



# **Communication & Visibility Guidelines 2019**

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## FOREWORD

It is a pleasure to present the “ECES Communication and Visibility Guidelines”, finalised after lengthy consultation across our Foundation and completed by colleagues with long and varied experience in all aspects of communications.

Visibility is a bedrock element of most policies the European Union and EU Member States, which are our main donors, agrees on and contracts to organisations like ECES to implement.

Through its visibility initiatives, the EU and its Member States showcases its actions in partner countries across the world, as well as connection to its stakeholders and beneficiaries. It also shows delivery of the services the EU and its Member States has pledged to European citizens to undertake in their name.

I am a huge devotee of communication and visibility. This is actually one of the many reasons why I have co-founded ECES which is to provide the appropriate visibility of the EU and its Member States in our electoral support projects and activities also to underline the powerful peace message of the EU itself.

In this context, these Guidelines are drafted for our personnel but also to be shared with our donors, beneficiaries of our projects and other electoral stakeholders to indicate the importance ECES attach to this issue also to fully respect contractual conditions with our donors.

On my travels and in the travels of all ECES personnel, it is always a pleasure to appear with members of our teams and with project beneficiaries in photos, videos and online posts. They tell the story of the passion and commitment we all put in to our work, and of the purpose we share to support electoral processes worldwide, often more effectively than formal written descriptions ever can.

Next year is going to be the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ECES which was therefore established not long ago. But in that short period of time, contemporary public communication has evolved beyond recognition: social media platforms and smartphone technology, in particular, have become habitual in our daily lives, shaping the way we communicate and empathise and connect with others.

ECES, too, has evolved beyond recognition. We are now an ever-growing team, spanning over different continents and many countries, and we should use the moment to show our many-layered work accessibly and as it is on the ground: People-oriented, effective, supportive and sophisticated.

That said, however accessible these new technologies may be, the process still demands consistent and thoughtful work. We need to talk the right language to those we’re reaching out to through our social media, websites and the traditional media.

These guidelines offer a 360-degree picture of the current landscape. They cover everything from audience understanding to social media analytics, taking better pictures to writing better words, banner design to logo design, copyright to search engine optimisation. And much, much more.

It is tempting to see such this document as a collection of formal rules set in stone, to be filed on a dusty office bookshelf after it’s lightly skimmed, and consulted only when the need arises.

But this is far from our aim. Colourfully presented, these guidelines are the fruit of a collaboration between inspired team members. They are dynamic and open to adaptation in an ever-changing

multimedia environment. We want to encourage you to continue to share your experiences and ideas for improvement so we can keep pace with, even be one step ahead of, demands, trends and innovations in the field of communications.

Done well, communication serves our professional interests like nothing else and we look forward the implementation of these guidelines from our personnel at HQ and in the field in collaboration with our donors, beneficiaries and stakeholders at large



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*Executive Director*

European Centre for Electoral Support

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ECES family at the European Development Days 2019



# COMMUNICATION

## 1. Objectives and scope of the guidelines

### 1.1. Objectives

Sometimes seen as a subsidiary aspect of a non-profit organization's work, communication is, on the contrary, an absolutely essential tool that should be taken into consideration in almost all parts of the job.

The impact of an effective communication strategy is invaluable for ECES, as it ensures the development of far-reaching visibility, generates fundraising and recruitment opportunities, and builds trust and credibility. It is, furthermore, a contractual obligation stemming from our partnerships with donors and institutional partners. As an organization contracted by these donors, ECES is bound to abide by a range of C&V requirements and guidelines.

Sharing and disseminating what ECES is doing is key! It keeps all those involved in the organization informed, generates visibility among donors, stakeholders and broader audiences, and informs beneficiaries and the general public about the importance and benefits of our action.

By following a coherent, impact-focused and sustainable C&V plan, ECES raises awareness of the projects it is (and has been) implementing across the globe, and therefore maximizes the impact of its work. Ultimately, this contributes to reinforcing ECES's image as an international centre of excellence in the field of electoral support.

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*Beware: poorly organized communication can be worse than no communication!*

---

Remember that without professional guidance and experience in the field, your well-intentioned efforts can become disjointed and counter-productive, resulting in negative audience perceptions and harmful consequences for the organisation.

On the contrary, a deft use of ECES's audio-visual tools, social media and other communication channels can help it reach its target audiences in multiple and efficient ways.

### Efficient communication yields

- ➔ Increased funding opportunities
- ➔ Improved trust and credibility
- ➔ Transparency and accountability
- ➔ Public awareness and brand building
- ➔ Expanded community outreach engagement
- ➔ Strengthened ties with donors and stakeholders

## 1.2. Key messages and C&V rules

All C&V actions must be designed in accordance with the present C&V plan AND the donors'/partners' plan.

The main requirements include:

- A clear communication objective
- A well-defined target
- Accurate, up to date and factual information
- A scheduled, well sequenced delivery timeline
- An appropriate communication channel (cf section 3)

All communication must be:

- a) context-appropriate and culturally sensitive
- b) results oriented
- c) aligned with ECES's vision and values
- d) embodying ECES's key messages and objectives (and, when relevant, those of partners)
- e) using suitable language, fitted to the target audience
- f) measurable in terms of impact
- g) closely coordinated with the donors and partners' requirements

## 1.3. Target audience

In order to share information, one must first identify his/her target audiences, determine why they are significant and how to best communicate with them.

Knowing your audience will help guide your decision on which social media to use (cf section 4.2.). Criteria to consider include among others: age, education level, geographical area and political orientation.

The table below outlines main target groups for ECES Communication and Visibility Actions and the best ways to communicate with them.

Target group	Actions and Tools	Objectives
Key donors and stakeholders (European Commission, bilateral donors)	Print communication Online communication Audio-visual productions	Fundraising Promotion
Implementing partners	Online and print communication Audio-visual productions	Information Promotion

### KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK

**WHAT** do you seek to achieve through this action?

**WHO** are you trying to inform/influence/fundraise from?

**WHEN** do you expect to release it? And **WHEN** do you expect a visible impact?

**WHERE** did you get your sources?

**WHY** are you implementing this C&V action?

Local/national authorities and stakeholders		Information
General public in beneficiary countries		
General public in EU member states and donors		
Media (broadcasters, print and electronic)	Press releases Press conferences & visits Interviews Online and print communication	

#### 1.4. Who should use these guidelines?

The present guidelines are aimed at the entire ECES staff, both Brussels-based and in country offices.

While they are first and foremost aimed at Communication Officers or staff in charge of C&V purposes, promoting ECES visibility is a duty for all ECES employees and the rules outlined in the present guidelines should be respected and followed in all ECES or ECES-related endeavours.

On arrival in the organization, each staff member should be briefed on these guidelines, and all staff should be regularly updated on the latest C&V requirements.

Changes in the present guidelines should be immediately communicated to all staff and subsequently applied as soon as operationally feasible.

This document will also serve to inform each of ECES's project in drafting their own C&V Plan, which should abide by all listed requirements. It should be noted that all C&V Plans should reflect the latest visibility requirements associated with the source of financing for their projects (eg: for projects financed by the European Union, its 'Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU External Actions', among other guidelines, constitute a contractual obligation).

---

*Remember: There is no one-size-fits-all. C&V actions must always be tailored to the target audiences, to messages and to the actual realities of the project.*

---

In addition to training other staff on the C&V requirements, Communication Officers should also be working closely with the Reporting section of each project as this constitutes a crucial part of the communication with donors. Contrary to C&V actions, reporting remains a non-public aspect of our work. Further details can be found in the *SOP section*



## 2. Terminology and Language

In all C&V material, ECES should be first referred to as the “European Centre for Electoral Support” before its acronym “ECES” can be used, or to its official translation in other languages.

All communication material regarding ECES should be drawn from official sources (ECES website, annual reports, etc) or otherwise approved by the ECES C&V focal point.

Due to its presence in various parts of the world, ECES’s language of publication will primarily be the one in which the contract with the donor is signed. For projects in parts of the world where the first language is neither English nor French, publication in the local language should always be accompanied by an English translation.

For ECES institutional communication, both English and French versions should be available, with English being the priority.

## 3. Communication and visibility channels and tools

### 3.1. Online

Online communication is part and parcel of ECES’s communication strategy and serves to disseminate information about all ECES projects and actions.

It encompasses two main channels:

- a) The organization and project websites
- b) Social media channels

#### a) Websites

The URL address of the ECES website is: [www.eces.eu](http://www.eces.eu)

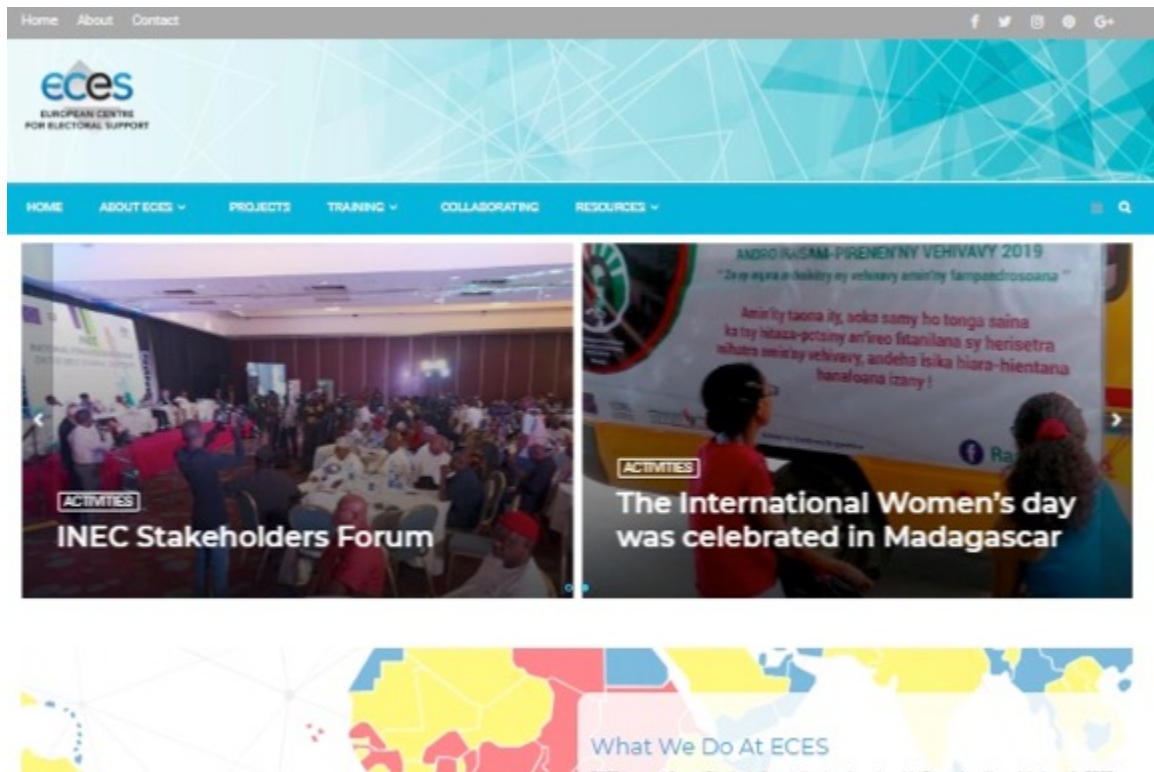
The website provides all the relevant information and documentation of the various activities and projects implemented by ECES, available in English and French.

In addition to the main ECES website, and except if otherwise advised by ECES HQ, each project should have a dedicated website created when the project is launched. Links to those project websites can be found on the ECES website, along with pictures, videos and infographics.

The website must be updated on a regular basis, with new items published at least weekly. The person in charge of the website must ensure that the information is accurate and that all featured links function correctly.

The layout of the website seeks to be intuitive and user-friendly, with different sections providing a comprehensive overview of the organisation’s mission, activities and projects.

More details about the website’s design and various functionalities can be found in the Visibility section.



Links to ECES social media

Interactive, user-friendly slider

## b) Social media

Social media are an integral part of the communication strategies of ECES and all project and they complement all other planned visibility actions.

They are a great tool to reach a wide audience in a quick and cost-effective way.

Please refer to section 4.3 for guidelines on the appropriate use of social media channels.

## 3.2. Print

ECES print communication is divided into two main categories, each embodying different purposes and characteristics. These are:

- a) Informational publications
- b) Media-targeted products

In addition to being disseminated in print format to relevant target audiences, all produced material should by default be available in electronic form (the various acceptable formats for such documents are outlined in the Visibility section below).

These publications should then be made available to the public through ECES online communication channels.

All printed material should be produced in the most environmentally friendly way possible.

### a) Informational publications

ECES produces various print publications which aim to promote its work around the globe. These include:

- **ECES Organisational Profile:** this document provides a comprehensive overview of the foundation, its history, activities and personnel.

It encompasses the following sections:

- History
- Facts & Figures
- Strategy
- Key Activities
- Areas of Activity
- Main Projects
- Capacity Development
- Partners
- How We Work
- Who We Are
- Publications

It is updated on a regular basis, in order to provide the latest updates of ECES's work.



- **EURECS – “A European Response to Electoral Cycle Support”** is a joint publication by ECES and other members of the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD).

It outlines the lessons learned and accumulated over the last five years from ECES and EPD members in support of electoral and democratisation processes.

The document is divided into the following sections:

- Overview of EU electoral assistance
- Implementing the EURECS
- Examples of EURECS-specific activities



- **Brochures, resumes, flyers**

ECES also produces a range of publications, both independently and in collaboration with its partners, with the aim of presenting its various programmes and activities. Examples include:



Visibility guidelines related to the production of such documents are outlined in the Visibility section below.

- **Academic publications**

In addition, ECES staff and experts regularly contribute to a number of publications, which span from training manuals, working papers to thematic papers that ECES makes available to practitioners and academics.

This embodies ECES's aim to contribute to the global sharing of knowledge and lesson learned in the electoral support sector.

Most of these publications are accessed via "Publications" on the ECES website.

### 3.3. Audio-visual material

Please refer to the Sections 7-11

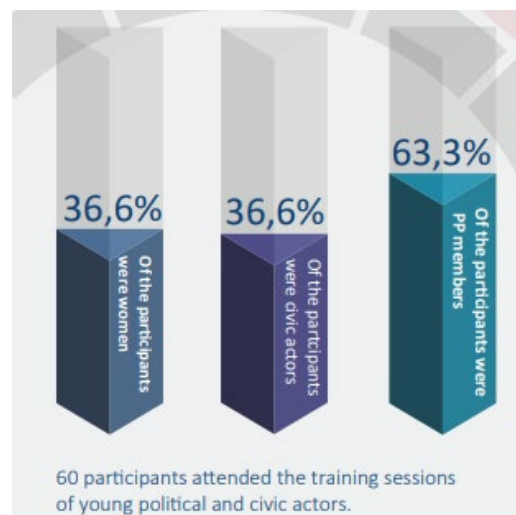
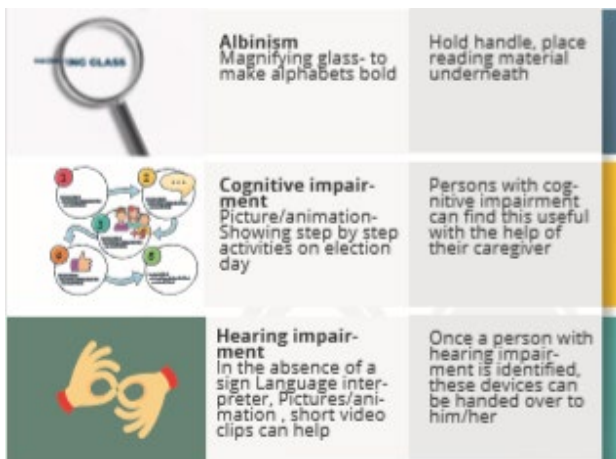


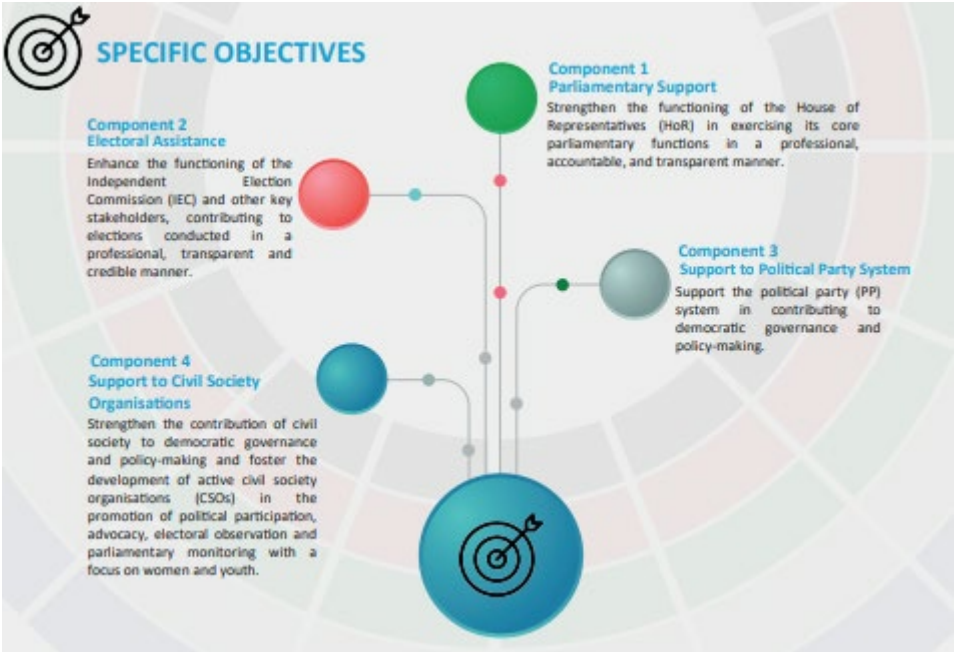
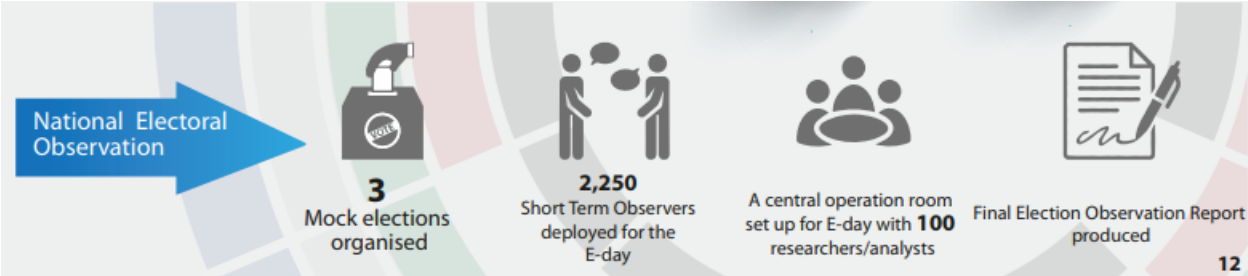
### 3.4. Infographics and design

In order to broaden its scope of communication and to further engage its audiences, ECES regularly develops visually appealing C&V products, such as animated GIFs, infographics and short clips, among others.

Visual content draws the attention of the audience, and helps communicate large amounts of information in an engaging, educational way.

Examples of designed content can be seen below:





Those infographics and design products are subject to ECES visibility criteria outlined in the Visibility section of this guide.

