



SEA-SPINE

High-speed Submarine Backbone for islands of the Aegean Sea

D5.1 Dissemination & Communication Plan and Tools



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Executive Summary

In the SEA-SPINE project the widespread adoption of the technological innovations by relevant stakeholders is a crucial component of the project's success. The success of SEA-SPINE overall and its social impact depend on the dissemination of the developed ideas and the obtained results to a broad audience, ranging from the research community to the general public. By coordinating the tasks related to the communication of the suggested solutions and dissemination of the results, this WP5 aims to raise awareness of SEA-SPINE.

Deliverable D5.1 describes an initial plan for the dissemination and communication actions to be pursued by the SEA-SPINE consortium partners. The tools and approaches used to accelerate the project's impact are also described.

The dissemination activities, both ongoing and planned, are described, details are provided on the target audience, on the devised communication strategy, on the overall dissemination targets, and finally also on the means used to achieve those set targets. Relations with other research projects as well as related Working Groups are also described.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

TERM	DESCRIPTION
CEF	Connecting Europe Facility
DAS	Distributed Acoustic Sensing
D&C	Dissemination and Communication
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GA	Grant Agreement
HADEA	European Health and Digital Executive Agency
IEEE	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
SDO	Standards Developing Organisations
WP	Work Package

1 Introduction

SEA-SPINE's overall objective is to construct seven (7) new submarine optical fiber links in the Aegean Sea (Figure 1), along with the required terrestrial and fiber optic networking works, towards substantially increasing network capacity, reducing network latency for critical applications, as well as ensuring traffic protection through link redundancy and multiple path-based impact mitigation in case of link failures. The novel submarine links involve 11 Greek islands, namely Amorgos, Astypalea, Kos, Sifnos, Folegandros, Euboea, Chios, Lesvos, Limnos, Thasos, and Skyros, while the overall length of the newly deployed submarine backbone infrastructure will extend across 563 km for the submarine segment and 231 km for the terrestrial one that will interconnect the submarine links to the respective exchange points.



Figure 1: SEA-SPINE map - seven (7) new OTE submarine fibre optic links between 11 Greek islands

Moreover, SEA-SPINE will investigate the potential of intelligent, distributed sensing capabilities, as a follow-up feature of the submarine cable infrastructure, leveraging Distributed Acoustic Sensing (DAS) techniques. Scientific and environmental monitoring capabilities, such as e.g. earthquake detection, measurements of oceanographic conditions, monitoring of marine mammal activities, etc. will provide high added research and social value to planned deployments after the project completion. Requirements, design considerations, as well as limitations will be extracted during the planning and construction activities, in order to enable future add-on deployments of DAS-related infrastructure and the execution of related studies.

1.1 Structure of the document

The structure of the document is the following:

Section 2 elaborates on the Dissemination and Communication plan and early activities. Specifically, in this Section there is a detailed mention of the dissemination and communication target groups, the foreseen communication channels, and activities as well as the early dissemination and communication activities that took place during the first 6 months of the project i.e., from January to June 2024.

Section 3 discusses dissemination and communication tools, such as the project's website and social media channels. The creation of a website, Twitter, and LinkedIn account is specifically cited, and abided by general guidelines on publications along with opportunity and activity tracking guidelines.

Section 4 elaborates on the evaluation and impact assessment and Section 5 provides an overview of the deliverable as well as concluding remarks.

1.2 Relation to other WP5 deliverables

Dissemination activities target specific audiences within the research community, the industrial sector, and all relevant stakeholders. Communication activities necessitate the delivery of targeted messages to a wide range of audiences, including the media and the general public. Thus, a cohesive strategy will deliver the communication of all the activities from the beginning until the end of the project.

This deliverable is the outcome of T5.1 “Dissemination and Communication” activities and in addition to T5.2 “CEF synergies and outreach to other programmes” will manage consortium efforts towards maximizing the final outcome and impact of the project.

Deliverable D5.1 is related to D5.2, D5.4 reports about Dissemination, Communication and Synergy activities, which are published in the middle and end of the project respectively (Table 1).

