



Digital Communication Strategy for EUSAIR (European Union Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region)

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Digital Communication Strategy for EUSAIR (European Union Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region)

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TASK 1 - ANALYSING THE CURRENTS STATUS QUO IN TERMS OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Introduction Task 1: EUSAIR, a global and digital communication challenge for an integrated Adriatic-Ionian Region

Created in 2014, the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) is one of the four macro-regional strategies created in the EU. Completely new vehicles of political decisions and investment, the macro-regional strategies allow countries located in the same geographical area to jointly tackle and find solutions to problems or better use their shared potential.

Encompassing 9 countries in the Adriatic and Ionian Region (4 EU Members States and 5 non-EU countries: Croatia, Greece, Italy, Slovenia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia), EUSAIR aims at promoting socio-economic prosperity and growth in the region by improving its attractiveness, competitiveness, and connectivity, around four thematic pillars: Blue Growth, Connecting the Region, Environmental Quality and Sustainable Tourism.

Following the conclusions of the European Council on the implementation of macro-regional strategies, highlighting the need for development of communication strategies and communication activities, EUSAIR aims at further increasing the visibility, awareness, interest, and attractiveness of the EUSAIR strategy among stakeholders and partners, and at ensuring appropriate communication of policy-related information to internal and external parties.

The objective for the next years is to promote awareness of the EUSAIR at the different levels, from local to international, build on the multi-level governance and ensure the involvement of public, economic, civil society and environmental partners, all this compiled into a strong and coherent (digital) communication strategy.

It is therefore crucial that the EUSAIR reaches the engaged audience and grows said audience so that it can be found by potential partners, develop new partnerships as well as foster relationships and operations with existing parties and stakeholders.

The communication audit that will be presented to you on the following pages is the embryo of a global approach aimed at achieving the communication objectives set by EUSAIR. As a first step in the process, this communication audit (task 1) will then be supplemented by an analysis of the key stakeholders in the macro-regional strategy (task 2) to be able to finally present to you and put in place a digital communication strategy in line with the objectives set for the coming years (task 3).

As such, the following report will focus on the current EUSAIR communication from a digital perspective. It will first explore, thanks to exchanges with the teams contributing to EUSAIR's online visibility on a day-to-day basis, the communication context of the macro-regional strategy and the objectives pursued, highlighting the experiences and feedback of people working closely or remotely on the strategy.

It will then dig deeper and analyse the communication tools used by EUSAIR - from its website to its various social media and the newsletters sent out – revealing the current performance of its digital communication. By qualitatively and quantitatively analysing communications, by studying the evolution over the years and by benchmarking with other similar organisations, first conclusions will be drawn leading – in a next step - to an integrated communication strategy.

In addition, this report will present quick wins for immediate optimisation. These will then be developed and integrated into the global strategy to be presented at a further stage.

1. Communicational context and processes

The *raison d'être* of EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) is to address common challenges through cooperation of multiple regions, cities and countries of the Adriatic and Ionian Region towards a stronger, harmonised, integrated and sustainable region. As an innovative instrument of cooperation between EU and non-EU countries, territories and people, EUSAIR also pursues the political aim of assisting participating candidate and potential candidate countries on their path towards the EU.

Covering 9 countries and nearly 95 million inhabitants, the EUSAIR is structured in two main levels (in addition to the political level): the coordination level represented by a Governing Board (among which National and Pillar Coordinators, DGs and other key partners), and the implementation level represented by Thematic Steering Groups of the 9 participating countries.

The **Governing Board members, National Coordinators, Pillar Coordinators, and Thematic Steering Group (TSG) members are responsible to identify the relevant areas, needs and opportunities** in their respective field where better visibility and promotion of the expected benefits of the Strategy to the relevant stakeholders would foster the overall implementation of the Strategy's goals, while the supporting structures should find the best solution to meet these goals.

Operational support to both levels is provided by **the EUSAIR Facility Point**, the main responsible and facilitator of the communication of the EUSAIR strategy. As **Lead Partner, the Slovenian Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy** oversees the day-to-day communication, from the updating of the website to social media and newsletters management. **Project Partners from each of the countries part of the macro-regional strategy** coordinate the communication in national languages with key national stakeholders.

Since 2017, many steps have been taken towards establishing a sound and consistent EUSAIR communication. To actively facilitate the process, the EUSAIR Facility Point Lead Partner drafted a Communication Strategy adopted by the Governing Board in 2017.

In 2018, the EUSAIR Facility Point issued a **Communication manual for EUSAIR governance structures** in order to reinforce the capacities of National coordinators, Pillar coordinators, Thematic Steering group members and Facility Point project partners.

Despite common efforts, actions, and initiatives, a 2020 report¹ concluded that the communicational aspect of the EUSAIR macro-regional strategy keeps facing certain issues, such as **a lack of quantitative and qualitative capacity**, which in turns prevents efficient, targeted, and clear messaging about the EUSAIR activities, goals and mission.

Six years after its conception, the EUSAIR is still at an early stage of development. While progress has been made, there is a variety of challenges hindering a more rapid implementation. **One of those challenges includes EUSAIR communication.**

To better understand the current state of the EUSAIR communication, **a survey towards EUSAIR Facility Point Lead and Project Partners** has been conducted (4 completed

¹ Final report 'Capacity Building for EUSAIR Communication', January 2020, Gabriel Alvarez.

surveys gathered from the operational team), whose main results can be found in the next page.

1.1. An inside view, within the Facility Point

The survey reveals that historically recurrent obstacles regarding the communication of the EUSAIR remain present. The common denominator in the different surveys collected from Facility Point Lead Partner and Project Partner members is **the lack of staff** although the issue is slowly tackled as **Facility Point Project Partners are engaging their external communication experts** in EUSAIR communications.

While the lack of staff dedicated to communication is a problem, **roles seem to be clearly defined** among Facility Point members in terms of general communication (three-quarters of the respondents replied positively and the latter neutrally), while the trend is slightly downward in terms of specifically digital communication, where one person out of the four replied negatively.

The positive point often mentioned is the **large amount of available and accessible information** about EUSAIR which can be communicated. As a result, Facility Point members are comfortable in their role of communicating about EUSAIR, with an average score of **7.75/10** (*On a scale of 1 to 10, how do you feel comfortable about communicating on EUSAIR?*).

However, on the question "*On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the ease to communicate around EUSAIR*", **the average score drops to 4/10**. Reasons for this include the **difficulty of communicating with one voice** for 9 different countries and the **challenge of collaborating** effectively with the different countries. As such, Facility Point members embrace a 'one-man band' role that is not without difficulty.

The survey highlights that the **process of information exchange within EUSAIR is not easy**, with some countries not contributing to the provision of information in the same way as others. For instance, to the question "*all EUSAIR member countries contribute in the same way to the communication content*", the majority (3 out of 4 people) answered in the negative and one person remained neutral. One of the respondents completed saying that the situation "*impedes the communication of EUSAIR*".

In addition, **the lack of clear key messages per target group** was pointed out by several respondents. To the statement "**EUSAIR has a clear digital strategy**", 3 out of 4 respondents answered "neither agree nor disagree", while only one person "totally agreed". When asked whether "**EUSAIR targets clearly defined audiences**", 3 out of 4 respondents replied "neither agree nor disagree", and one person even replied "disagree".

The positive news is that **EUSAIR has a clear mission and vision** – the goal now is to employ the human resources and tools to communicate these in an efficient, structured, and defined way.

2. Digital communication audit

As a macro-regional strategy, EUSAIR aims at creating synergies and foster coordination among all territories in the Adriatic-Ionian Region.

To deliver EUSAIR main messages and information to key stakeholders, different tools are used by the macro-regional strategy. In addition to press relations, which will be addressed here in a consistent manner - as they do not fall directly within the scope of digital communication - EUSAIR works mainly on its visibility **via a regularly updated website, a newsletter relayed to its members and the publication of news via social media.**

The website as well as the newsletters and social media are managed by the Facility Point, where **one person dedicates 100% of her time to communication**, with the occasional help of communication experts from the Project Partners countries.

This communication audit will entail a comprehensive review of the EUSAIR communication platform and tools, to determine the strengths and weaknesses of current communication.

To this end, the EUSAIR Facility Point shared access to the analytical data of its social media (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube), provided the statistics of its latest newsletters as well as the list of its recipients.

Various data were also collected through previous audits carried out for the macro-regional strategy and - regarding the website - through external tools.

Communication samples from all relevant channels, in all relevant formats were collected and analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Evaluation criteria included among other brand alignment, content quality, frequency, and performance.

2.1. EUSAIR Website ‘Adriatic-Ionian.eu’

The EUSAIR website, located at www.adriatic-ionic.eu, is a tool that supports the strategy’s mission: connecting people and institutions to build a common understanding of cooperation for a harmonised, integrated, and sustainable region. While its primary goal is therefore to **inform EUSAIR main stakeholders about the latest news of the macro-regional strategy**, its secondary one is to **activate** the audience to engage with it (e.g., by participating to events).

In order to understand in which capacity the EUSAIR website reaches these goals, we analysed its strengths and weaknesses which focused on the visual and textual content as well as the general structure of these elements. You will also find some visitor metrics in this section and news publication frequency as well as the website’s SEO and technical performance.

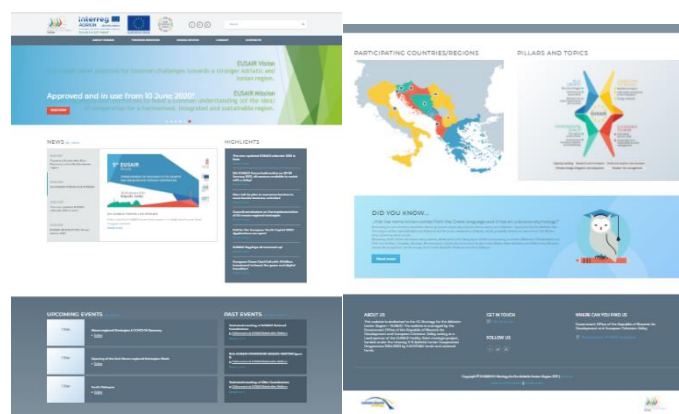
Based on our findings, we formulated suggestions (“quick-wins”) with the aim of converging to decisions that could improve the website to, subsequently, take actions on these decisions and, ultimately, boost its efficiency to communicate the EUSAIR message in a more targeted fashion.

2.1.1. A clear source of information on the macro-regional strategy and its functioning

The website **adriatic-ionic.eu** was set up as a platform to divulge two types of information: generic background information on the macro-regional strategy, its mission, vision, structure and partners and latest news on its achievements, events, calls of proposals as well as EU policy developments.

This information is hosted in six sections: (1) the homepage, (2) About EUSAIR, (3) Funding sources, (4) Media centre, (5) Library and (6) Contacts.

2.1.2. The homepage: a doorway that can confuse the visitor



Adriatic-ionic.eu homepage overview. ©EUSAIR

At first glance, the very first eye-catching content of the homepage is the banner. This predominates in the visual field to the disadvantage of **the presentation of the website**: *Who does this website belong to? Who is the organisation behind adriatic-ionic.eu?*

Although the 'About EUSAIR' tab is clearly present, there is no immediate description on the homepage.

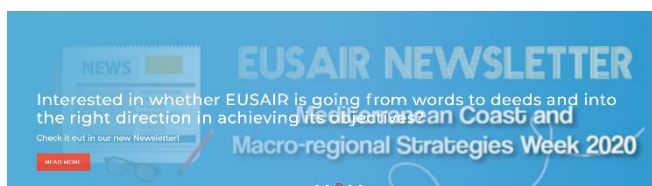
As such, the homepage **fails to efficiently transfer the essence of the EUSAIR**. To find this information on the homepage, the user needs to scroll all the way to the bottom (“About us”).

Moreover, the homepage is **visually overwhelming**: the multitude of logos (4 different logos) at the top of the page does not make its identification easy. For instance, the logo of the macro-regional strategy is not highlighted compared to the other logos presented. Therefore, the website visitor might wonder if they are on the website of the European Union, the Interreg one or on the EUSAIR one.



Screenshot of the various logos in the EUSAIR website header. ©EUSAIR

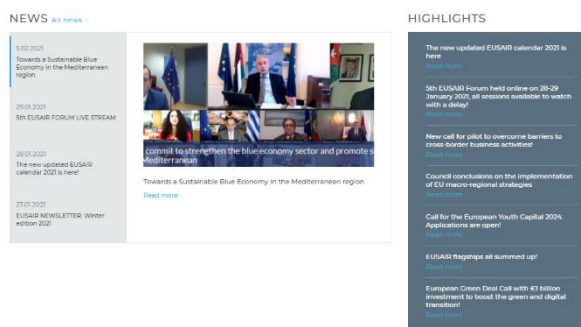
If we take a closer look at the central banner on the homepage, it acts as a slider and contains a maximum of five elements, which is a good balance. **However, the images that are used for the slider contain text that is often cut off.** While this is normal textual behaviour from a technical point of view, it is detrimental to its readability. Additionally, the slider contains **titles that appear on top of images with integrated text**, which makes it even more difficult to read and absorb the information.



Screenshot of the slider with superposed text. ©EUSAIR

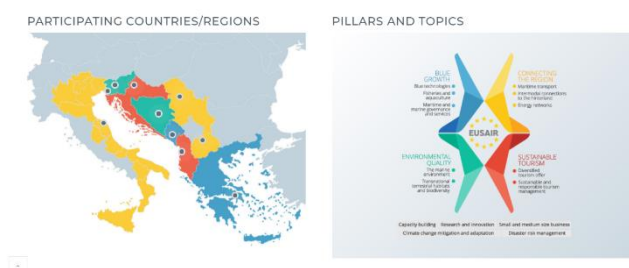
Scrolling down the homepage, the latest news and highlights are presented, allowing visitors to quickly get up to date with the latest news on the macro-regional strategy. However, this section is displayed asymmetrically (between news and highlights), which can complicate reading.

On the contrary, the next section, dedicated to events, is harmoniously arranged between past and future events.



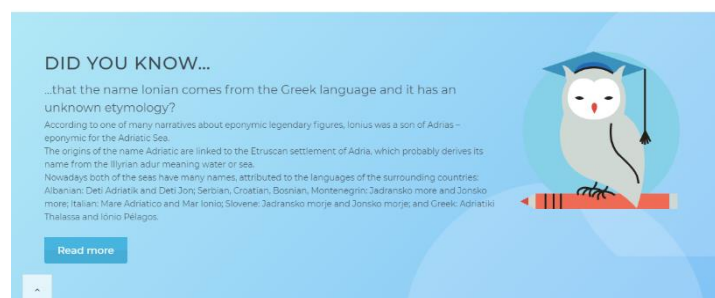
Screenshot of the mid-section of the homepage showing asymmetric columns. ©EUSAIR

Further scrolling down on the homepage, there are two relevant images that give insight in the macro-regional strategy, however, they're located **too far down**. It is not only unfortunate that the names of the countries are not included in the visual, it is also unclear to the visitor that the two images actually contain interactive content.



Visual representation of the participating countries/regions and the pillars located in the mid-lower section of the EUSAIR website. ©EUSAIR

Last but not least, the trivia section with the owl image at the bottom of the homepage seems quite far removed from the overall look and feel of the page presented so far.

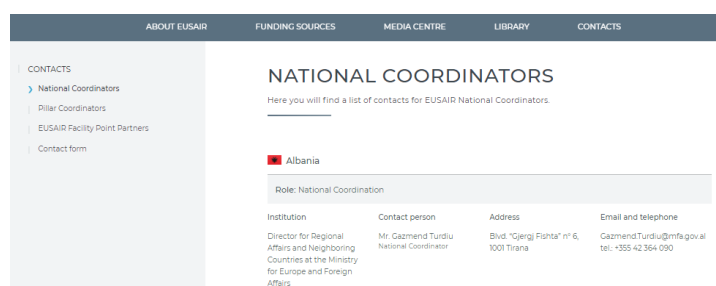


Screenshot of the 'Did you know' section. ©EUSAIR

2.1.3. Extensive information about EUSAIR to be restructured

One of the website's biggest advantage – when looking at the overall content - is that it hosts **extensive, reliable and transparent information** about EUSAIR.

For example, the contact section is **very transparent**. It appears clearly who is responsible for what with direct phone and e-mail provided for easy contact.



Website contact subsection 'National Coordinators' at www.adriatic-ionian.eu/contacts/. ©EUSAIR

As the information content is quite dense, it is important to keep it up to date. For instance, the mention of 8 member countries still appears in some parts of the website, while the number of participating countries has increased to 9.

A certain imbalance in textual load across pages can also be noted. The **About EUSAIR** section, for example, contains 7 different subsections, including all 9 versions of the text about the EUSAIR Facility Point Strategic Project, while the **Funding sources** sections – an alone-standing tab - hardly contains any information.

As such, the **organisation of all this content** may appear unclear to the visitor. Different parts of the website seemingly overlap, and the content repartition appears ambiguous: Funding sources constitute an apart tab, but could fit in the About EUSAIR one, the Events and News appear in the Media centre tab, and the difference between Library and Media centre can be difficult to understand for lambda visitors.

2.1.4. An eclipsed visual identity

On the whole, **EUSAIR's visual identity is not clearly displayed** and highlighted on the website.

The colours and visual elements of the macro-regional strategy's logo are not an integral part of the website (although used here and there as visuals).

It is therefore not easy to clearly identify the website as a EUSAIR platform at first glance.

As for the visuals, generally speaking, images uploaded to the website and containing text are not suitable for screens with high pixel density (ex: retinal screens). They appear blurred, which impairs readability.

2.1.5. The largest source of up-to-date information on EUSAIR

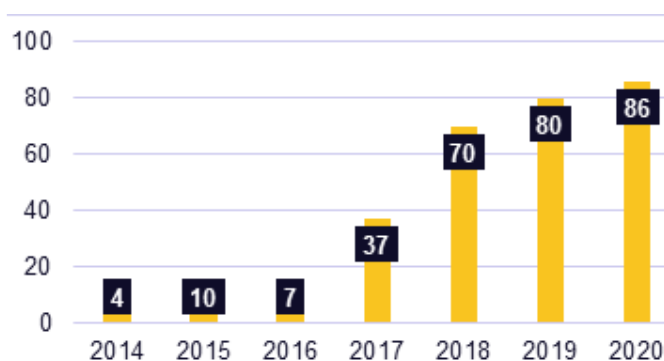
Real tools of communication towards the stakeholders, the blog articles of the website, presented in the news section are also important for the referencing of the website.

If the Facility Point Project Partners occasionally contribute to the content, the news section is managed by the Facility Point Lead Partner, who is in charge of the copy and publishing of the news items.

It is noteworthy that the website is **regularly supplemented with news, up to 2 to 3 per week** (outside holiday periods). In 2020, total of 86 news items have been published, i.e., 1 to 2 a week for the whole year.

While in the first years, the posting frequency was low, from 2017 on we can see a lot of activity, with numbers growing year by year.

Graph 1 - Evolution of the number of news posted per year on the website.

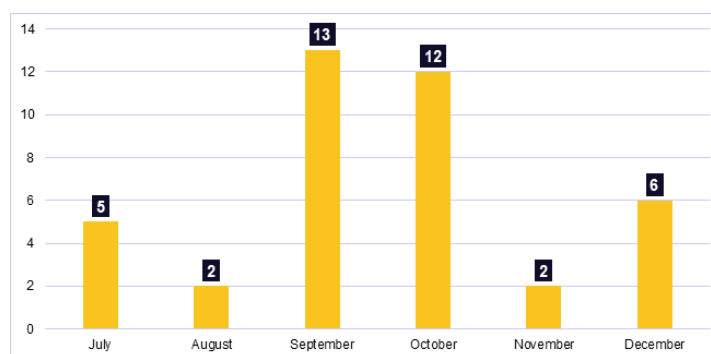


When it comes to the monthly publishing frequency, we analysed all news contributions from July to December 2020. In this period, **40 articles** were published.

The **September and October publishing peaks** immediately catch the eye, with 13 and 12 contributions in these months, i.e., a share of 62.5%. This can be explained because of the various events going on, including the EU Regions Week.

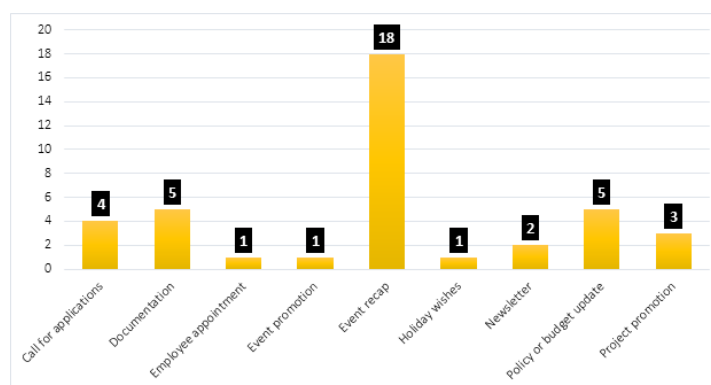
In comparison, **July, August, November and December were low on content**. During the summer months, a drop in activity is common. However, the last two months of the year were equally quiet.

Graph 2 - News overview per month (July - December 2020).



With regards to the **news topics**, the articles were divided into the following 9 categories: (1) Call for applications, (2) Documentation, (3) Employee appointment, (4) Event promotion, (5) Event recap, (6) Holiday wishes, (7) Newsletter, (8) Policy or budget update and (9) Project promotion.

Graph 3 - News overview per topic (July - December 2020).



As we can see in the above chart, **event recaps** (or summaries) represent 18 out of 40 publications, 45%. In contrast, there is only one publication promoting an event. This begs the question: *why are so few events announced? Is it because they are not open to the public?*

There are 5 articles announcing **policy or budget updates**. The publications integrating links to documentation, also tend to relate to events or policy updates, however, they are exclusively dedicated to showcasing documents, visuals and videos. With regards to **calls for applications**, 4 were counted. Furthermore, there are 3 articles that **promote a project** (the same one).

The other publications included holiday wishes, an employee appointment message and two announcements regarding the newsletter.

When analysing these articles, we made several observations regarding the content itself:

- First, the content focuses heavily on policy, and uses corresponding terms as well as extensive explications. It could be considered too technical.
- Secondly, the majority of the articles, i.e., event recaps, policy updates and documentation, which represent 70% of all content, doesn't incite engagement. There is no participation or interaction implied.
- Thirdly, we would like to address the article length. Some articles, such as the 8 October one about the 13th meeting of the EUSAIR Thematic Steering Group on Sustainable Tourism, are quite long, as are the policy update ones. In the former example, the publication was a press release reprised from another outlet. A press release can be used as a base for website news content, however, ideally, it should be edited into an article – including cuts – before publication in the news section.
- Furthermore, various articles did not contain any images.
- Last but not least, the titles lack call-to-actions. This means that the title does not contain any language that would incite the reader to do something, e.g., read, register to an event, etc.

