EUNICE RESEARCH | reunice project

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

· *PUT: Poznan University of Technology*

· *BTU: Brandenburg University of Technology*

· *UC: University of Cantabria*

· *UMONS: University of Mons*

· *UNICT: University of Catania*

· *UPHF: Université Polytechnique Hauts-de-France*

· *UVA: University of Vaasa*

INTRODUCTION

REUNICE's mission is to align the education, research and innovation strategies of the EUNICE European University alliance members, fostering a transformative agenda with a transdisciplinary, intercultural, shared, integrated and long-term joint strategy as its main foundation.

mission /ˈmɪʃən/ n.

REUNICE's mission consists on **aligning the partner universities' education, research and innovation strategies**.

vision /ˈvɪʒən/ n.

REUNICE envisions **a society based on knowledge and innovation, focused on a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth**, where universities and society cooperate by sharing expertise, recruiting new talents for science and pairing scientific excellence with social awareness and responsibility.

values /ˈvæljuː/ n.

REUNICE's project approach is based on a set of values that help project members focus on the same direction towards its vision:

- **Collaboration**, to share efforts and responsibilities to carry out the project's work.
- **Openness**, to accept and respect different approaches and viewpoints.
- **Innovation**, to contribute to the development of a long-term model.
- **Diversity**, to enrich the individuals who work in the project and therefore those reached by its results.
- **Inclusiveness**, to ensure the project benefits a global society based on European values and free of discrimination.

REUNICE'S COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

This document establishes the communication and dissemination strategy defined to support REUNICE project's objectives.

REUNICE's communication strategy is mainly aimed at raising awareness of the project and disseminate and exploit its results, which can be summarised in three communication objectives:

1. Widely disseminate EUNICE's alignment of its education, research and innovation agenda.
2. Enhance institutional change by engaging researchers, students, universities and HEI's executive staff, business and other non-academia stakeholders.
3. Create awareness on Higher Education Institutions, public administrations and policy makers on the challenges to be faced by European Universities in terms of institutional cooperation and academia-business collaboration.

In order to achieve these objectives, we have established protocols related to INTERNAL COMMUNICATION, EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION and BRANDING, as a 3-way strategy aimed at managing the overall communication for the project.

|	
INTERNAL COMMUNICATION	An internal information flow protocol to ensure all alliance members are aware of the project activities carried out by the different work packages.
EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION	Relevant communication channels to disseminate the activities and results achieved to all stakeholders and other identified audiences.
BRANDING	A communication style aligned with the values of the project and the alliance who delivers it, in order to endow the project with its own identity.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