Table 1: Related WP5 deliverables

WP5 deliverable	Description	Lead Beneficiary	Date
D5.2 Dissemination, Communication and Synergy activities report – v1.0	PDF document in English containing a record of all the D&C activities of the project for the first 18 months, including an updated D&C plan, as well as the description of all the synergy activities the project has engaged in until M18.	WINGS	M18
D5.4 Dissemination, Communication and Synergy activities report – v2.0	PDF document in English containing a record of all the D&C activities of the project and their outcome as well as the description of all the synergies the project engaged in and their results.	WINGS	M36

2 Dissemination and Communication plan and early activities

The dissemination and communication of information about the project, its objectives, approaches chosen, and results aligned with the GATEWAYS-WORKS calls [1] is an important goal of the SEA-SPINE project. The scope is to achieve this in a professional, high-quality way, and through various communication means and channels. Dissemination and communication activities, as aforementioned, are essential components of any project because the project's work and achievements are only valuable if the relevant communities are aware of them. While early adoption of results within the project consortium is crucial, the real impact emerges from the wider community being informed and adopting the results and findings.

SEA-SPINE dissemination activities will primarily focus on the distribution of knowledge generated by project deployment and experimentation. The goal is to maximize the dissemination of project results through publications and presentations at relevant events. In parallel, the communication activities focus on raising awareness about the project through various channels such as the project website and social media channels, newsletter, leaflets and flyers, and so on. Both dissemination and communication activities target a wide range of stakeholders, including academic, research, and industrial communities.

The project team identified and attempted to define key performance indicators to quantify dissemination and engagement activities during the proposal phase; the project team still considers these targets to be relevant and at appropriate levels.

In general, the main objectives of dissemination and communication plan are:

- To provide an understanding of the project’s scope, goals and expectations
- To create an active community of stakeholders and third parties
- To deliver awareness of the project among stakeholders impacted by the results activities
- To prepare specific communication material and adapted key messages

2.1 Dissemination and Communication target groups

The SEA-SPINE project will communicate its results and innovations by utilizing a variety of channels and means. Appropriate identification of SEA-SPINE’s target audience is a critical component of active participation of stakeholders in project communication and dissemination activities. The target groups of the two activities are slightly different because the general public is not associated with dissemination activities as they are addressed only to members who can produce impact and benefits to the project’s measurable results. Dissemination activities are focusing on groups with research and scientific backgrounds, institutions, universities, telecommunication industries, and relevant communities, as well as end users with familiar identities. The target groups of the D & C strategy and their interest in SEA-SPINE are described in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Dissemination and Communication Target Groups and Strategy

Target Group	Description	Interest in the project
A - Industry, SMEs and Entrepreneurs	Stakeholders from industry, network operators, SMEs and entrepreneurs, operating in the telecommunications domains and/or vertical domains for applications in transport, energy, security, education, digital health, etc.	Utilisation of project's results in operations and in their R&I activities for new service and product development.

Target Group	Description	Interest in the project
B - Policy Makers	Policymakers at any level (e.g. Council of Regions, EC Directorate for Communication).	Definition of future research and innovation directions based on project's acquired knowledge.
C - Standards bodies and fora	Standards bodies, industry fora, open-source organisations (e.g., ITU-T, ISO, etc.).	Development of roadmaps for standards development. Input for standardisation activities.
D – Research Community	Research centres, universities, etc. on DAS, seismographic, oceanographic research activities, etc.	Utilisation of project's results in operations and in their R&I activities related to Distributed Acoustic Sensing related applications, and others.
E - General Public	General public and anyone interested in the project.	Understand the value of such European infrastructures. Stimulate innovation in unexpected areas/groups of society.
F - Technology Clusters	European initiatives and clusters, research communities, associations, (e.g., Digital Business Innovation, Digital Agenda, Innovation Union).	Inclusion of project's results to collaborative research activities (roadmap, white papers, etc.). Participation in project's events for knowledge exchange.