Quick wins for an optimised website

- Integrate key information (e.g., Who you are) on the homepage and insert the key information higher up.
- If you are using a slider, let the visuals speak for themselves. In other words, avoid adding too much text or superposing it.
- Rethink the Menu bar, e.g., What (history, mission, vision, pillars, funding sources, etc.), Who (governance, countries), News & Events, Library, Contact.
- Maintain a steady publishing frequency even during traditionally quiet months, i.e., summer.
- Post more about concrete projects and the people involved.

2.1.6. Analytics and technical performance: towards a greater loading speed

Accessing the website's analytical data was unfortunately not possible, however, the figures obtained for 2019 make it possible to highlight the website's good performance.

Indeed, according to data from the period of 1 January 2019 to 1 April 2019², multiplied by 4, the website registered ...

- 15,000 visits in 2019,
- of which 21% were recurring visitors,
- with the average visit duration being 4 minutes.

Since an average visit of 2 minutes is considered good³, this last statistic is an excellent result.

Access to more data would make it possible to draw more dense conclusions, in particular the most visited pages (*Is it the News section?*) as well as the journey of visitors to the site (*Which page do they visit first? Where do they go next? On which page are they when they leave the website? After how many pages? Etc.*).

When it comes to **technical performance**, the website scored 51% by the tool "GTMETRIX" (full report in annex) and, on average, took more than 2 seconds to load.

- The first contentful paint (referring to how quickly content like text or images appears on your page) takes 1.9 seconds, which is 211% longer than what is considered a good user experience, i.e. 0.9 seconds.
- The largest contentful paint (referring to how long it takes for the largest element of content – such as the banner or slider - to appear on your page) takes 2.7 seconds to load, 225% longer than recommended, i.e. 1.2 seconds or less.
- The speed index (referring to how quickly the contents of your page are visibly populated) is 284% slower than recommended (3.7 seconds vs. 1.3 seconds or less).
- Last but not least, the cumulative layout shift (referring to how much your page's layout 'shifts' or moves around as it loads) takes 1.7 seconds to load, 170% longer than the minimum recommendation (0.1 seconds or less).

While these indications may seem complicated, the results presented can be improved on through various simple measures to boost loading performance, of which we have listed the top four below.

² Data retrieved from the PDF *Report CHARLELIE_Communication of MRS of EU_1.0*.

³ Spinutech, *7 Website Analytics That Matter Most*, link.

- Use .JPG format images instead of PNG format when not needed: in general, PNG is a higher-quality compression format. JPG images are generally of lower quality but are faster to load.
- Use HTTP/2 protocol: HTTPS secures the connection between a visitor's browser and the web server, ensuring data is encrypted and protected from intermediary actions. HTTP/2 allows for multiplexing (requesting multiple files at the same time). This significantly improves both site performance and server efficiency.
- Cache certain elements: caches are an extremely fast storage systems which hold the copy of the information to be accessed on a temporary basis, so that if that information is needed again, it can be fetched from the cache, allowing faster access.
- Update the website to HTML5: HTML5 is a mark-up language used for structuring and presenting content on the World Wide Web. It is the fifth and last major HTML version that is a World Wide Web Consortium recommendation.

In terms of SEO, the website uses good practices for basic referencing. It is however suggested to **add Meta Description to the HTML code**. Meta descriptions are types of meta tags in the HTML source code of a webpage. They describe the content of a website shortly and concisely and are therefore important indicators of a website's content to search engines. Without meta descriptions, search engines auto-complete it and might just pick the first 160 characters from the page (which could be irrelevant as a description).

Descriptions of images are also important in terms of referencing. Adding an 'alt text' to your images will allow search engines to understand their content. In addition, this text will be shown on your page if the image cannot be displayed.

In conclusion, the website is easy to find, largely accessible and there are no serious navigational issues, but the above points of improvement should ideally be taken on board in order to guarantee an optimal user experience.

2.1.7. Conclusion

From visual identity to loading speed, the website has aspect that could be upgraded and refined. At the same time, it has solid qualities, such as its accessibility and SEO quality on a technical level. Regarding content, we again want to highlight the very regular posting frequency, which lets the audience know that EUSAIR is active and committed. It incites curiosity and regular traffic to the website.

Moving forward, we will further elaborate on ways to boost the website's efficiency as well as built upon its positive points.

2.2. EUSAIR Facility Point Newsletter

As communication tools conveying the latest news of an organisation, newsletters help maintain contact and build relationships with key stakeholders through regular and high-value information.

In the case of EUSAIR, a newsletter is sent out between 2 and 4 times a year, reaching around 4200 recipients.

This section will analyse the newsletters sent out by EUSAIR following different qualitative and quantitative criteria. The present analysis will focus on 2019 and 2020, in which 6 newsletters were released, i.e., 3 a year.



Overview of the EUSAIR newsletters published in 2019 and 2020. ©Vademecom

2.2.1. An effective communication tool on which to build

This section will consist of a qualitative analysis of the 6 newsletters published in 2019 and 2020. All the information used for the analysis was collected from the newsletters themselves, available on EUSAIR website. For each newsletter, different elements were analysed: the overall look and feel, the title, the sections and content relayed as well as the length.

A simple and functional design

Looking at the general design of the newsletter, we observe an alignment from newsletter to newsletter, with a template being used for the layout. The visual presentation of a newsletter and its eye-catching appeal are an essential element that will have a direct impact on the attractiveness of the content and the development of reader loyalty.

Simple and efficient, the design respects the EUSAIR graphic charter (that mainly uses the blue and yellow) and integrates the EUSAIR and Interreg ADRION logos. If a recurring template is used, it is also **embellished with seasonal elements** (additional decorations) which adds a decorative and specific touch to each newsletter (spring, autumn).

On rare occasions, and in order to highlight some important news, the basic template is replaced, as can be seen in the publication of the first newsletter of the Slovenian Presidency.

While the design is simple and coherent, **the different sections within the newsletter are not clearly emphasised by the design**, which makes it difficult for the reader to spot a section change.

In terms of illustrations, the newsletter provides an **effective combination of both video and visual content**.

Quick wins for an optimised newsletter

- Make a clear distinction between the main components of the newsletter, by changing the background colour, for example.

Seasonal titles

If we consider the headings used, we notice some inconsistencies. With the exception of the newsletters dedicated to key events (Sea4Future and MRS Week), the title of the newsletters refers to the seasons, with no specific headline on the main news of the moment.

The title being the first element the recipients will read, it is decisive to make it appealing and special in order to increase the opening rate.

Moreover, if the titles thus seem to refer to the seasons, not all the seasons of the year are covered, which shows a certain irregularity in the publication of newsletters.

Quick wins for an optimised newsletter

- Embellish the title with an attractive sentence summarising the main content.
- Show consistency in the titles and distribution timings to further increase the loyalty of the audience.

An exhaustive content, primarily covering events and partnerships

In terms of content, each newsletter is divided into different sections. Although some sections vary from one newsletter to another, based on the current news, **others are recurrent thus allowing consistency from one newsletter to another**: “*In the spotlight*”, “*In your country*”, “*Macro-regional affairs*”, “*Open calls*”, “*Highlights*”, “*Upcoming events*”, “*Save the date*”, “*EUSAIR’s outreach*”.

A point of attention must however be made concerning these sections which are sometimes very similar. The same newsletter can for example include a “*Highlights*” section, as well as a “*In the spotlight*”. In order to avoid any confusion, it would be interesting to better distinguish the titles of these sections.



Overview of the sections “Highlights” and “Spotlight” from the April 2020 newsletter. ©EUSAIR

Similarly, while one newsletter includes a section called “*Macro-regional affairs*”, another one includes a section called “*Macro-regional affairs of EUSAIR*”. The effectiveness of a newsletter relies on its content, but also on the way it is organised, which is why it is recommended to stay consistent in the sections of each newsletter.

Overall, **the content of newsletters is exhaustive**, as it tackles internal news and events, as well as local, regional and macro-regional news. The general focus in EUSAIR newsletters are **events and meetings**, as well as **a strong highlight of EUSAIR stakeholders and partnerships**. All newsletters start with a highlight on an EUSAIR meeting or event, except one, in which the first information is the accession of North Macedonia to EUSAIR.

Among all EUSAIR countries, Slovenia has been the most highlighted country in the past newsletters and is the only country that is mentioned in the 6 newsletters, while Montenegro is cited in only one newsletter.

It is to be noted that one of the newsletters has an interesting feature, i.e. a link to vote on possible topics for the next newsletter: a great idea to reinforce the link with the audience.

In terms of length, **EUSAIR newsletters range between 650 and 2500 words, with an average of 1600 words** (for the 6 newsletters analysed). However, research shows that the perfect length for a newsletter is about 20 lines of text, or 200 words maximum, for the highest click rates⁴. Moreover, an average reader only spends 51 seconds reading a newsletter and only reads about 20% of the text on a page⁵.

If the different news are relatively concise, most of them redirecting to the website to discover a detailed article, the total number of these news in each newsletter increases considerably the overall length. Indeed, on average **12 news are presented per newsletter**, with two newsletters reaching 18-19 news (Summer/Autumn 2019 and Spring 2020).

As far as the **tone of voice** is concerned, there are usually two ‘tones’ in each newsletter. First, each newsletter starts with a ‘welcoming word’ from the EUSAIR Facility Point team, in which the tone of voice is **friendly and informal**. This part of the newsletter usually engages with the reader, for example with a word on current events (e.g., COVID-19 crisis, or current political situation in Europe). After this informal part, the tone of voice becomes **neutral and informative**, providing the latest news and information.

⁴ Campaign Monitor, *How Long Should An Email Newsletter Be*, link.

⁵ QuickSprout, *How to Write a Newsletter*, link.

Finally, all EUSAIR newsletters are written in English. As their objective is to be spread in different EUSAIR countries and speaking as ‘one voice’, this is the most effective language.

2.2.2. An audience mostly located in Greece, Italy and Slovenia

In order to evaluate the impact of the newsletters and their evolution in terms of reach, this section will consist of a quantitative analysis of EUSAIR newsletters and their audience. It must be noted that this analysis will only focus on the three newsletters published in 2020, as data was not made available for the other newsletters. However, this will already give us an idea of the general impact of EUSAIR newsletters. All figures collected in this section were made available by EUSAIR Facility Point.

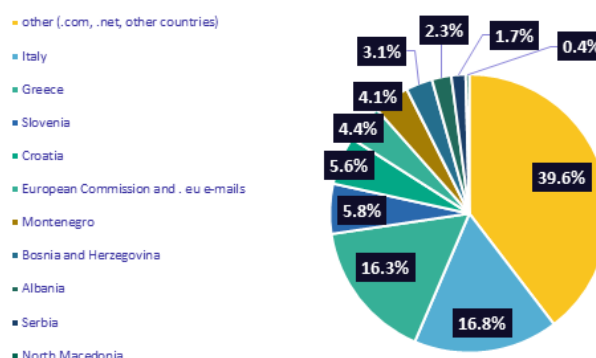
EUSAIR newsletters currently count **4284 subscribers**, representing **1253 different organisations**⁶.

In order to analyse the origin/location of the people receiving the newsletter, we classified the ‘subscribed’ email addresses of the database according to the domain extensions at the end of the email address (.it,gr,.al, etc).

If the majority of the addresses collected (39.6%) represent .com, .net or countries outside the members of the macro-regional strategy (.at, .de, etc.), we note that **.it and .gr addresses are the most common, representing each 16% of the newsletters subscribers**. Slovenia and Croatia come next with around 5% of the subscribers, followed by .eu e-mail addresses (among which the European Commission). The five EU neighbouring countries part of EUSAIR are less represented in the people receiving the newsletter, with North Macedonia, the latest EUSAIR member, representing 0.4% of the subscribers.

However, these results must be carefully interpreted, as EUSAIR countries might also be included in the .net and .com addresses.

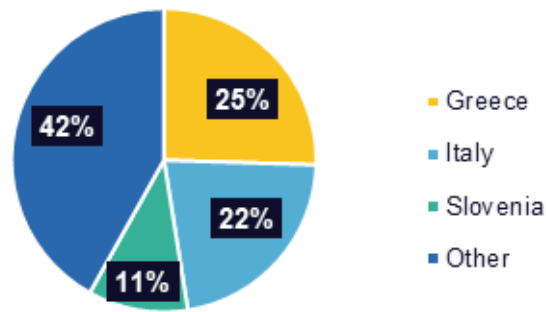
Graph 4: Proportion of newsletter recipients per country in 2020.



Looking at the people who opened the newsletters, we observed the majority of the readers were from Greece (25%) and Italy (22%), followed by Slovenia (11%), which is of course in line with the repartition of the subscribers.

Graph 5: Proportion of newsletter openers per country in 2020.

⁶ Data collected based on the current database used for newsletters on the basis of the domain name of the various e-mails, deleting duplicate domain names.

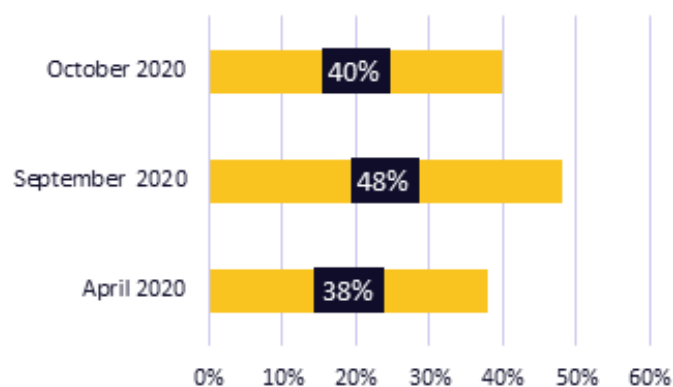


2.2.3. An awaited content for subscribers

In the following graph, we can observe the open rate obtained by each newsletter. The most successful newsletter in terms of openings is the one of September, i.e., the 1st newsletter of the Slovenian Presidency, with 48% of the subscribers who have opened the newsletter.

The open rate for the other two editions are quite similar to each other and are still **great results knowing that the average open rate in the governmental sector is 28.77%**⁷.

Graph 6: Number of total opens in 2020.

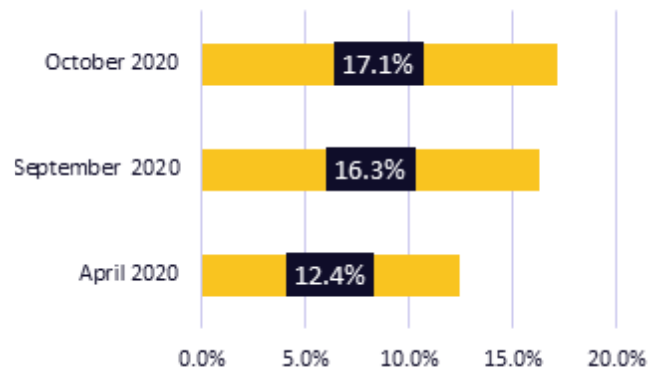


In order to know better the audience behaviour, an important statistic is the number of clicks that each newsletter gathered. This allows to know if recipients show interest in the content of the newsletter. **Knowing that the average click-to-open rate in 2021 is 14.1%**⁸, the performance for April is slightly below average, while September and October are above average, as shows the following graph.

Graph 7: Percentage of clicks per unique opens for 2020 newsletters.

⁷ Mailchimp, *Email Marketing Benchmarks and Statistics by Industry*, link.

⁸ Campaign Monitor, *Ultimate Email Marketing Benchmarks for 2021: By Industry and Day*, link.



Of all links present in the 3 newsletters under analysis, **20% were YouTube videos (among which 13,4% from EUSAIR Facility Point channel), and 80% were links to the EUSAIR website.**

In the three newsletters, **YouTube videos were the most successful.** The YouTube video that gathered most clicks was a video from the EUSAIR Facility Point YouTube Channel on “*Defining EUSAIR flagships*”, with 16 clicks. The website link that gathered most clicks was about an article defining EUSAIR flagships for the Blue Growth pillar in the region as well.

2.2.4. Conclusions

Analyses carried out in relation to the 2020 newsletters testify to the excellent performance of this communication tool: the opening rate, as well as the click-to-open rate are excellent. This shows the current subscribers' interest in the newsletter and the quality of the audience: an audience mainly coming from the 4 EUSAIR countries members of the EU (Italy, Greece, Slovenia, and Croatia).

The objective from now on should be to provide a clear strategy and planning for newsletters, establishing fix dates together with a clearer presentation and the promotion of the newsletter (on the website and on social media) in order to win the loyalty of the audience and extend it to the other members of the macro-regional strategy.

2.3. 'EUSAIR Facility Point' Facebook Page

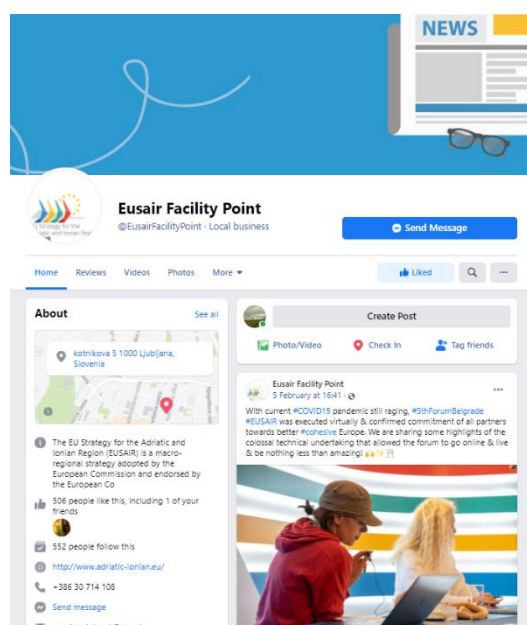
In this section, we will analyse EUSAIR Facility Point Facebook page as well as the performance of its posts according to various criteria, such as the type of content, the frequency of publication, demographic data or engagement statistics. In an objective of clarity and concision, the analysis will focus on 2020, from January 1st to December 31st, and will include comparisons with previous years when relevant.

The figures presented in this analysis were collected on the Facebook page, directly via the social media insights tool. At the end of each section of the analysis, some recommendations will be provided, for a quick optimisation of the page and its content. It is to be noted that these recommendations must be considered as 'quick wins' that can be directly implemented, before the next task 'Building a tailor-made results-driven digital strategy and communication', that will provide a complete and exhaustive strategy for EUSAIR Facebook page.

2.3.1. An understated identity

The **@EusairFacilityPoint** Facebook Page was created on 8 May 2017 and counted **455 followers** on 31 December 2020. In 2020, 166 posts were published, the great majority of them related to **internal events and news**, such as EUSAIR workshops, but also to European events, among which *the European Week of Regions and Cities 2020*.

The purpose of this first section is to analyse EUSAIR Facebook page identity (information-wise and visual-wise).



Overview of the Facebook page EUSAIR Facility Point homepage - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.
©EUSAIR/ Facebook

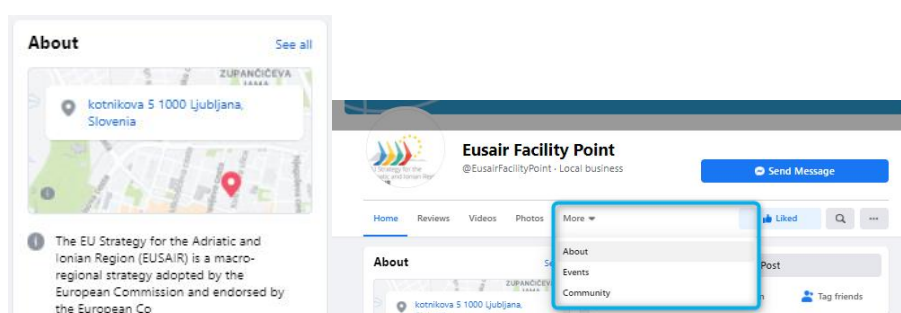
When it comes to the **visual identity of the page**, i.e. its overall presentation, we first notice the cover and profile picture of the page. If the **EUSAIR logo** is well present to identify the page (as profile picture), it does not fit the format of the profile picture. The current chosen picture does not allow to see the whole name of EUSAIR.

As for the **cover picture**, it consists of a blue design with a 'News' icon, the same icon used for EUSAIR newsletter, therefore highlighting the 'news' function of the Facebook page.

When it comes to **the name of the page**, "Eusair Facility Point", although it shows coherency with the other social media, it is not clear what it means exactly for the broader public (*What is a Facility Point?*), and does not allow to highlight the Adriatic-Ionian area.

Looking at the **description of the page**, this one is incomplete, as it stops in the middle of a phrase. The current limit for Facebook page description being 255 characters, we believe the description can be further optimised.

In terms of **general organisation**, the 'About' page, i.e., one of the most important section of the Facebook page to raise awareness of the macro-regional strategy, appears in the tab 'More' and not directly as the first sections. The page having been created under the template 'local business', the 'Reviews' tab appears first. In the case of EUSAIR, the template as well as the tabs organisation could be revised.



Overview of the Facebook page EUSAIR Facility Point homepage - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.
©EUSAIR/ Facebook

In the **'About' section of the page**, useful information can be found: the address in Slovenia (currently holding the Presidency of EUSAIR), a link to EUSAIR website, a phone number, a link to EUSAIR email address. However, there is no link redirecting to the EUSAIR other social media, as Twitter or YouTube.

Quick wins for an optimised Facebook page

- Upload a profile picture showing the visual element of the EUSAIR logo (without the text).
- Provide a description of the page including EUSAIR's objectives.
- Add a link to EUSAIR's other social media in the description.
- Reorganise the tabs for greater clarity.

2.3.2. An event-oriented communication: content and visually wise

In terms of **content and information provided**, various elements have been analysed, based on different questions: *what kind of content do posts convey? In what language? Does it include a visual?* To organise the analysis, posts published over the last four months

of 2020 have been analysed individually according to 4 defined criteria: the topic, the focus (pillar/ country/ language), the presence of links, hashtags and tags, and the visuals.

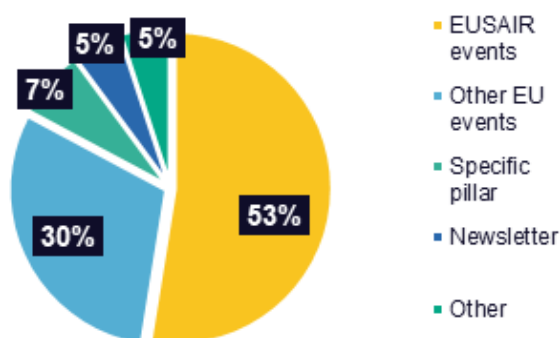
Of all posts published in the last four months of 2020 (56 posts), the majority, namely **53% of the posts, are related to EUSAIR events**, i.e., EUSAIR workshops, webinars, and other events.