The following diagram represents the information flow for the project communication and dissemination activities, distinguishing between internal and external communication in relation to the information flow taking place (either within REUNICE or extending to other stakeholders and audiences).
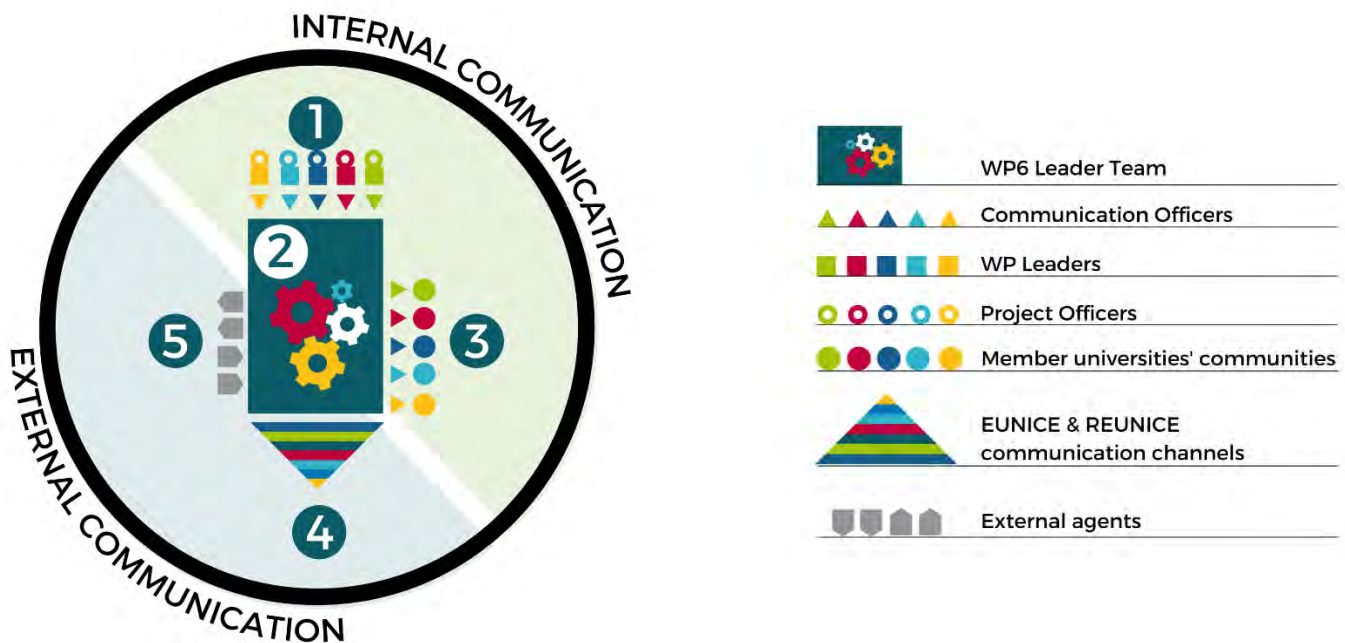
STEPS 1 TO 5

1. REUNICE's Work Package (WP) leaders provide information about their WP's activity to their communication officers, who will filter and process it to share with the Communication Board, formed by all communication officers and WP6 leader. Channels: email, online meetings and Only Office (project's cloud storage platform).
2. WPs' information input will be processed by WP6 leader team, who will -with the help of the relevant communication officer in each case- assess, filter and shape the messages, providing this with the relevant format (text, video, graphic materials, etc) to tailor it to different channels and audiences.
3. If the processed information is meant to be internal, WP6 leader will distribute it to audiences in all partner universities via the communication officers, who will adapt it into their own channels and languages (if needed).
4. If the processed information is relevant for external audiences, WP6 leader team will use EUNICE's own communication channels: REUNICE's section on the alliance's website, and the alliance's social media channels: Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube.
5. WP6 leaders will also attend information requests coming from external agents in many possible different ways. In these cases, those requests will be assessed, filtered and responded in the most diligent manner, without forgetting that the quality of this feedback can affect the project's brand reputation.

BRANDING

BRANDING MODEL

REUNICE brand has been designed as a sub-brand under the alliance's umbrella parent brand EUNICE. If the name REUNICE comes from R (Research) + EUNICE (European University for Customised Education), meaning that its focus is the research area within EUNICE, the brand must reflect this as well. This branding architecture model (i.e. brand + sub-brands that augment and are connected to the parent brand) will help to:

- Maximise the visibility of the parent brand (and therefore add strength to sub-brands)
- Enhance brand equity (a brand that hosts other brands, products or projects is perceived as better established and reliable)
- Operational efficiency (documents, templates, marketing materials, etc. are produced in a more efficient manner, as their adaptation to different formats is consistent across the family of brands)
- Avoid brand confusion
- Facilitate project staff develop a sense of belonging through branding

BRAND ARCHITECTURE

REUNICE brand is formed by two essential and non-separable elements: logotype + tagline. REUNICE's logo serves the purpose of integrating the project within the alliance (the sub-brand within the brand) and the tagline (i.e. RESEARCH) identifies the focus of the project and reinforces the concept of it being a collaborative project, through the use of the corporate colours of the seven universities of the alliance together forming the common word "research".

