

Deliverable D2.1:

Marketing and Dissemination Plan

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Abstract

The Marketing and Dissemination Plan defines the strategic approach to maximize the project's visibility, foster stakeholder engagement, and amplify its overall impact. The plan includes key elements such as branding, digital marketing, participation in relevant events, public relations, and the development of strategic partnerships.



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1. Introduction

CYCERONE (CYbersecurity aCademy foR educatiOn and experieNcE) is a EU co-funded project designed to address the cybersecurity talent gap in Europe by offering a unified access point for diverse learners – focusing on SMEs and public sectors - to enhance their cybersecurity skills. The project runs from January 2025 to December 2027, with EIT Digital leading a 15-partner consortium across 9 EU countries.

This **Marketing & Dissemination Plan** outlines the strategy to ensure maximum visibility, stakeholder engagement, and project impact. Key components include branding, digital marketing, event participation, public relations and strategic partnerships. Talent Garden will coordinate the Work Package 2 on Marketing and Dissemination and NTUA will lead the Task 2.2 on Dissemination and Communication activities, working closely with the project partners to ensure maximum outreach and impact.

This plan will serve as a guide for all the consortium partners in order to promote the project and maximize its impact.

2. Communication & Dissemination Strategy

2.1 Purpose and messaging

The primary objective of CYCERONE's multi-channel communication strategy is to increase awareness, engagement, and participation in cybersecurity training programs on European Public Administrations (PA) and Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This plan aims to:

1. To raise awareness in the topic of life-long education in cybersecurity, and engaging relevant stakeholders.
2. To promote CYCERONE activities, especially the education contents and modules offered by the partners.
3. To make CYCERONE education programs and modules attractive and visible across Europe.
4. To collaborate with the CSA selected by the call topic DIGITAL-2023-SKILLS-05-SPECIAL-PROGEDU to disseminate the results of CYCERONE activities.
5. To focus on sustaining active collaboration among key stakeholders and partners to secure the project's long-term impact.

Considering the objectives, we can sum up that messaging revolves around:

- **Bridging the cybersecurity skills gap** through innovative training programs.

- Providing **IT skills & competence** for SMEs and public sector professionals.
- Supporting **reskilling & upskilling** in cybersecurity.
- Establishing a **centralized learning platform**.

Key messages will evolve throughout the project lifecycle:

- **Phase 1** (2025 - Awareness & Branding): Introduction of CYCERONE, its mission, and partnership networks.
- **Phase 2** (2026 - Engagement & Participation): Promotion of training opportunities and industry/academia collaborations.
- **Phase 3** (2027 - Sustainability & Impact): Demonstration of impact through testimonials, case studies, and final dissemination efforts.

Key themes:

- IT skills and competence
- Cybersecurity training
- Reskilling & upskilling for SMEs and public sector professionals
- Digital innovation & ethical technology use

2.2 Key Audiences

CYCERONE targets:

- SMEs and public sector professionals (primary audience).
- IT & cybersecurity professionals seeking upskilling opportunities.
- Public/government bodies and initiatives
- Research and Innovation Institutes & Organisations
- Industry players
- Higher education institutions offering cybersecurity training
- European and national cybersecurity authorities (ENISA, ECCC, NCCCs)
- General Public
- Civil society organisations and professional associations
- Press

2.3 Methods and Touchpoints

A **touchpoint strategy** is built on the principle of establishing **key content pillars** (e.g., Cybersecurity Awareness, SME Digital Protection, Cyber Resilience for the Public Sector, AI & Cybersecurity) that serve as the foundation for all communication efforts. To **maximize impact and ensure consistency**, these core themes will be strategically leveraged across all available channels and formats, ensuring a cohesive and unified message throughout the project's digital ecosystem.

Considering the technical nature of the topic, it is essential to encourage expert contributions from partners, researchers, and cybersecurity specialists. This will not only enhance the credibility of the content but also position CYCERONE as a thought leader in the industry.

To ensure effective execution and alignment, this editorial plan must be forecasted in advance, allowing for strategic content planning, timely dissemination, and optimization of resources across the consortium.