The second biggest part of posts are also linked to events, this time not limited to EUSAIR but to other EU bodies, such as events organised by Interreg, the EU Commission or other MRS (e.g., *The European Week of Regions and Cities*, *EUSBSR Annual Forum*). These posts represent **30% of the posts of the last four months**.

In total, **83% of the posts are thus related to events**, and usually tackled the main conclusions, the take-home messages, or the implications for EUSAIR countries of the discussions between the stakeholders.

The remaining categories consist of posts on the promotion of a specific pillar (7%), on the promotion of the newsletter (5%), and the last category (5%) is made up of different posts that do not enter the previous categories (e.g.: post on the *Mediterranean Coast Day*; post on the Facebook group 'Danube Youth').

Graph 8 – Repartition of EUSAIR Facebook posts by topic in the last four months of 2020.

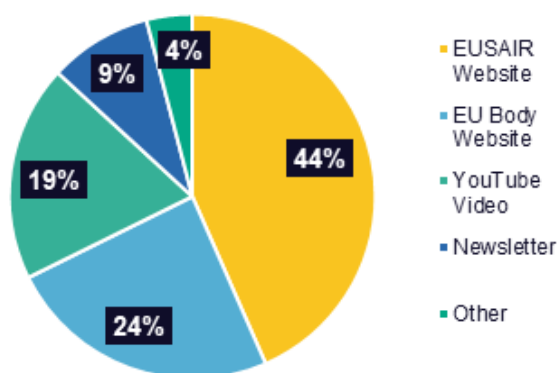


When a specific pillar is promoted (Blue Growth, Sustainable Tourism, Environmental Quality or Connecting the Region), the distribution is almost perfectly equal among the four pillars, as each pillar was specifically promoted 25% of the times. Additionally, it is quite rare that a specific EUSAIR country is targeted in a post. In the last four months of 2020, only 10% of the posts targeted a specific country: 4 posts (7%) targeted Slovenia, in the context of its Presidency of EUSAIR, 1 post targeted Croatia promoting a newsletter in Croatian, and 1 post targeted Italy, since the Region of Marche, was the organiser of a EUSAIR workshop. Apart from that, the posts do not target any specific country, and **speak as 'one voice' for the 9 EUSAIR countries**. This also explains that 100% of the posts are written in English, **making it accessible to all EUSAIR countries**.

When it comes to the links, hashtags, and tags (identification of other pages) present in the posts, we see that **37,5% of the posts include a URL link, acting as a clear Call-to-Action, 69% of the posts include at least one hashtag, and 41% of the posts have tagged at least one other account**.

If we analyse the URLs included in the posts: 44% of the URLs link to EUSAIR website, 24% redirect to other EU bodies websites (Interreg, EUSBSR, EU Commission...), 19% to YouTube videos and 9% to a newsletter.

Graph 9 – Repartition of URLs in EUSAIR Facebook posts in the last four months of 2020.



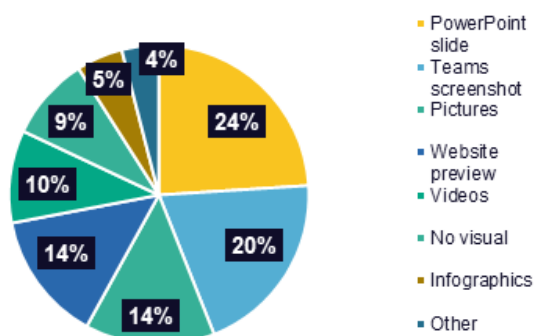
The most common hashtags used on EUSAIR Facebook page the last 4 months of 2020 were: *#SloPresidencyEUSAIR*, *#EUSAIR*, *#Strongertogether*, *#S3*, *#EUGreenDeal*.

Other hashtags more specific to one pillar were also used, such as *#EnvironmentalQuality* and *#BlueGrowth*. When it comes to the accounts tagged in EUSAIR Facebook posts, the most common tags were *EUSALP*, *EUSBSR*, *Interreg*, *Europe in my Region*, *Comune de Isola* and *Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*.

Overall, the most important accounts tagged are **other MRS or EU organisations related to EUSAIR**, but we also observe various tags related to Slovenia, currently holding EUSAIR Presidency. Although the tags are usually relevant, some posts include 10 tags in their text, which makes the post too heavy, while other posts do not include any tag at all. The tags are always included in the text, and never in the picture of the post (a technique that can be used to notify other accounts of a news without overcrowding the text of a post).

When it comes to visuals, the most common visual are one or various **PowerPoint slides, accounting for 24% of all visuals** in the last four months of 2020. The second most common visual are **screenshots of Teams meetings with its participants, accounting for 20% of the visuals**. The next two categories are pictures, such as stock images pictures (14%) and website previews (14%). Videos account for 10% of the visuals, followed by no visual at all (9%), infographics (5%) and other visuals such as newsletter screenshot (4%).

Graph 10 – Type of visuals for EUSAIR Facebook posts in the last four months of 2020.



Although there is a high variety of visuals, PowerPoint slides with lots of text are not considered the most effective on Facebook. The prevalence of PowerPoint slides and Teams screenshots is directly linked to the fact that EUSAIR Facebook page is mainly dedicated to events and workshops promotion. Moreover, the percentage of absence of visual (9%) is important, which is not recommended on Facebook.

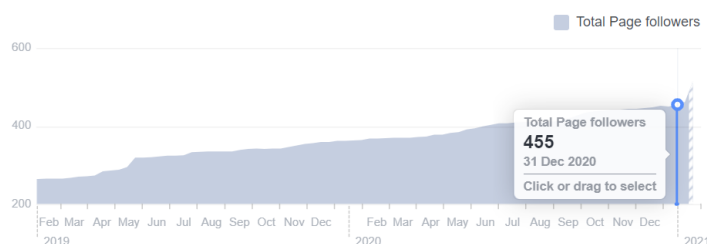
Quick wins for an optimised Facebook page

- Keep Facebook posts short and concise.
- Ensure continuity and coherence in the hashtags.
- Tag relevant Facebook accounts in posts, ideally in the visual in order not to overcharge the text.

2.3.3. A rather institutional ecosystem

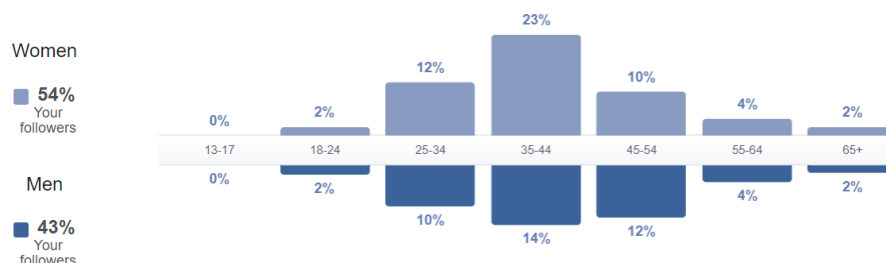
Followers and people reached: a working-age population from Greece, Italy and Slovenia

In terms of followers, while EUSAIR Facebook page had 362 followers on the 1st of January 2020, one year after, on the 31st of December, it counted **455 followers**. This represents an **increase of 25,6%** (from 362 to 455) in the total number of followers in one year. If we compare it to the increase of 2019 (37,1%, from 264 to 362), we notice that the page is not growing as fast as it used to.



Evolution of the number of followers on EUSAIR Facebook page. ©EUSAIR/ Facebook

The following graph shows the aggregated demographic data about the people who follow EUSAIR Facebook page based on the age and gender information they provide in their user profiles.

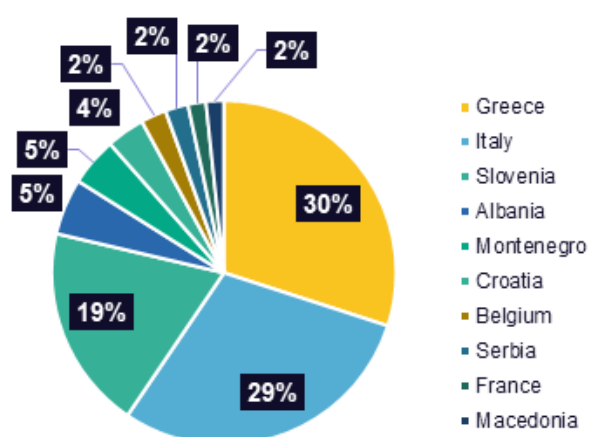


Age and gender of the followers of EUSAIR Facebook page. ©EUSAIR/ Facebook

We can observe that the most important group of the audience is **women from 35 to 44 years old (23% of the followers)**, and **35-44 years old in general (37%, men and women together)**. The next most important groups are the 25-34 and 45-54 years old, that both account for 22% of the followers. It is clear when we see this graph that the biggest part of followers is part of the working population.

In terms of location, the first six countries represented in the followers are countries that are part of EUSAIR. The **3 most-represented countries are Greece (30% of the followers), Italy (29%) and Slovenia (19%)**.

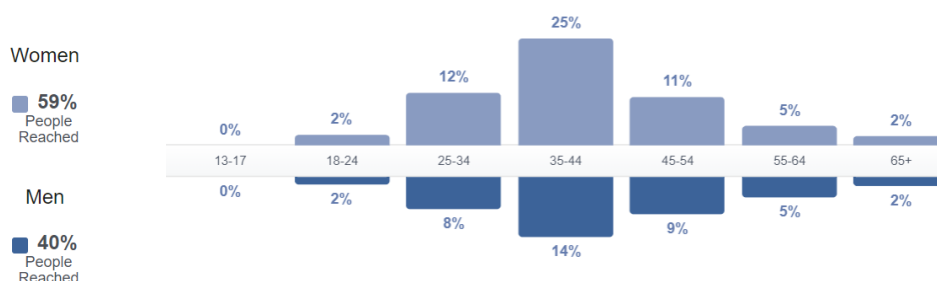
Graph 11 – Repartition of EUSAIR Facebook page followers according to their country.



When it comes to the reached audience, in 2020, the most reached people (*i.e., people who had any content from the page enter their screen*) are **from 35 to 44 years old (39% of the people reached)**. Among this group, mostly women are reached by the publications (25% of the people reached). The second and third most reached groups are the 25-34 and 45-54 years old, each representing 20% of the people reached.

We see that this data is once again very similar to the data on the followers of the page. Other groups, i.e., younger, and older groups, do not represent a big part of the people reached, as shows the graph below. The biggest part of the audience is thus part of the working population, i.e., people from 25 to 54 years old.

In terms of gender, EUSAIR Facebook posts reach more women (59%) than men (40%) in general and in all age groups.



Age and gender of the people reached by EUSAIR Facebook posts. ©EUSAIR/ Facebook

We observe that the statistics of followers and of people reached by EUSAIR posts are very similar. This can be explained by the fact that posts are not sponsored, as sponsoring Facebook posts allows to target a specific and chosen audience.

Unfortunately, Facebook does not provide us with statistics about the people engaged with EUSAIR posts because the audience is not large enough to receive anonymised and aggregated insights. As the page grows, this will be an important data to analyse too. Indeed, people engaged are not necessarily the same as those reached.

Mentions and interactions: a largely EUSAIR's institutional ecosystem

Who is interacting with EUSAIR on Facebook? Who mentions the macro-regional strategy? With which organisations are bridges created? Based on the analysis of the mentions and most engaged users with the content, this section is aimed at **mapping the EUSAIR Facebook Community**.

In 2020, EUSAIR was mentioned (tagged in the posts) mainly by **EU regional organisations**, such as *Interreg Italy-Albania-Montenegro*, but also by other MRS, such as the *Danube Region Strategy*. Other mentions were from *AL DONIA*, a consultancy in Croatia, concerning COVID implications on tourism, *Istra Inspirit*, a Croatian local business on tourism, *UHPA*, a travel company in Croatia. Finally, the *Instituto Nazionale di Oceanografia e di Geofisica Sperimentale* tagged EUSAIR regarding an ADRION project.

Overall, we see that **businesses and organisations that are directly linked to one of EUSAIR's pillars (tourism, transport, sea...) and European organisations that already know about EUSAIR are the most likely to talk about the macro-regional strategy**. Such partnerships are important and must be maintained and promoted.

Additionally, when we look at the most active users of EUSAIR Facebook page (through the analysis of shares and top fans), we see mainly people working for EUSAIR or working in regional organisations within EUSAIR countries. The vast majority of EUSAIR posts are shared either by an employee of EUSAIR, or by a related organisation, such as *Forum AIC* (Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce).

At the moment, the page seems to target people rather institutional partners, and private organisations or the European citizens in the Adriatic-Ionian region less so.

Quick wins for an optimised Facebook page

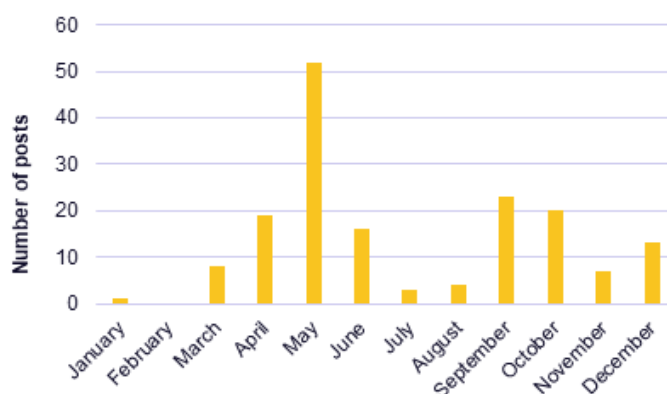
- Keep on building bridges with institutional stakeholders.
- Extend EUSAIR's visibility beyond the institutional ecosystem by targeting a broader audience.

2.3.4. A frequency of posts directly linked to events

This section focuses on the analysis of the posts published in 2020 and includes a comparison with the number of posts since the creation of EUSAIR Facebook Page (May 2017). All data was gathered from the Facebook page itself.

In 2020, a total of **166 posts were published, i.e., an average of 14 posts per month**. However, we observe important variations depending on the month, as shown in the following graph:

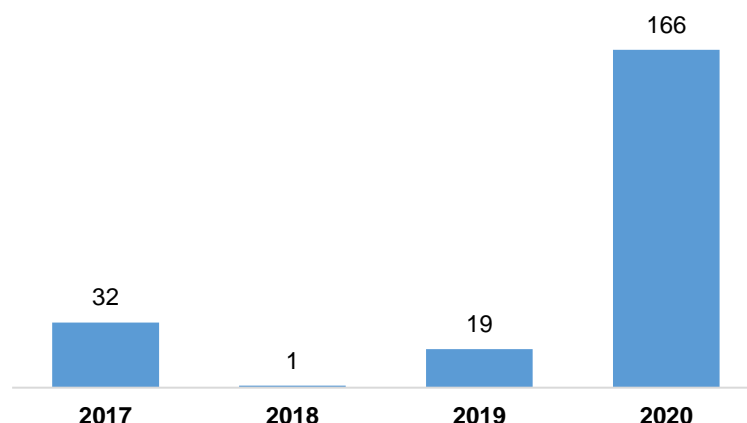
Graph 12 - Repartition of the number of posts per month in 2020.



We observe an increase in the number of posts from January (1 post) to May (52 posts) and then a strong decrease until August (4 posts). Overall, the graph shows that **less posts are published in holiday periods**. Another – smaller – peak is observed in September with 23 posts published, but then again, a small decrease with 20 posts in October, 7 in November and 13 in December. The peak observed in September can be explained by the *Mediterranean Coast and Macro-regional Strategies Week 2020* which took place from 14 to 25 September and was the topic of most of this month's posts. However, the important peak in May is not due to any particular event this month, but rather to a variety of posts on different events, such as *EUSAIR Facility Point Steering Group meeting*.

In order to get an idea of the evolution of the page, it is important to compare this data to previous years:

Graph 13 - Repartition of the number of posts per year.



While 166 posts were published in 2020, only 19 posts were published in 2019 on EUSAIR Facebook page. This data is even lower in 2018, with 1 post published. Finally, from May 2017 (when the page was created) to December 2017, 32 posts were published. We see that **posts frequency is particularly irregular, from month to month but also from one year to another**. These statistics are particularly surprising, and it seems that EUSAIR Facebook page has been neglected before 2020 and created without any strategy of communication or coordination between different stakeholders.

Quick wins for an optimised Facebook page

- Post frequently and keep a regular number of posts per month. This can be achieved through the establishment of a calendar of posts each month.
- Use the scheduling feature of Facebook to avoid absence of posts during holiday periods.
- Follow a clear and defined strategy in order to maintain coherence on the page.

2.3.5. A low reach, but an engaged audience

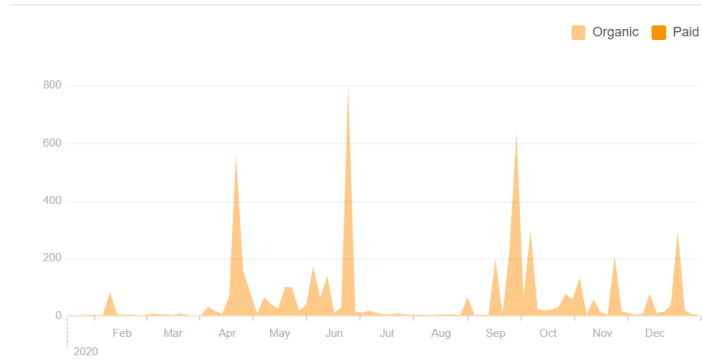
This section analyses the reach and engagement that posts gathered on EUSAIR Facebook page in 2020. The main results will consist of a quantitative analysis, although the most successful posts of 2020 will be analysed qualitatively, as a mixed approach allows to obtain an exhaustive view of the success of posts.

The average reach for 2020 is 173, which means that **an average of 173 people (unique users) has seen each post appear in their timeline the last year**. Considering the fact that there are 455 followers on EUSAIR Facebook page, this represents 38% of the audience. On Facebook, the average reach of an organic page post is around 5.20%⁹. The

⁹ Hootsuite, *Organic Reach is in Decline. Here's What You Can Do About It*, blog article, 04/08/2020, link.

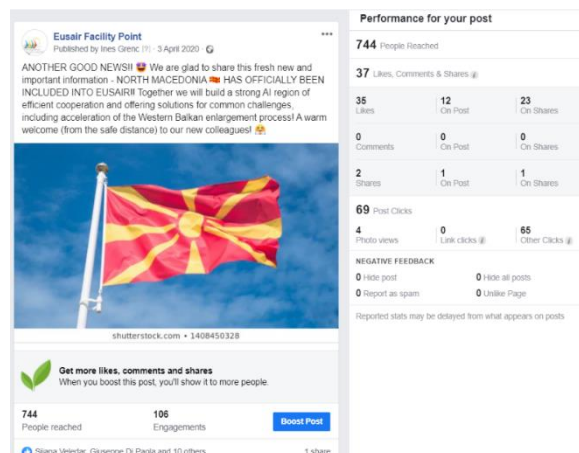
reach is therefore very good in comparison to general statistics. Obviously, the more the number of followers will increase, the more risk this number will decrease.

The following graph shows the main peaks in terms of reach for 2020, that will then be analysed in order to get an idea of the most successful posts and their content.



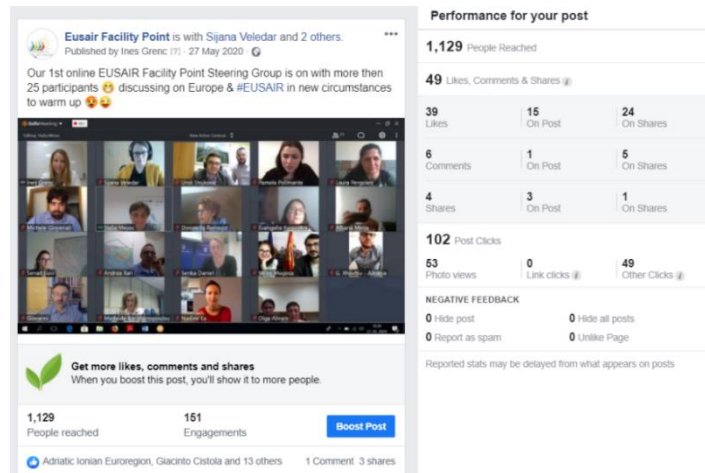
Evolution of Facebook posts reach in 2020. ©EUSAIR/ Facebook

The first significant peak corresponds to a post published in April on the inclusion of North Macedonia into EUSAIR. The post was popular, with 744 people reached, 69 post clicks and 37 actions (likes, comments & shares). Posts that start with an engaging formula (such as “GOOD NEWS”) are usually popular on Facebook, as they directly engage the audience from the beginning.

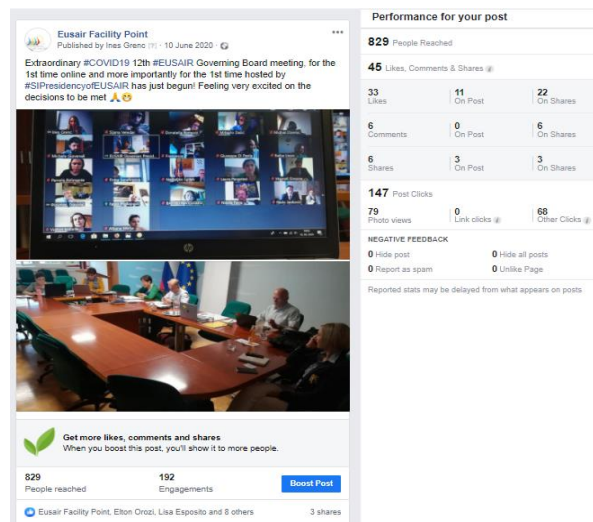


EUSAIR Facebook post of 3 April 2020 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021. ©EUSAIR/ Facebook

The second peak corresponds to the combination of two posts in May/June, on online EUSAIR meetings due to covid-19. The first post reached 1129 people, gathered 102 post clicks and 49 actions. It is the most successful post for 2020 in terms of reach. The second post reached 829 people and gathered 147 post clicks and 45 reactions. Posts that tackle internal news and current topics (here, COVID-19) are typically very successful on Facebook.