In very specific cases, there may exist the need to include the full project's name in the brand (for example, on internal project reporting documents). For this purpose, an extended sub-brand has been created. However, we foresee this sub-brand not playing a part in our external communication activities, as its use outside the project's environment would act in detriment of the brand penetration, as per the branding model proposed above.

ADDITIONAL BRANDING ELEMENTS

REUNICE brand will be reinforced by the use of the branding elements of the umbrella brand, which are:

Triangle brand markers

Photographs used in communication printed or online materials will be branded with the use of the bottom-right triangle that contains the corporate colours of each of the seven universities of the alliance where the project is being developed. These colours are as follows:

CMYK

- PUT · C:90 M:60 Y:20 K:4
- BTU · C:45 M:0 Y:100 K:0
- UC · C:88 M:50 Y:45 K:22
- UMONS · C:17 M:100 Y:100 K:9
- UNICT · C:95 M:78 Y:11 K:2
- UPHF · C:58 M:2 Y:17 K:0
- UVA · C:3 M:37 Y:100 K:0

When REUNICE communication materials derive from just one of the member universities within the alliance, photographs will be marked with the triangle of their own corporate colour, rather than with the triangle containing the colours of the seven alliance partners.
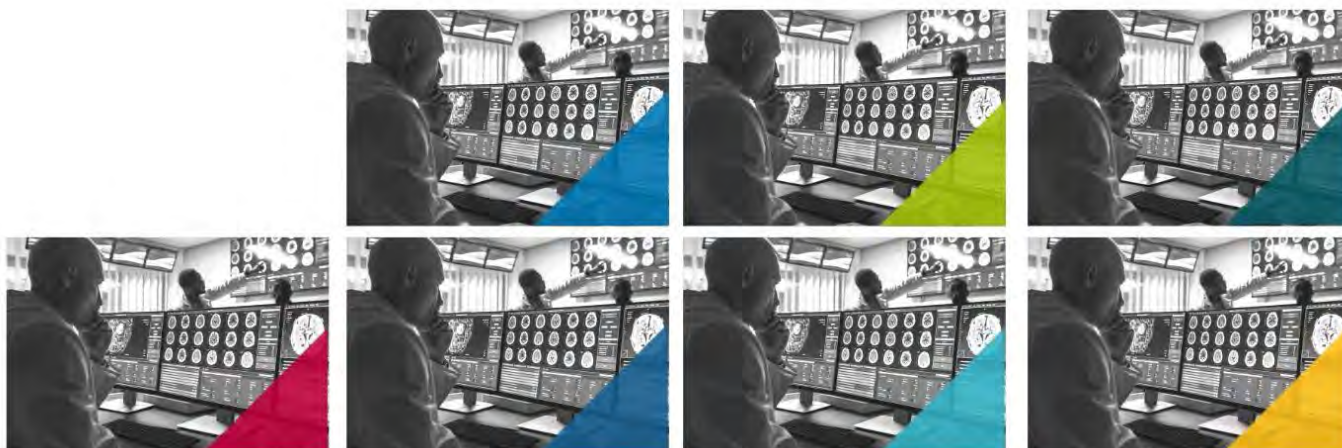

Alliance member logo integration

In order to emphasise the belonging to the alliance and the strength of the union of seven institutions and their own brands, footer of communication materials will include these:

