but it requires considerable investment which is outside the financial capabilities of the present programme. This heavy dependence on road transport also increases considerably the environmental footprint of transport activities in the area, especially at the border crossings (e.g. long lines of trucks) and especially during the tourist season. Last but not least, the area lacks accessible public transport for people with disabilities and cross-border public transport services.

Labour Market, Poverty and Social Inclusion

While in 2007 unemployment rates for the CB districts were on the average near or below the national rates and below the EU27 average rate, unemployment started to rapidly increase – especially in Greece - soon after the wake of the economic crisis in 2008 reaching record high levels in 2013. The Bulgarian districts succeeded to keep unemployment rates near or lower than the EU27 average. Currently, the high disparities among the CB districts have not dissipated. The latest data exhibit the following high unemployment rates (2013): Xanthi

37,5%, Drama 36,8%, Thessaloniki 32,1%, Serres 22,9%, Kavala 22,8%, Evros 22%, Smolyan 20,3% and Rodopi 16,8%. In addition, long term unemployment rates have increased sharply - especially for the Greek regions - after 2009, indicating a risk of large structural unemployment which in turn implies the existence of inefficient labour markets and a mismatch between labour market demand and the available skills and locations of the workers seeking employment. According to the ESPON DEMIFER project the CB area shows significantly higher values of long-term unemployed persons compared to the EU28. Youth unemployment rates display similar trends and are attributed to the lackluster economic growth, the rigid labour market, and the mismatch between potential employee skills and employers' needs in Greece and Bulgaria.

In addition, the CB area exhibits considerably higher than EU28 percentages of population at risk of poverty or social exclusion (3-4 times higher). The main reason for the large divergence is the comparatively higher long term unemployment rates, and the higher share of people living in areas with low work intensity and low income levels. With respect to the latter, the share of people living in areas with low work intensity has been rising since 2010 in Bulgarian and Greek territories alike.

The large number of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion in the CB area is also attributable to the presence of various vulnerable groups such as minorities, internal migrants, asylum seekers and foreign persons under subsidiary protection. The higher risk of poverty and social exclusion among these groups is primarily connected to long-term unemployment and economic inactivity.

The rising incidence of poverty has many social consequences, one of which is the deteriorating public health conditions. Even though the CB area enjoys the availability of basic health care resources (e.g. hospitals and doctors) at levels near, or even better in several cases, than the EU28 average, the average life expectancy is lower than EU28 levels and many epidemiological indicators record higher values. Overall, Greek districts have exhibited higher life expectancy than Bulgarian districts in the past, but since poverty forces more people to resort to hospital care (more than a 20% increase has been documented in Greece after 2010), it appears that Greek districts may be more at risk of deteriorating health care conditions in the near future, thereby lowering overall public health levels in the CB area.

1.3 Scope of the project “Aqua-lity”

One of the common challenges that are being encountered in the cross border area is the lack of an interregional strategy for water quality monitoring and improvement. Although in Greece, water management procedures have been adjusted and enhanced by the use of innovative technology, in Bulgaria the problem of ineffective water supply networks and monitoring is apparent as stated in the Strategic Evaluation on Environment and Risk Prevention under Structural and Cohesion Funds 2007-2013. In order to address this challenge, a joint effort from Greek and Bulgarian stakeholders should take place towards the exchange of knowhow, the development of common tools and policies. Lead Beneficiary - Municipality of Oraiokastro (PB1) has long now proven its interest in the subject and has undertaken initiatives as in the case of CIVILWATER project. Therefore, the incentive of PB1 is to transfer existing knowhow to the Municipality of Dimitrovgrad while increasing its own capacity of addressing drinking water quality problems in the area. According to the Programme analysis, water pollution is a common threat between Greek and Bulgarian sides, while there is an increased proportion of classified bodies that do not meet Good Ecological Statues (GES) and cases with unknown chemical status in Greece. The low level of GES is attributed to a variety of reasons that include industrial pollution, pollution from agricultural activities and inadequate water management. Specifically, the concertation of hydrogen sulfide/H2S (>0), iron/Fe (764,3 mg/l) and manganese/Mn (86,2 mg/l) in the water network of Anthoupoli, Oraiokastro is higher that the acceptable levels (H2S=0, Fe<0,2mg/l and Mn<50mg/l) that have been established by the Greek legislation (KYA Y2/2600/2001). In Dimitrovgrad, the amount of water produced from all sources was 6.162.498 m3 in 2014, channeled by 19 zones. For many of the settlements that are supplied with water from the river Maritsa, unusual levels of manganese and its oxides are observed. Generally in Bulgaria (as of 2012) the number of samples not corresponding to the norms about mechanical/chemical/ radiological parameters are 94% of total measures and 96.6% about microbiological parameters. Additionally, most of the water supply networks are made of asbestos cement pipes, leading to a deterioration in the quality of drinking water while in remote areas with small populations where drinking water originates mainly from local drillings, several problems related to drinking water quality emerge, while many others may remain unidentified, since drinking water quality is not effectively monitored in these areas.

