

Communication Handbook - Factsheet 7

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Publications

- ⇒ How to design effective leaflets, brochures or other publications keeping in mind graphics, images, text, format, messages
- ⇒ How to use third party leaflets to reach wider range



Leaflets and brochures

General leaflets and brochures need to convey a rounded impression of your project in a way designed to draw attention and create interest. The first step is to choose or commission a design that will encourage a person from your target audience to take the time to read it.

Effective designs tend to be relatively simple and **make good use of graphics and imagery that** are both eye-catching and relevant to your subject matter. Use bold and striking pictures, preferably including some action or an interesting view or place, rather than bland portraits, group team pictures or handshakes.

Be realistic about how much information can be conveyed in the space available. There is no point cramming everything you want to say into a design so crowded that it becomes unattractive or effectively unreadable. Accessible designs include a substantial amount of white or empty space to make the content easier on the eye.

Determine how much space you have available before beginning to write.

Imagine how people will read the leaflet and brochure. Not many of them are likely to sit down and give it their full concentration for a long period of time as they might with a book. People flick through brochures until something catches their eye; leaflets get even less attention, so be clear and concise.

Vary the format of your content, avoiding large blocks of text that will put readers to sleep. Use boxes, lists, bullet points, graphics – any way you can imagine to encourage readers' eyes to linger on your key information.

Build the content around your messages, with a clear view to angles that are likely to be interesting to the target audiences that you have in mind.

If your leaflet or brochure is destined for a use where it will be competing for attention with a large number of similar publications from other organisations, consider using a format that will help it to stand out, such as an unusual size or shape (this can be as simple as using landscape rather than portrait orientation), a novel material such as a textured paper, or a fold-out layout.

Probably the most common error with leaflets and brochures is to invest a great deal of time, effort and budget into an expensive design, layout and print job but direct much too little attention towards the quality of the content. The goal is to engage an audience and influence their views or behavior in line with your communications strategy. In this context a beautiful brochure is no use if it is boring or unclear. Use your best writers and devote enough time to the task to create truly powerful prose; if necessary, commission professional copy-writers or copy-editors.

Third party newsletters

Newsletters compiled by other organisations can often be interested in MED Programme project activities, and this is a great opportunity to reach out to a new segment of your target audience. Below are two examples of such publications (DG Regio's magazine "Inforegio" and the Interact newsletter).