EUSAIR Facebook post of 27 May 2020 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021. ©EUSAIR/ Facebook

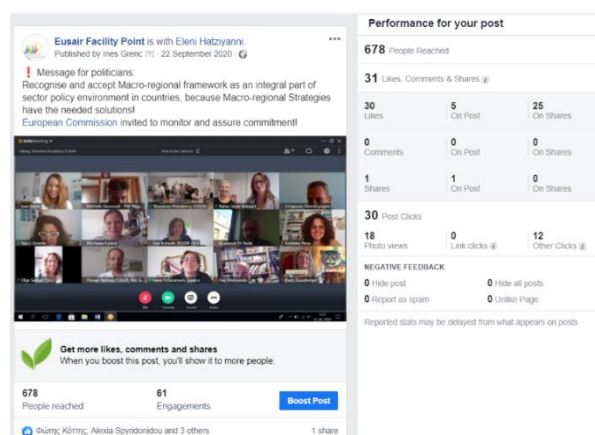


EUSAIR Facebook post of 10 June 2020 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021. ©EUSAIR/ Facebook

The third and last peak corresponds to a combination of two posts in September 2020. The post published on 2 September was the most successful post of the year in terms of engagement, with 102 reactions and 184 post clicks, and the second most successful in terms of reach, with 1085 people reached. The post concerns the first EUSAIR newsletter, which attracted a lot of engagement. The second post reached 678 people and gathered 31 reactions and 30 post clicks. It used another useful tool, which is tagging other accounts in the post, here the European Commission.

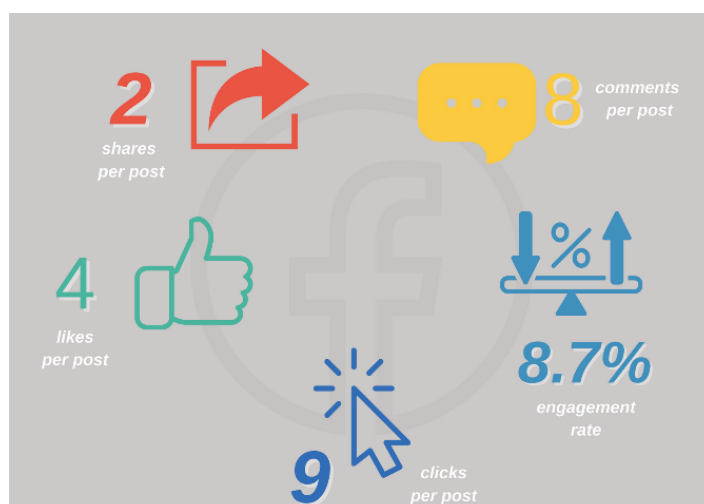


EUSAIR Facebook post of 2 September 2020 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021. ©EUSAIR/ Facebook



EUSAIR Facebook post of 22 September 2020 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021. ©EUSAIR/ Facebook

As far as the **engagement** is concerned (i.e., how actively involved the audience is with the posts), the below table provides an overview of various engagement statistics for 2020. As the number of posts published each year (e.g., 19 in 2019 vs. 166 in 2020) is highly irregular, comparison between years is not relevant here.



Facebook engagement statistics for the EUSAIR Facebook page. ©Vademecom

In 2020, the engagement rate, a metric often used to track how actively involved with the content the audience is, rose to **8.7%**, which is considered **a great engagement rate when we compare it to the average engagement rate for Facebook posts, which is 0.18%¹⁰**. This means that **the people who follow the page are active and engage with the posts**. An average of 15 people (unique users) engaged with each post (by commenting, liking, sharing or clicking) in 2020.

Overall, the average engagement results are quite 'low' compared to similar Facebook pages such as the Regional Cooperation Council (cfr. benchmark section), but it must be put into perspective as the page only counts 455 followers (versus 30,483 for the Regional Cooperation Council, for example). This means that **an important part of EUSAIR followers are engaged users**, as reflected in the good engagement rate results.

Quick wins for an optimised Facebook page

- A daily community management (answering messages, replying to comments, liking the 'shares', etc.) is important to engage with the audience.

2.3.6. Conclusions

The qualitative and quantitative analysis conducted show that EUSAIR Facility Point Facebook page is mainly dedicated to events within EUSAIR and at the European level. Most of the content addresses conclusions and EUSAIR-related issues from these events, which results in a community mainly composed of EUSAIR institutional stakeholders.

The analysis also shows that the page followers and people reached have the same profile: they are part of the active population (mainly from 35 to 44 years old), and come from Greece (30%), Italy (29%) or Slovenia (19%) mainly. As for the other EUSAIR countries,

¹⁰ Hootsuite, *47 Facebook Stats That Matter to Marketers in 2021*, blog article, 11/01/2021, link.

they are not highly represented in the followers of the page. Although we have seen that the number of followers is rising (+25.6% in 2020), the rate of increase is slowing down.

The quantitative analysis of posts showed that the number of posts per month is very irregular, and that the page tends to be less active during holiday periods, particularly in July and August. We also see that the number of posts per year is even more irregular, with 1 post in 2018, 19 in 2019 and 166 in 2020, implying that the page was created without a clear strategy.

When analysing the most successful posts, we see that what works well is posts that tackle current news, such as COVID-19 adaptations. Moreover, sharing important news regarding the EUSAIR countries shows good results (e.g., the accession of North Macedonia into EUSAIR, the newsletter on the Slovenian Presidency).

Finally, although the reach of EUSAIR Facebook posts is low, the followers of the page show a good engagement rate of 8.7% for 2020. In 2020, for each post, 9 people clicked, 4 people liked it, 8 comments were posted and 2 users shared it. These results may seem low, but they must be put into perspective as the page only has 455 followers, which shows that an important part of the followers are engaged users. The main objective from now on should be to further develop the page, by reaching more users and increasing the engagement of these users.

2.4. 'EUSAIR Point' Twitter Page

In this section, we will analyse EUSAIR Twitter page and the performance of its Tweets according to various criteria, such as the type of Tweets, the frequency of publication or engagement statistics. In an objective of clarity and concision, the analysis will focus on 2020, from January 1st to December 31st, and will include comparisons with previous years when relevant.

The figures presented in this analysis were collected on the Twitter page, directly via the social media analytics tool. At the end of each section of the analysis, some 'quick' recommendations will be provided.

2.4.1. The most widely used and fostered social media

The **@EusairPoint Twitter page** was created in April 2017 and currently has **1.130 followers**, making it the most followed EUSAIR social media. In 2020, **220 Tweets were published**, the great majority of them related to events. EUSAIR Twitter page was visited 2.433 times, mentioned 191 times and gained 145 new followers in 2020.

Table 1 – Key Twitter statistics for 2020.

	Tweets	Tweet Impressions	Profile visits	Mentions	New followers
January 2020	5	8.877	120	5	7
February 2020	11	13.400	274	17	20
March 2020	14	11.900	138	7	0
April 2020	18	8.787	182	26	15
May 2020	43	18.100	284	35	18
June 2020	32	15.100	254	17	9
July 2020	6	6.658	81	7	14
August 2020	2	3.991	25	3	4
September 2020	26	15.100	282	29	17
October 2020	36	14.800	192	25	17

November 2020	11	5.385	163	10	15
December 2020	16	6.257	448	10	9
TOTAL	220	128.355	2.443	191	145

The overall look of the page, the first thing every visitor sees and considers, is of great importance. In this case, the name of the macro-regional strategy, its explanation and logo are clearly present on the Twitter page.



Overview of the Twitter page EUSAIR Point homepage - Screenshot taken on 28/01/2021. ©EUSAIR/ Twitter.

The cover photo, which represents an inspiring image of the sea, adds attractiveness to the page. For branding purposes, it might be interesting to include the name "EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region" in the photo.

When it comes to the name of the page, it is important to note that Twitter is the only page that is not called EUSAIR Facility Point (cfr. Facebook and YouTube analysis). The display name of the page is simply 'EUSAIR', while the handle (username) '@EusairPoint'.

Let us also note the existence of an account with the handle @EUSAIR whose objective is to share Tweets mentioning the macro-regional strategy. As this account has not been used for several years, it would be interesting to recover it to eventually delete it and perhaps consider recovering its handle (@EUSAIR).

2.4.2. A real-time page to communicate about events

In order to better picture the content relayed on the page, an analysis of the Tweets has been conducted following 4 specific criteria: the topic, the focus (specific pillar or country), the presence of hashtags, links and tags, and the type of visuals. The analysis focused on the Tweets published over the last four months of 2020.

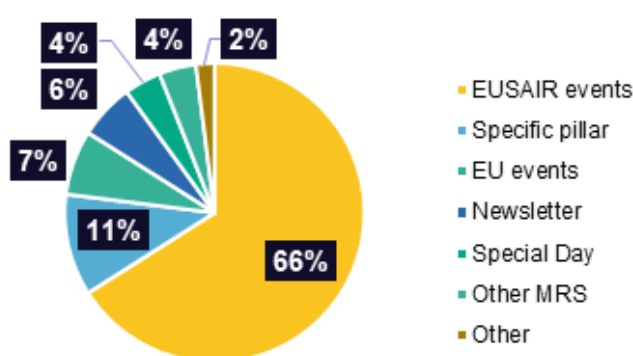
As it is the case for YouTube and Facebook, Twitter is almost exclusively dedicated to events. The communication on Twitter is organised instantly or 'real-time', as reflected in the number of Tweets published in the same day or same hour (event coverage).

A first important observation is that almost all Facebook posts were also published as Tweets: with the same visual and the same message. The only difference resides in the tags, and in the fact that there are more Tweets than Facebook posts. However, the two social media are different in terms of audiences, configuration or tone of voice which should also be reflected in the content. This first observation will also explain the similar results for Twitter and Facebook in terms of content and information provided on the publications.

When it comes to the topics of the Tweets, **we observe a big majority of Tweets about EUSAIR events (66%)**. EUSAIR Twitter account often uses the 'auto-reply' feature, also resulting in successions of Tweets on the same topic.

The second category consists of the promotion of a specific pillar (11% of the Tweets), followed by EU events such as *the EU Regions Week* (7%), the promotion of newsletters (6%), of a special day such as *EU Cooperation Day* (4%) and Tweets about other MRS (4%).

Graph 14: EUSAIR Tweets per topic in the last four months of 2020.



If we only take into consideration the Tweets that focus on one specific pillar, we observe a higher proportion for the **pillar Sustainable Tourism (60%)**, followed by Blue Growth (25%), Environmental Quality (12,5%) and Connecting the Region (4%). The tourism sector has indeed been considerably impacted by the covid-19 crisis. In addition, this pillar has been strongly emphasised through the promotion of an online workshop organised in October on 'Cycling Tourism and Cultural Routes'.

As on Facebook, EUSAIR Tweets usually **speak 'as one voice' for all EUSAIR countries** and do not target one specific country. This was only the case for 7% of the Tweets, that focused on Slovenia in the framework of its Presidency of EUSAIR in 2020 and 2021, and one Tweet that targeted Croatia about a newsletter in Croatian. Apart from that, the Tweets are meant to target all EUSAIR countries, as reflected in the fact that 100% of the Tweets are published in English.

Looking more precisely at the content of the Tweets, an analysis of hashtags¹¹, tags¹² and shared URLs has been undertaken. The analysis shows that **62% of the Tweets include one or various hashtags, while this number drops to 33% for the tags and to 25% for the URLs.**

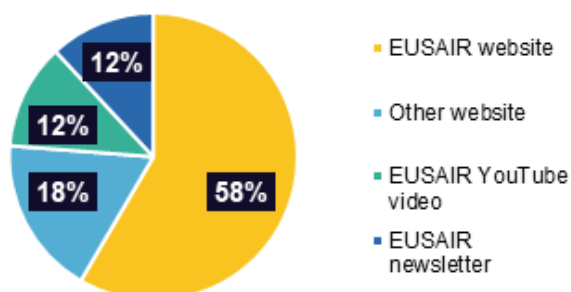
The analysis of the most frequently used hashtags shows unsurprisingly that *#EUSAIR* was the most used in Tweets the last four months of 2020, followed by *#SloPresidencyEUSAIR*, *#Covid19* and *#S3*.

As far as the tags are concerned, all tags are **generally included in the Tweet and practically never in the visual**, which probably explains the low proportion of Tweets including tags.

The most frequently used tags in the last four months of 2020 are *@JZP_Izola* (City of Izola in Slovenia), *@MZZRS* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Slovenia) and *@SVRK_RS* (Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy), followed by *@EU_Commission*, *@Rs_mop*, *@EuinmyRegion*, *@InteractEU*. Other Twitter accounts that were used more than one time are *@EUSALP*, *@EUSBSR* and *@EUSDR*. We see that although the Tweets are meant to target all EUSAIR countries, **a strong focus on Slovenia is observed in the hashtags and tags.**

On the 25% of Tweets redirecting people outside Twitter with URLs, 58% promoted the EUSAIR website, 18% redirected to other websites (e.g., EU Commission or other MRS), 12% to a YouTube video from EUSAIR YouTube Channel, and 12% to an EUSAIR newsletter.

Graph 15: Type of URLs in EUSAIR Tweets in the last four months of 2020.

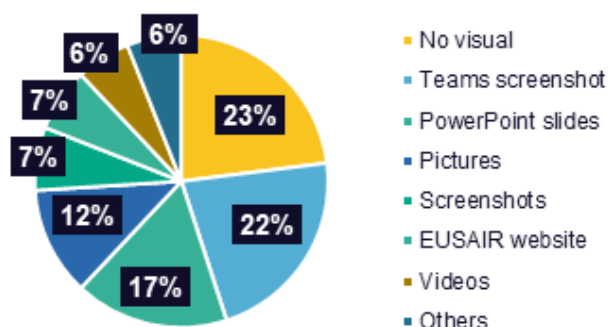


When it comes to the visuals, our analysis shows that the biggest category of visuals consists of Teams screenshots of participants (22% of the visuals), followed by PowerPoint slides (17%) and stock pictures (12%).

Graph 16: Type of visuals in EUSAIR Tweets in the last four months of 2020.

¹¹ Used to index keywords or topics on Twitter, the hashtags allow people to easily follow topics they are interested in.

¹² Tagging allows a user to identify someone else in a Tweet or picture. Tagging accounts in a picture makes conversations easier and does not affect character count in the Tweet.



Important to note: Tweets without any visual account for 23% of the publications. This is since EUSAIR Twitter account uses the autoreply feature a lot, resulting in the absence of visuals in a succession of Tweets.

Quick wins for an optimised Twitter page

- Ensure continuity and coherence in the hashtags.
- Tag other relevant accounts in posts, ideally in the visual in order not to overcharge the text.
- Always add a visual to a Tweet and limit it to one visual.
- Use a pre-defined template for all visuals.

2.4.3. EUSAIR's social media with the largest audience

Until now, @EusairPoint has **1130 followers on Twitter, with 145 new followers in 2020**. This makes Twitter the social media channel for EUSAIR with the biggest reach.

In order to picture the current **audience** of the page, 3 defined criteria were used, i.e., top followers, EUSAIR mentions and retweets.

In 2020, the Twitter page counted new 'top followers', i.e., the Twitter users that started following the page who have the highest follower count.

Notable top followers in 2020 are @MZZRS, the Twitter account of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia (23,100 followers), @Dubravkasuica, VP of the European Commission in charge of Democracy and Demography, Former MEP and former Mayor of Dubrovnik (10,000 followers), and @EUSDR, the Twitter account of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (1187 followers). What is particularly striking is the fact that EUSDR and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia did not follow EUSAIR Twitter account before 2020. Other top followers of the Twitter page include EU organisations, such as EU_Commission, Interreg, EU_near, etc.

If we analyse the Tweets that mentioned EUSAIR (through the use of hashtags or tags), we notice that most of the Tweets come from **accounts of local and regional organisations**, such as *CDIAIbania* (think tank in Tirana), *EUSAIR Facility Point Greece* (who joined Twitter in December 2020), *All PS* (Adriatic & Ionian Initiative), *AI_NURECC* (organisation supporting the implementation of EUSAIR), *ISTEN Project* (organisation co-funded by Interreg ADRION), *Adriatic Ionian Euroregion*, *Interreg*, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia*.

Next to regional and European organisations, some private accounts can be noticed. In general, these accounts are owned by people who work in the above-mentioned organisations (be it EUSAIR itself, or other regional and European bodies).

The analysis of these mentions implies that **EUSAIR Twitter account is particularly known by people working in one way or another for EUSAIR**, mostly in public institutions. Links with private organisations, such as SMEs, association or professional organisations are much less – if not at all -performed.

Finally, the analysis of the accounts that retweeted EUSAIR content draws the same conclusions: most of the accounts are local, regional or European organisations (*Interreg*, *AI_NURECC*, *AIC Forum*, *CPMR Balkan* and *Black Sea Commission*, *Adriatic Ionian Euroregion*, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia*), or people who work in these institutions.

Quick wins for an optimised Twitter page

- Keep on building bridges with institutional stakeholders.
- Extend EUSAIR's visibility beyond the institutional ecosystem by targeting a broader audience.

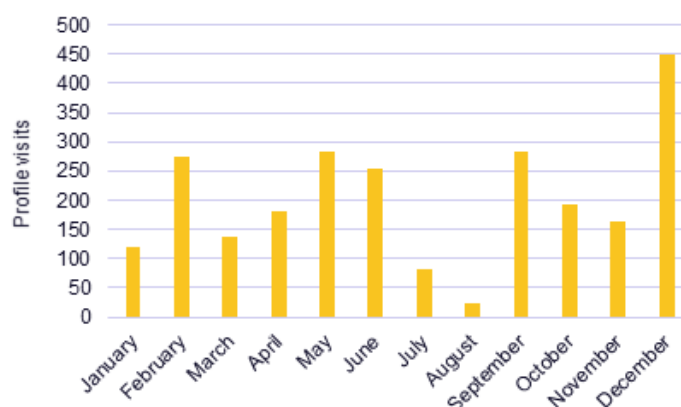
2.4.4. A fluctuating traffic depending on events and periods of the year

The present section will analyse the frequency of Tweets on EUSAIR Twitter page and its repercussions on profile visits and impressions.

The number of profile visits represents the number of times a Twitter user visited EUSAIR Twitter account. **In 2020, the page was visited 2443 times**, with an average of 203 visits per month. Generally speaking, visits to the page are constant from month to month, though with a peak in December 2020 (448 profile visits).

During the holiday periods, i.e. January, July and August, we notice a significant drop in visits to the page, which can also be explained by a lower number of Tweets published at that time of the year.

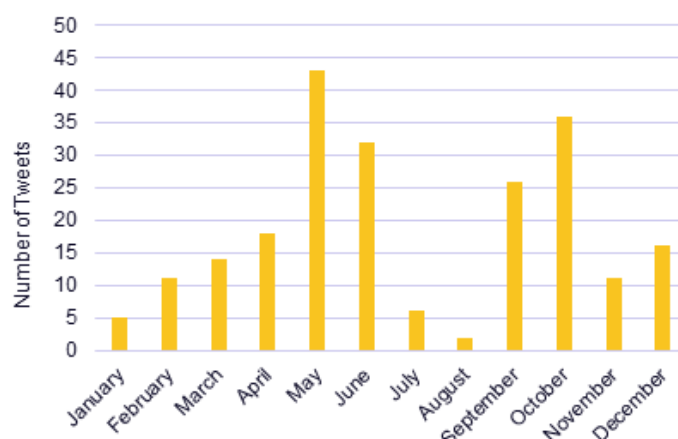
Graph 17: Number of profile visits per month in 2020.



In 2020, **220 Tweets were posted in total, with an average of 18 Tweets per month**. We observe an increase from January (5 Tweets) to May (43 Tweets), and then a decrease in July and August (6 and 2 Tweets). The number of Tweets in November and December are slightly below average too. The lower results for January, July and August are reflected in a decrease of profile visits. This shows the **importance of ensuring a regularity and continuity in the communication**.

The peaks in May, September and October are linked to events that were covered by EUSAIR Twitter account. In May, different internal news were shared, such as the first online EUSAIR Facility Point Steering Group. In September, the Mediterranean Coast and Macro-regional Strategies week was an important event for EUSAIR. In October, the EU Regions Week took place and was the source of many Tweets.

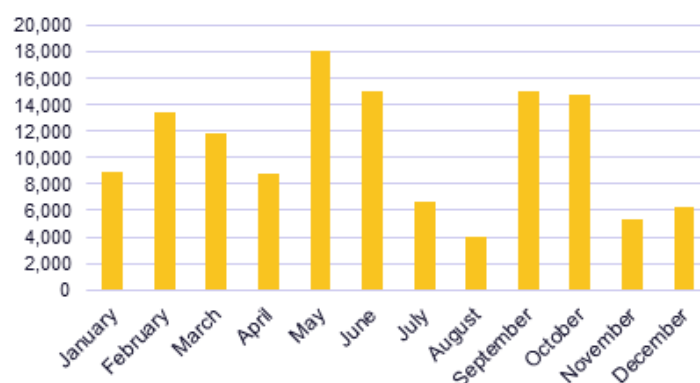
Graph 18: Number of Tweets per month in 2020.



In 2020, the Tweets gathered **more than 128,000 impressions**. Some notable peaks can be observed in May, June, September and October, which is directly due to a higher number of Tweets.

Such as on Facebook, the biggest peak happens in May with 43 Tweets and 18,100 impressions. **July, August, but also November and December show the lowest results in terms of impressions for 2020.**

Graph 19: Number of impressions per month in 2020.



Quick wins for an optimised Twitter page

- Keep Tweeting regularly, establishing a calendar of generic Tweets each month.
- Twitter being an 'instant' social media, it is important to Tweet fast and often at the occasion of events.

2.4.5. A page showing good engagement rates

Given the difference in tweets published between 2019 and 2020, the analysis of the engagement rate is an interesting statistic for comparing the performance of Twitter publications over time.

This data allows to understand the quality of the Tweets based on the engagement (clicks, retweets, replies, follows, likes, etc.) of the audience and calculates it based on the impressions (number of engagements divided by impressions).

With an increase from 0.9% in 2019 to 1.45% in 2020 the **engagement statistics are positively evolving**. Knowing that the average engagement rate across all industries for 2020 is 0.045%¹³, the result is very good. Based on the information gathered in the table below, and knowing that 220 Tweets were posted in 2020, we can conclude that each Tweet gathered on average 1 link click, 1 retweet and 4 likes.

Table 2 – Engagement statistics for EUSAIR Twitter page in 2019 and 2020.

	2019	2020	Evolution
Engagement rate	0.9%	1.45%	+0.5%
Total link clicks	551	229	-58.4%
Total retweets	323	302	-6.5%
Total likes	1.237	971	-21.5%
Total replies	16	85	+431.2%

¹³ RivalIQ, 2020 Social Media Industry Benchmark Report, link.



EUSAIR Tweet of 20 February 2020 - Screenshot taken on 02/02/2021. ©EUSAIR/ Twitter.

You will find on the right the most successful Tweet of 2020 in terms of impressions.

This Tweet of 20 February gathered 3294 impressions, 42 media engagements, 20 likes, 6 retweets, 6 profile clicks and 1 reply.

