



COMMUNICATION PLAN

Agency for the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information

EXTRACT

The communication plan of the Agency for the Protection of Free Access to Public Information (APFAPI) defines the tenets, goals, and principles of the communication, promotion, and visibility of the institution with the various stakeholders, affected and interested.

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Abbreviations used

ABBREVIATION	MEANING
APRFAPI	Agency for the protection of the right to free access to public information
GRNM	Government of the Republic of North Macedonia
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
EU	European Union
LFAPI	Law on the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information
MISA	Ministry of Information Society and Administration
MJ	Ministry of Justice
NGO	Non-government organisation
FREUC	Fundamental Rights of the European Union Charter
RFAPI	Right to free access to public information
RNM	Republic of North Macedonia
FAPI	Free access to public information
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (English: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)
SWOT	Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunity and Threats)

Introduction

The communication plan of the Agency for the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information (APRFAPI) is a complementary document to the Strategic Plan of the Agency for the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information (hereinafter: the Agency), adopted in 2021, and the Action Plan of the Agency 2021-2025. The plan was developed within the framework of the project "Promoting transparency and responsibility of public institutions", implemented within the framework of the EU IPA2 program, and financed by the European Commission, represented by the Delegation of the European Union in the Republic of North Macedonia.

The communication plan establishes the goals, principles, and tenets of the Agency's communication with the stakeholders, concerned, and interested parties. These are all geared toward achieving the goals, competencies, and functions of the institution's work.

The Agency, as an independent state body with the rights, obligations, and responsibilities specified by the Law on Free Access to Public Information (hereinafter referred to as the Law), oversees the exercise of the constitutionally guaranteed right to free access to public information. Within the context of accomplishing its objectives, the Agency is required, in accordance with its responsibilities, to communicate efficiently and effectively with a large and diverse number of stakeholders - requesters and holders of public information.

The purpose of the communication plan is to enable clear, focused, and effective communication with the main stakeholders, concerned and interested parties, and thereby enable and contribute to the achievement of the strategic goals and priorities of work, which the Agency has defined for the period 2021-2025.

Moreover, the communication plan aims to enable a stronger connection between the Agency and the various stakeholders, which in turn will ensure effective communication with the public, about the Agency's mission, services, and competencies.

As a document, the Communication Plan outlines the key messages the institution wants to convey, the channels it will use to reach stakeholders, and the methods it will employ to engage, involve, and inform the various stakeholders and thereby advance the transparency and accountability of the public sector, subsequently contributing to strengthening the trust of citizens and society in state institutions. The plan identifies the target audience for each message that will be used to establish communication with the selected relevant stakeholders.

In particular, the communication plan of the Agency for the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information focuses on building awareness and understanding of the mandate, competencies, and function of the organization towards information requesters and holders. To promote and inform the public about the right to access public information, the Agency will use social media, the contents of the institution's website, as well as public and educational-informative events that will be organized and implemented independently and/or in collaboration with various donors and agencies.

The communication plan is a vital document because it provides the Agency with a framework for meeting the needs and expectations of information requesters and holders in a way that is consistent with its mission and mandate. This will allow the Agency to better inform the public about its services, relevant laws, and core competencies.

Methodology - Process of Preparation of the Communication Plan

The planning process, in its simplest terms, is the method that institutions use to develop plans for achieving overall, long-term goals.

The process of preparing the Communication Plan of the Agency for the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information included the following key steps:

- **Study of the context and competencies of the institution:** This includes a review of the legal framework and determination of the authority of the institution. At the same time, in this phase, the existing strategic plan of the institution was reviewed and taken into account, as well as previous communication plans and implemented activities for visibility, informing, and involving the public in the work of the Agency. The consultant was also informed about the current communication activities of the institution, the relations of the organization with various stakeholders (requesters and holders of information), as well as with the external environment, which affects the work of the institution. Determining the context in which the institution operates represents the basis for identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the organization.
- **Identifying communication goals:** The institution has determined its communication objectives for the upcoming time period based on the findings of a recent situational analysis.
- **Defining target groups:** The communication plan identified the key stakeholders and target groups to whom the institution wishes to convey its communication messages.
- **Developing key communication messages:** The communication plan defined the key communication messages that the Agency wants to convey to its target audience/target groups, in order to achieve the defined communication goals. The messages are clear, concise, and easy to understand and are specifically aimed at each selected target group individually.
- **Suggested communication channels:** The plan identified the most appropriate communication channels to reach target groups.
- **Defining tactics and activities:** The communication plan identified specific tactics and activities that the institution will use to achieve the communication goals.

In general, the process of preparing the communication plan for the Agency takes into account the strategic priorities and determinations for the development of the institution, its competencies, and mandate established by law, as well as the expectations and needs of the concerned and interested parties (requesters

and holders of information). The plan should be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that it remains relevant and effective in achieving the organization's communication objectives.

Context – Legal Framework and Competencies

Existing legal framework for the protection of the right to free access to public information

One of the most rapidly expanding rights today is the right to free access to information. The number of national laws on access to information has increased significantly over the past two decades, reaching a figure of 128. The Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), in 2016, protected this human right under the European Convention on Human Rights Article 10. Its acceptance was further strengthened in Europe with the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents in 2020.

In the Republic of North Macedonia, the right to free access to public information is a constitutionally guaranteed right contained in Article 16 paragraph 3 of the Constitution.

The basic regulation that regulates and operationalizes this constitutionally guaranteed right is the Law on Free Access to Public Information. The first Law on free access to public information was adopted in 2006 ("Official Gazette" No. 13/2006, 86/2008, 6/2010, 42/2014, 148/2015, 55/2016, and 64/2018 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 98/2019). In 2019, the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia passed the new Law on Free Access to Public Information (Official Gazette No. 101/2019), which formally began its application on December 25, 2019, with the election of the Agency's leadership.

One of the essential novelties in the Law on Free Access to Public Information from 2019, in view of its predecessor from 2006, is the transformation of the Commission for the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information into an independent body - Agency for the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information, managed by the Director and Deputy Director.

What is new in the existing Law on Free Access to Public Information is that compared to the first law, in accordance with Article 30 of the new Law on Free Access to Public Information, the Agency, in addition to the powers it had as a Commission, acquired additional powers in the area of conducting misdemeanor proceedings through its own Misdemeanor Commission. There are also mandatory obligations established by the law for each holder of information arising from the established definition of **public interest** according to this law, an increasing number of institutions that are registered in the Agency's **list of information holders** in accordance with the Law; increasing transparency of public institutions, **List of information** that the institutions must publish in a prominent place on their websites in accordance with Article 10 of the Law, holding public information within the scope of their competence and the obligation to publish the same data in an appropriate format with a banner in a prominent place on the home page, etc.

Furthermore, the right to free access to information implies two obligations for the public bodies:

1. Obligation to make publicly available any and all records generated by or disposed of by the institution or its employees that relate to the institution's operations (active transparency);
2. Reactive obligation to issue Decisions in response to requests for public information and made available to the public for free via electronic publication and delivery (reactive transparency).

If both obligations are met, the administration will be more transparent and accountable, thus earning the trust of its constituents and the larger community.

When it comes to the right to access public information, the scope of the new 2019 Law on Free Access to Public Information is much wider. According to its provisions, public authorities in the Republic of North Macedonia have an obligation for both active and reactive transparency (Articles 9 and 10). Law on the use of data from the public sector ("Official Gazette No. 27/2014") was adopted in 2014. This law establishes the obligation of the bodies and institutions from the public sector to publicly publish the data they create in the exercise of their competencies in accordance with the law in an open format. The Government of the Republic of North Macedonia has also shown its willingness to promote proactive publication according to the Transparency Strategy of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia (2019-2021) and 2023-2025, a new transparency strategy that will be prepared in 2023; The Strategy for Public Administration Reforms 2018-2022 and the new SPAR 2023-2030 and the Action Plan; as well as with The Open Data Strategy and the National Open Government Partnership Action Plan.

