SecurePART

Increasing the Engagement of
Civil Society in Security Research

GUIDE FOR PROMOTERS OF COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF SECURITY RESEARCH: **A SPECIAL FOCUS ON CSOS**

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1. Introduction

This guide is a product of the SecurePART project that aims to provide practical information, tips and good practice to security research communication promoters in order to facilitate their activities in the field of security research. In particular, the Guide aims to bring together stakeholders from Civil Society and Security Research – to work on a 'case for action', in order to exchange mutual advantages coming from their different fields.

1.1. Background

SecurePART is a project co-funded by the European Commission under the Seventh Framework Programme that aims to support internal structure of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) promoting collaboration among them and with the rest of stakeholders, from industrial technology developers, public security providers, policy makers, and researchers; it explores institutional opportunities within the European Union Security Research regime in order to contribute to more inclusive, responsible and legitimate governance of the contentious research field of security technologies; finally, it defines a strategy and an Action Plan on how to increase CSOs participation in both co-shaping and implementation of Security Research (SR).

The results from the study that the consortium carried out within SecurePART project – but also from other projects' experiences – state that the engagement of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in security research is scarce and difficult to implement.

Therefore the purpose of this guide is to give useful tools to be considered by all those researchers, academia, industry, policy makers who want to "translate" and spread their findings, knowledge, policies or new products among the Civil Society. Indeed, it highlights the particularities of the communication of security research towards CSOs.

The guide illustrates the main challenges for the security research stakeholders – for instance, the expression of security research results in a more clear and understandable way to those actors who are not familiar with the technical language, or to have access to the civil society networks. It provides also some recommendations about how to structure the communication process and to prepare a communication strategy.

1.2. The aim of the guide

The perspective offered by the Guide is based on the project results coming from: interviews with CSOs representatives, independent experts; desk research; analysis of CSOs relation with other stakeholders and (including) other CSOs. These results have shown that there is a big gap between the security research realm and the civil society realm. Too often, the scientific results about security produced by universities, research centres, experts, remain stuck within the sector while they should be shared and spread also in other sectors, in particular among civil society. Citizens need to be informed on scientific results about security because sooner or later those results will have an impact on their lives. In this regard CSOs can play the role of mediator but also they can contribute in implementing such security research results through their networks, their projects, their contacts with other stakeholders. CSOs can also contribute providing other sources of information (mostly from the grassroots) that can be useful to complement the security research.

This guide aims to offer some solutions in order to help reduce the gap between the Security Research (SR) sphere and the Civil Society sphere: in other words, to bring closer academia, research centres and experts in the field of Security to CSOs, NGOs, volunteer groups and international networks.

The involvement of CSOs in SR is not an easy task: in order to achieve this goal it is very important to first engage the promoters of communications of both fields in different communication actions where they can get in contact with the stakeholders and be up to date in the latest research results, projects, activities related to their work in security research.

This Guide is made to help the promotion of SR among the different actors involved in this field in order to increase CSOs participation.

1.3. What's in this guide?

The Guide explains through an easy vocabulary and with schematic steps, how CSOs can be involved in different communication actions regarding Security Research. In other words, the Guide illustrates the main communication actions that communication promoters from the Security Research field can undertake in order to reach CSOs: who is the target audience, how to structure the information to communicate, how to communicate and disseminate such information.

In order to provide a better understanding of these specific communication activities, the Guide provides a set of best practices that serve as useful examples.

2. Communication

Security Research is an important part of our lives; just think of the data protection issue or maritime surveillance technologies, or food security strategies. The application of security research is inseparable from society. However, security research is only relevant when it solves problems and addresses people's lives. The large number of scientific studies and the development of technologies have an inevitable impact on society, the structure of its economy and way of living. This is the reason why the communication of security research results among civil society and among different sectors is so crucial. This Guide wants to contribute in this regard by providing some useful tools to undertake this mission. The elaboration of a communication plan is a very detailed task that every SR promoter needs to carry out carefully. The following paragraphs may help you to go through all the main aspects you need to consider to carry out this task successfully.

2.1. The challenges

Scientists, academia, policy makers and companies ought to communicate their scientific knowledge in a clear and accessible language in order to facilitate the spread of information among a larger audience. The questions here are the following ones: how much does the public understands about security research? Is security research addressing the issues people care about – and what are those issues?