2.3.1 Dissemination Objectives

- DO1: Communicate the project's concept and ideas in the target audiences and the general public;
- DO2: Make sure that the CYCERONE results and outcomes are widely disseminated towards all target audiences and the general public;
- DO3: Motivate partners to engage their networks in the project activities;
- DO4: Encourage the engagement of the involved stakeholders across related project activities and further engage other actors vital to or benefiting the outreach;
- DO5: Make sure that the project's results influence the policy makers, the research and academic communities and the rest target audiences so as to enhance a long-term sustainability.

2.3.2 Branding & Visual Identity

KPI: 1 logo

An appealing logo is being developed, accompanied with the respective brandbook, providing detailed information for all partners regarding color palette, fonts, correct logo usage. Moreover, a project tagline will be elaborated in an early stage to enhance the project identity.

- **Logo & tagline:** Logo pictures



Figure 1. Project Logo

- **Brand book:** a brandbook, providing detailed information for all partners regarding color palette, fonts, correct logo usage will be provided.

2.3.3 Webpage

KPI: 12,000 visitors/year

The **CYCERONE webpage**, hosted in the Talent Garden domain, will serve as the central hub for the project's online communication strategy. Open to all engaged partners and external stakeholders, it will provide up-to-date information, including news articles, press releases, resources, and details on project milestones, outcomes, and events. To ensure a clear and accessible user experience, the webpage will be designed with UX and UI consistency, aligning with the needs and expectations of the target audience. Additionally, keywords and SEO best practices will be carefully implemented to enhance organic visibility and relevance.

The website will also feature a blog section where articles contributed by the entire consortium will be published, fostering knowledge sharing and engagement. The website will comply with GDPR regulations, ensuring proper handling of personal data.

2.3.4 Newsletter

KPI: 6 newsletters launched

Newsletters will be published every six months providing a summary of the project's latest developments. They will be distributed via LinkedIn to engage both technical and non-technical audiences while also being archived on the project's webpage for easy access. The content will focus on project news and achievements, as well as emerging trends in the field. To ensure a cohesive communication approach, the newsletters will be aligned with the social media strategy.

2.3.5 Social media channels

KPI: 10,000 impressions/year.

KPI: Number of posts using project-specific hashtags: 3/month

From an organic perspective, CYCERONE's social media presence on LinkedIn and YouTube will be established from the project's outset to enhance awareness and reach diverse geographical audiences, ensuring strong outreach. Content will cover project updates, emerging trends, and key insights from each participating European country, fostering engagement and knowledge sharing. All partners will be encouraged to leverage their own communication channels to amplify key messages, maximize impact, and reshare CYCERONE's posts. A dedicated project hashtag (e.g., #CYCERONE) will be used across all posts, while additional hashtags will be strategically incorporated to highlight relevant keywords and attract the right audiences.

During the first year (May - December 2025), the awareness phase will focus on delivering:

- overall project launch and presentation of the project's dedicated webpage
- video content interview
- deep dive into cybersecurity topics, exploring key trends both at the European level and across partner countries; to highlight the collaboration, the partners will be introduced showcasing their role and expertise
- contents on emerging cyber technologies and trends shaping the EU landscape.

2.3.6 Paid Advertising

KPI:

Google Ads (Search & Display): 3,300 visitors / 510 leads / 15% conversion rate.

Social Media Ads: 3,000 visitors / 450 leads / 15% conversion rate.

Advertising on specific industry platforms: 1700 visitors / 280 leads /15% conversion rate.

YouTube Ads: 1,000 visitors / 160 leads / 16% conversion rate.

Email Retargeting: 8,000 visitors / 100 leads / 8% conversion rate.

Paid advertising will be leveraged during key project milestones, if necessary, to expand visibility and reach a broader audience. Tailored campaigns will be developed to promote diversity and inclusivity within the academy, with a particular focus on attracting underrepresented groups, especially women, to the offered courses. These campaigns will promote the educational contents, ensuring a seamless user journey from awareness to enrollment. Additionally, all campaign content will be produced in alignment with the project's identity, maintaining visual and messaging consistency to reinforce brand recognition and engagement. To further enhance impact, we will collaborate with organizations that align with these communities, ensuring that our messaging emphasizes the inclusive nature and relevance of the training programs.

