

Evaluation of communication strategy and publicity of RDI OP

FINAL REPORT

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
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| AS CR | Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic |
| CATI | Computer-assisted Telephone Interviewing |
| CZ | Czech Republic |
| CR | Czech Radio |
| CT | Czech TV |
| QS | Questionnaire survey |
| EQ | Evaluation question |
| EC | European Commission |
| ERDF | European Fund for Regional Development |
| EC | European Communities |
| EU | European Union |
| FAQ | Frequently asked questions |
| IDI | Individual interviews |
| IOP | Integrated Operational Programme |
| IS | Implementation Structure |
| IS MONIT7+ | Information System MONIT7 + |
| CoP | Communication Plan |
| LN | Lidové noviny |
| MRD CR | Ministry for Regional Development, Czech Republic |
| MEY&S CR | Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Czech Republic |
| NSRF | National Strategic Reference Framework |
| OP | Operational Programme |
| EI OP | Operational Programme Enterprise and Innovation |
| TA OP | Technical Assistance Operational Programme |
| RDI OP | Research and Development for Innovation Operational Programme |
| EC OP | Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme |
| ROP | Regional Operational Programme |
| ACoP | Annual Communication Plan |
| MA | Managing Authority |
| SF | Structural Funds |
| TC | Telecast |
| RD | Research and development |
| UNI | Universities |
| IB | Intermediate body |

Evaluation of communication strategy and publicity of RDI OP

1 Executive Summary

The project "Evaluation of communication strategy and publicity of RDI OP", whose authority is the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEY&S CR), was implemented by HOPE-E.S., v.o.s., EUservis.cz division, from 14 January 2011 to 15 April 2011.

The project addressed the evaluation of the RDI OP communication strategy and publicity according to individual **evaluation areas (EA)**, which closer address the bellow issues:

- Assessing the relevance and appropriate setting of specific objectives, information priorities target groups, and information tools and publicity tools,
- Assessment of the current state of implementation of RDI OP CoP, in terms of current activities, outputs, results, level of awareness of target groups of the RDI OP and the identification of factors promoting or hindering the achievement of planned objectives
- Assessment of consistency of objectives, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts of RDI OP
- Design of scenarios to achieve the global objective of RDI OP, suggestions for improvement or clarification of specific objectives, information priorities, target groups, information and publicity tools, outputs, results and monitoring indicators, justification, how effective communication strategies of RDI OP would be implemented through proposed modifications.

The main conclusions and recommendations formulated on the basis of the implemented analysis according to evaluation areas are:

Preparation and implementation of annual communication plans (ACoP) from 2012 to 2015

In this period it is appropriate to move the **emphasis from the initiation of the interest of potential applicants in support towards informing the public and other relevant target groups about the program and interventions results**, using a comprehensive media campaign. At the same time it is necessary to further **develop and strengthen communication support to beneficiaries** and create conditions for successful completion of unfinished projects. **For the success of the program direct information support to the beneficiaries is essential within** the implementation phase of the project, so as to minimize the risk of problems in the implementation phase of projects.

Communications management, monitoring, evaluation

Within management and implementation of communication strategy and publicity of RDI OP, the **processor proposes to enhance the perception of the role of publicity** within the Managing Authority of OP, ensuring consistent budget implementation of communication plan and cooperate conceptually with **external suppliers**. **To effectively update ACoP it is**

vital to continuously evaluate communication activities, best on an annual basis and conduct relevant annual updates of ACoP; To increase the validity and reliability of indicators of success of communication and promotional activities, the processor suggests **re-organizing and optimizing the monitoring indicators**.

Application of communication tools

It is essential to **create a custom Web portal of RDI OP**, which will be used for communication with both the general and professional public, as well as with applicants and beneficiaries. For application of all planned measures in accordance with RDI OP CoP it is also necessary to complete the selection of external service providers (web site, promotional materials, organization of seminars and conferences, media agency, etc.). In this case, the possibility to use services of external suppliers is a barrier to the implementation of planned activities of RDI OP CoP. The proposing part of the report contains recommendations how **to improve project communication to the general public**. These recommendations are made based on investigations and processor's experience in the field of communication and communication expert advice for the public administration. Recommendation section contains proposals for strengthening the means of communication used by public administrations in the media, online and direct communication, namely using modern communication channels. Emphasis should be placed on the **use of current technology options, such as the potential of social networks, forums and tools to share multimedia content**, or direct communication.

Partial conclusions under each of the areas examined are:

Appropriateness of specific objectives setting, information and publicity tools is specific under target groups according to individual RDI OP CoP

a) applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP

- For the target group of applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP communication paths should be primarily set through **direct personal contacts of individual applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP with representatives of the Managing Authority (MA) at the level of project managers**. In this context and perception of the target group of applicants and beneficiaries we can recommend least possible changes at positions of project managers at the MEY&S for frequent changes in communication (form and content). Likewise, this group recommends **joint meetings of representatives of RDI OP beneficiaries with representatives of the Implementing Entity or establishment of working groups, representatives of applicants and beneficiaries and project managers from the MEY&S**, primarily because the community of beneficiaries within the RDI OP is not as wide (as e.g. in the case of EC OP) and that applicants and beneficiaries themselves assume that they address similar problems. Within the communication with project managers at

the MEY&S, RDI OP applicants and beneficiaries prefer e-mail communication. Another good tool for information and publicity, according to the target group of applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP, is setting up a custom website for RDI OP, which would be regularly updated and where current contact details of MA project managers would be clearly listed. Last but not least, one of the main information and publicity tools for the target group of applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP are **guides for applicants and beneficiaries**, while this target group evaluates them largely negatively, especially in relation to their frequent changes.

b) potential applicants for RDI OP

- The target group of potential applicants for RDI OP uses primarily electronic resources to receive information about the RDI OP, **especially websites of Operational Programmes** (e.g. www.strukturalni-fondy.cz), **website of the Implementing Entity** and **webpages of other authorized applicants for RDI OP**. This target group rates **websites** as appropriate awareness tools, while especially the website of RDI OP Managing Authority was criticized for its confusing arrangement, difficult orientation and traceability of necessary information. In terms of recommendations from potential applicants for RDI OP information provision is recommended mainly through direct sending of newsletters and the necessary information via email directly to potential applicants.

c) public

- The target group of **wide and professional public** receives information about the RDI OP primarily through **electronic resources and media tools** (TV, radio, press releases). Appropriate tools to raise awareness among the **professional public** target group are mainly **websites of Operational Programmes** (especially www.strukturalni-fondy.cz) and webpages of other potential applicants for RDI OP (websites of universities, research organizations, etc.). For the **general public** target group appropriate tools to raise awareness are mainly classical media, i.e. **television, radio, print and online advertising**. With regard to the content of the communication giving information about specific projects and their latest developments has proven to be effective.

d) Implementing Entities of RDI OP (Managing Authority)

- The level of OP CoP target group's awareness of the RDI OP, in particular the Implementing Entities of RDI OP, **largely depends on the workload of individual employees of the MA**. Employees whose job it is to coordinate RDI OP at ministries are highly aware of RDI OP and specific areas of the RDI OP CoP.
- Quality of opinion on the RDI OP and in particular the RDI OP CoP Implementing Entities target group mainly depends on **satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the current division of responsibilities, and where appropriate, with the system of**

communication activities management at the MA. Employees whose job it is to coordinate RDI OP at ministries are rather dissatisfied with the current division of responsibilities within the management of RDI OP communication activities (reorganization, staff changes).

e) **media**

- The general level of awareness in the target group of media is to some extent affected by web sites of Operational Programmes and Managing Authority. **Press releases, information events and direct cooperation** with journalists, which is influenced by the division of communication responsibilities at MEY&S (reorganization), substantially affect the rate and quality of RDI OP awareness in this target group.
- Quality of awareness of RDI OP among target group media is **influenced in particular by affairs**, which are related to areas of science and research in general, specifically with events co-financed by the RDI OP (the issue of funding for science and research in the Czech Republic, opening up new scientific centers, research centers at universities or success of Academy of Sciences - ASCR).

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Within the context of **RDI OP Managing Authority** activities we can divide specific communication and promotional activities into **two groups based on their success**, i.e. activities that different RDI OP CoP target groups rated **positively** and those can therefore be considered successful, and those that were rated **negatively**, and they can thus be considered less successful.

Target groups rate positively **consultations and seminars, as a wider range of seminars and workshops** has been reported, but the demand still outstrips the supply. As for **consultations, target groups value greater responsiveness and professionalism** of the RDI OP Implementing Entities' staff. **The media presented some major projects of RDI OP in a positive way** (e.g. CEITEC project), which significantly contributed to the promotion of the RDI OP; however, **the presentation of the program reflected negatively institutional issues** (e.g. related to the withdrawal of the Director General of the European Funds Section of the MEY&S).

Target groups rated **negatively the changes in information availability through web portals**, especially www.msmt.cz, which has become rather confusing and unstructured recently; it is very difficult to learn the information sought. **Frequent changes and staff turnover** at the MEY&S, namely in positions of contact persons in the RDI OP projects, are also negatively perceived mainly by beneficiaries. Also, the target groups complain about the changes and their timing during the preparation and implementation of projects, especially in **methodological manuals and calls**. All these aspects mentioned affect the success of implementation of communication and promotional activities of RDI OP.

In terms of recommendations we can be especially suggest **significant shift in the internet presentation of RDI OP** - although the overall assessment of the portal does not come out clearly negative, certain editing of the site is necessary (streamlining of MEY&S website, the emergence of independent RDI OP website), launching a media campaign and cooperation with external service suppliers (media agency event agency, web portal, promotional items, etc.) and the **involvement of new communications and promotional channels, especially social networks** (Facebook, Twitter etc.).

2 Introduction

This report presents the outcomes of the project "Evaluation of the RDI OP communication strategy and publicity" commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

The project has been implemented from February 7, 2011 to April 15, 2011 and is divided into two phases. The first phase took place between February 7 to February 21, 2011 and its output was the Initial Report including the specified methodological approach to the evaluation solution. The other phase of the project was implemented from February 22 to March 31, 2011; it mainly concerned field investigations. The final report submitted presents in detail any findings made within the evaluation survey and the resulting conclusions and recommendations.

2.1 Project grounds

According to Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006, Article 69, it is the duty of an EU Member State assisted by the Structural Funds (SF) to ensure transparency and full awareness on the assistance drawn from the Structural Funds. In the Czech Republic a communication strategy has been developed for these purposes, which is an integral part of the implementation of the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) in CR. Information and publicity measures are implemented in line with the NSRF and through communication plans for individual Operational Programmes. Communication Plan of Technical Assistance Operational Programme (TA OP) will inter alia include a framework communication strategy of the CR for the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) for 2007-2013. The obligatory evaluation of publicity and communication activities results inter alia from the Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1828/2006.

The aim of the evaluation is not only to evaluate the publicity and promotion of the Operational Programme. MEY&S long-term objective is to provide information on the OP in a unified way, increase the efficiency of information, their intelligibility and improve the overall image of the institution in the field of OP administration. It is therefore essential that the evaluation also partially addresses the information relationship to other relevant departments of the ministry, such as EC OP Management Department, Department of Technical Assistance, etc.

Since the history has proven that weaknesses in external communication are based on deficiencies in internal communication, this evaluation focused on this important aspect.

