ANNEXE 1

IMQP Self-analysis on communication strategies

1. Introduction and Scope

This report presents a self-analysis of the communication strategies adopted by the IMQP Master Programme, with a specific focus on digital channels. Its aim is to assess the effectiveness of current communication tools in terms of visibility, outreach, and engagement, and to support evidence based reflection on strengths and areas for improvement. The analysis covers website traffic data and social media performance using quantitative indicators from recent monitoring periods.

2. Objectives of the Communication Strategy

The communication strategy of the IMQP Master Programme is designed to support the academic, institutional, and international mission of the programme. Its main objectives can be outlined as follows.

First, a primary objective is to enhance the visibility of the programme at international level. Communication activities aim to increase awareness of the IMQP Master among prospective students, academic institutions, and professional stakeholders worldwide, positioning the programme as a reference point in its field.

Second, the strategy seeks to ensure the clarity, accessibility, and reliability of information. This includes providing clear and up to date information on the programme structure, learning objectives, mobility pathways, application procedures, and key deadlines, in order to facilitate informed decision making by prospective applicants and partners.

A further objective is the engagement of stakeholders, including current students, alumni, academic staff, partner institutions, and external collaborators. Through regular updates on activities, events, and achievements, communication channels are used to strengthen the sense of community and to foster ongoing interaction among the different actors involved in the programme.

Finally, the communication strategy aims to support students and institutional partners throughout the academic lifecycle of the programme. Digital communication tools are used to disseminate practical information, promote events and opportunities, and facilitate coordination and collaboration among partners, thereby contributing to the overall quality and effectiveness of the IMQP Master Programme.

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3. Target Audiences

The communication strategy of the Erasmus Mundus Master in Quaternary and Prehistory is addressed to several key target audiences, each with specific information needs and levels of engagement.

The primary target audience consists of prospective students at an international level, particularly graduates in archaeology, geology, palaeoanthropology, environmental sciences, and related disciplines, who may be interested in an interdisciplinary and highly specialized programme focused on Quaternary studies and Prehistory.

A second key audience is represented by enrolled students, for whom communication aims to ensure clarity, transparency, and timely access to academic, administrative, and mobility related information throughout the duration of the programme.

Academic partners and teaching staff of the consortium constitute another crucial target audience. Communication with this group focuses on coordination, teaching organisation, assessment procedures, and the overall academic coherence of the programme.

Finally, external stakeholders such as research institutions, museums, cultural heritage organisations, and potential employers are considered a relevant target audience, particularly in relation to programme visibility, professional opportunities for graduates, and the long term impact of the Master.

This differentiated approach allows the communication strategy to respond effectively to the diverse needs of all stakeholders involved in the Erasmus Mundus Master in Quaternary and Prehistory.

4. Communication Channels

The Erasmus Mundus Master in Quaternary and Prehistory uses a range of complementary communication channels to ensure effective dissemination of information and engagement with its target audiences.

The official programme website represents the primary and most authoritative communication channel. It provides comprehensive and up to date information on the structure of the Master, admission procedures, academic content, mobility pathways, and institutional partners, and serves as the main reference point for prospective and enrolled students.

Social media platforms are used to increase visibility and outreach at an international level:
- Facebook and Instagram are employed to share news, announcements, deadlines, events, and highlights of academic and student activities, with content adapted to a broad and diverse audience.
- YouTube is used to host video materials, including presentations, promotional content, and recordings of selected academic or informational activities, allowing for more in depth and accessible communication.

- A dedicated mailing list is used for direct and targeted communication with specific stakeholder groups, in particular enrolled students, academic staff, and partners. This channel ensures the timely circulation of official information, administrative notices, and coordination related messages that require clarity and traceability.

The combined use of these channels allows the programme to balance formal and institutional communication with more dynamic and outreach oriented approaches, while ensuring coherence, consistency, and accessibility of information across all platforms.

5. Assessment of Effectiveness

This section provides an overall assessment of the effectiveness of the communication channels currently used by the Erasmus Mundus Master in Quaternary and Prehistory. The analysis aims to evaluate how well each channel supports the objectives of the programme's communication strategy, in terms of clarity, reach, timeliness, and engagement with the identified target audiences.

The assessment is based on the experience of the Management Committee, feedback from stakeholders, and observed outcomes over the reporting period. Each communication channel is examined separately in order to identify strengths, limitations, and areas for improvement, and to support evidence based recommendations for future actions.