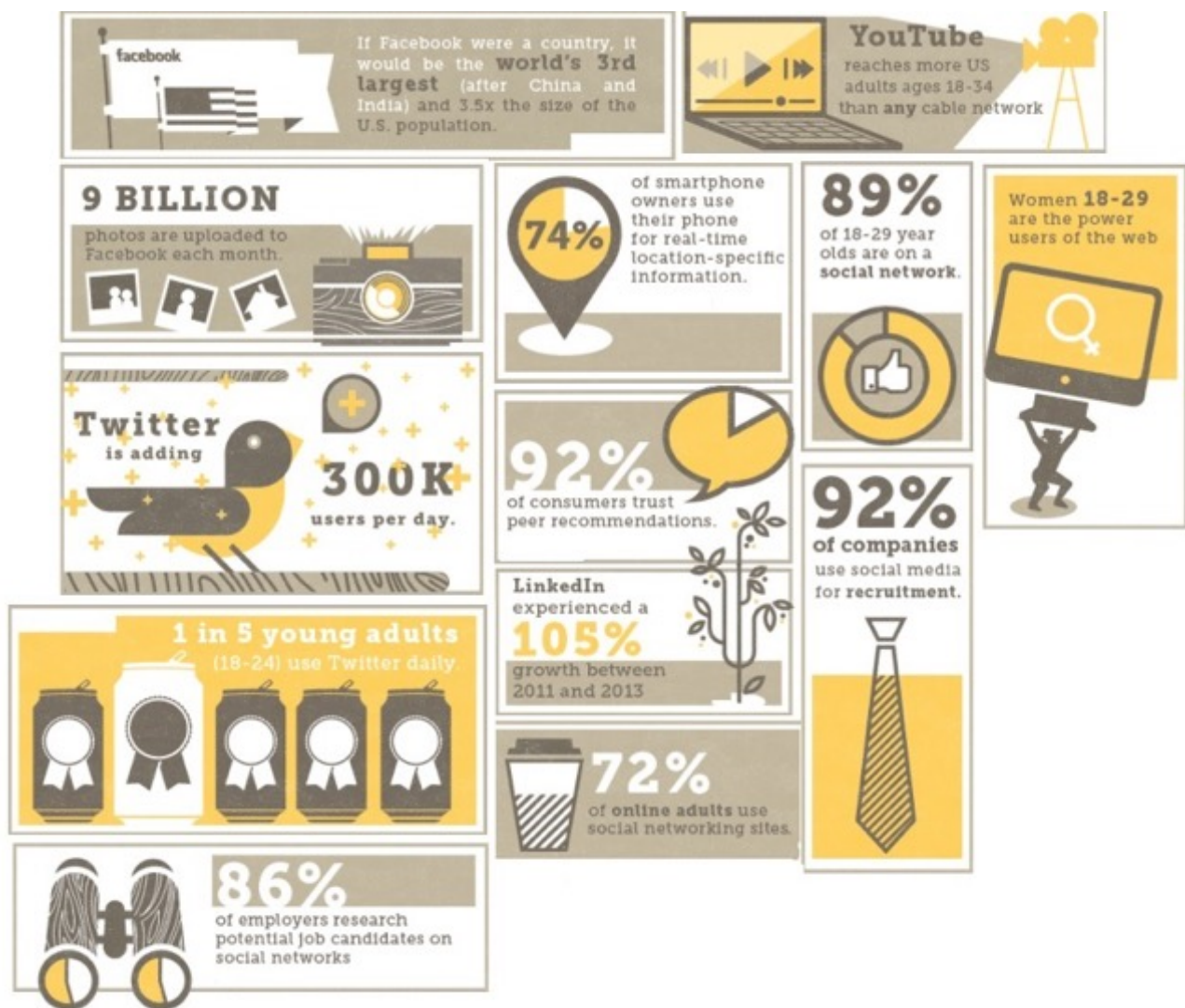


## 4. The specific case of social media

### 4.1. Why social media?

The emergence of social media has transformed radically the way communication is done and information is shared with the public. The last decades have witnessed an explosion of growth in popular social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, among many others.

A few statistics to illustrate this (**Source: MoZ.com**):



As publishing content has become much simpler, web dynamics have shifted from a “one to many” setting to a “many to many”. But while this represents a great opportunity for organisations operating on a global level, like ECES, it also means competition is fierce, and one needs to master the tools of social media in order to get the right message across to the right people.

Below is a technical guide that will support you in your social media endeavours and allow you to get the word about ECES out there in the best possible way.

Do not forget: social media are NOT a separate and independent means of communication. They should always be used alongside traditional media and be part of an integrated communication strategy.

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*Communication does NOT start with social media.  
Instead, social media are a vector that will help  
you galvanize and bolster your existing efforts.*

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#### 4.2. The right medium for the right purpose



Social media platforms are numerous and varied, and they all serve a different purpose. Whether it is about professional networking, instant news sharing or visual inspiration, each platform has its own particularities and its specific type of users.

Knowing this will help you tailor your social media marketing to the right platforms, and therefore help you maximize your impact. While it is essential to carry a consistent message and tone from platform to platform, it is also vital to demonstrate adaptability depending on the nature of the platform.

As well as the characteristics of the target platform's typical user, you should also consider the specificities of the country/geographical area you are communicating with. Not all tools and networks are used similarly in each country.

You may also make use of local social media networks, when relevant.

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**Remember:** *Consumers rarely use just one social platform, so you cannot focus your communication on one single channel*

---

The most commonly used social media platforms are outlined in the table below, along with their key characteristics and the best ways to capitalize on them:

Social media	Active users (as of 2018)	ECES Network (March 2019)	Characteristics	Benefits/goals	Downsides

<b>Facebook</b>	2.32 billion	118,061 Followers	<p>Largest social network worldwide</p> <p>Focused on news and entertainment</p> <p>Mostly based on personal connections</p>	<p>Widely used</p> <p>Varied content options</p> <p>Brand awareness</p> <p>Storytelling</p>	<p>Competitive</p> <p>Close circle centered platform: no organic reach</p> <p>Need for constant engagement</p>
<b>LinkedIn</b>	610 million	2210 Followers	<p>Business-related social network</p>	<p>Market research</p> <p>Networking</p> <p>Long-form articles</p> <p>B2B platform</p>	<p>Less interactive</p>
<b>Twitter</b>	326 million	2,869 Followers	<p>Limited to 280 characters</p> <p>Used for linking content</p>	<p>Viral sharing of links, short facts</p> <p>Real-time network</p> <p>Reactivity</p>	<p>Fast paced</p> <p>Very short content life span</p>
<b>YouTube</b>	1.5 billion	516 Subscribers	<p>Video centered</p>	<p>Potential for viral sharing</p> <p>Fit for educational/entertaining videos</p> <p>Organic search</p> <p>Brand awareness</p> <p>Audience engagement</p>	<p>High quality requirements</p> <p>More difficult outreach</p>
<b>Instagram</b>	1 billion	1,540	<p>Images/videos based</p>	<p>Rapidly growing</p> <p>Engagement rate</p> <p>Intuitive, user friendly</p> <p>Brand awareness</p> <p>Visual branding</p>	<p>Limited audience</p> <p>Need for original visual content</p>

### 4.3. How to use social media: general rules

#### a) Golden rules

Communicating on social media platforms is completely different from traditional offline C&V.

Bombarded with information (500 million Tweets are sent each day), internet users have become extremely volatile and demanding in terms of content. Therefore, you need to make sure you deliver engaging, quality content to grab (and retain) the interest of your existing and potential followers.

Also know that maintaining a poor social presence can be harmful to your organization. With inactive accounts, your audience might assume that you are not active or, worse, that you are not interested in your audience's needs and activity.

- **Consistency:** in your message, style and posting habits. It does not mean you cannot post varied content, but you should make sure to maintain a coherent voice in line with ECES messaging within and among your platforms.
- **Target-tailored:** know your audience. Will your post enrich them in any way? Is it likely to compel them to share it in their own network? You do not address a donor in the same way as you would a beneficiary population. Keep in mind the target group table when posting.
- **Concise:** long content (anything more than 1,200 words) is known to outperform briefer posts. Do not get lost in details and technicalities, remember that your followers will have thousands of others posts to look at, and they need something clear and straight to the point to be willing to stop and take a look.
- **Visually appealing:** text is not enough; content that works best on social media is visual – photos, videos, illustrated quotes, graphics. So try to include them as much as possible.
- **Educating and entertaining:** great stories have a much wider impact than jargon or institutional messages. Try to make your stories as people-centered as possible while also showcasing results of ECES actions.
- **Reactivity/Proactivity:** a key quality of social media officers is reactivity. Being able to reply, interact and respond in a quick and adequate manner is crucial and special attention should be paid to comments and messages from our audience, as explained later in this guide. Monitoring our platforms to ensure that inappropriate or offensive are deleted on time is paramount.



b) Best time to post

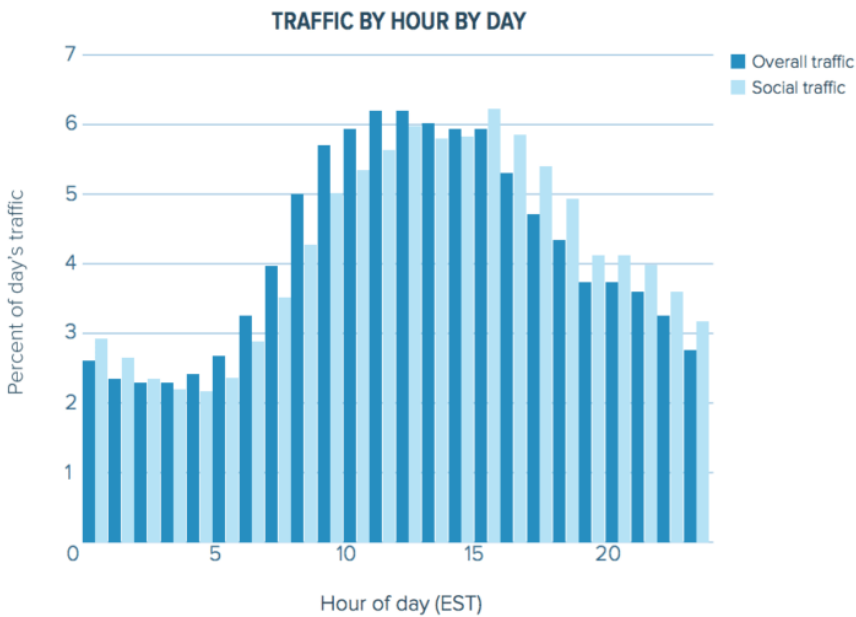
While there is no magical formula to know the exact time when your followers might engage with your posts, having an idea of the best times to post is an advantage you shouldn't overlook.

The following data give an overview of the times when your audience is most likely to engage with your posts. But we also recommend that you test and see what works best for you and your audience on each platform.

Overall, research has shown that **late afternoon to nighttime** is the best time to reach people on social media.

While those rules are not set in stone, it is preferable to take advantage of the peak traffic and social sharing times, which are commonly between **3:00 p.m. and 1:00 a.m.** (see graphs below).

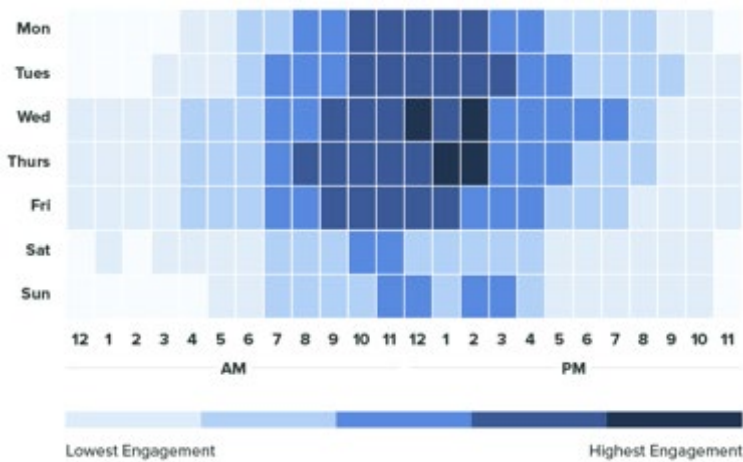
Source: [buffer.com](https://buffer.com)



For those interested in more specific data, research was also conducted per social media engagement, as displayed below: **(source for all tables: [sproutsocial.com](https://sproutsocial.com))**

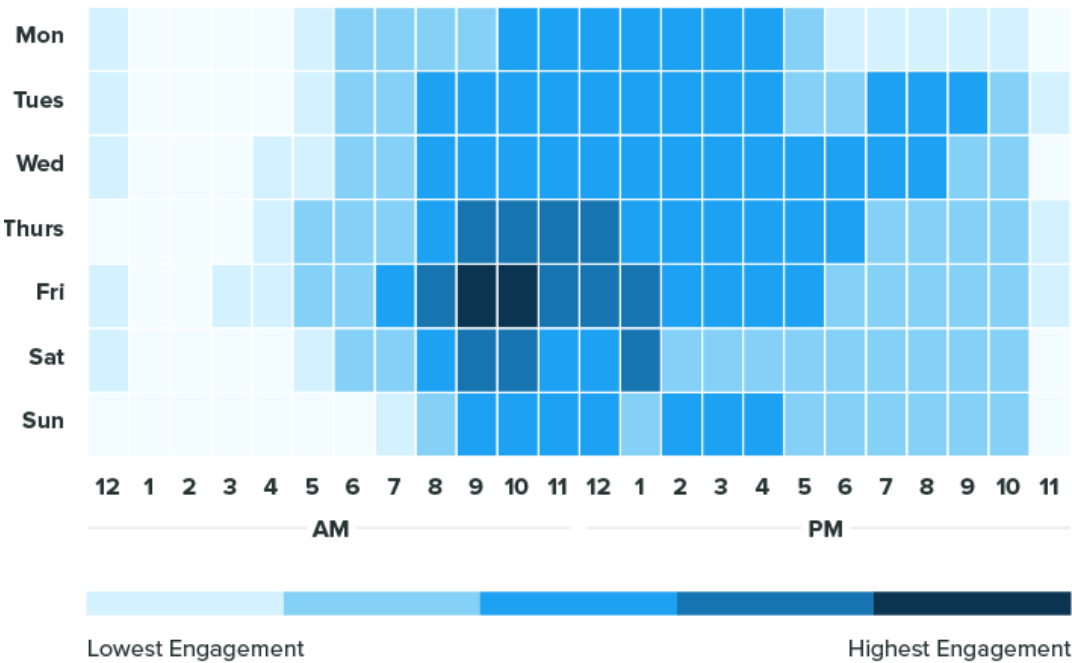
- Facebook Global Engagement Trends

Peak time: midday on weekdays



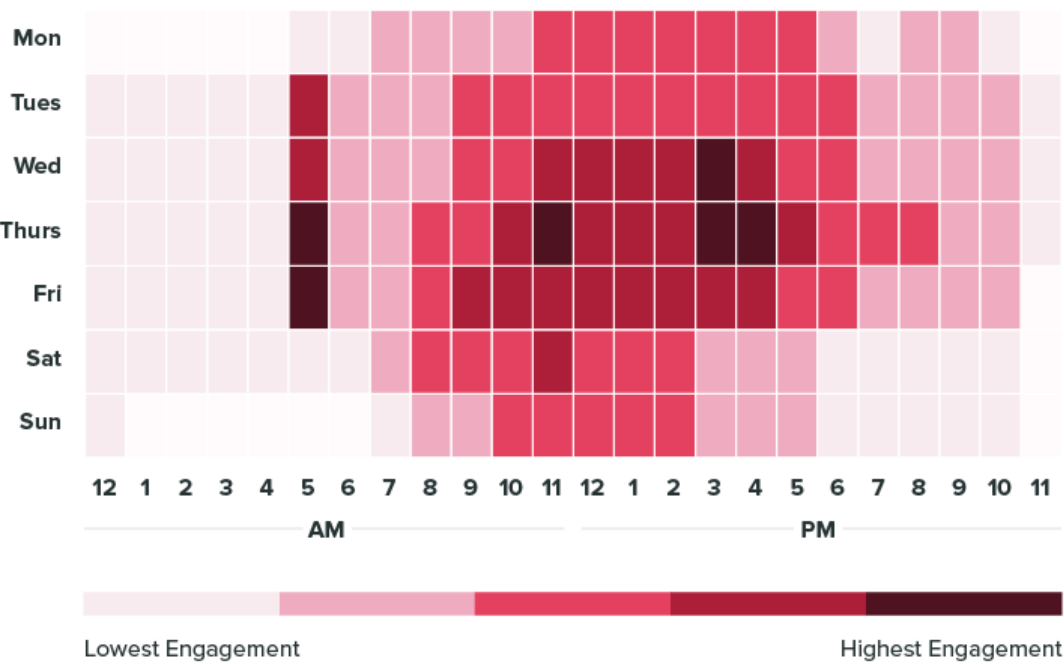
- **Twitter**

Peak time: continuous, including weekends and nighttime



- **Instagram**

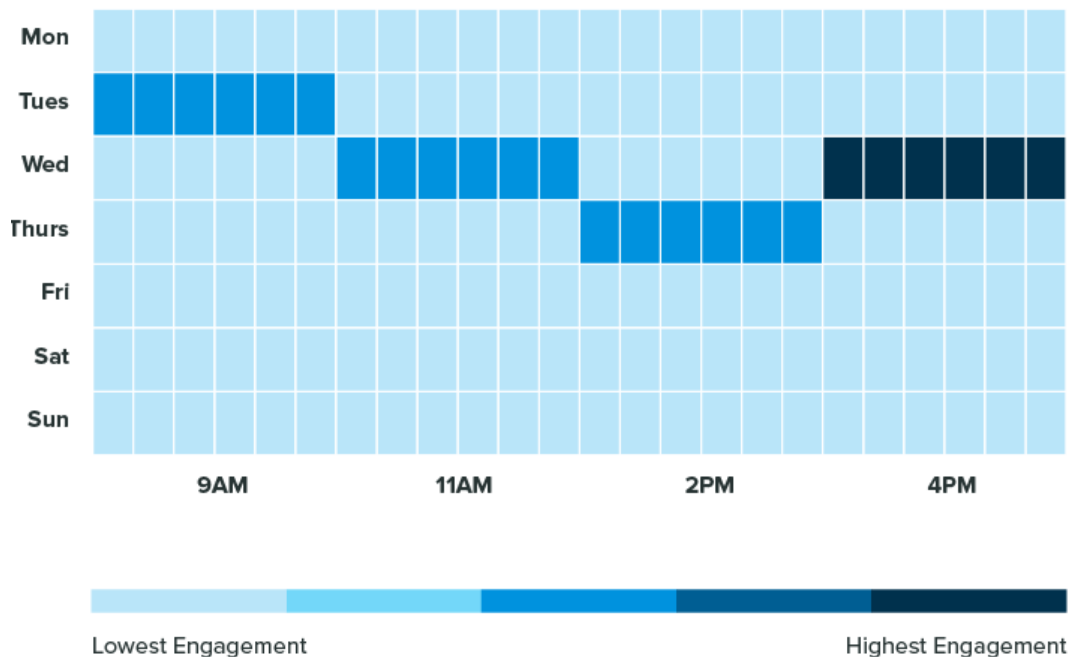
Peak time: early mornings on weekdays





- **LinkedIn**

Peak time: weekdays, after 3pm



### c) Frequency of posts

Once you understand when to best reach your audience, you can develop a post calendar and start scheduling posts. Again, this is not an intangible rule, it will always depend on your audience, their “social media appetite” and on what you have to say.

Less is more: Do not post “for the sake of it” as you might put off your followers and instigate brand fatigue.

It is better to post great content once a day (or less) and retain an interested audience base than to over-post and risk being ignored.

However, the opposite is true as well: not posting for a week might let your audience think you are not active or do not have continuous action to share.