2.2 Communication Channels & Activities

The SEA-SPINE communication strategy combines a mix of traditional and disruptive communication channels:

- **Online presence:** A project page has been created (<https://SEA-SPINE.eu/>) by month M03 and maintained by **WINGS** serving to: i) promote the project’s public image and serve as a main online access point for the different target groups and ii) serve as an information source, highlighting project objectives, activities, outcomes and relevant updates.
- **Press and TV/Radio Interviews:** The project will publish at least 3 press releases (~1 per year) in order to communicate the major project’s achievements and the potential of Fibre connectivity as a future-proof technology for novel services. The consortium will attempt to reach the general audience via TV/radio interviews. **OTE** will be responsible for this activity.
- **Brochures/flyers:** The project will prepare 2 technical brochures providing information about the technical and scientific. The brochures will also be distributed to local universities, schools, city councils, recreational areas, etc. **All partners** will be involved in this activity.
- **Social media:** The project will use several online social media sites, such as Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube, as a two-way access between the project partners and the technical and public audience. The consortium will regularly publish announcements and initiate discussions from month M06. The content will be updated on a regular basis and the obtained feedback will help to influence the project’s directions. **WINGS** will coordinate this activity.
- **Video clips:** 2 video clips will be produced, which will cover the project’s general ideas, demonstrations and presentations and talks that will also include non-technical information about the project,

targeting non-expert public. The videos will be available at the project’s website during the entire project’s lifetime, while a dedicated link will be used in order to request feedback from the audience. This activity will be coordinated by **WINGS**.

- **Newsletters:** These will be distributed to different mailing lists, to foster inter-communication with other relevant research actions, projects and technical communities. The newsletters, available at the project’s website, will provide information regarding the project activities, achievements, and results, targeting cross-fertilisation. The first issue will be released at M06 and new issues every 6 months. **OTE** will coordinate this activity.
- **Public engagement:** Consortium members will follow a set of strategies to interact with the general public (e.g., non-scientists, secondary schools, etc.) and inform them about the effect of the results in their everyday life and to create awareness on the differences about facts regarding the societal benefits of broadband communication services. This set of activities include the use of social media, online video-clips, public talks at schools and university open days, participation at events organised by the local authorities, etc.

2.3 Early activities from January till June 2024

Even from the early stages of the project, partners have seized opportunities to engage industry with the objectives and vision of SEA-SPINE. An initial report of those activities is summarized with the following dissemination and communication actions:

- **HADEA Announcement (January 2024)**



- **Submarine Networks EMEA 2024 (May 2024)**

SEA-SPINE participated in [Submarine Networks EMEA 2024](#), (London, 29-30/05/2024), where the outline and current project status were presented.

 EU-SEA SPINE reposted this



We're thrilled to announce another incredible speaker lineup for **#SubNetsEMEA**. Join us on Day 2 for 'News in brief: SEA-SPINE: High speed submarine backbone connectivity for remote islands of the Aegean Sea'. Meet and gain insights from industry leaders:

Ioannis Patsouras, Solutions Architect, **WINGS ICT Solutions**
#ChristosKossidas, Telecommunications Engineer, **OTE Group of Companies (HTO)**

Secure your place at Submarine Networks EMEA to connect with over 1,000 attendees and learn from thought-provoking panels and presentations. Book your tickets today!

BOOK NOW  <https://lnkd.in/g2VDqVYj>

#subsea #submarinecables #subseaengineering



Christos Kossidas
Telecommunications Engineer
OTE S.A. (HTO)



Ioannis Patsouras
Solutions Architect
WINGS ICT Solutions

HaDEA also organised a [clustering event](#) where representatives from the submarine cables related projects funded by CEF met and exchanged views and ideas for future enhancements and developments with HaDEA officials.