Facebook: the Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/quaternary.prehistory/) has more than 4,500 followers. The analysis of the Master's Facebook page shows that the communication strategy is strongly oriented towards link based content, which accounts for 72.8 percent of interactions and primarily serves to redirect users to official information and external resources. Photo and multi photo posts together represent a relevant share of the content, indicating a moderate use of visual communication to support engagement. In contrast, reels and other multimedia formats are only marginally used, suggesting limited exploitation of more dynamic and interactive tools. Overall, the page is effective in information dissemination, but there is clear potential to diversify content types to increase visibility and user engagement (Fig. 1). The audience analysis of the Master's Facebook page indicates that 70.3 percent of interactions come from followers, while 29.7 percent originate from non followers. This demonstrates a solid level of engagement within the existing community, confirming the effectiveness of the page in reaching and informing its established audience. At the same time, the significant share of interactions from non followers suggests a positive outreach capacity and potential for further expansion of the audience. Strengthening content aimed at visibility and shareability could further enhance engagement beyond the current follower base (Fig. 1).

By content type ⓘ

● Followers ● Non-followers

Content		Percentage
Link		72.8%
Photo		13.8%
Multi-photo		12.6%
Reel		0.4%
Other		0.4%
Multimedia		0.1%

By followers vs non-followers ⓘ
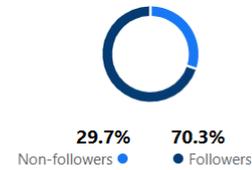
29.7% Non-followers ● 70.3% Followers ●

Fig. 1: the first graph shows the number of times that the IMQP content was played or displayed. Content includes reels, posts, stories and ads. Views are displayed as a percentage-based breakdown of the type of content type (e.g. link, story, reel) that the view came from. Content types within views are further broken dropdown by whether the account who saw that content is a follower or not. the second graph shows the number of times that the IMQP contents was played or displayed. Content includes reels, posts, stories and ads. Views are displayed as a percentage-based breakdown of views by whether the account that saw the content is a follower or not.

The analysis of viewers of the Master's Facebook content shows that the audience is predominantly concentrated in the 25 to 34 age group, which represents 43.8 percent of viewers and closely aligns with the primary target of prospective and early career students. A substantial share of the audience is also in the 35 to 44 age range at 28.3 percent, indicating engagement from more established academics and professionals. Lower levels of interaction are observed among younger users aged 18 to 24 and older age groups, suggesting that communication efforts are currently more effective with early and mid career audiences. This distribution confirms good alignment with core targets while highlighting potential for targeted strategies to broaden reach (Fig. 2).
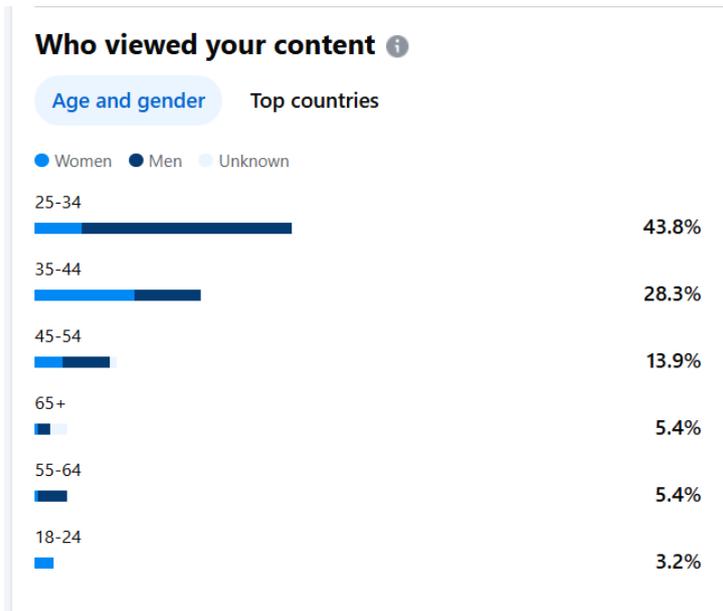
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Who viewed your content ⓘ

Age and gender   Top countries

● Women ● Men ● Unknown

25-34	43.8%
35-44	28.3%
45-54	13.9%
65+	5.4%
55-64	5.4%
18-24	3.2%

Fig. 2: The age and gender distribution of the audience. These values are estimated.