Communications Plan of the Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation (RDI OP CoP) is based on the communication plan of the TA OP and further develops the communication strategy for assistance from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in the field of science and research for the period 2007 - 2013. Framework communication strategy for RDI OP is annually elaborated and specified through annual communication plans that include detailed information on planned information and promotional activities. RDI OP CoP partly follows the Communication Action Plan for the Industry and Enterprise Operational Programme (the IE OP) from 2004-2006. It also results

from individual analysis focused on information and communication activities in 2004-2006 and foreign experience. It thus aims to **streamline the provision of information on the assistance from the Structural Funds, particularly the ERDF, to the area of research, development and innovation.**

RDI OP Managing Authority - Ministry of Education, Labor and Sports is responsible for the implementation and proper execution of the RDI OP CoP. MA is in charge of the implementation of European Community structural assistance, responsible for fulfilling the obligations concerning information and publicity, and especially to ensure that target groups will be informed. Information and publicity measures are implemented in line with the NSRF and through communication plans for individual Operational Programmes.

RDI OP CoP contains information on objectives, target groups, content, strategy and tools of information and promotional activities, financing, management and implementation, evaluation and entities involved in its management and schedule.

The global objective of RDI CoP is to ensure with a professional approach that assistance provided by the European Regional Development Fund to develop research and development of RDI OP in the programming period 2007 - 2013 would be available and transparent for all RDI OP target groups and highlight the positive role of economic and social policy cohesion of the European Union for this assistance.

Specific objectives of the RDI CoP reflect the need for different **levels of communication with regard to target groups** and allow for **more effective communication with various target groups**. Achieving the specific targets ultimately leads to meeting the global objective.

Specific objectives of the RDI CoP:

- 1) To ensure awareness of the general and professional public about the results and the implementation of RDI OP and the role of the European Union.
- 2) Ensure sufficient awareness among potential RDI OP beneficiaries and create conditions for the implementation of a sufficient number of quality projects.

Respective specific objectives of the program are extended by information priorities with defined target groups and assigned appropriate tools.

RDI OP MA (MEY&S) also annually presents annual communication plans (ACoP), which specify the activities implemented during the year, describe the methods of activities' evaluation, monitoring indicators, etc.

2.2 Project Objectives

The overall objective of the project was to evaluate the Communication Plan of RDI OP, resp. communication strategy and publicity of RDI OP.

Project objectives are specifically defined as follows:

- **Determine the extent to which the CoP reflects the current needs of RDI OP** in relation to specific objectives, information priorities, target groups and awareness and publicity tools.
- **Determine the current status of implementation of RDI OP CoP and achieved outputs / outcomes**, i.e. the evaluation of the RDI OP awareness and publicity strategy implementation.
- **Determine how the current version of RDI OP CoP helps its effective monitoring and evaluation.**
- **Provide feedback to the Managing Authority along with recommendations** to increase the effectiveness of implementation of the RDI OP communication strategy and publicity; in case that a need is identified, propose improvements through the review of the RDI OP Communication Plan, which would result in a more effective implementation of the RDI OP communication strategy.
- **Implement a reliable and complete survey** to evaluate the actual structure and potential for the RDI OP communication and promotional activities. Full awareness and opinion survey among the RDI OP CoP target groups will be run (questionnaire survey, individual interviews, and telephone survey).
- **Evaluate the effectiveness and success of communication and promotional activities** for the evaluation criteria of **relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, relevance and sustainability.**
- **Analyze in detail appropriate ways to use the RDI OP communication and promotional activities in a broader context and formulate specific practical recommendations** to be used for drawing up the annual RDI OP communication plans.
- **Perform comparative analysis of communication and promotional activities of RDI OP and other ERDF programs** (e.g. Enterprise and Innovation Operational Programme) and give examples of good practice.
- **Utilize experience with the implementation of awareness and publicity measures under the ERDF programs of the previous period** - e.g. "324 G02 Methods of communication in the implementation of EU funds for 2007-2013 programming period (transparency, coordination and communication management): Methodology of development and implementation of the Communication Action Plan for OP", and propose recommendations for RDI OP.
- **Run the analysis of awareness and publicity tools of RDI OP.**
- **Create a collection of proposals for alternative solutions for the successful communication plan implementation in the next period**, including the pros and cons of the proposed solutions scenarios for the RDI OP Implementing Entities.

- **Specify communication mechanisms and tools compliant to the needs of RDI OP CoP target groups.**
- **Summarize and integrate the results of the analysis already carried out** (implemented or ongoing investigations) and use the results for evaluation and to create a communication plan.
- **Create conditions for effective dissemination of evaluation results among all defined user groups** (through dissemination events - presentations at meetings of working groups, or the monitoring committee, the EC staff, etc.). The processor puts special emphasis on this partial objective, for now there is not a sufficiently strong awareness of the possibilities of using the results of the analysis processed and their application.

The project does not merely assess the current state including quantification of communications impact on target groups, but also **proposes more effective communication activities and communication strategies for the RDI OP including implementation of the results into the communications strategy for the future.**

3 Methods Used and Project Methodology

A wide range of methods and tools have been used within the project. These methods were appropriately combined according to target groups and type of information to be obtained and analyzed. The basic techniques for data collection and evaluation were mainly desk research, quantitative and qualitative field research, surveys of public awareness and media analysis.

3.1 Desk research

Desk research method was the primary method for gaining information and data "at the desk" on all relevant available information and materials relating to the subject project. The desk research used primarily current RDI OP documentation related to issues of communication strategy and publicity.

List of documents used in the desk research:

- Communication plan for the Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation
- Annual Communication plans for the Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation
- Analysis of communication needs and draft of RDI OP communication strategy
- Guidelines - evaluation of OP communication plans 2007-2010, 2010
- Methodology for Monitoring of Structural and Cohesion Funds for the programming period 2007-2013, MRD CR, 2009 as amended,
- Annual reports on implementation of RDI OP
- Guide for Applicants for Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation (for each priority axis)
- Guide for Beneficiaries within Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation
- National Indicator Chart
- Rules for RDI OP publicity - Annex to the Guide for Applicants and Beneficiaries of RDI OP
- Research and Development for Innovation Operational Programme (RDI OP)
- RDI OP Visual Identity Manual
- Documentation of calls offered
- Monthly monitoring reports
- Documentation of other ERDF programs - such as IOP
- Operational Manual of RDI OP
- Data and documents about the monitoring of the publicity provided by the MA of OP
- Conclusions of the RDI OP Monitoring Committee meeting

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- Database of RDI OP beneficiaries - Report on the projects supported provided by the authority as of 7. 2. 2011
- Lists of RDI OP beneficiaries, <http://www.strukturalni-fondy.cz/Stav-cerpani/Seznamy-prijemcu>
- Database and contact details of MEY&S staff who can be contacted within the investigation in the evaluation of communication and publicity of RDI OP - set provided by the authority as of February 22, 2011
- Outputs of publicity activities for RDI OP (archive of press releases, publicity outputs and documentation for each year)

Thanks to the desk research a comprehensive map of the problem has been created, ongoing processes have been mapped; thematic fields of research were precisely defined and the conditions for carrying out a field survey of subsequent evaluation analysis were created.

3.2 Qualitative Media Analysis

An additional tool for the desk research was the qualitative media analysis, which focused on information sources and documents published by the media. Media content analysis is a quantitative research method for a systematic and intersubjectively verifiable description of communication content.

Media content analysis is a quantitative research method for a systematic and intersubjectively verifiable description of communication content.

Analysis of RDI OP media coverage maps in detail the **media presentation of EU funds mediated by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in the national and regional news media** (national and regional newspapers, radio, television, and internet) **in the second half of the year 2010**. It investigated explicit mentions of the MEY&S and one of the following terms at the same time: Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation, the European Union (in terms of utilization of funds).

The aim of the method was to **evaluate the current media non-advertising publicity of RDI OP**.

Reference period: 2. Half of 2010

Sample volume: 319 relevant posts that mention the issue in the Czech media

Monitored Media:

- Dailies: Mladá fronta Dnes, Právo, Lidové noviny, Hospodářské noviny
- TV coverage: ČT, Nova, Prima, Z1
- Radio coverage: ČRo1, Impuls F1

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- Weekly: Ekonom, Euro, Profit, Týden, Reflex, Respekt
- Regional Content: Mladá fronta Dnes, Právo, LN, Pražský deník
- Internet sources: novinky.cz, aktuálně.cz, idnes.cz, centrum.cz, ihned.cz

Analysis of RDI OP media coverage corresponds to the following questions:

- What was the level of media coverage of European funds spent by MEY&S in the period monitored?
- How did the intensity of media coverage of spending of European funds by MEY&S vary in national and regional media?
- In what context (negative, neutral, and positive) was the spending of European funds MEY&S presented by the media?
- How intensively were hyped individual priority axes and areas of intervention?
- How intensively were regions and municipalities hyped in connection with the drawing of EU funds by MEY&S?
- How intensively were specific organizations and categories of organizations (ministries, offices, social and nonprofit organizations, private institutions, etc.) hyped in connection with the drawing of MEY&S subsidies?
- How much space did the media provide to specific speakers mentioning the subsidies of MEY&S?

Analysis of issue media publicity comprehensively assessed the issue profiling in the media. It analyzed the context (positive / neutral / negative) and thematization of media coverage (basic thematic categorization by priority axes of RDI OP), identified key stakeholders and interest groups who communicated on the issue, evaluated the impact of crisis events.

Basic evaluation of media analysis is a part of the response to the evaluation questions; a full evaluation is included in Annex to project report.

3.3 Field research

One of the principal sources of information for the qualitative process evaluation of RDI OP communication strategy and publicity is a field investigation. The field survey used questionnaires and individual interviews with beneficiaries, potential applicants and beneficiaries, public representatives and representatives of the Implementing Entities of RDI OP.

3.3.1 Quantitative research - an electronic survey (DOT)

Questionnaire survey was chosen for the quantitative survey, along with electronic questionnaires. The electronic questionnaire form allows respondents to enter the questionnaire portal www.dotaznicek.cz directly through an addressing e-mail.

Within the survey RDI OP beneficiaries were asked along with potential RDI OP applicants and beneficiaries and RDI OP Implementing Entities. Processor drew up a list of respondents based on publicly available databases, documents and reports from the IS MONIT7 + (as of February 7, 2011), provided by the contracting authority.

Survey of RDI OP applicants and beneficiaries

Report of RDI OP beneficiaries included a list of 220 projects. In total, the report provided by the authority (February 7, 2011) showed that 220 projects were presented by 84 different eligible applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP. Contact List has been modified and adjusted for duplicate e-mail contacts to representatives of applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP. **After removing duplicates, and the necessary adjustments to the list of projects the database included a total of 173 unique e-mail addresses of the RDI OP beneficiaries and applicants.** There was a **complete addressing** within the questionnaire survey.

The questionnaire survey of applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP was **carried out through the portal** from 1 - 13 March 2011. On 25 - 28 February 2011 a pilot testing of the questionnaire was carried out, which tested the functionality of electronic research, verified the structure and logic of asked questions and the export of answers from electronic questionnaires. In the middle of the questionnaire survey (9 March) a repeated query was sent to respondents who had not participated in the questionnaire or did so only partially (e.g. filling in only a part of the questionnaire).

