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**ESBIO**

Development of a coherent approach to human biomonitoring in Europe

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Concept for communication to stakeholders

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## 1. Background

In the preparation as well as during the performance of the EUpilot project on Human Biomonitoring several important issues have to be organised and developed. A project established on a European Scale involving Member States requires a maximum of transparency as well as an active involvement of concerned actors. In addition to technical, political and financial preparation the elaboration of a communication concept is one very important issue. It ensures awareness raising and elucidates the objectives of the pilot project. Moreover the concept should be prepared in a way which enables to inform the general public and stakeholders about the aim of the pilot project, the individual and collective results and their significance for public health.

For the development of a concept for a successful communication strategy it is essential to define in an early stage clear aims, target groups, tools to be used as well as the content to be communicated.

In addition to the concept four principles should be followed to keep the campaign efficient and effective:

1. There should be no double work between the involved actors (like EU communication and Member States).
2. There should be a close coordination with other EU activities in the field of E&H.
3. The red thread and the core statements have to match in all communication activities.
4. The campaign should be flexible and adaptable according to different needs and requirements.

Against this background the main objectives of an appropriate communication strategy should be

- ensure awareness raising,
- elucidate the objectives of the EUnetwork on HBM,
- inform the general public and stakeholders about the aim of the EU network on HBM,
- promote active participation of the general public and stakeholders,
- inform about individual and collective results and their significance for public health
- act as a tool to actively involve people

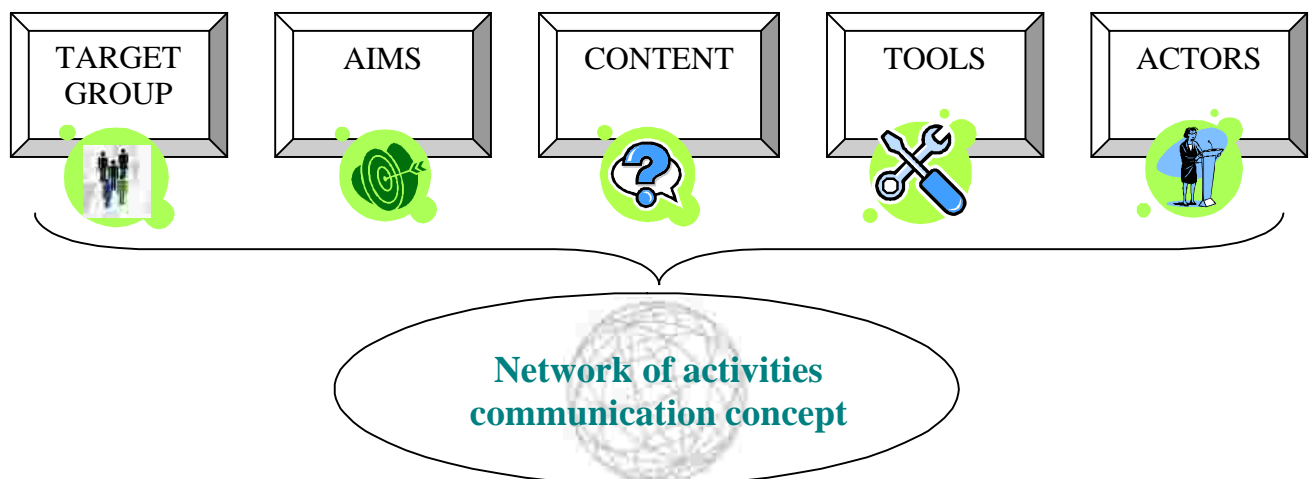
In order to support the activities of the pilot project the concept should take into account that communication should start already before the pilot project start and should accompany the pilot project during all different stages. In addition it should inform about the conclusions and recommendations at the end of the project.

## 2. Overall principle

By using a modular conception an efficient and effective communication strategy taking into account several different aspects can be set up.

1. Module: Target group
2. Module: Aim
3. Module: Content to communicate
4. Module: Tools to be used
5. Module: Actors to realize the communication campaign

In each module a lot of different aspects have to be considered. In order to find the most appropriate way for a communication strategy the modules have to be combined and appropriately connected. In the following possible aims, target groups, appropriate tools and possible contents are listed.



### **Module: Target Group**



As an EUwide human biomonitoring project will involve several different interest groups (e.g. study participants, general public, policy makers, scientists, etc.) also the communication concept has to be adaptable according to their different needs and expectations. Therefore several different target groups have been identified as basis for the further elaboration of the communication concept.

At a first approach it seems to be adequate to have eight target groups. At a later stage and during the realisation a fine differentiation amongst single target groups might be useful.