The geographical distribution of viewers of the Master's Facebook content shows a strong international reach. India represents the largest share of viewers at 24.8 percent, followed by Italy at 17.8 percent and France at 10.1 percent, reflecting both global visibility and a solid presence in partner and academically relevant countries. Significant engagement from Mexico, Spain, and the Philippines further confirms the programme's appeal beyond Europe. Overall, this distribution is consistent with the international profile of an Erasmus Mundus Master and indicates effective outreach to diverse geographical areas (Fig. 3).
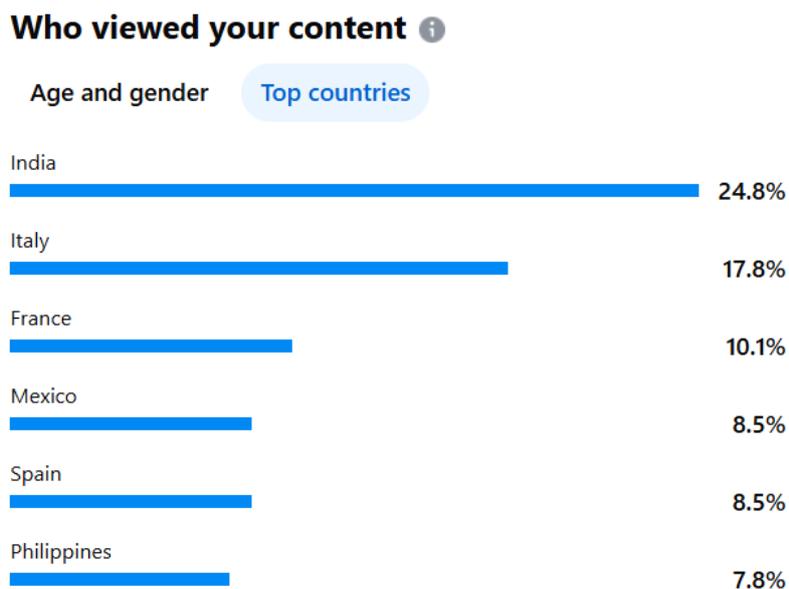

Who viewed your content ⓘ

Age and gender   Top countries

India	24.8%
Italy	17.8%
France	10.1%
Mexico	8.5%
Spain	8.5%
Philippines	7.8%

Fig. 3: The top countries where the viewers live. These values are estimated.

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YouTube: The analysis of the IMQP YouTube channel shows a steady but still limited level of engagement, consistent with a specialised academic audience. Overall, the channel hosts a coherent set of academic videos, with view counts ranging between 48 and 64 for recent lectures, reflecting stable performance across content types. In the last 28 days, the channel recorded 548 views and 65.3 hours of watch time, while the subscriber base increased to 322, with a growth of 15 subscribers, indicating gradual but positive audience development. The absence of comments and limited interaction suggest that the channel currently functions primarily as a one way dissemination tool rather than an interactive platform.

The channel performance over the last 28 days shows a clear improvement compared to its typical baseline. The IMQP YouTube channel recorded 548 views, representing an increase of 378 views compared to the usual performance, indicating a period of heightened visibility and interest. Watch time reached 65.3 hours, which is 58.3 hours higher than average, suggesting not only increased access to the content but also longer and more sustained viewing. In parallel, the channel gained 15 new subscribers, a 67 % increase compared to the previous 28 day period, pointing to a growing recognition of the channel's relevance. Overall, these indicators reflect a positive trend in audience engagement and the effectiveness of recent content dissemination efforts.

Fig. 4: visualizations over the last 28 days (15 November 2025 to 13 December 2025).

The analysis of the IMQP YouTube channel from its launch to the present shows an overall total of 11,753 views generated from 207,768 impressions, with an average click through rate of 2.25 percent. This indicates a broad visibility of the channel's content, although only a small proportion of impressions result in actual views. The average viewing duration of 3 minutes and 51 seconds suggests that, once accessed, the videos retain viewer attention for a meaningful

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portion of their length. Overall, the data indicate effective long term dissemination within a specialised audience, while also highlighting potential for improvement in converting impressions into views (Fig. 5).
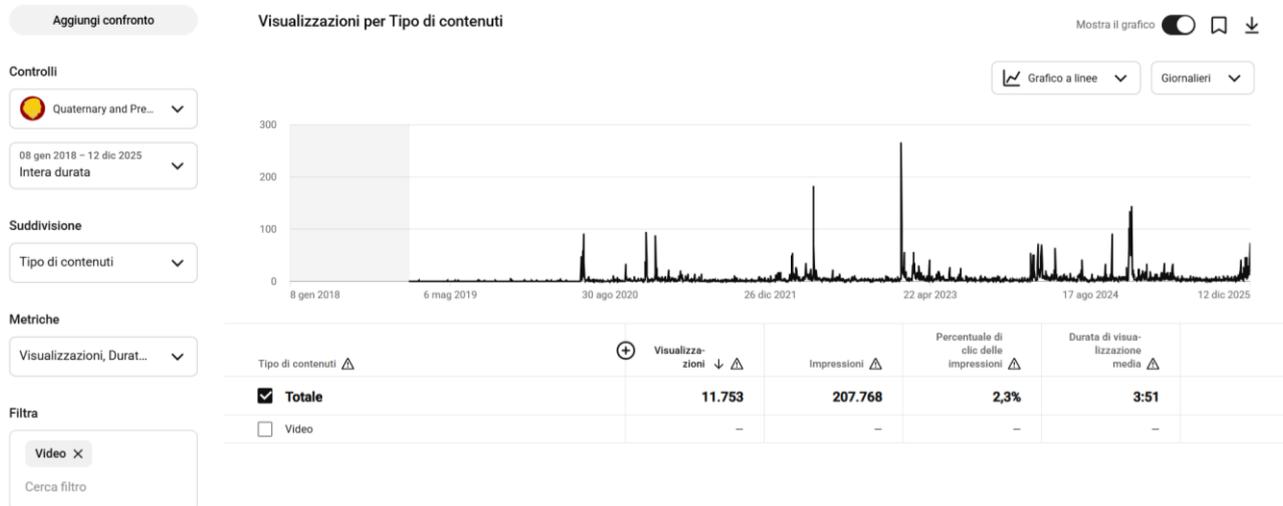