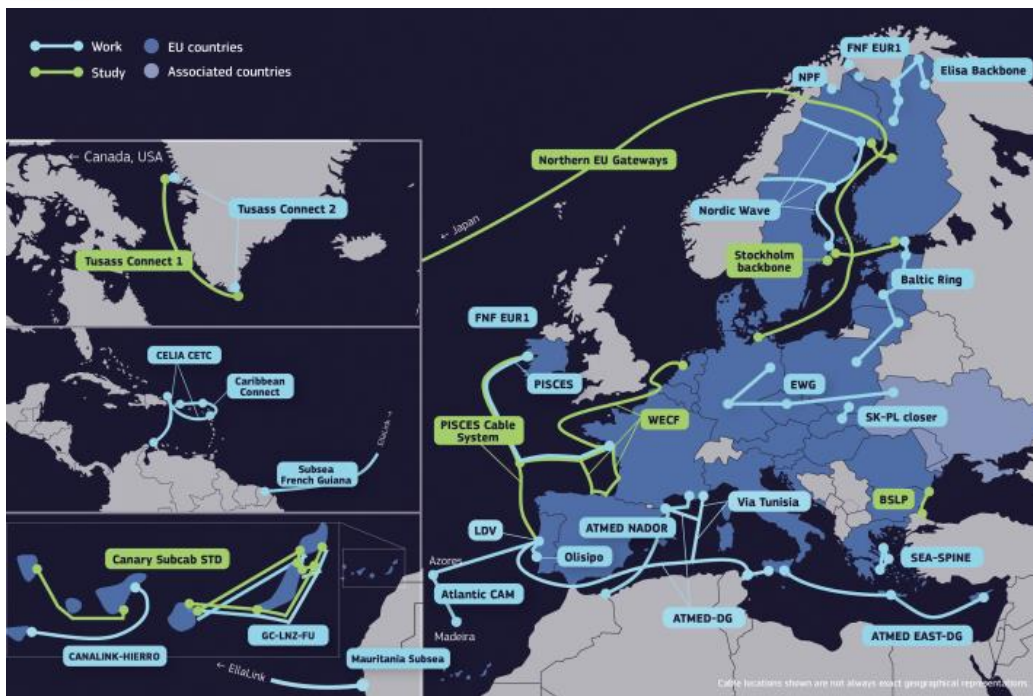
NEWS ARTICLE | 23 May 2024 | European Health and Digital Executive Agency | 1 min read

Global Gateways projects funded by the EU present at Submarine Networks conference



Digital connectivity infrastructures, and in particular submarine cables, are one of the priorities of the European Commission. With the [Connecting Europe Facility \(CEF\) Digital Programme](#), the EU aims to leverage public and private investments in digital connectivity infrastructures of common European interest.

The European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA) will join this year's [Submarine Networks EMEA](#) conference and HaDEA's Director Marina Zanchi will present the latest accomplishments and the role of the Agency in supporting the strategy of the Commission in this area on the first day of the conference.





Marina Zanchi • Following
Director of the European Health and Digital Executive Agency
4d • 🌐

What an inspiring day at #SubNetsEMEA in London! Yesterday, I had the honour to highlight the EU's investments in submarine cables under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Digital programme. The EU's commitment to fast, secure, and widespread subsea connectivity is strong and continuous. Since 2022, the **European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA)** has been funding 30 Digital Global Gateways projects for more than 277 million Euros.

I'm also glad I had so many interesting discussions and exchanges with representatives of #CEFDigital projects. Thank you to all the participants for joining HaDEA at our clustering event - we appreciate and value your feedback!



3 Dissemination and Communication Tools

3.1 Project's website and social media channels

In order to effectively ensure SEA-SPINE's information flow, create awareness, and reach out to the multiple targeted audiences (industry, network operators, SDOs, relevant stakeholders, general public, scientific communities etc.), a variety of traditional and innovative channels will be used, considering the specific characteristics and needs of each targeted group. The following list of proposed communication channels shows the tools already chosen by the consortium to transmit project information.

3.1.1 Website

The project's website is an important tool for dissemination. It serves as the primary entry point for all interested target groups. As a result, is the primary repository for the project's outputs and resources, where the majority of our online activities take place, or at least where activity records are presented in a clear, organized manner. The official address for the website is <https://SEA-SPINE.eu/>.

At the initial publication stage, the site has a main page (Figure 2) and three subsections; About (including Objectives and Consortium), Dissemination and Communication (News & Events and Public Deliverables), Contact.