Useful scheduling tools include: Buffer, HootSuite, Spout Social and Social Engage.

## 4.4. A technical guide to social media use

A few essential steps to undertake before you start using social media platforms include:

- **Reserving your name:** verifying your organization’s name prevents other people from using it as theirs on these networks.

- **Check potential double accounts:** the existence of several accounts – some potentially created long ago and not deleted – will create confusion and undermine your social media campaigns.
- Make sure all your **information is up-to-date**. Whether it is in the “About” or “My Profile” section of the medium, it is important to ensure that ECES is accurately and positively presented to the public.

Outdated information risks damaging the image of the organization, so always think of updating those information sections when changes in the foundation happen.

#### a) Facebook

With over 2 billion monthly active users, Facebook (FB) is the go-to online platform, which allows you to post text, pictures, videos, etc. to a network of friends and followers.



#### Step 1: Posting

Various content you can share includes: text with colored backgrounds, photos, videos, GIFs, stickers and links.

Several options allow you to inform your followers about your activity and whereabouts, such as: Feeling/Activity, Check in, Tagging Friends and Events.

**How to use it?** To share a FB status, go to the text box at the top of your news feed page or on your profile page and select the type of content you wish to post.

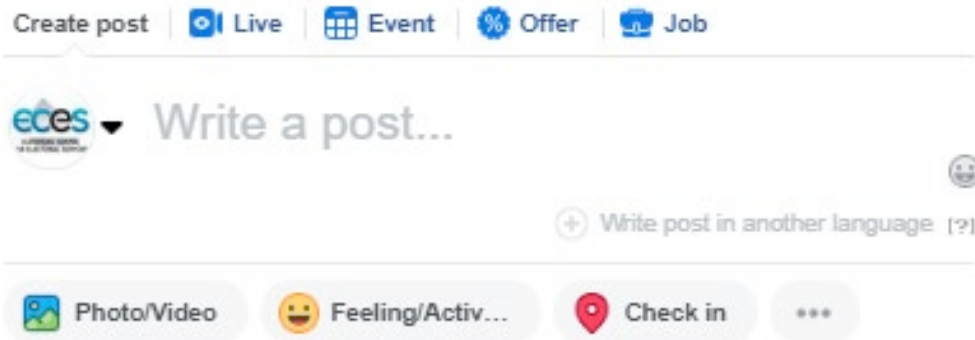
#### INDICATIVE FREQUENCY

**Facebook:** once to twice/day

**Twitter:** up to 5 times/day

**Instagram:** 1-2 times/day

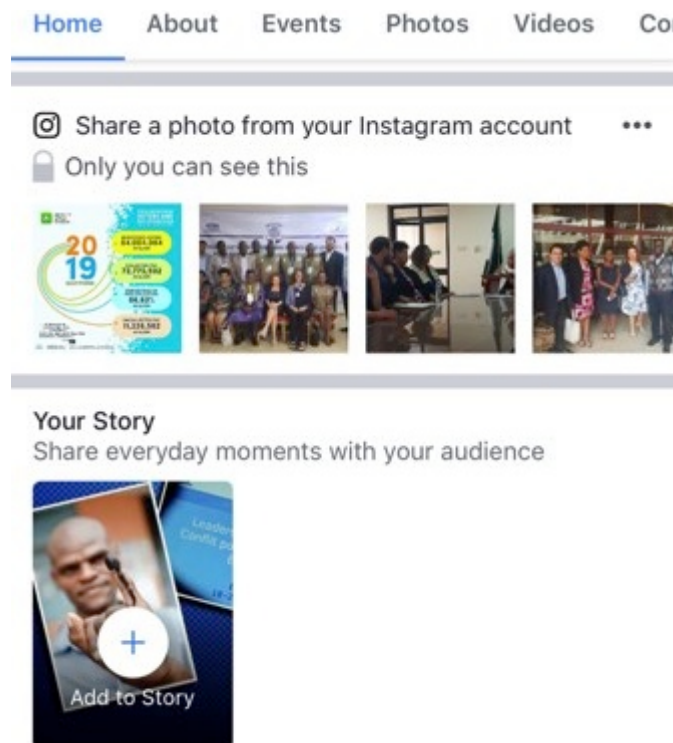
**LinkedIn:** one/weekday



## Step 2: Useful tools

- Poll: ask your Facebook friends what their opinion is on a certain topic.
- Answer a Question: choose a predetermined question to answer, or create your own question to answer, and share it with your Facebook friends.
- FB Stories: all the content that you can share through a status update is shareable through your Facebook story. Content can also be uploaded to your stories by clicking on 'Add to Your Story' button on the right sidebar.

This is a visual way of sharing your updates, and gives you numerous possibilities to customize your photos and videos.





### Step 3: Livestream

Facebook Live gives you the possibility to broadcast events or activities from your mobile device in real time. It is a cost-effective video strategy that provides unique content to connect directly with your audience and increases awareness around community events.

**How to use it?** Click on the Live button at the top of the app, and tap Go Live. You can add a description to your video, pick a feature, and select your audience. You will be able to see how many people are watching, as well as their comments in real time.

The screenshot shows the ECES Facebook page with several annotations:

- Verified account sign:** An arrow points to the verified account badge on the profile picture.
- Facebook Live:** An arrow points to the 'Live' button in the 'Create post' section.
- Schedule events:** An arrow points to the 'Event' button in the 'Create post' section.
- Community:** An arrow points to the 'Community' link in the left-hand navigation menu.
- Learn about your followers:** An arrow points to the 'Groups' link in the left-hand navigation menu.
- Integrate your various accounts:** An arrow points to the 'Share a recent photo from your Instagram account' section.
- Brief about the organisation:** An arrow points to the 'Our Story' section, which describes ECES as a not-for-profit private foundation headquartered in Brussels.

## b) Twitter

Twitter is a “real-time” network that allows users to post about things as they are happening. Due to the limit of characters (280), tweets are short, concise and straight to the point. They can be accompanied by a link towards a more elaborate piece, or published with a picture.

Unlike Facebook, Twitter updates and profiles are normally public, and you do not need to give your approval for someone to follow your account. This means easier engagement, but also a risk of spam accounts which are not interested in your content.



### Step 1: Tweet

Type your Tweet into the compose box at the top of your Home timeline, or click the Tweet button in the top navigation bar.

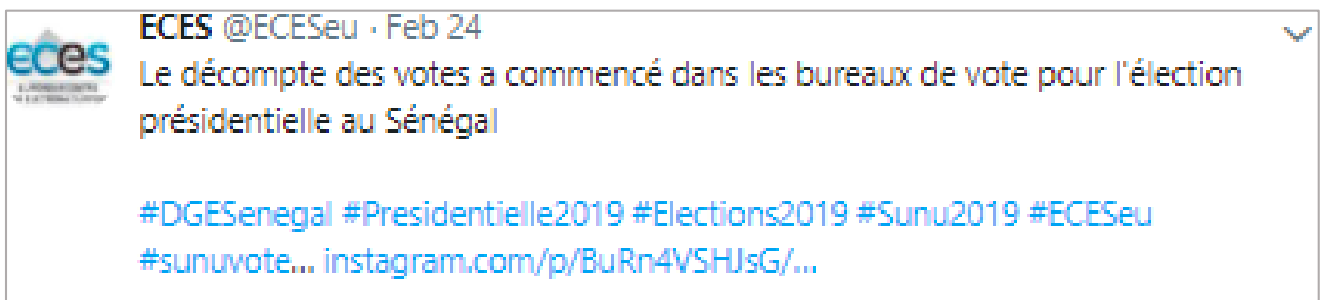
Make use of Hashtags (#) to maximize your outreach

**Hashtags** (#) are a unique feature of Twitter and provide an easy way to search for topics being discussed across the web.

Working as index keywords, this allows you to easily follow topics ECES might be interested in.

They can be inserted anywhere in a Tweet, and they will appear in blue, as a direct link to all the other Tweets mentioning this word on the platform.

When hashtags are widely used at the national or global level, they become **Trending Topics**



Choose your #Tags efficiently: keywords, preferably one word, easy to spell.

During events and activities you may choose to ask people to use a hashtag when posting online, either with the name of your event or the topic at hand. This is also an easy way to pull up all the tweets that mentioned your event.



### Step 2: Retweet

In addition to your own content you can share publicly posts made by other users: this is a **Retweet**.

This helps you pass along news and related content to your network and to create connections with other users with similar interests. You can either retweet the post as is, or add a personal comment.





Another useful feature is the **@replies** to other users.

There are two ways to use the @:

- Starting a tweet with @name will only notify the tagged user and anyone following both you and the recipient.
- If the @name is mentioned in any other part of the tweet, it will appear in all your followers twitter feeds.

---

*BEWARE: Do not retweet a link unless you have read the whole article as it may appear like an endorsement of content*

---



### Step 3: Follow

Following someone on Twitter means that:

- Their updates will appear in your Home timeline
- They will be able to send you Direct Messages



You can follow by clicking on their @name whereupon a Follow button will appear



People who already follow you will have a mention “Follows you” under their name.

There is no set rule on whom to follow back and you should definitely not follow everyone back.

Remember that the tweets of everyone you follow will come up on your Twitter feed.

Follow your partners, stakeholders, donors, journalists etc. and any person with similar interests, or who you think might have something interesting to say about topics ECES is working on.

**ECES Twitter account:** <https://twitter.com/ECESeu>



### c) LinkedIn

Lesser known than most social media platforms – or overlooked – LinkedIn can be a tremendous resource for ECES, as engagement rates on this website have been shown to be even higher than Facebook or Twitter.

Networking on LinkedIn is much more different from other platforms. It is a site geared toward careers and business, so you need to always communicate in a highly professional way, much less informally than on Instagram or FB.



#### Step 1: Connect

LinkedIn is a focal point for job seekers and recruiters, and provides great opportunities to network with people and organisations in your field.

Connecting will give you access to useful resources tailored to ECES's interests and help you stay up to date with the latest developments in the field of electoral support among others issues.



#### Step 2: Recommend and endorse

Similar to traditional letters of recommendation, LinkedIn acts as a track record of your professional abilities and endeavours. By allowing connections to write “recommendations” and offer “endorsements” of skills, LinkedIn puts you “on the map” of the field you are evolving in.

One feature allows people to highlight specific attributes or achievements that define you, while another can display a simple, straightforward confirmation that you have a particular skill.

These are later public to any profile visitor and provide you with credibility and legitimacy.



#### Step 3: Share

Use LinkedIn to post simple text updates, images/videos and links to other sites, or to share posts from other users.

Make sure your post is useful, informative and relevant to your professional network.

One of the particularities of LinkedIn is its long article feature.

Through its Publishing Platform, you can write long, elaborate pieces, which is a great way to showcase ECES expertise. It can be an op-ed, an informative piece, or any other material that can highlight ECES's mission, values and latest activities.

**ECES LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-centre-for-electoral-support/>

Connections/invitations to  
connect

Start a direct conversation

The image shows a LinkedIn profile for the European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES). The profile header includes the ECES logo, name, and location (Brussels Area, Belgium). The profile description states: "ECES is a not for profit private foundation headquartered in Brussels with a global remit. ECES promotes sustainable democratic development through the provision of advisory services, operational support and management of large projects in the electoral and democracy assistance field. ECES works with all elect...". Below the description is a "Profile Strength: Intermediate" bar. The "Your Dashboard" section is circled in blue and contains three statistics: "200 Who viewed your profile", "258 Media views", and "120 Search appearances". The "People Also Viewed" section on the right is also circled in blue and lists several potential connections, including Reiner Schmitz, Samia Mahgoub, Domenico Tuccinardi, Björn Müller, Clément Hut, Thierry COOSEMANS, Xavier Flament, and manji wilson. Annotations include a blue arrow pointing from the "Connections/invitations to connect" text to the "My Network" icon, and another blue arrow pointing from the "Start a direct conversation" text to the "Messaging" icon. A third blue arrow points from the "Automatic, tailored statistics" text to the "Your Dashboard" section, and a fourth blue arrow points from the "Potential connections" text to the "People Also Viewed" section.

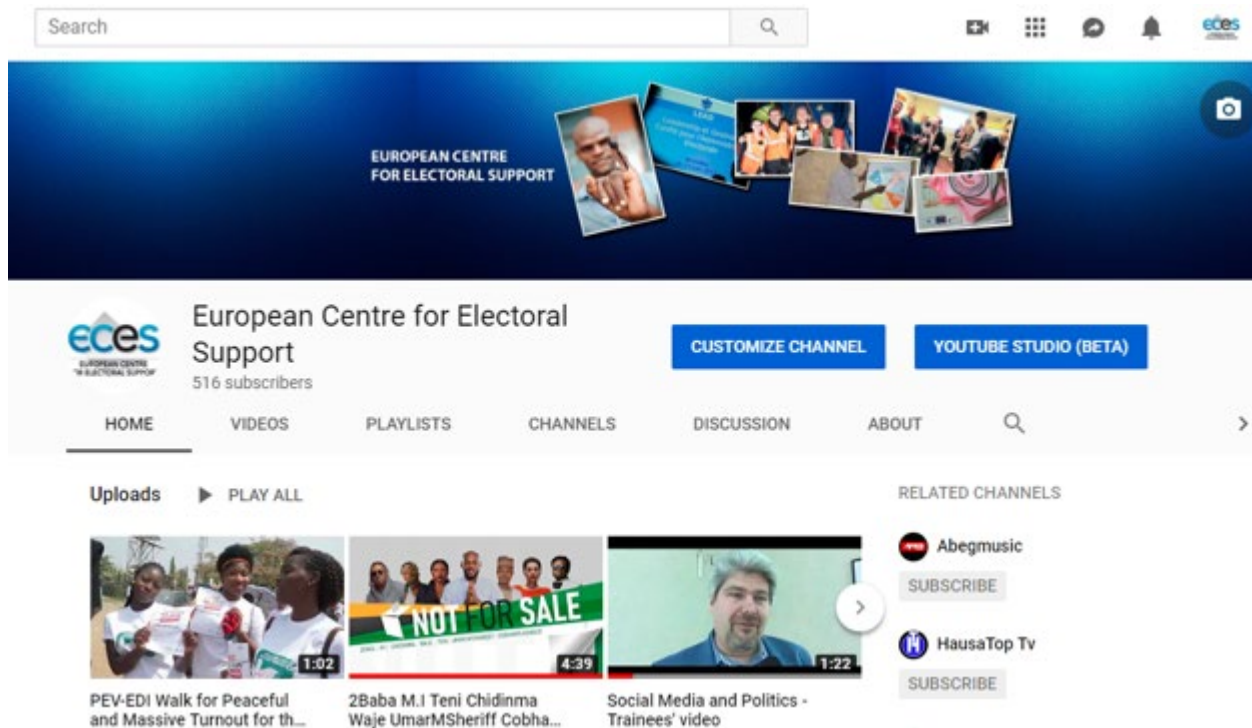
Automatic, tailored  
statistics

Potential connections

#### d) YouTube

##### ECES YouTube account

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8L7qT\\_8So11zvKYfNc4xeQ?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8L7qT_8So11zvKYfNc4xeQ?view_as=subscriber)



#### e) Instagram

Instagram (IG) is a rising platform, extremely popular among young audiences. With many ECES projects being implemented in countries with a large youth population, this is a key medium to capitalize on.

Instagram uses a lot of similar features to the media mentioned above, such as hashtags, tagging, location tag, stories, etc.

---

*Remember to tag people!  
People prefer to connect to individuals than brands and  
organisations*

---



Instagram Profile page features





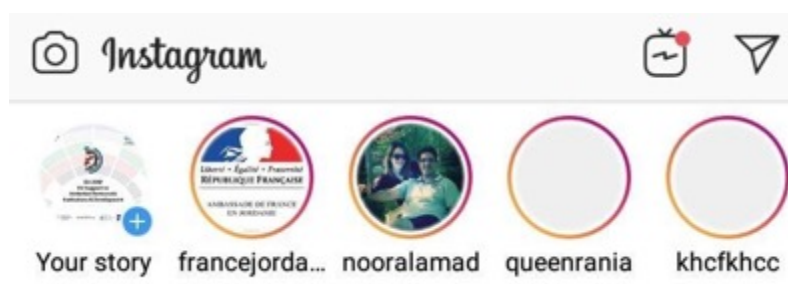


## Instagram stories

One of the popular IG tools are Instagram Stories, which allow you to post “ephemeral” visual content that disappears after a certain period of time.

Using this feature will allow you to get closer to your followers, generate interest and expand your outreach when posting your own stories.

Instagram Stories appear in a bar at the top of your feed and display a pinkish circle around the profile picture of a user to notify you about new Story content.



To view a story, just tap on the profile photo, and the user’s story will appear full-screen, including all the content they’ve posted in the last 24 hours.

The content plays in chronological order, from oldest to newest.

To move on to the next image/video, just tap on the screen or swipe left to jump to the next user’s story.

You can always go back to check stories later. However, stories automatically disappear after 24 hours and do not appear on the user’s profile, unless otherwise saved.

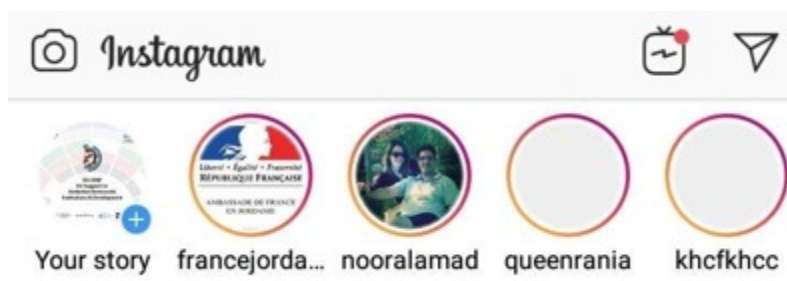
Stories do not display likes and public comments, so it is more of a tool to keep informed and to interact one on one with specific users.

### IG STORIES

**24-hour life span**  
**15 seconds cap**  
**Unlimited number of**  
**videos/photos**  
**Re-watchable unlimitedly**  
**Not saved on profile**

To create your own story, just tap a new “+” icon.

Take the picture or video as you normally would if you were posting on your profile (or select from your gallery), including by using the range of available visual editing tools (filters, text, drawings and icons).



Stories are useful to see how many people are regularly engaging with your content, in a more straightforward way than analytics and metrics.

Just click to watch your own story, before swiping up to check out data about who's seen each photo and video.

## 5. Maximize your online presence

### 5.1. Build a core network

Before thinking of expanding your network, you should secure a core follower base, mostly by engaging all of ECES and project staff on your social media.

All ECES staff, whether related to the C&V department or not, are strongly encouraged to support ECES communication endeavours, most specifically on social media.

Staff in charge of communication should compile all social media information of staff, and regularly brief them on the best use of online platforms. They should also encourage them to promote the content disseminated online through retweets, likes, shares, etc.

One simple way to keep track of employees' social media footprint is the following Word or Excel table:

Name	Position	Location	Profiles
Fabio Bargiacchi	Executive Director and Co-Founder	Brussels, Belgium	<a href="https://twitter.com/fabiobargiacchi">https://twitter.com/fabiobargiacchi</a> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/fabio.bargiacchi/">https://www.instagram.com/fabio.bargiacchi/</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/in/fabiobargiacchi">https://www.linkedin.com/in/fabiobargiacchi</a>
Wilson Manji	Elections and Communication Officer	Abuja, Nigeria	<a href="https://twitter.com/wilsonmanji">https://twitter.com/wilsonmanji</a> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/wilson.manji/">https://www.instagram.com/wilson.manji/</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/in/manji-wilson-1a343188/">https://www.linkedin.com/in/manji-wilson-1a343188/</a>
Camille Dupire	Senior Communication Officer	Amman, Jordan	<a href="https://twitter.com/CDupire">https://twitter.com/CDupire</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/in/camille-dupire-4bb279a4/">https://www.linkedin.com/in/camille-dupire-4bb279a4/</a>

Communications officers can also make use of existing tools such as Twitter lists, which allow you to add all staff members and share specific content with them.