Fig. 5: Visualization of the videos since the channel launching.

The analysis of viewer provenance from the launch of the YouTube channel to the present highlights a strongly international audience. While European countries such as Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Austria, and Malta are represented, a substantial share of views originates from non European regions, including India, the Philippines, Indonesia, Laos, Pakistan, Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Bolivia, Colombia, Algeria, Singapore, and the United States. This wide geographical distribution reflects the global visibility of the IMQP Master and its relevance beyond the European context. The diversity of regions confirms the channel's effectiveness in reaching an international academic and student audience, consistent with the global scope of an Erasmus Mundus programme.

The analysis of playlists on the IMQP YouTube channel shows differentiated performance across content types. Academic and methodology focused playlists generate the highest engagement, particularly Applied methodologies for Quaternary's studies, which records 2,374 views and over 203 hours of watch time, with a solid average viewing duration of just over 5 minutes. Joint course playlists also perform well, especially the IMQP Joint course of leveling 2025, which, despite a lower number of views, shows the highest average viewing duration at 7 minutes and 40 seconds, indicating strong viewer commitment.

Introductory and institutional playlists, such as Introduction to the International Master's in Quaternary and Prehistory and The IMQP Partners Institutions 2024, show lower engagement and shorter viewing durations, suggesting that this content is accessed more selectively and for quick reference. Overall, the data indicate that in depth academic content and structured teaching materials are the most effective in retaining viewers, while promotional and institutional videos play a complementary but less engaging role within the channel.

Instagram. The Instagram profile of the IMQP Master Programme has shown a marked and sustained growth over the last three months, confirming the platform as an effective communication channel for outreach, visibility, and engagement.

During the reference period (lasts 3 months), the profile generated a total of 60.066 views, reaching 6.679 accounts, with an increase of more than 1000 % compared to the previous period. This sharp growth indicates a significant expansion of the audience reached by the profile. Views are almost evenly distributed between followers 50.1 % and non followers 49.9 %, demonstrating that the content is effective not only in engaging the existing community but also in attracting new users beyond the established follower base (Fig. 6).

Fig. 6: Activity of the IMQP Master Instagram profile over the last 3 months

Content performance analysis shows a clear predominance of posts, which account for 84.8 % of total views. Stories contribute 14.6 % , while reels 0.6 percent and videos remain marginal. This distribution reflects a communication strategy mainly based on informative and documentary content, such as academic activities, events, lectures, and institutional moments, which appears to be particularly well suited to the academic and professional target audience of the IMQP programme.

Profile activity and user interaction have increased substantially (Fig. 7). Overall profile interactions reached 909, representing an increase of 447 % compared to the previous period. Profile visits totalled 896, with a growth of 443 %, indicating growing interest in the programme and its content. External link clicks reached an increase of 1200 %. Although the absolute number remains limited, this growth confirms that Instagram is increasingly functioning as an entry point directing users towards external resources, such as the programme website or application related information.
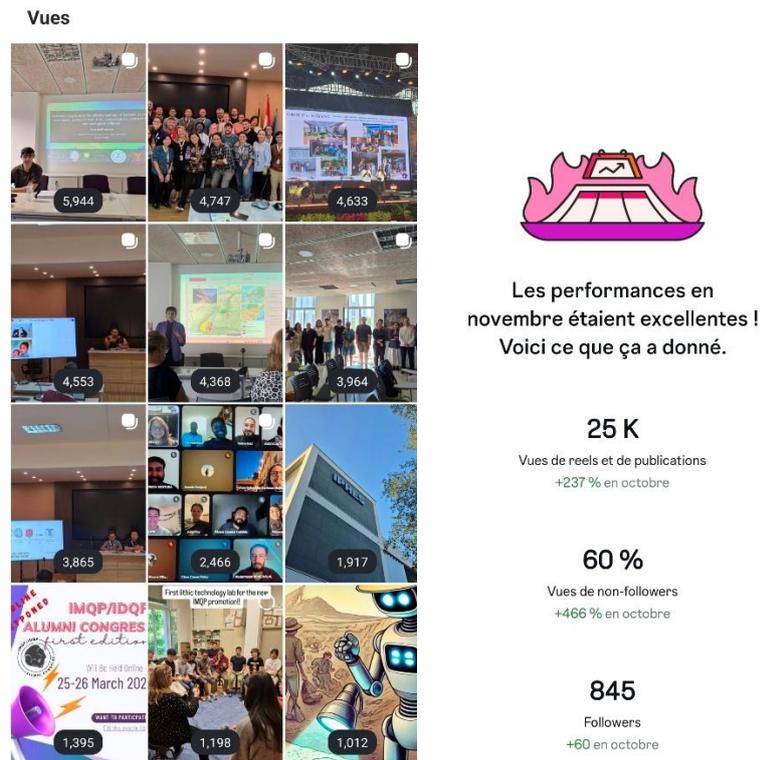
Fig. 7: level of interaction.