There are also cultural and social issues linked to security research. Communicating security research results to CSOs is a complicated issue to tackle. This audience is highly diversified and it encompasses several groups and subgroups different from each other in culture, religion, status, age, sex, countries of residence and economical resources.

Besides these differences, the interests and concerns about security research issues have increased within the last years and there is a growing demand for this information from citizens.

Additionally communication of security research results can enhance the reputation of the scientific team and the value of the research in combination: this process can bring the interest of more stakeholders, more budgets, the creation of market demand for the application of these results and the development of new products. Citizens have a direct influence on the growth of the SR as customers who decide what to purchase.

Hence, bridging the gap between security research and civil society can be very beneficial for both the parts: the challenge here is to find the way to allow both parts to interact and exchange information and mutual advantages.

2.2. The Audience

This guide understands as promoters of communication of SR all those actors such as researchers, academia, technology industry, policy makers that want to spread their results, knowledge, policies or new products among the Civil Society.

2.3. Messages

What do you want to communicate?

First of all it is important to identify the outcomes of the research activity to communicate and disseminate: the selection of the information should be made in accordance with the members of the team. Indeed, the harmonization of the vision of the members of the team is essential to create a unique and clear message. Define homogeneous criteria; try to elaborate an internal guide of action for the participants of the team to support and help all communication activities to an external audience. This way, consensus on the objectives of the communication and dissemination is established and this ensures that the appropriate information is given each time from all partners.

Secondly, it is recommended to establish a communication coordinator to be in charge of the development of the plan and in control of the strategy.

Thirdly, it is good to consider the audience's level of understanding in order to select the most appropriate language of communication. The objectives need to be realistic and achievable: it is better to focus on the quality of the communication and dissemination activities rather than just on the quantity.

2.4. When the communication should take place

All communication activities should be planned during the preparation stage of the project. In this phase, the objectives and milestones of the project are determined, consequently, also the communication objectives can be realized in accordance with the general goal.

The promoter of communication should also take into account the desired extent of the impact to achieve through the communication: short, medium or long terms.

Starting a dissemination activity early will increase the impact it can achieve. Provide CSOs with a notice in advance of what you have planned so that they have time to become interested in the matter and finally to get involved. The early communication of results supports engagement and helps to create expectations concerning your work. It is not necessary that the product or the process development be fully completed to start the dissemination. Providing information during the activity will help to incorporate CSOs in the process, facilitating their understanding of both the objective of the project and its context.

2.5. Methods of dissemination

Dissemination is one step within the communication set of activities ant it serves to spread the work and results among the target audience. The selection of your communication tools is a part of your plan that requires special attention. Keep in mind that these are the vehicles of your dissemination process, including the channels and the vocabulary, useful to reach your target group.

To do list

· **select your message;**
· **identify the channels;**
· **identify the target audience;**
· **select your communication vehicle;**

· **prepare a press release;**
· **choose the most adequate communication tools;**
· **If possible, centralize the "feedback point"** (one email, one web site, one contact person...)

3. Tools and Products of the Communication Strategy

The peculiarity of the present Guide lies on its very specific topic in which it is focused: how to engage CSOs in security research. The following section offers some tips and examples to build the communication strategy in order to raise the interest and engagement of CSOs.

Dissemination channels / Dissemination tools	Personal, personalised, direct – 1	Personal, non–personalised, direct – 2	Physical delivery of information holder — Printed – 3	Electronic data holder, CD, DVD, pendrive	Internet 4 — Website, passive 4.1	Active webcast, e–mail – 4.2	Electronic broad–casting (radio, TV…) – 5	Networking – 6	CSOs Importance Scale
1. FOR PERSONNEL INTERACTIONS									
1.1 Personnel discussions, meetings	▨								1
1.2 chatting on events, group meetings	▨								1
1.3 expert consultation	▨								2
1.4 expert panels to support specific users	▨								2
1.5 events organized by the researchers. Workshops, seminars, conferences		▨							1
1.6 trainings		▨							1
1.7 events organized by others. Workshops, seminars, conferences		▨							1
1.9 exhibitions, fairs		▨							1
1.10 practical demonstrations		▨							1
1.11 brokerage events		▨							1
2. FOR WRITTEN INFORMATION									
2.1 flyers, brochures			▨	▨	▨	▨			1
2.2 research summary sheets			▨	▨	▨	▨			1
2.3 guidelines, manuals			▨	▨	▨	▨			1
2.4 booklets on specific subjects			▨	▨	▨	▨			2
2.5 research reports, studies			▨	▨	▨	▨			2
2.6 books			▨	▨	▨	▨			2
2.7 posters			▨	▨	▨	▨			1
2.8 recommendations			▨	▨	▨	▨			1

