

## Communication Plan

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### Disclaimer:

*“The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union, the participating countries and the Managing Authority”.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

This document is the Communication plan of the project titled as "Continuity of care in metabolic diseases through modern technology", with an acronym "COMETECH", implemented under the Subsidy Contract No.SC027, COMETECH-CN1-SO1.2-SC027 upon the 1st Call for proposals within the INTERREG IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Greece - the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020.

The Interreg IPA CBC Programme "Greece - The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020" is a cross-border cooperation Programme co-financed by the European Union under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II). The strategy statement of the Programme is "to enhance territorial cohesion by improving living standards and employment opportunities holding respect to the environment and by using the natural resources for upgrading of the tourism product". The total budget of the Programme for the period 2014-2020 is 45.470.066,00 €.

COMETECH is implemented by a partnership consisted of five partners from both participating countries:

Pr. Nr.	Partner title	Country
LB (PP1)	Alexander Technological Educational Institute of Thessaloniki	Greece
PP2	Florina Prefectural General Hospital	Greece
PP3	Medical Association of Thessaloniki	Greece
PP4	Clinical Hospital Bitola	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
PP5	General Hospital Veles	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

COMETECH project aims to address the problem of inadequate access to the health system services to people who live in isolated communities at Greece-FYROM cross-border areas. The project will establish 4 e-health units -2 in each country- at isolated and deprived communities collaborated each other, aiming at introducing "Continuity of Care" in the

border region between FYROM and Greece. It anticipates contributing to the improvement of health services of both countries in a commonly shared region that has been economically neglected to a substantial degree.

The establishment of the e-health units will allow affordable access to medical services within Greece-FYROM cross-border area. These units (equipped by state-of-the-art medical devices, supported by an advanced software application and medical staff) will record data of local people, inform them about environmental and other risk factors, and offer valuable and high quality medical care services. The records of the citizens using the COMETECH services will be safely and easily accessible by their physicians. The involved public bodies will be encouraged to use COMETECH services as a tool for introducing high quality continuity of health care in their respective regions.

COMETECH specific objectives:

- To support a collaboration between research teams from FYROM and Greece of scientists from different scientific fields (such as doctors, biologists, etc.) and closer cooperation among the two national health care systems so as to develop a common strategy for prevention, early diagnosis and treatment of Obesity, DM and CardioVascular Disease (CVD).
- To raise awareness of the local and national authorities regarding the above health issues.
- To inform the regional population on the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of DM, Obesity and CVD.
- To identify the environmental and other risk factors that are involved in the development of DM, Obesity and CVD in the population that will participate in the project.
- To facilitate access for doctors on both sides of the border to their patients' data through telemedicine.
- To develop four e-health units equipped by hi-technology medical devices and supported by an advanced software application for ensuring "Continuity of Care" through telemedicine.
- To support the life-long education of the COMETECH involved population and medical practitioners by utilizing their telemedicine interaction with experts as the means for training.

COMETECH expected results:

Patients with type 2 DM are usually asymptomatic and the diagnosis of diabetes delays until serious complications develop. Therefore, the assessment of DM, Obesity and Cardiovascular risk factors and the providing of up to date information on these diseases will increase the awareness of the population. This will reduce the occurrence of above diseases in the targeted isolated areas.

On the other hand the cost of DM, Obesity and CVD is tremendous. Over the lifetime, DM imposes a substantial economic burden on healthcare systems. It has been calculated that the medical per person costs of treating DM and its complications, during a lifetime, is in average 85,200 Euros. The total annual cost of DM, Obesity and CVD in EU is about 550 billion Euros. Taking this into account, the current research project is of great value not just in terms of medical but also in terms of the high economic benefit for every citizen separately and for the national health system, as a whole. COMETECH project will also promote the cooperation between healthcare authorities.

Total Project budget amounts 1.018.189 EUR, i.e. 321.486, 00 EUR for project activities that are to be implemented in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, while the remaining amount of 696.703 EUR is allocated for the implementation of activities in Greece. The project duration is 24 months.

## **II. GENERAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

Effective communication is the basis of cross-border cooperation and has vital role for the successful implementation of COMETECH project. In addition, it is a prerequisite for the project to deliver meaningful results not only to project partners but also to audiences and communities within the targeted cross-border area.

Communication takes place between project partners, between project partnership and its audience outside the project community, between the project itself and Joint Secretariat, Managing Authority and different national bodies.