The project is also essential for the two PBs in order for them to comply with WFD 2000/60 in terms of protecting water quallity and developing a common approach for state members. The project has two main target groups: the first one refers to the local communities of Oraiokastro and Dimitrovgrad that will enjoy safe and sanitized drinking water and will be protected from health hazards that occur from inappropriate, low quality water; the second one refers to the Beneficiaries (and their water enterprises which will operate the systems after the end of the project) that will be equipped with innovative systems either for water sanitation (Oraiokastro) or early warning in cases of water pollution (Dimitrovgrad). Additionally, water bodies and policy makers in the cross border area will gain access to an online water quality monitoring database which will work as a decision support system for further investments and interventions as well as policies. Although the project focuses on the two implementation areas, its scope exceeds them and gains a cross border character through actions that foster the creation of a joined desicion support system, development of knowhow and initiation of public discuss among relevant stakeholders in the CB area.

The project applies the proposed (by the Programme) approach of the promotion of innovative technologies in water management sector and especially in industrial (Oraiokastro) and agricultural (Dimitrovgrad) pollution areas. To the best knowledge of the PBs, this is the first time that a project focuses on drinking water quality in urban and semi urban areas with the intention to not only improve local conditions but also initiate an interregional public discuss on the matter by providing the necessary tools for cooperation between different authorities.

The ***main objective of "Aquality"*** project is to enhance drinking water quality and reduce health hazards. This will be achieved with the implementation of an innovative early warning system for water pollution and a sanitation system. Consequently, the project will contribute significantly to the priorities set by the Programme since it will "promote innovative technologies to improve environmental protection and resource efficiency in the waste sector, water sector, soil protection etc". It has been acknowledged that the main source of water pollution in Greece is agriculture, while in Bulgaria the main water pollution sources are industry and urban effluents. For this reason PBs have included a study which will identify and record spots of environmental pressure such as industrial or livestock units (georefering of the

spots) in order to investigate the extent of their impact in water quality and make suggestions on interventions that should take place in order to limit this impact.

The rest of proposed activities also contribute to the specific object 6 “to enhance water management” by giving beneficiaries the necessary tools for providing drinking water of higher quality to their residents, improve their capacity to address water pollution incidents in a direct and cost efficient way, comply with Directive 2000/60/EC and design well targeted strategies in the field of drinking water quality.

Last but not least, the project is based on the two pillars of the Programme: the exchange of knowhow and good practices among beneficiaries; and the implementation of initiatives that foster and facilitate further cooperation among stakeholders in the cross border area.

The ***main expected results*** from the project implementation:

The project will have significant results for both residents in the implementation area as well as beneficiaries and water management bodies in the whole CB area.

First of all, the quality of drinking water in Oraiokastro will be improved dramatically and it will be appropriate for human consumption. This is expected to have a wider social impact because it will contribute to improved health status and living standards in the area (Scientific studies have proven that there is a positive interrelationship between health status and economic development). Additionally, the early warning system will assist Project Beneficiary 2- Municipality of Dimitrovgrad (PB2) in complying with Water Framework Directive 2000/60 (by addressing pollution from urban waste water and from agriculture) and protect citizens from being exposed to health hazards related to the consumption of polluted water. From an economic point of view, PB2 will achieve reduction of operational and managerial costs of drinking water management due to early identification and/or prevention of potential accidents. Additionally, the reduction of water related hygienic problems will lead to further economic benefits due to improved health conditions and thus decrease of public spending for health care provisions.

As far as beneficiaries and water management bodies are concerned, the project provides them with the opportunity to gain significant knowhow in applying innovative technologies for monitoring and improving drinking water quality. Furthermore, the development of tools

to support and facilitate water monitoring could be the first step towards a joint policy for addressing common challenges. Last but not least, publicity actions will reinforce public awareness on issues of water conservation, the importance of water sanitation and the contribution of EU funds in regional development.