As well as employees' networks, it is essential for ECES to strengthen ties with key stakeholders and donors to secure a strong and reliable network. To this end, ECES and its project teams are to regularly share information and updates with selected groups through emails, based on a designated mailing list.

Mailing lists should be carefully designated and regularly updated, each embodying a specific target audience: EU Delegations, media, partners, etc.

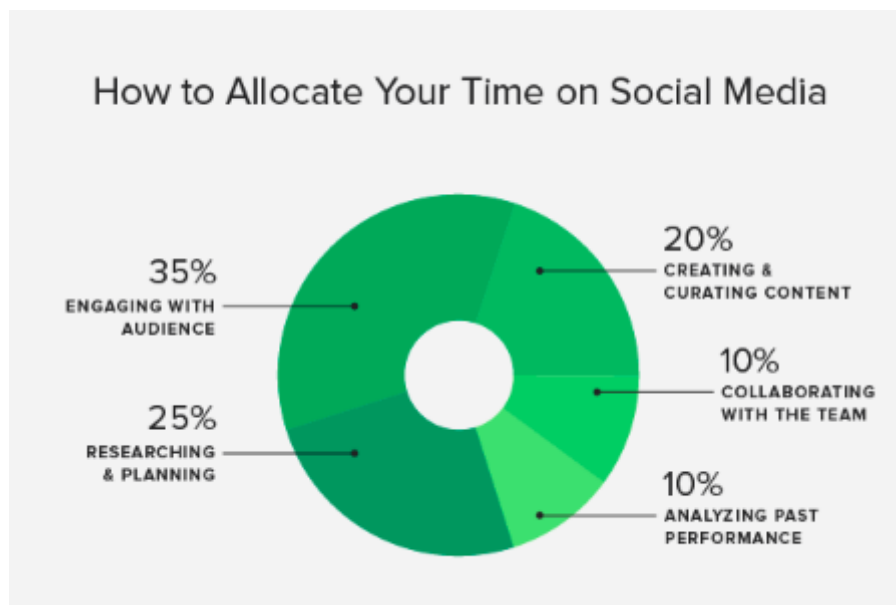
**Be careful!** Stay away from the tendency to spam posts, which would trigger recipient fatigue. Rather, make sure that you send **targeted**, **consistent** and **meaningful** emails to your list, at a regular yet reasonable interval.

Email communication can take the form of newsletters, links to publications and reports, updates on recent activities, etc.

## 5.2. Interact

Online presence is not all about posting: research, interaction and listening are just as important as publishing content.

One suggested way to divide the time you dedicate to social media is as follows (**source: sprout social**)



As highlighted in the graph, interacting with your audience is key to building a loyal, long lasting network, and is one way to set yourself apart from other organisations. This can be done in several ways: responding to comments and messages, commenting on users' mentions of ECES, answering general and targeted questions, etc.

Due to the fast paced nature of social media, **reactivity** is key. Whenever possible, respond in less than 24 hours (a couple hours or less in the case of Twitter) to ensure the thread of conversation isn't lost.

---

*Social media are a platform for two-way conversations.*

*Interact, listen, connect*

---

### 5.3. Listen

Social media should not solely be used to get the ECES message out there; it should also serve as a monitoring tool which helps you better understand your target groups and identify the strategic entity or people you might want to connect with.

Social media listening allows you to collect data on ECES beneficiaries' needs, how they feel towards the foundation and what they are most interested in, among other things. This data should be regarded as feedback on how you are doing online. It will allow you to re-evaluate all of the above techniques, including the timing of your updates, the format of your posts and the type of media you are using.

#### Social media listening tools

- ➔ Look out for mentions of ECES and projects
- ➔ Monitor partners and donors
- ➔ Identify trends (i.e. hashtag) and key influencers
- ➔ Search for related hashtags
- ➔ Look at search queries

### 5.4. Integrate

Operating across various platforms is not only a way to broaden your outreach, but also to capitalize on your follower base by leveraging on your various accounts.

This can be done by ensuring the ECES website has visible and up-to-date social follow buttons, which will allow for cross-cutting traffic among your platforms.

Make use of the twinning features between Instagram, Facebook and Twitter accounts (among others), which allow you to channel your followers from one platform to the other.

This also applies to printed material, which should all mention ECES's various social media accounts (cf Visibility section of this guide).

## 6. Indicators of achievement / Monitoring and impact evaluation

Communication endeavours have no purpose if they do not result in a concrete impact, which will enhance the foundation's work.

Whether tangible or intangible, these impacts are indicators of the quality and viability of your communication plan and can inform you on the needs to re-adjust your strategy for better results.

---

*Communication with no impact = ZERO communication*

---

A variety of quantitative and qualitative indicators can be used to measure these impacts, which range from automatized analytics tools, individual written feedback, surveys and polls, and an increase in requests for otherwise, among many others.

Before you decide to develop any type of communication action, make sure that you have a viable way of measuring its potential outputs for your organization/project.

A simple way to assess the success of your action is to ask the following questions:





## 6.1. Qualitative monitoring

While an increase in followers or comments on your online posts might seem like you have reached your C&V goal, these metrics can sometimes be flawed, and it is also important to assess your success in terms of qualitative outputs.

Qualitative monitoring is concerned with the underlying gains behind the numbers.

Questions to ask yourself include:

- WHAT was said about ECES in comments, retweets and messages?
- WHY was the foundation or its projects mentioned/retweeted/regrammed ?
- HOW was ECES perceived overall?
- TO WHAT EXTENT were the mentions consistent with ECES message?

Qualitative reporting should not to be ignored because it tells a more comprehensive and insightful story behind what seems to be happening in terms of numbers/data inputs.

## 6.2. Quantitative indicators

Nevertheless, if you need quick, easy-to-read data and graphs to assess your influence, quantitative indicators remain the go-to tool.

Social media metrics are used to measure different impacts:

- Awareness: metrics used to highlight your current and potential audience.
- Engagement: this will tell you how your audience is interacting with your content.
- Conversion: such metrics will show how effective your social engagement is.

Yet, numbers should not remain just numbers; you need to make use of the collected data in order to analyse their meaning for your C&V strategy and for your organization as a whole.

Example: When did the number of new followers spike? When did you witness a sudden drop in followers?

The main indicators are listed in the table below:

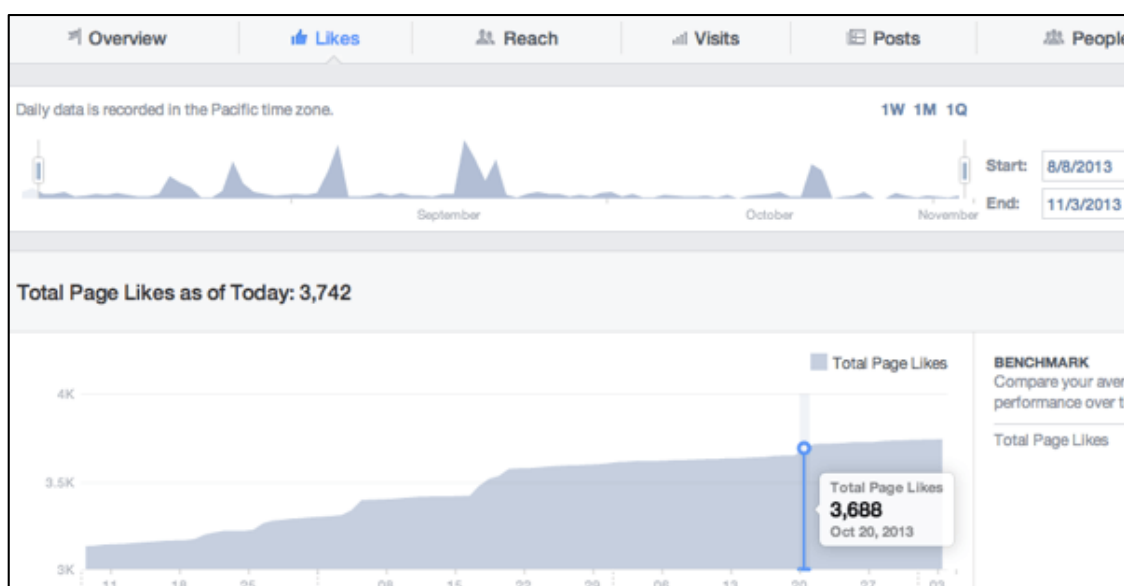
C&V Tool	Indicator	Source of verification	Reporting frequency
Print communication	Number of media requests Public perception	Qualitative	Quarterly
Website	Regular use of website Length of visits Number of pages visited Number of clicks on social media links	Google Analytics; Social Crawlytics; Simply Measured; Radian6	Quarterly

Social media	Number of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New followers</li> <li>Post Likes</li> <li>Shares</li> <li>Comments</li> <li>Mentions</li> <li>Unfollows</li> </ul>	Facebook Insights; Crowd booster; Social Mention; Tweet deck; Hootsuite; Tweetreach; Social Mention	Monthly
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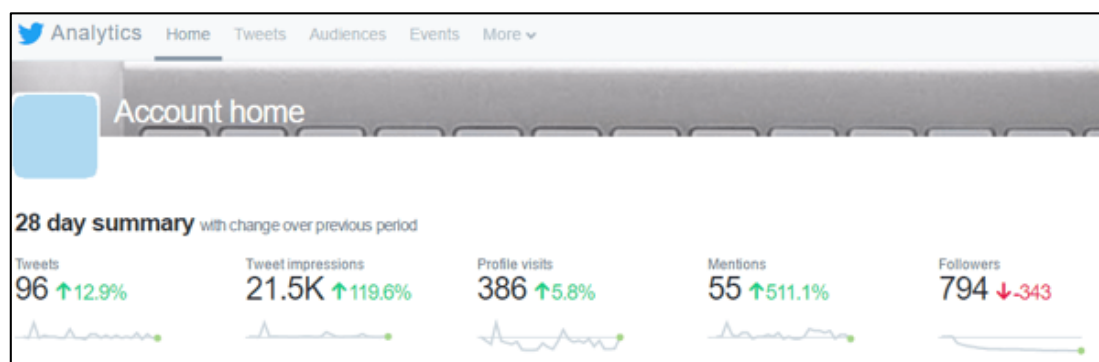
Like any technical tool, the variety of options available can seem a bit unsettling at first, we recommend you try out one or two of them until you find the most suitable for you.

Examples of visual representations of your social media impact can be found below:

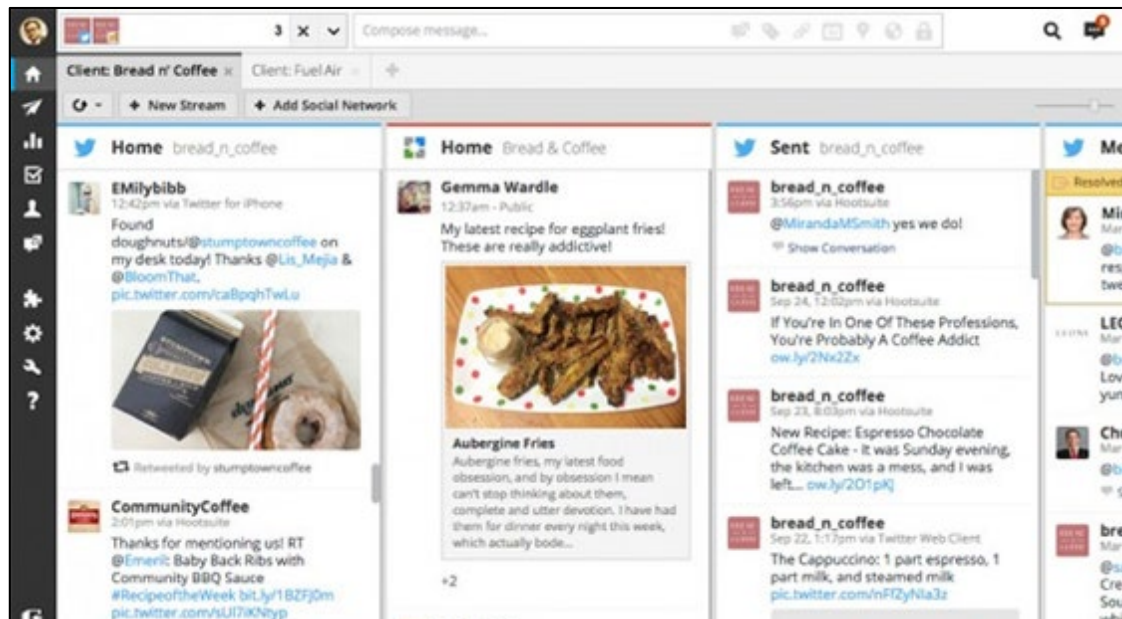
## Facebook Analytics



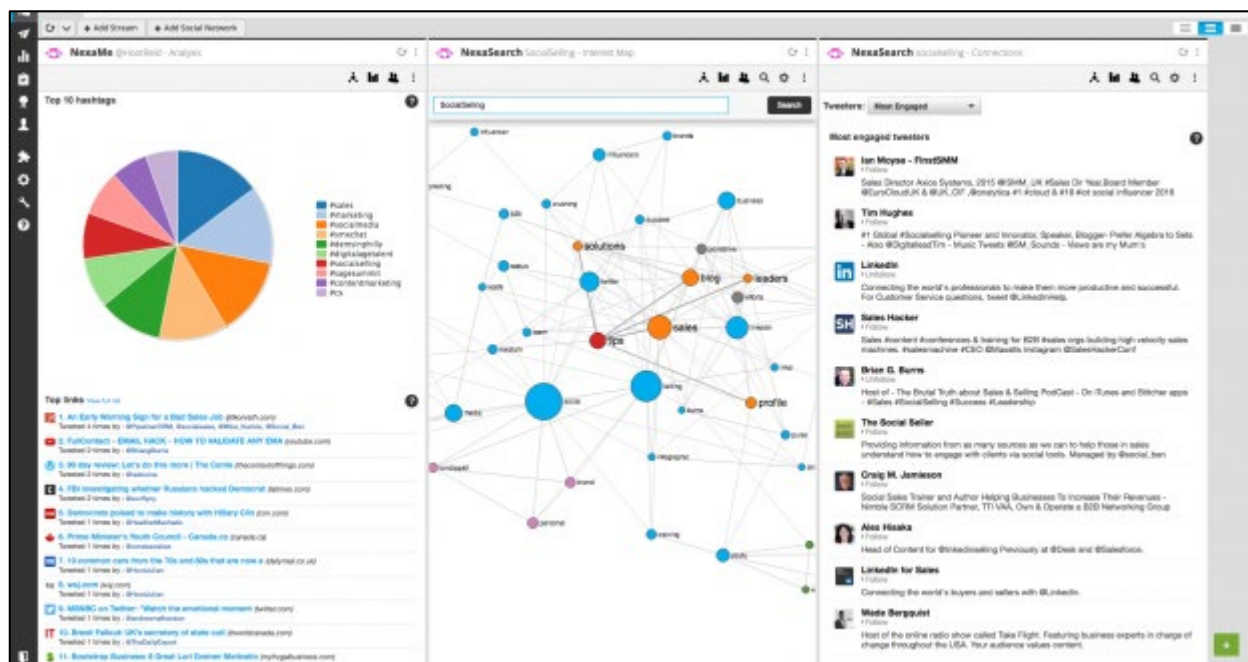
## Twitter Analytics



## Hootsuite



## Nexalogy



Ultimately, the best way of reporting and monitoring your C&V success is the regular production of reports that use a mix of both methods, qualitative and quantitative.

Show the numbers you gathered alongside a deeper analysis of what they mean for your organization and your strategy.

## 7. Taking Pictures

Good photos send out positive conscious and unconscious messages.  
Of relevance, immediacy, professionalism, imagination, creativity and much more.



Everyone expects and likes them these days, all the more so if the subject matter under discussion is dry. So they're important.



They demonstrate presence, action and impact in ways that words can't. They're vital for the moment now, as part of a continuous visibility drive, and important for the future, for website photo albums and our long-term activities record. And for our own memories and attachment to our work.

Most photographs will be shot on smart phones. Most will be in sterile, frequently seen environments like hotel conference rooms, offices or official meeting rooms. Many will be group photos taken at the start or end of a workshop or training session.

But none of this should be a constriction to producing images that draw people into our and our subjects' story, our work and the people we meet.

We are uniquely placed, in many countries at the same time, to cast light on an area of activity vital to people's lives, but little-known outside of specialist circles. Among the best ways to capture and communicate that is through pictures, videos, graphics and a well-worded accompanying caption (Caption writing see below).

## 7.1 Taking good pictures

Variety is the key: In the angle/tilt, closeness (or distance) from subject, shades of light, colour and mood.

Wide eyesight and breadth of vision in seeing something visually appealing in a common scene, or in capturing a moment of emotion, are essential too.

Everything we do has the potential for a photo, and it may be out of immediate eyesight, so make a short visual appraisal of your surroundings to see if anything beyond the obvious catches the eye.

Here are some basic starters, followed by examples, each with a short note:

- ✚ Wipe your camera lens with a tissue. This is true for whatever camera you are using, but especially true when you're using a smart phone,
- ✚ Tap on your subject in frame when taking the picture to ensure focus,
- ✚ Shoot from several angles. It can be the same subject shot from different angles. There's always going to be a better and a worse angle and if you do several you can choose.
- ✚ If you are clustering a group of three or four photos for a multi-photo post on social media, different angles and composition will be very useful. You can choose what will be the "lead" photo, and in what order the other three subsidiary photos appear, as in the group below.





Note how the off-centre vertical and horizontal lines of the bannister help frame the picture, adding a bit of shiny lustre too. All these pictures were the same event, an election debate involving opposing parties and held in an evangelical church, and together paint a reasonably full picture.

Look for features that allow you to add dimension. There may be other elements which help to make the photo more interesting with relevant things happening in the background, or simply things which are more appealing to the eye, like nearby foliage.

This is a generic “It’s elections season” photo, which uses some nature to add visual appeal and a sense of seeing something through other matter.



Think about giving it an edge, shadow, mirror effect or bevel, for a more polished finish.





Using available street “furniture”, i.e. the poster, helps to paint a scene.



The chosen angle in the photo above lends extra interest (and relevant detail). With shots like this, there is a danger the prominent foreground will smother the subject. But it's a rule of photography (and human nature) that we will always focus on the person, no matter how small a part of the picture they are.

This photo is no exception, capturing a certain pleasure in the moment.



Take some time to think about composition.

See how effective the picture below works without any sentimentality.



Or this one.







These photos above deliberately allow a tree, wall or electricity post to obscure the left side of the frame, giving a sense of a “hidden” subject.



Some variations on a thumb:







### The eyes have it!

Experiment if you have the time with watching and following what people's eyes are doing. It will yield ideas for composition and focus.

When subjects' eyes are captured in any way in a shot, people will always look and refer to that. They're the epicentre of a shot, and it's interesting to use that as the point of a composition and work outwards.

Below is a good portrait of a person deep in concentration, oblivious to the camera. The photo has been too tightly cropped from the top by the author, but it's got all the necessary details.



Use negative space...whether it's a wall, the sky, a banner or a table: fill it or make a virtue out of it.

