Communication Strategy for Gen-Y City Project

Content

Background

European countries, and the regions are seeking new ways to enhance their competitiveness and innovation within the concept of smart specialization and ways to support new business models. In Poznan activities are concentrated in the sectors of innovative and creative, which means that a lot of companies focuses its activities on high added value. Start-ups are increasingly popular among young people. Having this in mind and taking into account migration trends, the partners in the GEN-Y CITY Network are seeking new ways to create optimal conditions for the development of personal and professional life of these young people. To achieve this, it is necessary to diagnose the needs of the generation Y, to develop new channels to communicate effectively and develop tools that implement the policy of the City will make it an attractive place to live and work. One of the ways of solving these problems is to implement, in cooperation with foreign partners, identifying similar problems in their cities, the international project "Gen-Y City - Get into the swing of the City" in the framework of EU program URBACT III.

The project is implemented in partnership with 12 cities, which are: Poznan (Poland), Granada (Spain), Wolverhampton (United Kingdom), Klaipeda (Lithuania), Daugavpils (Latvia), Genoa (Italy), Kristiansand (Norway), Bologna (Italy), Coimbra (Portugal), Nantes (France), Economic Development Agency Sabadell (Spain) and Torun (Poland).

Project Objectives

The aims of the Gen-Y City project include:

– The identification of the factors that influence the development of companies operating on the basis of new business models, including the creative and innovative sectors in the city, especially those fitting into the smart specialization concept. They should include both the hard factors: infrastructure, capital investment, taxes; and soft: business support services, personal factors, the attractiveness of residential areas and public spaces, the operation of networks, recreation and relaxation offer, the attractiveness of the natural environment, social climate of the city,

– The identification of factors that influence the formation of networks in the ecosystem of innovative and creative, knowledge-based industries/sectors in the city,

– The analysis of development factors influencing new business models and in knowledge-based economy such as networking, exchanges of experience in order to create the right conditions and support services to revitalize the economy in the city. They could include support to young entrepreneurs (i.e. co-working, mentoring meetings, legal support, implementing new IT solutions and applications, promoting young creators, creating networks). Those policies should offer integrated approaches and synergies with the third generation of Regional Innovation Strategies.

– The identification of necessary changes within the operating structure of the city hall and in the approach of employees to new development trends in order to better understand the needs of enterprises, which will translate into real understanding and the ability to choose the best tools to support the development of the creative and innovative sectors. It calls for institutional changes involving entrepreneurial discovery process but also one that can be called institutional discovery.

– The identification of the impact of the innovative and creative sectors to other dimensions of the city life and services, including: education, health, spatial planning, sport and recreation and culture.

The final aim of the project will be to create a three-layered action network, involving all the

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partners and able to carry out its activities also after the completion of the project. The layers in the network will include:

- An inter-sectorial network in each city involving young businesses, public sector and civic society working on defining and implementing effective policies to support new business models in innovative and creative sectors and offer them right locations and conditions for development.

- An inter-departmental network in the city halls in each city involving all the right internal stakeholders crucial for tackling different aspects of new support policies in an integrated and coherent way.

- An inter-city network working on the exchange of knowledge and good practices connected with the new support policies but also offering solutions for international cooperation of young businesses like soft-landing schemes or B2B networking opportunities.

The effect of those networks should be a new, self-supporting system able to implement the Local Action Plans including support policies for young businesses in innovative and creative sectors developed in the scope of the Gen-Y City project.