This is a good example of a successful Tweet: tagging other accounts in the Tweet (here, @EUSBSR, @EUSDR and @_Eusalp) but also in the picture (@EUinmyRegion, and 6 others), inserting relevant hashtags (#Mobility, #Energy, etc.), and adding pictures to the Tweet.

2.4.6. Conclusions

The qualitative analysis of @EusairPoint Twitter page has shown that the page is used as a real-time platform to communicate about EUSAIR events. The tweets are mainly targeting EUSAIR institutional stakeholders and related organisations.

Twitter is EUSAIR's social media account that has the biggest reach, with 1130 followers.

When it comes to the Tweets themselves, we see that the frequency of posts slowed down in January, July and August, resulting in less profile visits. In terms of engagement, the EUSAIR Twitter page experiences good engagement rates comparing to median engagement rates across all industries, with an engagement rate of 1.45% in 2020. Knowing that there is no budget allocated to the sponsoring of Tweets, we can say that Twitter shows good results, but it is also clear that some features could be improved in order to further develop the page, sharing key messages and concrete results, reaching a wider audience among the EUSAIR key stakeholders and increasing the engagement.

Finally, it is to be noted that a new Twitter account was created at the end of 2020 @Eusair_fp_GR, the Twitter account of EUSAIR in Greece, and has already been active in the past few weeks. Until now, most Tweets have been published in Greek. This is an interesting new tool to reach Greek users. Until now, this new Twitter account has been retweeting and mentioning @EusairPoint. Coordination between the two accounts should keep on being developed.

2.5. 'EUSAIR Facility Point' YouTube Channel

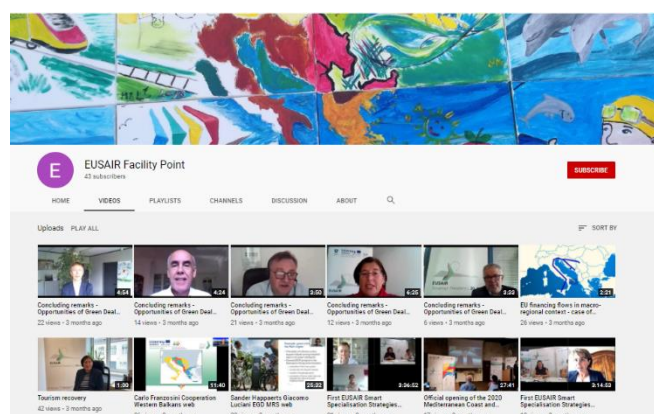
In the following points, we will analyse the appropriation of the EUSAIR Facility Point YouTube channel and the performance of its videos using various criteria both qualitative and quantitative such as the type of videos, the frequency of publication and related trends, demographic data and behaviour of the viewers or views statistics.

All results presented in the analysis take into account data from the creation of the channel up until 31 December 2020.

The figures presented in the analysis were collected on the YouTube channel, directly via the social media analysis tool. All qualitative analyses were carried out according to criteria that will be defined in the corresponding points.

2.5.1. A platform mainly dedicated to events

The EUSAIR Facility Point YouTube channel was created on the 27th April 2017. Since its creation about 60 videos have been published, the great majority of them related to macro-regional strategy events, from the *EUSAIR Forums* to the *Mediterranean Coast and EU Macro-regional Strategies Week* as well as the *Media Conferences on EU Macro-regional Strategies*.



Overview of the YouTube channel EUSAIR Facility Point homepage - Screenshot taken on 29/01/2021. © EUSAIR/ YouTube

The purpose of this section is to analyse the YouTube channel and its videos from a qualitative point of view. To do so, three aspects have been taken into account: the channel identity, the information provided on the videos as well as the organisation of the channel.

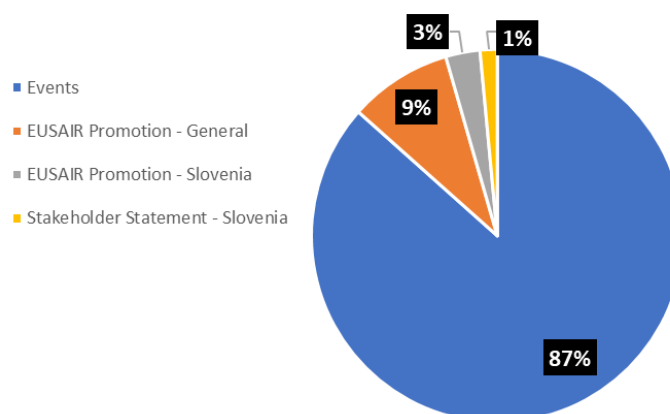
If we first analyse the basic building blocks of the channel, i.e., its overall presentation, various elements are to be highlighted.

In terms of general identity, the logo of the macro-regional strategy only appears faintly on the channel, in the cover visual. No logo or image has been inserted to identify the page (as such, a purple circle with an 'E' was automatically created by YouTube as 'logo'). The YouTube channel does not currently have a description identifying its authors, its function, and its objectives. Consequently, apart from the name of the channel, no other element refers to the macro-regional strategy. With regard to the chosen name, 'EUSAIR Facility Point', although it reflects coherency with the other digital tools used (e.g., social media), this can be confusing for users (*What is a Facility Point? What does EUSAIR means?*).

In terms of videos, different elements have been analysed: what kind of content do they convey? In what language? Do they contain subtitles? Has a description been included? In order to set up the analysis, each video has been analysed individually according to 4 defined criteria: the topic, the language, the presence of a description and the presence of subtitles.

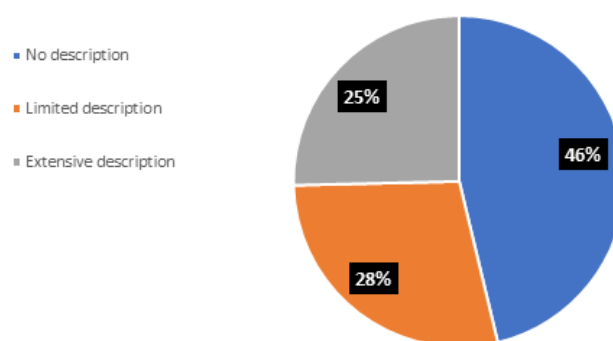
Of all the videos present on the EUSAIR Facility Point YouTube channel, **the majority, namely 87% of the videos, are related to events of the macro-regional strategy**, most of them being live broadcasts. Many events of the macro-regional strategy are relayed via the YouTube channel, permitting an easy viewing of the speeches and interventions of key speakers.

Graph 20 - Distribution of videos on the YouTube channel EUSAIR Facility Point - from 2017 to 2020 - according to their topic.



In terms of referencing, videos uploaded to YouTube rarely present a complete and relevant description (25%). **Three-quarters of the videos have a very limited description** (often with the title only; 28%) **or no description at all** (46%).

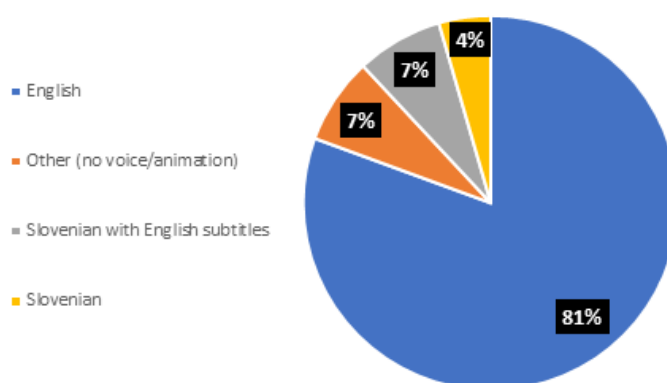
Graph 21 - Distribution of videos on the YouTube channel EUSAIR Facility Point - from 2017 to 2020 - according to presence of descriptions on videos.



The videos on the YouTube channel EUSAIR Facility Point are mostly videos in English, with English speakers (81%). This is due to the 'event' nature of the channel; English being the common language of events. Apart from English, some of the videos are in Slovenian. However, the other languages of the macro-regional strategy are not represented.

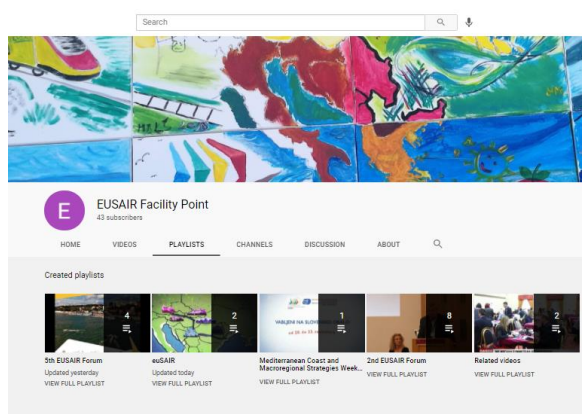
Similarly, only a few videos have subtitles (7% of the channel's videos). When present, subtitles - in English - are added to the Slovenian language videos.

Graph 22 - Distribution of videos on the YouTube channel EUSAIR Facility Point - from 2017 to 2020 - according to the language and presence of subtitles.



Looking at the construction of the titles, we notice that the structure used and the elements put forward vary from video to video. In some cases, the date (year) or title of the event are not provided: “*National Coordinators technical meeting*”, “*Karin Zaunberger EU Biodiversity Strategy*”, “*Trio Presidency meeting*”, “*Concluding remarks - Opportunities of Green Deal 4 MRS: Andreja Jerina, SI National Coordinator MRS*”, etc.

In terms of organisation, YouTube makes it possible to regroup the videos uploaded to the channel into different playlists.



Overview of the YouTube channel EUSAIR Facility Point Playlists - Screenshot taken on 29/01/2021.
©EUSAIR/YouTube.

The creation of playlists allows to organise the channel's videos according to their topic. In the present case, we can notice the existence of different playlists, divided by events (2nd and 5th EUSAIR Forum, for example). However, some of the playlists created do not have a precise grouping goal.

As a result, following this initial qualitative analysis, we can assume that the channel is mainly used as a support for communication, rather than as a communication tool in its own right. As such, the YouTube channel is used to relay live events, which are promoted outside the channel, but does not aim at reaching new subscribers. In the case of EUSAIR this is not considered as an issue. However, an optimisation of the chain is necessary to present the macro-regional strategy in a clear, coherent and professional manner.

Quick wins for an optimised YouTube channel

- Rename the channel for more clarity.
- Include a description of the YouTube channel.

- Redirect users to a website and/or other social media.
- Convey the visual identity through the addition of a logo and a cover image including the name of the organisation.
- Transmit complete information on the relayed videos, following a precise and constant structure in terms of titles and description.
- Organise the channel's videos based on relevant topics.

2.5.2. A frequency of publication varying over the years

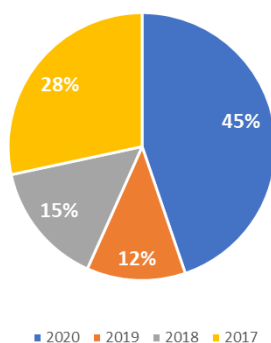
The analyses below will be aimed at quantitatively evaluating the YouTube channel and its videos, based on data provided by the YouTube analysis platform. A large amount of data has thus been extracted from YouTube, making it possible to carry out analyses from year to year since 2017, particularly with regard to the frequency of publication.

Hence, since its creation, **67 videos have been published on the YouTube channel**. The first years, an average of 12 videos have been published each year and the rhythm increased considerably as of 2020, with the publication of around 4 times more videos in 2020 than in 2019 (from 8 videos in 2019 to 30 in 2020).

Table 3 – Repartition of the number of videos published per year since the creation of the YouTube channel in 2017, till December 2020.

Year	Number of videos published on the channel
2017	19
2018	10
2019	8
2020	30
TOTAL	67

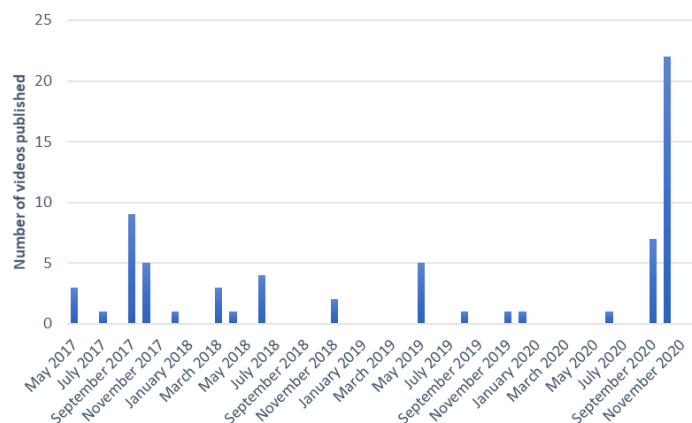
Graph 23 - Repartition of the number of videos published per year since the creation of the YouTube channel till December 2020.



In 2020, the statistics were influenced by the massive upload of videos relating to the *European Green Deal and Macro-regional Strategies*, which took place online on 21 and 22 September 2020, and the *First Smart Specialisation Strategy Meeting*, which took place online on 23 and 24 September 2020.

There is no doubt that the increase in online events brought on by the COVID-19 situation in 2020 and, above all, the greatest trend and ease for people to follow digital events played an important role in the massive use of the YouTube channel to broadcast these events. As a result, 45% of the videos on the YouTube channel were uploaded during the year 2020 and 97% of those were published between September and October 2020 (one video published in June 2020).

Graph 24 - Repartition of the number of videos published per month since the creation of the YouTube channel till December 2020.



Quick wins for an optimised YouTube channel

- Enrich the YouTube channel with existing videos related to the macro-regional strategy.

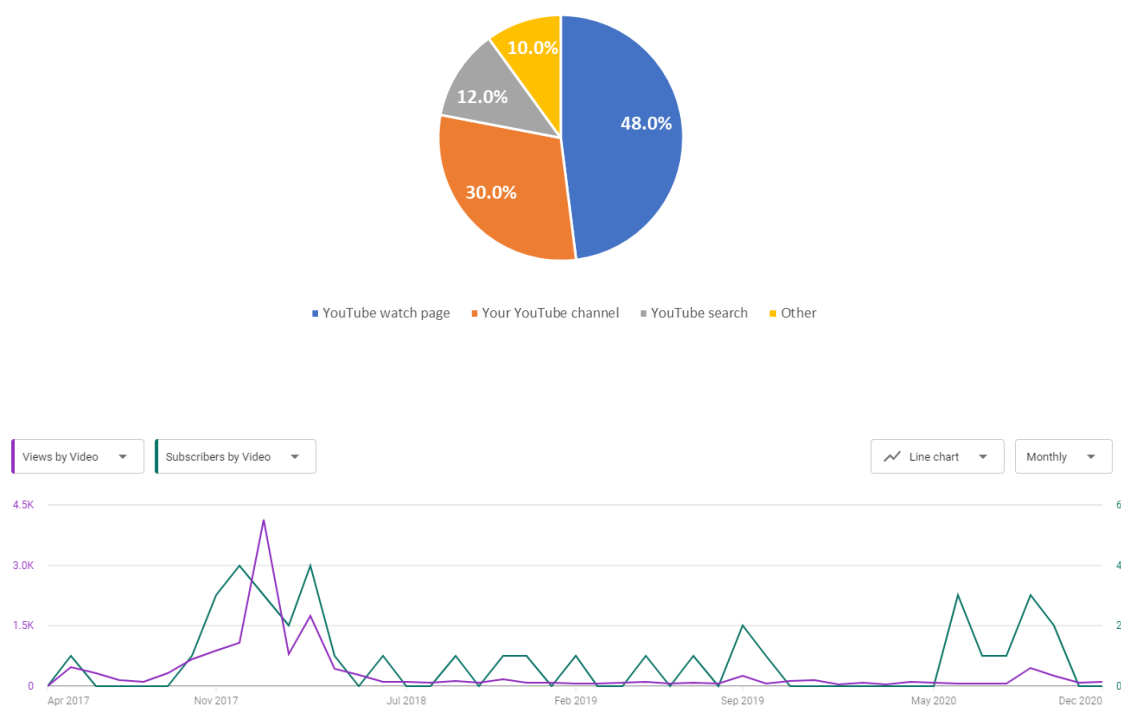
2.5.3. Subscribers and viewers' profile: a predominantly young Slovenian audience

Subscription trends

As of the end of 2020, the YouTube channel “EUSAIR Facility Point” had **39 subscribers**. The majority of new subscriptions (48%) come from the video pages themselves, with viewers clicking on the 'subscribe' button during/after viewing a video. The second source of subscriptions is the channel's homepage (30%), followed by subscriptions resulting from YouTube searches (12%).

As shown in the graph below, we can clearly see that trends in terms of views are linked to trends in subscriptions. At each peak in terms of video views, we thus notice an increase in subscriptions to the channel.

Graph 25 – Repartition of the subscription sources from the launch of the page till December 2020.



View of the number of video views over time, as well as the number of subscriptions to the channel.
©EUSAIR/ YouTube.

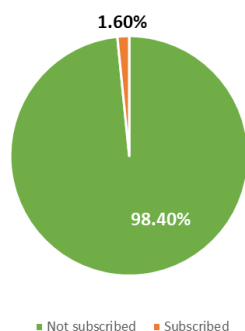
Viewers demographic data and behaviour

Most of the viewers (98.4%) are non-subscribers. The channel's audience is therefore not a recurring or loyal audience but could rather be described as punctual, depending on the events broadcast.

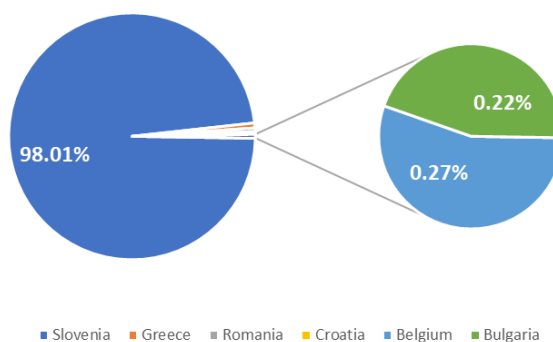
Looking at their location, most of the viewers (98%) are from Slovenia and have between 18 and 34 years old (60% of the total number of viewers). The category 35-44 years old is also well-represented, counting for 20% of the viewers. However, the videos count no

viewers of more than 55 years old. As far as gender is concerned, no trend emerges (54% of women and 46% of men).

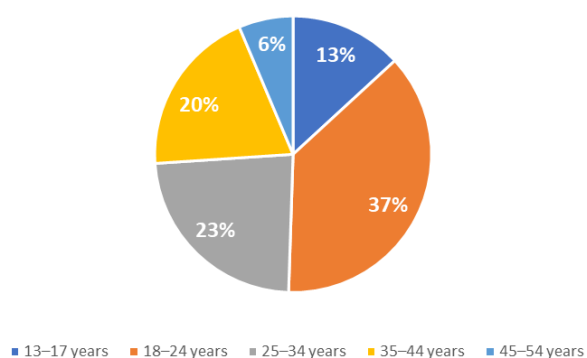
Graph 26 - Profile of people who have watched the channel's videos, according to whether they are subscribers, until 31 December 2020.



Graph 27 – Location of the people who watched EUSAIR Facility Point videos on YouTube.

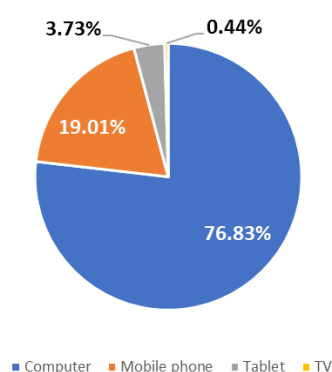


Graph 28 – Age of the people who watched EUSAIR Facility Point videos on YouTube.



It is interesting to note that the majority of people who watch YouTube videos use their computer (77%) against 19% using a smartphone.

Graph 29 – Device used by the viewers to watch the YouTube videos.



Quick wins for an optimised YouTube channel

- Enlarge the audience using videos dedicated to the different countries of the macro-regional strategy, be it through the presentation of EUSAIR's regional activities, or the testimonies of key stakeholders from different regions.

2.5.4. Video views: a tendency to sparse and limited views

General trends and evolution

The publication of the 67 videos on the YouTube channel generated **a total of 14,737 video views**. On average, for the period analysed (2017-2020), **26% of the total length of the videos were viewed** and **the average view duration was 2 min and 31 seconds**.

The data gathered in the table below gives an insight into the evolution over the years (complete years taken into account).

Table 4 – Comparison of key data over the years. Statistics extracted over one year, for videos published that same year.

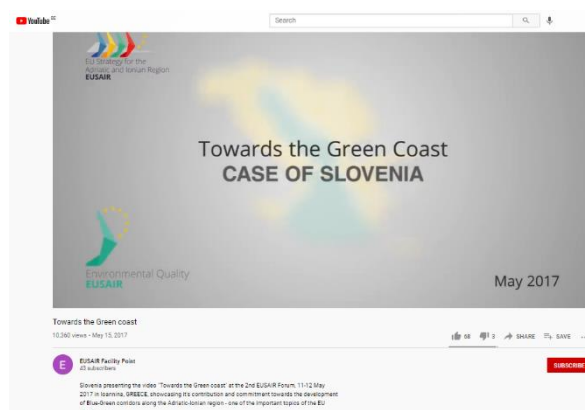
	Videos published in 2018	Videos published in 2019	Videos published in 2020
Number of videos published	10	8	30
Views	389	471	756
Average percentage viewed	11.3%	21.7%	11.4%
Watch time (hours)	23.1	15.7	31.4

Average view duration	3:33	1:59	2:29
Most viewed video of the year	Coast and Macro-regional Strategies Week, SEE MY SEA (163 views until the end of 2018)	Snapshots from the 9th International GeoRegNet Summer School - EUSAIR Facility Point Workshop (138 views)	Defining Flagships in the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-region for the period 2021-2027 (155 views)

In 2020, we note that videos have proportionally generated fewer views compared to previous years. While the percentage of video viewed in 2020 is similar to 2018, this figure has decreased from 2019.

Best performing videos: a successful first upload

The very first video uploaded to the channel, entitled "Towards the Green coast" and published in May 2017, generated alone 10,324 views, i.e. 70% of the total views on the platform.