For example, if you have a photo of a meeting at a table the size of a football field, use it. If it's glass-topped it will present interesting reflections. See the examples below, and how tables offer opportunities to capture symmetry, light and human interaction.





Shots taken at tables can be tilted, framed, bevelled or circled to add an extra dimension to a common scene. They can also be clustered together and angled to face off against each other, or flow in the same direction, as above.



The reflective qualities and symmetry of glass-topped tables can also be put to good use, as above.

Symmetry...and asymmetry are critical to photos. Both add something eye-catching and appealing, and all readily available in the shapes of objects all around us.

The picture below is an exquisite example, with bold, orderly lines, demolished by the simple, modest figure of the woman voting. For sure, it needs brightening, but the composition and structure are all there to work with.



Non-linear works with this gently sweep of bright cooking pots. It's party-political campaign inducement, but not as we know it!

If you tilt the photo, you can play with the symmetry.





This, below, is a bit staged, but the idea is good...it would have been better to have captured the two observers in mid movement.



Scenes of meetings are difficult, especially between two principal interlocutors. If they're sitting either end of the table, who do you focus on? A shot taken from the middle, with both subjects at either edge of the photo risks losing everything.

Two over-the-shoulder shots work. More, they give added context of the setting, showing others involved in the process and giving important hints about the nature of the conversation, listening, thinking, insisting, noting, etc.



### Looking at me, looking at you

There's a place for photos in which people look at the camera lens. Managed group shots at events are one. Shots of children, and ordinary people, young, middle or old can also deliver a direct and powerful "hear my voice" message that other photos can't, especially if there's a short blurred depth of field behind the subject. But they can look staged and they have to have a clear purpose.

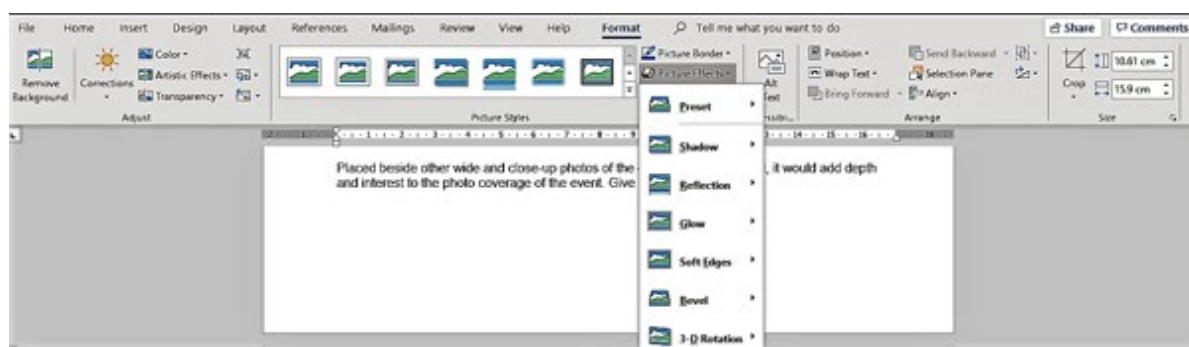
Generally, it's much better to capture moments when people are not thinking about the camera.

This photo below of the subject's rapt concentration at a conference would look totally different if it was face on.

Placed beside other wide and close-up photos of the event itself, for context, it would add depth and interest to the photo coverage of the event.

When you give it a slight bevel in picture effects, it gains the grace of a portrait.





On the outside looking in is always a style that arouses curiosity, and if it is a photo of others on the outside looking in, then it's two aspects for the price of one!



### Lighting

Take a quick note of the ambient lighting. Where are the shadows and over-bright spots?

Adjust the overhead lights if possible or necessary, or move a bit where the overall lighting is better.

Let some natural light into a room if possible. People always look better in natural light rather than artificial light.

Professional photographers always look for evenly diffused light. But below it's obvious the dark and light contrasts that work for the circumstances.



Don't hesitate to use captured movement. It can add a certain intensity to an ordinary indoors scene. If you know that you want it, set the camera or smart phone to multi frame shooting, possibly as "sport" in the settings, and take 10 to 20 snaps. There will be plenty with movement.





Edit your photos with more exposure, highlighted shadows, saturation, contrast etc. But don't over edit. A light touch is often all that's needed.

Here are some shots from different electoral moments in Africa and the Middle East which show how different aspects of photography can be put to use:

An emotive scene of mass following that captures an intense mood.

With pictures that represent one party or another, don't forget to balance up with a matching image from another, or two other, parties.



Use props or relevant objects to add perspective and dimension to a photo (in this case the out-of-focus EU desk flag).



Make generous use of direct sunlight, particularly in the “golden hour” just before sunset, to add an extra sparkle to your photo. This is the Lebanese National Parliament in Beirut. Of the two pictures below, the top one clearly has more magic.





Using what other people are doing at the same scene, as below, can be a useful technique that offers different angles on the same event. Clustered, they'd look well together.



Clustering gives a great opportunity for engagement. One main picture and at least 3 others...like an open door inviting further inspection. A good caption will help it too.

### Caption writing

As much as photographs, videos, and explainers are means of attracting and engaging, captions are equally important.

They carry vital info: Who, What, Where, When, and most importantly WHY. In many cases also, HOW. The fundamentals of story-telling.

Each of these can be informative and offer points of interest in their own brief way.

Captions can also carry embedded links to content other social media platforms, or within the same platform, as well as references and places of interest deeper within a given website. They arouse curiosity and, wisely used, complement perfectly a picture, video or a series of either.

### A good caption tells you:

- ✚ Who are the principals? Don't spend too much time on honorifics and titles, such as His/Her Excellency, Honourable her/him...they rarely use them themselves and the word-tight, quick-read conventions of social media mean it's not obligatory, where a formal caption in a newspaper, say, would have been.
- ✚ What is happening? This reinforces the need for pictures with plenty of variety. How much easier is it to write a caption for a picture which stands out, than for one which is the usual line-up of people in front of a banner?
- ✚ Where and when is it happening? Distance from the capital? Type of terrain it is located in? Reference to the weather, even. For example, if we see the sun or dusty, dry land in a picture,

you can say that this area hasn't seen rain for xx months or years. You will have succeeded in a small way in filling and colouring the context in which the subjects who are being photographed live in.

- ✦ Why is it happening? This gives an opportunity to describe an event and its context.
- ✦ How is it happening? Is it the culmination of an exciting / demanding / inclusive / ground-breaking process? Is there something to say about the journey leading to the event?
- ✦ Don't be afraid to be emotional and forthcoming. It reduces often dry programmatic ideas to a level that people can relate to, especially if there are other elements in the caption doing the same thing.
- ✦ Avoid jargon. Avoid unexplained acronyms. Keep it simple, clear and accessible.

#### Here's what Instagram describes as a good caption:

"A great Instagram caption will add context, show off your brand's personality, entertain the audience, and/or compel people to take action...Your captions shouldn't be hashtag-ridden essays stuffed with cryptic emoji messages, though you can use some. As with any piece of good web writing, your caption should be attention-grabbing and easy to read and follow. It should also speak to the content and the audience."

#### Here are some more tips from Instagram's guide on caption writing.

- Keep it light, informal, humorous where appropriate, and don't be afraid to show personality.
- Edit yourself brutally. "Cut out words that are unnecessary and be concise".
- Keep key interesting words and ideas at the top. For many readers, captions will be cut short, with an invitation hit "more..." to read further.
- Pose a question: "Ever thought how hard it is to get a message across a land as big as Nigeria?"
- Use the caption to carry brief but interesting and relevant background information, all available on the website. People-oriented facts and figures, innovations, new projects, uncontroversial country facts.
- Use positive, affirmative language,
- Include a direct quote. It gives a human dimension to a bland photo and offers wide open space to get across a message and tone otherwise missing from the picture.

Compare these two captions below for readability and engagement (the quote is made up):



Terrific insights into labyrinthine twists of Nigeria's electoral law and disputes resolution from the President of Nigeria's Court of Appeal, Justice Zainab Bulkachuwa (3<sup>rd</sup> left), who welcomed Ethiopia's Electoral Commission Chair, former judge Birtukan Mideksa (2<sup>nd</sup> left), and ECES President Monica Frassoni (centre).

The advice from Justice Bulkachuwa for newly appointed Commissioner Mideksa?

*"You know this as well as me, but the law is at the centre, front and rear of an election. Trust me, it will be your, and your country's, best friend."*

Ethiopia's elections are slated for 2020. @ECESeu facilitated the Ethiopians' whirlwind fact-finding trip, while @EUinEthiopia funded it.

Or this:



Hon. Justice Zainab Bulkachuwa, President of the Court of Appeal of Nigeria (3<sup>rd</sup> left), met with Hon. Birtukan Mideksa, Chairperson of the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), in the framework of a fact-finding mission to Nigeria to explore various dimensions of the electoral process here. Joining them were the President and Executive Director of ECES, Monica Frassoni and Fabio Bargiacchi, respectively. Elections in Ethiopia are scheduled for 2020. ECES facilitated the Ethiopians' fact-finding trip, which was funded by the EU delegation in the country.

Always choose the active voice over passive voice.

- Passive = distanced, vague and a bit secretive
- Active = engaged, open, vital and sharing

Let the photo do the talking, if it is arresting and speaks for itself, keep the caption short.

Finally, here are two apps which can be useful, particularly where English is not your mother tongue.

<http://www.hemingwayapp.com/>

This app promises to make writing "bold and clear". It highlights words and text that are superfluous, sloppy or indulgent. It also promises to simplify and cut down your word count.

<https://www.grammarly.com/>

Checks grammar and structure and offers alternative ways of phrasing.

## 8. Taking Video

Video is the thing (along with photos...). Quality video with ideas simply executed even more so.

That includes all moving images edited together, not just well-crafted video sequences. Look at the number of animated explainers, live web-streams, simple sound bites, gifs, even music-backed slide-show compilations of photos, to see how popular they are. It's all driven by the voracious appetite for visually appealing content on social media.

That's obviously an opportunity for communication and creativity. It's also an opportunity for inclusivity and co-ownership. It offers an opportunity to generate direct, on-the-spot testimony from the people we work with about the value, relevance and innovation of a programme or activity.

Currently, such inputs and feedbacks work their way, eventually and in writing only, into appreciative e-mails, audits, evaluations and reports. The rubric changes with the opportunity to record and post a 1'30" interview with one or several beneficiaries, carried out at an event.

It's easy to do and can have an impact way beyond the time and effort spent.

The proliferation of DIY tools, online guides, plug-ins and gadgets make it not nearly as complex, or expensive, to generate video content as it was just a few years ago.

This guide goes through some of the basics, and is peppered with weblinks to more specific information. It assumes:

- ✚ You'll be generating simple video of events and significant moments for posting on ECES social media platforms
- ✚ You'll be using a smart phone rather than camera rig
- ✚ You'll have bought some basic but essential kit (basic photographer's tripod, Smartphone clamp, Smartphone-friendly mic attachment, 32/64GB minimum micro SD card with download adapter for a laptop). All will be available for online purchase and delivery. [See bottom of this guide for some examples and sources.](#)

Unless it's a live stream, any video should be no longer than around 1 minute, 1'30" maximum, and should deliver a mini-bite of an event which reflects its theme, context and colour and the role ECES and partners are playing in it.

No more is needed. This will offer up-to-date and relevant information from the world we operate in, highlight the engagement of ECES and partners, and establish brand.

All of this satisfies the hunger of social media platforms (and their users) for content that gets it out quick and moves on to the next update.

So, the first thing to do is define the objective and stick to that with clear purpose.

- ✚ How long will your video be?
- ✚ Realistically, how much do you therefore need to film (so as to avoid over-filming)?



- ✦ Do you want to avoid editing too (on the spot on your phone or later at HQ)? If so, all the more care is needed in finished quality.
- ✦ Have you captured the essence? Something, better still somebody, with character?
- ✦ How will you film it? Will you do what everyone else is doing, and there's nothing wrong with that. Or will you break the mould?
- ✦ How important is the sound? And have you positioned yourself best to capture what's necessary...and, crucially, to avoid what's not?

Thinking in advance about all these things will help you work more effectively and will increase the quality of what you post.

Here are some additional starter points, gleaned with thanks from various Smartphone film guides on the web.

### **CLEAN THE LENS**

It sounds silly and simple, but this is always the first place to start, and easy to forget. Give the lens a puff of breath, wipe with a clean tissue or corner of a shirt, then blow gently to remove lingering tissue fibres.

### **TURN YOUR PHONE TO “SILENT”**

...or to “do not disturb”. Constant interruptions will ruin your efforts.

### **MAKE SURE YOUR PHONE HAS ENOUGH STORAGE SPACE**

Have you ever experienced this distressing and distracting moment, when you're unable to film video because you got this pop-up notification?



If this notification pops up while you're filming a video, your phone will stop recording, you'll have to clear files (which you may still want) and you'll have to pick up again where you left off, having missed everything in between. A micro SD card is also a good solution. 16GB gives you just over an hour, 32GB, 2.5 hours and so on.

## Check and set your settings

Smartphones might be limited in functionality compared to dedicated video cameras, but that doesn't mean they're only capable of shooting one type of video. Most Smartphones these days have a few different resolutions and frame rates to choose from, including slow motion (slo-mo) and time lapse, both of which can be useful and dramatic in the right place.

One vital setting is the video resolution, which refers to how large your movie will be. The two common resolutions are 1080p and 4K, the larger of the two. 1080p should be the default, unless you override it for reasons mentioned in the 4K sub-section below.

Next, check the frame rate, which sets how many individual frames per second (fps) your video records. Common settings are 24 fps, 30 fps and 60 fps. The higher the number, the smoother-looking video you'll produce. Most video is shot at 30 fps, although 60 fps will show smoother, less jittery video when depicting action. Many videographers use 24 fps as it mimics the frame rate used in movies and gives an appealing cinema feel.

Each of these settings determines the final file size of the video. For instance, a five-second video shot at 4K-resolution will be roughly four times the size of the same segment shot in 1080p (HD) resolution.

On Android phones, these settings are usually right inside the main camera app. Apple have buried these options in the main settings menu. You have to back out of the camera app, go into Settings, scroll down to Photos & Camera, and then scroll down to the Camera section.

Once you've found them on whichever phone, here's a quick breakdown of the three most commonly used video settings. All are high definition:

- **1080p at 24 frames per second:** one of the two most standard settings for shooting video. 1080p is the resolution, a term for how many pixels are captured in each frame of the video (1920 x 1080). 24 frames per second speed is just above the low end of what our brain is able to perceive as fluid video, but with a tiny element of stutter that creates the quasi-cinema look.
- **1080p at 30 frames per second:** Your video has more frames displaying every second, which gives the footage an even more fluid look that is closer to how you would have seen the scene in real life. The choice between 30 fps and 24 fps is mostly an aesthetic one. Both should display correctly wherever you post.
- **1080p at 60 frames per second:** shooting at 60 fps will give you an even more fluid-looking video. It's also what the camera defaults to when you hit the slo-mo button.
- **4K:** Many premium smartphones are now capable of shooting 4K video, typically at a resolution of 3840 x 2160 pixels. To shoot in 4K, you have to select this option wherever your phone lets you change resolution settings.

Do you need to shoot in 4K? Probably not. Most people don't choose to watch (or even have the ability to watch) 4K videos...yet.

That doesn't mean you shouldn't bother, but only if you have the time and the storage space on your phone for the additional data weight that comes with the higher quality.

Here are some benefits:

- ✚ You're future-proofing the video you shoot. In a few years, almost every screen will be capable of displaying 4K resolution or higher. Shooting in 4K now helps ensure that your videos will look their best down the road.
- ✚ You're also capturing more detail when you shoot in 4K, which means you can take advantage of the fact that most people watch videos in 1080p. If you didn't frame a particular shot the way you'd like, or you want to focus on a specific subject in the scene, you can zoom in and crop on a 4K video without losing quality in the final version, which will be saved as 1080p.
- ✚ You're allowing for the video you shoot to be seamlessly incorporated into future projects, such as long-format edited videos, and for your video material to be manipulated and treated by an editor as the quality is so high in the first place.

## Stabilisation

Many phones come with some means of image stabilisation. Make sure it's switched on, as it's inevitable that a lot of video will be shot hand-held. This is all the more important if you zoom in on a subject (see also the warning about zooming below).

## Brace yourself to steady the camera

This applies to shooting video with any smartphone, regardless of whether it has image stabilization or not.

Finding ways to brace yourself while you shoot video is the key to making your footage look smooth. There are a number of ways to do this.

simply tuck your elbows into your side as you hold your phone out in front of you

use two hands

place your phone up against something solid for support, such as a pillar, flat table, on the top of a chair, or even flat against a clean window.

If you really want to make sure you get a steady shot, buy some accessories. A tripod with a clamp for your phone is the easiest and cheapest route and costs no more than \$50/60 for both.

Always have two hands on the phone. It may seem rudimentary, but it makes a big difference. Phone lenses generally have optical image stabilization built in, so they're pretty stable already. But using two hands produces even steadier footage.

That said, it doesn't matter how steady you think your hands are, they probably aren't steady enough to film a video. So use a tripod.

## Composition

To create compelling video, compose the elements in a scene or sequence with purpose and with an eye for the unusual and different angles.

*For more on composition, go to [Kyle Cassidy's article on Videomaker.com](#) which offers a good introduction to composition devices, like the rule of thirds, as well as tips, such as focusing on people's eyes in your video.*

## Point of view

Ask yourself "Where am I pointing my camera lens and from what angle?"

And "How will the video's point of view help me tell the story?" For example, when shooting small children or babies, it makes sense to get right down on the floor to shoot, or at their eye level.

A video can resonate for reasons other than exquisite technique. The subject might be funny, or the story simply thrilling, sad, or even chaotic. Sometimes, a powerful video, though technically not perfect, still draws us in by other means and angle of attack is a key component of that.

## Shoot horizontal



They all say shoot only horizontal. In fact, if the post is shot entirely vertically, or portrait, it's fine. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc will format the video in their style and it'll still look great. Social media and video sites all use slightly different aspect ratios (16:9, 4:3, etc). In the example below it's clearly appropriate and effective to shoot portrait.





But start to mix this shot with other equally appropriate horizontal (landscape) shots and things start to go wrong.

It will look jumpy and confusing for viewers. It's even more problematic if you are editing images together rather than posting directly in the filmed format, as an editing programme has to fit the vertical shots into a platform designed for a landscape aspect ratio (16:9).

That's why you see this frequently in videos and news films.



So, by all means shoot vertical, but make sure it has a clear purpose and will stand alone rather than be mixed with landscape shots.

## Lighting

Light not only defines your subjects but also sets the mood or evokes emotion.



Credit: Brittany Greeson for The New York Times

Professional photographers always look for evenly diffused light. But in the shot above it's obvious the dark and light contrasts work best for the circumstances and impact.

Experiment with light and be aware of where your main light source is. For instance outside, noon sunlight on a cloudless day creates unflattering shadows on your subject's face, while an overcast or cloudy day produces a softer, more pleasant-looking light.

If indoors, ask yourself where the shadows and over-bright spots are. Adjust the overhead lights if possible or necessary, or move a bit where the overall lighting is better.

Better still, let some natural light into a room. People always look better in natural rather than artificial light.

### Avoid back lighting

Avoid having a window or light source behind your subject as he or she will be silhouetted. Make sure you have the strongest light source to the side of you or behind you.

### Lock your exposure

The smartphone does a fantastic job finding the subject to focus your camera's exposure, which is great for taking a photo.

