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Regional Cooperation Council

THE VOICE OF INSTITUTIONS IN THE SERVICE OF CITIZENS

GUIDELINES FOR MORE EFFECTIVE
SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN FIREARMS-RELATED
AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITIES

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The South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) is a joint initiative by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), aimed at enhancing national and regional capacities for the control and prevention of proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, in order to promote stability, security and development in South-Eastern and Eastern Europe.

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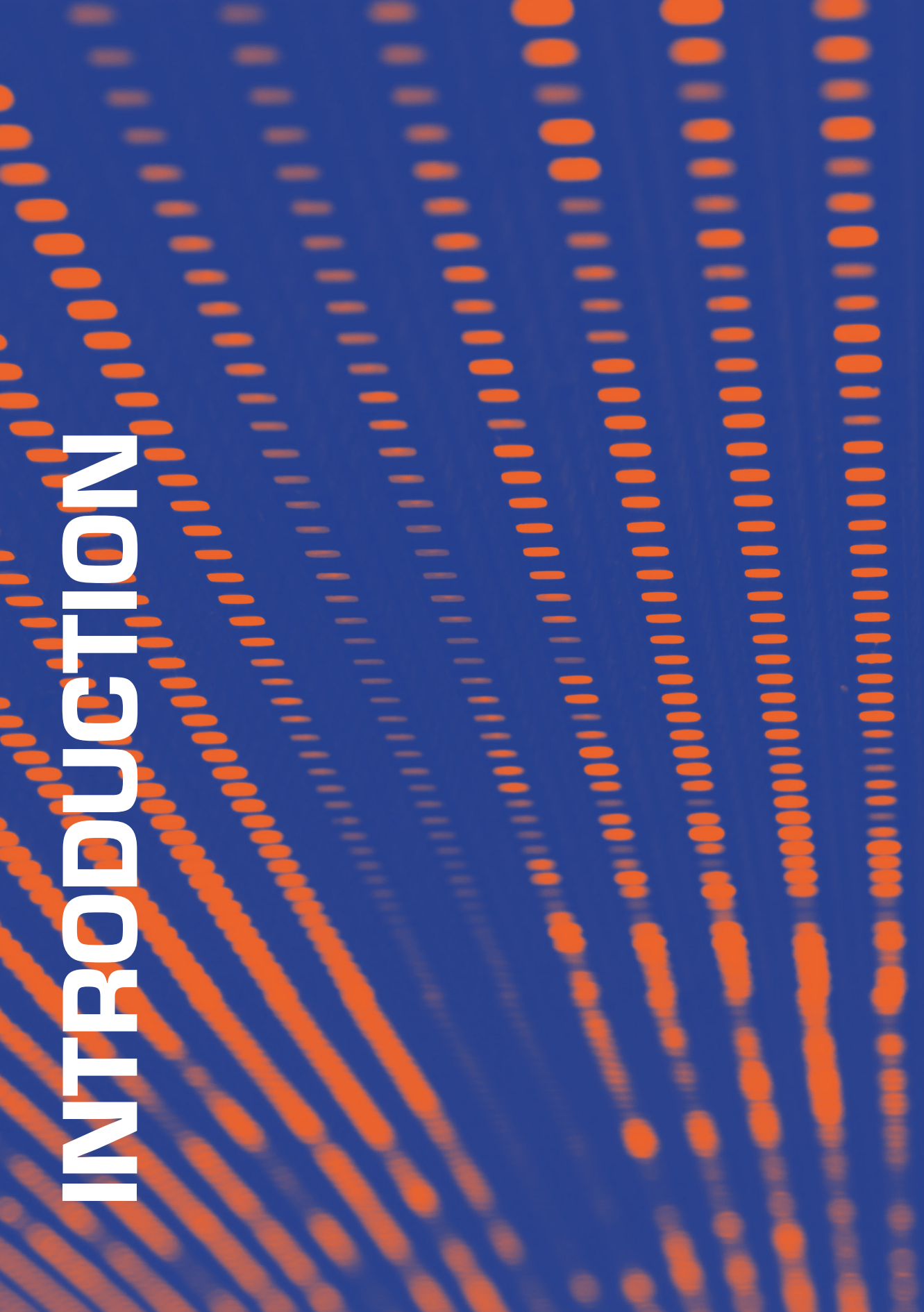
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ACRONYMS

IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
Mol	Ministry of the Interior
PR	Public relations
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
GBV	Gender-based violence
SALW	SALW Small arms and light weapons
SEE	South-Eastern Europe
SEESAC	South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

INTRODUCTION



The background features a grid of orange dots on a blue field. The dots are arranged in a pattern that creates a sense of depth and perspective, with the grid lines appearing to converge towards the top of the image. The dots themselves are slightly blurred, giving the overall effect a soft, digital or data-like quality.

01

INTRODUCTION

Aiming to reduce the dangers of misuse and illicit possession of small arms and light weapons (SALW) through regular coordination with relevant institutions across the Western Balkans, with a particular emphasis on achieving more efficient communication with the public with regard to this issue, in June 2022 SEESAC supported the establishment of the [Regional Awareness-Raising Task Force](#). Within this framework, SEESAC organizes meetings of representatives of ministries of the interior and police authorities from the six Western Balkan jurisdictions who are involved in various aspects of awareness-raising activities linked to SALW control up to twice per year.

Already at the initial meeting, Task Force members requested support for enhancing the capacities of ministries of the interior and police authorities to communicate with the public via social media. While institutions have long communicated via numerous *profiles*, room for strengthening such communication and better utilising the potential of social media has been identified. In response to this request, at the

[6th Task Force meeting](#), held in Belgrade on 24-25 September 2024, SEESAC organised a one-day training designed to share knowledge that would enable institutions to communicate with the public via social media more efficiently, particularly on the topic of firearms control.

Profile - Created on a social media network, it represents a person, company, organisation, institution, campaign. It has certain features - such as a profile photo, name and other descriptive features. One person can create multiple profiles.

The publication - *The Voice of Institutions in the Service of Citizens: Guidelines for More Effective Social Media Use in Firearms-Related Awareness-Raising Activities* (hereinafter: Guidelines) - is intended as an additional tool to be relied on by Task Force members, as well as their colleagues in charge of creating content and managing Mol and police social media profiles, in their future work.

Ministries of the interior and police authorities communicate with citizens via social media in order to provide them with timely, accurate and clear information about matters relevant to public safety, legal compliance and everyday life. Their presence on social media aims to serve the public interest, build trust, provide support in crisis situations, as well as to encourage responsible behaviour and cooperation between institutions and the community.

The Guidelines are designed to ease the process of content creation and boost its frequency, making it relevant to as many citizens as possible, while sustaining the high communication quality expected of ministries.

Although they have been specifically designed for communication on firearms control, the Guidelines are readily applicable in communication on other topics within the purview of ministries and police authorities.

The development of the Guidelines, contingent on their subsequent operationalisation by the authorities, directly contributes to the implementation of the [Roadmap for a Sustainable Solution to the Illegal Possession, Misuse and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Explosives in the Western Balkans until 2030](#) by the jurisdictions. The Guidelines most directly concern Roadmap Goal 4, which reads: "By 2030, significantly reduce the supply, demand, illicit possession and misuse of arms, ammunition and explosives through the means of prevention," particularly its second target, under which jurisdictions aim to "strengthen public trust in security institutions and develop sustainable partnership to strengthen advocacy and outreach."

A large, empty stadium with rows of blue seats, overlaid with a blue gradient and the text "SOCIAL MEDIA TODAY".

SOCIAL MEDIA TODAY



02

SOCIAL MEDIA TODAY

Data from February 2025 indicate that 63.9% of global population use social media, which constituted a 4.1% increase relative to the previous year.¹ An average user spends 2 hours and 21 minutes per day on social media.² In the Western Balkans, the proportion of users is even higher in several jurisdictions, ranging from 54% to 74%.³

According to surveys conducted in 2021, in two thirds of the Western Balkans jurisdictions, social media are the second most prevalent source of information, after television. Online media rank only third – except in Serbia and Montenegro, where online media have precedence over social media.⁴

While traditional media are a more prevalent information source compared to social media, it is important to note that under half of citizens in all jurisdictions do not trust media.⁵ At the same time, the population of social media users has been on the increase year after year in several jurisdictions.⁶ This suggests that social media warrant equal attention as traditional media, and in the future – probably even more.

¹ Digital 2025: Global Overview Report, DataReportal (February 2025.), <https://bit.ly/4jVLKpC>

² The Global Statistics. The Data Expert, Global Social Media Users Statistics 2025 | Top Global Platforms (2025), <https://bit.ly/45oPnOZ>

³ S SEENPM, Our Media, Our Democracy, Our Future, The Future of the Media in the Western Balkans and Turkey - Facts and Trends (January 2025.), <https://bit.ly/4sTaQJR>

⁴ SEENPM, Regional Review of Media Trust in the Western Balkans, (June 2021.), <https://bit.ly/4bdcWOi>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ SEENPM, Our Media, Our Democracy, Our Future, The Future of the Media in the Western Balkans and Turkey - Facts and Trends (January 2025.), <https://bit.ly/4sTzHgC>

Jurisdiction	Reach and trends in social media use (2022-2024) ⁷
Belgrade	69.8% of the population use social media - Growth
Podgorica	63.5% use social media for news - No change
Pristina	65% of the population use social media (2021) - No new data
Sarajevo	74% of the population use social media - Growth
Skopje	57.5% of the population uses social media - no change compared to 2021; drop compared to 2022.
Tirana	54% of the population use social media - Growth

SPECIFIC FEATURES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The specific features of social media discussed below may be viewed as challenges or alternatively, as emerging opportunities. It is important to note that social media change continuously and very rapidly. Hence, some of the guidelines below may only remain valid for a limited time, especially those regarding current formats prioritised by platforms - but this will be stressed where appropriate.

TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION CHANNEL

Before social media, ministries of the interior and police authorities communicated with citizens by means of traditional media, press

⁷ Ibid.

conferences, public announcements and similar, predominantly one-way (cold) communication channels. On those channels, if any questions are asked, they are asked by journalists, rather than by citizens. This is the space where all attention is focused on institutions' representatives, who need not compete for visibility.

Such understanding of communication has long prevailed in the way social media is used as well. Despite the two-way (warm) nature of social media, they are often used as yet another avenue for releasing statements - without actual exchange. It is understandable that Mol officers sometimes approach social media in a similar way as traditional media. However, by doing so, an opportunity to fully utilise these channels' potentials is missed.

WHAT DOES TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION MEAN?

It means that the audience and the message sender are engaged in a conversation. In our case, the audience reacts to the information presented by the institution with questions and comments. Messages and comments on social media provide an insight into society's thinking and perception of the institution's activities and offer an opportunity to influence them quickly and efficiently. As part of managing the channels, all public relations teams should certainly be able to answer citizens' questions daily - both in comments and in messages.

However, two-way communication also means communication whereby we respond to the needs of those citizens, even without their active engagement in a conversation with us. Recognising their needs, concerns, frustrations, and - within the boundaries of our mandate - providing information that is relevant to them.

Two-way communication is not only a requirement of the modern digital environment - it is also a source of trust, insight into problems affecting the target group, and support. When citizens feel that they are understood - that the institution addresses and responds to their problems, they will be more willing to cooperate. This is especially important for institutions in charge of security and those responding in crises or sensitive situations. These Guidelines therefore aim to help ministries' and police authorities' PR teams to seize this opportunity - because two-way communication can be a most valuable tool in building trust, authority and a stable relationship with the community.

Content that comes from the institution's side only, with the assumption that citizens will passively follow the messages sent, may seem too formal in terms of language and less interesting and relevant to the audience in terms of topics, which automatically renders it less competitive in the dynamic social media landscape. PR teams are tasked with striking a balance between the formal institutional approach and a presence that would be consistent with the dynamic and language of social media. This is a challenge, as well as an opportunity.