Communications Objectives

Programme

URBACT Secretariat described the four objectives that must be achieved within each project. These include:

1. Raise awareness of the programme to a wider group of beneficiaries;
2. Promote the thematic content to beneficiaries and interested organizations to ensure uptake the knowledge;
3. Share knowledge about the urban themes, sustainable urban development, and how the UE is approaching urban development to wider public, media;
4. Ensure that the beneficiaries and internal stakeholders play an active role in communication;
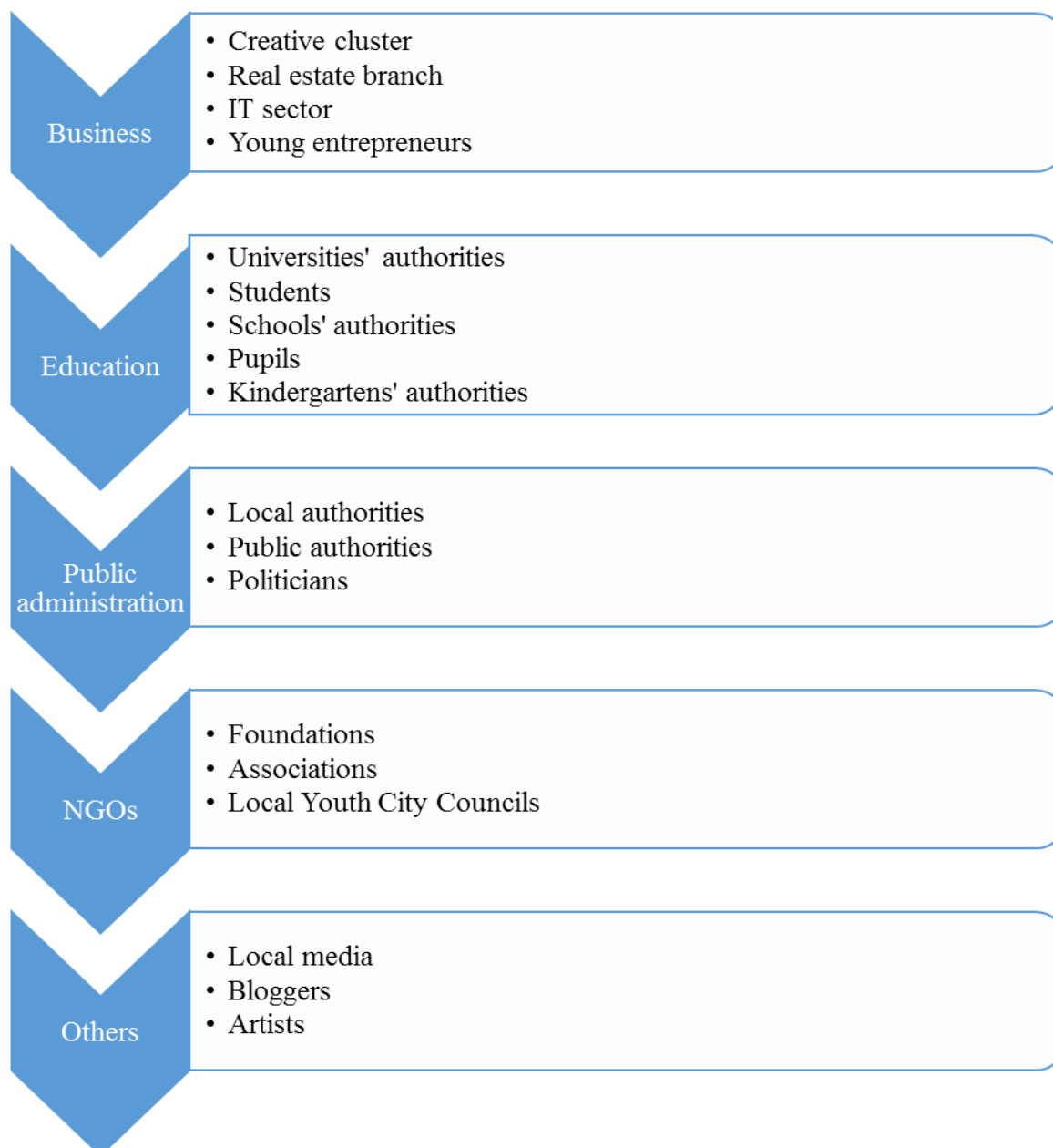
Project

Beyond the implementation of the objectives that were set out at the programme level in the Gen-Y City project was identified additional aims:

1. Raise awareness of the Gen-Y City project;
2. Ensure that the target group plays an active role in the implementation of project activities;
3. Share the new ideas with target group to help in the development of good Local Action Plans;
4. Promote STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and creativity;

The implementation of goals at the program level, as well as, the project level will ensure effective communication of project activities and will make it success.