A closer look at the temporal evolution of views highlights a strong acceleration in the most recent month. In November alone, the profile recorded 25000 views of posts and reels, corresponding to an increase of 237 % compared to October. Notably, 60 % of these views originated from non-followers, with a growth of 466 % month on month, confirming the strong outreach capacity of the content published during this phase.

The profile currently counts 845 followers, with a net increase of 60 followers in the previous month, indicating steady organic growth. The most successful posts are primarily related to in person academic events, group activities, conferences, and institutional presentations, several of which exceeded 5000 views. These results suggest that content showcasing the academic community, international dimension, and concrete learning experiences of the IMQP programme is particularly effective.

Overall, the data from the last three months indicate that the Instagram profile plays a strategic role in the IMQP communication ecosystem. It significantly enhances international visibility, supports key communication moments such as events and calls for application, and contributes to engaging both current and prospective students. The current strategy proves effective and coherent with the programme identity, while also offering further potential for growth through a gradual diversification of content formats.

IMQP web site. Over the past year, the IMQP website recorded an average of approximately 2000 visitors per month, with significant peaks exceeding 3000 visitors coinciding with the launch of the calls for application. These peaks clearly indicate a strong correlation between application announcements and increased user interest and visibility of the website.

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Over the course of the year, the website registered a total of 22.912 visits and 49.682 page views, confirming a steady and consistent level of engagement with the online content. The ratio between visits and page views suggests that users typically navigate through multiple pages during each session, rather than accessing only a single page.

During the same period, visits originated from a global audience. The geographical distribution of users highlights the international reach of the IMQP programme, with the United States representing the primary source of traffic, followed by a wide range of other countries across different continents. This confirms the strong attractiveness of the programme beyond Europe and its capacity to engage prospective applicants worldwide.
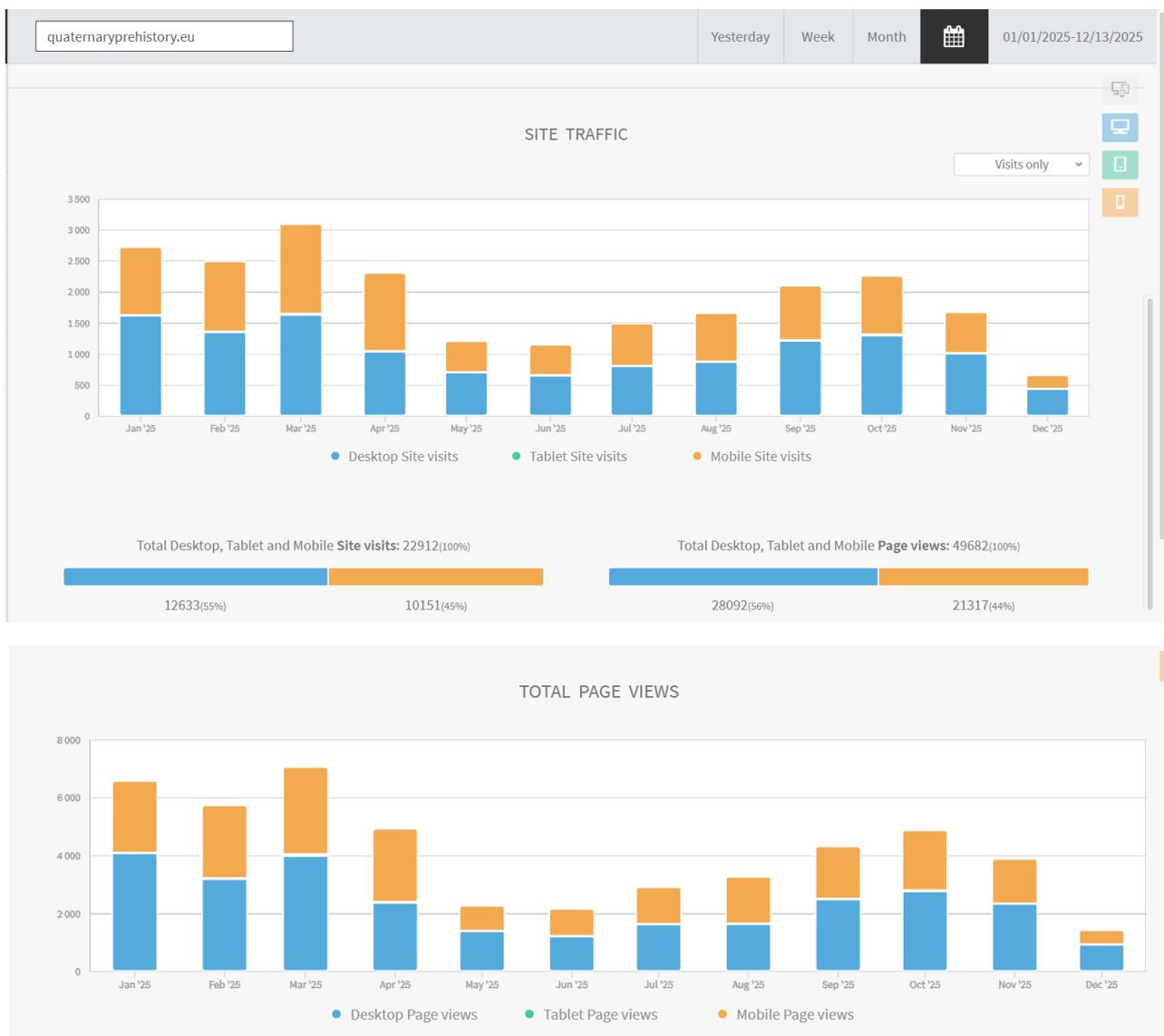