SPEED OF SOCIAL MEDIA

An additional advantage of social media is the speed of information flow to and from citizens, especially in crisis situations - when information changes minute after minute and it is crucial to call on citizens to take specific action or inform them quickly. For example: how to find adequate cover during a shooting incident or help the police shed light on a crime by sharing any information they might have.

A social media *post* may also be viewed as a channel to communicate with the media, which will take the information in order to disseminate it further, but its primary purpose should be to accustom citizens to seek timely and relevant information about security and other topics within the ministry's purview on the Mol and police profiles as the primary source.

Post - Posts are the primary form of communication on platforms. The term "post" is used to denote everything included in a single item of published content. The content may be: a photo post, video post, link post, story, reel, collab post, status, tweet, etc. For instance, a Facebook post will consist of a photo or visual accompanied by text (caption).

PERSONALISATION AND HUMAN TOUCH

Communication experts' greatest challenge is shifting from learned, formal communication patterns to those prevalent on social media, characterized by a personalised tone. In order to blend into the social media environment, we need to communicate in a language typical of informal, everyday speech that everyone understands.

Any formal tone will be recognised as advertising and the content will quickly be scrolled over. This is why companies hire “brand ambassadors”, influencers who give a human voice to their brand and speak for it. Ministries and police authorities have the advantage of having police officers and experts in their ranks, who can serve as authentic faces and voices of the institution and whom a wider audience can easily relate to and trust.

Additional, specific suggestions for achieving a personalised, less formal, and approachable tone that brings the institution closer to citizens without losing its authority are given in further sections of these Guidelines.

TRANSPARENCY

In addition to an approachable tone, citizens also value institutions’ transparency in their work and communication, and lack of transparency is most easily noticed on social media. This entails sharing information in a timely manner, informing the public about decisions and actions, as well as responding to criticism and questions.

**WHAT DO WE WANT
TO ACHIEVE?**



The background features a complex, abstract pattern. It consists of multiple layers of wavy, parallel lines in various shades of blue, creating a sense of depth and movement. Overlaid on these lines are rows of small, orange, oval-shaped dots that also follow the wavy pattern, adding texture and contrast to the overall design.

03

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

– THREE KEY QUESTIONS

The creation of social media content on small arms and light weapons control should be understood as a continuous process. It may include

Integrated campaigns - Integrated campaigns are those that use a wide array of channels to communicate, including: interviews on television/radio/in newspapers, video clips for television, public events, press conferences, audio or video programmes or documentaries, billboards, radio jingles, leaflets, posters, social media etc.

large-scale *integrated campaigns* integrated campaigns where social media are only one of the channels used to deliver the campaign, or a set of social media posts designed strategically to address a specific sub-topic in order to reach a predetermined target group with a specific objective. The term “campaign” is frequently used in these Guidelines; however, it is worth noting that it refers not only to an integrated campaign, but also to a smaller-scale activities

implemented on social media only, over a shorter time period or in multiple waves (for instance, a number of posts on secure storage of firearms).

All communication has an objective. Publishing information is not an end in itself - it has a clear intent. For instance, to inform citizens about new rules for firearm registration; or to explain the procedure for firearm deactivation; or to encourage them to take an action, such as surrendering firearms or taking part in a local event on security and firearms with relevant institutions; or to engage them in dialogue by inviting them to share their experiences and views about firearms or to point out reasons for not reporting illicit firearm possession.

Before launching a social media campaign or creating a post, we must formulate a rough sketch and define ideas for relevant content. Three key questions help us in this process:

- What does our target group need?
- What do we want to achieve?
- What resources do we have at our disposal?

The intersection of answers to these three questions is where relevant content ideas will be found.



TARGET GROUPS

Campaigns and posts on social media can potentially be seen by all citizens who have access to social networks, which represents a large percentage of the population. However, when preparing them, it is necessary to do so with a specific target group in mind. Also, each social media post should be viewed as a separate message which, if it is of good quality, will—thanks to the algorithm (see the explanation of the term below) reach its predefined target group.

When we are talking about the issue of SALW control, under this broad topic we can define many target groups to address, depending on the current security circumstances, occasion and campaign objective. Some of them could be: legal firearms owners, illegal firearms owners, individuals who inherited a firearm, armed violence victims, young men interested in firearms, mothers/grandmothers who do not have a clear stance on firearms or their use, etc.

TERMS: ALGORITHM

An algorithm is a mechanism behind the way content is displayed on social media. Its key purpose is to identify each individual's interests and then show them content deemed by the platform to be relevant and interesting to them. In other words, the type of content that users view, share, comment on and save will be shown to them more frequently.

It is important to understand that the algorithm's functioning does not prevent us from reaching the desired audience and therefore cannot be seen as justification for the posts' low reach. It works based on audience engagement - if the content is of high quality and tailored to users' interests, it will be recognised and prioritised by the algorithm.

Each social media network has its own criteria for evaluating content. Common factors include: post viewing time, *engagement* (comments, likes, shares and saves of posts), as well as format (e.g. Instagram currently prioritises video formats such as reels).

It is, therefore, essential that the content shared by institutions is: high-quality, accurate, clear and tailored to the interests and needs of the specified target groups. The content posted mainly reaches those users who have already shown interest in similar topics. This means that social media users encounter content that matches their interests, values, attitudes – they are shown content that they will be the most likely to consume and react to. This is why it is important to take a strategic approach to topics, format and how we invite the audience to interact, if we want to reach a wider audience. For example, if our profile is followed by people who support the police and are interested in security services, predominantly men, we will receive feedback from them in the form of likes and comments, but we may have little contact with women, i.e. they may not be reached by our content. We will then reflect on the target group and create content that this specific target group will find relevant and appealing. For example: how to surrender an inherited firearm; what are the hazards of improperly stored firearms, especially for children; what the presence of a firearm means in a domestic

Engagement – The total number of interactions with specific content by users. Includes reactions, comments, shares, saves and other interactions with content. High engagement signals to the algorithm that the content is relevant and interesting, which may increase its visibility.

violence situation; what exactly happens when we call the police to report illicit firearm possession or firearm misuse (irrespective of its legal status).

SHADOW BAN

Ministries encounter another challenge in working with algorithms, especially when dealing with topics such as armed violence – shadow banning. While the content will not be removed as it does not violate social media policies, it will be shown less if the algorithm recognises that the content may have an adverse impact on other users.

Words such as: “suicide”, “pistol”, “explosive”, “murder”, “assault”, as well as videos of underage persons, may automatically restrict content distribution and prevent its promotion. Even if we communicate from a positive angle, the algorithm will disregard this and will reduce content visibility. This should always be kept in mind when creating content on firearms-related topics since it has a direct impact on its visibility.

The better we understand the target group we are addressing, the better we will be positioned to create content for it. Below are examples of characteristics that can help us specify a target group clearly when preparing a campaign or post.

Demographic characteristics	Psychographic characteristics	Media behaviours	Relationship to the institution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender, age, education • Area of residence (urban/rural, region) • Employment status • Family status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values, attitudes, interests • Lifestyle, behaviour • What matters to them (security, career, health etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which social media do they use to get informed? • Do they comment, ask questions, share contents? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they trust the institution? • Are they active citizens or passive observers? • Are they likely to criticise or cooperate?

We need not always have answers to all of these questions, but it is useful to be aware of them and seek answers.

Social media offer us another important tool - constant feedback through reactions to posts. User reactions are an indicator of their interests, frustrations, attitudes, and allow us to find out more about the target group. This is how we learn about our target groups.

Reaction - In this context, we refer to reactions to contents posted on social media by their users. Depending on the platform, different reactions to content may have different names and functions. For instance, on Facebook, reactions include different expressions of emotion (such as like, laugh, anger, shock, sadness, love), while the reaction on Instagram is a heart - i.e. a like.

WHAT DOES OUR TARGET AUDIENCE NEED?

When we define the target group we are addressing, it becomes easier to identify their needs, frustrations, problems, what matters to them, and their attitudes. This will guide us further in creating relevant content that communicates effectively with the specific target group.

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

As noted above, each campaign and, within the campaign, each post must have an objective that is clearly defined by answering the question: What do we want to achieve with the target group? Do we want citizens to be informed about a specific topic, to change their attitude, do we want them to embrace a certain behaviour, to share the information further, or to take a specific action, such as surrendering firearms or visiting an event on the risks of improperly stored firearms?

All activities and messages within the campaign must be geared towards that objective. It is crucial to clearly answer the question: What exactly do we want our target group to do when they see this message? Based on the answer, when conducting a campaign, we choose the channels, set the time frame for posting content on platforms, and also specify the format and - most importantly - communication content.

WHAT RESOURCES DO WE HAVE AT OUR DISPOSAL?

To ensure continuity in content creation, it is crucial to be objective when it comes to our resources. This concerns not only technical capacities (whether we have the equipment to film content and the programs needed) and our skills (whether we know how to use the equipment and programs), but also the information available (whether we have access to relevant sources, such as colleagues who can provide professional insights and contents suitable to be released publicly).

In addition, **time resources** should be considered: who on the team has the capacity to take on the creation of a specific post at a given time.

If the person in charge of social media is simultaneously assigned to other duties, the volume of posts should be adjusted to the objective capacities. In addition to the time needed to create the actual posts, the time needed to answer posted comments or questions should be taken into account as well, since this is precisely what builds trust and drives engagement. The frequency of posting, i.e. how many posts a week can be released, should be decided accordingly, in order to cover all aspects using the available resources.

Further, is the importance of communication in general and the specific campaign in particular, met with understanding and support from within the institution? Are the superiors willing to facilitate information inflow, make statements, approve *visuals* and respond by providing timely feedback or approval? Without internal coordination, even the most creative plans will remain unachieved.

Visual - An image that has been edited, e.g. text, logo or other content has been added, or it has been entirely created using graphic elements, in such a way as to send a message. Visuals are created in sizes corresponding to the platform where they are to be posted.

EXAMPLE: SPECIFYING THE TARGET GROUP, OBJECTIVE AND RESOURCES

We will use the example of a small-scale campaign that can be conducted during the wedding season, seeing that firearms misuse is especially pronounced at weddings. The campaign can have multiple target groups, divided into primary, secondary and, if necessary, tertiary.⁸

ASSUMPTIONS AND INFORMATION AVAILABLE

Under ideal conditions, every campaign would be preceded by a survey to precisely define the target groups (primary, as well as secondary and tertiary), and small-scale surveys can always be conducted. However, in

⁸ The primary target group is the most important for the campaign. The secondary target group is also important, but not as important as the primary one. Tertiary target groups are peripheral. They may help spread the message to the primary or secondary target group, affect their attitudes, or be an audience that will be addressed in the future.

the absence of a survey, PR team members can rely on a combination of existing data, knowledge, experiences - both local and regional, as well as grounded assumptions. Alternatively, they can talk to their friends and family, as well as a wider circle of acquaintances (a sales assistant in a nearby store, attorney, children's doctor etc.) in order to obtain a broader picture of attitudes and perceptions. Taking into consideration all this knowledge and information, they can specify and elaborate the target groups for the campaign.

Moreover, the abovementioned algorithm and feedback from the audience during the campaign will help them adjust in the process.

WHO ARE WE ADDRESSING AND WHAT ARE THEIR NEEDS?

Women, brides and maids of honour are often key figures in the wedding planning period, as well as at the wedding itself, and can have a strong influence on the atmosphere and decisions made. Campaigns of this type usually target men, who make up the majority of firearm owners, but this time we can try addressing women.

Despite the persistent traditional norms, young couples increasingly make decisions - especially wedding-related ones- together, as equals.