The commitment of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia to strengthening free access to public information, i.e. to transparency and accountability of state institutions and bodies, is confirmed by the signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation with the Agency in 2021.

Within the framework of that cooperation in 2022, following the guidelines given by the Agency, the Government of RSM and the Agency mutually edited the website in accordance with Articles 9 and 10 of the Law. The given directions were primarily in the direction of placing a banner on the home page entitled "Public information", which contains documents from the holders of the 22 categories of information according to the LFAPI in an open format. Also, video materials and materials were uploaded, aimed to educate and inform the public about the constitutionally guaranteed right of access to public information, about the operation of the Agency, as well as about the obligations of the officials with the holder of the information.

Basic competencies of the Agency for the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information

The Agency for the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information of the Republic of North Macedonia (hereinafter: the Agency), based in Skopje, acts as an independent state body, with rights, obligations, and responsibilities determined by this law, financed from the Budget of the Republic of North

Macedonia. The agency, as a legal entity, reports on its work to the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia through an annual report.

The competencies of the Agency, according to the valid legal framework¹, defined in Article 30 of the Law are presented in the table below. According to this Article, the Agency

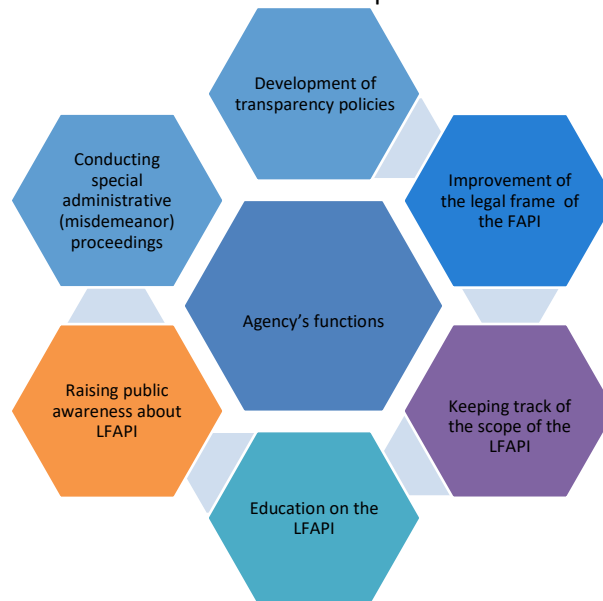
- Conducts administrative proceedings and decides on appeals against the decision by which the owner of the information refused or rejected the request for access to information of the applicants;
- Takes care of the implementation of the provisions of the law;
- Prepares and publishes a list of information holders;
- Gives opinions on proposals for laws regulating free access to information;
- Develops policies and provides guidance regarding the exercise of the right to free access to information;
- Conducts misdemeanor proceedings through the Misdemeanor Commission, which decides upon misdemeanors in accordance with the law;
- Undertakes activities related to the education of information holders about the right of free access to the information they have;
- Cooperates with the holders of information regarding the realization of the right of access to information;
- Prepares an annual report on its work and submits it to the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia;
- Carries out international cooperation activities related to the execution of the international obligations of the Republic of North Macedonia, participation in the implementation of projects of international organizations, and cooperates with the authorities of other countries and institutions in the field of free access to public information;
- Promotes the right to free access to public information and performs other tasks established by the law.

The Agency for the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information carries out the given competencies through the following functions:

- Development of transparency policies (proactive and reactive)
- Improvement of the legal framework for FAPI
- Keeping track of the scope of LFAPI
- Education on the LFAPI

¹Law on free access to public information ("Official Gazette of RSM" No. 101/2019), at the time when the Strategic Plan was developed (November 2020 - January 2021)

- Raising public awareness about LFAPI
- Conducting special administrative (misdemeanor) proceedings
- Cooperation with related institutions and partners at the domestic and international level.