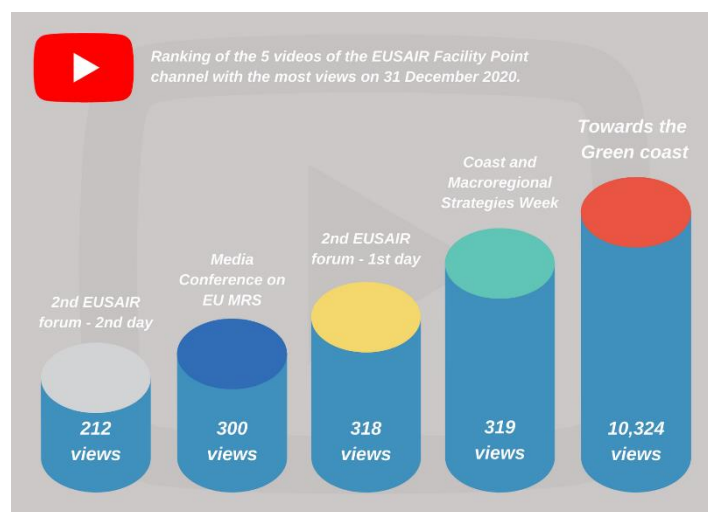
'Towards the Green Coast', videos having generated the most views on the channel as of 31 December 2020.
©EUSAIR/ YouTube.

Although it was released in May 2017, most of the views accumulated on the video took place from October 2017 onwards, with a peak of over 2,000 views in January 2018. On 18 January 2018, a publication about it was indeed issued on the EUSAIR website. In addition, this video was included in the literature package for the 2017/2018 Geography competition for Primary and Secondary Schools in Slovenia, thereby contributing to the increase in views during this period. Three years after its publication, the video continues to gather views, e.g. 21 views in December 2020.



Repartition of the number of views for the video "Towards the Green coast", since its publication till December 2020. ©EUSAIR/ YouTube.

Of all the videos published on the channel, three videos (putting aside the first video that passed the 10,000 views mark) have exceeded or reached 300 views: "Coast and Macro-regional Strategies Week, SEE MY SEA" (319 views), "2nd EUSAIR forum - 1st day" (318 views) and "Media Conference on EU macro-regional strategies, Portorož 2017, Day 2, Part 2" (300 views).



Ranking of the 5 videos of the EUSAIR Facility Point channel with the most views on 31 December 2020. ©Vademecom.

It is noteworthy that the two most viewed videos of the channel are edited videos, including testimonies and images showing the countries of the macro-regional strategy. The other most viewed videos of the platform are live broadcasts of events, ranging from 2h to 4h30 of broadcasting.

Although live broadcasts are very advantageous for enabling a large audience to follow an event, they have a very short lifespan, as most live videos are no longer watched a few weeks after the event.

Quick wins for an optimised YouTube channel

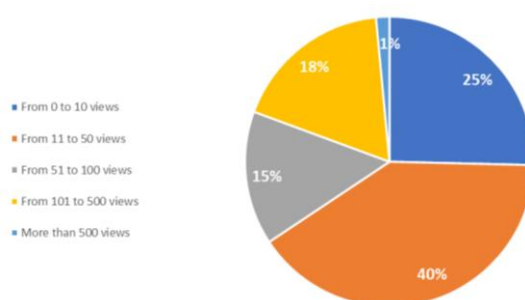
- Adopt a video content strategy to vary themes and formats.

Average video views: a prevalence of videos below the 100 views threshold

Leaving aside the channel's first video, which generated 70% of the total views, the average number of views for the rest of the channel's videos is 60. Consequently, on average, **each video generated 60 views**.

The graphic presented below illustrates the performance of the videos in terms of views. Accordingly, a quarter of the videos published have 10 views or less, highlighting the fact they are not promoted/communicated in any way. **80% of the videos do not exceed 100 views after publication**. On the other hand, 19% of the published videos generate a satisfactory number of views (more than 100 views).

Graph 30 - Repartition of the number of videos published from 2017 to 2020 categorized per number of views.



Traffic source: the importance of promotion emphasised

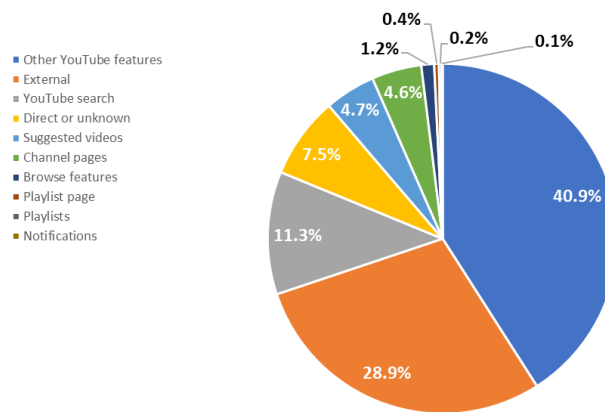
Traffic source analysis allows to determine the source of the video views: *how did the viewers get to the YouTube video?* Over the period, two main sources stand out: YouTube itself ('other YouTube features'¹⁴) and external sites.

Of the external sites that redirect to your YouTube videos (28.9%), the ones that brought the most views are Google Search, Gmail, **adriatic-ionian.eu** and Facebook.

Views counted through searches on the platform itself account for 11.3%.

Graph 31 – Origin through which people viewed the videos.

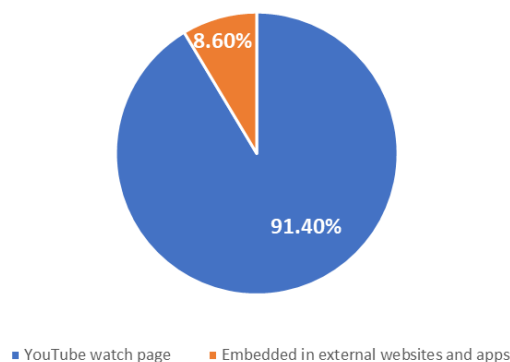
¹⁴ YouTube defines it as the "traffic from within YouTube that doesn't fall in any other category, such as views from Partner promotions, or the dashboard. Traffic from any playlist that included one of your videos.". In this particular case, the other YouTube features' refers to the URL 'Youtu.be'.



Playback location: a platform outside the ecosystem

The majority of the views obtained on the videos of the "EUSAIR Facility Point" channel were made directly from the platform. Consequently, the majority of the videos are actually seen on YouTube (91.4%). It is interesting to note that **8.6% of the views were made outside of YouTube, via embedding of YouTube videos on external platforms.**

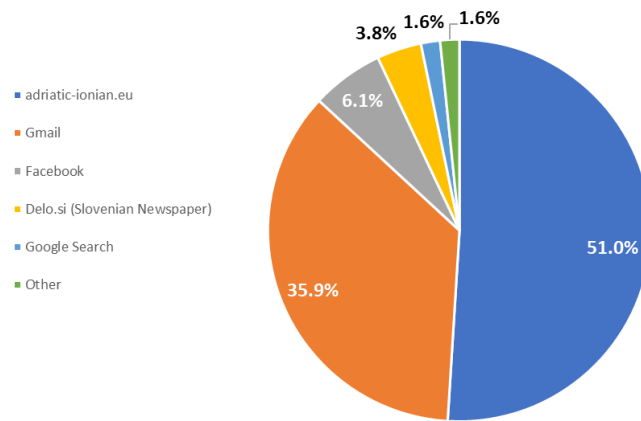
Graph 32 - Repartition of the platforms on which the YouTube videos have been viewed.



The majority of the views obtained on the videos of the "EUSAIR Facility Point" channel were made directly from the platform. Most of the videos are actually seen on YouTube.

However, about 8% of views were made outside of YouTube. If we look at these platforms, the EUSAIR website appears as the first source of views from platforms outside YouTube (51%), followed by Gmail (35.9%) and Facebook (6.1%). Indeed, some videos have been embedded on the website, therefore contributing to their promotion outside YouTube.

Graph 33 - Repartition of the platforms on which YouTube videos have been embedded.



Quick wins for an optimised YouTube channel

- Promote YouTube videos on various platforms.

2.5.5. Conclusions

Both qualitative and quantitative analyses of the YouTube channel confirm that the platform is currently being used in an opportunistic way, on the occasion of key events, and not as a communication tool. In the case of EUSAIR, there is little likelihood that YouTube users will use the channel as such, so this is not a major issue. However, the channel needs to be rebuilt and kept up to date on a more regular basis, following a clear and coherent process.

This will provide a clear and exhaustive video library, with videos usable on multiple other platforms, within a clear ecosystem.

The ambition: transforming this archiving location into a 'modern library', into a cosy corner where users will not only be able to experience and relive events online, but also discover and enjoy educational, informative videos about EUSAIR and its activities.

3. A snapshot of press relations

Although aside from digital communication, it seemed interesting to also analyse the way media relations are carried out within EUSAIR.

Indeed, during the analysis, it was noted that press releases were posted on the macro-regional strategy website. *How does EUSAIR communicate with the media? How often? Who is in charge of press relations? And how is this communication organised?*

In order to answer these questions, the following analysis will be based on the results of the survey sent to EUSAIR staff in charge of day-to-day communication as well as on the press releases published online on the strategy website.

First of all, it is interesting to note that within the broad spectrum of communication activities (social media, copywriting, internal communication, events, etc.), press relations skills were not indicated by any of the respondents to our survey as one of its main strengths. Thus, it is already worth noting that press relations are not the expertise of any of the members making up the EUSAIR day-to-day communication team. As a matter of fact, it is not uncommon for these media relations tasks to be relayed to external consultants within similar organisations.

This was also confirmed in the survey, which highlights the fact that contacts with the press are often organised **on key events** and **by their responsible organisation** (Minister, national coordinator, host, etc. assisted by external consultants if necessary).

The survey of Facility Point members indeed revealed that press releases are sent out on the occasion of events such as the Mediterranean Coast and Macro-regional Strategies Week and the EUSAIR Forum. In the case of the Forum, it also appears that the press release was produced by the communication agency in charge of organising the event.

If we analyse the press releases written for journalists, we notice that **6 press releases have been published on the website in the last two years** (4 in 2019 and 2 in 2020).

Table 5 - List of press releases published online on the website Adriatic-ionian.eu in 2019 and 2020.

Title	Date	City	Spokespeople
PRESS RELEASE – 3 EUSAIR flagships related to Sustainable Tourism to be developed!	3 August 2020	/	Frano Matušić, State Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism. Renata Tomljenović, Assistant Director of the Institute of Tourism.

PRESS RELEASE – 12th meeting of TSG4	9 June 2020	/	No quote but mentions of Maciej Hofman (DG EAC), Laurent Guirkingner (DG NEAR), Janos Schmied (DG GROW), Jelena Kolić (INTERREG ADRION).
PRESS RELEASE – 9th Thematic Steering Group for Pillar 1 “Blue Growth”	12 April 2019	Athens	/
PRESS RELEASE – 10th Thematic Steering Group meeting for Pillar 4 “Sustainable Tourism”	05 April 2019	Podgorica	/
PRESS RELEASE – INTERACT event “Macro-regional strategies as strategic frameworks for ESIF on post- 2020”	27 March 2019	Brussels	/
PRESS RELEASE – 10th Thematic Steering Group meeting for Pillar 3 – “Environmental Quality”	14 March 2019	Zagreb	/

Regarding the organisation of interviews - and thus the proactive lobbying of journalists to cover these events in the press, this seems to be coordinated mostly by the organisers of the events, in a very occasional way.

As such, 2 respondents to our survey explain that they 'sometimes' come into contact with the press, 1 'rarely' and 1 'never'.

Except on the occasion of key events, no media communication is therefore organised on EUSAIR in general, its achievements, results and concrete activities.

4. General benchmark with key organisations

In order to evaluate the current position of EUSAIR in relation to other organisations and to identify areas of improvement, a benchmark analysis was conducted based on two types of organisations.

First, the benchmark analysis focused on the other Macro-Regional Strategies (MRS) of the European Union, i.e., EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR.

In a second phase, the benchmark analysis focused on 4 key organisations that have the same regional scope, i.e., Berlin Process, the Central Europe Initiative, the Regional Cooperation Council and DG NEAR.

4.1. Social media benchmark

The social media analysis was conducted based on different criteria, such as the number of followers, posting frequency, the average likes per post, etc. All collected data directly comes from the Social Media in question.

The first part of the benchmark consisted of the analysis of MRS Social Media. The three MRS of the EU (apart from EUSAIR) were analysed: EUSBSR, EUSDR, EUSALP.

The **European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region** (EUSBSR) is the first macro-regional strategy and counts 8 countries: Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland.

The **EU Strategy for the Danube Region** (EUSDR) is a macro-regional strategy adopted in 2010, including 14 countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Finally, the **EU Strategy for the Alpine Region** (EUSALP) promotes the Alpine Region and includes 7 countries: Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland.

Table 6 – Social media benchmark with EUSBSR, EUSDR, EUSALP.

	EUSBSR	EUSDR	EUSALP	EUSAIR
Facebook followers	2116	3495	1578	556 (February 2021 – 455 end 2020)
Facebook av. posting frequency*	2-3 times per week	daily	7 times per month (irregular)	daily (irregular: a lot of posts in January because of Annual Forum)

FB av. likes per post**	8	5	5	4
Twitter followers	3334	1194	793	1174 (February 2021 – 1130 end 2020)
Twitter av. posting frequency*	2 per week	5 times per week	7 times per month (irregular)	daily (irregular: a lot of tweets in January because of Annual Forum)
Twitter av. likes per post**	6	3	5	4
YouTube followers	113	45	80	44 (February 2021 – 39 end 2020)
YouTube uploads	219	36	58	67
Social Media topics	<p>Facebook mainly events and projects.</p> <p>Twitter mainly events, local projects, communication toolkits and calls for proposals.</p> <p>YouTube Annual forum sessions, promotion of pillars, events.</p>	<p>Facebook mainly events and calls for applications.</p> <p>Twitter mainly events and calls for applications (often same posts as on Facebook).</p> <p>YouTube Mainly pillar promotion and events.</p>	<p>Facebook events, current issues (international days, holidays), post about specific projects.</p> <p>Twitter mainly events but also local news.</p> <p>YouTube Local and current news (Covid, current EUSALP presidency, local projects).</p>	<p>Facebook mainly events.</p> <p>Twitter mainly events.</p> <p>YouTube mainly events.</p>
Social Media imagery	Often website with EUSBSR logo or website screenshot.	Often Teams or PowerPoint pictures of an event or redirection to a website.	Varied: videos and animated gifs; also static images.	Mainly Teams and PowerPoint screenshots.
Other Social Media?	Flickr , 13 subscribers, 1570 photos	LinkedIn , 2184 followers, active and good engagement of the audience.	Instagram , 529 followers, active. LinkedIn , 112 followers, active.	/

*average based on January and December 2020 as checked on 12 February 2020.

**average of January and December posts as checked on 12 February 2020.

The second part of the benchmarking analysis consisted of the analysis of 4 regional organisations: Berlin Process, Central Europe Initiative, Regional Cooperation Council and DG NEAR.

The **Berlin Process** is an initiative aimed at stepping up regional cooperation in the Western Balkans and aiding the integration of these countries into the European Union. It was launched on August 28, 2014, by the German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

The **Central European Initiative (CEI)** was founded in Budapest on 11 November 1989. It is a regional intergovernmental forum committed to supporting European integration and sustainable development through cooperation between and among its Member States and with the European Union, international and regional organisations as well as with other public or private institutions and non-governmental organisations.

The **Regional Cooperation Council** serves regional cooperation and European and Euro-Atlantic integration of South East Europe in order to spark development in the region to the benefit of its people. It was officially launched at the meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) in Sofia, on 27 February 2008, under which auspices it continues to operate.

The mission of the **Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR)** is to take forward the EU's neighbourhood and enlargement policies, as well as coordinating relations with EEA-EFTA countries insofar as Commission policies are concerned. DG NEAR works closely with the European External Action Service and the line DGs in charge of thematic priorities.

Table 7 – Social media benchmark with the Berlin Process, the CEI, the Regional Cooperation Council and DG NEAR.

	BERLIN PROCESS	CENTRAL EUROPE INITIATIVE	REGIONAL COOPERATION COUNCIL	DG NEAR
Facebook followers	2073	5196	30,444	568,262
Facebook av. posting frequency*	Irregular: from 3-5 times a week to 1 time a month when active (no post in the last 2 months)	2-3 times a week	Daily	daily
FB av. likes per post**	3	7	43	637
Twitter followers	3651	1751	4579	115,100
Twitter av. posting frequency*	5-10 times per month when active (no tweets in the last months)	3 times a week	Daily	daily

Twitter av. likes per post**	16	5	8	15
YouTube followers	3	120	182	N/A
YouTube uploads	9	40	193	N/A
Social Media topics	Facebook events, call for applications and projects Twitter announcements, events, news, quotes from officials/partners, promotion (tourism) and retweets of relevant news, partners and participating countries YouTube Summits, fora, presentation video	Facebook events, call for applications and projects, posts linked to UN Days, personal profiles, project updates and milestones, etc. Twitter announcements, events & news, quotes from officials/partners, promotion (tourism) YouTube Documentaries, presentations, events	Facebook events, call for applications and projects, posts linked to UN Days, post about specific projects (often containing stats), profiles from people involved, project updates and milestones, etc. Twitter (partner) announcements, events & news, relevant quotes YouTube Documentaries, presentations, events	Facebook events, posts linked to societal and political issues, post about specific projects (often containing stats), posts linked to UN days, personal profiles, project updates and milestones, etc. Twitter (partner) announcements, events & news, relevant quotes
Social Media imagery	Mostly static images or videos	Mostly static images or videos	Good mix of static images and animated gifs; quotes are often integrated in an image with the person's picture	Videos and animated gifs; also static images but to a lesser extent
Other Social Media?	Flickr	LinkedIn , 907 followers	Instagram , 3544 followers LinkedIn , 1603 followers	Vimeo , 51 followers Instagram , 22,600 followers

*average based on January and December 2020 as checked on 12 February 2020.

**average of January and December posts as checked on 12 February 2020

4.2. Website & newsletters benchmark

The second part of the benchmark analysis consisted of an analysis of the websites of these key organisations. The analysis was conducted based on different criteria, such as the organisation of the page, the presence of news, or the presence of press releases. All collected data directly comes from the website in question.

The analysis focused on MRS websites (EUSBSR, EUSDR, EUSALP and EUSAIR) and the same 4 organisations as for the Social Media benchmark analysis: Berlin Process, Central Europe Initiative, Regional Cooperation Council and DG NEAR. Here is an overview of the results for the four MRS.

Table 8 – Website and newsletter benchmark with EUSBSR, EUSDR and EUSALP.

	EUSBSR	EUSDR	EUSALP	EUSAIR
URL WEBSITE	https://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/	https://danube-region.eu/	https://www.alpine-region.eu/	https://www.adriatic-ionician.eu/
Languages available	English	English	English	English
Menu tab	Home About Communication Annual Forum Contacts Tool kit	Home About EUSDR Projects and funding Communication Contact us	EUSALP Governance Action groups Communication Contact	About EUSAIR Funding sources Media centre Library Contacts
Organization of the homepage	Latest news, followed by events and blog highlights.	Latest news, followed by communication, country list and pillars.	Latest news, followed by description of EUSALP and calendar.	Latest news, followed by highlights and events.
Comments	/	/	Some sections of the homepage are not updated: information about Annual Forum of November 2019.	EUSAIR website was analysed earlier in this report. See section 'Website' for more information.
Presence of news?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Frequency of news*	2-3 per month	2-3 per month	1-4 per month	5-10 per month
Presence of newsletters?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of newsletters per year*	6	2	2	3

Number of news per newsletter*	5	6	5	11
Presence of press releases?	No	No	Yes	Yes (although no dedicated section)
Number of press releases**	NA	NA	4	6

*Based on 2020.

**Based on 2019 and 2020.

The same analysis was conducted for four organisations, here is an overview of the results.

Table 9 – Website and newsletter benchmark with the Berlin Process, the CEI, the Regional Cooperation Council and DG NEAR.

	BERLIN PROCESS	CENTRAL EUROPE INITIATIVE	REGIONAL COOPERATION COUNCIL	DG NEAR
URL WEBSITE	https://berlinprocess.info/	https://www.cei.int/	https://www.rcc.int/	https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/about/directorate-general_en
Languages available	English	English	English	English
Menu tab	Home News & Events Publications & Documents Op Eds About Contact	Who we are What we do How we do it News Media centre	Home Who we are What we do SEE 2020 Economic integration Databases Library News	Home EU Neighbourhood Policy Enlargement Policy Funding, Evaluations and Technical assistance About us The Directorate-General Career opportunities Info corner
Organisation of the homepage	Latest news followed by description of Berlin Process and events.	Highlights, fields of action, followed by latest news and media gallery.	Highlights followed by description of RCC and projects.	Description of the DG.

Comments	It seems that the website is not regularly updated: latest news in October 2020.	/	/	Part of the EU Commission website (no dedicated website).
Presence of news?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Frequency of news*	Irregular (last one in October)	2-15 times a month	1-10 per month	Daily
Presence of newsletters?	No (only possibility to subscribe)	No (only possibility to subscribe)	No	No
Number of newsletters*	NA	NA	NA	NA
Number of news per newsletter*	NA	NA	NA	NA
Presence of press releases?	No	No	No	Yes
Number of press releases**	NA	NA	NA	78

*Based on 2020.

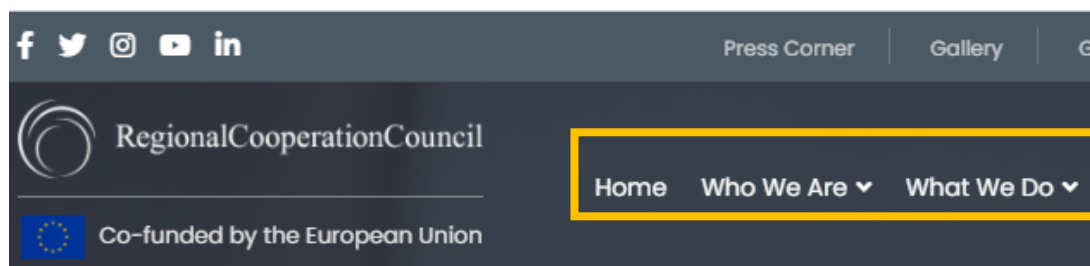
**Based on 2019 and 2020.

As the analysis of additional metrics is not possible for websites or newsletters, we have highlighted below some good practices implemented by EUSAIR's 'neighbouring' organisations.

With regard to the website menu, first of all, several websites of the analysed organisations use the method of questions to facilitate the orientation of visitors on their site. Because of the simple design with white background in the example below of the Central European Initiative, the visitor's attention is drawn to the questions: *Who are we? What do we do? How do we do it?*



Menu example of the Central European Council at <https://www.cei.int/> © Central European Council.



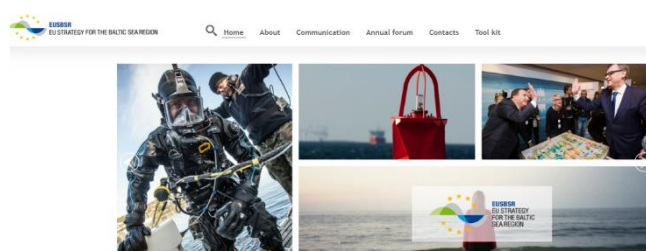
Menu example of the Regional Cooperation Council at <https://www.rcc.int/> © Regional Cooperation Council.