Target Audience

After consultations with all Project Partners five target groups had been listed. The Gen-Y City project will be communicated and created with:

Business
- Creative cluster
- Real estate branch
- IT sector
- Young entrepreneurs

Education
- Universities' authorities
- Students
- Schools' authorities
- Pupils
- Kindergartens' authorities

Public administration
- Local authorities
- Public authorities
- Politicians

NGOs
- Foundations
- Associations
- Local Youth City Councils

Others
- Local media
- Bloggers
- Artists

Tools

During Phase 2 of Gen-Y City project will be used different kinds of communication tools. Gen-Y City team will provide the best solutions which help people all over the Europe to know the project's issues and aims as well as encourage them to take a part in the project.

Within the project

The Lead Partner will organize 8 management team meetings using Skype teleconference tool. The participants of these meetings will discuss project management, reporting of activity and budget provisions. The participants will include Lead Partner's management team, Partner coordinators and financial managers. The program and schedule of the meetings will be presented to the Partners at least 3 weeks before them, so there is time to prepare for the discussion. Also, after each meeting, minutes will be prepared and sent to the Project Partners. If there appear individual problems at the Partner side, the Lead Partner will organize additional individual meetings to solve these issues. The schedule of coordination meetings is presented below:

	Date[1]	Time
1st coordination meeting	26th July 2016	11:00 CET
2nd coordination meeting	30th August 2016	11:00 CET
3rd coordination meeting	25th October 2016	11:00 CET
4th coordination meeting	28th February 2017	11:00 CET
5th coordination meeting	30th May 2017	11:00 CET
6th coordination meeting	29th August 2017	11:00 CET
7th coordination meeting	28th November 2017	11:00 CET
8th coordination meeting	27th March 2018	11:00 CET

Each Project Partner are obliged to set up at least one Skype account to communicate with other partners and Lead Expert. Lead Partner will prepare the list concerning all data to improve and make easier the communication process.

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[1] The dates are indicative and can be changed because of transnational meetings and force majeure

It was created the special connection between Lead Partner, Project Partners, Lead Expert and other interested actors using Dropbox. Each person engaged in Gen-Y City project has the access to data, which are available in the program. As a result, the work on common documents is easier (each person has the ability to edit and change the documents). Furthermore, the persons interested in having access to the complete set of design data.

Lead Partner, Project Partners and Lead expert are in contact all time by using e-mails and telephones. Moreover, for the effective implementation of activities in Gen-Y City project each partner has been organizing team meetings according to the needs.

Outside the project

Each interesting activities will be described in social media with photos (Facebook and Twitter). Moreover there will be also published all newsletters and articles from different magazines connected with Generation Y topics.

At Gen-Y City website (http://urbact.eu/gen-y-city) will be published all reports, articles, Local Action Plans, collection of good practices and political declarations. It is assumed to produce at least 8 newsletters, 24 articles, one collection of good practice, 12 political declarations, 25 reports and 12 Local Action Plans. It allows people to know the know-how evolved during project life, and will spread the knowledge gained during its implementation.

An account at MailChimp has been created to encourage people to read about the Gen-Y City project. This will allow the creation of a list of subscribers, and unusual newsletters encourage people to articles created in the project.

It will be also created special Gen-Y City channel at YouTube. There will be published 12 short videos showing what progress and policies the partner cities have made towards developing, retaining and attracting Gen-Y creative-tech talent. Moreover some videos prepared during transnational meeting will be also published.

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Rules

Rules of good external and internal communication were established during one of the transnational meetings in Poznan. These rules will be followed in communicating at all levels.