The ***main outputs of the project*** are divided into 4 thematic categories (WP), each of which has a distinctive objective.

In WP1, PBs will produce regular progress reports (on a semiannual base) according to the Project Implementation Guide as well as three project meetings. These outputs will ensure the efficient management of the project and its implementation according to activities' time-schedule.

In WP2, outputs aim at the dissemination of project results and raising awareness in local communities and include: a strategic communication plan, a website (developed according to WCAG 2.0 for people with disabilities), publicity material (4000 leaflets, 3000 brochures, 8 banners, 150 posters and 500 folders), 5 press releases in local media and an International closing conference in Thessaloniki. WP3 is focused on the development of drinking water monitoring and improvement systems and includes the supply of a water processing and sanitation system (with all relevant works that need to be implemented in order to be fully functional), the elaboration of two studies on spots of environmental pressure, the supply and establishment of equipment for the pilot action, and the pilot actions for the two beneficiaries. Finally, the outputs of WP4 have a threefold aim: i) the evaluation of pilot actions through sampling tests which will result in 2 evaluation reports, ii) the dissemination of know how through the elaboration of an environmental guide with examples of best practices and seminars for the end users of the early warning system (30 participants) and iii) the development of an integrated water monitoring tool in the CB area, which will work as a decision support system.

In the framework of the project “Aqua-lity” will be jointly implemented by all beneficiaries through parallel & integrated activities and it is divided in 4 well-structured thematic Work Packages, each of which concerns an integrated and complete group of activities.

Working Package 1-Project Management & Coordination concerns the management of the project and includes:

a) Three project meetings, (2 project meetings in Oraiokastro and 1 project meeting in Dimitrovgrad)

b) Four semi-annual progress reports to JS,

c) Financial reports to 1st level control and

These outputs will reassure the quality of the rest of the deliverables and that they will be implemented on time and on budget

Working Package 2-Communication & Dissemination includes a series of actions for:

a) Project communication plan,

b) Development and hosting of the project's website and

c) An international closing conference on Water Quality in Thessaloniki for 100 participants

d) Publicity material (leaflets, brochures, banners, posters).

e) Five Press releases in local mass media

These outputs contribute to raising awareness among public for the project, its results and the contribution of the EU.

Working Package 3 - Drinking Water monitoring and improvement systems

a) Drinking Water improvement system

This work package concerns all the necessary actions for the establishment of Drinking Water Monitoring & Improvement Systems and its outputs will contribute to the improvement of drinking water quality.

Working Package 4 - Evaluation and dissemination of knowhow

a) Study on environmental pressure spots

b) Pilot operation of the system

c) Project Evaluation

d) Cross border water quality monitoring system

This work package concerns the project's evaluation and dissemination of knowhow. WP4 will contribute to proceed with the elaboration of a project evaluation in order to measure the impact of the project, the satisfaction of local population and whether the project has met the goal set in the present proposal and the communication plan. Moreover, in the outputs of this actions are included the reduction of water and carbon footprint in urban environments and the dissemination of the knowhow gained by the project to employees in relevant public bodies.

Actions of WP1 and 2 will run throughout the life of the project, with the intensification of publicity actions towards the end of the project (when the main outputs will have been completed). Actions from WPs 3 and 4 duration depends on the scope of each action.

WP	WP
1	**ject Management & Coordination**
2	**mmunication & Dissemination**
3	**nking Water monitoring and improvement systems**
4	**luation and dissemination of knowhow**

Each Partner has undertaken the responsibility for several actions-deliverables within the framework of the above mentioned WPs as following.

Municipality of Oraiokastro	
1	**ject Management & Coordination**
iverable 1.1.1	paration Activities
iverable 1.1.2	ject Management and Coordination
iverable 1.1.3	ject Meetings
2	**mmunication & Dissemination**
iverable 2.1.1	mmunication Plan
iverable 2.1.2	ject Website
iverable 2.1.3	ernational Closing Conference
iverable 2.1.4	licity Material
iverable 2.1.5	ss Releases
3	**nking Water monitoring and improveme tems**
iverable 3.1.1	nking Water improvement system

4	**luation and dissemination of knowhow**
iverable 4.1.1	dy on environmental pressure spots
iverable 4.1.2	t operation of the system
iverable 4.1.3	ject Evaluation
iverable 4.1.4	ss border water quality monitoring system