REUNICE's TOPICS

REUNICE's communication will reinforce messages related to four main topics: collaboration (between universities, researchers, society and industry), research and innovation, sustainability and social equality.
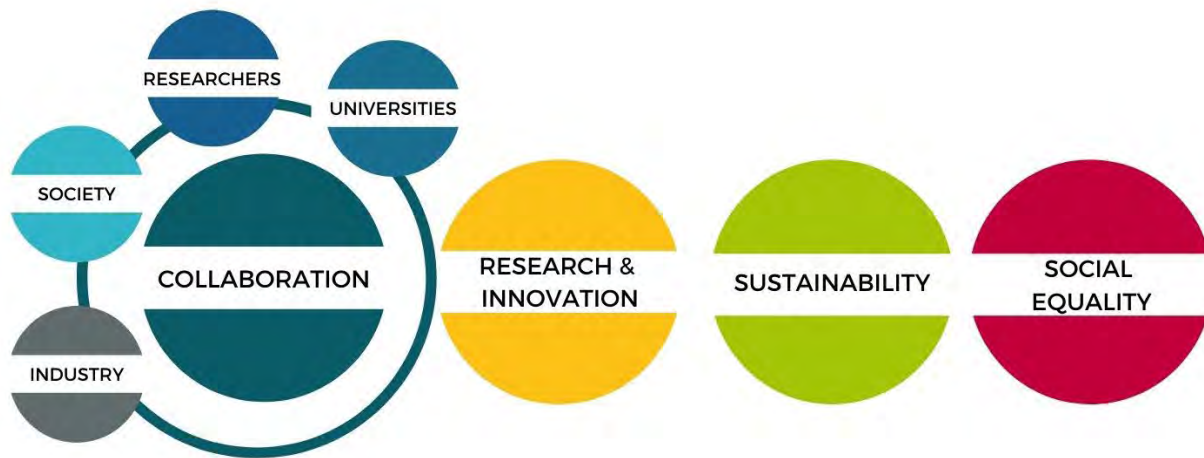
These four main topics will ensure that the contents of our communication activities will cover all the angles related to the activity of the project.

Collaboration

REUNICE's uniqueness is heavily marked by the fact that this is a project based on a collaborative model aimed at building an effective cooperation between science and society.

- Aligning strategies (for education, research and innovation) will be achieved by collaboration between the seven partner universities.
- Research departments from all members will need to work together to build standardised protocols aimed at enhancing their research capacities and scope.
- Engaging external partners (institutions, companies, social representatives) means that REUNICE team members will need to work with them in order to find common ground that develops reciprocal benefits.

Raising awareness of this collaborative approach will be crucial to promote the project's objectives and achievements.

Research and Innovation

REUNICE, in line with its objective to promote Open Science, will develop a common research and innovation agenda. This agenda will be fed by the findings of research practised by researchers from all alliance members, and WP6 will be responsible for its dissemination.

Sustainability

REUNICE promotes sustainable Science for Business and Society, in line with current and future challenges of European Universities. In the framework of the Swafs H2020 programme, REUNICE will place sustainability at the core of its collaboration with society. Therefore, a good proportion of REUNICE's communication activities will focus on highlighting some of the current and future sustainability-related challenges that the alliance will seek solutions for.

Social Equality

Inclusiveness (of people at risk of exclusion) is not only identified as one of REUNICE's values, but also it will be demonstrated by some tangible activities, such as WP4's task to identify deficiencies in this field and propose a specific strategy to correct them, and WP6's task to develop a specific communication plan to promote diversity, inclusiveness and gender equality. Given its direct relationship with the overall objectives of the European Universities initiative, our communication strategy will pay special attention to this topic.

TARGET PUBLICS

Target audience	Rationale
European policy makers and regulators (in the field of training and research on high education institutions)	Interactions with these target group will be essential in order to establish recognition and accreditation measures that are sustainable in the long-term and applicable not only for our alliance but for other education and research institutions.
Public administrators	Public authorities from the seven nations (at state, regional and local level) are strategic allies for the alliance's partners, so keeping them up to date with our activities and engage their continuous support and collaboration are also a vital part of our communication strategy.
Higher education institutions representatives and managerial staff	The maximum authorities of each of the seven partners, as well as their management teams, are in charge of the final approval for any strategic decisions taken by the project members. Therefore, regular communication with them will serve as a guarantee for the project's progress.
Companies and industry actors	Regular contact with this group is at the core of REUNICE's communication activities, since the research areas that will focus on will be in line with the conclusions derived from the interactions with the industry.
European universities	In order to explore joint structures across all European Universities on common technical activities to identify challenges and share best practices on research and innovation, it is imperative that all alliances are considered one of REUNICE's target publics as well.
Researchers	Researchers, both within the alliance and from other research bodies we collaborate with, will be not only one of our main audiences but also a very important source of information to develop content.
Students	Since aligning research and education is the mission of REUNICE, students across the alliance will need to be made aware of the possibilities available for them and the positive impact that getting involved in research will have in their future careers, be them within the academic world or in public or private companies.
General audiences	REUNICE's ambitious aim to embed research into all aspects of society means that our communication activities will also need to focus on raising awareness about the beneficial impact that our project will have in the society as a whole.
Media	WP6 team will also deal with media relations in order to ensure that the topics we cover are included in their agenda. In this regard, the Communication Board members will respond to media requests and channel REUNICE's messages through media in order to reach a wider public.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND TOOLS