TARGET GROUP CHARACTERISTICS:

- Women aged 25-35
- With secondary and higher education attainment
- Living in cities with the highest numbers of firearm-use incidents in the past 10 years
- Brides-to-be (primary target group), maids of honour, sisters, friends (secondary)
- Beliefs and attitudes: They respect tradition and consider it an important part of the wedding. They care about their future husbands' masculinity and do not want to diminish it, especially in front of their families and friends. Nevertheless, safety is a primary consideration for them, as long as tradition is observed.
- **Their needs are:** for the wedding to go smoothly, with good entertainment, respect for tradition, but without violence, weapons, or injuries, and for everyone present to be safe.
- They mainly use Instagram and TikTok.
- They take useful advice from those networks.

Once specified, this information can be used for boosting, because **Meta (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp)** has the option to precisely target e.g. “brides-to-be.”


Meta - The company that owns the platforms Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp.

WHAT DO WE WANT FROM THEM?

In this case, the objective is for women - brides-to-be and maids of honour, as well as brides' close friends - to be informed about the hazards of firearms misuse at weddings and to influence grooms and other men to refrain from firearms use and find alternative ways of celebrating.

The intersection of answers to these two questions (Who are we addressing and what are their needs and What do we want from them?) is where our content ideas will be found. When we include the answer to the third question - What can we offer, i.e. what resources do we have? - we will know what our further steps will be, i.e. what kind of content we will be creating.

Sample post

<p>IDENTIFY THE ODD ONE OUT</p> <p>a checklist for a good time at the wedding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> good music<input type="checkbox"/> your friends<input type="checkbox"/> a gun<input type="checkbox"/> comfortable shoes	<p>IDENTIFY THE ODD ONE OUT</p> <p>a checklist for a good time at the wedding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good music<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> your friends<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a gun<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> comfortable shoes	 <p>A bullet fired into the air doesn't disappear; it falls back down and can cause severe injury or death.</p>
<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>

What is important from the aspect of knowing the target groups are their beliefs and attitudes.

1. The assumption is that brides do not want to forgo traditional customs; thus, in our content, we should shatter the myths about traditional customs and/or offer an alternative.
2. If apple shooting is customary, we can reflect on the ethnological aspect of it, explain why it is done and put it in the contemporary context, thus invalidating the view that the groom “needs to be a good marksman, capable of protecting his future wife and future family if necessary”. Offer alternatives that make sense today.
3. Another possible assumption is that most people are not aware of the danger posed by the bullet trajectory, or with the prison penalties prescribed by law. We may address these topics, but we should do so by addressing the bride.

**“OH COME ON,
HOW OFTEN DOES
IT HAPPEN?”**
More often than you think.

In 2021, a wedding photographer was wounded in the hip by a stray bullet after a guest fired into the air.
The investigation revealed that the bullet had ricocheted against the pavement before hitting her.

**DON'T LET YOUR
HAPPIEST DAY
BECOME SOMEONE'S
SADDEST DAY.**
Firearms don't belong at weddings.
#CelebrateSafely

4

5

6

The background features a dark blue field with a grid of orange and light blue squares. Overlaid on this are several large, semi-transparent orange circles and vertical bars, creating a layered, architectural effect.

THE RIGHT TIME FOR CAMPAIGNS

04

THE RIGHT TIME FOR CAMPAIGNS

— CONTINUOUSLY

The issue of firearms-related risks is usually raised in periodic campaigns conducted by ministries, addressing specific topics such as voluntary firearms surrender, celebratory shooting, domestic violence involving firearms, and youth education. In the region, these campaigns usually last one to two months, and the materials used are rarely reused.

The topic of SALW control should feature on the ministry's profiles constantly, throughout the year, rather than only during narrowly focused campaigns, as part of response to specific incidents or as part of reporting on the institution's recent activities.

Continuity in posting on this topic raises awareness of the problem and also offers solutions for people's daily questions and problems – whether they relate to the firearm registration process after the owner's death, voluntary surrender, deactivation of inherited firearms, or, like in the example above – the appeal to refrain from shooting at weddings.

INSPIRATION FOR CONTINUOUS CONTENT CREATION

It is clear that ministries' social media teams simultaneously handle numerous topics and a wide range of duties. This section will, therefore, offer concrete proposals for content, as well as tools to facilitate and expedite planning SALW control related posts, thus saving time. Information and inspiration for content can be drawn from:

AVAILABLE DATA

Ministries of the interior have access to credible information about incidents and short-term trends that is not accessible to other stakeholders, but is of interest to the public, which makes it an ideal source of social media content. In addition to their own databases, institutions also have access to relevant information from the SEESAC Armed Violence Monitoring Platform⁹, and its analyses¹⁰, as well as the statistical data collected and published annually by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) in its publications, including SecuriMeter¹¹. Regular reports on SALW Control Roadmap implementation, presented through key performance indicators, also constitute a valuable information source¹². In addition to statistical data, which indicate key trends, institutional response should be highlighted as well. Relevant news on institutions' activities may also be of interest to the general public.

Examples of statistical data:

- Number of people killed, wounded with firearms
- Number of reports of domestic violence involving firearms in the past year
- Number of injuries or deaths resulting from such incidents and profile of perpetrators and victims
- Number of reported cases of firearms misuse in celebratory shooting in the past year

Examples of institutional response:

- Number of emergency measures issued after reports of domestic violence involving firearms
- Number of illegal firearms collected in police actions in the past year
- Types of measures undertaken after celebratory shooting is reported; Do police services always respond and arrive to the scene upon receiving such a report?
- Whether and how police services respond to examples of celebratory shooting posted on social media

⁹ Armed Violence Monitoring Platform: <https://www.seesac.org/AVMP/>

¹⁰ See the list of SEESAC publications on armed violence at: <https://www.seesac.org/Armed-Violence/>

¹¹ SecuriMeter, Regional Cooperation Council: <https://www.rcc.int/securometer/>

¹² See regular reports on SALW Control Roadmap implementation at: <https://www.seesac.org/Roadmap-Monitoring/>

ANALYTICS AND LONG-TERM TRENDS

Ministries and police authorities also have access to many databases containing information collected over many years. Firearms focal points (FFPs), which are in place in most police authorities in the region, have access to all databases on firearms, criminal offences and perpetrators, and are best positioned to analyse those data and identify long-term trends. These data also provide an invaluable source for preparing posts. They can contribute to the creation of a positive image of the institution, improve citizens' perception of safety, or encourage the audience to act (surrender firearms, report misuse etc.). Examples include:

- Number of police interventions in response to firearms misuse at weddings, by years
- Registered firearms statistics and related trends over time
- Most common types of firearms surrendered
- Most common misuses and contexts of firearms use (celebrations, domestic disputes, domestic violence etc.)
- Firearms-related mortality by incident type
- Number and type of injuries caused by firearm use

ARCHIVED AND FIELD VIDEO FOOTAGE

Existing video footage of seizures and arrests of persons who illicitly possess, manufacture or sell firearms, firearms destructions and similar events, vehicle searches at border crossing points, ballistic and forensic departments' work, police officers' practical drills, all may be used

Voiceover - An audio recording of a speech, i.e. spoken commentary or narration accompanying a visual post. Its purpose is to contribute additional information about the content. A voiceover may consist of sound only, or the speaker may be visible in the video format. However, in the context of creating video content, "to record a voiceover" primarily refers to an audio recording.

accompanied by information that provides context. The video can be explained using *voiceover* or *subtitles*: what is happening, where, how and why. Such footage is unique, interesting to the public, and effective in depicting institutions' efforts. Videos can also be used for educational purposes or to encourage action. Old footage can be reused. **It should be noted that photos and video footage that glorify firearms are not recommended.**

EXPERTISE

The knowledge and practical experience of ministry and police staff is an invaluable resource available to these institutions; however, they tend to take it for granted and often overlook it as a potential source of support for campaigns. How to safely store/keep firearms? Is ammunition dangerous outside firearms and, if so, what are the possible consequences of improper ammunition use? What type of firearms-related incidents causes the most fatalities and why? Forensic experts, police officers, analysts, SALW commission representatives and FFP representatives can formulate relevant information in a format of stories that appeal to the audience and offer a glimpse into ministries' work. These types of posts have an added value - they enhance trust in institutions.

Subtitles - Visual presentation of the text heard in video content. Optionally, they can be used to provide translation; however, in most cases, they are intended to ensure that users who watch video content without sound (on silent) can also understand its message. Beside subtitles, additional information can be provided by text overlay.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Citizens are often insufficiently informed about their rights, procedures and legislation. What should I do after the passing of my father who owned a firearm (legal/illegal) and what is the time limit? How do I surrender a firearm, what are the consequences, what are the penalties for the use or possession of an unregistered firearm? My sister is being abused by her husband, and he also has a gun. What will happen to him and to her if I report abuse and mention that there is a firearm present? What does the procedure look like? All the citizens' questions that are answered in hidden corners of websites, laws and bylaws should be brought to the fore, formulated using language readily understood by an average citizen, and given attention on social media. These types of posts tends to be saved; as a result, they will be prioritised by the algorithm, which will, in turn, increase their visibility.

HUMAN INTEREST STORIES

Personal stories by those affected by firearms misuse are powerful and make an emotional and preventive impact. Individuals who have experienced that kind of trauma may be interested to take part in campaigns aimed at raising awareness of the risks that are often overlooked. Their stories may take the form of recorded video statements, but where this is not possible, written accounts may be used as well, as text in created visuals. It is important to note that the use of this type of material requires formal consent (a signed consent form for the use of photographic or video materials and testimonies) and must be based on the protection of dignity as a fundamental principle.

OCCASIONS – IMPORTANT DATES

In addition to specific occasions and periods (wedding season, celebrations – New Year and the like), when thinking about stereotypical human behaviours, there are dates that can serve as prompts to raise a topic that matters to us. For example: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence – from 25 November to 10 December. During this period, we can talk about firearms being the most lethal in domestic violence situations and disseminate promotional messages for safer families. There are also:

- 9 July – International Gun Destruction Day
- 5 March – International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness
- 24 - 30 October – United Nations Disarmament Week

We can also broaden the perspective:

- On 12 August – International Youth Day, we can talk about young men being the most frequent perpetrators of firearms-related criminal offences, as well as the most frequent firearms victims.
- On 10 October – World Mental Health Day, we can reflect on the need for and importance of rigorous mental health checks for firearms owners or permit applicants.
- On 20 October – World Children's Day, we can talk about injuries sustained by children as a result of improper firearms storage or explosive (pyrotechnic) articles illegally sold or procured for them by adults.
- In addition to international days, national days or important anniversaries of particularly traumatising incidents may also be considered.

AUDIENCE AS AN INFORMATION SOURCE

The audience is not merely an observer but may also be an excellent source of content; when participating in interactive content, the audience actively contributes to its creation. For instance, Instagram stories can be used to conduct a poll, a quiz, or to ask an open-ended question to be answered by citizens, who thus contribute to content creation.

- Poll: Does anyone in your family have a firearm? Yes; No; I don't know.
- Quiz question: What do you do when you find a firearm? I leave it alone, I don't touch it; I call the police; I hide it.
- Poll: Have firearms ever been used at weddings you attended? Yes, at every one; Maybe once; Never.
- Quiz question: Where does the bullet go after being fired into the air? Into space; Well, it has to fall somewhere; It falls into pieces somewhere up there.
- Quiz question: Can a bullet falling "from the sky" injure someone? Absolutely; No way; I don't know.
- Open-ended question: Share your firearms-related experience with us.

People like taking part in polls and quizzes, especially when these are available directly on the platforms they already use. They participate not only to share their opinions, but also to be able to see how others responded and thus become familiar with other people's views. This type of content boosts interaction, keeps users' attention on the profile and opens up space to share personal experiences and stories, which can be shared with the general public - anonymously, of course - accompanied by useful tips and comments. They can also help us get a sense of the public sentiment, identify attitudes that we may have been unaware of or only intuitively sensed without any supporting evidence, or identify issues to be addressed.