But when it comes to filming a video, its powered exposure drive will continue self-adjusting and readjusting according to movement, leaving your final video often blurry and out of focus.

You can solve this problem by locking the exposure while you're filming. Before you press record, hold down your finger on the subject of your video until a yellow box appears around the person or object and the words "AE/AF Lock" appear.

### **Use slow motion wisely and frugally**

You can get some amazing shots with the iPhone's and Android's built-in slo-mo, but make sure the choice is motivated and fits your story. A shot of someone skiing will probably be great in slo-mo. A shot of someone typing on their computer, or giving a speech, might not be so interesting.

### **Avoid digital zoom**

Generally, it degrades image quality by simply enlarging the image and can make your final video look pixelated and blurred.

Instead, "zoom with your feet" by getting physically closer. Watch what the professional camera people using smartphones are doing at an event. They can be a useful, and free, guide!

If it's difficult to move physically and you have to zoom, don't do it while still recording. Stop. Zoom. Start recording again. Recorded zooms don't work. They will capture the inevitable shake and give you no time to recompose an entirely different image.

### **Use a detachable microphone**

There are many available that plug directly into the phone's headphone socket. Using a microphone will minimize distracting, and loud, ambient noise. At the bottom of this guide are some affordable mic options.

Good quality audio is essential for impactful video. If you don't have a mic, here is a good audio trick:

Borrow a second phone, place it close to a speaker (but not too close, so as not to get distorted "peaked" sound), and start recording audio on the voice recorder function. Then shoot your video on your own phone from where you like.

You now have two sources of media to be synced in the edit (which will be on your laptop as it'll be nigh impossible on your phone at the event...)

- 1/ video and ambient audio from phone #1
- 2/ audio from phone #2

### **Pace yourself**

Shooting a lot of video, especially in 4K, is going to clog up your phone's storage faster than almost anything else.

Find a storage solution that works for you, whether it's cloud-based (Google Drive, iCloud, Dropbox, etc.) or local storage (external hard drives or your laptop) and get into the habit of backing up your footage regularly.

### File, back-up and name...

...on the day, even if it's the last task you do and you're exhausted.

Name it so it can be searched for easily. Event, day, date, month, year, event. Plus, a trigger word/indicator such as "fab, great, shaky, best, etc".

When you see such hundreds of files in a long list in a folder, it will stand out. Also, a file named "fab" is easier to locate in a search than one named, say, "stakeholder".

You'll thank yourself, and be thanked by others using your material, for timely and efficient filing.

What do you do with it your video?

- ✚ Put it straight out, unedited? There is indeed a place for that, in both the speed of content delivery to a post and in the raw effect.
- ✚ "Top and Tail" it (clean it so it starts and finishes smoothly)?
- ✚ Do a basic, in-phone edit, so it's an edited sequence of moments, perhaps including a short sound bite?
- ✚ Do a more complete edit on a dedicated editing platform on a laptop? Such as Adobe Premier Pro or Final Cut X?

The choice is yours, depending on the circumstances, pressure you're under and confidence with alternative platforms. Finding the right workflow takes trial and error. But the best way to approach it is to start simple ("Top and Tail" method, so it's clean and fast-delivered.)

Don't forget that unless it's actively removed, any clip will live permanently on your feed or website, so curate what you post.

### Editing

The smartphone's camera combined with some minor editing can deliver plenty of opportunities. Free tools like **iMovie** have made editing easier for everyone.

You can do light video editing in your smartphone's own photos app, like trimming the length of the video, applying a few basic filters and effects, or editing together 5 or 6 different video moments to create a sequence. You can also add light music readily available on the editing platform.

To do anything more advanced, though, you're going to have to try out some different video-editing apps.

One of the easier apps on iOS is Apple's own **iMovie**. It comes with some premade effects, and templates for text overlays.



**GoPro's Quik** video editor is similar, and it will work with videos you shot on your smartphone even if you don't own a GoPro camera. Just select the clips you want the app to pick from, and in a few seconds it will throw back an edited video.

You can go back in and tweak the edit from there. The results aren't always perfect, but it handles some of the most bothersome first steps of video editing. More advanced options include **Splice**, **Adobe Premiere Clip**, and **Filmic Pro** for advanced editing.

Google's Photos app, which is available on the iPhone, and Apple's own Photos app, will also automatically edit together videos for you from photos, with music, but you'll have less control over the finished product.

On Android, you're probably going to have a bit more basic control over your video in the stock photos app. But look to apps like **Power Director** or **Filmic Pro**, which are good if you really want to spend some money for advanced features.

## Choose your channel

Before you start creating a video, you should choose a primary channel for sharing that video.

**Instagram** allows you to post videos 3 to 15 seconds in length. You can upload and combine videos from your phone or record a video using the app's camera function. Videos are cropped in a square shape to match the popular aesthetic of their photos. Instagram posts show up as native photos or videos in Facebook, but as links in Twitter.

Instagram is a great place for your brand if your team is creative enough to produce visually appealing content. Users look for images that impress them, not generic screenshots or boring video clips.

**Vine** lets you publish videos up to 6 seconds long. These videos automatically play and loop when they're viewed.

While Vine is technically a channel, most of the user engagement happens within Twitter, so you're better off building and engaging your audience on Twitter than building it exclusively within Vine.

Vine has proven to increase engagement via Twitter and across the web. The short length of the content encourages viewers to watch clips multiple times, which is great from a branding and engagement perspective.

**YouTube** offers the ability to upload almost any video regardless of length or quality. All videos are published in a widescreen format. YouTube videos can be played within Facebook and Twitter feeds and most other social networks.

## Kit costing approx \$100 in total

**Microphones** for smartphones (available through multiple outlets, including Amazon for between \$20 and \$60 <http://www.rose.com/microphones/videomicme>)



Rode VideoMicMe



Rode standard lapel mic

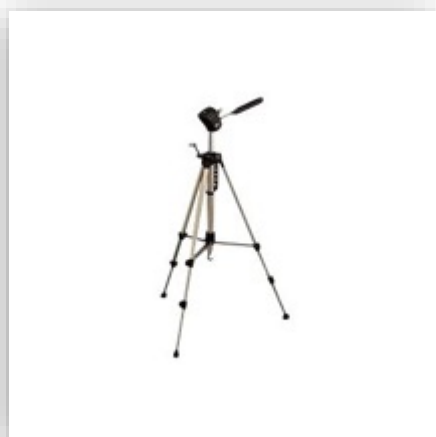
**Clamps** for attaching a smart phone securely to a basic photographic tripod  
([https://www.amazon.com/Universal-Metal-Phone-Tripod-Mount/dp/B01LXB7SLO/ref=pd\\_lpo\\_vtph\\_107\\_tr\\_t\\_1?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=SSGXZKE NPY5TZ46WQMR7](https://www.amazon.com/Universal-Metal-Phone-Tripod-Mount/dp/B01LXB7SLO/ref=pd_lpo_vtph_107_tr_t_1?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=SSGXZKE NPY5TZ46WQMR7))



Manfroto Smartphone clamp (screws into the top of a tripod)

**Tripod**, available anywhere \$20 and \$50.

[https://www.amazon.com/s?k=camera+tripod&ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss](https://www.amazon.com/s?k=camera+tripod&ref=nb_sb_noss)













## 9.4. Dissemination, product offshoot

	Activation of dissemination plan	Personnel	Budget/Cost	Budget Overview as proportion of total	Review Process with vendor dates: description of progress	Analytics of social media and press engagement
Editing						
Number of days						
Overview of editing + production + pre-production days as proportion of the total						
Scripting ideas/brainstorming including individual human story outlines						
Interviews note and commentary						

## 10. Approaching and engaging video contractors

Video is an expensive and labour-intensive business.

Getting it right can lead to multiple benefits for ECES in terms of visibility on a wide range of traditional TV, radio and social media platforms.

Getting it wrong requires huge effort to fix and at the end reduces the options for exploiting video products to their full potential.

Below is a check list which can help ensure the right choice of contractor at the start and set the correct workflow and delivery of commissioned products further down the line.

### 10.1. Select the type of product you want to generate.

Will it be a:

- ✚ One-hour documentary?
- ✚ 30-minute documentary?
- ✚ Series of shorter, discreet 10-minute documentaries? Ones that are capable of standing and being broadcast alone, but that can be joined together as a longer documentary at a later stage?
- ✚ Series of 1 to 2-minute stylised and polished “mini-stories” for broadcast on social media?
- ✚ Radio version of the video, for podcast or broadcast, or to be used as short clips for social media?
- ✚ Video (or radio) products to be broadcast in the local languages?
- ✚ If so, which audience are they to reach, and which languages should you select?
- ✚ Or a mixture of some or all of these parts?

**One recommendation** is for a series of two or three 10-minute mini-documentaries. This is a safe choice, as they will be long enough to tell a story with compelling characters, they are safe in case you are not 100 per cent sure of the capacity to deliver of the selected production house, and they can be capable of being versioned into shorter films for social media (same-length versions for radio).

This choice of format should also limit a common tendency of production houses to over-shoot (thereby creating massive problems of content and story management in the editing phase...this is not an uncommon experience).



## 10.2. Selecting a shortlist of potential contractors

Once you've decided what product you want, it becomes much easier to narrow down potential contractors. Here are some steps that will help:

Talk to friends/acquaintances at the EU Delegation, local UN agencies, IFES, national and international NGOs and CSOs, BBC Media Action, for their experiences and any recommendations.

Select four or five potential contractors and check out their websites and social media pages for the quality and type of content they have produced. You can answer many questions by asking:

- ✚ Have they won prizes?
- ✚ What is their style of production? Is it distinctive?
- ✚ How does their material look? Well shot? Well edited? Nicely voiced?
- ✚ Who have they worked for? Multiple clients, including international actors?
- ✚ From what you have seen, can they write, edit, voice, interview, shoot...and "touch" audiences emotionally across the country's social and economic spectrum?

## 10.3. Drawing up terms of contract, detailing clearly:

- ✚ Nature of the products being commissioned
- ✚ Key messages
- ✚ Nature of interview subjects (a full list can be drawn up later)
- ✚ Target audiences / target media (TV, radio, social media)
- ✚ Desired style (Reportage? Documentary?)
- ✚ Available budget
- ✚ Deadlines for each of the products
- ✚ Additional terms and conditions (for example, on copyright ownership and the right to terminate a contract)

There should also be a clear commitment in a contract to ECES's complete ownership of the filmed and edited material; and that none of the filmed material is used for any purpose by the contractor without a detailed outline of what it is for and how it will be used (in writing).

The contractor should also agree to deliver, at their expense, all materials on a 2tb/4tb hard drive, including saved timelines, video media and music and graphics. Ideally, the back-up of this material should be done progressively as the project advances, by agreement with the contractors.

## 10.4. Inviting potential contractors to submit separate creative/technical and financial proposals.

### Creative/technical:

- ✚ story board of scenes, sequences and locations...who to meet and why?
- ✚ ideas to bring the story to life and to interest audiences
- ✚ tone of the piece
- ✚ scripting sampler (can be from a previous project)
- ✚ technical equipment to be used, and an indication of the supporting A and B roll to be filmed
- ✚ editing capacity
- ✚ access to video archive (free or otherwise)
- ✚ examples of their network within the field, including contacts in the media and stakeholders
- ✚ description of graphics and animation capacity
- ✚ access to original music / musicians
- ✚ step by step approach to getting on TV or radio
- ✚ social media dissemination plans
- ✚ description of target audience(s)

### Financial:

- ✚ detailed breakdown of their budgeting, in 4 phases:
  - pre-production (be very wary of budgets that are loaded heavily in favour of pre-production...most of the costs should be directed towards filming and post-production)
  - production
  - editing and post-production
  - dissemination on traditional and social media. (Will there be a grand launch, with media present? Is this costed?)
- ✚ a production matrix on Excel, detailing:

- activities in all stages of the production
- personnel
- budget allocation
- the agreed review processes
- on-going script

Before signing a contract, check with the key beneficiary of the video that they have no objection or knowledge of a record of problematic prior history.

## In summary

- ✚ Think big, start small...
- ✚ Thinking small in terms of the complexity of the product, then expanding outwards towards bigger products like documentaries, allows you to keep control of the production and the story telling.

Too often companies neglect this basic aspect of filmmaking, placing most initial emphasis on shooting interviews.

Captivating stories are what make the difference between a memorable film and an institutional one.

- ✚ Consider the possibility of dividing the production between two companies: production and editing/post-production.  
This can help you speed up the editing process and allows more overall creative control.
- ✚ Budgeting...be sceptical about “pre-production costs”. They can be excessive and are difficult to quantify.

Much better is a contractor who budgets generously for production and allows good time for editing, with spare budget for creative dissemination ideas.

## 11. Doing interviews with the media

There are 5 main types of interview you could be invited to participate in:

- 1) Event coverage, which ECES has organised or which we are participating in (Pre-recorded or live)

- ✚ By far the most frequent type of interview, and one that offers us a fine opportunity to present our story, with ECES branding, in the context of a happening event and in the company of key, often very senior, principals or stakeholders.

- ✦ Be aware that advances in mobile equipment allow broadcast journalists to report live from the scene with little more than a small pack on their backs.
- ✦ Don't forget to ask if the interview is being aired live.

## 2) Press Conference / Post-Event Statement

- ✦ Another good opportunity to shine in our own right and in the right company.
- ✦ If it is a panel of ECES, make sure the functions of each participant is clearly worked out in advance:
  - Press conference leader, who makes opening remarks and takes the questions
  - Panelists who contribute when the questions turn to their specific areas of expertise.
- ✦ There are no fixed rules, but I think it is always better to have the leader do most of the talking, but to manage things such that no-one on the panel is left out, even if they have only one contribution to make.

It looks (not to mention feels) bad if you're invited on to a panel but not given an opportunity to speak.

## 3) Studio debate with two or three other panellists present

- ✦ Great opportunity for ECES to convey interesting detail, the big picture context, corporate branding and the personal touch
- ✦ Great opportunity for the news station to grill an ECES interviewee, as a captive subject with no easy escape route, on all types of other, potentially controversial, issues.

### **BEWARE AND PREPARE!**

- ✦ Prepare well beforehand. 15 to 30 minutes is a long time to be improvising if you've run out of ideas
- ✦ Rehearse **5** key points you must get out.
- ✦ Have **2 extra** big-picture elements on stand-by.
- ✦ Jot them down as short bullets on a note card. Radio can't see it; TV cameras don't mind interviewees having the odd bit of paper...most likely the anchor has one too.
- ✦ Make sure you know what the hot political potatoes are and expect to be asked about them...know your response in advance.

- ✚ Don't be afraid to return to previously asked questions. It's your space as much as the radio station's.
- ✚ Don't **ever** be confrontational.
- ✚ In the highly likely event of having to be contradictory, **always be polite**:
  - "In fact, there is another aspect to this which is often overlooked..."
  - "I'm sorry, but I don't subscribe to that take on events. What I'd say from my side is..."
- ✚ Don't look at the camera, look at the presenter or other panelist, even while you're not speaking.

#### 4) Ambush interview

- ✚ Usually after some high-level talks.
- ✚ Be aware of this possibility, and that it may be a chaotic affair with cameras pushing in.
- ✚ Remain calm, polite and mindful of the fact that the cameras will be running all the time, and may be broadcasting live.

#### 5) Set-piece, long-format interview

- ✚ Pre-arranged interview in the office or in the field, often lasting 20 to 30 minutes.
- ✚ Make sure you run through the questions in advance. That way you'll be prepared, but you can also know what's being left out and what needs to be referred to.
- ✚ Note the same cautionary notes as for the Studio Interview (No 2 above).

## Before and After an Interview:

### ✚ Rehearse and research:

Run through what you want to say in advance, and aloud, to hear and test the content, tone and quality of your own answers.

If cross-reference is needed, for example to a national policy or a Bill passing through Parliament, check it out for the latest and for precise wording.



✚ **Check who the outlet is**

...and when any report will be aired or published. It sounds obvious, but there's not always time, especially in the field and there are two or three journalists waiting for an interview.

✚ **Ask the journalist how long he/she needs**

...for the interview. The length may indicate how deep they wish to go and will help you compose responses.

✚ **In a friendly fashion, establish a right**

...to run through an answer a second time if there's a distraction or if you want to express yourself differently, and for that version to be the one that's used.

✚ **In times of controversy**

...ask who else is appearing in the report. Maybe there'll be crucial information that helps frame an answer more appropriately...or indeed that dictates whether you will appear in the reportage at all.

✚ **It sounds obvious**

...but make sure that your attire is appropriate and your physical posture and behaviour are within accepted professional norms.

✚ **Don't forget**

that in many radio studios these days video cameras run for simultaneous live web-streaming, even during off-air pre-interview chat time.

✚ **Make sure the mission visibility**

materials are well placed, but not so as to look like crass product placement.

✚ **If for TV, check if they want you to look at the camera**

...or at the reporter. If it's the camera, resist it and persuade the reporter to rethink. Straight to camera interviews work for film/rock stars, campaigning politicians, person to person appeals for aid or help. They rarely work as straight reportage interviews.

✚ **If there are a lot of journalists**

...try and remember to be equitable and to have given some time to TV, Radio, Print and News Agency journalists. This will facilitate the sharing of suitable content between journalists of different media (which frequently happens,) and also means no-one gets

left out. Inevitably, TV will force its way in first, but there are others who want a moment with you too.

#### ✚ **Have a business card at the ready**

If the journalist has further queries, they know where to come. Crucially, it helps the journalist get the name and organisation right for your Lower Third on-screen title.

Is there a relevant pamphlet? If so bring a bundle with you.

#### ✚ **Check with the journalist if you can get a copy**

of the broadcast interview. It won't be the case by any means, and it is considered an awful chore by journalists anxious to move on to the next assignment, but it's very useful to have, especially for our social media platforms (and for later Monitoring and Evaluation purposes).

#### ✚ **Bring a bottle of water**

...plus tissues or handkerchief to wipe a sweaty brow!

#### ✚ **If you're nervous**

...breathe, like they do for yoga. Slowly. In through the nose, out through the mouth. It works wonders for composure, truly.

## **During Interviews**

#### ✚ **Talk short:**

The simple, unavoidable reality of TV channels and any other news outlets is that they need a 15 to 30 second clip...maybe two or three clips if you are lucky...and this/these will be competing for a place alongside other interviews carried out for the reportage. The 2/3-minute answer is going to be cut (if it can).

Being brief, succinct and to the point, virtually guarantees you a slot.

Avoid subordinate clauses. If it is subordinate, it is self-evidently not the main point. Subordinate clauses make a soundbite difficult to cut and are difficult for viewers to follow. Save the idea for another complete, roundly delivered idea.

#### ✚ **In longer format interviews, take your time**

The act of listening to a question, pausing, thinking and considering a response **is part of the interview process**.

It's a communication of respect (for listening to someone without interrupting and embracing their ideas) and of seriousness (taking a pause to weigh an answer because the response **matters**).

Don't be in a hurry, as there's no need.

#### ✚ **Talk in 3s**

...leaving the most important point to the last:

*"And thirdly, and this is the key issue that I'd like to mention, is the inescapable fact that..."*

#### ✚ **Be "micro" and "macro" at the same time.**

The context and reach give a lot of added value.

*"So, this small project, in a remote part of Nigeria and involving just 34 people, shines welcome light on a national drive to expand the participation of voters from all sectors of society.*

*"I'd say it goes even further, into the global sphere, by touching on several of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals."*

#### ✚ **Don't use acronyms. And Use figures sparingly**

Unless it's the UN or USA, FBI or KGB, they are rarely instantly understood. Their use means that whatever point you wanted to make will be lost as viewers/listeners struggle to work out the acronym.