REUNICE CHANNELS AND TOOLS FOR EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

In order to engage with the identified target publics and contribute to the sustainability of the project, REUNICE will make use of the following main communication channels.

1. Website
2. Social media channels:
   - LinkedIn
   - Facebook
   - Instagram
   - Twitter
   - YouTube
3. Blog
4. Newsletter
5. Branded materials
6. Events

WEBSITE. In consistency with our branding strategy, REUNICE's website will be hosted within the alliance EUNICE's website domain, since it is considered an integral part of this European University rather than an 'additional project'. With the URL (Uniform Resource Locator) **www.eunice-university.eu/research** we emphasise this fact and also contribute to highlight the project as the alliance's "research arm": REUNICE is not a mere add-on but rather a project to make the European University EUNICE complete. Hosting REUNICE's web within the European University domain will contribute by itself to reinforce this idea amongst our different publics, both internal and external. Sections and contents of REUNICE's website will be agreed with all WP leaders and defined in detail in REUNICE's Communication Action Plan (project deliverable D6.2).

SOCIAL MEDIA. In the same way that we do with our website, REUNICE will use the **alliance official social media channels** to boost its online communications. Creating new channels just for REUNICE would result in diluting the brand strength, which we would consider a mistake, especially when both the alliance's and REUNICE's projects are novel in nature and share a considerable number of target groups. Social media channels allow for **specific targeting** through the use of hashtags and tags, and this will be key in REUNICE's social media strategy. All social media posts that are originated within REUNICE (EUNICE's research arm) will include the hashtag #research by default, as well as specific ones related to the content (e.g. #EUNICEresearch, #reunice, #researchproject, #researchcollaboration, #equality, #innovation, #sustainability, etc).

In addition to this, we will identify the most relevant social accounts to follow and interact with to **promote 2-way interactions** with these by a) relevant tagging and mentions, b) interaction through

comments on their posts and sharing and c) setting lists (i.e. Twitter lists, which allow both perusing content from relevant sources in a more efficient manner as well as positioning us as a network active promoter in the specific field).

https://www.linkedin.com/company/74565706

https://www.facebook.com/Eunice-European-University-101749955266529

https://www.instagram.com/eunice_uni_/

https://twitter.com/EUNICE_uni_

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXmj6Fg2Nev0Y12MbtcvFqg

BLOG. Blogging about REUNICE's activities and findings will allow us to position our project experts, external collaborators and partners as a relevant, authority voice in the field of research and innovation, which will in turn help reinforce the project's brand reputation and grow our audiences. EUNICE's blog (to be launched in January 2022) will disseminate articles related to REUNICE.

NEWSLETTER. The alliance's newsletter, released every six months, will have a **specific section on Research** dedicated to the dissemination of REUNICE's activities and results. This newsletter is distributed via the website and promoted by each alliance member through their own channels and distribution lists in their local language, which helps the messages reach publics that otherwise may be overseen.