The overall purpose of this Communication Plan is to establish how the project will communicate between partners, and to ensure the communication with organizations and persons outside the project. It is vital to work with stakeholders, general public and mass media in order to raise awareness for the project and the development opportunities it brings. The communication strategy will focus on increasing the awareness about COMETECH project, it's objectives, activities and goals, giving full visibility and promotion

of INTERREG IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Greece - the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020.

The communication strategy will outline the global aim and specific objectives of the communication measures, the key target groups, the key messages to be conveyed and the strategic approach, together with the roles and responsibilities of each project partner regarding the information and publicity activities, the evaluation criteria, indicators and measures, the timeframe and the necessary financial and human resources.

Therefore, the Communication Strategy targets to:

**1) Internal communication (communication among COMETECH Partnership)**

COMETECH Communication Plan shall ensure that all partners are fully informed about the project, its development and implementation.

Due to the cross-border character of COMETECH Project, effective internal communication has to be ensured in order successful management and coordination of all project activities to be ensured. Although the representatives of Implementation Teams of each partner are responsible for the communication between themselves on a daily base, the Project Management Team bares the responsibility to monitor and evaluate the internal communication during entire project implementation.

**2) External communication (communication with COMETECH stakeholders & target groups)**

COMETECH Communication aims to provide two key elements regarding the communication between the project and its stakeholders and target groups:

- Awareness raising among communities in the cross-border targeted areas through proper and timely dissemination of key information about the project;
- Absorption of capacities which will enable active participation of target groups in project activities and fulfillment of project goals and results.

This document should be considered as a live and dynamic instrument in the hands of COMETECH partnership aiming to the most effective and wide communication and publicity of the project itself as well as of its main objectives and goals. Partners are always welcomed to make suggestions or comments for the improvement of COMETECH Communication Plan in order to be more realistic and easy to apply in their day-to-day project implementation.

Based on the above, the SWOT analysis of the project regarding communication is the following:

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good scientific evidence</li> <li>• National network of affiliates and supporters regarding the targeted diseases</li> <li>• Strong ability to widely distribute project information to specified audiences</li> <li>• Work in an interdisciplinary environment</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Might not have adequate resources to communicate effectively</li> <li>• Partners don't take advantage of new technology</li> <li>• Lack of knowledge regarding technical / medical information which can lead to misinformation being disseminated</li> <li>• Competition from other organisations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing the diabetes society</li> <li>• Promote communication and engagement through various types and media sources</li> <li>• Learn new communication skills</li> <li>• Social media</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hostile campaigning groups</li> <li>• Lack of commitment from the involved staff</li> <li>• Apathy</li> <li>• Lack of national communities support</li> </ul>

The COMETECH Communications Strategy will be applied in practice via the Work Package 2 (WP2). By maintaining the communications plan as a working document throughout the project, WP2 will ensure that the project's initial communications activities have been focused on shared goals, while adapting the Communications plan to the project's growth and development. In general, communications in the beginning phases of the project have focused on communicating objectives. Later in the operational phase, results and outcomes have comprised the central communications theme. At the time of project completion, once project evaluation and end user testing are finished, the communications will emphasize the lessons learned and the resulting findings of best practice.

WP2 is dedicated to address the communication and dissemination activities proposing in brief:

- One (1) website developed and maintained by the coordinator providing the information about the project and the link to the web application. Moreover,

it will act as an information portal providing updated information on DM, Obesity and CVD.

- One thousand leaflets providing information about the COMETECH project and the above diseases.
- Two (2) joint workshops on the targeted issues and two (2) cross-border training seminars. Moreover, it will provide which tactics to use to best accomplish the aims and objectives of the communication strategy. Defining a set of tactical principles is necessary before moving on to defining specific communication activities.

These principles for communication are:

- **Transparency:** All communication carried out in COMETECH will be as transparent as possible.
- **Consistency:** The messages delivered about the COMETECH project, its results and outcomes will be clear and consistent and as such made as easy to understand as possible.
- **Simplicity:** The tone of communication should be simple and easy to understand.
- **Targeted:** In order to maximise impact the communication efforts carried out will be targeted to its relevant target audience as identified for the individual circumstances and specific messages.
- **Cooperation:** All work package leaders and members are encouraged to take an active role in ensuring that the COMETECH project is accessible to relevant national stakeholders and media.
- **Tangible and relatable:** Using visual means such as infographics, videos and photo material to facilitate better understanding of the Programme.
- **Demand-oriented:** Making relevant information and guidance material available in smaller packages users can consume when they need it.
- **Accountability:** This Communications Plan has been updated throughout the launch and first half of the COMETECH project to ensure its continuing applicability to project goals and developments.