Actors involved in project communication should:	send clear message and information,
	be open minded,
	use right tool to right target group,
	answer quickly to all questions,
	respond for all e-mails,
	allow everyone to be heard and have their own voice,
	be polite,
	be interested in participation,
	be organized,
	set and keep deadlines,
	have the same goals,
	be regular in communication,
	exchange their minds in constructive way,
	be silent in the background,
	follow the rules.

Promotion

Each transnational meeting will be connected with 'Swing of the City' event, designed to involve the members of local inter-sectorial and inter-departmental networks while showing the special features of the city's Generation Y environment and, where possible, developing quick, short time and demonstrative adaptation of some urban policies so they can become more friendly for young businesses.

After each transnational meeting, partner responsible for its organizing, will prepare the newsletter, which will be distributed by Lead Partner to the rest of the Project partners, the URBACT Secretariat, ULG's, experts, websites, Social medias and newsletters' followers.

Moreover, during two years period, each Project Partner will prepare two articles connected with the project topics. These articles will be published at official Gen-Y City website on urbact.eu. The articles will be promoted by newsletters.

Project Partners and Lead Partner are obliged to prepare short videos showing what progress and policies the partner cities have made towards developing, retaining and attracting Gen-Y creative-tech talent, with input coming from project partners, expert and representatives of local networks. Video concept will be prepared by the Lead Partner.

There will be organized local dissemination events by each Project Partner to present the results of the Gen-Y City Network to a wide local audience and in an accessible way. The occasion will be useful to present the project results by the politicians to the local media. It could be, in example a press conference, press article or public information on the local thematic website.

At the end of Phase 2, Lead Partner will published the collection of good practice. It will include the new solutions for developing, retaining and attracting Gen-Y creative-tech talent that are capable of being implemented and adapted by other cities. The document will be prepared by Lead Partner, Project Partners and Lead Expert.

Furthermore, all Project Partners should involve decision-makers in their city in such a way that they sign the statement shoving their involvement in the implementation of the new policies and schemes elaborated in the course of the Project.

Budget

In budget for Phase 2 is located Expertise Communication subcategory. It is assumed that the money found in this category will be used for designing, editing, printing and distribution of project communication and promotion tools, i.e. newsletters, brochures, translation etc.

Lead Partner will design until August 2016 (or order) promotional materials in one formula for the entire network. It means:

- 1 roll-up;
- 1 sticker;
- 1 brochure to be adapted locally;

When the above material has been accepted by all Project Partners, the Lead Partner will distribute them. Lead Partner planned 6 050€ for tasks connected with communication and promotion. It is assumed also 1500€ for each Project Partner in Phase 2 for these tasks. Below is a table showing the expenditure for expertise communication per year (including Phase 1 and Phase 2 of Gen-Y City project).

	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Lead Partner					
Expertise Communication	1 000,00	3 000,00	2 000,00	2 050,00	8 050,00
Total	1 000,00	3 000,00	2 000,00	2 050,00	8 050,00
Project Partners					
Expertise Communication	2 500,00	8 000,00	5 500,00	5 500,00	21 500,00
Total	2 500,00	8 000,00	5 500,00	5 500,00	21 500,00
Total	3 500,00	11 000,00	7 500,00	7 550,00	29 550,00