Fig. Visitors and page views to the IMQP website from 01/01/2025 to 12/13/2025

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Country ^	Site visits ^	Visitors ^	Page Visits ^	Avg. Visit Duration ^
	22991(100%)	21102(100%)	49505(100%)	00:03:27
1... Unknown	4105(17.85%)	3670(17.39%)	9399(18.99%)	00:04:10
2... United States	2972(12.93%)	2772(13.14%)	5681(11.48%)	00:02:38
3... Indonesia	1146(4.98%)	1033(4.9%)	2292(4.63%)	00:02:15
4... India	992(4.31%)	928(4.4%)	2069(4.18%)	00:01:38
5... Pakistan	891(3.88%)	816(3.87%)	2013(4.07%)	00:02:34
6... France	828(3.6%)	765(3.63%)	1866(3.77%)	00:05:36
7... China	681(2.96%)	641(3.04%)	1390(2.81%)	00:07:22
8... Italy	647(2.81%)	596(2.82%)	1559(3.15%)	00:02:15
9... Spain	506(2.2%)	471(2.23%)	1117(2.26%)	00:01:25
1... Brazil	432(1.88%)	403(1.91%)	959(1.94%)	00:03:12

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Fig. Geographic distribution of website visitors over the last year.

A particularly significant increase in traffic was observed immediately after the publication of the call for application for the 2026 intake. Within the first 8 hours following publication at 7 am, the website experienced a 29 percent increase in visits from mobile devices and a 33 percent increase from desktop devices. This rapid response demonstrates the effectiveness of the communication strategy and the high level of interest generated by the announcement across different platforms.
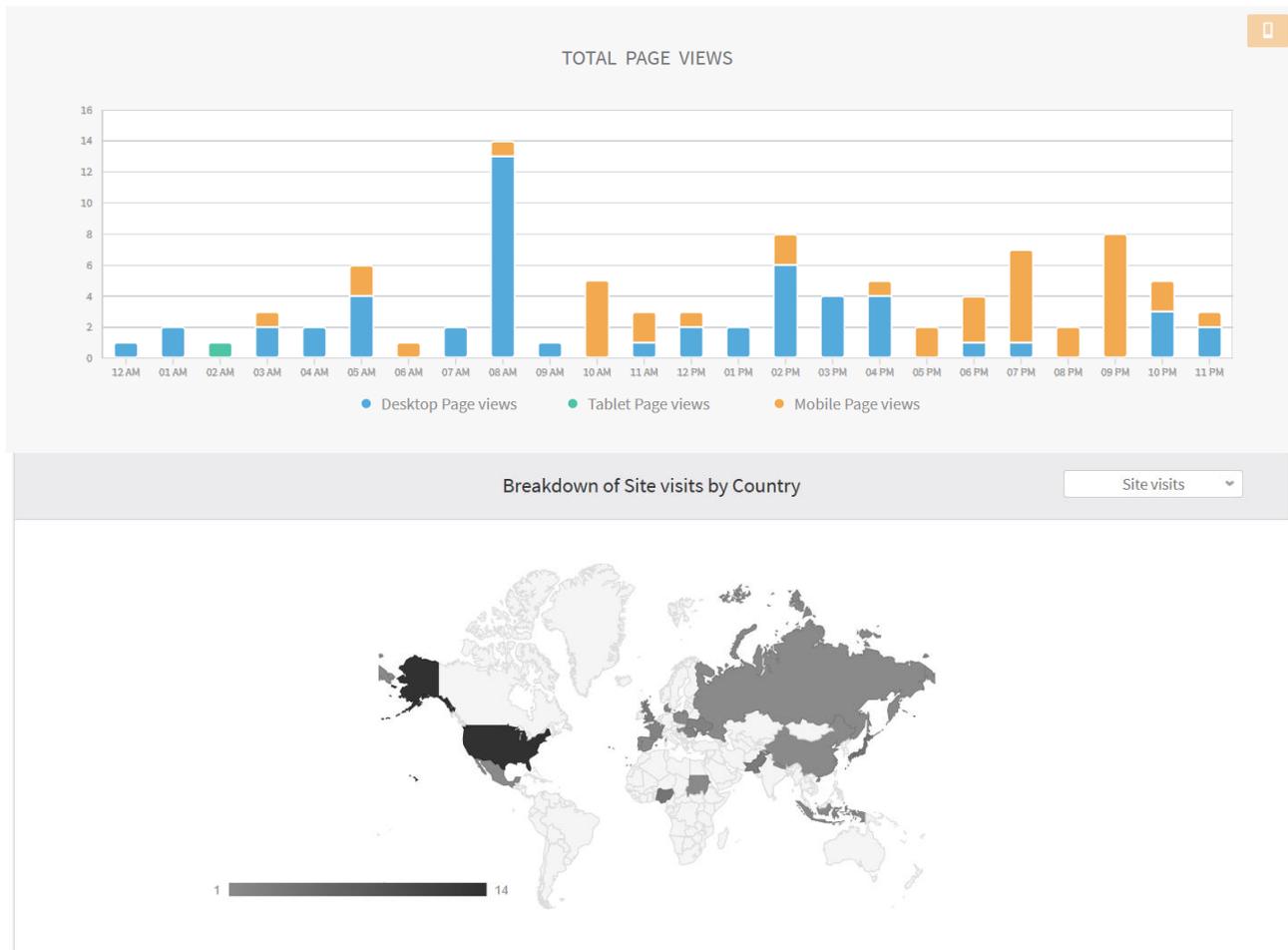
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Fig.: Page views and geographic origin of visitors following the launch of the call for application at 7 am.

Overall, these data show that the IMQP website functions as a key communication and outreach tool, with traffic patterns strongly influenced by strategic milestones such as the launch of calls for application, and with a clearly international user base engaging promptly and actively with new content.

IMQP MOOC's center: The GA4 snapshot of the MOOC center records 29 active users in the period from 12 November to 12 December, of whom 27 are new users. This indicates traffic composed almost entirely of first visits, with a very small share of returning users. The average engagement time per active user is 24 s, a value that suggests quick consultations, likely aimed at retrieving a specific piece of information or checking a page. Sessions come mainly from Organic Search with 22 sessions, followed by Direct with 13 and Referral with 5, while Organic Social is marginal with 1 session. In practical terms, access to the MOOC center occurs primarily through search, and secondarily through direct access, with a limited contribution from external links.