Graph 1. Functions of the Agency

The Agency for the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information is managed by a Director and their deputy and currently has 19 employees.

The Communication Plan was prepared after careful consideration of AFAPI's 2021–2025 Strategic Plan and the supporting legislation outlining AFAPI's mission, mandate, and mandated responsibilities.

Analysis of weaknesses and strengths, and opportunities and threats - SWOT Analysis

Analysis of internal factors or the so-called SWOT refers to identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. It is a widely used technique for assessing these four aspects of an organization or institution.

The SWOT analysis is applied with the aim of full utilization of the potential possessed by the institution, i.e., it demonstrates how to use the best advantage of the institution. On the other hand, it is used as a tool that acts preventively in reducing the risk of failure, by recognizing what is missing and eliminating dangers and threats that might otherwise appear unexpectedly.

SWOT analysis identifies strengths/weaknesses as well as opportunities and threats in the operation of the institution and provides guidance on what should be taken into account and be the focus of the institution's future development strategy. The strengths and weaknesses reflect the internal capacities and are what is in the competence of the employees and management of the Agency and give an overview of equipment, capacities, resources, way of working and organization, and other internal issues. The opportunities and threats arise from the legal framework, the (in)action of other stakeholders in the system, cooperation, and other issues that affect the work of the institution but are beyond its power.

The SWOT analysis took into consideration the study done for the strategic plan of the organization, which was carried out with the help and input of a variety of participants. The analysis presented in this document has been revised to reflect the most up-to-date views and perceptions of the institution's functioning held by the staff, with due consideration given to the feedback they receive from the institution's various stakeholders (including requesters and holders of public information) throughout the operation.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Agency for the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information - APRFAPI takes care of the protection and realization of the right to free access to public information• The employees show high professionalism in their work• The agency is recognized by the holders and requesters of information as a leader in the protection of FAPI• The agency always openly and promptly meets and responds to the holders of information in fulfilling their legal obligations to act in accordance with the provisions of LFAPI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthening the role of AFAPI in encouraging and promoting proactive transparency and information disclosure by information holders• Strengthening the capacities and role of AFAPI for the implementation of educational and informational activities through which the right to free access to public information will be further affirmed, and proactive transparency will be encouraged among institutions/holders of information• Limited resources for the implementation of communication activities, which limit the scope and coverage of various target groups and users.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AFAPI provides support for holders and applicants with clarifications, additions, and other appropriate assistance. ● AFAPI has excellent cooperation with civil society organizations in the field of protection of the right of access to public information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A state institution does not have the right to direct financing for the realization of a campaign, that is, it is dependent on sponsorships for this activity ● Absence of a PR person employed in the Agency ● expert designer for preparation of creative solutions.
<p>Opportunities</p>	<p>Threats</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Connection and cooperation with the civil sector, and implementation of joint projects that will encourage and promote the proactive transparency of state institutions and information holders, in general, ● Establishing cooperation with the national media and using the opportunity for free information, in order to affirm the right to free access to public information ● Use of social media/networks, to increase the visibility of the institution ● Connecting and cooperating with donors, to increase/improve the visibility of the institution and its competences ● Implementation of promotional-educational-informational campaigns and activities, to increase the trust of the stakeholders in the AFAPI operations, but also of the holders of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Insufficient commitment of public and state institutions (owners of information) to stable and continuous provision of clear and consistent information to stakeholders (proactive transparency). ● Public perception and mistrust in the ability of information holders to communicate effectively and transparently with stakeholders, and to provide clear and accurate information in a timely manner ● Insufficient interest of donors and sponsors in the realization of this plan ● Cybersecurity threats can compromise sensitive information and damage the reputation of information holders ● Insufficient staffing of employees due to unsecured consents for new hires ● Emergencies and disasters, such as natural disasters or public health crises (e.g. the Covid-19 pandemic), can disrupt normal communication channels and create confusion and uncertainty among stakeholders.