In the questionnaire survey, a total of 173 respondents from among applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP and was attended by a total of 85 respondents. In order to evaluate the questionnaire it was necessary to select only completed questionnaires, i.e. those closed and sent by respondents through an electronic system. **A total of 57 completed questionnaires were returned, i.e. the return rate of the questionnaires reached 32.9 %.**

A survey of potential RDI OP applicants, resp. professional public

Potential RDI OP applicants were assigned based on a desk-based research, when conditions for eligibility to submit the projects to the RDI OP were identified from relevant documents. Based on the analysis contact details and lists of eligible RDI OP applicants or beneficiaries were obtained from publicly available databases. The group of RDI OP potential applicants included research organizations, libraries, museums, universities and astronomical bodies. A total of 1 151 e-mail contacts were obtained from databases of those bodies. The sample was made with regard to the type of applicant, and geographic distribution. In the questionnaire survey **1,151 representatives of potential RDI OP applicants were addressed.**

The questionnaire survey of RDI OP potential applicants and beneficiaries was **carried out through the portal from 1 - 13 March 2011**. On 25 - 28 February 2011 a pilot testing of the questionnaire was carried out, which tested the functionality of electronic research, verified the structure and logic of asked questions and the export of answers from electronic questionnaires. In the middle of the questionnaire survey (9 March) a repeated query was sent to respondents who had not participated in the questionnaire or did so only partially (e.g. filling in only a part in the questionnaire).

In the questionnaire survey, a total of 1, 151 respondents from among RDI OP applicants and beneficiaries were addressed and it was attended by a total of 159 respondents. In order to evaluate the questionnaire it was necessary to select only completed questionnaires, i.e. those closed and sent by respondents through an electronic system. **A total of 99 completed questionnaires were returned, i.e. the return rate of the questionnaires reached 8.6 %.**

Survey of RDI OP Implementing Entities

List of representatives of RDI OP implementing bodies was provided by the authority on February 25, 2011 and included a total of 58 contacts. There was a **complete addressing** within the questionnaire survey.

The questionnaire survey of RDI OP applicants and beneficiaries **was carried out through the portal from 3 - 17 March 2011**. On 2 - 5 March 2011 a pilot testing of the questionnaire was carried out, which tested the functionality of electronic research, verified the structure and logic of asked questions and the export of answers from electronic questionnaires. In the middle of the questionnaire survey (14 March) a repeated query was sent to respondents who had not participated in the questionnaire or did so only partially (e.g. filling in only a part in the questionnaire).

In the questionnaire survey, a total of 58 respondents from among representatives of the RDI OP Implementing Entities were addressed and the survey was attended by a total of 38 respondents. In order to evaluate the questionnaire it was necessary to select only completed questionnaires, i.e. those closed and sent by respondents through an electronic system. **A total of 33 completed questionnaires were returned, i.e. the return rate of the questionnaires reached 56.9 %.**

3.3.2 Qualitative research - individual interviews (IDI)

A qualitative survey was conducted through individual structured interviews with actual and potential RDI OP applicants and beneficiaries and representatives of the RDI OP Implementing Entities. The selection of respondents for individual interviews was conducted by the so-called quota sampling.

Sampling in research groups of actual and potential applicants and beneficiaries of EC OP fulfilled basic criteria for selection:

- - Criterion 1: Coverage of respondents in terms of the type of applicant / beneficiary (legal forms)

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- Criterion 2: Coverage of respondents in terms of support (relevant for the actual applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP)

The *additional criteria* were selected as follows:

- Criterion 3: Coverage of respondents in terms of region of residence of the applicant or project's impact
- Criterion 4: Coverage of respondents in terms of success / failure of the project within the evaluation process (relevant to the actual applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP)

The selection of respondents was made on the basis of publicly available databases, documents and reports from the IS MONIT7+ provided by the authority on February 7, 2011. **Individual interviews with eligible applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP were implemented between 3 - 25 March 2011.** Pilot testing of individual interviews, which tests the developed interview scenario in terms of structure, logic and sequencing issues, as well as in training of interviewers and familiarization with the research sampling, took place two days before the start of qualitative research. **In total 19 interviews** were implemented in the above period, **which were attended by 20 respondents.** The individual IDI records were processed to aggregate outputs and subsequently analyzed by the evaluation project areas (see Section 5.1 of the report).

Research sampling in the group of RDI OP Implementing Entities was conducted in collaboration with the authority. Within the individual interviews RDI OP Managing Authority representatives were approached, as well as staff of other relevant departments of MEY&S. In the period from 21 - 29 March a total of 10 interviews were carried out. Conclusions and suggestions raised by individual interviews are part of the answers to the project evaluation questions and final recommendations.

3.3.3 Telephone Survey

Telephone survey was used to investigate **awareness among the general public**. Its **aim was to identify knowledge and awareness of the EU programs and RDI OP**. Public awareness survey was conducted by CATI (Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing). CATI telephone interviewing has been recommended in order to ensure representativeness of the target population in the Czech Republic. Telephone survey approached **representatives of the general public**; experts were part of a survey related to potential applicants of RDI OP.

Quota sampling was based on four criteria:

- Age
- Sex
- Education
- Place of residence

The scope of the investigation sample: 750 respondents (sample size is sufficient for the representativeness of research for the CR population)

Implementation period: February-March 2011

Objectives of the survey:

- Mapping of awareness and knowledge of the RDI OP, awareness of the specific activities supported
- Information sources of identified awareness

Findings from the survey are included in responses to evaluation questions in this report, the summary results of the investigation are contained in the annex to this report.

4 Identification of results and observed data

This chapter includes the identification of the field survey objects sample and observed results and data.

4.1 Quantitative research - an electronic survey (DOT)

The questionnaire survey was conducted by an electronic questionnaire portal www.dotaznicek.cz. Respondents from among the beneficiaries of RDI OP and applicants and potential applicants participated in the questionnaire survey, as well as the representatives of the RDI OP Implementing Entities. **The investigation was conducted during March 2011, and approached a total of 1,382 relevant representatives of authorized entities and was attended by a total of 282 respondents.**

Chart1: Identification of survey respondents

| Target group | Number of respondents | The number of participating / percentage participation | Number of questionnaires included in the evaluation, so-called representative sample | Return of completed questionnaires |
|---|-----------------------|--|--|------------------------------------|
| Applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP | 173 | 85 (49.1 %) | 57 | 32.9 % |
| Potential applicants of RDI OP, professional public | 1 151 | 159 (13.8 %) | 99 | 8.6 % |
| Implementing Entities of RDI OP | 58 | 38 (65.5 %) | 33 | 56.9 % |
| Total | 1 382 | 282 (20.4 %) | 189 | 13.7 % |

Note: Number of participants includes the total number of respondents who participated in the survey. The participation percentage is related to the ratio of the number of participating and total number of respondents.

Number of questionnaires included in the evaluation is the number of fully completed questionnaires, so-called representative sample.

The return of completed questionnaires shows the percentage share of a representative sample on the total number of respondents.

Questionnaire by type of respondents (actual and potential RDI OP applicants / beneficiaries and representatives of the RDI OP Implementing Entities) are evaluated collectively and then

analyzed by the evaluation project areas. A full evaluation of the investigation is attached to the final project report.

4.2 Qualitative research - individual interviews (IDI)

Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted and the selection of respondents for individual interviews was conducted using the so-called quota sampling. Individual interviews were **attended by representatives of the RDI OP beneficiaries and applicants (15), RDI OP potential applicants (5) and RDI OP Implementing Entities (10).** The investigation was conducted in March 2011 and a total of 30 respondents participated.

Respondents selected from among applicants and beneficiaries were the **representatives of universities (6), public research institutions (3), the private sector (2) and one representative each of school educational facilities, public utility companies, government funded organizations and statutory cities.**

Group of 15 applicants and beneficiaries included respondents who had submitted / implemented projects in the following areas of support: 1.1 (1), 2.1 (7), 3.1 (2), 3.2 (3) and 4.1 (2). Respondents presented by their submitted and completed projects according to the regional coverage the Liberec region, South Moravia, Pardubice, Zlín, Olomouc and Hradec Králové. **The ratio of successful (Approved projects) and other projects** of applicants and beneficiaries, who participated in individual interviews, was **5:10.**

Research sampling in the group of RDI OP Implementing Entities was conducted in collaboration with the authority. Within the individual interviews RDI OP Managing Authority (MEY&S) representatives were approached. In the period from 21 - 29 March **a total of 10 interviews** were carried out. Conclusions and suggestions raised by individual interviews are part of the answers to the project evaluation questions and final recommendations.

Conclusions and suggestions received from the respondents in individual interviews were comprehensively evaluated and analyzed according to the evaluation project areas. Brief assessment of interviews for the target group of applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP is a part of the Annex to the project report.

4.3 Telephone Survey

Telephone survey was used to investigate the **awareness among the general public**. Its **aim was to identify knowledge and awareness of the EU programs and RDI OP**. Public survey conducted by CATI in the months of February-March 2011. A representative nationwide sample survey included 750 respondents, selected by quota based on age, gender, education and place of residence.

Chart 2: Description of research sample of the general public

| Age | 18 to 29 | | 30 to 44 | | 45 to59 | | 60 and above | |
|-------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--|
| | 22% | | 26% | | 28% | | 24% | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Sex | men | | | women | | | | |
| | 48% | | | 52% | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Education | Elementary | | Secondary (no GCSE) | | Secondary (with GCSE) | | University | |
| | 22% | | 26% | | 28% | | 24% | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Region | | | | | | | | |
| Prague | Central Bohemia region | Karlovy Vary region | Moravian-Silesian region | South-Moravian region | Pardubice region | Usti nad Labem region | | |
| 12% | 11% | 3% | 12% | 11% | 5% | 8% | | |
| Zlín region | South-Bohemian region | Liberec region | Hradec Kralove region | Olomouc region | Plzen region | Vysocina region | | |
| 6% | 6% | 5% | 5% | 6% | 5% | 5% | | |

Source: Survey on Awareness of RDI OP among the general public, March 2011

Basic evaluation of public survey is a part of responses to evaluation questions; a full evaluation is included in the Annex to project report.

5 The main conclusions and findings

The following subsections deal with the main conclusions and findings throughout the evaluation.

5.1 Responses to evaluation questions

Four evaluation tasks were defined, which included the following evaluation questions:

Evaluation task 1:

To what extent does RDI OP CoP reflect the current needs of RDI OP in the area of communication and publicity?

The current settings of the communication plan basically reflect the needs of RDI OP in the area of communication and publicity.

Basic sets of tools are included in the CoP (we can recommend partial completion with new modern trends, such as the use of social networks). In the following period it is appropriate to move the emphasis from the **initiation of the interest of potential applicants in support towards informing the public and other relevant target groups about the program results and individual interventions**, using a comprehensive media campaign. At the same time it is necessary to further develop and strengthen communication support to beneficiaries and create conditions for successful completion of unfinished projects. For the success of the program direct information support to the beneficiaries is essential within the implementation phase of the project, so as to minimize the risk of problems in the implementation phase of projects.

The following section gives detailed answers to the sub-evaluation tasks.

1.1 What activities were applied by the MA / IB as part of informing the RDI CoP target groups of the existence and possibilities of using RDI OP funds?

We can say that RDI OP target groups are informed based on sets of tools as defined in OP CoP and individual ACoP. Quantitative evidence about application of individual instruments is conducted; it is possible to largely monitor performance of indicators related to the application of individual tools.

Basic groups of tools applied to increase the awareness and support communication about the RDI OP:

- **Media Communications** - these are mainly press releases issued during the implementation of RDI OP
- **On-line communication** - administration and operation of the program website, direct online communication with applicants, beneficiaries, professional public, etc.

- **Direct communication** - individual and collective, i.e. seminars, conferences, individual consultations, etc.
- **Publishing activities and specific information tools** - publications, promotional items, etc.

These activities are part of annual communication plans (ACoP) of RDI OP. Those activities that are directly tied to the implementation by staff responsible for communication and awareness (or other internal staff involved in RDI OP awareness and communication) are very successfully implemented. However, the selected activities anticipated in ACoP that are tied to the selection of external service providers (media communications event agency, promotional items, etc.) are implemented in compliance to original intentions. Selection of external suppliers (for selected services, carried out together with the EC OP) was not completed in the monitored period; it was thus impossible to ensure the application of all planned tools in the expected intensity. Based on the investigation we can conclude that the selection of external services suppliers has not been completed partly due to administrative barriers and complexity of the selection of suppliers' process. External service suppliers are selected for similar services together for RDI OP and EC OP (to avoid purposive splitting of contracts).