Example of key information located in the top-mid section of the homepage as seen on www.berlinprocess.info. ©The Berlin Process.

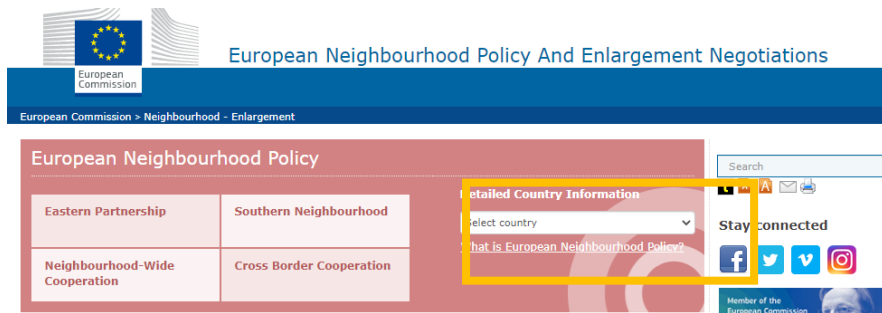
As is the case with the Berlin Process website, information about the initiative appears clearly upon arrival at the website to allow the visitor to better understand the identity of the website and its purpose.

Visuals are obviously an excellent way to convey information, such as an organisation's mission, e.g., with striking, to-the-point images on the homepage.



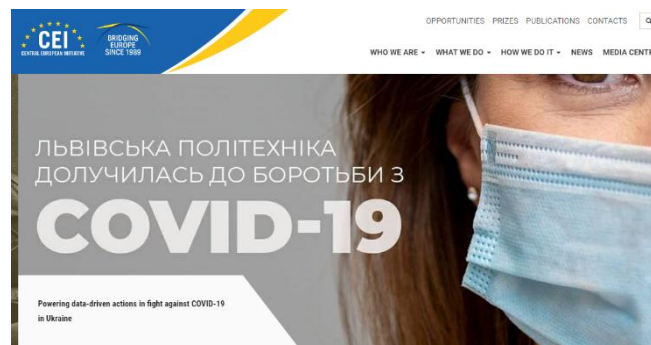
Example of areas of focus and activities being illustrated with attractive images from www.alpine-region.eu. ©EUSALP.

To facilitate the search for information within the website, some tools are deployed by neighbouring organisations.



Example of a user-friendly drop-down menu on DG NEAR website. ©DG NEAR.

The use of sliders is used on many websites. In the example below, text and image cohabit in a harmonious way, without overlapping.



Slider on www.cei.int. ©CEI.

4.3. Conclusions

Upon completing the benchmark analysis, we observed certain correlations. First, for social media, the average **posting frequency** appears as an important element of the performance of social media. The more often and regularly an organisation publishes news and other content on their platforms, the higher the number of followers.

A second conclusion is the **content**. Organisations posting about different yet still relevant aspects of their work, i.e., which provide versatile content, generally have more followers and a higher engagement. Covering more general topics, which speak to the widest possible spectrum of its audience, helps to generate more engagement.

The statistics tend to work very well on the 'neighbouring' pages of EUSAIR. People like numbers, and even more so if they are impactful. The same goes for attractive visuals, which are eye-catching to users. It is to be noted that the most popular pages often use animated gifs, i.e., do not limit themselves to static images.

Third, in terms of tone and form, popular content often zooms in on the **human aspect or specific projects**, appealing to pathos, the audience's emotions. Regarding the form, the actual lay-out (emojis, white space, etc.) is carefully looked after on well-performing pages.

Last but not least, all of the organisations that were analysed do not limit themselves to Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. It seems that the most popular platforms (other than Facebook and Twitter) are Instagram (more visual, reaching younger audiences) and LinkedIn (professional platform).

When it comes to the benchmark analysis of websites and newsletters, EUSAIR showed good results in terms of news release and newsletter presence, compared to other organisations such as the Berlin Process that does not provide any of these two sections in its website.

In terms of frequency, results are positive too, although the frequency of newsletters publication is quite low, as developed earlier in this report.

Some good practices were highlighted in other websites, such as the use of questions in the menu tabs (*'Who we are'*), in order to engage with the audience and to make the homepage clear and user-friendly.

In terms of language, all organisations under analysis use English as the main and only language for their website.

5. SWOT matrix

The SWOT matrix is an analytical tool frequently used to establish the basis of a communication strategy. By analysing the strengths and weaknesses of an organisation, as well as its (external) opportunities and threats, the SWOT matrix provides an overall view of an organisation's performance and the actions to be taken.

The points presented below are thus a summary of our communication audit. These will be further enhanced by the results of EUSAIR's stakeholder analysis and will together form the basis of our communication strategy.

Table 10 – SWOT Matrix.

STRENGTH	WEAKNESSES
Lots of communicational material available.	No clear communicational objectives.
Detailed structure and repartition of areas within member countries.	Vague communication plan, with no clear KPIs.
Extensive partner network.	Little human resources managing the entire communication (one people full time).
One voice communication (for all countries members of EUSAIR).	Lack of communication on 'concrete' actions (key numbers, (fun) facts, projects, achievements, etc.) appealing to a broader audience.
Strong links with institutional partners.	Difficulties of collaboration among the current detailed structure.
Great event communication.	Majority of content in English only (one voice).
Good engagement rate.	Lack of coordination between (national) partners.
Transparent and extensive information on the website.	Weak links with 'on the ground' partners (local, regional, national).
Growing and regular content on the website.	More developed audience in some countries (mostly EU member states, to the detriment of neighbouring countries).
Growing use of social media.	Visual identity poorly represented.
Good results with little means.	Lack of varied textual and visual content.

	<p>Limited online audience (low number of followers).</p> <p>Irregularity in posting content (social media and newsletters).</p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>Develop a concrete/clear and integrated communication strategy.</p> <p>Raise EUSAIR understanding among key stakeholders and raise awareness about its activities.</p> <p>Take advantage of the visual identity.</p> <p>Broaden the audience by varying the content ('on the ground' partners and general public).</p> <p>Involve the general public in the content.</p> <p>Boost involvement of EUSAIR actors in the communication.</p> <p>Launch advertising campaigns to grow the audience.</p> <p>Take advantage of external consultants' expertise.</p> <p>Track performance and progress.</p>	<p>Budget limitations</p> <p>Disparities between member countries (cultural, technological).</p>

Conclusions Task 1

This first stage of our communication audit highlighted the tools used by EUSAIR to promote its visibility, not only to its current stakeholders (mainly institutional), through the frequent updating of its website and the distribution of a quarterly newsletter, but also to an 'external', even still institutional, audience via social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

While the second part of our communication audit - i.e., the more in-depth analysis of audiences and stakeholders - is still to be carried out (task 2), this first analysis already makes it possible to draw conclusions for the drafting and development of a communication strategy.

First of all, it is important to recall and underline the relatively limited configuration of the current team in charge of day-to-day communication for EUSAIR. While several people are involved in EUSAIR communication, at different levels, only one person is currently working on the operational side of communication full-time, with relatively little input from EUSAIR partners.

In terms of content, whether it concerns the website, newsletter or social media, communication currently revolves around EUSAIR events, and more specifically around the results of these events, with little emphasis on their promotion and even less on general awareness about EUSAIR itself, its activities and the concrete results of its actions (on a partner and local level).

However, as revealed by the survey, EUSAIR has a wealth of content, holds a real treasure of information that can support its communication, and, at the same time, offers the possibility of varying the type of content, in an attempt to broaden the audience and the scope of the macro-regional strategy.

In terms of tools, the website and the newsletter, which are currently used to maintain and capitalise on the link with current stakeholders, seem to be preferred tools for the communication team. Nevertheless, social media, which allow to extend the scope of possibilities by reaching new stakeholders, should not be disregarded when considering the communicational objectives of the macro-regional strategy: to promote awareness of the EUSAIR at the different levels, from local to international, to build on the multi-level governance and ensure the involvement of public, economic, civil society and environmental partners.

To achieve this, it will be important for all EUSAIR members to clearly understand and implement the objectives of the macro-regional strategy, and above all to work together to accomplish them.

Presently, though, communication seems to be thought of in a reactive way, in the short term, without any concrete strategy or underlying objectives. Indeed, if communication is most often focused on events it does not currently aim at increasing visibility in general, at reaching new targets or at creating understanding on specific key themes/pillars, showing great empathy.

While the richness from macroregional strategies is the fruit of the joint forces of several regions, the heterogeneity and complexity of their structures is also a vulnerability that needs to be overcome.

In this sense, and in order to override these flaws, it is crucial to establish concrete bases for collaboration between each of the parties, particularly in the implementation of the communication.

This lack of mobilisation can only be achieved through the implementation of a clear strategy, based on key messages dedicated to each pillar and each audience, with precise objectives and, most importantly, a strategy understood and integrated by each of its members.

To do so, we will examine, in a next step, how to create a policy of 'champions', how to inspire partners to share content, how to enable EUSAIR to clearly assume a facilitating role within the Adriatic and Ionian region, and *in fine* to become a reference platform for managing macroregional challenges.

TASK 2 – IDENTIFYING AND MAPPING ALL THE GROUPS OF EUSAIR STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

Introduction Task 2: Promoting awareness of the EUSAIR throughout the Adriatic-Ionian Region

6 years after its implementation, EUSAIR's objective for the coming years will be to extend, consolidate and assert its presence and key role in the Adriatic-Ionian region.

From a local to an international level, EUSAIR seeks to gain visibility, to build on the multi-level governance and to ensure the involvement of public, economic, civil society and environmental partners.

In order to fulfil its mission of “connecting people and institutions” and to be able to implement ‘joint multi-level solutions for common challenges’, it is crucial for EUSAIR to communicate effectively to its multiple audiences, from the most local to the most international stakeholders.

To do so, it is first of all essential to determine its audience, to structure it, and to know it in depth. Indeed, any successful communication requires a good understanding of its audience in order to provide it with the most relevant messages via the most appropriate channel, and at the right time.

As such, to enable EUSAIR to reach its audience, to grow said audience, to develop new partnerships as well as foster relationships and operations with existing parties and stakeholders, we will identify and analyse in the present report all the groups of EUSAIR stakeholders in the Adriatic and Ionian Region and beyond.

After first establishing the communicational context of EUSAIR and highlighting the different stakeholders internal to the macro-regional strategy, we will give a first overview of the current situation in terms of stakeholder communication through a survey submitted to the members of the Facility Point as well as several members of the European Commission.

We will then paint a picture of EUSAIR's existing audience by, for example, looking at the number of followers as well as their qualitative value and engagement levels, and present the current stakeholders' structure of the macroregional strategy.

In preparation of the communication strategy that will follow in a future report, we will analyse the digital trends and behaviours of the member countries of the Adriatic-Ionian region, globally and individually.

Finally, EUSAIR's current contact database will be considerably expanded, with almost 60%, thanks to research work executed in the 9 member countries of the macroregional strategy as well as in Belgium, centre of the European institutions.

This second part of the communication audit will then make it possible to develop, in collaboration with DG REGIO and EUSAIR, an integrated communication strategy adapted to each stakeholder to achieve the objectives set for EUSAIR in the coming years.

1. Stakeholders' communication context

Built upon a vision of joint multi-level solutions for common challenges towards a stronger Adriatic and Ionian region, communication in the EUSAIR is the shared responsibility of all EUSAIR key actors involved in the coordination and implementation of the strategy. Setting organisational structure and robust internal communication channels is a prerequisite for smooth and effective external communication.

1.1. Governing the EUSAIR: a tale of many parties

The internal EUSAIR governance structure consists of three levels.

First, a political level, comprising Ministers for EU Funds and Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the nine participating countries who make strategic decisions at the EUSAIR Annual forums' ministerial meetings.

Secondly, a coordinating level represented by a Governing Board, which acts as an interface between the operational level (Thematic Steering Groups, see below) and the political level on top of ensuring coordination with existing regional cooperation organisations, as appropriate. Standing members of the Governing Board include:

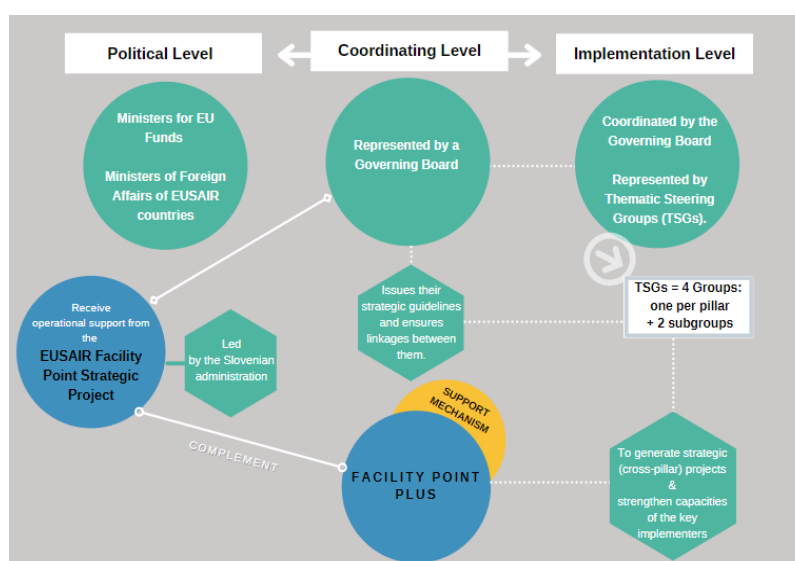
- national representatives, i.e. two formally appointed National Coordinators per participating country, one senior official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and one senior official from the national administration responsible for coordinating EU funds in the country;
- formally appointed Pillar Coordinators (Blue Growth, Connecting the Region, Environmental Quality and Sustainable Tourism),
- Commission services: DG REGIO, DG MARE and DG NEAR (other Directorates-General may participate as appropriate),
- a European Parliament representative,
- a Committee of the Regions (CoR) representative accompanied by a representative of its Adriatic-Ionian Interregional Group,
- a European Economic and Social Committee representative,
- the Permanent Secretariat of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative under the leadership of Amb. Giovanni Castellaneta, Secretary General, who was appointed by all Ministers of Foreign Affairs gathered in the Adriatic and Ionian Council in Ioannina (11 May 2017) under the Hellenic Chairmanship.
- Managing Authority of the Interreg ADRION transnational cooperation programme representatives,
- EUSAIR Facility Point representatives.

Thirdly, **an implementation level, represented by Thematic Steering Groups (TSGs)**. There are four in total, i.e., one per pillar, with special arrangements for Pillar 2, Connecting the Region, which comprises two sub-groups for transport and energy, respectively. The TSGs are chaired by a tandem of countries, consisting of one EU member state and one

non-EU country. Currently these are Greece and Montenegro for Pillar 1, Italy and Serbia and from 2020 also North Macedonia for Pillar 2, Slovenia and Bosnia-Herzegovina for Pillar 3, and Croatia and Albania for Pillar 4.

The work of the TSGs in charge of implementation is coordinated by the Governing Board through strategic assistance with respect to management and implementation of the EUSAIR. This means, amongst other things, that the Governing Board has to issue strategic guidelines to the TSGs and ensuring linkages between them.

Both the Governing Board and the Thematic Steering Groups receive operational support from the **EUSAIR Facility Point Strategic Project**, a partnership of project partners from all nine EUSAIR participating countries, incorporated in the Adriatic-Ionian (Adriatic) Transnational Cooperation Programme. The majority of the project partners are governmental institutions, however, there is also one regional institution and one municipality involved. The EUSAIR FP is led by the Slovenian administration.



EUSAIR governance structure, a tale of many parties. ©Vademecom.

Last but not least, the **Facility Point Plus** was set up ('Additional Support to the Governance of the EU Strategy of the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR)'). This support mechanism addresses the need to generate strategic (cross-pillar) projects in the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region and to strengthen the capacities of the EUSAIR key implementers and other stakeholders with the aim of accelerating the implementation of the Strategy. It should be seen as a complement to the EUSAIR Facility Point Strategic Project.

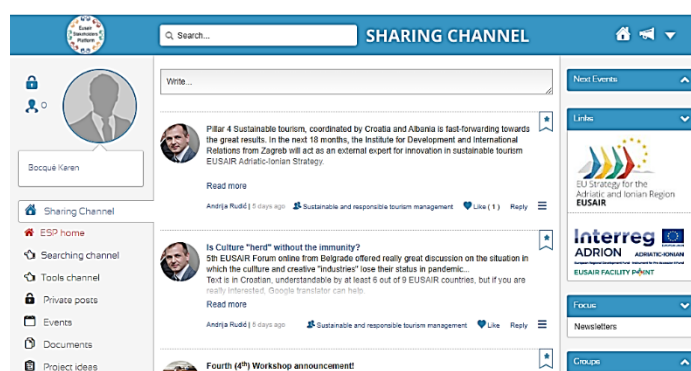
1.2. One internal key channel to pass on knowledge

The main way for the above parties to find news, information and events to draft then diffuse relevant content to their target audiences, is **the EUSAIR stakeholder platform**, a centralised communication, community and collaboration instrument. Managed by the Marche Region - Productive Activities, Education and Labour Department in the framework of the EUSAIR FP, the platform currently regroups around 950 members. **Set up as the preferred knowledge sharing tool of the EUSAIR, it aims to increase stakeholder engagement coordination and implementation processes.**



Screencap of the EUSAIR Stakeholders Platform [Presentation](#) on the YouTube Channel “Eusair Stakeholder Platform Facilitypoint”. ©EUSAIR.

The EUSAIR stakeholder platform includes a **Searching Channel**, where stakeholders can find out more about existing projects as well as consult trends reports and documents on their respective Pillar. The **Sharing Channel** is a place where the EUSAIR stakeholder community can share content, ideas and events with other stakeholders. It also offers a **Learning Channel** that currently holds two virtual lessons explaining key ideas, such as the concept of strategy, with the aim of capacity building.



Screencap of the EUSAIR Stakeholders Platform Sharing Channel. ©EUSAIR.

When it comes to the actual diffusion of the content, this is predefined by a **concise/short communication plan**¹⁵, in the form of a table, of which the main purpose is to identify communication activities to facilitate the implementation of the EUSAIR Communication Strategy as well as deadlines, responsible partners and ‘vague’ indicators of results for each activity. Indeed, no clear KPI is part of the communication plan.

¹⁵ Annual EUSAIR Facility Point Communication Plan for 2020.

1.3. Local, regional and national institutions: EUSAIR's key partners

To support the diffusion of its message, EUSAIR counts on a partner network of institutions and organisations related to the Adriatic-Ionian Region.

These comprise¹⁶ (1) **UniAdrion**, an association of universities and research centres of the Adriatic-Ionian area, (2) **the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion**, a transnational association of 33 regional and local authorities of Italy, Croatia, Greece, Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro and Albania, (3) **the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce**, a transnational, project oriented, non-profit association linking the chambers of commerce of the eight countries of the Adriatic and Ionian macro-region, (4) **the European Commission**, more particularly, the **DG REGIO**, (5) **the Adriatic and Ionian Interregional Group at the Committee of the Regions**, (5) **Adriatic & Ionian Initiative**, which includes eight Members¹⁷: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia, and (6) **the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities**, a non-profit international association open to municipalities of the Adriatic-Ionian basin.

Covering various political layers on a national, regional and local scale, they are **key in spreading the EUSAIR vision and mission**.

The above-mentioned EUSAIR stakeholder platform is also used by these institutions and organisations to stay updated with the latest activities of the macroregional strategy.

Every year, the EUSAIR governance structure and its partners come together at the **EUSAIR Annual Forum** to discuss the progress of the macroregional strategy as well as its future, an event which is heavily promoted.

1.4. Beyond the institutional sphere: disseminating EUSAIR in the Adriatic-Ionian basin

1.4.1. Connecting communication objectives and mission

Although both propelled and supported by its governance structure, which has major decision-making power in the macroregional strategy, and by its partners, who maintain a constant relationship with EUSAIR, the macroregional strategy aims to extend beyond this institutional sphere.

According to its mission statement, "*Connecting people and institutions to build a common understanding of cooperation for a harmonised, integrated and sustainable region*", it is indeed important for EUSAIR to create a link with 'people'.

Be it universities, municipalities, local economic actors, regional associations, EUSAIR needs to target these audiences in order to **connect the citizens who 'make' the region**

¹⁶ Adriatic-Ionian.eu, EUSAIR Partnership Building, [link](#).

¹⁷ Based on the latest information found in documentation. This number might have been increased to 9 since the inclusion of North Macedonia in the strategy.

with the institutions responsible for them, so that, together, they can find solutions to major problems around the 4 pillars.

In its 2020 communication plan, EUSAIR expressed the **wish to extend its list of stakeholders in the region**¹⁸. However, the exact targeting and defining of these audiences remain unclear and does not make it possible to highlight priority audiences or clear objectives on who to reach and how. This task – “extending the stakeholders list” - was managed by the Facility Point on the basis of input from the Project Partners. It will therefore be interesting and important to study the results of this activity.

Although the EUSAIR shows itself willing to extend its communication to a growing number of stakeholders, there seem to be **a lack of clear vision on how to achieve this goal**.

DOMAIN	ACTIVITY	DEADLINE	RESPONSIBLE PP	INDICATOR	Comments and Recommendations
-	Collect a list of stakeholders and e-addressees for direct e-mailing per target groups (Pillar/institutions, etc.)	1 st phase by February 2020, 2 nd phase by June 2020 (ongoing)	All PPs, send to LP	Number of new addressees. Target group relevance.	FP LP and FP PP should invest more effort to dully implement this activity. FP PP are requested to connect with their institutions and related actors to obtain data on stakeholders

Screenshot of EUSAIR 2020 Communication Plan. ©EUSAIR.

1.4.2. A stakeholders' database highlighting a desire for extension

To determine and analyse the list of EUSAIR current stakeholders, a contact list, divided by organisation type, was provided by the Facility Point Lead Partner.

This contact database, used for invitations to EUSAIR events in recent years, will be analysed in depth in the following sections. However, it already allows for some interesting conclusions regarding the classification of stakeholders and related objectives.

The current database is divided into 15 categories of organisations: from local authorities to NGOs, SMEs and universities. **This classification is a very good basis** for clearly distinguishing the persons and organisations present in the EUSAIR database.

One missing element, however, is a reference to the 'pillar' of the organisations. While some organisations may obviously be valid for several pillars of the EUSAIR strategy, others are active in specific areas corresponding to the pillars. This indication could therefore be key to refining the targeting of audiences.