- Municipality of Dimitrovgrad	
1	**ject Management & Coordination**
iverable 1.2.1	paration Activities
iverable 1.2.2	ject Management and Coordination
iverable 1.2.3	ject Meetings
2	**mmunication & Dissemination**
iverable 2.2.1	mmunication plan
iverable 2.2.2	nference
iverable 2.2.3	blicity Material
iverable 2.2.4	ss releases
iverable 2.2.5	ject Website
3	**nking Water monitoring and improvement systems**
iverable 3.2.1	paratory study on environmental pressure spots
iverable 3.2.2	uipment and process analysis study
iverable 3.2.3	pply of equipment
iverable 3.2.4	t operation
4	**luation and dissemination of knowhow**
iverable 4.2.1	luation study
iverable 4.2.2	od practice Guide for optimum water qual nagement
iverable 4.2.3	ining seminar

All the above mentioned deliverables must be produced and delivered in accordance with the approved Application Form of the Project and the Specification of Budget Costs. All project partners shall contribute to the project implementation procedures, supporting all “Aquality” partnership, whenever judged necessary or asked by the Lead Beneficiary.

2. Information and Publicity Strategy (Στρατηγική διάδοσης των αποτελεσμάτων του έργου)

The communication process and the dissemination of the project results are an important element for its successful implementation and the recording of the coverage indicators of the

communication strategy. As stated in the Information and Publicity Guide of the Programme, Beneficiaries must be involved in a series of Communication and Dissemination actions in order to raise awareness about the project, its outputs and results and the role and support provided by the EU Funds.

In order to achieve these goals in the most effective way, PB1, with the contribution of PB2, will elaborate a thorough communication plan according to the template provided by the Programme and will create the visual identity of the project which shall be used for all published materials. The communication plan will ensure the appropriate visibility, plan relevant human and financial resources, allocate responsibilities among the partnership, set milestones and define target groups of the project. Additionally, the communication plan will define specific targets in terms of publicity that should be met by beneficiaries and set evaluation criteria which will be included in the overall evaluation of the project (WP4)

2.1 Purpose of the Communication and Dissemination Strategy

i) Communication Strategy

The goal of the communication strategy is to approach the project with the general public and between stakeholders in order to promote the project's activities and disseminate the results. It analyzes how partners interact with each other for the proper implementation of project actions and their smooth and timely implementation within the set timetable. This encourages open dialogue, open communication between stakeholders and the public concerned in relation to the objectives of the project and encourages social dialogue.
At the same time, the appropriate tools are used to communicate the objectives of the Program with the target audience described below.

ii) Dissemination Strategy

The dissemination of results defines the promotion and awareness process from the beginning of a project to the end of the project. This fact makes the results known to various stakeholder groups (such as researchers, private and public bodies, professional organizations, policy makers) in order to be able to use the results in their work. Dissemination means taking strategic and targeted measures to promote action as well as its effects on a number of

audiences, including the media and the public, and the participation of two-way exchanges. The aim is to bring society as a whole together as well as to a number of special audiences while also demonstrating how EU funding contributes to addressing social challenges.

The dissemination channels of the project includes the website, the international closing conference and the 5 press releases.

2.2 Communication Objectives

The main objective of the second work package "Communication and dissemination" is to inform all interested parties and the general public about the project's idea, its activities, its objectives and its results.

The present detailed communication plan is drawing in order to fully comply with the program's communication strategy, focusing on a comprehensive, multilateral and horizontal approach designed to ensure high visibility of the project, thereby enhancing consensus in its policies of European Union.

Effective communication is one of the most important factors contributing to the success of a project. The Communication Plan includes an analysis of the activities concerning mainly the actions/ deliverables of Communication and Dissemination (WP2) plus all the information elements regarding the project as a whole.

It indicates the exact material to be produced and the respective standards for their production and the application of the rules of the Programme on information and publicity. The project team must provide timely and accurate information to all stakeholders. Members of the project team prepare information in a variety of ways to meet the needs of project stakeholders. Team members also receive feedback from these stakeholders.

2.3 Basic stages of communication

There are three basic stages of communication:

- ✓ General Information about the plan and its activities

- ✓ Dissemination of information to target groups through design and implementation of integrated environmental education programs
- ✓ Dissemination of the project's results and benefits

The information and publicity measures of “Aquality” project, through which the project's results will be promoted, will be include the production of the project communication plan, the development of a multilingual website (EN, GR and BG) with essential information about the project, beneficiaries, the Programme, upcoming events and news, an open international closing conference in Thessaloniki about “Drinking water quality in the C/B area” where relevant stakeholders from Greece and Bulgaria will be invited, the multilingual informational material such as leaflets, brochures, posters, banners and five press releases in local mass media which will mark the project’s milestones and inform local communities about project outputs.