Communication Plan

The communication plan contains the following elements:

1. Communication purposes,
2. Target groups,
3. Communication messages,
4. Communication channels, and
5. Plan of activities.

Communication purposes

Taking into account the context and work environment, as well as the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses, AFAPI opportunities and threats, the following communication goals are defined:

1. Facilitation of the application of the right to access to public information, with the expected result - an increased awareness of this right among information requesters, so that the requesters know how the right to free access is exercised and to increase their trust in the Agency;

2. Increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of public information, with the expected result - increased active transparency, accountability and proactivity in information holderstand access to quality, complete and timely available public information, as well as reduced administration silence and Provided support for promotion of the "reactive" transparency of public institutions;

3. Increasing the visibility of the Agency in the public with an expected result - an increased number of public requests, increased and simplified interaction between holders and information applicants, a smaller number of complaints to the Agency.

4. Information requesters know how to exercise the right to free access to public information.

Target groups

In the following section, the target groups that will be the focus of the communication efforts of AFAPI during the realization of the goals of the communication plan are described:

1. **General public:** The general public is a key target audience for APRFAPI. Here, in addition to citizens, representatives of specific target groups such as youth and students, then investigative journalists, researchers, and others who are interested, and stakeholders/requesters of public information may be included.
2. **Media:** The media workers are an important target audience for a government institution responsible for the realization of the APRFAPI. This audience includes journalists, editors, and producers who are both requesters and users of public information, utilized for reporting on important issues and social problems/topics that affect citizens.
3. **State and public institutions/holders of public information:** State and public institutions have a dual interest in the work of APRFAPI - as holders of public information that should provide free access to applicants and other stakeholders, but also as users of public information (inter-institutional cooperation), so that they can perform their daily functions.
4. **Civic organizations and formal and informal associations of citizens representing the interests of a specific social group:** The representatives of this group are some of the most frequent users/requesters of public information. In addition, those organizations that work in the sphere of (proactive) institutional transparency are also potential partners and collaborators with whom APRFAPI could implement joint projects and activities aimed at achieving the strategic goals of the institution.
5. **Lawyers:** Legal professionals (lawyers, judges, and others who rely on public information in legal proceedings) are also a specific target group for AFAPI.
6. **Businesses and business associations:** Businesses and business associations are also a target group of the communication plan of APRFAPI. This includes all business and corporate stakeholders who rely on public information to make business decisions.

For the purposes of the communication plan, these different stakeholders are organized into the following categories:

1. Requesters of public information (media, non-governmental organizations, citizens, lawyers, businesses, and business associations)
2. Holders of public information (state and public institutions)
3. General public
4. Donors, domestic and international partners, and collaborators

The communication plan further elaborates specific communication messages and activities aimed at the four categories of target groups. Communication messages, specific to each target group, should enable APRFAPI to reach and engage this audience with the messages/information/issues that are within the scope of the institution's work.

Communication messages

The purpose of the communication messages developed and presented for the specific categories of target groups elaborated earlier is to effectively convey the message of the Agency to the specific audience in a way that touches the specific target groups, encourages them to take action (if that is the goal) and informs/educates them about the work of the institution.

Moreover, the communication messages are tailored to the specific needs and interests of the target audience, taking into account factors such as the level of knowledge or understanding of the issue of free access to public information, their values and beliefs, as well as their communication style.

The ultimate goal of communication messages is to inform, educate, and motivate the target audience to take action, whether that's submitting a request for public information, attending an event, or supporting the institution's mission in some other way.

By developing clear and effective communication messages that target a specific audience, an institution can increase the likelihood that its message will be received appropriately, and will arouse adequate feedback from the target audience, ultimately leading to greater engagement and support for the work of the institution.

Messages for different target categories:

TC 1 – Public information requesters:

- Ask for information!
- Don't waste time on unverified sources!
- Ask where you need to ask!
- You have the right to be informed!
- You may, you can, and you should ask for information! You must get an answer from the holder of the public information if public information is what you are looking for.
- Ask to receive an answer! You have that right, and the institutions are obliged to provide the answer.
- Be informed, feel free to ask!