COMETECH Partnership will ensure that the implementation of the project will follow the information and publicity requirements according to the new version of INFORMATION AND



PUBLICITY GUIDE FOR FINAL BENEFICIARIES, which is in force as of 11 September 2018 and will also ensure that all information and/or publicity actions are regularly reported to Communication & Technical Assistance Officer from the Joint Secretariat in Thessaloniki.

Contact person for COMETECH communication activities

Professor Kyriakos Kazakos

E-mail : [kkazakos@med.auth.gr](mailto:kkazakos@med.auth.gr)

Mobile: 6937074882

### III. OBJECTIVES

#### OVERALL COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

##### OVERALL COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

(communication among COMETECH Partnership)

- To ensure a clear understanding of COMETECH project;
- To ensure foreseen objectives, considering human and financial resources available;
- To ensure an integrated approach of all communication tools and thus enable transparent flow of information among the partners;
- To ensure effective knowledge transfer among all participating partners;
- To stimulate partners' commitment to project goal through the involvement of all partners in the same time encouraging increased partner teamwork;
- To support the successful implementation of COMETECH project by ensuring an effective and on time communication system.

##### OVERALL COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES OF THE EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

(communication with COMETECH Stakeholders & Target Groups)

- To ensure that communication is designed in a way to promote the main idea of COMETECH project and to reach relevant stakeholders and target groups;
- To ensure an integrated approach of all communication tools available thus enabling proper dissemination of key information about the project to the relevant stakeholders and target groups;

- To create visual identity of COMETECH project and make sure all information and publicity activities comply to the Information and Publicity Guide for Final Beneficiaries;
- To ensure visibility for COMETECH project and the INTERREG IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Greece - the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020 at local and national level;
- To raise awareness among stakeholders and target groups about the benefits that COMETECH project can provide to them and to the communities;
- To encourage active participation of project target groups in project activities;
- To ensure the cooperation and full support of the media;
- To inform relevant regional and national decision makers about the project itself, its goals and results, thus ensuring their cooperation and support to project successful implementation.

The Communication Plan applied by the Dissemination Board (DB) will manage the COMETECH related communications and dissemination activities during the project and subsequent to its completion.

## VI. TARGET GROUPS

The key target groups of the COMETECH communication plan are:

- Representatives of COMETECH partnership
- The staff of the management bodies of INTERREG IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Greece - the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020 (Managing Authority of European Territorial Cooperation Programmes, Joint Secretariat Interreg IPA CBC "Greece - the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020" in Thessaloniki, National Authority, Audit Authority, First Level Control Unit).
- The Academic and research institutions, Departments of health prevention, Medical and nursing schools.
- Members of medical chambers.
- Local authorities and municipalities.
- Public health policy makers.

- Networks and potential multipliers, such as, members of relevant groups and/or non-governmental organizations of the targeted patients.
- National, regional, local media from both participating countries.
- Local population.

This overall list of stakeholders guides the general communications at the overall project-level of COMETECH. It also provides a template for each work package to use in the process of identifying its specific audience and target groups.

## V. COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES AND TOOLS

The COMETECH project has foreseen implementation of different types of activities, most of them included within WP2, in order wide publicity of the project to be accomplished.

It should be noted also that almost all project actions (not only those included in WP2) have strong information & promotional character and are expected to have a remarkable impact or influence on most of the target groups described previously. The popularization of the project and its results will be aimed at raising awareness of local and national authorities and citizens on the territory of the covered areas to DM, Obesity and CVD diseases and prevention measures. The following methods and means of communication, as well as, information and publicity measures will be used:

- One website with both open-to-public and restricted web pages will be developed to present and disseminate information about the project hosted in the ATEITH web server and be maintained for at least three years after the completion of the project. Due to the website, the project becomes open to the public not just from the targeted cross-border area, but much wider, all over the world. The website promotes project's idea, activities, objectives and results and disseminates project's results and outcomes to the target groups and general public. COMETECH website will be simple and clear, easily accessible for the old people and a disability friendly site. In order to succeed that, the website will be keyboard friendly, alt text will be added to all images, the colors will be chosen carefully and the contrast will be checked properly. Making sure COMETECH site is welcoming to as many people as possible should be a top priority.
- The public web pages will inform the general public about the results of the project (including the presentations and the informative leaflets) and the

restricted pages will achieve the information flow among the partners playing the role of an information hub. Web site will be also include social media, newsletter in a 6month basis, as well as, informational material in three languages.