These actions will be widespread throughout the project’s life and will be intensify by the end of it in order to communicate the actual results which are of great importance for the local communities (i.e. providing clean and safe drinking water to more than 220 people in Oraiokastro and improving water quality monitoring in Dimitrovgrad for its 38.015 residents).

2.4 Target Groups

The communication strategy of the project will focus on two different target groups: the first one is the local population who will benefit directly by the improved quality of drinking water and the second one refers to stakeholders in regional and national level who can benefit indirectly by the project via the establishment of a good practice guide in water quality management, new technology, transfer of knowhow and initiation of a public discuss among policy makers.

3. Communication Tools (Δράσεις επικοινωνίας)

3.1 Internal Communication Tools

The internal communication is necessary in order to reach the goals set by the project. In order to be effective, the communication between all project partners has to work well at all levels which are identified as follows:

- The first level is the day to day communication, which will be the basic way of communication.
- The second level will be partner meetings and similar events to discuss more complex topics. Each partner will appoint responsible persons for project management, communication and financing issues who will be in direct contact with the lead partner for any prompt reply and involvement in problem financial issues. There are several tools used in the internal communication between "Aquality" project partners, as described below:

❖ **Consortium internal contact list**

This contact list will contain contact details (name, organization and e-mail address, telephone and fax numbers) of all persons involved in the "CB Railway" project. The list will be provided to all project partners and will facilitate internal communication and the flow of information within the consortium. The contact list will facilitate the day to day communication. As persons involved in the project may change during the project period, consortium internal contact list will be periodically updated.

❖ **Steering Committee mailing list**

In order to facilitate Steering Committee's internal communication, there will be a mailing list containing contact details (name, organization, position and e-mail address) of all Steering Committee members. This mailing list will be sent to all Steering Committee members.

❖ **Project Meetings**

At the beginning of the project, a kick-off meeting was organized in Oraiokastro, Greece on 10/10/2018. During the kick-off meeting, all project partners presented themselves, made an

overview of the project, the management procedures and the first steps for the implementation of the project. For meaningful and good communication between project partners, better coordination and in order to arrange all activities for the upcoming period, three more meetings are planned within the project duration. These are:

1 Project Meeting (final meeting) in Oraiokastro, organized by Municipality of Oraiokastro (LB)

1 Project Meeting in Dimitrovgrad, organized by Municipality of Dimitrovgrad (PB2)

The meetings will be set to discuss the results, which have been reached during the previous reporting period, as well as for planning the tasks and responsibilities for the next period. Before each meeting, an agenda will be prepared. Additionally, minutes will be taken from each meeting to report the outline of discussions and the decisions taken. Both agenda and minutes will be sent to all partners and the JTS. All information about upcoming and already organized meetings will be uploaded on project's website.

- **Problems solution**

  In case a problem occurs in the communication between two or more PPs, in case of a dispute or in cases when troubles might harm the successful implementation of the project, the lead partner will be contacted. The lead partner will either try to provide a solution, or will contact a JTS representative for help.

3.2 External Communication Tools

There are several tools used in external communication with project Stakeholders, key actors and general public

The project envisages the development of the five mandatory Information and Publicity outputs: a) present project communication plan, b) Development and hosting of the project's website, c) an International Closing Conference on Water Quality in Thessaloniki d) publicity material (leaflets, brochures, banners and posters. e) Five press releases in local mass media.

These outputs contribute to raising awareness among public for the project, its results and the contribution of the European Union.

3.2.1 Website

The site is the first source of information on the project. The design and operation of the project's website is obligatory according to the Programme rules. Thus, the development of a structured website is an essential part of a Project. The name of the website should be short and easy to remember. The web site that will be designed will incorporate into a single, accessible and environmentally friendly information about the project and the results of it. The project website will bear information about the project and it will incorporate project results (different investment solutions, intense of socio-economic impact, environmental pressure spots) in web GIS application. The site will be in English because it is the official language of the project and then, according to the project's Information and Publicity Project Partners Guide, this is the most appropriate choice. At the same time, the website will also be available in the language of the partners. LB will be responsible for this deliverable while PB2 will provide input for the Bulgarian side and will translate its content in Bulgarian.