By the same token, be sparing with figures, keep them big and round, and don't mix per centages with decimal with fractions.

Compare these for rapid accessibility:

*"64 per cent of an electorate of 8.9 million of over-18 voters went to the ballot box..."*  
**with** *"almost two thirds of almost 9 million eligible voters went to the ballot box..."*

#### ✚ **Talk with your hands, arms and eyes:**

You'll help yourself talk with your heart. You'll probably feel the change too.

Make frequent eye contact with the interviewer. It's engaging (and looks it). Not doing so can look shifty and evasive.

#### ✚ **Cross-refer to other people and partners**

It comes across as participatory, deferential and generous, without any false humility. No project is ever a single endeavour.

*“As you’ve just heard in xxx’s opening remarks, this is all about maximising awareness of electoral participation when the “pre-election noise” is not so loud...”*

*“I couldn’t agree more with what xxx has just said. It’s at the heart of the mandate we and partners x y and z have agreed with our funders, the EU...”*

### ✚ Be patient and forgiving

...with journalists who appear not to be across the subject. You never know why, and the principal idea anyway is to get across your point, pleasantly and accessibly.

Overly vague, or wrong, questions help you draw the discussion back to essential elements, and as such can be seen as a gift!

### ✚ Refer back occasionally

...to your original function, mandate or core ideas.

Along the lines of: *“It’s all about democratic assistance, through supporting this country’s electoral body, so that elections are better run and more inclusive...”*

This helps gives people necessary context in a world of information over-crowding. It also helps people make clear a distinction between different organisations operating under the flag, or funding, of the EU.

Confusion by journalists over what and who exactly the EU is can lead some to identify ECES as an institution within the Union, and therefore as a legitimate spokesman for it.

This is a hazard EOMs constantly face, and it is one the ECES too can be exposed to. Be crystal clear.

### ✚ During election time

Don’t be drawn into making any observations during interviews about the conduct of the ongoing electoral process.

If asked, say simply: *“our task is for electoral-cycle assistance to the EMB, never to carrying out election observation. Different bodies do that.”*

### ✚ Don’t say “No Comment”

- 1/ it looks like you have a comment but just don’t want to pass it on.
- 2/ it looks evasive and slippery.

Instead, say: *“I’m sorry but that’s outside our mandate...”* or *“It’s a good question, but better put to x y or z. We’re here to support the electoral commission, and that’s focused on improving election delivery...”*

### Finally, here are some other tips from the web, in three blocks

Many of these have been mentioned above, but some haven't (at least directly) and they are really worth noting because they are about the **ONE vital, often elusive, ingredient** of a good interview: The Human Feel Factor...HFF (let's exceptionally allow an acronym here).

That is to say, **how you make people feel by your interaction with them**, via the simple, mechanical means of a TV camera or radio microphone. In the end, these are mere tools of message conveyance, no more, or less, functional (or interesting) than a spanner in your domestic toolbox.

But with intense precision they pick up how you make points **and** how you engage with the interviewer as you make them. Nothing escapes their notice, or the notice of the audience. They may seem secondary, but they are not.

The pointers below that touch on the **Human Feel Factor** are marked with an **HFF** in yellow.

#### For TV:

- ✦ Choose Your Outfit Wisely. Now is not the time for that colourful striped shirt or blouse you just bought **HFF**
- ✦ Practice Your Sound Bites
- ✦ Send Questions to Your Interviewer, or ask for theirs
- ✦ Control Your Body Language **HFF**
- ✦ Slow Down Your Speech **HFF**
- ✦ Practice Ahead of Time
- ✦ Choose Your Listening Face **HFF**
- ✦ Forget Your Audience

#### For General:

- ✦ Be prepared
- ✦ Know why you're being interviewed
- ✦ Make a list of key message points
- ✦ Strong quotes help you and the reporter
- ✦ Avoid jargon (acronyms and too many figures)
- ✦ Be ready to be steered "off-topic."



- ✦ Self-promotion is not cool...generous cross-reference to others is **HFF**
- ✦ Be concise

**And one more set:**

- ✦ Assess the journalist and publication
- ✦ Decide on key messages
- ✦ Don't fill in pauses
- ✦ Don't discuss hypotheticals
- ✦ Always stay positive **HFF**
- ✦ Don't say "no comment"
- ✦ Prepare facts and anecdotes to back-up your answers
- ✦ Avoid jargon
- ✦ Practice body language **HFF**

## 12. Communication Process for updating Social Media & Website

Project communication should start from the time when Concept Note & Activity Calendar has been approved by Project Coordinator and any update on these documents should always be shared and copied to Project Communication Team.

Project coordinator will assign Team Leader for each activity such as training, external meeting, conference, seminar and any other activity related to the project.

Activity form (*see page 95*) will be handed over to Team Leader by Project Officer as one of the required documents and to be submitted back to project office at least 6 hours prior to the start of the event/activity.

Team leader will be the one in charge of communication between field and project office with the support from Project Officer.



### Technical Requirements

- Internet access provided by ECES.
- Laptop with ECES email account configured.
- Mobile phone with ECES email account already configured.
- Skype account, sending images through WhatsApp or any other message provider is not recommended.

### File type to be sent

- Image as JPG, JPEG or PNG.
- Video as mp4, mpg or avi.

## ECES Activity Form


### ECES ACTIVITY FORM

To be uploaded to project's social media, website and digital archive upon approval from Project Coordinator.  
Need to be sent to HQ Office for project activity database.

<b>Project</b>	
<b>Title of activity</b>	
<b>Location</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<b>Description of activity</b>	

Attach below five or more high quality pictures:

Av. Louise 222, 1050 Ixelles  
 Brussels - Belgium  
 +32 2 325 55 58  
[info@eces.eu](mailto:info@eces.eu) | [www.eces.eu](http://www.eces.eu)



Page 1 of 2

## VISIBILITY

### 1. ECES Logo

Before we continue with the guidelines related to visual identity and visibility material, this document will begin by setting out the requirements and guidelines for the use of the ECES logo and for presenting ECES visual identity.

It should be stressed that Implementing Partners (IPs) are required to clearly display the ECES logo in any project-related activity and event. This requirement is compulsory and a condition of funding.

#### 1.1. When to display logo

At events/trainings/meetings or presentations which are funded or partially funded by the EU or any other funding countries, the logo should be present in a prominent and clear manner. This includes:

- On any office document template
- On event backdrop banners/roll ups
- On event handouts, training materials, certificates, agendas
- On vehicles of any kind when necessary
- On any other logistical equipment and IT equipment, and/or its packaging
- On all promotional materials produced by ECES such as brochures, CDs, calendars, posters, newsletters and visibility items (e.g. T-shirts, caps, umbrellas, pens, notebooks, etc.)
- On the cover page of any ECES written material including reports, publications, research and studies
- On all signboards present at the project offices or project sites
- On commemorative plaques placed on infrastructure
- On videos and public presentations related to ECES Projects

#### 1.2. Version of logo

There are three official versions of the ECES logo, depending on the background color. Preference should be given to the main logo (LOGO 1), unless it is used on a darker or a similar background color structure as the LOGO itself (LOGO 2/3). Logos are displayed below:

##### LOGO 1



LOGO 2



LOGO 3



On a specific media background that has multi shapes and colors, we strongly advice to embed a white square box behind the logo.



For further usage related to other projects requirements, please consult with ECES local graphic designers or contact ECES HQ.

### 1.3. How to use logo

When using the ECES logo, please only use official copies. Do not attempt to create the logo from scratch or manipulate current versions. Appropriate sizes and color should be used to ensure visibility, and, when appearing alongside logos of other organizations, ECES logo should be the same size as partners' logos, except under exceptional arrangements.

### 1.4. Format of logo

There are 4 (four) formats available for publication, all available upon request by third parties.

#### 1.4.1. High Quality JPG/JPEG:

JPEG compression is used in a number of image file formats. JPEG/Exif is the most common image format used by digital cameras and other photographic image capture devices and compressed for easy transfer. We commonly use it for small printing media, online media and office documents (up to A3 size). ECES Jpg logo is 3,000 pixels size.

#### 1.4.2. High Quality PNG:

PNG supports palette-based images (with palettes of 24-bit RGB or 32-bit RGBA colors), grayscale images (with or without alpha channel for transparency), and full-color non-palette-based RGB/RGBA images (with or without alpha channel). PNG based logo can be used similarly to the JPG format. ECES Png logo is also 3,000 pixels size.

#### 1.4.3. High Quality PDF:

The Portable Document Format (PDF) is a format commonly used to send to printing companies and is a vector-based media.

#### 1.4.4. Adobe Illustrator (AI):

Adobe Illustrator is the official software ECES uses to develop any graphic material, AI files are the original vector graphics and should not be distributed outside ECES.

### 1.5. Logo position/placement (Visibility for activity)

Below are samples from some previous ECES project activities which outline the logo position/placement on media platforms. The logo should always be on the right side of all media and ECES-funded activities. In cases when ECES-owned activities are concerned, the logo should be displayed on the left side.



### 1.5.1. Backdrop Banner

Funder

Implementer (ECES)



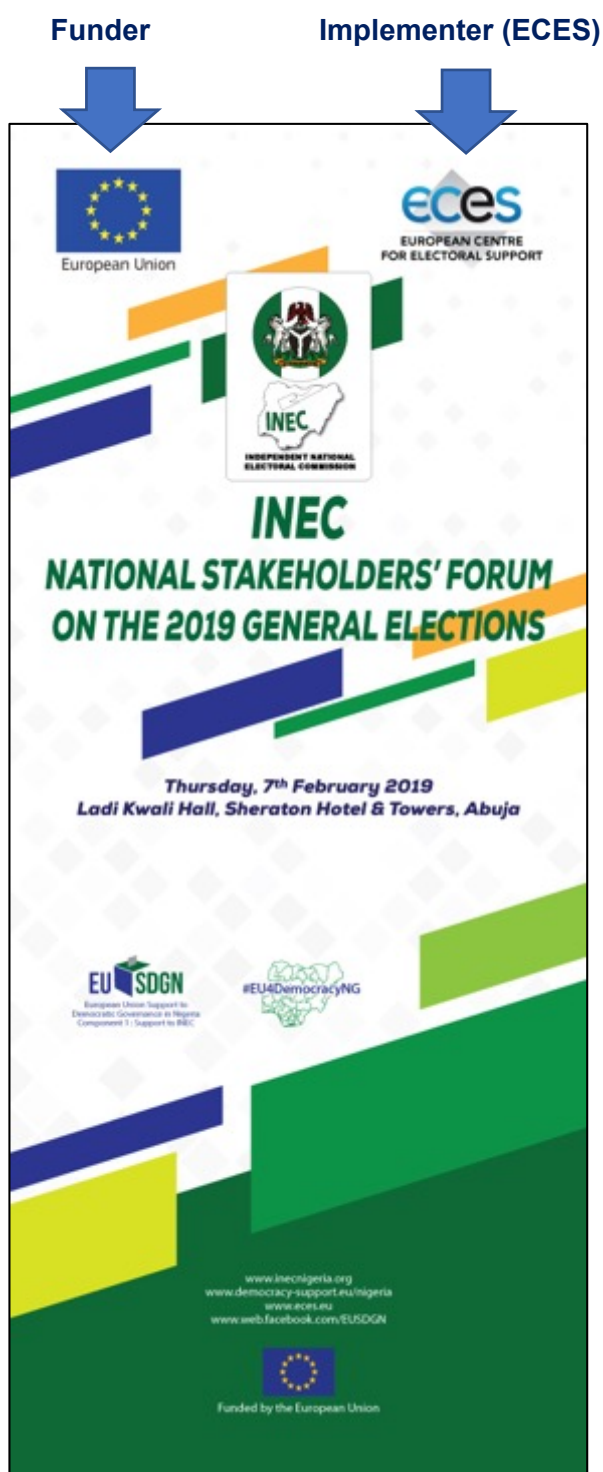
Funder

Project Logo

Implementer (ECES)

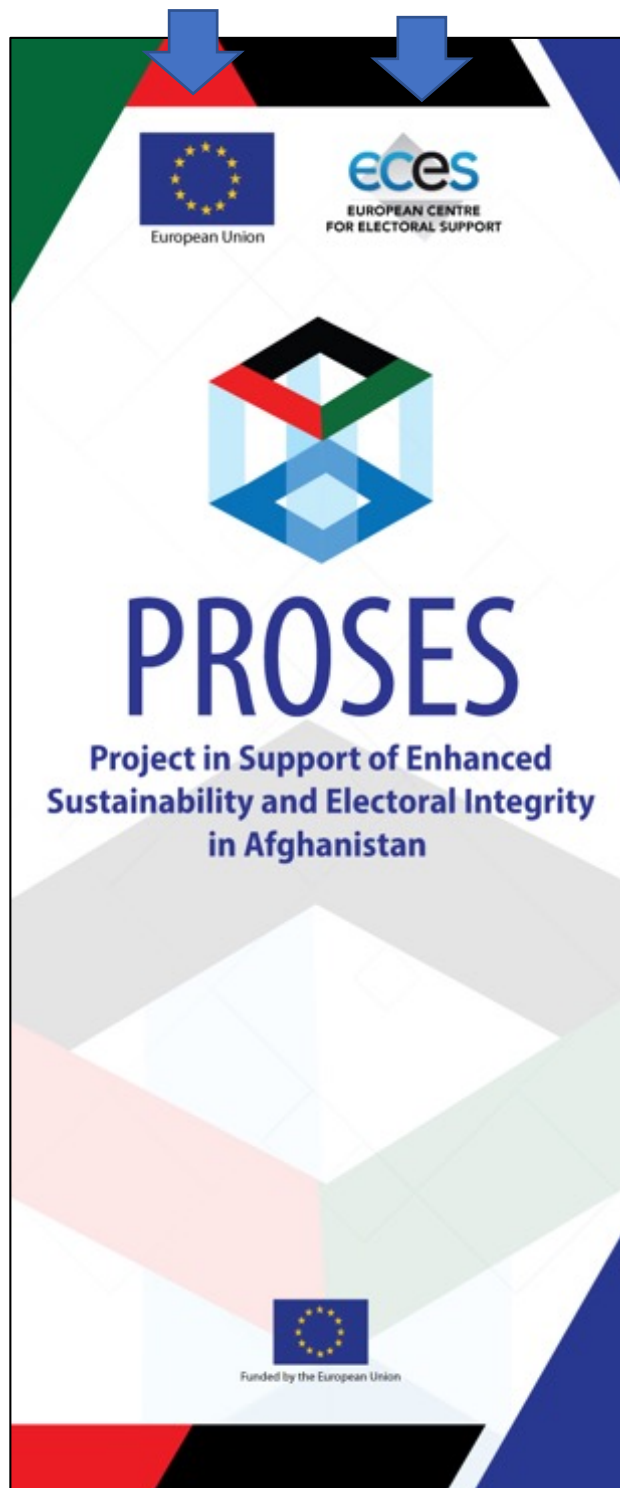


## 1.5.2. Rollup Banner



Funder

Implementer (ECES)



← Project  
Logo

### 1.5.3. Sample of report cover (front and back)

As stated above, the funder logo should be at the far left of the material, followed by the ECES logo on the opposite side (right).

The project logo should be placed in the middle or, upon agreement, additional information including the project office address and the website address will be placed on the back cover.

Content header and footer design will be harmonized according to the cover theme and color.

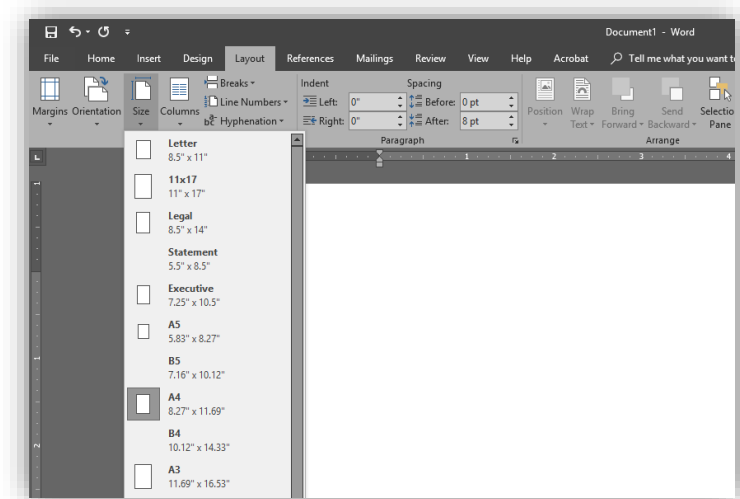


## 2. Office document reporting format

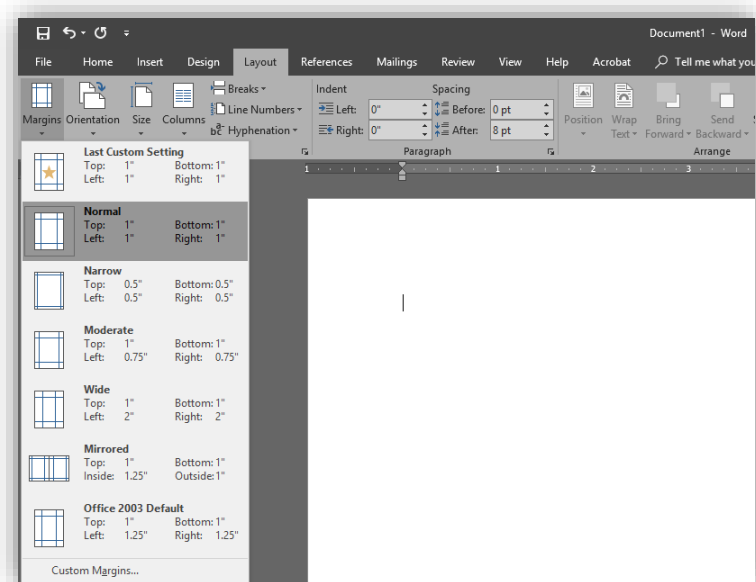
It is highly recommended to use the latest version of Microsoft Office or, at least, a later version than 2013. All settings should first be modified following the below guidelines for every document created by ECES staff.