Flow of knowledge

The partners should be able to find the balance between the amount of information and knowledge produced and disseminated within the project. Information channels should be adjusted to the absorptive capacity of the project team's members. Feedback loops between producers of information and users of knowledge should be established. These would include: occasional Skype Calls in order to establish the common context for knowledge; creating a vocabulary of key terms (e.g. Generation Y, Smart City, spatial development, globalization etc.).
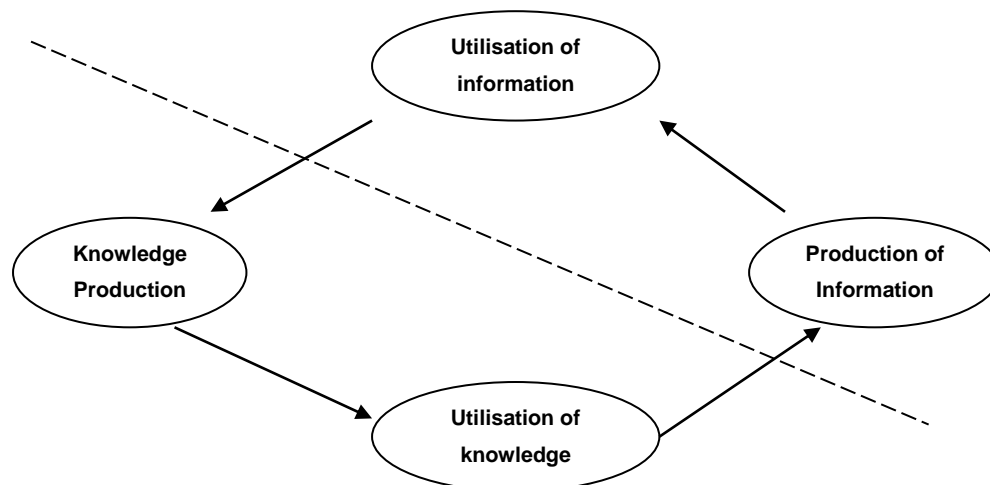
The project main rationale is to mobilize knowledge which is residing within individual cities and make it available to other project members. Knowledge is considered *the capacity (potential or actual) to take effective action in varied and uncertain situations* (Bennet & Bennet, 2004), a human capacity that consists of understanding, insights, meaning, intuition, creativity, judgment, and the ability to anticipate the outcome of our actions. It is often claimed that KM supports decision-making and innovation. Mobilisation of knowledge could be defined as a set of goal-orientated practices aimed at reducing the gap between *what we know* and *what we do.* In the military context, mobilization, for any kind of war, includes the procurement and training of manpower for military purposes. In the context of education systems, mobilization may relate to the procurement of knowledge assets correlated with the

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procurement of financial resources necessary for implementation of institutional and organizational and must be synchronized with timetables for training (knowledge development) and strategic deployment.

Mobilization, to be effective, not only must be well organized but must have everything in step.[2] In the business context, the mobilization of resources can be described as the time needed to launch a new product or service (*time-to-market*). In education *time-to-market* can be translated into "*time-to-problem solution*". In an a perfect economic system all resources are perfectly distributed and fully utilized. In social systems, such as the system of education, there exist gaps between the stock of their intellectual capital and the degree to which this capital is employed for the benefit of organizations.

The two key aspects or knowledge mobilization are (a) the *identification* of knowledge and, if necessary, (b) the *transfer* of knowledge. The success of knowledge mobilization may be ensured only if these two processes are efficient enough.

The identification of knowledge is a prerequisite for knowledge mobilization. Frequently, the right knowledge resides within a school or even the teacher herself. What is needed in such a situation is raising the awareness and/or self-confidence among the teachers that they already *know* the solution to the problem. The concept of mobilization of knowledge deserves a further analysis in terms of what is needed to successfully implement it.

Knowledge sharing relates to the situations, where individuals or organizations consciously or unconsciously engage into learning processes with other teams or/and organizations. According to Cummings (2003) knowledge sharing involves the processes through which knowledge is channeled between a source and a recipient. Mobilization of knowledge, however, does not necessarily involve the transfer of knowledge. In many cases, the necessary knowledge resources already exist there where they are needed. Identification of knowledge may involve raising the awareness of the teachers about their own knowledge and its potential applications.

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[2] See: The Encyclopedia Britannica, http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/386813/mobilization, [21.12.2014].

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Jeffery Cummings (2003) in his literature study presented a number of variables that can affect knowledge sharing (which is consistent with transfer of knowledge):

1) The nature of the knowledge being shared in terms of its tacitness and embeddedness,
2) the strength of relationship ties between the parties,
3) the learning mind-set and capability of the recipient,
4) the transfer activities undertaken.