Acronym	Description of target group
TG1	Whole population
TG2	NGOs
TG3	Industry
TG4	Scientific community
TG5	Possible study participants
TG6	Directly in HBM involved actors (hospitals, laboratories, etc.)
TG7	Decision makers at EU level
TG8	Decision makers at MS level

WP 5

Table 2-1 Target groups

In the course of ESBIO work package 5 a focus was laid on the three target groups NGOs, industry and scientific community.

### Module: Aim



In order to find the appropriate content to communicate it has to be defined already in the beginning of a communication concept which aim should be reached. The following aims have been identified for an EU communication campaign accompanying an HBM pilot project.

Acronym	Description of aims
A 1	Awareness raising at the political level about the benefits of HBM as a tool for policymaking
A 2	Awareness raising about the advantages of a common European approach
A 3	Awareness raising about environment & health relations and about the benefits of HBM
A 4	Inform the public, stakeholders as well as policy makers on the potential as well as on the deficits of HBM
A 5	Ensure transparency and visibility
A 6	Visibility and justification for EU activities on HBM
A 7	Support for recruitment of study participants
A 8	Answers and supplementation to industry / NGO campaigns
A 9	Inform the public and stakeholders about the aim of the study
A 10	Information about the individual and collective results and their significance for public health
A 11	Interactive involvement of concerned actors, the general public and stakeholders; obtaining information from concerned people and stakeholder
A 12	Assuring relevance of HBM for policy and social debates
A 13	Promoting learning processes among various involved actors
A 14	Responding to concerns and discussions from various target groups arising from the project performance, providing input and information in this regard
A 15	Elucidate the objectives and aims of the pilot project

Table 2-2 Aims

WP 5 focused on stakeholders, this means on the target groups T 2, T 3 and T 4 which represents NGOs, industry and the scientific community.

The first two modules can subsequently be linked thus for each target group the individual aims can be identified.



### **Module: Content to communicate**

The identification of content to be communicated is a continuous task. The task should be done in close cooperation with the Implementation Group on HBM, with Member States and the foreseen project team. In the following a basic list of 26 questions is presented. These questions describe possible contents that might be addressed within the communication campaign; definitely further question will come up during the preparation of an EU network on HBM which can easily be added.

The questions are summarized within four categories:

AWARENESS RAISING	
Acronym	Description of content
C1	What is biomonitoring and how does it work?
C2	Which success could already be achieved?
C3	Which outcomes have already be obtained?
C4	Why is a European EU network on HBM important?
C5	Why are European activities important?
C6	What are the aims of an EU network on HBM?
C7	What is the additional value of an EU network on HBM?
C8	How does the EU network on HBM work?
C9	Why is biomonitoring a bridge between environment and health?
C10	What is the benefit of HBM for the environment and health policy?
C11	What is the difference between national HBM and HBM in industry, NGOs and the scientific world?
C12	Who are the involved persons for the EU network on HBM?
C13	How can persons actively be involved in the communication?
C14	What are the reaction possibilities for policy makers?
INFORMATION ABOUT AIMS OF THE EU NETWORK ON HBM	
Acronym	Description of content
C15	What are the limits of national HBM studies?
C16	What individual and collective results are expected and what is their significance for public health?
C17	What can HBM not achieve?
C18	What can not be expected by the EU network on HBM?

PARTICIPATION	
Acronym	Description of content
C19	Why should anyone participate in the EU network on HBM?
C20	Who should participate?
C21	What will happen after the EU network on HBM?
C22	Which feed back and information can participants expect?
C23	Which countries will participate?
C24	Which substances will be focused?
C25	How will ethical issues be addressed in the project?
COMMUNICATING RESULTS & THEIR HEALTH SIGNIFICANCE	
Acronym	Description of content
C26	The content behind this category is related to the actual results of the HBM (levels of pollutants in blood, etc.). It also addresses the meaning of HBM results and potential health relevance including communication about uncertainty. Relevant questions have also to consider ethical requirements.

Table 2-3 Content

**Module: Tools to be used**

There are different tools available to reach the target groups and to achieve the aims. For each tool also the coverage, costs and verifiability have to be taken into account.

Acronym	Description of tools to be used
TO1	Brochure / book / CD ROM
TO2	Poster / Folder / Leaflet
TO3	Interviews / Press releases / Articles
TO4	Homepage / Web based tools to structure and visualise information
TO5	Events / Conferences
TO6	Video / TV report
TO7	Interactive tools (e.g. focus groups, interactive workshops)

The idea behind TO 1 brochure / books / CD ROM is to have a substantial and broad information basis on European HBM. This could be done by contributions of various authors. Various topics within HBM could be addressed. The tool is well suited to provide long lasting information.

Poster / Folder / Leaflet should concentrate more on selected specific topics within biomonitoring. It is therefore expected that several posters / folders / leaflets are necessary. This tool can be an excellent way to reach a broad audience with comparatively small amounts of money.