- 100 posters / 1,000 leaflets will be prepared and distributed to the public, which contain information on COMETECH project, on the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of DM, Obesity and CVD. The distribution of the informational material is addressed to project target groups in order to get their immediate response and wide acceptance of the project by the general public. This way the project enables close cooperation with the target groups and works on the efforts to get positive feedback from relevant stakeholders during the realization of each planned action. It is important to be noted that every partner will support the dissemination of the produced info material to relevant stakeholders according to project dissemination strategy.
- Two (2) workshops will train specific target groups (patients with DM, Obesity and CVD and their family members, elderly people and high risk people) how to help themselves and their beloved ones if they suffer from these diseases. In this case training and specialization is the best vehicle to reinforce stakeholders and end-users involvement. Identified targeted groups will receive information material and will be invited to participate in the training. Training materials will distributed in both draft and final form to selected users for testing and evaluation, and users will be encouraged to circulate them within their institution for amplification of the effect. During these seminars the overall progress of the project, as well as country-specific problems that may arise during the project application will be discussed. The seminars will be adequately advertised in the Media (TV, radio, internet) and to the Hospitals, Universities and to Medical Associations.
- A number of presentations with information on pathophysiology, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of the targeted diseases.
- The above mentioned workshops/presentations/seminars/conferences will take part at reachable and accessible venues, located at a ground floor of a hotel. Accessible restrooms ,with proper signs, will be available close to the venues. In addition all project communication activities will be open to everyone, and special care will be taken to avoid discrimination based to any ground such as colour, race, gender, ethnic or social origin, genetic features,

language, disability or sexual orientation.

- Three research papers will be prepared and submitted in peer-reviewed international scientific journals (e.g. International Journal of Diabetes Mellitus, International Journal of Diabetes in Developing Countries, etc.) or presented as oral presentations in International / National Conferences.
- The COMETECH project will enable its visual identity by using the logo created according the instructions of JS Thessaloniki. COMETECH logo will be consisted of: a) INTERREG IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Greece - the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020 logo ([http://www.ipa-cbc-programme.eu/com/17\\_Documents-for-Project-implementation](http://www.ipa-cbc-programme.eu/com/17_Documents-for-Project-implementation)); b) The acronym of the project “COMETECH”.



Project logo, enclosed with the textual reference of the sources of financing “The project is co-funded by the European Union and by National Funds of the participating countries” will be used in all outputs and tender notices, thus increasing project’s visibility and recognition among target groups and general public.

Communication and dissemination starts with the information about the project and its objectives, as well as, the organization and chairing of workshops bringing together project partners, policy makers, pharmaceutical companies, researchers and stakeholders concerned with the research subjects. In this way a forum for discussions between scientists, practitioners and stakeholder experts will be established supported by COMETECH web portal. Members of the forum will receive regular email updates and an electronic newsletter.

## **VI. MONITOR AND INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENTS**

The project management and WP2 will monitor the progress and delivery of this Communications Plan. The progress will be on the agenda for the four (4) coordination meetings (Thessaloniki: Kick-off and Final Event, Bitola and Veles) and the two (2) workshop meetings in Thessaloniki. Two indicators are used to evaluate the progress of the communications:

- Population informed about the DM, Obesity and CVD diseases: 5,000.
- 100 posters / 1,000 leaflets will be prepared, published and distributed to the public with information on the COMETECH project, on diagnosis, treatment and prevention of DM, Obesity and CVD.
- The indicators of achievements are attached in Appendix 3.

## VII. RESPONSIBILITIES

The parties responsible for WP2's work are:

- The Communications work package leader: ATEITH.
- Translations of the informational material: Clinical Hospital Bitola.
- Specific person of all the partners who will contribute and be responsible for local publicity.
- Work Package leaders and other beneficiaries will contribute and be responsible for local publicity.
- In overall, the management and coordination of the COMETECH project will be implemented under the Project Office at Department of Nursing in ATEITH that will be responsible for the strategic direction of the project, its work programme and impact. For the communication needs of the project the Dissemination Board (DB) will be setup with the start of the project. The DB is chaired by the Dissemination Coordinator (DCo) Professor Kyriakos Kazakos from ATEITH (Coordinator) and it will be responsible for the co-ordination, monitoring and supervision of the dissemination activities; organization of workshops and other dissemination events; and project results dissemination.

## VIII. Budget

In March 2018, the project partners approved a change to the WP2 budget to reflect the actual expenditure in the project and to ensure adequate funding for the remaining communications activities. The revised budget is attached in Appendix 2.