Dissemination channels / Dissemination tools	Personal, personalised, direct – 1	Personal, non–personalised, direct – 2	Physical delivery of information holder — Printed – 3	Physical delivery — Electronic data holder, CD, DVD, pendrive	Internet 4 — Website, passive 4.1	Internet 4 — Active webcast, e–mail – 4.2	Electronic broad–casting (radio, TV…) – 5	Networking – 6	CSOs Importance Scale
2.9 inventories of publications, successful cases, books			▨	▨	▨	▨			1
2.10 conference proceedings			▨	▨	▨				2
2.11 expert opinions			▨	▨	▨				2
2.12 newsletters			▨	▨	▨	▨			1
2.13 annual reviews, reports			▨	▨	▨	▨			2
2.14 research publications			▨	▨	▨	▨			2
3 FOR AUDIO–VISUAL TOOLS									
3.1 videos				▨	▨	▨			1
3.2 e–learning tools					▨	▨			1
3.3 Website					▨	▨			1
3.4 Social media					▨	▨			1
4 FOR MASS MEDIA									
4.1 Articles in press journals			▨	▨	▨				2
4.2 press releases			▨		▨				2
4.3 press conferences		▨					▨		2
4.4 radio interviews, reports					▨		▨		1
4.5 TV interviews					▨		▨		1
4.6 press articles			▨		▨		▨		1
4.7 TV films					▨		▨		1
4.8 Expert discussions, TV, radio					▨		▨		1
4.9 Education programmes, TV					▨	▨	▨		1
5 FOR NETWORKING									
5.1 Collective research	▨		▨	▨	▨			▨	1
5.2 Cluster innovation activities	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨			▨	1

3.2 Good practices carried out in security research

The Guide identifies different communication actions, organized at the European Level to reach civil society organizations and citizens, with regard to Security Research. In the following table a list is presented with some examples using different vehicles and messages.

N°	Name of the best practice	Level	Target	Media	Effects	Reference
1	Official Catalogue of Secure Societies by the European Commission	European	All stakeholders: CSOs, scientist, academia, politicians, industry	Guidelines, manuals	Investing in Security Research for the benefit of European citizens, critical infrastructures, SMEs and industry	Link
2	The global expoconference on Critical Infrastructures Protection	European	All stakeholders: CSOs, scientist, academia, politicians, industry	Events organized by others	The growing importance of critical infrastructures, their protection and the related Cyber Security protocols led to different approaches and continuous legislative changes worldwide. CPExpo is the answer to the exigency of an exhibition, which provides visibility and business opportunities to those industrial solutions and the newest innovation enabling communities to feel safe thanks to the protection of their critical infrastructures.	Link
3	SEREN project website	European	All stakeholders: CSOs, scientist, academia, politicians, industry	Website	The aim is to link the different NCPs of the security research programme, to initiate coordination in the network, and to improve the quality of the network and, as a matter of fact, the ability of its members to deliver a high level of services to the community.	Link
4	Global Risk Forum	International	All stakeholders: CSOs, scientist, academia, politicians, industry	Events organized by other	The International Disaster and Risk Conferences (IDRC) – the world's leading conferences on integrative risk management. It's an unique community of business leaders, decision makers, practitioners, UN–, IO– & NGO–agents, and scientists that share and discuss new findings and experiences about the broad spectrum of risks societies are facing today.	Link
5	PRACTICE toolbox	European	CSOs as end users	e–learning tools	The toolbox will be a web–based database with a catalogue of exisiting and innovative components provided and developed during the PRACTICE project by the partners and the members of the Supplier Platform, validated by the Users.	Link
6	PRACTICE toolbox video present – ation	European	CSOs as end users	Videos		Link