2.3.7 Public Relations

KPI: 4 Press Releases and 6 Press activities

Press activities will be strategically planned and coordinated at both national and European levels, with a focus on key CYCERONE milestones. These efforts will leverage a mix of mainstream media channels— such as newspapers, news websites, TV, and radio—alongside communication platforms provided by the European Commission to ensure broad and effective dissemination.

Once the CYCERONE website is live, an initial press release will be issued to boost awareness of the project. It will be written in English, allowing each country to translate and adapt the content for local media, ensuring effective communication tailored to regional audiences. This first press release will also provide an overview of the cybersecurity landscape at the European level, leveraging key data to enhance newsworthiness and public interest.

The same approach will be followed once the learning platform is launched and for all major project updates, ensuring continuous visibility and engagement across different media outlets. To support

media relations effectively, a spokesperson will be identified to represent the project, ensuring a consistent, authoritative voice in public communications and press interactions.

Additionally, it is crucial that each partner shares media coverage results. This will allow the rapid amplification of press mentions across CYCERONE's social media channels and other communication touchpoints, maximizing visibility and engagement while strengthening the project's impact.

2.3.8 Communication Materials and Multimedia

KPI: 6 Online Brochures, 10 digital banners, 2 roll-up banners

A set of communication materials, including an online brochure, general presentation, roll-up banner, and digital banners, will be created to effectively present the project's objectives and key information in a clear and accessible format. All materials will be produced in English and designed in alignment with the project's visual identity to ensure brand consistency.

Partners will be encouraged to translate and localize key materials into their native languages for specific country activities. This will allow each country to adapt both print and online materials to better suit their local audience, maximizing engagement. These localized materials can be leveraged during national events, collaborations, and partnerships, ensuring the project's messaging remains relevant and impactful across different regions.

Additionally, essential project templates—such as those for deliverables, PowerPoint presentations, and agendas—will be developed at the start of the project to maintain a cohesive and professional communication approach across all project activities.

KPI: 10 videos and 4 podcasts

The project will develop multimedia content to effectively communicate its objectives and key outcomes to both non-technical audiences and the general public. A primary project video will be produced, while all partners will contribute by creating additional videos that align with the project's messaging, including versions in their native languages. All video contents will be hosted on the project's YouTube channel and will also be utilized across social networks, digital touchpoints such as the website and newsletter, presentations, and PR activities, maximizing visibility and engagement.

The plan includes the creation of:

- 1 general video to introduce the project's objectives.
- 8 partner-produced videos covering specific topics, such as overviews of tools, tips & tricks, or insights into local scenarios related to the project or training contents.
- 1 final video showcasing the project's results, which will also be used during the final event.

Where possible, it will be recommended producing long-form content from which shorter versions can be extracted for social media, ensuring adaptable and engaging storytelling. Additionally, the use of graphics and visual elements will be encouraged to enhance clarity and impact.

Furthermore, the project will feature 4 podcasts with professionals, designed to foster community engagement and provide valuable insights for a broad audience. Where possible, podcasts will be recorded in English to ensure they can be leveraged by the entire consortium, increasing reach and accessibility across all partner regions.

2.3.9 Events, Conferences, Meetings & Webinars

KPI: 25 Presentations and 1 Final event with 100 participants

To effectively disseminate project results, the consortium will actively engage in key national and European events related to the Digital Education Action Plan and tertiary educational ICT programs. Participation will include presentations, posters, and dedicated sessions, ensuring visibility among relevant stakeholders. These events represent a key opportunity to reach the appropriate target audience, including professionals, policymakers, and industry leaders.

Consortium partners will take part in high-profile events such as ESORICS, Cybersec Expo & Forum, European Cyber Agora, and the International Conference on Education and Educational Technology (ICEET). In addition to these major conferences, the project will also leverage local events to engage SMEs and public administrations. For example, collaborations with trade associations will be explored to reach small and medium-sized enterprises, ensuring tailored communication for this sector.