In the event that in the period 2007-2015 the activities contained in the approved RDI OP CoP failed to be implemented, these changes should be explained and justified in the annual updates of the RDI OP communication plan. Otherwise, it could be a violation of the provisions of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006 of 8 December 2006, Article 7, par. 1, which states that "Managing Authority shall ensure that the **information and publicity measures are carried out in accordance with the communication plan** and to focus on the extensive publicity in the media, using various forms and methods of communication at the appropriate territorial level."

1.2 Which communication and promotion tools are more or less successful in ensuring knowledge and awareness of the RDI OP among the CoP target groups and why?

Within the target group of **applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP** an appropriate means of ensuring the knowledge and awareness of RDI OP is especially direct contact with the staff of ministries, especially through **direct and personal email communication**. Applicants and beneficiaries see direct communication as very successful (especially personal consultation), which confirms the results of field investigations. Applicants and beneficiaries regarded **private consultations** directly with the MEY&S staff as a key tool for communication with a Managing Authority; in this regard it is crucial to **maintain quality staff of MEY&S, namely project managers**, who should not change in relation to changes in leadership or organizational structure of the Ministry.

Another communication tool to increase knowledge and awareness of applicants and beneficiaries are **seminars and workshops** where you can get current information on specific topics and issues related to the preparation and implementation of projects. For a

successful and smooth project preparation and implementation quick availability of timely, often very specific information is the key. It is thus necessary to put emphasis on **accelerating the information requirements negotiation process from applicants and beneficiaries to the ministry** through specialized staff (project and financial managers).

Handbook for applicants and beneficiaries as another communication and information tool proved to be frequently used, **but hardly practicable source** of specific information in the investigation. The reason, according to applicants and beneficiaries, is its excessive academic nature, complexity and clutter of the text with a lot of useless general provisions. **Practical applicability of specific information** in the manuals for specific areas of project implementation **is perceived as problematic**, but the manuals and methodology are very often used especially in the preparatory phase of the project.

Furthermore, the investigation revealed that both the target group of applicants and beneficiaries, and the target group of **potential applicants** especially considered RDI OP website (www.strukturalni-fondy.cz) an effective tool for transmitting information, along with **direct email communications**, especially for sending information on calls and supported activities. On the part of applicants and beneficiaries, however, there are complaints about the clarity of the RDI OP web portal.

The **general public** survey shows that **quality and understandable information is largely obtained in the internet by respondents** (54%). **1 / 4 of the population** considered **television** a suitable source of information on the RDI OP. **Newspapers, magazines** are preferred by 13 % of respondents and 7 % of respondents prefer **conferences, seminars, courses and specialized web sites**. Personal contact with institutions, specialized publications, trade press and information line are preferred by 1% of respondents - for the general public this is a marginal source of information.

In summary we can conclude that:

- To ensure general **public awareness**, the most appropriate tool seems to be a **media campaign that uses television, internet and print media**.
- For potential applicants, applicants and beneficiaries it is appropriate to use a mix of instruments, a combination of **direct communication** (personal consultations and e-mail communication), organization of **seminars and workshops** on specific topics, available and **practical methodologies and manuals prepared for applicants and beneficiaries**, and a clear and attractive **web portal** of RDI OP.

1.3 Do existing methods (forms) of information comply with your needs? What forms are most used? Which forms of information about support options can be considered effective? Which forms should be strengthened and why?

The target group of RDI OP applicants and beneficiaries uses most the **website of Operational Programmes and the website of implementation body** (2 / 3 of respondents), resp. **seminars and workshops** (60% of respondents) and **methodologies**,

manuals, handbooks (50% of respondents). Seminars and workshops with the participation of competent persons who are able to answer questions, and information provided via email are considered the most efficient transmission of information by applicants and beneficiaries. The existing awareness forms according to the investigations carried out meet the requirements in principle, but there were minor deficiencies identified in some tools. Within investigations proposals of RDI OP applicants and beneficiaries were often raised to **enhance quality and visibility of web pages** of the Managing Authority, **introduction of separate web pages of RDI OP** and **strengthening the timeliness and accuracy of email communication with the ministry staff**.

The target group of **potential RDI OP applicants** most used **websites of Operational Programmes** (2 / 3 of respondents) and website of **Implementing Entity** (55% of respondents) and the transmission of information via web portals is therefore for this group the most effective. At the same time, respondents considered appropriate to **enhance the quality and visibility of web pages of the Managing Authority**.

The general public mostly uses the information **from the Internet** (54% of respondents). **1 / 4 of the population** considered **television** a suitable source of information on the RDI OP. **Newspapers, magazines** are preferred by 13 % of respondents and 7 % of respondents prefer **conferences, seminars, and courses**.

To sum up, it is appropriate to **maintain and further develop the transmission of information via the RDI OP web portal**. This can be considered an effective tool of awareness across all target groups, but streamlining the portal (or building their own separate and structured RDI OP portal) is recommended. **Direct communication, particularly with applicants and beneficiaries**, can also be considered highly effective and necessary. It is often a transfer of specific information when it is appropriate to ensure interaction between target groups and MA of RDI OP. To enhance public awareness of the RDI OP, a media campaign (TV spots, etc.) is appropriate. Using media campaigns has proved to be effective as in the case of the HRE OP, where awareness of the program among the general public reaches about 30% .

Evaluation task 2:

To what extent does RDI OP CoP contribute to the achievement of goals?

In the context of the communication activities of the RDI OP Managing Authority we can say that awareness among the CoP target groups is sufficient. The following text contains the partial findings related to certain aspects of awareness among target groups; **there is also scope for increased public awareness of the RDI OP** (reaching about 10%). Generally, the **CoP in its current form contributes to the achievement of its goals. However, the success of various communication and promotional activities aimed at fulfilling the objectives varies.**

Target groups rate positively consultations and seminars, as a wider range of seminars and workshops has been reported, but the demand still outstrips the supply. As for consultations, target groups value greater responsiveness and professionalism of the RDI OP Implementing Entities' staff. The media presented some major projects of RDI OP in a positive way (e.g. CEITEC project), which significantly contributed to the promotion of the RDI OP; however, the **presentation of the program reflected negatively institutional issues** (e.g. as related to personnel changes at the MEY&S).

Target groups value **negatively changes in the documentation of programs, changes and transparency of the web portal www.msmt.cz.**

The following section gives detailed answers to the sub-evaluation tasks.

2.1 To what extent do the CoP target groups know Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation (or in comparison with other Operational Programmes) and how do they perceive RDI OP and why?

Based on the investigation we can conclude that the CoP **target groups' awareness of the CoP and RDI OP varies.**

The general public, which is one of the target groups of RDI OP, **shows a relatively low awareness of support for activities in science and research** (10% of respondents). **Compared** to the general public awareness of **other ERDF programs** - such as the **IOP**, it is nevertheless clear that the awareness of RDI OP in the general population is higher than of e.g. IOP, which is specifically focused on areas that have no direct potential of attractiveness of projects supported for communication with the public. The reason for the relatively low public awareness of the RDI OP is that no extensive media campaign was carried out in the monitored period that would be meant to inform general public target group about the RDI OP. E.g. for OP HRE, which launched a media campaign, the awareness among the general public reaches about 30%. We can therefore expect that if a media campaign focused on the general public is launched, the awareness of RDI OP will exceed that found within the current implemented investigation of public awareness. Increasing public awareness of the RDI OP and its benefits is desirable to strengthen the role of the Community in promoting research and development, according to Commission Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006 of 8

December 2006, Article 7, par. 1, which states that "Managing Authority shall ensure that the information and publicity measures are carried out in accordance with the communication plan and to focus on the **extensive publicity in the media, using various forms and methods of communication** at the appropriate territorial level." "

The timing of media campaign should respect the status of program implementation; primarily the presentation of concrete results of the program appears to be an appropriate topic for the campaign (successfully assisted projects and their results). Suitable topic and timing is important for public acceptance of the campaign, research and development topics can be perceived by a significant part of the public as difficult to understand and abstract.

The group of **potential applicants, including professional public** shows **greater awareness of the possibilities of funding for projects** focused on science and research in the Czech Republic (over 70% of respondents) than the general public target group. Specifically, two thirds of respondents are familiar with **SF Operational Programmes** (e.g. EC OP), of which **nearly 60% of potential applicants are aware of the existence of RDI OP**. Respondents from among potential applicants agreed that it is necessary to be aware of funding opportunities for their institutions and projects, since external sources of funding (projects, grants) are an important financial source for their continued existence and development. They specifically mentioned programs and funding opportunities through the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic, EUREKA project.

Awareness of the target group of beneficiaries is highest compared to other CoP target groups. As they are preparing or implementing a project in the RDI OP, the beneficiaries **know this Operational Programme in greater detail than other target groups** (e.g. potential applicants or the public). **Beneficiaries are also aware of other possibilities of funding** for their projects, particularly **through national programs** (ca. 80%), **EU Framework Programmes for Research and Development** (73% of respondents), **SF Operational Programmes**, such as OP PI, ROP (65 %). Other funding options are less well known among the beneficiaries (e.g. Programs of intergovernmental cooperation - 44% Programs outside the EU - 40%, Technology Platforms - 25%, Community programs - 21%).

2.2 To what extent are the relevant target groups aware of possible participation in the RDI OP?

Potential applicants', resp. professional public's awareness of the RDI OP involvement options is quite high, as shown by results from field surveys. Approximately **two thirds of RDI OP eligible applicants know** the funding options for projects through the **Structural Funds**, a half of the respondents are aware of the **OP Research and Development for Innovation**.

44% of respondents familiar with the RDI OP according to their statements in the implemented field survey plans to submit projects within the RDI OP, specifically focusing on **building well-equipped departments of science and research** (more than 55% of interested respondents), **providing quality education for students and young researchers and to create conditions for successful commercialization of its own scientific and research activities**, including intellectual property protection (approx. 36%).

Developing a top workplace with an international reputation and improving the system of availability of scientific information on science and research and contribution to the promotion and popularization of science and research are the project areas attractive for about 30% of respondents. ^{1/5} of respondents would like to focus on projects **supporting the development of quality infrastructure of universities** - quantitative and qualitative increase in human resources for research and development.

2.3 To what extent do the relevant target groups know the activities supported by RDI OP and how are they informed of their progress?

The awareness of activities supported by the RDI OP is **greatly diversified** among the RDI OP CoP target groups. Based on the survey results we can conclude that the **greatest knowledge** of the activities supported by the RDI OP has been shown within the target group of **applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP**. Lower level of awareness of the RDI OP is among the target groups of **potential applicants** (59 %) and **general public** (10 %).

The target group of applicants and beneficiaries is mostly informed through **seminars and workshops** (over 70% of respondents) and the **websites of Implementing Entity** (67%) and **Operational Programmes** (over 50%). Survey results showed that respondents in the target group of applicants and beneficiaries filed most applications in the project area 2.1 **Regional R & D centers** (54%), followed by 4.1 **Infrastructure for university educational process associated with research** (26%), 3.2 **Promotion and awareness on the results of R & D** (23%), 1.1 **European centers of excellence** (23%) and 3.1 **Commercialization of research organizations and protection of their intellectual property** (21%).