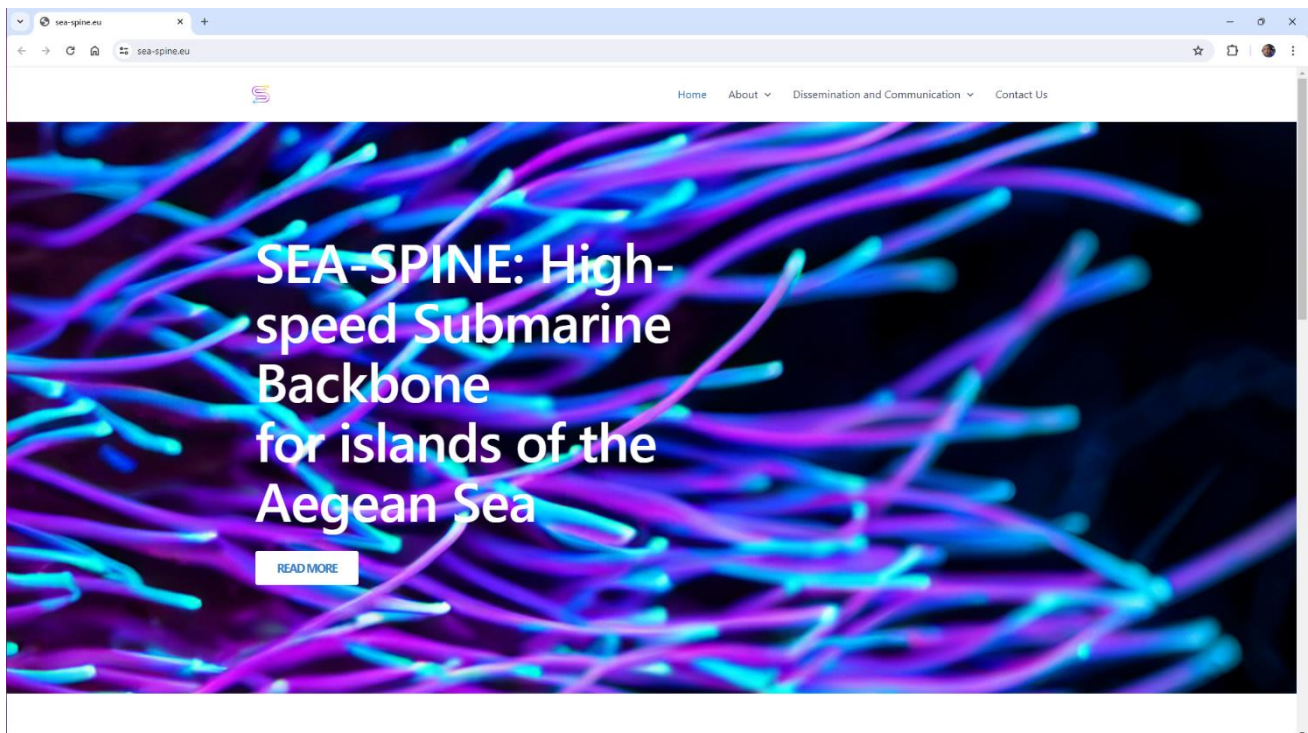


Figure 2: SEA-SPINE website

3.1.2 Twitter/X

A Twitter/X account has also been created (Figure 3), as it is an excellent medium for communicating concise messages to followers. The Twitter/X account is considered to be very important, especially during workshops, conferences, and similar public events where the Consortium's activity can be populated instantly; the use of hashtags will also allow our vision to reach a wider audience.