N°	Name of the best practice	Level	Target	Media	Effects	Reference
7	Interactive fire map from The Center for Satellite Based Crisis Information	European	All stakeholders, specially CSOs as end users	Website	The Center for Satellite Based Crisis Information presents a service of the German Remotes Sensing Data. It provides a 24/7 service for the rapid provision, processing and analysis of satellite imagery during natural and environmental disasters, for humanitarian relief activities and civil security issues worldwide.	Link
8	DEFENCiV TV	International	All stakeholders, specially CSOs	TV interviews, education programmes	Information channel exclusively for professionals in civil defense and global security, created by the French High Committee for Civil Defense.	Link
9	HCFDC blog	National		Blog		Link
10	HCFDC press releases and opinions	National		Press releases and opinions		Link
11	HCFDC formation	National		Trainings		Link
12	IAEM events and conference	International	CSOs	Events, conferences, webminars, meetings	IAEM is dedicated to promoting the "Principles of Emergency Management" and representing professionals whose goals are saving lives and protecting property and the environment during emergencies and disasters.	Link
13	Nanoandme website	European	Citizens and CSOs	Website	The aim is to provide balanced information about nanotechnologies and be the hub of debate for everyone to discuss the important issues which arise from its use.	Link
14	Innosec Web-tool	European	CSOs	Website, e-learning	Web-tool that help security organizations to explain why innovation belongs to everybody, what kind of leadership and management is needed, how to develop an innovation culture, and how to support organizational learning and change management to CSOs.	Link
15	Innosec, Web-tool manual	European	CSOs	Manual		Link
16	European Security Roundtable – ESRT Facebook website	European	All stakeholders	Social media	The key function of the ESRT is to provide a forum for EU-centered security and defence topics. It is a neutral platform between the EU Institutions and encompasses all major political groups of the European Parliament.	Link

N°	Name of the best practice	Level	Target	Media	Effects	Reference
17	European Forum for Urban Security – Efus Facebook website	European	All stakeholders	Social media	A network of 250 local authorities in 17 countries aiming to strengthen crime reduction policies and to promote the role of local authorities in national and European policies.	Link
18	Privacy International Research reports	International	All stakeholders	Research reports, studies, research publications	Privacy International has been producing world-class research reports for over a decade, in collaboration with academic institutions across the globe. We work on a huge range of topics and produce in-depth reports, from topics like communications surveillance, to country specific reports and submissions to the United Nations using local research and experience.	Link
19	Privacy International Expert opinion		All stakeholders	Expert opinion	Privacy International is building a global network of advocates to fight for privacy, uncovering surveillance practices around the world, and advocating for strong privacy protections on the domestic and regional level.	Link
20	Chatham House Social media	International	All stakeholders	Social media	World-leading source of independent analysis, debate and influential ideas on international affairs.	Link
21	Chatham House Publications			Publications		Link
22	Statewatch Journal	International	All stakeholders	Journal	Statewatch Journal is published quarterly and carries analyses and features and sources.	Link
23	Statewatch Research publications			Research publications, press releases, among other information	This database is updated weekly and contains all the material from the **Statewatch bulletin** (since 1991), **Statewatch news online** (since 2000) and our archives.	Link
24	Statewatch Inventories of publications			Inventories of publications	Statewatch has been systematically monitoring and documenting the development of EU Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) policy since 1991. SEMDOC seeks to increase public understanding and debate about JHA policy through the provision of comprehensive information about decision-making and legislation.	Link

3.3 Conclusions: Top–ten tips on security research communication learnt from CSOs

1. When you are working on the communication strategy and you are selecting the CSOs to involve, make sure to know enough about them: search about what is their mission, what are the projects they are already involved, how they are structured, how big they are in terms of staff and network. This information will help you to understand how to approach them, and what might be their interest in engaging in your security research.

> WHILE YOU ARE SELECTING THE CSOS TO INVOLVE, MAKE SURE TO KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT THEM, ESPECIALLY ABOUT THEIR MISSION, THEIR PROJECTS AND THEIR STRUCTURE.

2. It will be important to check external perceptions of your communication actions among potential target audiences before starting. Having an internal point of view you may have a different idea from the one coming from external actors. This will help to adjust your strategy and increase the chances of implementing a successful interaction with Civil Society Organizations.

> CHECK EXTERNAL PERCEPTIONS OF YOUR COMMUNICATION ACTION AMONG POTENTIAL TARGET AUDIENCES BEFORE YOU START

3. CSOs are already engaged in many other activities related to their field of expertise: if you want to engage them also in security research you need to propose clear objectives and accessible contents. This will avoid waste of time and energies for CSOs to understand the information: this will also allow them to join the communication actions fast and to contribute.