The target group of RDI OP **potential applicants** is mostly informed through **Web portals of Operational Programmes**, such as www.strukturalni-fondy.cz (65% of respondents) and **Implementing Entity website** (50% of respondents). **55% of potential applicants plan to submit a project within the RDI OP**, specifically on activities such as **building a well-equipped scientific and research workplace** (57% of respondents), **providing quality education for students and young researchers** (about 36%), **creating conditions for successful commercialization of their scientific and research activities, including protection of intellectual property** (approx. 36%) and **building a top center of international reputation** (approx. 32%).

The best known activity supported among the general public is the development and improvement of technology, research and innovation.

An interesting finding is that the knowledge of specific projects in the general public target group **does not affect the level of awareness of the RDI OP**. Awareness of the RDI OP in the target group of the general public is largely shaped by the specific awareness of upcoming projects that are media-visible to general public. In view of this fact, showing concrete projects and their results, along with the people behind them seems to be an appropriate topic for a media campaign. The campaign can reach both the general and professional public and raise awareness of RDI OP among potential users of the results of supported projects (scientists and researchers, students, etc.).

2.4 What information sources were used most by RDI CoP target groups to learn about the RDI OP?

The target group of RDI OP applicants and beneficiaries mostly used **seminars and workshops** (70% of survey respondents), **web site of Implementing Entity** (67% of survey respondents), and **communication and consultations with the staff of the MEY&S** (40% of respondents survey) to learn about RDI OP.

Potential RDI OP applicants and beneficiaries most used **web portals of Operational Programmes - e.g. www.strukturalni-fondy.cz** (about 66% of survey respondents) and **web portal of Implementing Entity** (55% of survey respondents).

The public mostly learned about RDI OP from the **internet** (54%), **TV** (24%), **newspapers and magazines** (13%), and through **radio broadcasts** (10%). Specifically, this target group mostly used **website www.strukturalni-fondy.cz** and **Managing Authority website**.

2.5 How did the relevant RDI CoP target groups obtain the information on existence and use of the RDI OP funds?

Field research across all target groups of CoP showed that **the most used awareness tool for** information about the existence and use of the RDI OP funds **is the internet**.

The target group of RDI OP beneficiaries and applicants obtained information about the existence and funding possibilities within RDI OP especially from **websites of Operational Programmes and Implementing Entity website** (65%), resp. within **seminars and workshops** and **handbooks, manuals and methodologies** (50% of respondents).

The target group of RDI OP **potential applicants** obtained information about the existence and funding within RDI OP namely through **websites of Operational Programmes** (e.g. www.strukturalni-fondy.cz), **MEY&S website** (about 60% of respondents) and **websites of RDI OP eligible applicants** (about 1 / 3 of respondents).

First contact with the RDI OP according to the targeted RDI OP beneficiaries and applicants and potential applicants would be implemented for most of them through **web portals of Operational Programmes and Implementing Entity**, resp. **seminar for applicants**.

The target group of the general public obtained information about the existence and funding possibilities within RDI OP especially from the **Internet** (54%) and **TV** (24%).

2.6 To what extent and how did the used awareness and publicity tools affect / assist in RDI OP project preparation and implementation?

From the perspective of the targeted RDI OP **applicants and beneficiaries** the used awareness and publicity tools **affected** the preparation (88% of respondents) and implementation of projects (70% of respondents). The most important awareness tool that

affects the preparation of projects are for applicants and beneficiaries **guide for applicants and beneficiaries** (50% of respondents), **workshops for applicants and beneficiaries** (50% of respondents), **telephone and email contact with the Managing Authority** (30% of respondents) and **MEY&S website** (30% of respondents).

In principle the preparation and implementation of RDI OP projects is most affected by Guides for applicants and beneficiaries and those awareness and publicity tools, which allow for **direct interaction with applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP**, i.e. **seminars for applicants and beneficiaries, and subsequent consultations with MEY&S staff**.

In terms of specific impact on project preparation and implementation, survey respondents most often cited problems with **inconsistency and mutual contradiction** of information obtained from **Guides for applicants and beneficiaries**, information from **employees of RDI OP Managing Authority** and the information given at **seminars for applicants and beneficiaries of RDI OP**. Furthermore, particular timeliness and accuracy of the information played a key role, both within the **direct communication** of the target group of applicants and beneficiaries with the staff of Managing Authority and intermediate bodies, as part of the information contained in the **guides for applicants and beneficiaries** or Managing Authority web portal. Another important factor with significant impact on RDI OP project preparation and implementation are changes in terms within the call and changes in the end date of the call.

Evaluation task 3:

To what extent the current version of RDI CoP helps its effective monitoring and evaluation?

The current form of RDI OP CoP does not contain sufficiently detailed guidance and procedures for monitoring and evaluation of communication and information process. Within management and implementation of communication strategy and publicity of RDI OP, **processor proposes to enhance the perception of the role of publicity** within the Managing Authority of RDI OP, ensuring consistent budget implementation of CoP. **To effectively update ACoP it is vital to continuously evaluate communication activities**, best on an annual basis and conduct relevant annual updates of ACoP. To increase the validity and reliability of indicators of success of communication and promotional activities, the processor suggests **re-organizing and optimizing the monitoring indicators**.

The following section gives detailed answers to the sub-evaluation tasks.

3.1 Which method of information about the assistance options is / would be optimum for the RDI OP CoP target group, which are they satisfied with and how often do they work with various sources of information?

The **optimal way of informing for the target group of beneficiaries and applicants** is in particular the flow of information through **seminars and websites of Implementing Entities** (respondents rated satisfaction with seminars and workshops with the average mark 2.18 and websites of Implementing Entities with 1.9 on a 1-5 scale). Seminars and workshops are attended on average by 30% of respondents min. once a month. Individual consultations are used by over 30% of respondents min. once a month.

Applicants and beneficiaries are rather satisfied with **websites of Operational Programmes, Managing Authority and eligible applicants** (respondents rate the quality of web portals with an average mark of 2.5 to 2.6), these information resources are used mainly at weekly intervals. Respondents **are least satisfied with the media**, i.e. television, radio, print and online advertising (respondents rate the quality of media tools with the average mark 3.3 to 3.6).

Potential applicants prefer **informing through web sites** (66%) to all other sources of information. The second preferred source of information for potential applicants are **seminars, workshops and consultations** (preferred by 30% of respondents). **Individual consultations** are preferred by 25% of potential applicants.

The public mostly searches **internet** for the information on RDI OP (54%), followed by **TV** (24%), **newspapers and magazines** (13%), and through **radio broadcasts** (11%).

Based on the analysis and results of field investigation we can conclude that **the best source of information** for the CoP target groups are mainly **web portals, seminars, workshops, and individual consultations**. These tools are suitable both in terms of relevance and in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. In terms of impact on the awareness of target groups (especially public) we can mention a media campaign (especially for TV

or online campaign on the Internet). However, these tools can be perceived problematic in terms of sustainability (which is clearly lower than for example for well-managed and updated web portal).

3.2 How and to what extent do RDI OP CoP activities contribute to the successful implementation of the program?

Evaluation of contribution of communication activities to the success of the program is problematic at the current stage of program implementation. Projects are gradually getting into the implementation phase, there is a shift in information activities focus towards beneficiaries, while there should be changes compared to the current focus of communication and information activities.

The survey among **RDI OP beneficiaries and applicants** showed that during the monitoring of information on RDI OP **changes in information coverage by the Implementing Entities were not particularly seen**, e.g. in terms of web streamlining, publication on the web, new information leaflets, a wider range of seminars, conferences, etc. (opinion of 63 % of respondents). Respondents value positively **partial clarification of MEY&S website and an expanded range of seminars**. Respondents value negatively frequent personnel changes among project managers at the MEY&S and inconsistency of information provided by multiple sources (e.g., manual vs. seminars, consultations). All these aspects affect the success of program implementation.

Based on the investigation we can conclude **that public awareness of the assistance provided by ERDF and RDI OP is minute (10%) but increases depending on the education of citizens**.

Media analysis showed that **RDI OP was more often presented in the national media than in the regional ones** (2/3 of the reference sample for the national media) and **a greater emphasis was put on institutional issues** (53%) than the **information on the priority axes, projects** (47%). Media coverage of the program was **most influenced by removal of the Director of EU funds (personnel changes at the ministry) and potential problems with further drawing of EU funds due to insufficient staffing of EU funds section**.

The media often presented a most common means of identification of origin of European money - subsidies from the EU, Structural Funds, EU money. **Less frequently the ERDF and marginally explicit indication of Operational Programmes**. The emergence and development of well-equipped research institutes were most frequently (and best rated) presented RDI OP topic in the media.

3.3 To what extent and why is / is not increasing public awareness on the assistance of the ERDF and RDI OP successful through communication and promotional activities (i.e. awareness and publicity tools)?

Based on the investigation we can conclude that public awareness of the assistance provided by ERDF, resp. RDI OP is at 10%. **Compared to the general public awareness of other ERDF programs** - such as the IOP, it is nevertheless clear that the awareness of

RDI OP in the general population is higher than of e.g. IOP, which is specifically focused on areas that have no direct potential of attractiveness of projects supported for communication with the public.

According to investigations carried out so far among the general public we can say that **spontaneous knowledge of Operational Programmes among the public is generally very low**, the vast majority of population fails to name a single operating program (72%). **General public derived the Mission of RDI OP rather from the name of OP** than its actual knowledge. The population largely sees the mission of the OP as the **"development and improvement of technologies"** (approx. 6.5%) or as **"research and innovation"** (4%).

Media analysis showed that **RDI OP was more often presented in the national media than in the regional ones** (3/4 of the reference sample for the national media) **and a greater emphasis was put on institutional issues (53%) than the information on the priority axes, projects (47%).** The emergence and development of well-equipped research institutes were the most frequently (and best rated) presented RDI OP topic in the media.

3.4 How to modify the layout of the responsibility for implementing of the communication and promotional activities to maximize the successful implementation of the CoP?

Barriers were identified in the implementation of communication and promotional activities, consisting mainly in the **finished selection of external suppliers of services** related to the implementation of planned promotional and communication activities according to the CoP. These include an incomplete selection of service providers in the field of **media communications**, service suppliers in the **supply of promotional items**, service delivery and the **organization of seminars, workshops and conferences** (events), and supplier of a **new web portal**. Without a complete selection of suppliers it is hardly possible to implement the tools defined in the RDI OP CoP and annual communication plans (ACoP). In the event that in the period 2007-2015 the activities contained in the approved RDI OP CoP failed to be implemented, these changes should be explained and justified in the annual updates of the RDI OP communication plan.

Evaluation of communication activities is provided within **brief information in the annual reports on the implementation of RDI OP**. To meet the essential requirements of implementing Regulation, this method can be regarded as sufficient. Systematic monitoring of promotion and awareness activities is also carried out. **It is important to focus on systematic observation and monitoring of activities in the future, both with regard to average levels (number of copies of promotional materials, the number of consultations and people at workshops, web site traffic, etc.) and the achieved quality** (e.g. systematic feedback from beneficiaries and applicants for consultations, seminars, conferences, etc.).

3.5 How to set indicators of success of communication and promotional activities to increase their validity and reliability to monitor the success of the CoP?

To monitor the success of communication and promotional activities it is necessary to distinguish two levels of monitoring - quantitative and qualitative. For **quantitative evaluation** of the success of communication and promotion activities, **monitoring of communication and promotional tools** needs to be set and implemented systematically. According to the survey and analyses, monitoring of the measures implemented is satisfactory. However, with regard to effective monitoring, it is necessary to primarily monitor the quantitative data, at relevant levels (outputs, outcomes and impacts).