Project's official twitter account is <https://twitter.com/EuSeaSpine>

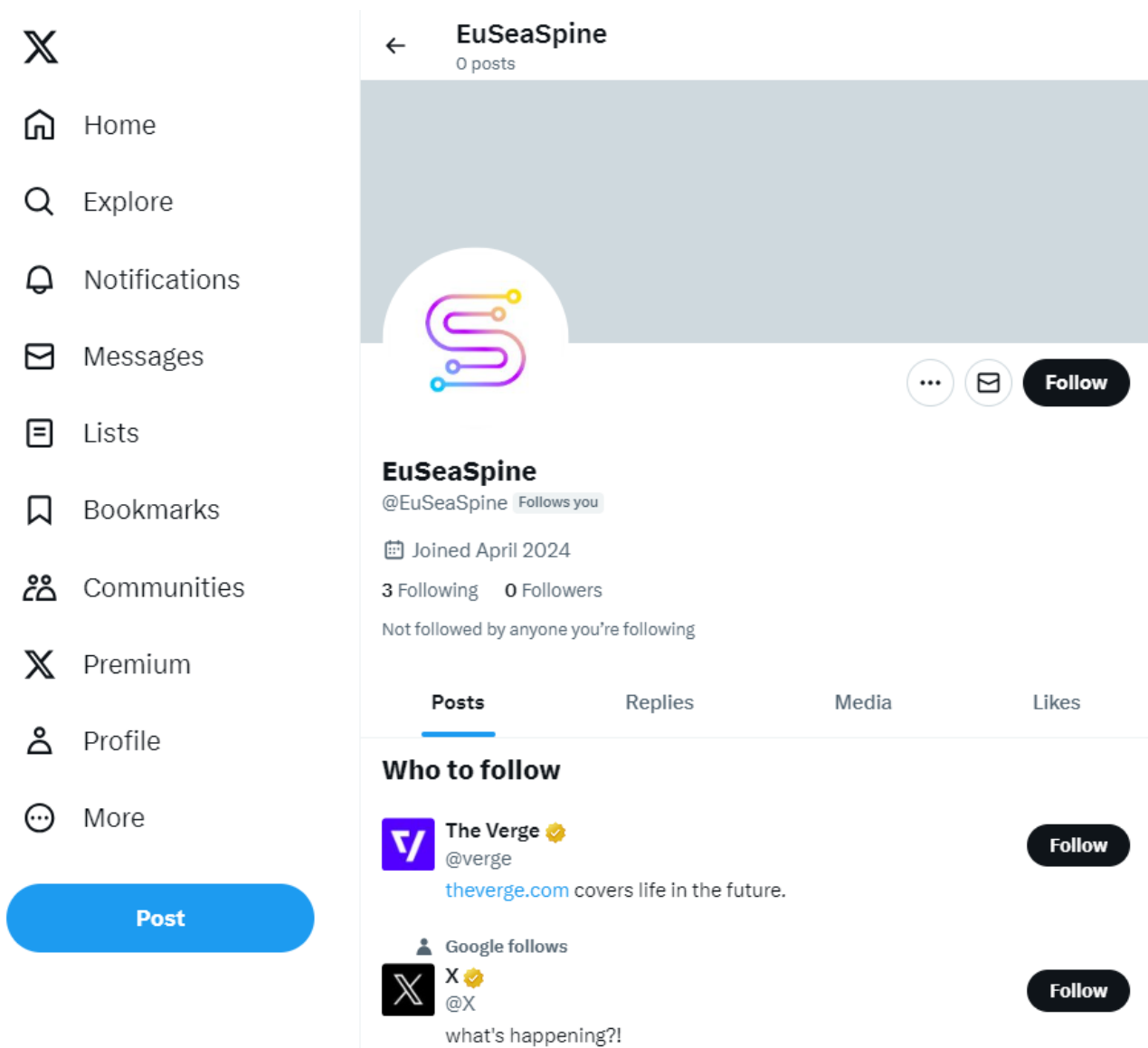


Figure 3: SEA-SPINE twitter/X account

3.1.3 LinkedIn

The partnership is involved in the requirement of communicating the project's progress to a larger community. For this reason, in order to increase project visibility and create a space for professionals and stakeholders to share views, we have created a LinkedIn group (Figure 4) where consortium members interchange ideas and knowledge not only among themselves but also with the larger industrial and scientific community. All project partners have invited stakeholders to this group to communicate SEA-SPINE progress.