Interviews / press release / articles are also typically targeted to communicate specific topics to a broad audience. It seems to be very important that this tool is used in a way that principle 3 is strictly followed.

The idea behind the tool homepage is to have a regularly updated and broadly available electronic communication platform. The various sectors of the homepage should be well maintained. It seems to be important that principle 1 is followed. Also tools to visualise information (e.g. policy issues; scientific issues) in an easy way can be placed here.

Events / Conferences define quite huge efforts for a comparatively small audience if they are used for communication purpose only. Therefore it seems important that this tool is properly combined with other tools (like TO3 and TO4).

Videos and TV reports again define comparatively big efforts and therefore should be used very carefully. However, for some purposes they might be the best tool as they can address big audiences and communicate contents in a very costumer friendly way.

Interactive tools allow involving the public as well as others actively in the communication. The aim of this tool is to ensure the dialogue in two ways and to accompany the general campaign.

### **Module: Actors to realize the communication campaign**



A communication campaign accompanying a project on European level should be done on a professional basis. It is suggested to have a team of communication experts, HBM experts and social scientists.



It is further important to involve the relevant communication units of the Commission and keep close contact with them.

Depending on the target groups it will be necessary to include appropriate multipliers for the communication (like environmental agencies, universities, associations) that can further transport the messages.

Acronym	Description of tools to be used
AC 1	HBM experts
AC 2	Communication experts
AC 3	Social scientists
AC 4	Communication experts of the Commission
AC 5	Multipliers
AC 6	HBM – Implementation Group
AC 7	Responsible persons for HBM at the Commission
AC 8	Responsible persons for HBM at the national governments



Step 2: Linkage of aims with content to be communicated

Acronym	A 1	A 3	A 5	A 8	A 10	A 11	A 13	A 14	A 15
C1									
C2									
C3									
C4									
C5									
C6									
C7									
C8									
C9									
C10									
C11									
C12									
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C18									
C19									
C20									
C21									
C22									
C23									
C24									
C25									
C26									

Figure 3-2 Linkage of content to be communicated and aims

From the two matrices it can be derived which messages should be communicated to the different target groups.

Step 3: Selection of tools to be used for communication

In order to reach the target groups most effectively and to communicate the important messages in a precise and sustainable way the tools to be used for the communication have to be considered. For

this reason important characteristics of the different tools should be taken into account as shown in the figure below.

Acronym	Acceptance	Coverage	Cost	Verifiability
TO1				
TO2				
TO3				
TO4				
TO5				
TO6				
TO7				

Figure 3-3 Tool – characteristic

Step 4: Linkage tools to be used with adors to realise

A last but crucial step is to decide on who should realise the communication. This depends primarily on the tools to be used but also on the target group addressed.

Step 5: Network of activities

Having followed this step by step procedure will lead to an organised, well coordinated and effective communication strategy adaptable for individual target groups and various topics but kept together under one common