TC 2 – Public information holders:

- When a citizen asks, answer quickly and accurately.
- You are a service to the citizens, they trust your answer.
- Respect the citizens and fulfill their expectations, that way they will have confidence in you.
- The image of the institution is a result of your attitude towards the citizen, every day.

- Be responsible, so that the citizens are satisfied.
- Accountable institutions, informed citizens.

TC 3 – General public:

- Encourage the accountability and transparency of the institutions - ask for information and check the democratic condition of the institutions!
- "Open institutions" mean accountability, respect for laws and procedures, rational spending of money, and narrowing of corruption opportunities.
- The work of APRFAPI is an important link in building democracy, every individual can join, only if they request answers in the right place.
- Free access to public information is a human right. Ask questions, demand accountability, and aid the strengthening of the transparency and openness of institutions in that way!
- Feel free to ask for information! You have a legal right, and access is easy and simple.

TC 4 – Donors, domestic and international collaborators, and partners:

- By organizing public/media campaigns, the presence and visibility of AFAPI in the public and the citizens' awareness of the right to free access to public information will be improved.
- Citizens should know that they have the right to be informed.
- Continuity in informing the public about the right to ask, as well as encouraging institutions to respond, is only possible with financial resources. The greater visibility of the Agency will encourage a greater number of citizens to be interested in public information.
- Our will and commitment to encourage the openness of institutions is indisputable, just as we strive to provide citizens with easy access to information. That's why we need support from other parties, so that we can realize what is the right of the citizen, and what is our obligation.
- The exchange of experiences, expert support, but also funds that would bring better technology and increased visibility, are of vital importance for accomplishing the Agency's mission.
- This is a way for the citizens themselves to participate in the improvement of the institutions and their transparency, accountability, and responsibility, as a basic principle for the functioning of a democratic state.
- If we want motivated citizens who will ask and influence the openness of the institutions, we must first introduce them to the right to ask and receive an answer in a timely manner. This is the only

way we will include them in public processes if they know that they have the legal right to ask and that the institution has an obligation to answer them.

Communication channels

The communication plan for AFAPI foresees the use of the following communication channels through which it plans on reaching the target groups:

- **AFAPI Website (www.aspi.mk):** The institution's website is a basic and key communication channel for providing information for information requesters and holders of information, as well as for promoting various current events, legal solutions and competences, and other issues related to the exercise of the right to free access to public information.
- **Social Media:** Social media platforms (Facebook/Meta, LinkedIn, Instagram) are effective channels for communicating and sharing information about the mission, activities, and resources of the institution, as well as for engaging with stakeholders and solving current issues and problems.
- **Press Releases:** Press releases can be used to announce new initiatives, provide information on current issues and ongoing work, and respond to media inquiries.
- **Public Events:** Public events can be used to provide information and engage with stakeholders in the work of the institution.
- **Public Speaking:** Public speaking engagements and presentations by AFAPI employees at various events, conferences and/or panels can be used to raise awareness of the institution's mission and work, as well as to engage with stakeholders and answer questions.
- **Public Notices:** Public notices can be used to inform the public of public information requests, upcoming meetings, or other important information.
- **Direct mail:** Direct mail can be used to provide targeted information to specific stakeholders and specific representatives of the target groups.
- **Email:** Email communication can be used to provide updates, share important information, and respond to stakeholder questions.
- **Media interviews:** Media interviews can be an effective way to reach a wider audience and convey the institution's message to the public.

These communication channels should be taken into account and it is important to adapt their application depending on the message and the target group for which they are intended, as well as to establish an institutional practice for the effective use of these communication channels with stakeholders.

PLAN OF ACTIVITIES

Activity 1 – Improvements to the E-portal for applicants

Redesigning the "slobodenpristap.mk" portal in order to make it more striking and streamlined to use, with relevant and updated messages to the audience/citizen, with a more direct speech to the users.