The effectiveness of knowledge mobilization efforts is determined by the following conditions:

1. *Speed* (of transfer or identification: see above)– how fast was the knowledge delivered to the end-user? How quickly did the end-user realize that she possesses the right knowledge? Was she made confident that she is able to solve the problem?

2. *Accuracy of intervention* – was the proper type of knowledge applied and delivered to the user? Inappropriate diagnosis of the problem may cause mobilization of inappropriate type of knowledge.

3. *Sustainability of knowledge* – was knowledge, which was mobilized a quick-fix solution ('a fish') or a sustainable solution ('a fishing rod')?

4. *Stickiness of knowledge* – was the knowledge adequate to the absorptive capacity of the beneficiaries? The recipients of knowledge may not be able to absorb the knowledge due to lack of absorptive capacity. Knowledge which does not fit into the mental models, cultural context, and language of the recipients will not be fully absorbed and, as a result the mobilization of knowledge will be a wasteful effort.

Another useful observation regarding the practical aspects of knowledge mobilization is the distinction made by Patrick Lambe (2014) who maintains that knowledge consists of two parts: Knowledge (Informing) and Knowledge (Proceeding). This builds on the distinction between "knowing that" and "knowing how" (the *potential* and *actual* capacity to take effective action). Knowledge (Informing) is the *information (or content)* part of knowledge. While this information part of knowledge is still generically information (organized patterns), it is special because of its structure and relationships with other information. Knowledge (Informing) consists of information that may represent understanding, meaning, insights, expectations,

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intuition, theories and principles that support or lead to effective action. When viewed separately this is information even though it *may* lead to effective action. It is considered knowledge when used as *part of the knowledge process* (Lambe, 2014). The second type of knowledge: knowledge (Proceeding), relates to the *process* and *action* part of knowledge. Note that the process our minds use to find, create and semantically mix the information needed to take effective action is often unconscious and difficult to communicate to someone else; therefore, by definition, tacit. Figure 1 shows the different components of knowledge identified by Alex Bennet.