LinkedIn official account is <https://www.linkedin.com/company/eu-sea-spine/>

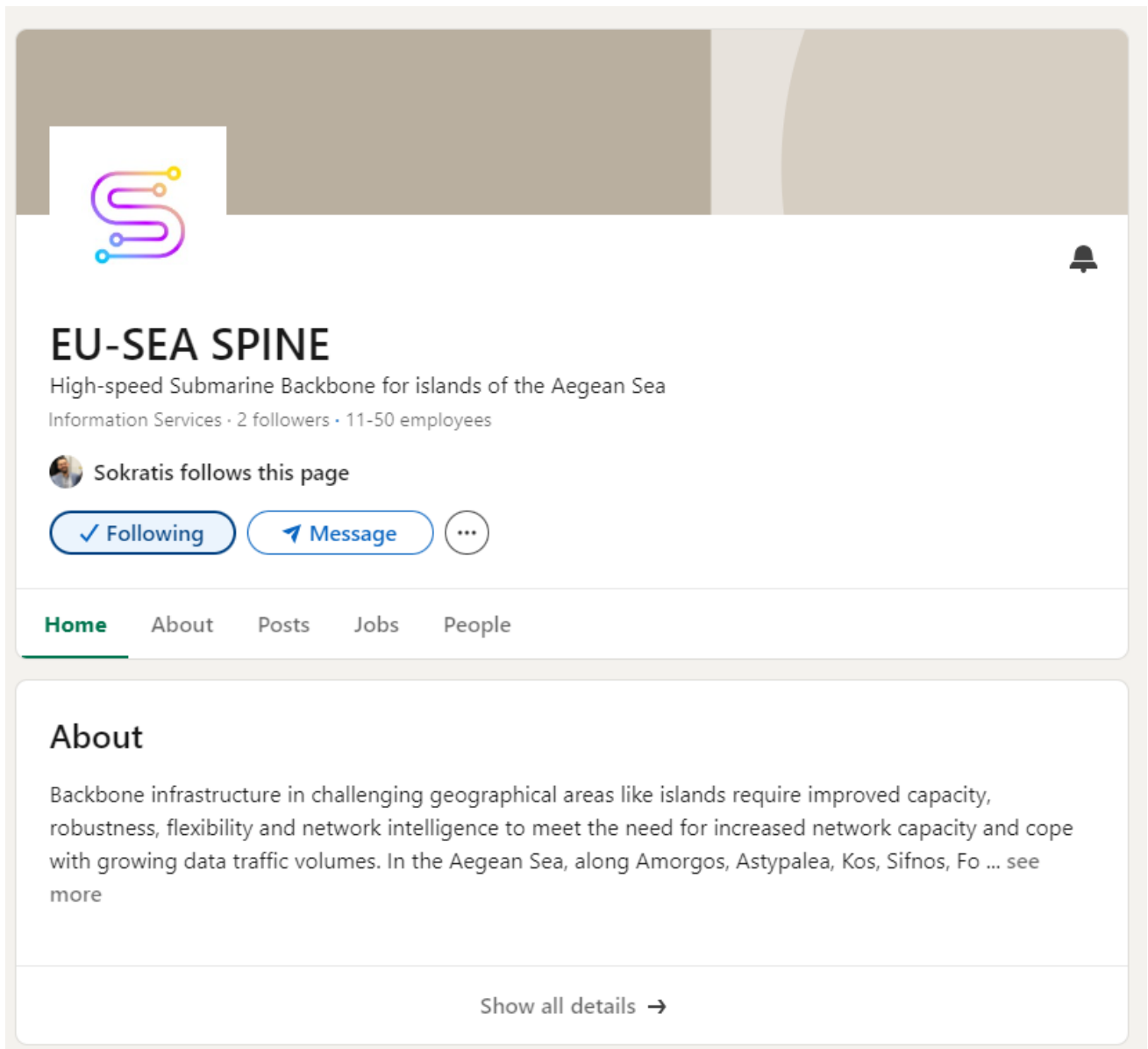


Figure 4: SEA-SPINE LinkedIn account

3.2 Publications and acknowledgement

Before engaging in a communication or dissemination activity expected to have a major media impact, the beneficiaries must inform the Granting Authority.

- If partners post on Twitter, they shall tag the Granting Authority and the CEF programme by using @EU_HaDEA and the dedicated hashtag #CEFDigital. (Note: HaDEA can also be found on LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-health-and-digital-executive-agency-hadea/mycompany/>))
- Every communication activity foreseen for SEA-SPINE should be communicated to HaDEA in a timely manner to ease coordination and possible exchanges/participation.

Besides these guidelines, prior notice of any planned publication shall be given internally to the Consortium before publication. Any objection to the planned publication shall be made in accordance with the Grant

Agreement in writing to the Coordinator and to the Party or Parties proposing the dissemination. If no objection is made, publication is permitted. Detailed aspects are mentioned in the Grant Agreement ARTICLE 17 — COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND VISIBILITY.

To ensure high quality of scientific publications it is suggested to follow IEEE instructions such as the “IEEE Authorship Series How to Write for Technical Periodicals & Conferences”. Collaborative papers with authors and work from more than one partner are encouraged. All papers or publications related to the project must include the following Acknowledgement:

This work was supported by the European Union’s Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) programme under Grant agreement No 101133518. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not in any way reflect the views of the EU.

3.3 Opportunity and Activity tracking

SEA-SPINE employs a spreadsheet-based tracking tool to record dissemination and general engagement activities, as well as to monitor the entire life cycle from initiation to submission, review, and publication. It is a quick way to ensure that all dissemination and communication activities are documented. All partners are responsible for reporting the activities in which they are involved.

