COMMUNICATING COHESION POLICY
INTRO

WHY COHESIFY?
COHESIFY THE PROBLEM

IF EUROPEANS WERE 100

- 50 travelled abroad at least once
- 35 completed higher education
- 30 travel abroad yearly
- 25 can work in a foreign language
- 10 consider they benefitted from EU projects
COHESIFY

BRIEFLY

PARTNERS
8 UNI, 2 SME

FUNDING
2,498,787 €

QUESTION WORTH
50 BILLION €

DURATION
27 MONTHS
COHESIFY MIXED METHODS

1 Analysis of mass media
   - News media
   - Social media
   17 Case studies
   12 Countries
   14 Years (2007-2020)

2 Documentation
   Communication plan  Evaluations  Monitoring reports

3 Citizens views of Cohesion policy, the EU and identity
   Focus group
   Telephone survey

4 Opinions on performance & communication
   Stakeholders + Managing Authorities & key actors of the programmes
   Online surveys
   In depth interviews

Interested in the topic? Follow us on Twitter @cohesify
QUESTIONS ABOUT CITIZENS’ KNOWLEDGE OF COHESION POLICY, ITS IMPACT & CONTRIBUTION TO EUROPEAN IDENTITY

WHERE DID WE INTERVIEW?

Cyprus - Cyprus
Germany - Baden-Württemberg
Greece - Central Macedonia
Hungary - Nyugat-Dunántúl
Ireland - Southern and Eastern
Italy - Lombardy
Poland - Podkarpackie
Poland - Pomorskie
Romania - West
Slovenia - West
Spain - Andalucía
Spain - Castilla y León
Netherlands - Flevoland
Netherlands - Limburg
United Kingdom - North East England
United Kingdom - Scotland

WHO DID WE INTERVIEW?

240 PARTICIPANTS
110 WOMEN

AGE

HOW DID WE RECRUIT?

Interested in the results? Register for the final conference at www.cohesify.eu
QUOTES

IF YOU WANT TO WRITE A EUROPEAN PROJECT, YOU DON’T HAVE TO WRITE IT YOURSELF. YOU NEED TO GO TO A SPECIALIST, THE SPECIALIST WILL WRITE IT FOR YOU, AND YOU JUST NEED TO FILL IN...

IF WE EARNED AS MUCH AS THEY DO, THEN CERTAINLY WE WOULD MORE STRONGLY FEEL WE BELONG TO THE EU.

“THERE IS A BIG BILLBOARD AT THE NURSERY OF MY DAUGHTER. THE BILLBOARD IS UGLY, BUT THE NURSERY IS VERY NICE.”
CITIZENS’ SURVEY

QUESTIONS ON THE AWARENESS OF EU FUNDING AND COMMUNICATION, EU ATTACHMENT AND IDENTITY

WHAT DID WE DO?

8559 Telephone surveys
40 Questions
17 Regions
12 Countries

WHAT DID WE FIND OUT?

% who have heard of at least one of ERDF, Cohesion Fund, or ESF

Survey carried out by GfK Belgium
KEY CONCLUSIONS
KEY CONCLUSIONS

The **image** of the EU & **public trust** in EU institutions has **deteriorated** over the past decade.
Cohesion Policy spending & communication makes a **real difference** to how citizens perceive & identify with the EU.
Spending needs to be seen by citizens to be addressing regional & local needs & development challenges
Citizen-focused approach to the programming of EU funds is needed with an upgraded role for communication.
2 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS
RECOMMENDATIONS - Programming for people

Introduce ‘open programming’ for real dialogue with citizens in designing interventions
RECOMMENDATIONS - Programming for people

HOW?

Through democratic innovations

participatory budgeting & deliberation (juries, panels and polls) to give local people a say
RECOMMENDATIONS - Programming for people

Potential to revolutionise citizen engagement & communication
RECOMMENDATIONS - SMART communication planning

Communication integrated in planning including:

- Outcome indicators with baselines
- Funding earmarked & costs specified
RECOMMENDATIONS –
Project selection – to exploit communication impact

Effectiveness of projects to exploit results should be a selection criterion (as in H2020, COSME...)

Especially where EC has leverage (major projects)
RECOMMENDATIONS – Media Strategy

Recognise that countries & regions differ in the way Cohesion policy is framed
RECOMMENDATIONS – Media Strategy

Design media strategies with reference to local frames

Enhance positive frames

Build longer-term narratives linked to individual stories

Actively challenge - rather than ignore - negative frames
RECOMMENDATIONS – Media Strategy

Diversify & upgrade media activity
**RECOMMENDATIONS – Visibility, branding & relevance**

**Increase** visibility of EU FUNDS brand

**More** EU presence in regions

**Humanise the funds** – managing communication as a set of stories about people and their locality

**Bring projects to life:** unified project database with **audiovisuals**
THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

ANY QUESTIONS?

Gauthier Bas
Mail: gauthier@old-continent.eu