BRANDED MATERIALS. Apart from all online general channels, REUNICE will produce **printed media** such as flyers, posters, roll-ups and other materials to promote brand visibility and support contextualisation of events and specific activities at a local level (i.e. in the seven regions where the alliance is present, as well as at any relevant event where the alliance takes part).

EVENTS. Events will complete the set of communication channels through which REUNICE will position its messages and its brand, and will use these to build networks and engage public authorities, industry players, research bodies and other relevant social groups, in order to develop a closer relationship between science and society.

REUNICE CHANNELS AND TOOLS FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

WP6 not only plays an active role in developing the communication strategy to reach external publics, but also works a support structure to facilitate internal communication within the project's environment.
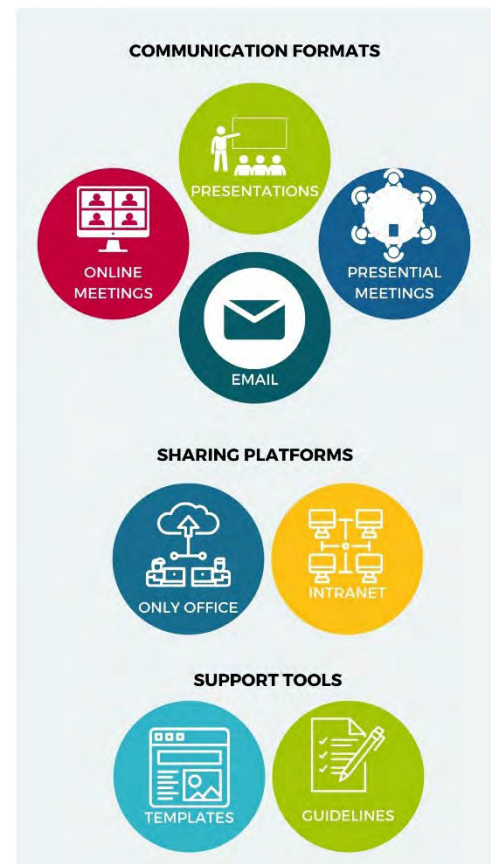
COMMUNICATION FORMATS

Communication at project's level is mainly done through presentations, online and face-to-face meetings and email. WP6 input in order to maximise the effectiveness of REUNICE's internal communications aims to reinforce team-building and sense of belonging, as well as raise brand awareness amongst the project members, since they will act as brand ambassadors and it is essential they feel identified with (and proud of) REUNICE's brand and its brand values.

SHARING PLATFORMS

WP6 will use, in order to share relevant materials, two sharing platforms. First, the cloud-based platform established by the project management team (WP1), Only Office, where all project documents are stored and activities are scheduled and monitored. In addition to this, the alliance's digital platform (to be completed by EUNICE's WP4) will also serve as an intranet for internal project communication and document sharing.

SUPPORT TOOLS

In order to support all WPs and project members and help build the brand from within, WP6 will produce sets of templates for documents required to function as a team (i.e. PPT, Word, forms, etc.) as well as guidelines to help WP1 (Project Management Team) reach uniformity in internal communication procedures and practices.

PLANNING AND MONITORING

WP6 will schedule meetings with REUNICE's WP leaders and communication officers at each of the partner universities during M4 in order to gather information about their planned activities and elaborate a Communication Action Plan (deliverable 6.2) based on each WP's input and established communication needs.

Each WP leader will identify, with the help of their local project communication officer, the main communicable milestones. WP6 will then design the project's Communication and Dissemination Action Plan, which will contain a specific timeline for the communication activities required to support the project, as well as guidelines on how to monitor and measure progress for WP6.

We will set goals for our communication activities and monitor our success in reaching these goals. The regular feedback received will be examined against the communication objectives, which will enable us to adapt to changing needs, revisit our approach if needed and increase the impact of our work.

The monitoring will be 1) quantitative – e.g. website visits, media and social media coverage, the number of social media followers, event participants, number of video plays, etc., and 2) qualitative – e.g. feedback from events and joint projects, stakeholder surveys, web user surveys, staff surveys, etc.