To increase the validity and reliability of indicators of success of communication and promotional activities, the processor suggests re-organizing and **optimizing the monitoring indicators**:

Output indicator - measures the number of implemented activities, events and measures in relation to the planned number of activities, events and measures. Thus, the outputs indicate the degree of implementation of CP, especially in quantitative terms.

Results indicator - evaluates the direct and immediate impact of the activity on target groups - the intervention of CS members, the number of clicks on banner, the number of participants in seminars, etc. Result indicators already show evaluation of CoP implementation in terms of quality.

It is advisable to also **quantify the target values of RDI OP CoP impact indicators**, which have not been quantified until now.

Impact Indicator - observes the change in awareness, knowledge, perceptions and attitudes. Even managing authorities, which have impact indicators defined since the beginning of the programming period, are currently reassessing the target values – adjusting then to real values achieved in the mid-term.

Table 3: Proposed indicators of outputs and results

| Communication tools | Output indicator | Result indicator |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Media communication - advertising | → Number of advertising campaigns | → Post-buy analysis: → Net Reach – number of target group members, who have seen the spot, ad at least once; → GRP - the total number of impressions (number of spot views) |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ CPT - the amount of funds spent to reach a thousand of members of a target group |
| Media Communications - editorial cooperation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Number of press releases; ➔ Number of organized events (press conferences, press trips, events) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ The number of used and publicized press releases (media coverage): ➔ Number of published outputs of implemented events (articles, reports, interviews, etc.) |
| On-line communication - website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Number of websites | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ The number of visitors, the standard website traffic monitoring (such as Google Analytics, i.e., unique visitors, pages viewed, time spent on site, etc.); ➔ Number of documents downloaded |
| On-line communication (advertising) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Number of implemented online campaigns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Number of surveyed users; ➔ Number of clicks; ➔ The average price per click |
| Direct communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Number of organized seminars and trainings; ➔ Number of organized conferences; ➔ Number of participations in conferences; ➔ Number of participations in trade fairs ➔ Number of organized events for the public; ➔ Number of database e-mails | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ The number of participants in seminars and training; ➔ Number of those addressed by mailing database |
| Publishing activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Number of new publications, manuals, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Number of copies; ➔ Number of copies distributed; |

| | | |
|-------------|---|---|
| | methodologies, newsletters, annual and final reports | ➔ Number of documents downloaded on-line |
| Other tools | ➔ Number of types of promotional items; ➔ Number of educational, instructional and promotional films on DVD, CD-ROM; ➔ Number of other processed materials on digital media | ➔ Number of distributed digital media |

Note: Way of monitoring of some indicators depends on the manner of implementation of communication activity to which the indicator relates. An indicator will be monitored in case of ensuring activities through an external supplier otherwise than in case of provision of activities by internal capacities.

The processor proposes to monitor impact indicators listed in the table and defines their target values in 2015 as follows:

Table 4: Proposed Impact Indicators

| Impact indicators | Target value in 2015 |
|--|----------------------|
| Spontaneous knowledge of RDI OP ➔ professional public (applicants and beneficiaries); ➔ general public <i>"Do you know any of the Operational Programmes, through which financial support from the Structural Funds is provided? "</i> | 35 % 12 % |
| Questioned knowledge of RDI OP ➔ professional public ; ➔ general public <i>"I will read now some abbreviations of specific programs. Please tell me for each of them, to what extent you know it. "</i> | 90 % 45 % |
| Knowledge of the main mission of RDI OP ➔ professional public ; ➔ general public <i>"Do you know what is the main mission of the Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation? "</i> | 60 % 30 % |
| Awareness of the results and benefits of RDI OP ➔ professional public ; ➔ general public | 50 % 10 % |

*"Do you remember any specific projects funded by the RDI OP?
Provide all. "*

The above proposed indicative values of impact indicators take into account the following facts:

- The current level of awareness among the general public is about 10%. In case of implementation of media campaign, media coverage of projects and the results of RDI OP can be expected to maintain and also increase public awareness of at least 2 percentage points (i.e., the proposed 12%).
- Interviewed RDI OP knowledge among the general public is likely to be supported by implementing their own RDI OP projects, awareness can be expected in about half of the public with regard to the attractiveness of large projects for the media at regional and national level.
- Knowledge of RDI OP mission among the general public corresponds with RDI OP assisted knowledge, but problems may arise with a clear mission assignment of RDI OP when, for example, there were too abbreviated interpretation of media messages. For this reason the general public awareness is proposed at 30%.
- Knowledge of specific projects of RDI OP among the general public could be well achieved, the population is already familiar with projects and we can expect to further increase the awareness during their implementation.
- Critics are already currently quite extensively informed about the existence of the program, while it is real within the application of planned tools that the planned values will be achieved (the current knowledge of the RDI OP is about 60%).
- For professional public we can expect a good orientation in the areas assisted by RDI OP along with adequate knowledge of the results of RDI OP and specific supported projects.

Monitoring and evaluating of the quality of the applications of awareness and communication tools

To monitor and **assess the quality** of awareness and communication tools we especially recommend **systematic qualitative research** (e.g. in the form of feedback) from the communication and promotional activities' target groups. The most appropriate are, in particular:

- Evaluation questionnaires for the participants of seminars, workshops, conferences, etc.
- online polls and surveys of satisfaction, such as newsletters, shape, form and content of web pages, personal counseling, etc.

- Regular surveys of awareness of target groups (qualitative or quantitative)
- Regular surveys of public awareness - which can be implemented both at the OP level and possibly along with other OPs at the NSRF level.

To evaluate the **success of information and communication activities** it is also possible to run an ad-hoc analysis (an example could be this analysis in mid 2007-13), or annual operational evaluation of the awareness of target groups' quality. Importantly, however, also allow for the fact that willingness to participate in the investigation significantly decreases in case that the investigation of target groups is run too often. This is especially true for representatives of organizations burdened with regular reporting on their activities. With regard to validity and reliability of survey results it is thus appropriate to coordinate the awareness quality investigation with other evaluation units, studies and surveys so that the relevant target groups are not too often the subject of investigation (especially relevant for groups of applicants and beneficiaries).

3.6 Have the aims set out in the annual communication action plans been achieved with efficient use of inputs?

The objectives set in the communication plans are considered as indicative, therefore optional in terms of their fulfillment. Given the dynamic developments in communication and communication means, it is very difficult to target monitoring indicators of all levels in CoP several years in advance, so rather the values specified in each Annual Communication Plan are taken as relevant, especially at the level of outputs. However, without setting a quantified objective we cannot rightly say whether or a defined objective has been achieved.

In case of RDI OP **an important part of activities is linked to external service providers**. Due to the fact that a significant part of selection procedures has not been completed, efficient use of inputs and outputs cannot be done in a quite relevant way. Therefore a planned drawdown of funds for the implementation of the CoP is not happening under the plan, results and impacts of the awareness target groups are also correspondingly lower than in the implementation of CoP tools under the plan (e.g. if a media campaign had been implemented, public awareness of the RDI OP would be probably higher). . **Compared with public awareness of selected Operational Programmes, the public awareness of RDI OP is lower** (concerns EC OP, and OP HRE awareness).

According to surveys conducted **the awareness of target groups reaches a level that corresponds to the evaluator's opinion to the implementation phase of the program and the application of individual CoP tools**. In view of these facts the current level of awareness can be considered sufficient, both in the target groups directly related to program implementation (potential applicants, applicants and beneficiaries), and also **awareness among the general public (10%) can be considered sufficient** .

The above values that reflect the awareness of target groups, cannot be considered sufficient for future awareness and communication support of implementation of the RDI OP. The current level of awareness of target groups, especially the general public, corresponds to a state when the projects are just getting into the implementation phase. To build and maintain awareness among particular target groups of the RDI OP, it is necessary to use a complex mix of awareness and publicity tools, particularly the media campaign

targeted at the general public. When implementing communication tools in line with the RDI OP CoP, particularly the media campaign **we could expect to achieve better results in awareness among the general public** (as already mentioned, for example, OP HRE reaches the level of about 30%). Also if the tools of direct communication are enhanced and a new web portal is created, **it would be possible to achieve better results** that will relate to the satisfaction of relevant target groups (especially applicants and beneficiaries) with **the quality of information**, its usability, accuracy, etc.

It is clear that unless contracts with external service suppliers are concluded, implementation of all activities in accordance with the approved communication plan is likely to fail. In the event that in the period 2007-2015 the activities contained in the approved RDI OP CoP fail to be implemented, these changes should be explained and justified in the annual updates of the RDI OP communication plan and presented to Monitoring Committee of RDI OP in accordance with Commission Regulation (EC) No . 1828/2006 of 8 December 2006, Article 4, par. 1-3.

Otherwise, it could be a violation of the provisions of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006 of 8 December 2006, Article 7, par. 1, which states that "Managing Authority shall ensure that the information and publicity measures are carried out in accordance with the communication plan and to focus on the extensive publicity in the media, using various forms and methods of communication at the appropriate territorial level."

Evaluation task 4:

Should the current version of the RDI OP CoP be revised in order to promote the achievement of planned objectives, which fully reflect the needs of RDI OP? If so, how?

The current version of RDI OP CoP meets the essential requirements to fulfill the objectives set. In the period 2011 - 2015 it is however appropriate to focus also on the use of new communication trends unused at the time of the CoP preparation (e.g. social networks, etc.). In this period it is appropriate to move the **emphasis from the initiation of the interest of potential applicants in support towards informing the public and other relevant target groups about the program and interventions results**, using a comprehensive media campaign. At the same time it is necessary to **further develop and strengthen communication support to beneficiaries** and create conditions for successful completion of unfinished projects. **For the success of the program direct information support to the beneficiaries is essential** within the implementation phase of the project, so as to minimize the risk of problems in the implementation phase of projects.

The following section gives detailed answers to sub-evaluation questions.

4.1 Have the tools and interventions in the field of communication and publicity brought the expected results?

Awareness of RDI OP target groups is sufficient, however, **compared with other Operational Programmes implemented in the Czech Republic (EC OP, OP HRE)**, the **results and impact of communication are significantly** lower (see answers to questions relevant to the evaluation and see the results of the investigation of public awareness). Tools used lack the impact potential as of the comprehensive media campaign that was launched for example in the case of the OP HRE. Also in comparison with the EC OP the survey shows that the RDI OP has a lower natural potential to be perceived as a "program for everyone". On the other hand, projects planned in the regions contribute significantly to the higher public awareness. **Based on the information on the progress of specific projects it is possible to build public awareness about the progress of implementation of the RDI OP.**

In the coming months there can be a **significant increase in demand on the capacities of staff with regard to projects launched**, their own negotiation and entering into implementation phases. In particular, in **direct communication with the beneficiary, one must allocate sufficient capacity for the communication itself, as well as internal communication for solutions to specific problems** arising during project implementation (eligibility of expenditure, monitoring, sustainability, etc.), which is an essential prerequisite for effective external communication.

To improve results, and especially the impact of CoP implementation, it is necessary to focus on **media communication** (general public), **direct communication, seminars and consultations** for applicants and beneficiaries (improved quality of information and

minimizing problems in projects implementation), in general all target groups use **websites** and the Internet as an important source of information.

4.2 Could better results be achieved using other communication tools?

Due to the dynamic developments in communication, but also the external environment of the program, there are many new tools that are appropriate for information and communication with regard to new trends in use. In particular, it is the **ever-increasing importance of online communication, use of social networking, blogging, micro-blogging, etc.** These tools are also attractive with regard to their effectiveness; they feature very wide scope in both the public and especially the option to specifically focus on selected segments and specific target groups (e.g. only beneficiaries of RDI OP in the use of discussion forums or blogs).