To ensure credibility and expertise in these engagements, the designated spokesperson for these events should be a cybersecurity expert, capable of effectively conveying the project's key messages, insights, and technical advancements to both specialized and general audiences.

To maximize outreach, a detailed event mapping will be developed and continuously updated with input from partners, ensuring strategic participation in the most relevant opportunities.

Additionally, a final event will be organized at the end of the project to showcase the final results and key outcomes. This event will be hybrid, combining both in-person and online participation, ensuring broad accessibility and engagement. It will provide a platform for stakeholders to interact, discuss findings, and explore future opportunities for collaboration and implementation, maximizing the project's impact and visibility.

KPI: 3 Webinars

A series of webinars will be organized throughout the project's duration to disseminate its concept and progress to stakeholders and other interested audiences. These sessions will be led by experts and will be directly related to the learning path modules, providing valuable insights and practical knowledge. Whenever possible, the webinars will be held in English to ensure accessibility for the

entire consortium and a wider international audience. Additionally, whenever possible, they will be available on LinkedIn, maximizing reach and engagement across professional networks.

The specific topics will be defined in collaboration with experts, ensuring relevance to current industry challenges, emerging trends, and the needs of the target audience. To maximize participation, promotional efforts will be supported by an advertising campaign if needed, ensuring broader outreach and engagement across key target groups.

2.3.10 Synergies & Partnerships

KPI: 5 cross-dissemination partnerships with relevant cybersecurity initiatives.

A crucial factor in the project's success is collaborating with well-established initiatives, projects, and networks that have the influence and reach to enhance the project's visibility. These include Digital Innovation Hubs, the Digital Transformation Accelerator, Enterprise Europe Network, the European SME Alliance, and WEgate.

To facilitate this, a stakeholder mapping will be developed and maintained by the project coordinator, EITD, with input from project partners. EITD will take the lead in engaging key stakeholders, actively promoting the project to foster new cross-dissemination opportunities and strengthen collaboration, ensuring maximum outreach and impact.

3. Timeline and GANTT Chart Overview

Activity	2025	2026	2027
Branding & Visual Identity	Q1		
Website Launch	Q1-Q2		
Social Media Strategy	Q2-Q4	Q1-Q4	Q1-Q4
Paid Advertising		Q1-Q4	Q1-Q4
Events, Conferences, & Meetings & Webinars	Q3-Q4	Q1-Q4	Q1-Q4
PR & Press Releases	Q2-Q4	Q1-Q4	Q1-Q4
Communication Materials	Q3-Q4	Q1-Q4	Q1-Q4

and Multimedia			
Final Event			Q4

Table 1. Timeline

4. Monitoring & KPIs

To enhance performance and user engagement, the project will include regular analysis of website heatmaps and user behavior, ensuring optimized content placement and effective call-to-actions. Monitoring the conversion rates of organic versus paid traffic will help assess the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. Additionally, A/B testing will be conducted on social media and ad creatives to refine engagement strategies. To maintain alignment with project goals, quarterly strategy reviews will be held to evaluate progress, identify areas for improvement, and adjust tactics accordingly.

Evaluation Methods:

- **Google Analytics:** for website performance.
- **Social media insights:** to track engagement.
- **Lead tracking:** via CRM tools.
- **Feedback forms & surveys:** post-events/webinars.

5. Conclusions

CYCERONE represents a **collaborative effort between academia, the private and public sector, to address the pressing need for cybersecurity education and workforce development**. By uniting academic expertise, industry partnerships, and policy engagement, this initiative fosters a more secure digital landscape for SMEs and the public sector.

Through a multi-channel marketing and dissemination approach, CYCERONE will maximize visibility, ensure engagement with key stakeholders, and drive adoption of its training programs. With strong support from 15-partner consortium across 9 EU countries, the project will not only fill the cybersecurity skills gap but also establish a sustainable model for continued education and professional growth in Europe.

As the project progresses, continuous evaluation and adaptation will be essential to achieving its goals, ensuring CYCERONE remains a relevant and impactful initiative beyond its funded period.