The project website will be designed from scratch and will be developed in accordance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. The WCAG defines the parameters so that a website is marked as being friendly to people with disabilities. The existence of such a website facilitates access to people with disabilities, who can navigate the project website in an easy way. It will designed from scratch and hosted in an independent server for 7 years. It will provide links to the Programme, the Europe, the beneficiaries participating in the project and other relevant actors. In addition and for the benefit of the dissemination of the project results, the website will also include a database (managed by PBs), where all the information of the project deliverables will be included.

3.2.2 International Closing Conference

LB- Municipality of Oraiokastro will be responsible for a closing conference on Water Quality in Thessaloniki where project results will be presented along with the investment decision and

further-actions-plan for the actual implementation of the project. This final conference in Greece will be the responsibility of LB. It will take place in Thessaloniki during the last two months before the end of the Project. The main aim of the event will be to raise awareness on the project's results, related to improving water quality, and project's deliverables. Also, PB2 Municipality of Dimitrovgrad will participate in the International Closing Conference in Thessaloniki.

3.2.3 Publicity Material

Communication and Dissemination (WP2) is also obligatory and concerns the publicity of the project's results and includes: the development of the project's promotional material (4000 leaflets, 3000 brochures, 8 banners, 150 posters and 500 folders)
This material will be used and/or disseminated during public events of the project and will be available electronically on the project website, in order to increase awareness about the project's results in local communities and stakeholders.

PB1 will undertake the design and production of 4 banners, 2 in English & 2 in Greek which will be used in project events. Moreover, PB1 will undertake the design and production of 2.000 leaflets, in English (1.000 leaflets), Albanian (500 leaflets) and Greek (500 leaflets) which will contain information about the project and its outputs and PB1 will also produce 1000 Brochures in English (500 brochures), Albanian (250 brochures) and Greek (250 brochures). The project brochure will have the following content: ♣ The project: where the project will be outlined in terms of the project and the countries of origin of the partners ♣ The objective: where the objective of the project will be described in more detail ♣ Who concerns: where the target groups of the project will be described ♣ Results: describing the expected results of the project ♣ Partners: where the project partners will be mentioned with their logos and contact details. The project logo, the financing program logo as well as the EU will also be adapted in the brochure.
For the labeling of the events and for the attainment of the publicity rules, PB1 will design and print a total of 50 posters, 25 posters will be in English and 25 in Greek.

PB2 will undertake the design and productions of 4 banners, 2 in English & 2 in Bulgarian which will be used in project events. PB2 will also undertake the design and production of 2000 leaflets, in English (1000 leaflets), in Albanian (500 leaflets) and in Greek (500 leaflets) and 2000 brochures in English (1000 brochures), Albanian (500 brochures) and Greek (500 brochures) which will contain information about the project and its outputs. PB2 will produce 500 folders. For the labeling of the events and for the attainment of the publicity rules, PB2 will design and print a total of 100 posters, 50 posters will be in English and 50 in Albanian.
For each beneficiary a marketing/printing company will take over this deliverable.

3.2.4 Press releases

PB1 will also be responsible for promoting the project through five (5) press releases to the media.

PB1 will undertake the preparation and registration of five (5) press releases relating to the progress of the project and the individual actions of the project partners in order to promote, publicize and disseminate these actions at local and national level. These press releases will be published in key events during the implementation of the project. In particular, PB1 will undertake the design of a maquette, which will include all the elements of the project, such as the title, the Program, the Contracting Authority, as well as the necessary logos of the Contracting Authority, the project, the Program and the co-financing. Entries will be in black and white size ¼ of the registration page, as specified in the Call for Proposals and will be published in local Media. Each entry in the press should include:

- The emblem of the European Union and a reference to the European Union
- The Program logo
- The Project logo
- Reference to the European Regional Development Fund and sources of co-financing with the following phrase: "The Act is co-financed by the European Union (ERDF) and National Resources of Greece and Bulgaria"

The press releases will be determined according to the progress of the project and its publicity needs, from the date of signing the Contract to the end of the Project. In particular, the entries will relate to announcements on the progress of the project and its individual actions,

announcements on project conferences, and detailed information on the progress of the project's implementation.