Taking into account the increase of the number of users of social networks such as Facebook in the CR, it is one of the fastest growing communication tools in the country. The investigation of CSO shows that **in December 2010 in the CR** about 2.9 million users used the **Facebook network**. Compared to January 2010, when the tool was used by about 2 million users this is an increase by 900 thousand users. **The current number of users in December 2010 amounts to about 50% of all Internet users in the country.** Facebook is not a communication tool for "school children", the above number of users is about 2.3 million within 18 to 55 years, about 60 thousand users are over 55 (see the analysis of CSO Use of Facebook community network, available at http://www.czso.cz/csu/redakce.nsf/i/vyuzivani_facebooku_v_ceske_republice_a_ve_svete).

Administration of profile in social networks, blogs or micro-blogs can be implemented by internal employees of MA. It is not necessary to implement an external supply of services; an administrator interface already exists within the basic profile at social networks, which plays the role of CMS. Uploading content is then similar (and even simpler) to the upload of content at a web portal. **Cost effectiveness will be then directly influenced by internal capacities that can be flexibly used for these activities.**

Another advantage is **targeting information campaigns at target groups that are potential users of project results and outputs of RDI OP**, or may significantly contribute to the multiplication of project results. Those are secondary school and university students, graduate students, young scientists, scientific workers, who temporarily work abroad in internships, study visits and are thus relatively easy to address with regard to their positioning.

Generally, the **above target groups are not entirely new in the perspective of CoP. In part it is a segment of the general public** (e.g. students, young researchers), in part it is possible to address professional public by these means (a number of targeted persons can be potential applicants, users of supported interventions, etc.) or directly the beneficiary.

It can also be stated that a **higher awareness among the public and other CoP target groups could be achieved in cooperation with external service providers**, especially in

media campaigns, creating and managing RDI OP web portal, in organizing events and other ancillary supplies and services in the field of communication.

The emphasis on developing internal capacities of RDI OP MA is a way **to strengthen the quality of awareness** of those target groups that are directly involved in program implementation. The success of RDI OP largely depends on their awareness (applicants, beneficiaries). Through direct communication, seminars, workshops or individual consultations, methodologies and manuals awareness scope will not be increased (higher percentage of potential applicants who will be informed of the RDI OP), but **quality of awareness and satisfaction with the assistance of the implementation structure will increase**. You can also expect a **positive approach to the preparation and implementation of related activities** that will follow after implemented RDI OP projects, whether in the sustainability of implemented projects, and in the follow-up projects or programs. **Strengthening of quality awareness also helps long-term building of program image and implementing institutions image - MEY&S.**

4.3 What awareness and publicity tools can be more or less used in order to increase the impact of communication and promotional activities of RDI OP to specific CoP target groups?

For the information of the targeted **beneficiaries and applicants** of RDI OP based on analysis conducted, the appropriate tools of awareness and publicity are **Operational Programmes websites** (e.g. www.strukturalni-fondy.cz) and the **Managing Authority website** (55 - 65% of respondents considered them an appropriate tool for information transmission and approximately 30% of respondents work with them at least 1x a week). At the same time **measures aimed at increasing the quality of information content and visual aspects** (clarity, timeliness and accuracy of the information, its legibility, user friendliness, etc.) are to be taken for these awareness and publicity tools. Furthermore, **seminars and workshops for applicants and beneficiaries**, and **manuals and guidelines for applicants and beneficiaries** of RDI OP are appropriate awareness tools for RDI OP applicants and beneficiaries.

In the case of the target group of RDI OP **potential applicants**, web site of Operational Programmes and Managing Authority are mainly used.

However, media tools for searching information on the RDI OP are not favored by this target group. Media campaign, however, would clearly increase the impact on awareness of the target groups RDI OP CoP and its progress. Above all, the **general public** prefers the Internet, TV, newspapers and magazines and the most important tools enhance public awareness.

4.4 Would it be appropriate to change the portfolio of used communication tools?

Basic communication structure, which is mainly based on websites, direct communication with beneficiaries (individual and collective) and the media campaign, can be used as an

appropriate basis of awareness and communication tools of RDI OP in the next period. Due to the development of communication means, **complementing existing means of communication and broadening their portfolio to include new elements of effective communications** that enhance the attractiveness and impact on RDI OP target group communication should be considered.

The current tools do not need to be radically changed or replaced; it is advisable to consider adding new tools used in a portfolio of awareness and communication activities used. Significant potential can be seen in the area of addressing the intervention target groups using means of **online communication**, particularly modern elements related to the **sharing of media or the use of social networking and their interconnection with the web presentation program of the program**.

Reasons for the use of modern means of online communication in the case of RDI OP are mainly the following:

- This is a **dynamic and modern communication tool**. RDI OP should strive for self-perception as a dynamic, progressive, modern OP aimed at promoting modern and innovative procedures, including less traditional communication with target groups and following modern trends.
- Within a number of interventions RDI OP activities are focused on creating conditions for development of human potential in science and research in the Czech Republic, reaching a European and world levels and increasing the attractiveness of the human potential for highly specialized scientific and research capacities. • This strategy must correspond to the **contents of communications, as well as its form**. Communication must be **attractive in its content and form**; it must be interactive and also provide the opportunity to express an opinion of recipient's information, which increases the perception of transparency in communication.
- European and global dimension in a program supported within interventions will further promote international cooperation, while the popularity and use of social networks abroad is at a very high level. Some platforms do not have Czech localization yet, but it is only a matter of time before they become widely used in the CR (e.g. Twitter).
- It is an opportunity for the presentation of science, research and RDI OP, **sharing information, views and perspectives of applicants, beneficiaries, Implementing Entities of RDI OP**.
- It is also a unique opportunity for **changes in the internal communication** within RDI OP implementation structure of the MEY&S.
- Use of social networking is a **good complement to existing or newly created web portals**. • When using the web, forums and social networking, interesting synergies for SEO optimization arise.
- **Setting up the profile and adding content is usually possible immediately**.
- **Creation of content and administration of profiles** on social and community networks **is very fast and simple**, it can flexibly respond to current events, the environment allows for maximum interactivity.
- **There should be additional costs** for hosting web space, domain registration and management, graphic design, content management system, etc. in comparison to "classic" web presentation.

Possible steps for the application of communication tools and their modification in the following period are as follows:

Web portal of RDI OP

Based on the survey we can **recommend creating a custom portal of RDI OP**. The aim is to concentrate information for target groups in an attractive, user-friendly and well-arranged portal, to which the target groups are often channeled through other communication and promotional tools. The portal is used primarily by potential applicants, beneficiaries, applicants, professional public; it is a valuable source of information also for those involved in the implementation of RDI OP projects supported in the RDI OP, or the general public. Partial steps are:

- Creation of tender documentation for selection of external suppliers
- Selected contractor should propose a structure for a web portal, which should respect the fact that the portal will be used for communication with applicants, beneficiaries, professional and general public, the media; it will serve as storage of guidance documents and rules for the preparation and implementation of projects, or publication of tenders, etc.
- The portal should include features for interaction with target groups, i.e. a section of frequently asked questions (FAQ), sections for updates or newsletters, possible connection to RDI OP profiles within social networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.), connections with the media to share multimedia content (e.g. youtube.com)
- An important element is the existence of user-friendly website CMS in order to flexibly and easily edit website content by MA of RDI OP.
- Creating a web site should respect the requirements for easy searchability of sites through search engines (SEO), while the website and its design should be optimized with regard to the functioning of most frequently used search engines.
- The requirements for the web portal include the ability to track detailed statistics that allow monitoring the overall number of visits, number of unique visitors, monitoring the routing of users, use of browsers, statistics on the downloaded documents, etc.
- For a smooth transition from the existing to the new portal, parallel operation of old and new portal is suitable for a certain period of time with regard to preserving the content and a smooth transition to the new page.

Social Networks

For further the implementation of CoP activities we propose to consider the use of social networks to communicate with target groups. **In the context of the RDI OP use of these tools seems to be appropriate in combination with a presentation on the web portal.**

Using social networks without a connection to web sites is possible, but we consider linking of profiles on social networks to an existing or newly created web portal better. Partial steps are:

- Establishment of the RDI OP profile on one of the social networks where active communication with users will be possible (fans / friends / random contributors). Given the current state of localization and number of users, we recommend using Facebook.com,
- It is necessary to determine the RDI OP social network profile manager and administrator
- It is advisable to prepare the basic content of information (web links, contact information, logos, photographs or multimedia links) before the site is published
- After loading the contents the profile page can be published
- It is not advisable to choose very specialized topics, it is better to focus on engaging content - interesting events concerning the implementation of the program and projects, links to current news, scheduled events, etc.
- Maintaining the profile requires a prompt and timely response to any questions, suggestions or comments, it is necessary to allocate a time capacity to manage the portal, which will be periodically available to administer the website
- Interaction and communication with users should not be aggressive, complaints or disapproving reactions can be expected on some controversial topics, for a start it is advisable to choose the least controversial topics with the most recent content.

Youtube.com

For further implementation of CoP activities we propose to use the channel for publishing multimedia audiovisual content via the platform youtube.com. **In the context of the RDI OP use of these tools seems to be appropriate in combination with a presentation on the web portal.** Using social networks without a connection to web sites is possible, but we consider linking of profiles on social networks to an existing or newly created web portal better. Partial steps are:

- Setting up own (or use existing) channel on YouTube where the video is to be recorded to promote selected events related to the implementation of the RDI OP, or events that relate to individual projects.
- Determining the channel administrator on youtube.com or appointment of relevant staff that will insert the content.
- Youtube.com platform can be used for publication of produced television spots and thus increase their impact; recordings of press conferences, events related to the RDI OP or supported projects can also be published there.

- Within the services of YouTube you can record the user response (comments). The server also allows direct monitoring of visitors to every post.
- Videos can also be published on the website, adding them as links to the Web site and the created profiles on social networks.
- Example of embedded video of RDI OP Ceremony of a Decision on subsidy within the RDI OP project (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZ4zjxOKowk>).

4.5 Could we achieve better results with the same involvement of inputs (applying existing communication and publicity tools, activities and personnel resources)?

Better results in the field of information and communication could be achieved primarily by **completing an application of the originally planned information and communication tools that are tied to an external service provider. Failure to complete the selection of suppliers is seen as a major barrier to achieving the objectives** of RDI OP CoP and its annual updates. Given the planned use of external contractors, staff that is ready and able to provide their own implementation of all relevant instruments of communication and publicity was appropriated to ensure the communication within the program. **The current staffing is adequate to coordinate and manage activities with external suppliers.**

In the current programming cycle, it is necessary to **focus primarily on informing the public about the course and outcome of interventions, outcomes and impacts of the program** (particularly relevant for professionals and the general public).

Further efforts are needed to **ensure adequate communication support to beneficiaries** in order to create all conditions for **successful implementation and completion of unfinished or newly launched projects**. Given the complexity of the implementation structure and confusing terms of project implementation this is a crucial task for the awareness of the target group of beneficiaries (preferably using interactive communication tools such as tutorials, seminars, workshops, etc.). Especially in this area there is an important focus of future activities of communication, which must also be provided with enough capacity. **Sufficient awareness of beneficiaries and their sufficient support in the implementation phase of the project is essential to the successful absorption of the program means** and their effective use for the implementation of approved projects.

6 Proposed Recommendations

This section contains draft recommendations by the various areas of study. Individual recommendations are numbered and include links to findings, which are described in detail within responses to each evaluation task.

6.1 Preparation and planning of ACoP for 2012 to 2015

In the second half of the programming period, the methodological approach to meet the obligations under Commission Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006 can still be improved via CoP and ACoP.