Rearrangement of the list of holders of information published on the portal - the links should lead to their official sites, more precisely to the list of public information published by a specific authority (instead of only indicating the number of submitted and answered requests from the specific holder that were processed through the portal itself).

Open day for citizens *Inform yourself in person or by phone with the employees of APRFAPI.*

Enabling direct contact with a person from the Agency who will have knowledge of the area.

In addition, adding a telephone number to which citizens can call for two hours every working day and be informed about their rights, and an email address of the person through which questions from the area will also be answered. The person should be trained in giving advice that will facilitate the citizen's access to the institutions, i.e. they will clarify the dilemmas of how to fill out the request, how to formulate the question in the request, to whom the holder of information should contact in order to get the desired information, which would shorten the waiting time when the request would be submitted to the right institution.

During the redesign (which should be graphically more appealing), more active and motivating sentences should be used, such as "Ask what you want!", "Find out from the right source!", "Ask to be answered!", "You came to the right place", instead of "Your right to know".

In addition to the basic message of the e-portal, the names of other segments of the portal should also be "softened" linguistically, for example:

- "Holder List"
- "Who Can You Ask"
- "Who can provide you with an answer"
- "Submit a request"
- "Request information now!"
- "Ask now!"

Channel: Website, e-portal

Time: The beginning of 2023

Activity 2 – Press conference for the start of the campaign

The agency will present to the media the goals of the upcoming campaign to raise awareness among citizens about using the right to free access to public information.

A press release summarizing the key takeaways from the press conference will then be written and sent to a broader variety of media outlets.

Official social media outlets will publicize the news, with Facebook featuring highlights and a link to the full release on the Agency's website.

Thesis:

- Citizens do not know enough about their legal right to free access to information and therefore do not use it.
- The citizen has the right to know and our goal is to encourage them to ask and request answers in the right place.
- The one who requests information for their needs and to be personally informed, at the same time participates in the building of more responsible institutions, which are at the service of the citizens.
- Requesting information is a democratic way to put pressure on institutions to be more responsible and closer to citizens.
- In an age of misinformation and fake news, seeking information in the right place becomes ever more important.
- The agency makes efforts to make it easier for those who are looking for certain information, and streamline the ways to to get it.
- One of the steps is modification of the portal for information requesters and enabling direct contact with citizens who face dilemmas when looking for the necessary information.
- In the coming period, through a series of activities, we will try to explain to as many citizens as possible how and where to ask for information and why it is important to do so.
- We expect support from all stakeholders in society, and especially from the holders of information, in order to jointly improve the situation regarding the access to information, and thus the functioning of the system as a whole.

Channel: Media, social networks, website

Time: The beginning of 2023

Activity 3 – Preparation of short videos and audio advertisements to promote the right to free access to public information

The videos will be intended for periodic posting on social networks and for public service broadcasting (as well as on other television channels if feasible). The audio advertisement would be used on state radio stations and if possible on commercial radio stations and popular radio shows.

The most effective would be to use a scenario that would contain encouraging messages and show a real situation in which (for example) one citizen, one journalist, and one researcher use the right of free access in a real situation, specific to their needs. The video and audio campaign should contain the messages specified for the target groups and at the end of the spots the site should be highlighted where they can get more information.

*The animation made by "*Vidi Vaka*" has been placed on the official website. It is clear and informative, and it will be used on all online channels of the Agency in the future. The audiovisual content suggested above should practically motivate the audience to watch this video also, which explains the specific steps in requesting public information.

Channel: TV, radio, online media

Time: 2023

Activity 4 – Prepare and post social media cards

The cards' layout and message should be simple for anyone to comprehend them. In addition, the content will be supplemented by a clickable link leading directly to the corresponding informational e-portal. It is most efficient to create a batch of these social media cards at the start of the campaign so that they may be published repeatedly.