### 2.1. Microsoft Word

#### 2.1.1. Paper size

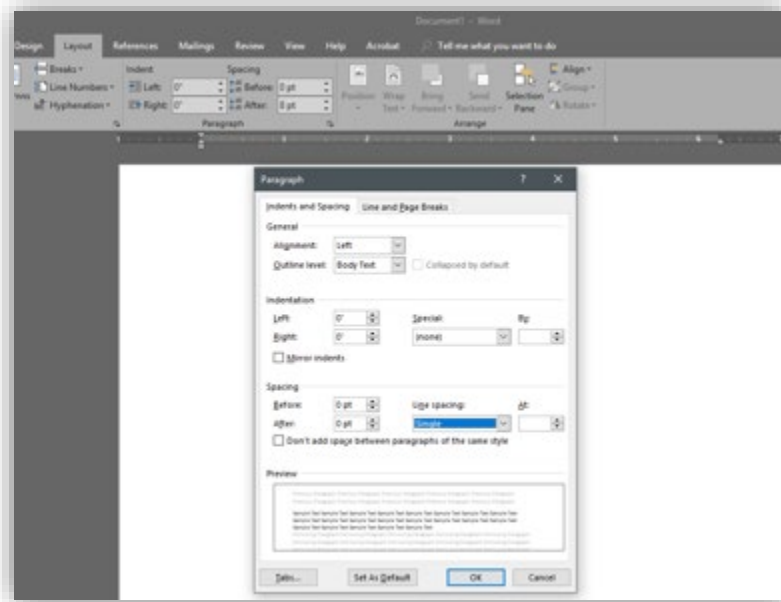


#### 2.1.2. Margin



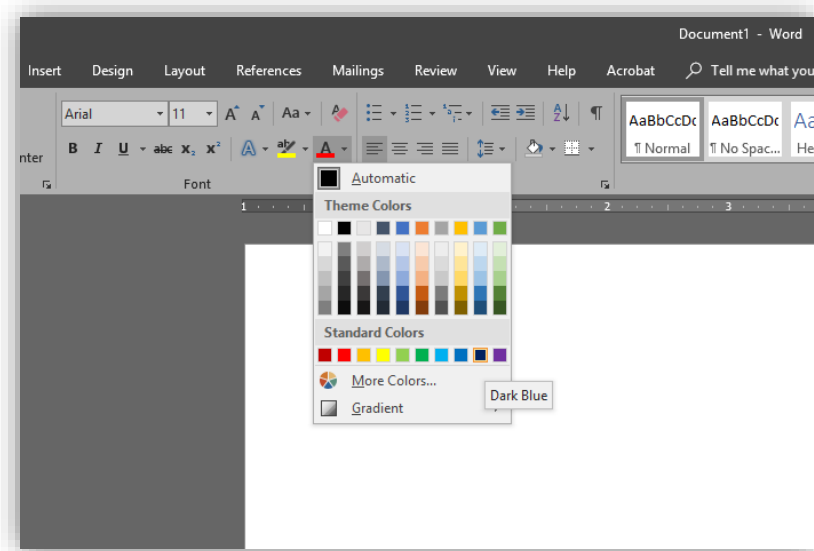


### 2.1.3. Paragraph



### 2.1.4. Font

Font: Arial  
Font size: 11  
Font color: Dark blue

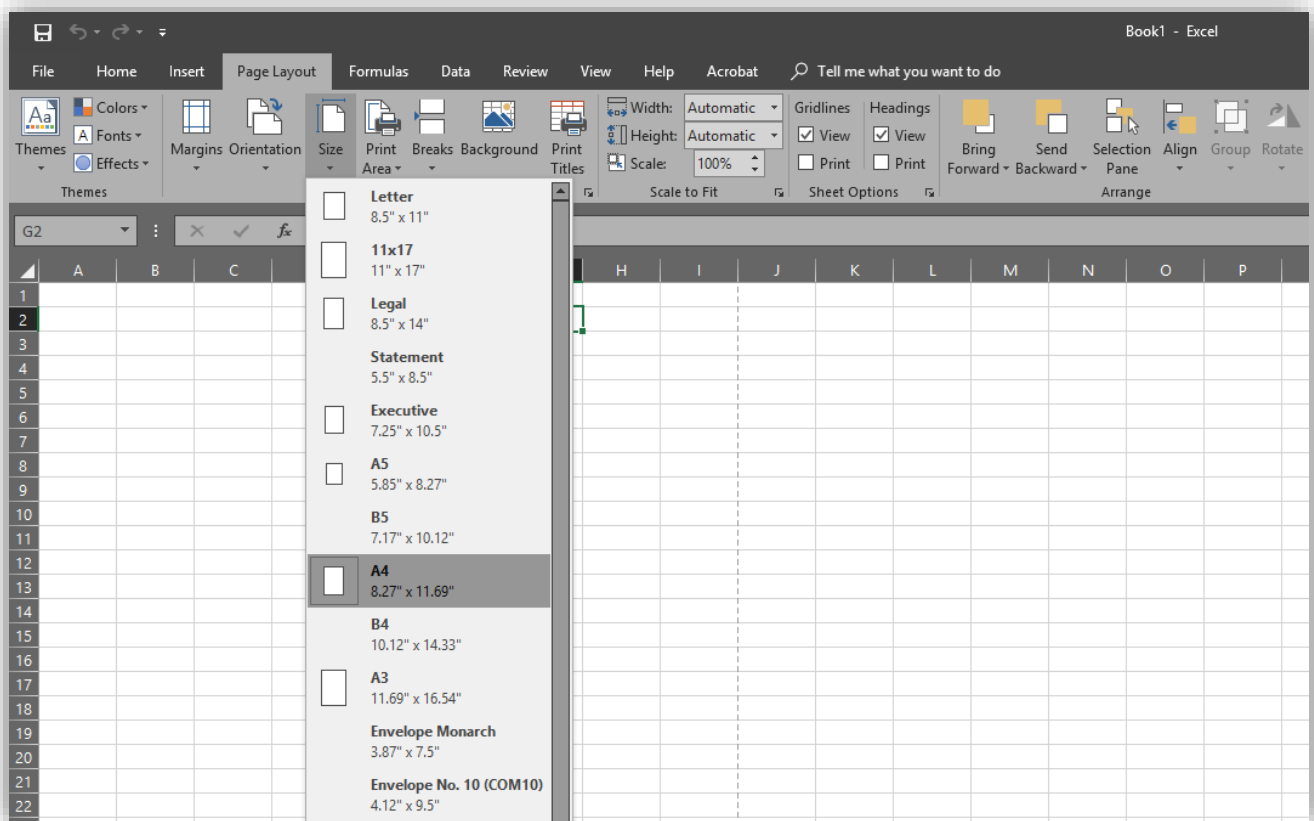


Cover & Back Cover, document header and footer (banner) should be provided by projects' local graphic designers, or contact ECES Senior graphic designer for any further request.

## 2.2. Microsoft Excel

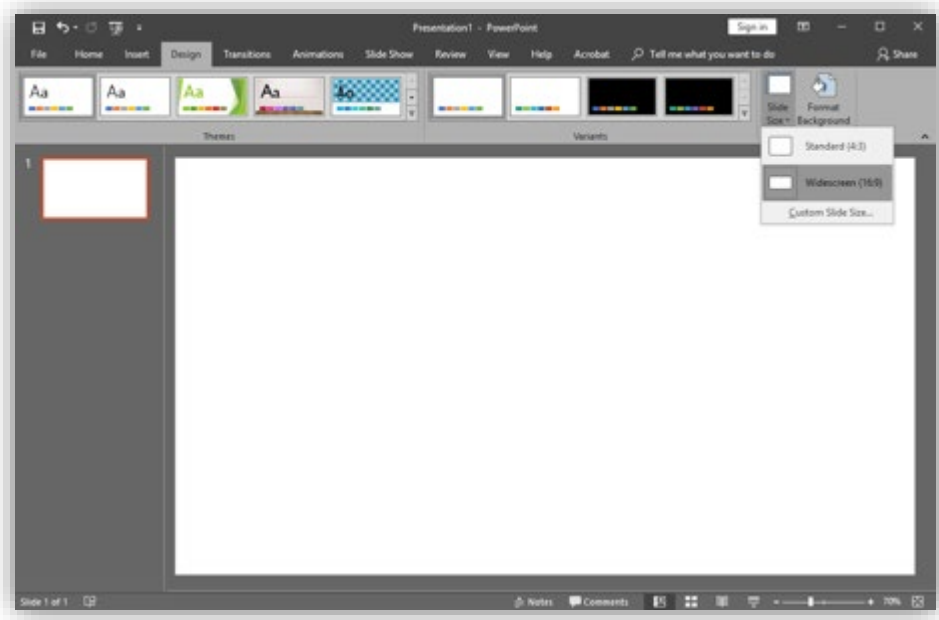
Microsoft Excel will mostly be used for financial documents (tables & numbers). There is no specific instruction regarding its use, except for the presence of a banner following the project design guidelines (includes logo and title of the project). Paper size for printing will depend on the total table width and maximum A3.

Start document with A4 and normal margin.



## 2.3. Microsoft PowerPoint

Presentation size should fit 4:3 screen and presentation theme, according to the project visibility plan. Template for the master slide should be provided by ECES Graphic Designer, according to the project.



Sample of general ECES PowerPoint master slide

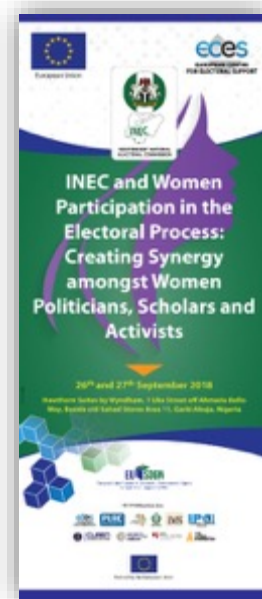
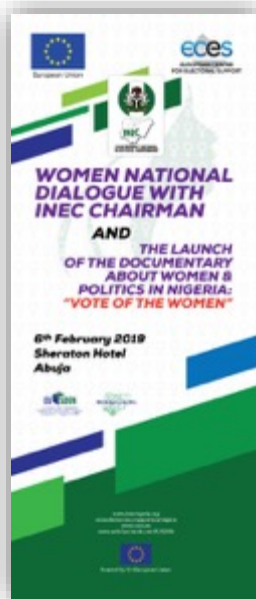


### 3. Type of visibility

#### 3.1. Rollup banner

Size should be 80cm x 2m (international standard).

Material should be either Vinyl or Glossy Polypropylene. Please consult with your local printing company.



#### 3.2. Backdrop banner

Size should be 1.5m x 3m (general activity) or as big as 4m x 5m for larger events or depending on survey reports from the project's logistic department.

Material similar to rollup banner.



### 3.3. Leaflet, Flyer, Project brochure

Most of ECES brochures are in A4 maximum, except if there is a certain request for custom size at times when less content has to be presented in a more compact manner.

Material is 70-80gr matte/glossy paper for the content and no more than 120gr for the covers.





### 3.4. Business card / ID card

ECES & project staff should have their business cards along with their ID card always at hand.

Double sided business card



Double sided ID card



## Stamp



### 3.5. Logistic Sticker (Property Sticker)

 <b>PROPERTY TAG</b> <b>IT_EU SDGN_386 762</b> No: <input type="text"/>	 <b>PROPERTY TAG</b> <b>OFF_EU SDGN_386 762</b> No: <input type="text"/>	 <b>PROPERTY TAG</b> <b>OF_EU SDGN_386 762</b> No: <input type="text"/>
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The image shows a "PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION" form template. It includes the following fields:

- Code**
- Category**
- Description**
- Date of purchase**

The form also features logos for ECES, the European Union, and AECID, along with the text "Enhanced Support to Democratic Governance in Jordan" and "Multiparty Democracy".

### 3.6. Stationary (Notebook, Pen, Folder)

#### Document folder



#### Notebook



## Pen



Placard (Activity & Event)

Handbag (Activity & Event)

## 4. Online & Social Media

### Website (Projects)

Below is an example of a project website – here Nigeria – which outlines the main rules to be applied to project websites.

For each project website, we draw inspiration from the country's flag (colours, emblems, etc.).

Here, the website was designed to meet the color theme of Nigeria, which is mostly darkish green together with slight EU blue. This is designed to be informative, data comprehensive and with visual engagement for our audience. Several key components were embedded such as the EU logo, the Nigerian National coat of arms and the logos of implementing partners on the home screen/page.

- **Website header**

The header of the website is composed of the project's title, "European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria", the European Union Logo/Flag and the Nigerian coat of arms.



- **Main menu**

The menu bar is dark green – black gradation color to fit the theme of the website – and is controlled by a rollover script, which means it will drop down when the mouse focuses there. It contains a sub-menu which unfolds when the mouse cursor moves over it.



The main menu consists of 7 components: Home, About, Methodology, Objectives, Activities, Management and Gallery, most of which contain sub-menus that can be viewed and clicked on when the cursor is placed above them.

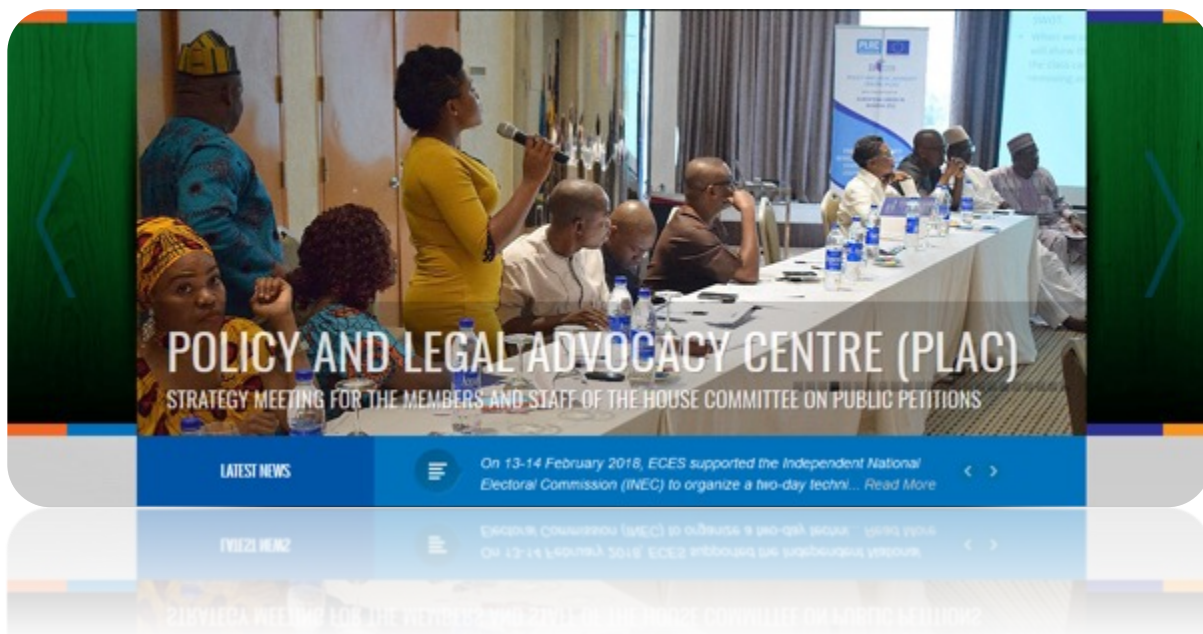


The menu-submenu list is as follows:

Menu	Sub-menu
HOME	
ABOUT	Background Implementing Organizations
METHODOLOGY	Continuity with previous actions
OBJECTIVES	Expected results
ACTIVITIES	Support to INEC Support to NAS Support to PP Support to Media Support to CSOS
MANAGEMENT	Monitoring & Evaluation Project Coordination Organizational Structure
GALLERY	IMAGES VIDEOS

- Image slider/news flash**

Image sliders (also known as image carousels or slideshows) are used to display multiple images or graphics on the homepage of the website. Projects are encouraged to use visually appealing, flashy and colorful images to capture the attention of viewers and direct it to the current news or visuals from the project activities.

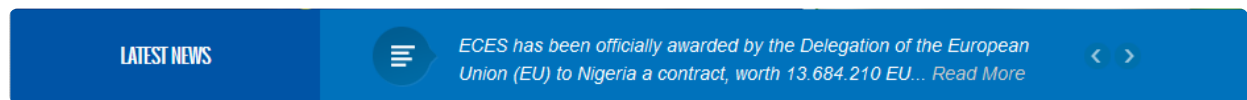


Apart from the in-built features of the slider, the website seeks to best minimize complexity, so as to give users the ability to completely control the slider. The slider might not actually slide at all, unless

the site visitor wants it to. It includes left and right arrows on the sides of each image so that website visitors can click through at their command.

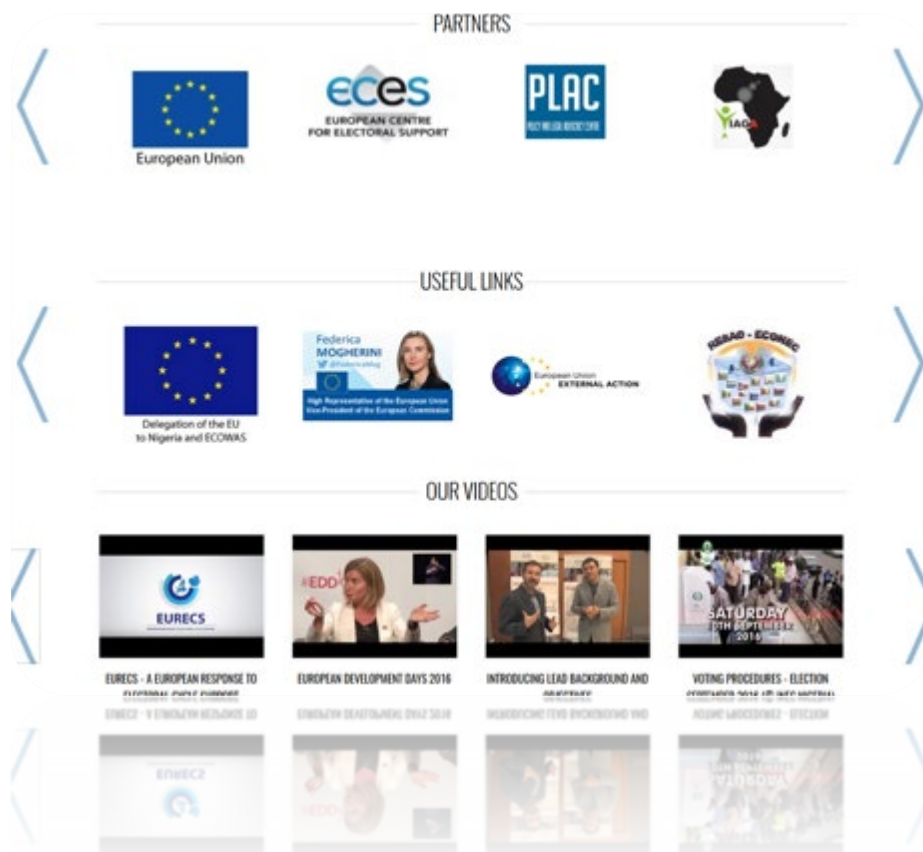
- **News slider**

This is a responsive script query to quickly view the most updated activities of the project, built with auto/manual slide. The theme color is EU blue.
















- **Visual and link sliders**

This is a user-friendly feature that allows navigation on the visual content (videos, albums), partners and useful links.



- **Web footer**

For contact information regarding project location, the following website footer was used:

<p><b>ECES HEADQUARTERS</b></p> <p> Brussels - Belgium</p> <p> Av. Louise 209/a, 1050 Ixelles</p> <p> +32 2 325 55 58</p> <p> <a href="mailto:info@eces.eu">info@eces.eu</a></p>	<p><b>STAY CONNECTED</b></p> <p>ECES likes to share news and updates through its social media. Follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn and stay tuned!</p> <p>      </p>	<p><b>PROJECT OFFICE</b></p> <p> Abuja – Nigeria</p> <p> 12 Charles de Gaulle Street</p> <p> Asokoro, FCT 9000211</p> <p> <a href="mailto:nigeria@eces.eu">nigeria@eces.eu</a></p>
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- **Part/sections to be updated by Partners/Implementers**

**Website picture slider with activity information (Front page)**

This picture slider will present implementers/partners programme activity with go-through link to their respective news page.





- **Latest News**

A description about implementers/partners' current and past activities.

They will be displayed alongside a small picture icon to be created using relevant tools



## 5. ECES file management

### ECES Server

Located at the headquarter and access will be provided for certain staff approved by Executive Director. Access will be configured by server provider remotely from HQ directly to your system.





**EUROPEAN CENTRE  
FOR ELECTORAL SUPPORT**

Avenue Louise 222 , 1050 Brussels, Belgium  
Phone: +32 (0) 2 325 55 58 – Fax : +32 (0) 2 502 6630

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[www.youtube.com/user/ECESeu](http://www.youtube.com/user/ECESeu)