With regard to the investigations conducted and findings obtained, particularly in the evaluation areas No. 1 and 2, the following measures may be proposed:

| No. | Location within the report | Recommendation | Responsibility |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1.1 | Ev. task 1.1 (p. 24), 3.4 (p. 35) | For successful planning and implementation of measures under RDI OP CoP it is generally required to strengthen and promote the importance of awareness and publicity within the implementation structure of the RDI OP and the MEY&S as a whole also in the next period. We consider it crucial to continue to fulfill obligations under Commission Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006 with regard to awareness and publicity. The Regulation defines responsibilities of the MA, regular participation of the RDI OP MA leadership may be recommended in working groups and meetings relating to the awareness and publicity issues at MEY&S. MA is responsible for the implementation of promotional activities in accordance with RDI OP CoP, for its updates, informing the RDI OP Monitoring Committee, etc. (See the findings within the evaluation questions 3.4 and 1.1). The key is to ensure consistency of implemented information and publicity measures with the approved CoP and meet legislative requirements under Regulation for the period 2011 - 2015. | Publicity Manager |
| 1.2 | Ev. task 1.1 (p. 24) | For future period 2012 - 2015 it is appropriate within the communication activities to build on the foundation of good communication tools for | MA |

| | | | |
|-----|--|---|----|
| | | <p>different target groups, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media campaign (especially for the general public) • Direct communication, consultation, seminars, workshops (especially for applicants and beneficiaries), • Web portal of RDI OP (especially for applicants, beneficiaries, potential applicants and professionals) • Handbooks and methodology (mainly for the beneficiaries to solve practical problems in implementing projects). | |
| 1.3 | Ev. task 1.1 (p. 24), 4.2 (p. 42), 4.4 (p. 44) | <p>Within ACoP updates for the period 2012 - 2015 it would be appropriate to consider using certain modern means of communication, such as the use of social networks, forums and tools to share multimedia content, or direct communication. When planning communication activities and choosing the tools and ways of their implementation, we should not forget that the people rather than enhancing communications in new media expect a smarter use of new media and new technologies to be were addressed by the relevant statements and were not overburdened with unnecessary information they find useless.</p> | MA |
| 1.4 | Ev. task 1.1 (p. 24), 4.2 (p. 42) | <p>In this context we also propose to consider the specific targeting of selected target groups (e.g. students, young researchers, etc.) By these tools (social networks, forums, blogs, etc.). These target groups can play a key role in the use of investments assisted by RDI OP. Discussion forums, specifically those related to the various topics of implementation (eligibility of expenditures, monitoring indicators, tenders, etc.) are recommended in combination with a FAQ section on the web portal to be used for the beneficiary or applicant.</p> | |
| 1.5 | Ev. task 3.5 (p. 36), | <p>For further CoP updates, we recommend to adjust the indicator system of CoP, including setting indicative targets of relevant outcomes, results and impacts.</p> | MA |

6.2 Application of communication tools under ACoP

With regard to the investigations conducted and findings obtained, particularly in the Evaluation area No. 1, the following measures may be proposed:

| No. | Location within the report | Recommendation | Responsibility |
|-----|---|---|--|
| 2.1 | Ev. task 1.1 (p. 24), 3.4 (p. 35), 3.6 (p. 39) | <p>To implement the planned awareness and communication measures, which were included in the CoP and ACoP and tied to an external supplier.</p> <p>The investigation revealed that part of the planned measures were key measures to support awareness and publicity activities of the program, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of a new web portal contractor • Selection of media campaigns supplier, • Selecting the agency to assist in events organizing (seminars, workshops in the regions, etc.) • Selection of supplier of promotional items. <p>We consider the actual implementation of these measures to be crucial with regard to the CoP meeting set targets, raising awareness and its quality among the CoP target groups.</p> | MA |
| 2.2 | Ev. task 1.1 (p. 24), 1.3 (p. 26), 3.1 (p. 33), 4.3 (p. 43) | <p>Performed investigations show that the web portal is one of the most important communication tools, which is used both by potential applicants, applicants and beneficiaries, as well as the professional or the general public. We therefore recommend concentrating efforts to create a custom interactive RDI OP web portal, which will meet the demands for maximum attractiveness, clarity, and it can be possibly connected with other communication tools (e.g. social networks, platforms for multimedia sharing, etc.). The attractiveness of the portal and its clarity along with easy work with the portal content are the key.</p> | MA |
| 2.3 | Ev. task 3.3 (p. 34) | <p>Performed investigations show that the general public perceives the program primarily through the presentation of concrete prepared (or implemented) projects. Given this fact we can recommend strengthening and maintaining ongoing media communication of RDI OP projects to the general public. It is appropriate to present "real stories", real</p> | MA, Public Relations and Communications Department |

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| | | people involved in projects, real locations of present or future project implementation, etc. | |
| 2.4 | Ev. task 3.2 (p. 34), 3.3 (p.34) | It is necessary to systematically build a positive relationship with the media with regard to the role of the MEY&S in the implementation of RDI OP. For systematic relationship building it is necessary to have enough factually accurate documentation of the conditions of preparation and implementation of RDI OP and various calls and projects. Given the current division of powers, it is necessary to pay sufficient attention to the consistency of the methodological setting of projects preparation and implementation processes and information provided on the implementation of RDI OP (especially with regard to factual accuracy). | MA, Public Relations and Communications Department |
| 2.5 | Ev. task 1.2 (p. 25), 3.1 (p. 33) | Build and develop direct communication with potential applicants regarding those support areas, where funds will be further distributed through the calls. Direct addressing by e-mail, newsletters, invitations to seminars for potential applicants, etc. seem to be an appropriate form. Another appropriate measure is the inclusion of seminars for the applicant before the call so that they would allow applicants to timely respond to any new requirements or changes and manage to modify the project. | MA |
| 2.6 | Ev. task 1.2 (p. 25), 2.6 (p. 32), 3.1 (p. 33) | Ensure enough capacity and develop direct communication with beneficiaries in the long run. Individual consultations, seminars for beneficiaries dealing with pre-defined topics related to project implementation (procurement, monitoring, publicity and technical requirements of projects implementation and other relevant issues) are a particularly suitable form. Quality building of close and in terms of capacity well secured relationship with the beneficiaries is the key to minimize the risks associated with problems in the implementation phase of projects. Concentration of direct communication (individual and collective) towards the beneficiaries and through consultations, seminars, workshops, etc. allows for creation of maximum favorable conditions for successful implementation of projects supported. In this context, we can recommend the introduction of regular meetings of RDI OP beneficiaries about once in a quarter or half - year (a group of beneficiaries is not too wide and they all have similar problems to solve). It is however advisable to focus separately on their own | MA |

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| | | particular issues of project implementation, the beneficiaries deal with other problems than applicants. | |
| 2.7 | Ev. task 3.3 (p. 34) | For effective communication it is necessary to respect the principles for writing press releases and respect the principles of processing content for Web sites and tools for online communication. Websites will thus become more attractive and streamlined for the RDI OP CoP target groups. | MA, Public Relations and Communications Department |
| 2.8 | Ev. task 4.2 (p. 42) | We recommend to place emphasis on developing internal capacities of RDI OP MA as a way to enhance the quality of awareness above all of those target groups that are directly involved in program implementation. The success of RDI OP largely depends on their awareness (applicants, beneficiaries). Through direct communication, seminars, workshops or individual consultations, methodologies and manuals awareness scope will not be increased (higher percentage of potential applicants who will be informed of the RDI OP), but quality of awareness and satisfaction with the assistance of the implementation structure will increase . Appropriate means include internal training system, the use of coaching and mentoring and the overall strengthening of internal communication and awareness of the RDI OP implementation. | MA |

6.3 Monitoring and evaluation of CoP measures

With regard to the investigations conducted and findings obtained in the Evaluation area No. 3, the following measures may be proposed:

| No. | Location within the report | Recommendation | Responsibility |
|-----|----------------------------|--|----------------|
| 3.1 | Ev. task 3.5 (p. 36) | We recommend modifying and completing an indicator system of CoP. The indicator system should monitor the level of outputs, outcomes and impacts. We also recommend consideration for which indicators target values should be established. For annual CoP we consider it appropriate to set indicative target values namely for output indicators related to various communication tools; we also propose to consider the determination of indicative values for impact | MA |

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| | | indicators related primarily to the target groups' awareness of the RDI OP at the end of the program period. Possible form of indicators is given in response to evaluation question 3.5, which includes both indicators to be considered for use in RDI OP CoP and target values for impact indicators. | |
| 3.2 | Ev. task 3.5 (p. 36) | We propose to continuously evaluate the quantitative performance of CoP measures (output monitoring) and qualitative aspects of information (e.g., continuous evaluation of the extent and quality of awareness of target groups). The purpose of communication activities is not only to ensure sufficient awareness of target groups, but also to ensure sufficient quality of awareness and perception of program transparency and interventions supported by RDI OP. | MA |
| 3.3 | Ev. task 3.5 (p. 36) | Within monitoring of web sites traffic it is suitable even upon setting conditions for creating a new RDI OP web portal to require a standard web site traffic monitoring for further development . These namely include identifying information on the number of visits, number of unique visitors, number of pages visited, statistics of traffic in individual sections of the portal, statistics of time spent in each section(s), information on the number of downloaded documents, data on routing of portal user accesses, etc. | MA |

7 References and Resources

Documents and resources of the Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation (RDI OP):

- Communication plan for the Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation
- Annual Communication plans for the Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation
- Analysis of communication needs and draft of RDI OP communication strategy
- Guideline - evaluation of OP communication plans 2007-2010, 2010
- Methodology for Monitoring of Structural and Cohesion Funds for the programming period 2007-2013, MRD CR, 2009 as amended,
- Annual reports on implementation of RDI OP
- Guide for Applicants for Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation (for each priority axis) - available online
- Guide for Beneficiaries within Operational Programme Research and Development for Innovation - available online
- National Indicator Chart - current version - available online
- Rules for RDI OP publicity - Annex to the Guide for Applicants and Beneficiaries of RDI OP, available online
- Research and Development for Innovation Operational Programme (RDI OP) - available online
- RDI OP Visual Identity Manual - available online
- Documentation of calls offered - available online
- Monthly monitoring reports - available online
- Documentation of other ERDF programs - such as OP Enterprise and Innovation - available online
- Operational Manual of RDI OP
- Data and documents about the monitoring of the publicity provided by the MA of RDI OP
- Conclusions of the RDI OP Monitoring Committee meeting
- Outputs of publicity activities for RDI OP (archive of press releases, publicity outputs and documentation for each year)

Materials used for the analysis:

- The outcomes of the questionnaires and individual interviews
- Analysis of media coverage of drawing European funds by MEY&S
- Survey on Awareness of RDI OP among the general public

Evaluation of communication strategy and publicity of RDI OP

- Database of RDI OP beneficiaries - Report on the projects supported provided by the authority as of 7. 2. 2011
- Lists of RDI OP beneficiaries, <http://www.strukturalni-fondy.cz/Stav-cerpani/Seznamy-prijemcu>
- A list of contacts to representatives of the RDI OP Implementing Entities for field research purposes - set of contacts provided by the authority as of 22. 2. 2011

8 Annexes

8.1 Report on field survey

See separate annex of the final project report.

8.2 Survey on Awareness of RDI OP among the general public

See separate annex of the final project report.

8.3 Analysis of media coverage of drawing European funds by MEY&S

See separate annex of the final project report.

8.4 Overview of used information sources

See separate annex of the final project report.

8.5 Collection of examples of good practice

See separate annex of the final project report.

8.6 Scenarios of possible solutions to CoP problems

See separate annex of the final project report.

8.7 Overview of settlement of comments to the final report

See separate annex of the final project report.