4. Measurement of efficiency indicators (Δείκτες αποτελεσματικότητας)

After the end of the actions, a report will be presented detailing the results of the publicity. For all actions, some indicators will be used to measure the effectiveness of each communication energy. The effectiveness indicators to be used are different for each communication tool. Based on the effectiveness of the tools the adjustments will be made if necessary.

Quantitative indicators could take into consideration number of: leaflets, posters, brochures, banners and folders, website average daily/monthly visits, participants at the events (closing conference).

More specifically:

- Printed materials such as leaflets, posters, brochures, banners and folders, will contain an easy to understand information about the project and will be used to promote the cross-border programme.
- For the resonance of the Website, we will take into account visits to it, that is, the number of people who visited the site and their time spent on it.
- At events (The international closing conference in Thessaloniki), we will compare the guests with the attendees who eventually will exist.

5. Analysis of human and financial resource requirements (Πόροι)

All partners are expected to use available as well as newly acquired equipment and staff or external expertise within the project’s framework to support the implementation of the communication actions. The people working in communication actions is estimated based on the amount of actions, the type of actions and it includes aside from secretarial support, speakers, staff and external experts. The budget for communication actions per Partner is predefined in the Application Form, nevertheless it may vary based on the supplier’s offers.

5.1 Human Resources Requirements

The role of the LB is to coordinate work and facilitate the beneficiaries' inputs required for all the WPs of the project. For this purpose the LB will provide the necessary experienced staff. It is responsible for the legal, financial and operational matters associated with the execution of the project in accordance with the commission contract. The LB will appoint the related Deputy-Mayor for the role of Project Coordinator (PC). The PC will be assisted by a Steering Committee (SC) that will be created with one representative per beneficiary. It will meet twice a year, in order to approve work plans, review progress and solve any strategic issues. The SC is responsible for the execution of the project and is the final authority for project-related decisions. It is also responsible for initiating and coordinating any activities related to quality control of the deliverables. For overall project's Management the LB will provide a dedicated Project Management Unit (PMU) composed of the Project Manager, one Assistant PM, a Project Administrative and a Financial Manager. The PMU will be supported by a Technical Committee (TC), composed by 2 executives from each beneficiary. The TC will meet 4 times during the project. Each beneficiary will report every 3 months to the PC about the progress of the work. The progress status of the tasks will also be reported in terms of actual man-months spent. The PC will summarize the overall project status and prepare technical and financial project reports for the JS following the guidelines of the programme manual. The PM will also establish an internal communication system, according to the following rough plan; the meetings and respective reports foreseen as deliverables of WP1 serve as major events for internal communication, and an information management matrix will be elaborated, pointing out who should provide and get which information, in which form, through which channel, and where it will be archived, how and by whom. Daily communication between Project Beneficiaries will be facilitated by phone calls, e-mails and online meetings while there a file archiving system will be established at the beginning of the project via Municipality of Oraiokastro (LB).

5.2 Financial resource requirements

The deliverables of the project will be operable within the duties and responsibilities of the beneficiary in charge of each activity. LB will operate and update the applications and web-portal through the website of the organization, for at least five years after the end of the project. At the end of the project, beneficiaries will discuss the details on the terms of use and further updating of the information included in all the tools created by the project, so as to allocate tasks and ensure the continuously operation and usefulness of these tools.

5.3 Table of External Expertise and Services

Partner	Budget (€)	ernal Expertise
Municipality of iokastro	**19.000,00€**	people approximately in tota all Communication Actions
2- Municipality of nitrovgrad	**9.700,00€**	people approximately in tota all Communication Actions

6. Project Templates (Πρότυπα έγγραφα & επικοινωνιακό υλικό του έργου)

It is important for the dissemination of the project, that a variety of documents which are regularly used throughout the implementation of the project, are common for all partners and actions, so that there is cohesion among all publicity material.

The templates that were developed for the needs of the “Aquality” project are the following:

i. Agenda

ii. Invitation

iii. Letter /document page

iv. Participants List

v. Presentation template

vi. Press Release

vii. Project Contact List

viii. Requests from partners

ix. Meeting cover folder

x. Project Deliverable

The aforementioned templates are available at the annex of the present communication plan, and they will be sent to all partners in digital version.