HOW TO ORGANISE CONTENT AND REGULAR CREATION

05

HOW TO ORGANISE CONTENT AND REGULAR CREATION

Sometimes it may seem that content creation takes up a lot of time. These Guidelines will offer a proposal for how to reduce the time needed and ensure content continuity.

CREATE AN ANNUAL CALENDAR

The first step is to create an annual calendar of communication on firearms control, which will help you spread out content throughout the year, in line with important dates, planned actions and team capacities.

The monthly calendar can include:

- Important dates to mark (see Occasions - important dates on page 38).
- The topics selected as important for the year, to inform the public about periodically (for instance, how firearms are perceived by young people today and why).
- Campaigns - with a narrower focus, usually with a shorter time frame - 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, a campaign against celebratory shooting during the New Year's season or the summer season.
- Police actions that you know will be conducted, are important for firearms control, and can help achieve the desired objectives (enhanced sense of safety, increased willingness to surrender illegal/legal firearms).
- Other activities relevant to SALW control, for instance amendments to the Law on Weapons.

- In a 12 months' plan, you should include posts on this topic at least on a quarterly and preferably monthly basis.

CREATE A MONTHLY PLAN/CALENDAR

Once we know what topics will be addressed on a monthly basis and what dates should be marked, a monthly plan with proposals for specific posts is prepared. This should be preceded by reflections on the objective, target groups and resources.

The monthly calendar can include:

- Concrete dates and timing of posts
- Post topics (e.g. youth and firearms; important deadlines - the amnesty ends on 20 July; narrowly focused campaigns - the new Law on Weapons and key changes introduced by it)
- Content type (video, photo, text, poll etc.)
- The platform to disseminate the content (Instagram, Facebook, institution's website, YouTube, etc.)
- Short post text (caption)
- The visual or notes on the visual, a link to the video or a link to the visual in the programs used (veed.io, [Canva](https://canva.com) etc.)
- Responsible person or team
- Results achieved

In addition to streamlining preparations and planning, a calendar allows us to look back on the already posted content - which is useful for analytical purposes, as well as for recycling content that is still valuable (e.g. reminders, anniversaries, similar occasions). Old calendars can serve as useful reminders of what was done, how and when, which posts were well received, and which ones could be reused. The calendar can also include brief comments on each post's performance, which can help identify good and bad practices.

CONTENT PRODUCTION AND POST SCHEDULING

Ideally, content should be produced in blocks, during one or two working days in a month (or in multiple batches, for a few hours at a time). It is easier to prepare and film multiple materials at once than to start over each time. If you know in advance what statements you need, you can film statements for multiple video posts during one visit (e.g. to a police station). The same applies to visuals, photos, archive search etc.

After creating all of the posts, in addition to entering them in the calendar, you can schedule posting using tools such as Meta Business Suite (for Facebook and Instagram) or directly on the platforms.

It is essential to note in your detailed monthly calendar what has been scheduled and for when. In case of any developments that may result in your posts being misinterpreted, it is crucial to remove or postpone your scheduled posts.

MONITORING PERFORMANCE

A step that is often skipped by teams, but crucial for long-term improvement is performance evaluation and application of lessons learned in further content planning. We need to know what yielded results, what should be changed and how to do better next time. **Weaker results should be treated as learning opportunities rather than as mistakes, as more effective campaigns are a result of learning from mistakes made and honest evaluation.**

METRICS TO BE UNDERSTOOD AND GIVEN ATTENTION

The focus here is on metrics from Instagram analytics, but other platforms offer similar options with similar names:

Reach → The number of unique user profiles, i.e. people, who have seen the post.

What does it tell us? → Whether the post reached a wider audience or only existing followers.

Impressions → The total number of times the post was displayed to users. It includes multiple displays to the same user.

What does it tell us? → Total content visibility, but not its reach.

Likes → Show how much the audience likes the content.

Comments → The number of comments indicates the level of interaction.

Metrics that say the most about content quality, i.e. the extent to which its quality is recognised by the audience:

Shares → The number of times the post was shared.

Saves → The number of people who saved the post for later.

Follows → The number of people who started following the page after interacting with the post.

Recently, **watch time** has become an increasingly important metric for the algorithm and for us as well, as it indicates → How long users maintain their attention on a post.

Content resulting in shares, saves or follows is content that should serve as the model for future communication via social media.

Calendars used for planning can be digital or printed.

DIGITAL CALENDARS (E.G. GOOGLE CALENDAR)

Google Calendar is a simple and accessible tool that enables teamwork, reminders and a clear, visualised schedule. For these purposes, teams may also use different online production and management tools (some of them offer certain functionalities free of charge, while others are paid services), such as Monday, Asana, Trello, ClickUp and others.


How to create a Google Calendar for content? Go to [Google Calendar](https://calendar.google.com) (calendar.google.com). In the left-hand side menu, click “+” next to “Other calendars”. Select “Create new calendar”. Choose a name for the calendar (e.g. “2026 SALW Social Media Content”), give a description (optional) and click “Create calendar”. After creating it, click “Settings and sharing” to share the calendar with your colleagues.


PRINTED CALENDAR (PREFERABLY ON A3 PAPER SIZE OR LARGER)

Teams that prefer visualising their planning on the wall can use a printed calendar accessible and viewable to everyone at any time.

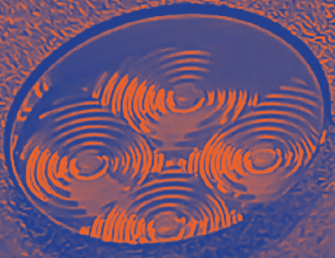
**How to find a printed calendar: Visit websites such as [Calendarpedia](http://www.calendarpedia.com) (www.calendarpedia.com) or [PrintableCalendar](http://www.printablecalendar.ca) (www.printablecalendar.ca)
Select an annual calendar for the current year (PDF format).
Download and print on A3 paper.**

Example of a calendar

09 - 15 March	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Time of posting	12h		18h
Visual / Link	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BoCeyval2pc		
Copy	<p>Meet Joe, the main anti-hero of the campaign #CelebrateWithYourHeart</p> <p>Joe thinks he is THE MAN, when he celebrates with guns and pyrotechnics. He will soon find out just how wrong he is about that.</p> <p>Find out what happened to him and learn from his example #DontBeLikeJoe</p> <p>Join the campaign and make your community safer.</p>		<p>It was a fantastic night for some, but not for Joe and his little brother Mike.</p> <p>They learned the hard way that misuse of firearms and pyrotechnics is dangerous for both them and those around them.</p> <p>Find out exactly what happened to them by swiping left, and then join the campaign #DontBeLikeJoe #CelebrateWithYourHeart and make your community safer.</p>
Social Media Networks	IG FB	IG FB	IG FB
Status	Done	Done	Done

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	10h		
			
	<p>Even though it might seem like just a quick BANG! to you, the loud noise created by pyrotechnic devices can induce great anxiety in many of your neighbours. Remember that even firecrackers not only scare small children and the elderly, but they also traumatize animals.</p> <p>#DontBeLikeJoe, think about the effect pyrotechnics can have on those around you. Consider the fact that their use often leads to light but also serious bodily injuries, not only to those who set them off but also to innocent animals and bystanders.</p> <p>#CelebrateWithYourHeart because you are not celebrating alone. We are all celebrating! Join the campaign and make your community safer.</p>		
<p>IG FB</p>	<p>IG FB</p>	<p>IG FB</p>	<p>IG FB</p>
<p>Done</p>	<p>Done</p>	<p>Done</p>	<p>Done</p>

CONTENT CREATION



06



CONTENT CREATION

– HOW TO GIVE LIFE TO OUR IDEAS?

In this section, the focus will be on content creation, which – beside creative skills – requires technical ones as well, in order to translate ideas into practice. Different teams have different ways of functioning – some hire external contractors to produce content, some do this in-house, some have a division of tasks within the team whereby each person is assigned to a specific type of tasks as part of social media content creation. These Guidelines aim to provide practical tips enabling each team member to execute an idea, from planning, to content creation, and finally to posting. Each person on the team may be better at some skills than at others; this is influenced by past experiences, as well as interests, creativity and computer proficiency.

COMMUNICATION TONE

It is essential that all team members understand and use the agreed communication language. This is more than a set of rules – this is how the institution speaks, the style and tone conveyed through social media posts. It is not only about what we say, but also how we say it.

A major communication challenge for ministries is excessive formality and use of strictly professional language in most posts. While the tone is somewhat adjusted in campaigns, regular communication is still dominated by expressions such as “person deprived of his/her liberty” or “electromagnetic device”. In the past, this kind of language was used to emphasise institutional authority and professional competence. However, in the modern media landscape, where information flows rapidly and

competes for attention, it is crucial to be understood by citizens quickly and easily. To ensure that they recognise the message as relevant and personal, and that the information reaches them in the first place.

It is also important to have a consistent tone that will help the audience recognise us and relate to us, to give an impression that ministries and police authorities are there to serve citizens and that they are available to respond to the challenges faced by citizens.

To conclude: communication tone should give an impression of accessibility for citizens, it should be clear and invite two-way communication. Below is a list of communication tones, among which teams should choose theirs; our recommendations are given in bold.

COMMUNICATION TONE	Friendly, Professional , Warm, Confident , Sincere, Authentic, Inspiring, Open , Optimistic, Formal, Informal , Calm
	Direct, Clear , Concise , Playful, Emotional, Talkative, Straightforward, Comprehensible , Interactive, Reasonable, Narrative
	Approachable , Empathetic, Supportive, Addressing a friend, Addressing a mentor, Neutral , Respectful, Polite, Joint (“we” rather than “you”)
	Humorous, Ironic, Sarcastic, Light-hearted, Subtle humour , Humourless, Self-deprecating
	Reliable , Authoritative, Explanatory , Educational , Useful (helps to understand)

Bold: This tone is professional and confident, yet approachable. Communication is open and informal, denoting that the person can be trusted and knows what he/she is talking about. Clear, concise and comprehensible language is used, without superfluous words and professional jargon that might put off the audience.

The ministry should be approachable and neutral, without imposing its views. Where appropriate, subtle humour is used, which must always be geared towards building better connections with the community. The content is reliable, explanatory, educational and useful – our aim is for citizens to learn something new, receive valuable information and feel that the ministry is there to help.

SOME EXAMPLES OF COMMUNICATION

DON'Ts	DOs
An individual was deprived of his/her liberty pursuant to Article 216 of the Criminal Proceedings Code.	A person was arrested on suspicion of committing the crime of armed robbery.
You are obligated to know this information.	Here is what you should know in this situation.
Citizens are required to act in conformity with the provisions of the Law on Weapons.	The law is there to protect all of us.
Firearms must be surrendered in conformity with the applicable legislation.	Bring the firearm to the nearest police station. There, we will go through the following steps together...

Amongst other things, ministries' PR teams are tasked with helping institutions establish better communication with citizens and establish a connection with them using all available channels; and in this process to identify a tone that will help achieve this purpose. This may require changing time-honoured communication practices that are no longer adequate, especially on social media.

While officials may not find it easy to adjust their social media presence, PR team members may have a role in helping them during this transition by demonstrating, through examples, that approachability builds trust rather than undermines authority. Evaluation and positive results on social media can help in this process.

FOUNDATIONS OF VISUAL IDENTITY

In addition to tone, there is also *visual identity*, which should be: consistent, simple and recognisable.

Visual identity consists of: colours, typography (fonts and their use), photos, videos, graphics, symbols, and - of course - logo. Institutions' profiles should have their visual identity on social media that is consistent with the institutions' overall visual identity.

Brand Kit - Brands usually have a brand kit - a collection of visual brand elements (colors, fonts, logo) and rules - how they are used in which case (print or digital edition).