This “tracker” keeps records of all different types of community facing activities from identifying “Dissemination Opportunities”, to issued “Press Releases”, target “Events”, given public and restricted “Presentations and Tutorials”, “Publications” from first submission to final publication (including DOIs linking to the documents), interactions with organisations and groups.

The tracker collects all details related to the activities and dissemination events, it is updated continuously when specific activities are confirmed or, where necessary, completed.

WINGS, as Dissemination & Communication leader, will be responsible for ensuring that this information is collected. Frequent e-mails will be sent to rest partners to remind them to report their activities in the previous period.

4 Evaluation and impact assessment

In order to measure the impact of the project and extract an accurate evaluation of dissemination and communication activities, a series of quantitative and qualitative indicators must be taken into account. Measuring these indicators on a regular basis progress has been made critical for determining whether and whether additional measures are required to ensure target values are met.

4.1 Quantitative impact assessment

Performance indicators and respective target values have been defined for the various dissemination and communication means as integral part of dissemination and communication plan. Table 3 presents the SEA-SPINE's communication and visibility quantitative targets and the respective tools. They are measured and evaluated throughout the whole life cycle of the project.

Table 3: Communication outcome, metrics and targets

Communication and dissemination means	Success indicators (description)	Target values
Project website	Search engine optimization metrics	Online by: month 3 Unique visitors from M12: 500 From M36: 1000
Social media	Number of users/followers	LinkedIn group followers: >100 Twitter followers: > 100 Re-Tweets: >100
Press Releases	Number of press releases	Press releases: >3
Newsletters	Number of newsletters	Newsletters: >3
Video Clips	Number of video clips and views	Number of online video clips: 2 Number of video views: > 500
Factsheets / Brochures	Number of factsheets and hardcopies	Technical factsheets: 2 Non-technical factsheets: 2 Hardcopies > 500
Flyers/posters & roll-ups	Number of fliers and banners	Project flyers: >2 Posters & roll-up banners: >2

4.2 Qualitative impact assessment

Qualitative indicators are used to complement quantitative ones. They provide information about the quality of the D&C activities that have been implemented. Throughout the project, qualitative assessments will be conducted for multiple dissemination and communication activities with specific goals. To be more specific:

- Project webpage: to determine whether the contents being uploaded to the website are relevant and what else can be added; to determine whether visitors are interested in coming back to the website.
- Events: to comprehend the event's organization quality, the relevance of the contents presented, and overall user satisfaction with the event.
- Newsletters: to understand whether the contents are relevant and accessible and if there is interest to receive future versions/editions of the e-newsletter.

For the qualitative feedback immediate verbal feedback will be sought.

4.3 Monitoring framework

A solid methodology could be developed to assess the impact of the project's outputs, or lack thereof. The following items are included:

- Google Analytics from social media analysis providing statistics on users, industries the user belongs to, geographical breakdown of users visiting the platforms, and so on.
- Interaction with users visiting the website via the "Contact us" form or the social media platforms on specific topics of interest or even queries.
- Reactions (satisfied, unsatisfied, etc.) on published material or event participations.

Once these metrics have been analyzed, any gaps in the project's impact and exposure can be identified, and precautionary measures can be designed. Among these actions could be:

- A specific event, such as a workshop or a webinar, can be organized, and specific target groups who have not shown sufficient interest in the project outcome can be invited to attend, raising awareness of the project and maximizing the impact.
- Collaboration with other related GATEWAYS-WORKS projects ensure reachability and cross-fertilization of project outcomes. Sharing communication channels and events between projects increases the impact and reachability of the project to communities that are already aware of the projects' efforts to meet needs and provide benefits and solutions to the industries' shortcomings.

The monitoring remains till the end of the project as an ongoing procedure to orchestrate and accelerate all communication and dissemination activities.

5 Conclusions

This deliverable presents the plan that the SEA-SPINE project consortium has made up for impacting the academia and the industry ecosystems with dissemination actions. The provided plan spans the activities throughout the project duration. The plan will be constantly kept updated, according to relevant changes and new opportunities that might arise in the ecosystem, as well as within the project consortium, with the final aim of delivering the best possible impact of the project results.

A timeframe for dissemination and communication actions and impact is provided and a list of planned target dissemination and ecosystem engagements activities is elaborated. In future WP5 deliverables, updated reports on the plan will be provided.

6 References

- [1]. <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/cef-dig-2022-gateways-works>