ANNEX

Aqua-lity: Application of innovative techniques for improving drinking water quality in urban areas

Project Meeting/ Conference/ Event

Date: XX/XX/20XX

Venue:

MEETING AGENDA

XX:XX – XX:XX	**Arrival and registration of the participants**
XX:XX – XX:XX	**Welcome speech** **…….**
XX:XX – XX:XX	**Title of the presentation** *Name of presenter:*
XX:XX – XX:XX	**Title of the presentation** *Name of presenter:*
XX:XX – XX:XX	**Title of the presentation** *Name of presenter:*
XX:XX – XX:XX	**Title of the presentation** *Name of presenter:*
XX:XX – XX:XX	**Title of the presentation** *Name of presenter:*
XX:XX – XX:XX	**Title of the presentation** *Name of presenter:*

Partner's Logo

Interreg
Greece-Bulgaria
EUROPEAN UNION
Aqua-lity
European Regional Development Fund

XX:XX – XX:XX	**Coffee break**
XX:XX – XX:XX	**Title of the presentation** *Name of presenter:*
XX:XX – XX:XX	**Discussion on project's progress** *All partners*
XX:XX – XX:XX	**Summary of the tasks for the upcoming period – Final conclusions** *All partners*
XX:XX – XX:XX	**Lunch**

Partner's Logo

PARTNER'S LOGO

INVITATION

(Name of the partner)
in the framework of the project
"Application of innovative techniques for improving drinking water quality in urban areas" with the acronym **"Aqua-lity"** of the INTERREG V-A COOPERATION PROGRAMME **"Greece – Bulgaria 2014-2020"**,
invites you to the …. Meeting/ Conference/ Event
on (Date) XX (Month) 20xx, at XX:XX am,
at the (Venue).

PARTNER'S LOGO

Name of the partner
Address:
Information:
Telephone:
e-mail:

City, XX/XX/20XX

To:
JOINT SECRETARIAT OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME
"GREECE – BULGARIA 2014 – 2020"
Address: 65, Leoforos Georgikis Scholis,
570 01, Thessaloniki, Greece
Call center: +30 2310 469 695
Fax: +30 2310 469 623
E-mail: jts_grbg@mou.gr
Web Site: www.greece-bulgaria.eu

Subject: ……

(Name & Signature)

Meeting/ Conference/ Event

Project Title: "Application of innovative techniques for improving drinking water quality in urban areas"
Project Acronym: "Aqua-lity"

Venue XX/XX/20XX

No	Name	Organization	Position	Phone Number	e-mail	Signature
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						
11.						
12.						
13.						

Partner's Logo

Interreg
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Aqua-lity
European Regional Development Fund

Meeting/ Conference/ Event

Project Title: "Application of innovative techniques for improving drinking water quality in urban areas"
Project Acronym: "Aqua-lity"

Venue XX/XX/20XX

14.						
15.						
16.						
17.						
18.						
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25.						

Partner's Logo

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Aqua-lity
European Regional Development Fund

TITLE OF THE PRESENTATION/ NAME OF THE SPEAKER

INTERREG V-A Greece – Bulgaria 2014 - 2020

Project Acronym: Aqua-lity
Project Title: Application of innovative techniques for improving drinking water quality in urban areas
Meeting – Venue, xx/xx/20xx

PARTNER'S LOGO

Contents

Interreg
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Aqua-lity
European Regional Development Fund
EUROPEAN UNION

Partner's Logo

PRESS RELEASE

PROJECT CONTACT LIST

Project Title: "Application of innovative techniques for improving drinking water quality in urban areas"
Project Acronym: "Aqua-lity"

No	BENEFICIARY	NAME	ROLE	PHONE NUMBER	E-MAIL	FAX	ADDRESS
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							
11.							
12.							

Interreg
Greece-Bulgaria
Aqua-lity
European Regional Development Fund

PROJECT CONTACT LIST

Project Title: “Application of innovative techniques for improving drinking water quality in urban areas”
Project Acronym: “Aqua-lity”

13.							
14.							

Interreg
Greece-Bulgaria
Aqua-lity
European Regional Development Fund

Contractor's Logo

Deliverable x.x.x
Title of the Deliverable

In the framework of the project "**Application of innovative techniques for improving drinking water quality in urban areas**" with acronym "**Aqua-lity**"
INTERREG V-A COOPERATION PROGRAMME
GREECE – BULGARIA 2014 - 2020

Partner's Logo

PARTNER'S LOGO

Name of the partner
Address:
Information:
Telephone:
e-mail:

City, XX/XX/20XX

To:
Municipality of Oraiokastro
Address: Komninon 76, Oraiokastro
Thessaloniki, PC:57013,
For the attention of Mr/ Ms. ……

Subject: ……

(Name & Signature)