Social media teams can request their colleagues in charge of graphic design to set up the visual identity with specific requirements for social media, which will then be used in all posts and appearances. For example: expanding the colour palette beyond the standard one used for printed visuals, choosing fonts to be used for better legibility (some for headlines, others for the remaining text, how to combine them), creating icons to be used in posts, providing examples of using photos, videos, fonts in video subtitles, animation used in that case. Also: templates - where to position the logo, where to position text overlay in videos, styles for video and animation, logo animation... All these should be specified in the process and set up in the tool used by the team ([Canva](#), [Captions](#), [Inshot](#), [Veed.io](#) and the like) to ensure the style is uniform and recognisable by the audience and to accelerate content creation.

In addition to setting them up, it is important to update these templates once in a while in line with social media trends and to avoid monotony, especially if the same templates are used constantly and each post resembles the previous one.

TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

This section will look into the most commonly used formats of social media content, in particular on the social media used by a majority of teams: Facebook and Instagram. We will consider their advantages, specifically the types of information they are the most suitable for.

Feed - The centralised flow of content shown to a user on opening a social media app - i.e. on the user profile's home page. It includes posts, photos, videos, advertisements and other contents posted by the profiles followed by the user, as well as recommendations generated by the algorithm based on the user's specific interests and past interactions.

Hashtag - The key word/concept/topic in a given post, preceded by the hash symbol #. Hashtags can be used to find/group posts on the same topic.

Boosting - Paid promotion of an existing post. A user can boost the visibility of a post by paying to have it displayed to more users than would have seen it organically. In this process, in addition to setting the budget, the user can specify the profile of users who should be shown the boosted post, i.e. to set its target group (by location, gender, interests etc.), as well as the time frame in which the boosted post will be shown.

is definitely prioritised by the algorithm and platforms over other, static posts. If you are planning to *boost* a short video, its duration should be up to 90 seconds.

INSTAGRAM

1) Feed post

A visual that may be: a photo, an illustration, a mix of illustration and text. It is accompanied by a caption below, and possibly location, *hashtags*, tags. Its dimensions are 1080px x 1350px, with a 4:5 aspect ratio.

2) Carousel - multiple visuals or photos in a single post

Up to 20 images in a single post. It is currently mainly used to present longer text content broken down into multiple sections for better readability. Just like a feed post, it is accompanied by a caption below, and possibly location, *hashtags*, tags.

3) Reel

A short vertical video up to 3 minutes in duration. It may be enhanced with music, subtitles and effects. Currently, this format

4) Story

Content that remains available for only 24 hours (after this, it can be saved in *highlights*). Its advantage is that it can include a clickable link, which was not always the case. This shortens the path from Instagram to the address we want to direct the audience towards. A story can consist of a video or a photo, but its distinctive advantage lies in interactive features, namely polls, question boxes, opportunities for fast interaction.

Perhaps the greatest indirect benefit offered by this format is one-on-one communication with users. Unlike posts, where comments are publicly visible, reactions to stories are visible only to the creator. This means that more honest and authentic reactions, comments, queries, feedback can be received from citizens. Story recently introduced comments visible to everyone, but they still maintain the more commonly used option—direct replies to the content creator.

Highlights - Stories saved on an Instagram profile, remaining available until removed, and in any case longer than 24 hours, grouped by topic. They may be added later from archived content (already expired stories, which are no longer visible to the audience). Highlights can have their own covers and titles.

5) Live Video

Not a frequently used format, but may be used for broadcasting events that include a Q&A session, press conferences, etc. Optionally, a live video can be saved and watched later, but the focus of this type of content is on covering current, newsworthy events that have the character of breaking news.

FACEBOOK

In addition to carousels, videos, stories, live videos, which are similar to the corresponding options on Instagram, Facebook offers some additional options not available on Instagram:

1) Status

A classic status can be shorter or longer. If longer, the recommendation is to use spacing and *emoticons*, for easier reading. This type of post is rarely used, usually when the same text is not already posted on the website, or when there is a specific reason why it is important to post the text in its entirety, without changes, on social media.

Emoticon, Emoji – The best-known and most commonly used – a smiley (smiley face). It was originally created with punctuation marks – a colon followed by a close parenthesis, representing a smiling face :) Smileys, and later also other graphic symbols that are nowadays referred to as emoticons, are used to add meaning to a written message. Emoticons represent emotions, objects, actions, flags, symbols, etc. There are currently over 3,900 emoticons.

2) Link Post

Still the easiest way to direct the audience towards a specific web page. Clicking on any part of the post, including the photo and headline, redirects the user to the web page. It is ideal for sharing press releases and other statements from the

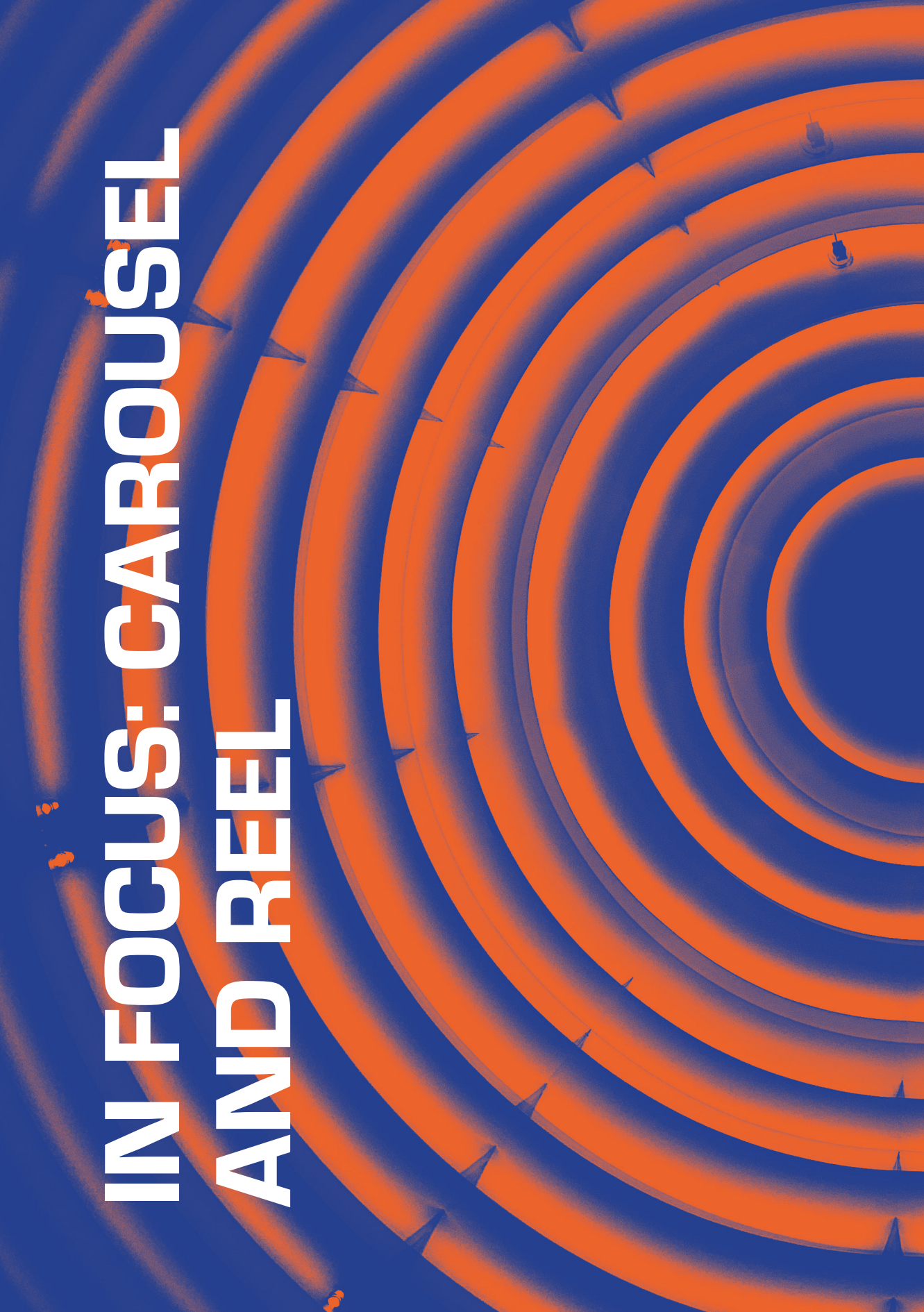
official website. A weakness is that the headline, intro and photo are automatically generated from the website to which we are redirecting users, which is why it is essential that the photo and headline on the website are attractive enough for the Facebook audience. Moreover, the algorithm decidedly prioritises contents posted directly on Facebook – e.g. a video posted on the platform itself will be favoured over an external link to that same video on YouTube.

3) Event

This is, in fact, a dedicated page with all the relevant information about a specific event (time, place, description, links etc.). While the use of this format is on the decline, it can still be useful for promoting major public events – especially when the goal is to increase visibility and boost registration or attendance, and also when the event itself is planned to be advertised via Facebook.

A HANDY TIP: Content display dimensions on social media tend to change. Dimensions change periodically and are mainly tied to updates to a given social media platform. Updates may be rolled out in waves, meaning that not all users will simultaneously get access to the new features brought by the update. For instance, if the update affects content display dimensions, it is possible that not all users will have the same content dimensions at the same time. It is, therefore, essential to follow trends and always check before posting – not only the dimensions, but also the safe area, i.e. the area that will be displayed regardless of the content display dimensions.

IN FOCUS: CAROUSEL AND REEL



A stylized maze with orange walls and blue paths, featuring a large white number '07' in the center. The maze is composed of concentric, slightly irregular rings, creating a complex, winding path. The walls are a vibrant orange, while the paths are a deep blue. The number '07' is rendered in a bold, white, sans-serif font, positioned centrally over the maze. The overall composition is dynamic and visually striking.

07

IN FOCUS: CAROUSEL AND REEL

In these Guidelines, we will focus on the two most prevalent content formats, whose preparation is more time-consuming, they remain available longer (unlike stories, which expire in 24 hours) and have the potential to go viral, which means they are shared and consumed extensively and achieve high visibility on social media, i.e. have the power to launch discussions and spill over into traditional media.

Characteristics of content with potential to be shared on a massive scale - to go viral

We always refer to the potential to go viral, because virality may be influenced by many factors and it cannot be guaranteed as such. It is worth noting that there are metrics that can be guaranteed. Meta is a platform that earns income from its advertisers. When running a campaign, we can lease some virtual space. In real life, when we lease advertising space, for example in a newspaper, we know the circulation of that newspaper, i.e. we know the likely number of people who will see our advertisement. When we lease billboards, we know the exact number of billboards that will display our advertisement and the level of traffic at those locations. On Meta, we actually buy the number of clicks, video views, reactions, etc. The more attractive the content is to the audience, the lower the cost relative to visibility (per click, reaction etc.). For example, 500 thousand clicks on attractive content will cost us less than the same number of clicks on lower-quality content. So, we can “buy 500 thousand views”, hypothetically speaking, but this will not necessarily reflect quality of content, make it appealing to the audience, or go viral thanks to paid views.

While it cannot be predicted with certainty which content will go viral, experience shows that certain factors increase the likelihood of sharing on a massive scale. In the case of ministries, these may be: breaking news and information, attractive visual portrayals such as field actions and the like (see: Archived and field video footage, page 36). However, whether we are dealing with a carousel or a reel, they must include the following elements in order to be comprehensible and have the potential to go viral as well:

- Hook (text, image, or sound to intrigue the audience and capture its attention) at the beginning
- Microstory - to convey the main point through a short story
- Call to action

HOOK

The performance of a post will largely depend on how we design the first three seconds of the video, or, in case of a carousel, its first image. A person who comes across the ministry's content while *scrolling* must understand at first glance:

- what it is about
- what he/she can expect

and draw a conclusion - whether

he/she is interested in the content or not, whether the content is relevant to him/her or not? This process does not take place at a conscious level. People do not always have a clear stance, they do not always know why they stopped at something or why they scrolled on to something else.