## Appendix 1: Activities and budget list

WP	Del.	Task
WP1	D1.1.2	Organization of project meetings, preparation of project meetings agendas and minutes
WP1	D1.1.2	Event organisation of organisational meeting in Thessaloniki (technical support, catering, etc.)
WP1	D1.1.2	Organisational meeting in Bitola
WP1	D1.1.3	Organization of project meetings, preparation of project meetings agendas and minutes
WP1	D1.1.3	Event organisation of coordination meeting in Thessaloniki (technical support, catering, etc.)
WP1	D1.1.3	Coordination meeting in Veles
WP2	D2.1.1	Website development
WP2	D2.1.2	Printing of awareness and dissemination material (100 posters, 3,000 leaflets)
WP2	D2.1.3	Organization of two (2) regional meeting workshops in Thessaloniki
WP2	D2.1.4	Preparation of publication
WP2	D2.1.4	Publication costs

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WP2	D2.1.5	Final event preparation activities in Thessaloniki
WP2	D2.1.5	Final event organisation in Thessaloniki
WP6	D6.1.2	Development of sustainability plan



## Appendix 2: Budget

WP	Del.	Budget line	Brief justification of the expenditure (Max 350 Characters)	Quantity of item (Nr.)	Time of item	Cost per item (€)	Total Cost
WP1	D1.1.2	Staff Costs	Organization of project meetings, preparation of project meetings agendas and minutes	1	1	2.000,00	2.000,00 €
WP1	D1.1.2	External Expertise and Services	Event organisation of organisational meeting in Thessaloniki (technical support, catering, etc.)	1		2.480,00	2.480,00 €
WP1	D1.1.2	Travel and Accommodation	Travel expenses for one organisational meeting in Bitola	1	500	0,15	75,00 €
WP1	D1.1.2	Travel and Accommodation	Travel expenses for one organisational meeting in Bitola	4	0	0,00	0,00 €
WP1	D1.1.2	Travel and Accommodation	Travel expenses for one organisational meeting in Bitola	4	1	63,00	252,00 €
WP1	D1.1.3	Staff Costs	Organization of project meetings, preparation of project meetings agendas and minutes	1	1	2.000,00	2.000,00 €

WP1	D1.1.3	External Expertise and Services	Event organisation of coordination meeting in Thessaloniki (technical support, catering, etc.)	1		2.480,00	2.480,00 €
WP1	D1.1.3	Travel and Accommodation	Travel expenses for one coordination meeting in Veles	1	500	0,15	75,00 €
WP1	D1.1.3	Travel and Accommodation	Travel expenses for one organisational meeting in Veles	4	0	0,00	0,00 €
WP1	D1.1.3	Travel and Accommodation	Travel expenses for one organisational meeting in Veles	4	1	63,00	252,00 €
WP2	D2.1.1	External Expertise and Services	Website development	1		5.000,00	5.000,00 €
WP2	D2.1.2	Staff Costs	Preparation design of posters / brochures	5	1,6	1.000,00	8.000,00 €
WP2	D2.1.2	External Expertise and Services	Printing of awareness and dissemination material (100 posters, 1,000 leaflets)	1		2.500,00	2.500,00 €
WP2	D2.1.3	Staff Costs	Organization of two (2) regional meeting workshops in Thessaloniki	3	2	2.000,00	12.000,00 €
WP2	D2.1.3	External Expertise and Services	Support for the organization of two (2) regional	1		19.840,00	19.840,00 €

			meeting workshops				
WP2	D2.1.4	Staff Costs	Preparation of publication	3	1	1.000,00	3.000,00 €
WP2	D2.1.4	External Expertise and Services	Publication costs	3		2.000,00	6.000,00 €
WP2	D2.1.5	Staff Costs	Final event preparation activities in Thessaloniki	2	1,25	2.000,00	5.000,00 €
WP2	D2.1.5	External Expertise and Services	Final event organisation in Thessaloniki	1		14.880,00	14.880,00 €
WP6	D6.1.2	Staff Costs	Development of sustainability plan	4	1,5	2.000,00	12.000,00 €

### Appendix 3: Project Indicators

Output/ result	Description	Target	Source of information
Output	Website	1	Periodic reports
Result	Leaflets	1,000	Periodic reports
Result	Posters	100	Periodic reports
Result	External events / Regional meeting workshops	2	Periodic reports, participants list
Result	External events /Final event	1	Periodic reports, participants list
Output	Research papers	3	Periodic reports