The geographic origin confirms an international audience: India 4 active users, Italy 3, United States 3, China 2, Greece 2, Hong Kong 2, Indonesia 2. Even though not all countries and values are included, this distribution already shows access from several non European areas in addition to European countries.

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Regarding event tracking, there are 61 page_view events, 47 user_engagement events, 41 session_start events, and 27 first_visit events. No key events are configured, so based on these data it is not possible to evaluate conversions or goal actions, only page access and usage.

6. Identified Challenges and Gaps

The analysis of the IMQP communication strategy highlights several challenges and gaps that limit the full potential of the current communication ecosystem. A first issue concerns the uneven use of content formats across platforms. While posts and link based content are effective for information dissemination, more dynamic formats such as reels, short videos, and interactive content are still underutilised, particularly on Instagram and Facebook, reducing opportunities for broader outreach and engagement with new audiences.

A second challenge relates to conversion tracking and impact measurement. On some platforms, especially the website and the MOOC center, the absence of clearly defined key events and conversion indicators limits the ability to assess user actions beyond access and basic engagement. This constrains the evaluation of how effectively communication channels support strategic objectives such as applications, registrations, or participation in activities.

Timing and coordination also represent a partial gap. Communication peaks are strongly linked to major milestones such as calls for application, while periods between these events show lower intensity and continuity. This indicates the need for a more structured editorial rhythm to maintain visibility and engagement throughout the year.