Below are a few examples showing the features of a good hook.

Clear and powerful beginning of a video: no "idle time"

In order for ministries' video content to be impactful, the voiceover and subtitles must begin immediately. Do not use footage without concrete content, i.e. *B-roll footage* without opening

Scrolling - The action of moving content up or down on the screen in order to view all posts. It is based on an analogy with unrolling a physical scroll to read it.

B-roll footage - Jargon for a short video or photo used in video format to provide context for a specific part of the audio recording or to add visual interest, e.g. a video showing the atmosphere at an event.

text - this is a missed opportunity to grab the audience's attention. Each video should have a relatable point - something that immediately and clearly tells the audience: "This is important for me."

Address citizens' genuine frustrations:

Frustration: "I am reading various sources of information, and I still don't know where and how to surrender the firearm."

Hook: "We'll show you where and how to surrender a firearm."

Address their dilemmas and concerns:

Instead of "Take a look at our new security measures," a better opening would be: "Do you know what to do if you hear gunshots in your neighbourhood?"

Show that you understand them:

"Confused by firearms registration rules? You are not alone - here's a simple explanation."

Elicit an emotion - for example, a justified concern, and follow it up by providing relevant information or shattering of a myth:

"You think a bullet fired into the air stays in the air? No - every bullet has to land somewhere."

It is worth noting that the hook can also be visual: a particular video shot, an object, movement, something happening in the video/image that immediately captures attention. However, the most common are textual or verbal hooks.

People often consume content quickly and superficially, especially on the phone and in the evening. This means that you have a limited amount of time to convey the message. Ask yourself: If I were the user, would I continue watching this? If not, change the opening. The hook has one simple task: to give the audience a reason to stay. Or even better: to get them so interested that they can't stop watching.

MICROSTORY

Regardless of changes to platforms, algorithms or content formats, what remains unchanged is the power of a story. Since time immemorial, humans have interpreted the world through narratives: Stories teach, connect, inspire and encourage us to act. In the modern digital landscape, the attention span is shorter, but the need for stories is still there - only shorter and adapted. A good post, whether consisting of a video, text or a visual, always includes a microstory. This is what makes the audience identify with it, get emotionally involved and memorise the message.

Sometimes, we cannot tell the whole story - everything about firearms and the importance of surrendering them or being a responsible owner. However, we can tell a snippet of a story - a microstory within this broad topic. Each post should be one microstory. It should have a clear introduction, elaboration and conclusion, with a focus on knowing from the very beginning what we want to say by telling the story.

This is always a good starting point for reflecting on content. What do we want to say with this? Who do we want to say it to?

Example



1



2

CALL TO ACTION

Stories are told for a reason. We want something from the audience. We want them to understand, spread the message further, report abuse, surrender firearms, register them, refrain from buying firecrackers to children, etc. The video or carousel, i.e. our story, should end with a call to action.

This is when we clearly let the audience know what to do next, what we want them to do after seeing or hearing our message. The call to action need not be a direct command. It can be an invitation to reflect - "Where do you keep your firearms?", a question to spark a discussion - "What are your experiences with weddings and firearms?", a link to learn more, or a concrete step: "Surrender your firearms by 1 July," "Share this with someone who cares," "Talk to your children about firearms and teach them before someone else does". A good story leads with emotion, but a powerful call to action gives it a purpose and makes a difference in society.



3



4

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF VIDEO CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Video content on social media has gone a long way - from slow loading on YouTube in the mid-2000s to today's dynamic reels on Instagram, TikTok and YouTube that we consume daily, almost subconsciously.

Initially, videos were reserved for platforms specialising in longer formats, such as YouTube. Genuine change was brought on by Snapchat (a social media network that used to be very popular among young people), which introduced the concept of a vertical short video in 2013 - short, informal videos that disappeared after 24 hours. This format introduced a new dynamic: videos no longer needed to be perfect, like advertisements, but rather authentic and quick.

At that time, Vine, an app that is no longer in use, succeeded in popularising ultra-short videos (6 seconds). TikTok later developed this into a distinct format - micro stories, vertical videos watched incessantly. Following TikTok's example, Instagram introduced the Reels format, Facebook followed suit, YouTube launched Shorts, and even business-oriented networks such as LinkedIn and X (formerly Twitter) prioritised video formats.

With fast, widely available, unlimited mobile internet access, video became ubiquitous. While queueing, eating or scrolling on a lunch break, video content is the easiest to consume. And it keeps changing. But what remains is the demand for short, captivating stories that grab the attention in the first few seconds.

The lesson that should be learned from this, not only by institutions, is: it is not about where the content is consumed,

it is about reaching the audience. If a social media user goes to the website to explore all of the content, it is considered an outstanding result; however, in most cases, this will not happen. Instead, success is increasingly measured by the ability to tell the story immediately, in a straightforward, comprehensible, appealing way - directly on social media, i.e. to convey the message to the audience where the audience prefers to receive it.

THE MOST COMMON FORMATS, TOOLS AND GOOD PRACTICES IN FILMING SHORT VIDEO CONTENT

As explained above, the evolution of video on social media is happening very fast, trends and formats are changing. Below is an overview of the currently most widely recognisable formats; however, they may become outdated a year from now.

STORY TIME

The format known as Story Time on TikTok - a person is filming himself/herself with a phone held or propped at arm's length. The video may be enhanced with props (in our case, this could be something like a firearm or documents required for firearm possession), B-roll footage, graphics etc., but the focus is on the person and the story.

It should be noted that these formats, despite appearing spontaneous, should always have a script - a clearly elaborated text to be spoken (or displayed on the visual, where applicable), a good hook and all other features described above.

VOICEOVER AND B-ROLL FOOTAGE

Voiceover, i.e. recorded commentary used as leading content together with attractive video content, is another commonly used format. This format is especially convenient in cases where we are not able to film ourselves or do not wish to show our face in the video.

The best way to do this is to record the voiceover after drafting the script. The audio recording is then edited using an appropriate program, to remove pauses, breathing sounds and anything else that is not needed. Once we have an audio recording that we are satisfied with, we add video content that contextually corresponds to the audio. Ideally, the video should be *lo-fi*. Moreover, photos do not produce adequate results here. Photos should only be used if there is no other option. Also, *stock* materials, such as those offered by Canva free of charge, should also be used only sparingly. These materials are always of high quality, but rarely authentic.

Stock Photo/Video - Professional photos or video footage that can be used free of charge or for a fee to create social media content. They are recognisable by their high-quality and by showing situations that are often staged. Well-known platforms offering stock content for sale include: iStockphoto and Shutterstock. This content can be described as hi-fi (high fidelity) content.

LO-FI CONTENT

Lo-fi or low fidelity content, as opposed to high fidelity, is a video or visual that appears not to be “produced” - recorded with a phone, without editing, with natural lighting, without a script. Although it seems spontaneous, it is precisely this rawness that gives it power. On social media, where the audience often scrolls automatically, lo-fi content appears to come from “ordinary people” rather than an institution,

which is why it is more captivating. In the digital environment saturated with neatly polished content, with professional photos, promotional materials, the audience increasingly trusts content that looks genuine, authentic. This is why lo-fi formats can be especially powerful for ministries and public services. They build trust through authenticity, rather than perfection.

WHERE TO GET LO-FI B-ROLL FOOTAGE

It is everywhere - our city's streets, cars driving by, different seasons, illustrative footage - e.g. footage showing children's toys when we are talking about children's safety. It is crucial that the footage is authentic - the toys should be those that we can see in our environment, the streets should be the streets in our city, with real-life cars, houses, apartment blocks. Photographs can show kindergartens or schools. This allows the content to communicate and connect with the audience already in the first second - the audience immediately recognises that the topic is "local" - that **it concerns them**.

A HANDY TIP: If we regularly film video content and store it in a single location, neatly sorted and named, it will be easier to find it later to create new social media material quickly.

What should the voiceover be like?

What applies to photos and videos also applies to the voice we hear. It should be authentic - not the voice of a professional TV host. The content should sound like social media content, rather than a programme on national television. Still, the voice should be clear, audible, comprehensible; the sound quality should be high, without background noise that may distract the audience. Nevertheless, it need not - in fact, it should not sound like the voice of a professional presenter.

Just as photos or videos from our city immediately let the audience know where the story is taking place and who the content is intended for, the voice, language and accent further emphasise this context.

A HANDY TIP: For the purposes of recording video or only audio, it is a good idea to consistently use one to two persons, so that, over time, they or their voices become recognisable to the audience and associated with the profile.

CONTENT FROM MEDIA APPEARANCES

We will often have access to content from ministry representatives' media appearances, which should be adapted for social media use. The same approach should be taken: find a good hook, tell a microstory, edit out all unnecessary gap fillers, pauses etc., and add a call to action.

A HANDY TIP: If this type of content is used frequently, there are apps to select the most appealing parts of the media appearance - this option is offered by the app [Opus Clip](#) as well as [Veed.io](#).

What else can be useful? Transcription apps. For example, the app [litteraworks](#) can *transcribe* speech in most regional languages, and the transcript includes time bookmarks, showing the exact place of a given sequence in the audio or video recording. This allows easier navigation through the material, avoiding the need to watch the entire content - which is especially convenient in case of formal sessions and other events that can last several hours.

Transcript - A voiceover may be transcribed. When the transcript is inserted into a video, it becomes subtitles, similar to the technique used to translate foreign TV series.

NOT RECOMMENDED: ADVERTISEMENTS

When it comes to social media content creation, the first instinct is to go for a tone typical of campaigns and advertisements. However, in most cases, what works on television – classic ads, high-budget production, rehearsed voiceover – will not do well on social media. Social media audience responds to authenticity, rather than advertising. Hence, we should not approach content creation as we would to advertisement making. We should not rely on formats such as video ads or studio production; instead, we should choose formats that have a natural, human and real-life feel.

Another consideration is linked to production and resources. We often lack access to professional equipment or a production team – and even if we had everything: cameras, camera operators, actors, lighting, locations – the process would require much more time and organisation efforts. We will, therefore, not rely on high-level production, but rather on formats that we can produce ourselves quickly and easily. **The goal is continuity – communicating regularly, clearly and efficiently – rather than perfection.**

NOT ALL CONTENT IS SUITABLE FOR VIDEO

Although we are aware that Meta favours video content, specifically the reel format, and that videos as such are more readily consumed, not all content is suitable for video and we need not push it. Below is a simple list of questions to be considered by the communication team when deciding whether to create content in the form of a video or carousel.

- What do we want to say with the content? Draft a script that can be used for both video and carousel.
- Then note on the side what materials would be needed: do we record a voiceover, do we have a person film himself/herself, do we have B-roll footage and what is it like? Is the B-roll footage in video form, is it authentic, is it lo-fi?
- Is the content time-sensitive – news, breaking news and the like, i.e. when do we need to post it? Is the content planned for the next week or two, or does it need to be posted as soon as possible?
- Consider options, capacities and other duties.

Taking all this into consideration – the possibilities for content creation and the final quality required – we decide whether to create a video or carousel or some other type of post.

For example, a video containing only B-roll footage from a meeting or police training will not attract reactions from the audience and may lead to loss of followers in the long run, since it does not offer any direct benefit to followers, and shares information relevant only to a very narrow target group with a wider audience. Other communication channels, such as the news section on the website, newsletter, etc., are better suited for this type of information.

IMPORTANT FEATURES OF A CAROUSEL

A good carousel is more than just a series of slides with text – it is a carefully structured story. The design of a carousel must be clear, legible, have a natural flow, but must not be crammed with content. It is crucial that the text is visually laid out in a way that allows the eye to follow the message easily: use text layout, different font sizes, contrasting colours, and use bold, underlined or differently coloured words for emphasis.

We cannot just put a long, dense, packed block of text on the visual. The message should be broken down into several simple and easily readable segments (images). In laying out the text, we should never pack it from margin to margin and justify it on both sides. This is strenuous for the eyes and the audience will simply scroll on to something more readily comprehensible.