Step 6: Time line

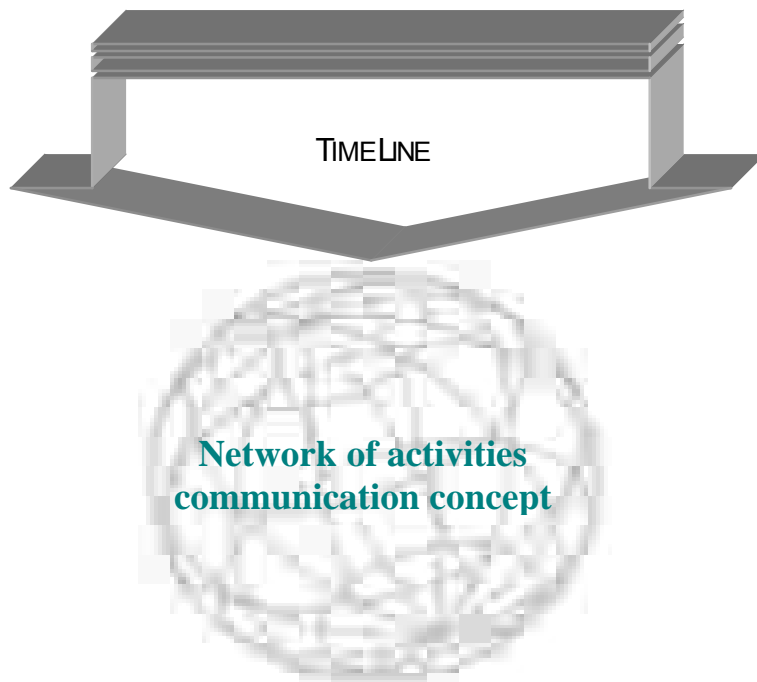
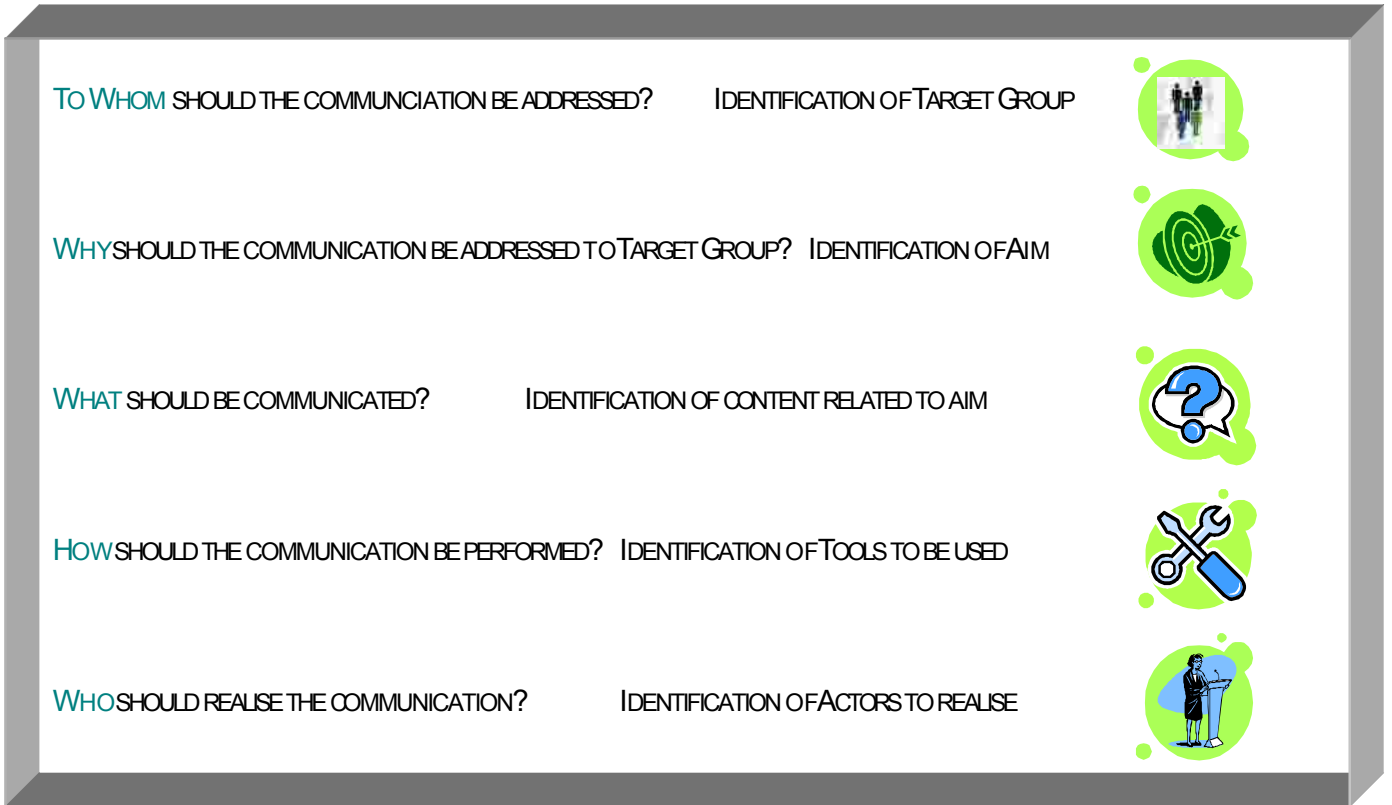
In order to support and accompany the work performed within an EU HBM pilot the time line of the project should be regarded as the basis. Communication activities should be elaborated individually for all different stages of the project. As the communication has to start already before the start of the project, has to accompany the project and has to last even beyond the finalisation of the project performance the following different phases and corresponding needs might be considered assuming a 3 years period for the project running time:

Phase [project month]	Communication needs
-6 - 0	Awareness raising general public, stakeholders, scientific community, international concerned actors
0 - 8	Provision of general information, involvement of stakeholders, encourage active participation
9 - 24	Inform on the ongoing project work, ensure transparency and visibility
24 - 36	Inform on results, inform on significance for health, give feed back

	and ensure a proper interpretation of data
+1 - +6	Inform of the use of the results, inform on follow up activities, provide recommendations and distribute conclusions

This schedule provides a very rough splitting of phases but can easily be adapted to the needs of an EUHBM pilot project.

In the following a summary of all necessary steps is shown at one glance providing a concept who to communicate to stakeholders as well as other concerned target groups.



**Figure 3-4** Network of activities