Finally, while the international reach of the programme is strong, targeted communication strategies for specific audiences such as alumni, professional stakeholders, or early career researchers could be further developed to diversify engagement beyond prospective students.

7. Lessons Learned

Several key lessons emerge from the implementation of the current communication strategy. First, strategic moments' drive visibility: calls for application, major events, and institutional announcements consistently generate strong and immediate increases in traffic and engagement across platforms. This confirms the effectiveness of coordinated communication during key milestones.

Second, the data demonstrate that clear, informative, and academically grounded content is highly valued by the IMQP audience. Posts related to teaching activities, conferences, fieldwork, and academic community life perform particularly well, confirming the importance of authenticity and substance in communication.

Third, the strong share of engagement from non-followers on social media highlights the high outreach potential of current content, even without heavy reliance on highly dynamic formats. This suggests a solid foundation on which more diversified strategies can be built.

Finally, the analysis confirms that each platform plays a complementary role: the website functions as the authoritative reference point, social media channels enhance visibility and outreach, and YouTube supports long term academic dissemination. Maintaining coherence across these channels is essential for effective communication.

8. Recommendations and Actions to Be Implemented

The analysis of the communication activities highlights a set of concrete actions that can further strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of the IMQP communication strategy. These recommendations build directly on the observed results and are intended to consolidate existing strengths while addressing the main gaps identified.

A first priority concerns the improvement of monitoring and impact assessment. While current data clearly demonstrate strong visibility and engagement, especially during key milestones such as calls for application, the absence of systematically defined key events limits the evaluation of how communication efforts translate into concrete outcomes. It is therefore recommended to define and implement a limited but coherent set of trackable actions across the website, social media channels, and the MOOC platform. These should focus on strategic behaviours such as access to application information, navigation towards partner institutions, and engagement with learning resources. Strengthening tracking practices, including the consistent use of campaign identifiers for shared links, would allow for a more precise comparison of communication performance across channels and over time.

A second recommendation is to reinforce the continuity of communication throughout the academic year. The data show that visibility peaks are strongly associated with major announcements, confirming the effectiveness of communication during these phases. However, maintaining a more regular presence between peak moments would help stabilise reach, sustain audience interest, and strengthen long term engagement. This can be achieved through a structured editorial rhythm that combines institutional updates with recurring content formats focused on academic activities, student experience, partner institutions, and key stages of the programme lifecycle. Such an approach would reduce dependence on isolated high impact moments and support a more consistent visibility profile.

The analysis also suggests the opportunity to gradually diversify content formats, particularly on Instagram and Facebook, while preserving the academic and institutional identity of the programme. Posts and link based content are effective in disseminating information, but a cautious increase in the use of short video formats and interactive elements could further enhance outreach, especially among non-followers. Short, clearly structured audiovisual

content linked to teaching, research activities, and programme features would support visibility without compromising credibility. Greater use of stories to highlight deadlines, events, and practical information could also strengthen direct interaction and guide users more efficiently towards authoritative sources.

Another important action concerns the optimisation of the user journey on the website, which remains the central reference point for all stakeholders. While traffic levels are high, particularly during calls for application, clearer structuring of application related information and more visible calls to action would facilitate navigation and reduce information barriers for prospective candidates. Aligning website updates closely with social media communication would ensure consistency and immediacy when users move across channels.

In parallel, the role of YouTube as a long term academic communication tool can be further strengthened. The channel already performs well as a repository for lectures and teaching materials, but its impact could be enhanced through clearer contextualisation of content and the production of a small number of concise orientation videos. This would support both prospective and enrolled students while improving the discoverability and usability of existing resources.

Finally, the communication strategy would benefit from a more systematic involvement of partners and alumni as amplifiers of official content. Providing partners with ready to use communication materials during key phases, and integrating alumni perspectives into communication outputs, would expand the programme's reach while reinforcing its academic and professional credibility. To ensure sustainability, these actions should be supported by light coordination mechanisms within the consortium, including shared planning, basic reporting routines, and clear responsibility allocation.

Overall, the recommended actions aim to enhance coherence, measurability, and continuity across all communication channels, strengthening the strategic role of communication in supporting the international visibility, academic mission, and long term impact of the IMQP Master Programme.

9. Conclusion

The self analysis confirms the shared view of the Management Committee that the current communication strategy of the IMQP Master Programme is effective, coherent, and well aligned with the international and academic nature of the programme. The data show strong visibility, growing engagement, and a clear capacity to reach global audiences, particularly during key strategic moments.

At the same time, the analysis highlights concrete areas for improvement, especially in terms of content diversification, impact measurement, and continuity of communication. The Management Committee confirms its commitment to implementing the identified

recommendations in order to further strengthen the effectiveness, inclusiveness, and strategic impact of IMQP communication activities in the coming period.