The blank space is important, and the visual hierarchy is crucial: the key information should have the biggest footprint, while ancillary information can take up less space by being written in regular or narrow font. Ideally, it should be possible to read the content “diagonally”, without reading every word, while still receiving the message.

Example of a poorly laid out carousel:

The Police Authority hereby informs the public that, in the evening hours of 27 July 2025, the police received a report of an incident in which, according to the initial information available, a firearm was discharged. Upon receiving the report, police patrols were immediately dispatched to the scene. On this occasion, one injured person was found, who was urgently attended to by Emergency Medical Services and transported to the nearest health care facility. According to information from the hospital, this person's life is not at risk. Crime scene investigation was conducted in the presence of the competent prosecutor, and the police continues to work on ascertaining the circumstances of the event, as well as identifying and locating the possible perpetrator. The public will be informed of the next steps in a timely manner.

The Police Authority hereby informs the public that, in the evening hours of 27 July 2025, the police received a report of an incident in which, according to the initial information available, a firearm was discharged. Upon receiving the report, police patrols were immediately dispatched to the scene. On this occasion, one injured person was found, who was urgently attended to by Emergency Medical Services and transported to the nearest health care facility. According to information from the hospital, this person's life is not at risk. Crime scene investigation was conducted in the presence of the competent prosecutor, and the police continues to work on ascertaining the circumstances of the event, as well as identifying and locating the possible perpetrator. The public will be informed of the next steps in a timely manner.

The same rules apply for enhancing the carousel with photos or videos. If we use generic stock photos and visuals crammed with information, the content might put off the audience. The same applies for carousels that are too uniform - always relying on the same design, created using the same template. The audience quickly learns to skip them, thinking subconsciously: "I have seen this before."

Of course, it is important to stay consistent in visual design; however, it is advisable to change the dynamic from time to time and introduce some variation in the layout of elements.

It is worth noting that format dimensions have changed: for Instagram carousels, instead of square (1:1), the 4:5 aspect ratio should now be used, since it has a larger footprint on the screen, thus increasing the chances that users will stop scrolling and take a look at the content.

A HANDY TIP: We recommend using tools such as Canva Brand Kit, which allow recognising the content as belonging under the same brand, while staying fresh. Canva, as a tool, will provide recommended dimensions, so all you need to do is choose what you want to publish when creating content, and Canva will automatically open a file with the appropriate dimensions.

FILMING, EDITING, POSTING: TIPS AND TOOLS





08

FILMING, EDITING, POSTING: TIPS AND TOOLS

We often think that our equipment is not good enough. However, with a few simple tips, we can achieve a sufficient level of quality with devices that we have available.

FILMING

- Many of us forget to wipe the camera before filming, although it may be covered in grease, fingerprints, etc. It is important to wipe the camera before filming.
- When it comes to audio recording, a microphone is always handy, but if you do not have one, be sure to record in a quiet room without an echo. Audio can be recorded even in a closet full of clothes. Note: Make sure to conduct a recording test - always check whether the sound is audible and how well.
- Film in the direction of lighting, rather than against it. The person's face should be lit, rather than in a shadow.
- Tripod: If the person doing the filming does not have a steady hand, a tripod can be used, as well as cheap mobile phone suction pads that can be mounted on almost any smooth surface.
- When filming yourself, try to make sure the shot appears "natural" - the phone should be approximately at arm's length.
- The shot can be improved by coming closer to the phone, rather than zooming in. Zooming in should be used only if there is no other option.
- Play around with what you have available - a tripod, additional lighting; all these tools can improve the video considerably.

EDITING

When editing, the focus should be on capturing attention; quick cuts and a rhythm that follows the speaker's flow make the content more dynamic. The screen should be straightforward - without superfluous information or excessive elements. It is important to stay within the **safe area** - make sure that all elements (text, logo, subtitles) are within the zone visible on different devices. Pay attention to consistent sound volume - avoid big fluctuations that may put off the audience. Most simple editing tools include simple sound editing functionalities.

Subtitles have become the norm. Everything is subtitled since 92% of the audience watch muted videos.¹³ As for animation - never choose the option where the sentence gradually appears, word by word or letter by letter - the entire subtitle should be shown immediately, especially in the opening shot - the first three seconds of the video.

Subtitles are also important because of the choice of *cover photo*. The choice of the photo shown at the very beginning drives viewing rates, and also answers the question: What is the topic of the content, and does it concern the user? Sometimes, if we are not satisfied with the cover photo offered from the video itself, we can choose one ourselves. It is advisable not to use images that are not taken from the video itself, but rather to take an image from the most attractive part of the video and add a caption that will explain what it is about even better than the transcript.

Cover - On social media platforms, a large image at the top of the profile or page, which visually represents the user's identity, topic or brand and helps create the first impression of the profile. In addition, a cover can be set for Instagram highlights.

Caption - for both a carousel and a video, this is a description that accompanies the post, complements it and provides more details. We should try to make sure the content from the post is not repeated in the caption.

It is crucial to take time to correct any typing errors. Tools such as Veed.io or Captions, as well as Inshot are excellent for creating transcripts,

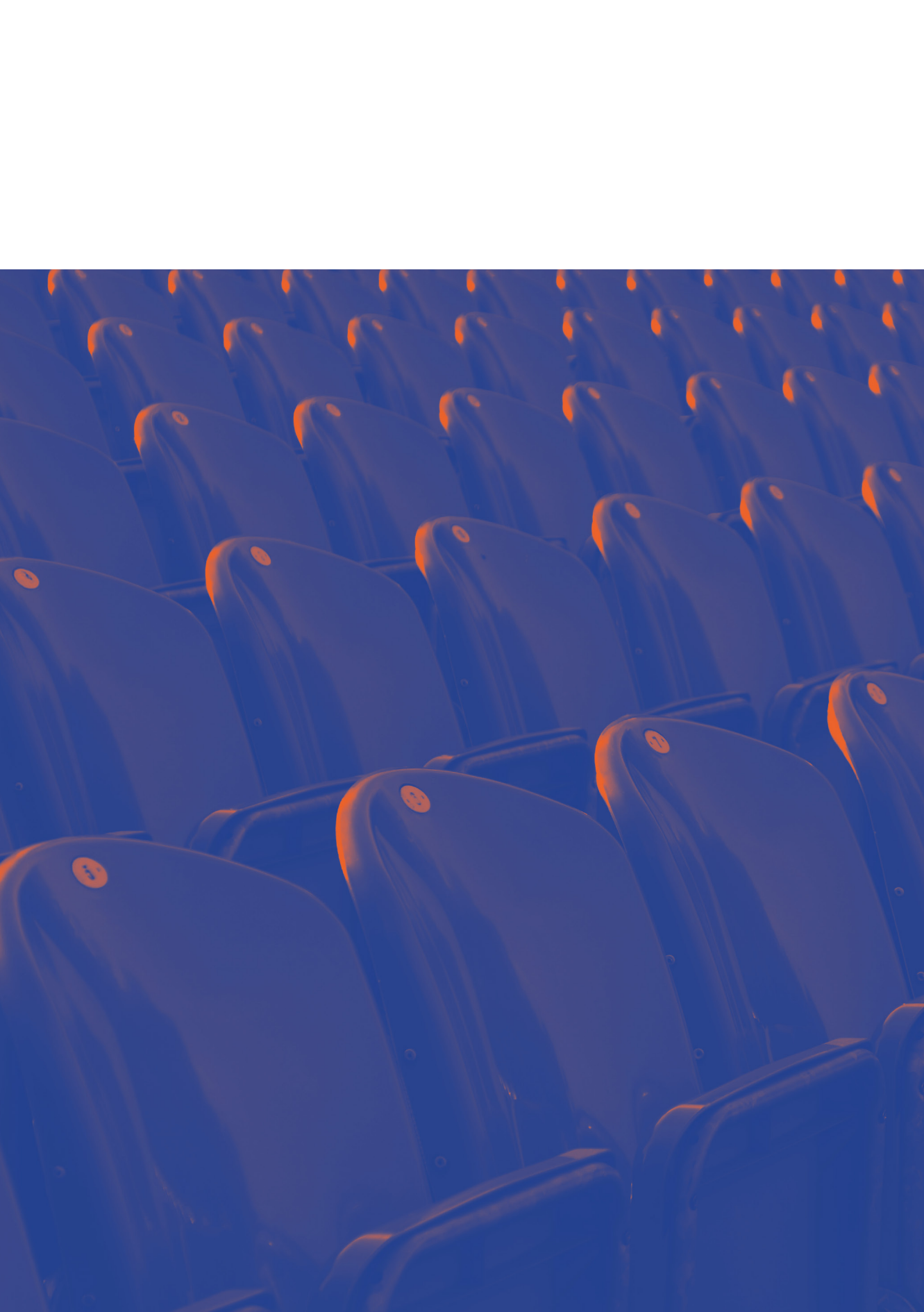
¹³ The Rise of Silent Videos: Why 92% of Mobile Users Watch Without Sound, VCD Studio Blog, (June 2025) <https://bit.ly/4be4Y7K>

but we should make sure to check the text multiple times if we do not have access to copy editors.


Where possible, we can also use *collab* post (posts that simultaneously appear on multiple profiles) to expand the reach through the network of organisations or relevant profiles.

Each of these steps can be made easier with available tools mentioned above:

- **Canva** - for cover photos, static visuals and brand kit
- **Inshot** - editing on a phone or computer; quick and intuitive
- **Veed.io** or **Captions** - for subtitles and quick editing
- **Opus Clip** - for cutting long videos into short clips for social media



KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

The background features several overlapping, rounded, pill-shaped elements in shades of orange and red, set against a solid blue background. The shapes are arranged in a diagonal pattern from the bottom left towards the top right, creating a sense of depth and movement.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Key terms and concepts are provided below to facilitate the understanding and application of these Guidelines. They are divided into four groups based on their function: relevant platforms, key terms, analytics and tools.

RELEVANT PLATFORMS

Facebook - A social media network for content sharing, communication and advertising. Facebook is the place where people/businesses/institutions create their pages, connect with others and share messages, images and videos.

Instagram - A social media network focused on visual content, allowing users to post and share images and videos, follow other profiles, communicate via comments and messages, and discover new content through search and recommendations.

YouTube - A platform and social media network for sharing videos, where users

can watch, post, comment and share video content. Channels for posting different content can be created on YouTube.

LinkedIn - A social media network focused on professional networking, where users create profiles to present their career and skills, liaise with colleagues and experts, and share professional information and business opportunities.

Meta - The company that owns the platforms Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp.

TikTok - A social media network for sharing short videos, usually between a few seconds and a few minutes long. Users can record and edit videos, add music, effects and filters, and follow and comment on other users' content. The key characteristic is its advanced algorithm that shows videos matching users' interests.

Twitter/X - A social media network for short public posts. Short texts (up to 280 characters), images, videos and links are posted and shared on Twitter. It is characterised by rapid sharing of information and opinions in real time, meaning that posts appear as an event unfolds, without delays. This is why Twitter has become one of the key platforms for following news, discussions and trends worldwide.

KEY TERMS

Post - Posts are the primary form of communication on platforms. The term “post” is used to denote everything included in a single item of published content. The content may be: a photo post, video post, link post, story, reel, collab post, status, tweet. For instance, a Facebook post will consist of a photo or visual accompanied by text (caption).

Reaction - In this context, we refer to reactions to content posted on social media by their users. Depending on the platform, different reactions to content may have different names and functions. For instance, on Facebook, reactions include different expressions of emotion

(such as like, laugh, anger, shock, sadness, love), while the reaction on Instagram is a heart - i.e. a like.

Like - The best-known reaction - a like. Represented by a thumbs-up emoticon.