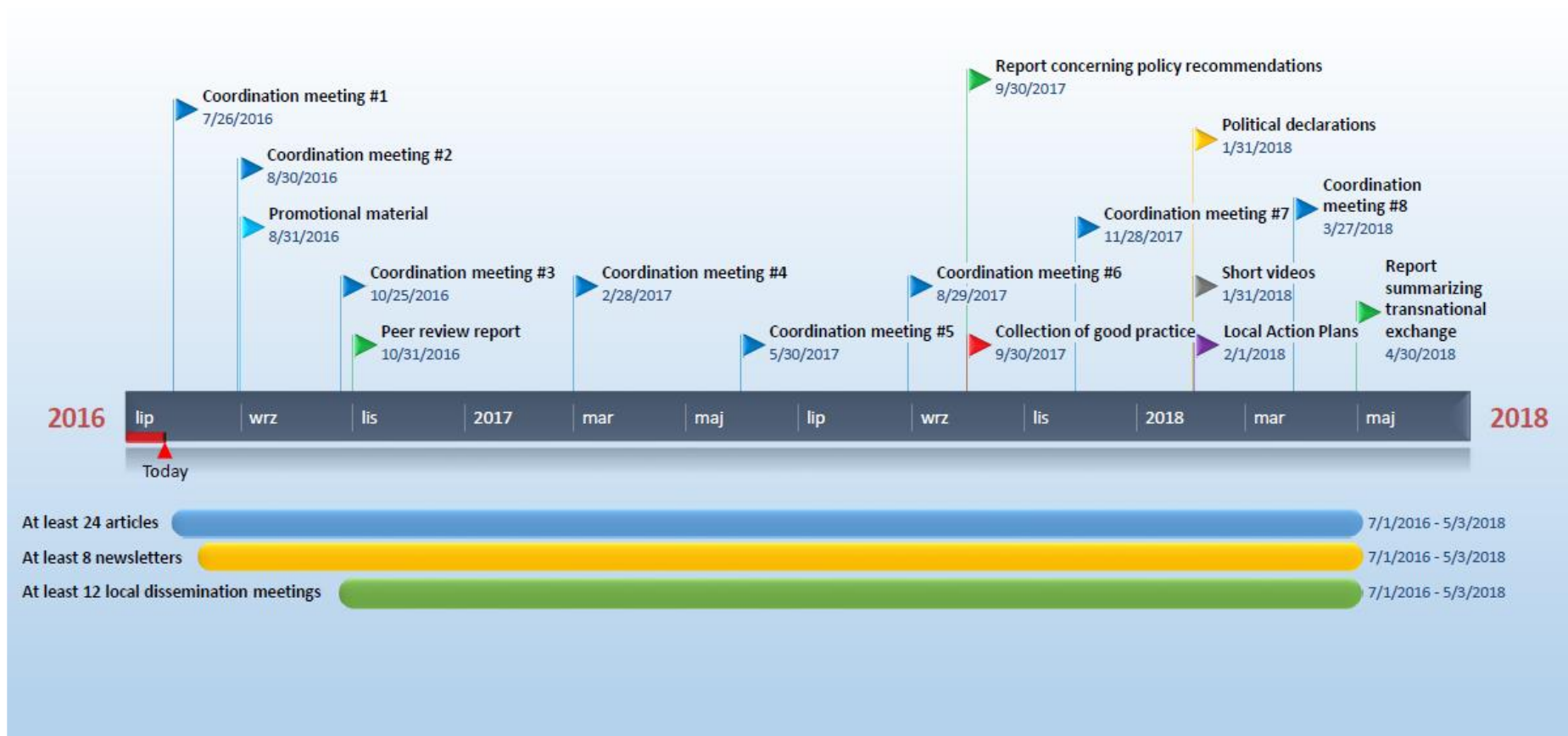**Figure 2: Knowledge (Informing) and Knowledge (Proceeding).**
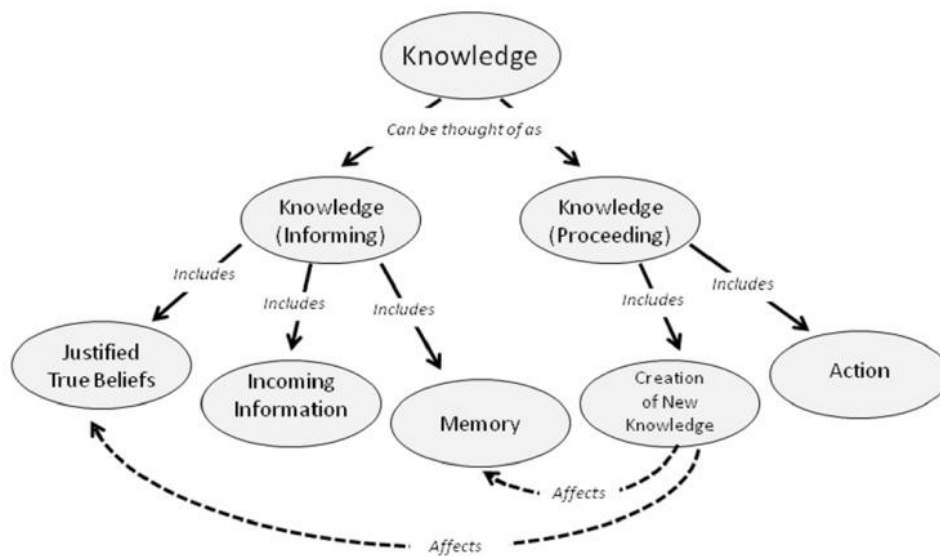
Source: Bennet, A. & Bennet, D. (2013). *Decision-making in the new reality: Complexity, knowledge and knowing*. Frost, WV: MQIPress.

The communication strategy for the Gen-Y project should focus on creation of NEW knowledge. Re-creation of existing frameworks and concepts within the project is counterproductive. Therefore, one should avoid 'false successes" which would imply passing on the already existing information, copying materials created by external bodies etc.

Timeline

Literature

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