> SET CLEAR AND SIMPLE CONTENTS AND OBJECTIVES IN ORDER TO HELP CSOS TO JOIN THE COMMUNICATION ACTIONS

4. Think about what are the most interesting subjects and themes for your target audience. Thematic areas mentioned by the CSOs regarding Security Research that can raise their interest are varied: health risks, environmental risks, peace, privacy, cybersecurity, individual civil rights, minority rights, etc.

> THINK ABOUT THE MOST INTERESTING SUBJECTS AND THEMES FOR YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

5. Be concrete on the mission and vision of your strategy. Some may be self-evident, like being honest and cost-effective communications. But also think about what you are prepared to do, and not do, as part of your communication strategy.

BE CONCRETE ON THE MISSION AND VISION OF YOUR STRATEGY

6. Develop some simple messages and model how these might work in different contexts – a news release, a report, a newspaper article, a website page. It will be good in order to maximize the success of the action and to reinforce the links with CSOs that will minimize a prejudice that undermines their potential role as an actor in research. Specifically the specific competences they have, the acceptability they can provide to new SR developments, societal acceptance they can contribute to produce with the variety of viewpoints and priorities they express.

DEVELOP SOME SIMPLE MESSAGES AND MODEL HOW THESE MIGHT WORK IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

7. Choose the target for CSOs according to the goals you want to achieve with your communication strategy. For example, if you want a communication action in large scale you should consider the umbrella organizations at European level that support the activity of small CSOs, provide information across nations and levels, give trainings and run different projects with different stakeholders. A structured environment (platform, forum) in which CSO participate is usually seen as a very positive scenario.

CHOOSE THE TARGET FOR CSOS ACCORDING TO THE GOALS YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE WITH YOUR COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

8. Share your communication strategy with the CSOs you targeted and be open to their proposals to implement it. CSOs will support your communication activity so it is good to hear about their proposals. Include a full list of all the relevant communication activities, developed into a working project plan with deadlines and responsibilities.

SHARE YOUR COMMUNICATION STRATEGY WITH THE CSOS AND INCLUDE A FULL LIST OF ALL THE RELEVANT COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES, DEVELOPED INTO A WORKING PROJECT PLAN WITH DEADLINES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
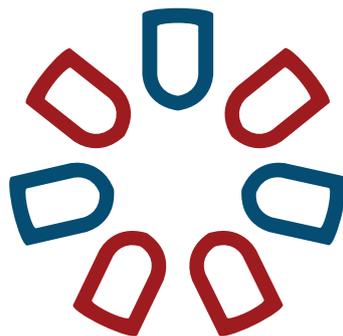
9. It is important to have in mind that CSOs have limitations especially in terms of human and financial resources. Thus, keep your strategy manageable and include key deadlines, milestones and review points. Also, estimate the time and budget involved.
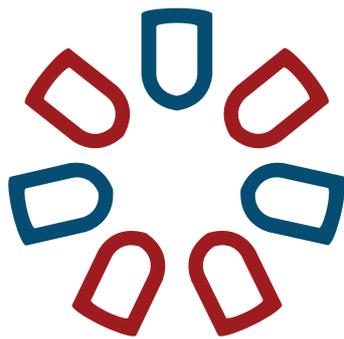
> **KEEP IT MANAGEABLE AND INCLUDE KEY DEADLINES, MILESTONES AND REVIEW POINTS AND ESTIMATE THE BUDGET**

10. Do not wait until the end of the whole activity to evaluate the work: set some simple mid-term evaluation measures to detect the positive and negative trends of your communication activities in order to adjust it time to time. Finally, it can occur that not all the information will reach CSOs, perhaps because it is too technical or because the channels used to communicate are not the adequate ones. Some processes are too complicated and time consuming, and this is one of the reasons why CSOs prefer not to get involved. Record your experiences and learn from them and improve the next time.

> **SET SOME SIMPLE MID-TERM EVALUATION MEASURES TO DETECT THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE TRENDS OF YOUR COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES. RECORD YOUR EXPERIENCES TO LEARN FROM THEM AND IMPROVE THE NEXT TIME.**