Emoticon, Emoji - The best-known and most commonly used - a smiley (smiley face). It was originally created using punctuation marks - a colon followed by a close parenthesis, representing a smiling face :) Smileys, and later also other graphic symbols that are nowadays referred to as emoticons, are used to add meaning to a written message. Emoticons represent emotions, objects, actions, flags, symbols, etc. There are currently over 3,900 emoticons.

Saves - The number of users who have saved a post for later.

Shares - The number of times other users shared a post publicly on their profiles or sent it directly to another user.

Story - A temporary post in the form of an image or a video that automatically disappears from the profile after 24 hours. This format is available on many platforms but is currently most extensively used on Instagram and Facebook.

Reel - A 15-90 second video post in the vertical orientation on Instagram or Facebook, often accompanied by music, filters and effects. It is currently most extensively used on Instagram; however, the same format, albeit under a different name, is also used on TikTok (the default TikTok format), as well as on YouTube (as YouTube Shorts). Once posted, a reel is permanently stored on the user's profile and can be accessed in a dedicated profile section.

Carousel - An Instagram post that can include multiple photos, videos, visuals. For instance, it can include up to 20 images in a single post, which a user can swipe through horizontally. It can be used to present longer text content broken down into multiple images for better readability. Just like a feed post, it is accompanied by a caption below, and possibly location, hashtags, tags.

Feed - The centralised flow of content shown to a user when they open a social media app - i.e. on the user profile's home page. It includes posts, photos, videos, advertisements and other contents posted by the profiles followed by the user, as well as recommendations generated by the algorithm based on the user's specific interests and past interactions.

Hashtag - The key word/concept/topic in a given post, preceded by the hash symbol #. Hashtags can be used to find/group posts on the same topic.

Tagging - The action whereby a user creates a reference to another profile, organisation/institution/company page in his/her post, photo, comment by using the symbol @. This enables linking the content to the tagged profile and notifying the tagged profile about the content concerned.

Live - A live video format on social media which allows users or organisations to broadcast video (and audio) to their audience in real time. During a live video, the user can interact with viewers through comments, reactions and virtual engagement tools (e.g. polls, question boxes). This format is used for direct communication, promotions, events, trainings and crisis information dissemination, since it ensures instant, two-way information sharing.

Viral content - Content that organically spreads very quickly and reaches an

outstandingly large number of people, often beyond the original target group, via social media. It spills over into the traditional media and becomes recognisable to the general public.

Visual - An image that has been edited, e.g. text, logo or other content has been added, or it has been entirely created using graphic elements, in such a way as to send a message. Visuals are created in sizes corresponding to the platform where they are to be posted.

Caption - Text accompanying a post, i.e. the textual description of the post. It has its origins in the marketing industry, since it denotes promotional/advertising text.

Voiceover - An audio recording of a speech, i.e. spoken commentary or narration. Its purpose is to contribute additional information about the content. A voiceover may consist of sound only, or

the speaker may be visible in the video format. However, in the context of creating video content, “to record a voiceover” primarily refers to an audio recording.

Transcript - A voiceover may be transcribed. When the transcript is inserted into a video, it becomes subtitles, similar to the technique used to translate foreign TV series.

Subtitles - Visual presentation of the text heard in video content. Optionally, they can be used to provide translation; however, in most cases, they are intended to ensure that users who watch video content without sound (muted) can also understand its message. Beside subtitles, additional information can be provided by text overlay.

Text Overlay - Additional information provided by displaying text in video content, which is not necessarily spoken in the voiceover/audio.

B-roll footage - Jargon for a short video or photo used in video format to provide context for a specific part of the audio recording or to add visual interest, e.g. a video showing the atmosphere at an event.

Collab Post - A post created jointly with another profile. The option was launched in 2021 on Instagram. It allows two or more profiles (currently up to six) to “own” the same post, i.e. to be shown as the creators of the same post. This boosts visibility and is an excellent format for joint campaigns and actions. For example, the ministry and the police.

Brand Kit - Brands usually have a brand kit - a collection of visual brand elements (colours, fonts, logo) and rules on how they are to be used and in which case (print or digital edition).

Stock Photo / Video - Professional photos or video footage that can be used free of

charge or for a fee to create social media content. They are recognisable by their high-quality and by showing situations that are often staged. Well-known platforms offering stock content for sale include: Istockphoto, Shutterstock. This content can be described as hi-fi (high fidelity) content.

Lo-fi or low fidelity content - A video or visual that appears authentic rather than produced - recorded with a phone, without editing, with natural lighting, without a script.

Cover - On social media platforms, a large image at the top of the profile or page, which visually represents the user's identity, topic or brand and helps create the first impression of the profile. In addition, a cover can be set for Instagram highlights.

Integrated campaigns - Those that use a wide array of channels to communicate, including: interviews on television/radio/

in newspapers, video clips for television, public events, press conferences, audio or video programmes or documentaries, billboards, radio jingles, leaflets, posters, social media etc.

Link Post - A type of social media post that includes a clickable button or web address. Clicking on it opens another page - for instance, a news article, blog, video, an external address. This is a post that takes you to another "location" outside the social media network. For this reason, platforms are increasingly diminishing their visibility, making them less attractive. The word "link" is also used as a verb to denote adding a link to a post as its part.

Scrolling - The action of moving content up or down on the screen in order to view posts by other users. It is based on an analogy with unrolling a physical scroll to read it.

Highlights - Stories saved on an Instagram profile, remaining available until removed, and in any case longer than 24 hours, grouped by topic. They may be added later from archived content (already expired stories, which are no longer visible to the audience). Highlights can have their own covers and titles.

Boosting - Paid promotion of an existing post. A user can boost the visibility of a post by paying to have it displayed to more users than would have seen it organically. In this process, in addition to setting the budget, the user can specify the profile of users who should be shown the boosted post, i.e. to set its target group (by location, gender, interests etc.), as well as the time frame in which the boosted post will be shown.

ANALYTICS

Algorithm - Social media algorithms determine content order and visibility by predicting which content is more likely to be interacted with by users, based on their past behaviour, connections with other users and characteristics of the content itself. Such algorithms shape user experience by filtering and ranking information according to individual interests and the platform's goals.¹

¹ See more:

Bucher, T. (2012). Want to be on the top? Algorithmic power and threat of invisibility on Facebook. In *New Media & Society*, 14(7), 1164-1180.

<https://bit.ly/3NF23uQ>

Gillespie, T. (2014). The Relevance of Algorithms. In: T. Gillespie, P. Boczkowski and K. Foot (eds), *Media Technologies: Essays on Communication, Materiality, and Society* (pp. 167-194). MIT Press.

Profile - Created on a social media network, it represents a person, company, organisation, institution, campaign. It has certain features - such as a profile photo, name and other descriptive features. One person can create multiple profiles.

Reach - The number of unique users - i.e. the number of profiles or people who saw specific content, regardless of whether they reacted to it or not. Reach measures how far a post has spread, i.e. the size of its audience.

Reach Rate / Engagement Rate - The percentage of users who saw or interacted with content relative to the total number of followers or total reach. These rates are used to assess the performance of a post in terms of reaching and engaging the audience.

Impressions - The total number of times content was displayed, including multiple displays to the same user. For instance, if a user sees the post three times, it counts as three impressions, but only one reach.

Engagement - The total number of interactions with specific content by users. Includes reactions, comments, shares, saves and other interactions with content. High engagement signals to the algorithm that the content is relevant and interesting, which may increase its visibility.

Cover

Profile photo

Profile name

SEESAC 3.5K followers • 43 following Contact us

Home About Photos Instagram More ▾ Like Message Search ...

About

- We support disarmament and arms control in South East Europe since 2002.
- Page · Nonprofit organization
- Bulevar Zorana Dindića 64, Belgrade, Serbia
- seesac.org

Create Post

Photo/Video Check in Tag Friends

SEESAC 30 mins 👤

Talking to the media isn't just about words - it's about presence, timing, and knowing when to pause.

Photos See all

- GUIDELINES
- Are we forgetting someone?
- Arms control central to human security and sustainable development.
- 98%
- Why would you RISK IT?
- Fatalities

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REACTION Like Love Wow Careful Sad Angry

152 comments 200 shares

Like Comment Share

View comments Oldest

Write a comment...

Reaction

Subtitle

Post



Dimensions:
1080x1440 px

Collab Post

Visual

Caption

Save

Profile

12:30

← undp_seesac

635 Posts 1,597 Followers 222 Following

UNDP SEESAC
Nonprofit organization
www.seesac.org

Follow Message +

Highlight CelebrateWith... PSSM & EU a...

GUIDELINES
FOR MEDIA & POLICE SERVICES
for communication with the media in cases of firearms misuse in gender-based violence

Are we forgetting someone?
The missing piece in the security puzzle

“Arms control contributes to human security and sustainable development.”
Michaela de Goeij
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Why would you RISK IT?

98%
of the population of the world is not armed.

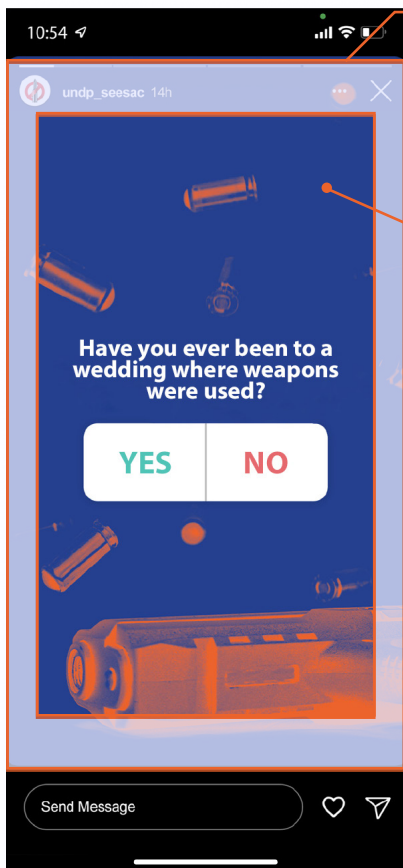
Fatalities
Firearm related more than double compared to the previous quarter

Highlights

Carousel

Story

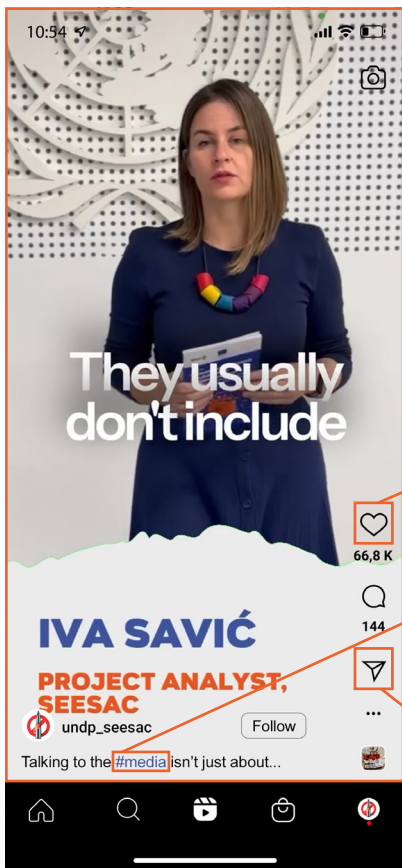
Dimensions:
1080x1920 px



Safe area

Reel

Dimensions:
1080x1920 px



Like

Hashtag

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TOOLS

Canva - An online tool for creating visuals and graphic content, which can also be used for shorter video formats.

Inshot - A video editing application suitable for beginner editors.

Meta Business Suite - A tool for managing posts, ads and statistics on Facebook and Instagram.

Monday, Asana, Trello, ClickUp - Task and project organisation tools, frequently used in digital marketing.

Opus Clip - A tool to create short clips optimised for social media out of long videos.

Veed.io / Captions - Online automatic tools for generating and editing subtitles in videos. Can also be used for minor video editing interventions.