Such sponsored posts should be promoted on Facebook and Instagram on specific days each month, with specific geographic and demographic targeting.

Channel: Social networks

Time: 2023 year

ACTIVITY 5 - Preparation, printing, and distribution of posters and flyers

There needs to be harmony between the written and visual components. Information holders and those who visit public places will be provided with posters, flyers, and/or stickers.

Social media posts like this are encouraged on occasion to demonstrate the Agency's field operations and boost the agency's own profile.

Channel: Printed materials, social media, website

Time: 2023 year

ACTIVITY 6 – Preparation of quarterly infographics (one pager)

The purpose of this activity is for information holders to be regularly and unobtrusively reminded of their obligations in this domain.

The infographic should not contain too much data, but only certain key information and statistics for the reporting period, displayed in a simple design.

Infographics should be distributed to all information holders and relevant responsible and supervisory persons, via electronic mail.

Channel: Email, social media, website

Timing: Quarterly, starting in 2023

ACTIVITY 7 – Placing pobarajinfo.mk banners on the sites of other institutions and media

In cooperation with some of the holders of information (primarily the larger institutions) to place a banner on their official web pages, which will lead to the e-portal for requesters of public information. If there are financial opportunities for it, such banners should occasionally be placed on relevant online media.

ACTIVITY 8 - Introduction of a symbolic recognition for the most conscientious responsible person and/or the most responsive institution

This activity aims to give a positive incentive to the holders of information (employees and managers). Such recognition can be awarded at a public event of the Agency (for example, in the framework of a press or professional conference where findings from an annual report are presented).

Channel: Media, social networks, website

Annex 1 – RECOMMENDATIONS

Social networks

It is necessary to correct the name of the Facebook page of the Agency. It is desirable to use only a part of the long name of the Agency (example: Free access to information), and in the description of the page the official name should be integral. Due to the prescribed length limit for Facebook page names, it is better to

use an abbreviated or unofficial page name than shortening the words themselves as is currently the case on the official Facebook page.

Prior to the launch of the campaign, the Instagram profile should be renamed to "pobarajinfo," or an entirely new one should be created, given that the one that is already there has a relatively small number of followers.

Periodic sponsoring of posts, especially promotional content (cards and videos) is also necessary to reach a wider and younger audience.

At this stage of the promotion of the work of the Agency and the realization of its mission, the use of these two social networks is sufficient, but in the future, according to the perceived dynamics of use and popularity of other platforms by users in the country, it will be necessary to open and manage and on other Internet communication channels.

Visual identity of the campaign

A crucial part of launching a successful campaign is ensuring consistency in the visual solutions used across all media formats. Automatic recognition equals increased exposure. For this reason, the "Request Info!" campaign should introduce this term as a logo, with consistent hues and typeface throughout all promotional materials.

Communicating current activities of the Agency

In the second year of the planning period, especially after the intensive part of the campaign, short announcements should be distributed to the media and about usual activities. It is necessary that the person in charge at the Agency always has an updated and thorough mailing list of media and journalists. It is enough to convey the information about the event through a short statement, accompanied by a few quotes from relevant interlocutors, for one such content, penetrates at least a certain part of the information portals). If the event is in another city, it is recommended to organize statements for the local media.

This recommendation does not mean that the media should be "spammed" too often with irrelevant content, but that this tool should be used occasionally to maintain the visibility and reputation of the Agency. Practically, this would mean that not every training transmitted on Facebook should be translated into a press release, but when it comes to the training of a designated or media-interested holder of information (for example, the Ministry of the Interior, a court, a larger municipality), it is desirable to communicate the activity with the media through a press release.

Persons from the Agency should occasionally appear on television to inform about the activities and remind of the right to free access to information, considering that television continues to be the most used channel for information in our country. To this end, morning shows and other contact audiovisual programs are where one should focus their efforts rather than so-called political shows and debates.

The majority of this plan's tasks, including monitoring and implementation, are within the purview of the department for public relations, openness, and education.