Looking at the Sheet above, the 'periods' indicated correspond to events. For each of the events, stakeholders have been selected, and some of them are being 'repeated' in each period.

¹⁸ Annual EUSAIR Facility Point Communication Plan for 2020.

As such, 'period 1' corresponds to 2016, 'periods 2 and 3' to 2017, 'periods 4, 5 and 6' to 2018 and 'periods 7, 8 and 9' to 2019 (columns 8 and 9 uncompleted).

In terms of objectives, a 'total value expected' has been indicated in one of the columns, however without any timing to frame the objective.

No.	Target group / Delivery period	TOTAL VALUE EXPECTED	Total reported	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8	Period 9
1	LOCAL PUBLIC AUTHORITY	150	48	15	9	1	8	0	11	4		
2	REGIONAL PUBLIC AUTHORITY	60	37	21	10	1	5	0	0	0		
3	NATIONAL PUBLIC AUTHORITY	80	115	50	29	6	12	7	6	5		
4	SECTORAL AGENCY	70	57	10	21	3	1	5	7	10		
5	INFRASTRUCTURE AND (PUBLIC) SERVICE PROVIDER	30	34	13	6	0	5	0	9	1		
6	INTEREST GROUPS INCLUDING NGOS	100	82	16	20	4	19	5	12	6		
7	HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH	60	181	39	38	5	30	7	36	26		
8	SME	500	341	39	74	11	134	4	46	33		
9	BUSINESS SUPPORT ORGANIZATION	200	113	35	27	1	13	5	21	11		
10	INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION (NATIONAL LAW)	8	29	10	9	1	7	1	0	1		
11	INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION (INTER-NATIONAL LAW)	5	27	13	6	0	2	2	3	1		
12	ENTERPRISE, EXCLUDING SME	50	37	3	8	1	21	1	3	0		
13	EDUCATION/TRAINING CENTRE AND SCHOOL	300	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0		
14 F	GENERAL PUBLIC FEMALE, TWITTER (1/2)	50,000	229,654	7	8	0	8	0	180351	49280		
14 M	GENERAL PUBLIC MALE, TWITTER (1/2)	50,000	229,658	7	9	0	13	0	180350	49279		
15	PRESS		79	23	17	14	13	0	10	2		

Screenshot of the introductory Excel sheet to the EUSAIR database, dedicated to events. ©EUSAIR.

Based on this data, **SMEs** (target: 500), **education/ training centres/ schools** (target: 300), **business support organisations** (target: 200) and **local public authorities** (target: 150) as well as **NGOs** (target: 100) seem to be the stakeholders that EUSAIR wants to reach the most, demonstrating once again their desire to extend their communication to a wider audience, outside the institutional sphere.

However, the figures put forward indicate that **these objectives have not been achieved** (red cells), EUSAIR thus failing to meet these targets.

NO	NAME OF ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY	DATE	GENDER	NAME	SURNAME	EVENT
3	MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND I	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	ANITA	KESER	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
3	MINISTRY OF CULTURE CROATIA	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	ANUŠKA	DERANJA CRNO	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
3	MINISTRY OF TOURISM CROATIA	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	BLANKA	BELOŠEVIĆ	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
3	MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND I	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MR	BORIS	MARTINEZ	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
7	VIROVITICA UNIVERSITY	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MR	DEJAN	TUBIĆ	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
4	TOURIST BOARD CROATIAN NATIONAL	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	IVANA	KARUZA	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
3	MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND I	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	JELENA	ČAČULOVIĆ	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
3	HORWATH HTL HOTEL, TOURISM AND LEISURE	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MR	JOSIP	MICIC	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
7	LIBERTAS UNIVERSITY	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	KSENJA	KEČA	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
3	MINISTRY OF TOURISM CROATIA	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	LJILJANA	PAJESKA	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
3	MINISTRY OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EU FU	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MR	MISLAV	KOVAČ	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
9	UHPA ASSOCIATION OF CROATIAN TRAVEL AGENC	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	NEDA	LUKIŠIĆ	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
3	MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS CF	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MR	NEDJELJKO	ŠPILEK	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
3	MINISTRY OF ECONOMY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	NIRVANA	KAPITAN BUTKI	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
3	MINISTRY OF TOURISM CROATIA	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	OLIVERA	ŠARIĆ	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
9	HSK CROATIAN WORLD CONGRESS	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	SAŠA	ZRNIC	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
3	MINISTRY OF TOURISM CROATIA	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	SENKA	DANIEL	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
3	MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS CF	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	TATJANA	KRALJ	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY
7	UNIVERSITY OF PULA JURAJ DOBRILA	CROATIA	03/07/2019	MS	TEA	GOLJA	THEMATIC EVENT EUSAIR INFO DAY

Screenshot of contacts Excel sheet in the EUSAIR database, dedicated to events. ©EUSAIR.

Which stakeholders are most targeted by the EUSAIR communication? What types of organisations are they most in contact with? With which countries of the macroregional strategy? These different points will be detailed in the rest of this report.

1.5. EUSAIR Survey: institutional scope and lack of clear targeting

On a general level, and as already highlighted in the interim report of Task 1 '*Analysing the current status quo in terms of digital communication strategy*', communication towards stakeholders both internal and external to EUSAIR seems to be a challenging point.

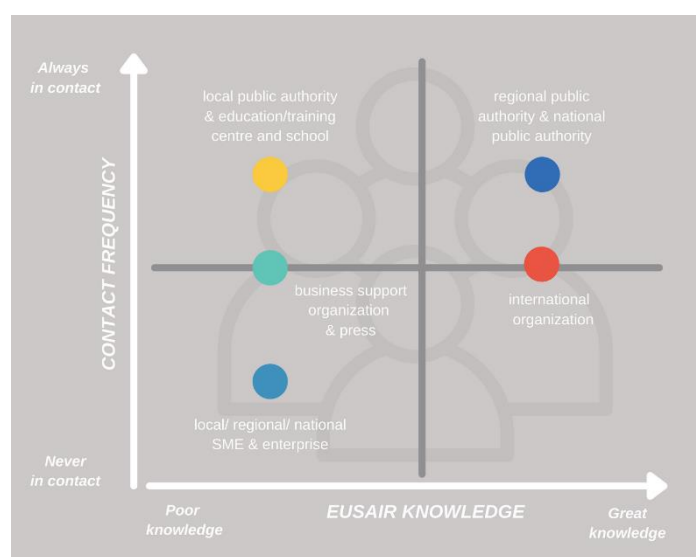
While the heterogeneity of the EUSAIR structure is a strength for the macroregional strategy, it is complex in the management of daily exchanges.

1.5.1. A focus on national public authorities

A survey conducted on EUSAIR stakeholder communications and completed by members of the Facility Point Lead Partner (3 respondents) as well as by one of the Project Partners (1 respondent), reveals that current communication is **mainly focused on public and institutional organisations**.

In line with the communication audit carried out on the various digital tools used by EUSAIR, it appears that **local, regional and national public authorities** are the partners with whom EUSAIR is most frequently in contact.

Business support organisations, international organisations and **the press** are, according to the respondents, 'sometimes' in contact with EUSAIR, while they report that they 'rarely' come into contact with **local, regional or national enterprises and SMEs**.



Matrix highlighting the frequency of contact with EUSAIR stakeholders and their knowledge of the macro-regional strategy, based on a survey conducted amongst members of the EUSAIR Facility Point.
©Vademecom.

According to this internal survey, the people responsible for EUSAIR's daily communication reveal that, apart from local, regional or national public authorities and international organisations, who have a good knowledge and understanding of EUSAIR and its activities, the other stakeholders mentioned have **moderate to poor knowledge** of the macroregional strategy.

Based on the above matrix, although local authorities and education-related organisations are in regular contact with EUSAIR, they are - according to respondents - not sufficiently aware of who EUSAIR is and what the macroregional strategy does. Hence, while national and regional anchoring is important, the impact of the macroregional strategy does not seem to be integrated at a more local level.

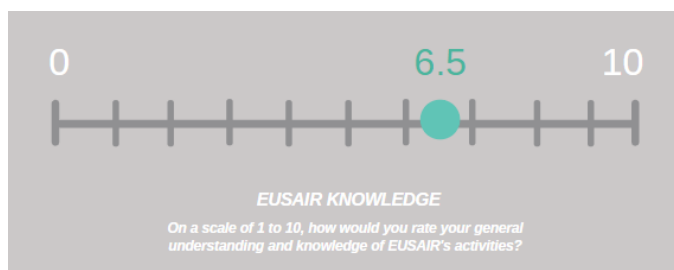
1.5.2. Unclear audience targeting

Beyond the institutional framework, the strategy seems to indicate **weaknesses in communication with external stakeholders**. This finding could undoubtedly be linked to the lack of clarity regarding the communication target. For instance, to the statement '*EUSAIR is targeting clearly defined audiences in its digital communication*', respondents either answered neutrally (3/4) or disagreed (1/4).

If we cross-reference these results with those of a second survey, dedicated to EUSAIR's external stakeholders and relayed to **a total of 98 individuals at various divisions of the European Commission** – out of which 22 completed the survey (for a 22.4% return rate)¹⁹ - some common patterns can be identified.

As assessed by Facility Point members, their institutional stakeholders, amongst whom members of the European Commission, should have good knowledge of EUSAIR. This is confirmed by the survey conducted among members of different DGs within the European Commission.

The survey's participants indeed rated **their general understanding and knowledge of EUSAIR's activities** with an average score of 6.5/10, which we can classify as 'average' to 'good'.

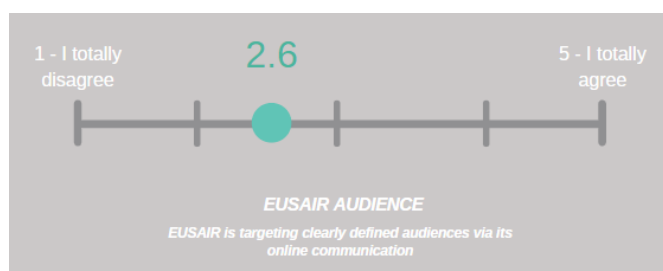


General understanding and knowledge of EUSAIR's activities among EC Stakeholders. ©Vademecom.

When asked if it was clear to them what EUSAIR's communicational challenges and objectives were, **27.2% replied positively; an equal percentage replied negatively (27.2%)**. The rest of the responses were either neutral or marked as 'not applicable'.

Furthermore, 22.8% replied negatively when questioned if **the EUSAIR digital communication strategy** is solid. Other replies were neutral or not applicable. There were no positive reactions.

¹⁹ It is important to note that even if the answers obtained by the members of the European Commission give a picture of their understanding and connection with the macro-regional strategy, they represent the opinion of only a small part of the EUSAIR stakeholders. To get a global view of the uptake of EUSAIR communications, it would be interesting in the future to carry out an in-depth study towards all types of stakeholders.



Average opinion on the clarity of the definition of EUSAIR audiences in its digital communication.
©Vademecom.

With regards to **the audience**, and more particularly, its **defined targeting**, most participants replied neutrally. From those with a defined point of view, 31.8% stated that EUSAIR does not target clearly defined audiences via its online communication platforms while less than 1% replied positively.

1.5.3. Imprecise roles and processes

When asked if the roles and responsibilities were well-defined, 9% replied positively and 22.7% negatively, meaning that a greater percentage thinks they are unclear.

Focusing on roles and responsibilities in the EUSAIR **digital** communication in particular, there were no positive replies, 72.7% neutral replies and 27.3% negative replies, meaning that **more than a quarter of those surveyed believe that clarity is lacking in this aspect**, also.

In relation to the information flow, 22.7% stated that **sharing and exchanging knowledge** between EUSAIR participating countries is a smooth process while an equal 22.7% said it was not. Moreover, **45.5%** believe that the EUSAIR participating countries **do not contribute equally to the content**. This number is specifically significant as there are no positive replies.

The survey also showed that it is rather **unclear** who the point of contact is for sharing information on social media, in the newsletter or on the website: **30% doesn't know who to address, 9% does** and the other answers are neutral or marked as 'not applicable'.

Last but not least, when it comes to the survey participants engagement, 72.7% is not subscribed to the newsletter. **The reasons for not subscribing are various**: (1) no need for it or not a priority in their line of work (2) unaware it existed (3) excessive or irrelevant information (4) unable to find the link on the website.

We can see **a similar trend for social media**: 68% of the respondents do not follow EUSAIR on social media.

1.5.4. Conclusion

To conclude, many participants recognised **the enthusiasm of the EUSAIR spokespersons and stakeholders**. There were also various positive reactions regarding the strategy's **visual identity**.

The common denominator in all issues is a **lack of clarity**, which applies to the audience targeting as well as the roles and responsibilities, causing an inconsistent flow of information and knowledge exchange.

As a result, we notice a **low engagement** from key audiences, limited visibility and a general lack of awareness both online and offline.

When asked about points of improvement, we can distinguish three main messages.

- Improve coordination and organisation.
- In this context, the Facility Point was most quoted as the stakeholder who should take charge. Several participants are also asking for all EUSAIR countries to participate so that the content contributions are more equally shared.
- Ensure more involvement from (high-level) stakeholders.
- It is suggested to be more present online, to count on ‘ambassadors’ and to liaise more with the press to boost visibility.
- Communicate more about tangible results.
- There is a clear call for a focus on real achievements instead of on governance and other abstract concepts that do not appeal to the people who ‘make’ the EUSAIR region.

2. Mapping of EUSAIR current stakeholders

To better understand the relationships and interactions between key players and the macroregional strategy, analysing the stakeholders – in terms of quantity, quality, and engagement - is essential in a communication audit.

In this section, current EUSAIR stakeholders will be analysed following both quantitative and qualitative criteria. Already presented in the interim report of Task 1 '*Analysing the current status quo in terms of digital communication strategy*', the audiences targeted and reached by EUSAIR via its different communication channels have been analysed, from the website to the newsletter audience, as well as the social media users.

In addition, this section includes an analysis of EUSAIR's current contact database, allowing to clearly understand who EUSAIR would like to contact and who EUSAIR is in contact with.

2.1. Different communication tools, the same audience

Painting a picture of the EUSAIR current stakeholders, the audience of each communication tool has been analysed in qualitative and quantitative terms²⁰, in order to deliver a general overview of the reach, the profile as well as the engagement of the audience.

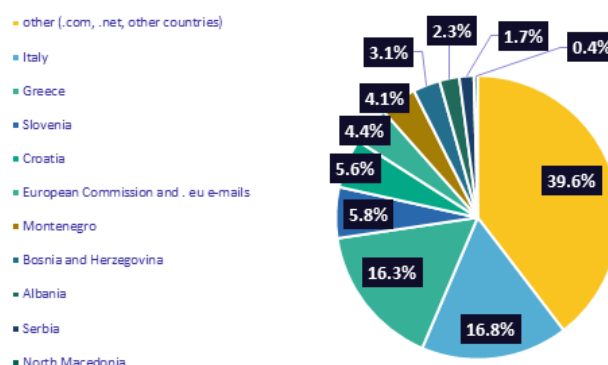
First, the **EUSAIR website**, located at www.adriatic-ionian.eu, aims at informing EUSAIR main stakeholders about the latest news on the macroregional strategy. The analysis of the website showed that this tool is clearly not addressed to 'lambda' citizens of EUSAIR countries, 'uninitiated' people, but rather to institutional stakeholders, such as members of EUSAIR governance structures and European institutions, those who are already familiar with the macroregional strategy. Indeed, the content focuses heavily on policy and uses corresponding terms as well as extensive explications, which makes it too technical for someone outside of the institutional sphere. Moreover, the majority of news articles on the website, i.e., event recaps, policy updates and documentation (70% of the content), do not incite engagement, nor participation.

Secondly, the analysis of the **EUSAIR newsletter** shows that this is the tool that reaches the largest audience, with 4284 subscribers and 1253 organisations represented²¹. Newsletters pursue the objective of maintaining contact and building relationships with key stakeholders through high-value information. The analysis of the current newsletters database allowed us to determine the location of the newsletter's recipients, which showed that **Italian and Greek email addresses are the most represented (16% each)**, while Slovenia and Croatia come next with around 5% of total subscribers, followed by EU email addresses (among which the European Commission). The five EU neighbouring countries who are part of EUSAIR, are less represented. It must be noted that these results must be carefully interpreted as EUSAIR countries might also be included in the .net and .com addresses, which don't give an indication regarding the recipients location.

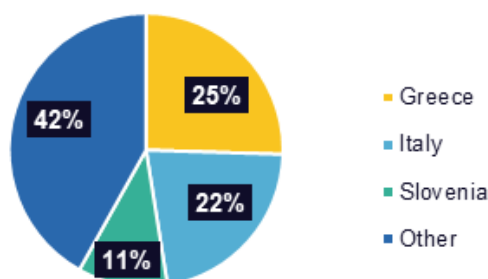
²⁰ The results presented come from the analysis of the different channels provided in the interim report of Task 1 '*Analysing the current status quo in terms of digital communication strategy*'.

²¹ Data collected based on the current database used for newsletters on the basis of the domain name of the various e-mails, deleting duplicate domain names.

Graph 34 - Proportion of newsletter recipients per country in 2020.



Graph 35 - Proportion of newsletter openers per country in 2020.



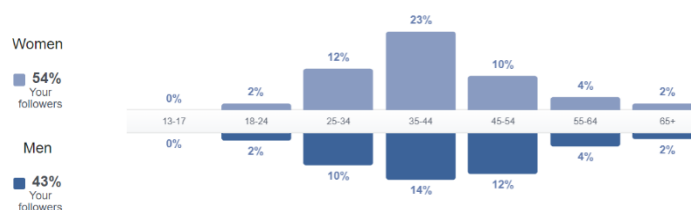
In terms of engagement, analysing the number of people who opened the newsletters, we observed the majority of the readers were from Greece (25%) and Italy (22%), followed by Slovenia (11%), which is of course in line with the repartition of the subscribers.

Moving on to **EUSAIR social media**, a first general observation in terms of audience is that the three social media platforms used by EUSAIR (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) mainly tackle the events of the macroregional strategy, which results in an audience mainly composed of institutional stakeholders and organisations englobed by EUSAIR governance structures.

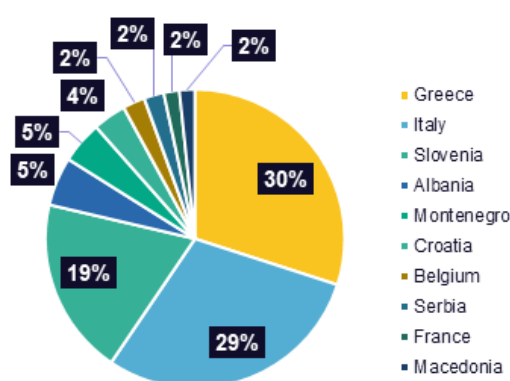
Looking at **Facebook**, the page counted 455 followers at the end of 2020.

The analysis of the audience showed that the most important group in the audience was constituted of women from 35 to 44 years old (23% of the followers), and 35-44 years old in general (37%, men and women together). Overall, the audience can be considered young and is part of the working population, with the second- and third-biggest groups representing the 25-34 and 45-54 age categories, each accounting for 22% of Facebook followers.

Graph 36 - Age and gender of the followers of EUSAIR Facebook page.



Graph 37 - Repartition of EUSAIR Facebook page followers according to their country.



In terms of location, the three most-represented countries are Greece (30% of followers), Italy (29%) and Slovenia (19%). We therefore note the same trend as for the newsletter, in terms of countries reached.

In order to map the EUSAIR Facebook Community, we analysed who is interacting with EUSAIR on Facebook, who mentions the Facebook page, and who shares EUSAIR posts the most. The conclusion is that businesses and organisations that are directly linked to one of EUSAIR's pillars (tourism, transport, sea...) and EU organisations that already know EUSAIR are the most likely to talk about the macroregional strategy. Facebook is thus a tool that targets institutional partners rather than potential local partners of the Adriatic-Ionian region.

Although encompassing a very limited audience, the page shows very good engagement rates, with an engagement rate of 8.7%, knowing that the average engagement rate on Facebook is 0.18%²². This means that the current followers of EUSAIR Facebook page are active and engage with the posts.

Twitter is the EUSAIR social media platform with the largest audience, counting 1130 followers. Through the analysis of EUSAIR's top followers and of the mentions of EUSAIR through hashtags and tags, it appears that the main audience on Twitter is composed of local, regional and European organisations. Next to these organisations, some private accounts are also notable, and are in general owned by people who work in the above-mentioned organisations (EUSAIR governance structures or other regional and EU bodies). This allows us to conclude that EUSAIR Twitter account reaches this same ecosystem as on Facebook, i.e., public institutions and their members, while private organisations (SMEs, associations, or professional organisations) are hardly represented as social media stakeholders.

Just like on Facebook, the engagement statistics on Twitter show a good performance: since the average engagement rate across all industries for 2020 is 0.045%²³, EUSAIR Twitter page's engagement rate of 1.45% in 2020 is good.

Finally, the last communication tool used by EUSAIR is **YouTube**. At the end of 2020, the YouTube channel 'EUSAIR Facility Point' counted 39 subscribers. This number is low, but it must be noted that most of EUSAIR YouTube videos viewers are non-subscribers (98.4%). This shows that the YouTube audience is one of occasional viewers rather than recurring or loyal ones. When it comes to the qualitative characteristics of the audience, we see that most of the viewers (98%) are from Slovenia and that this audience is particularly

²² Hootsuite, *47 Facebook Stats That Matter to Marketers in 2021*, blog article, 11/01/2021, [link](#).

²³ RivallQ, *2020 Social Media Industry Benchmark Report*, [link](#).

young, as 60% of the viewer total is part of the 18-34 years old age group, followed by 35-44 years old, who account for 20% of the viewers. There are no viewers older than 55.

Overall, the qualitative and quantitative analyses of EUSAIR communication tools (website, newsletter and social media) allow us to draw one general conclusion: currently, **EUSAIR is mainly and almost exclusively visible among institutional stakeholders, i.e., EU institutions and EUSAIR governance structures**. Indeed, the analysis of these different tools show that the audience reached is generally the same across all communication tools. Although social media allows to reach more 'external' audiences, it remains very institutional. Each tool reaches a different number of people, with the largest social media audience being on Twitter; the large database for newsletter distribution should be noted also.

2.2. An event database that reaches a larger variety of stakeholders

As identified in the communication audit, communication around events is key for EUSAIR. To determine the audiences targeted by the macroregional strategy more precisely, an analysis of the contacts invited to the various EUSAIR events was undertaken.

As explained in a previous section, this database includes all organisations, public and private authorities companies or NGOs that were once contacted for one or more EUSAIR events throughout the past years.

In order to paint a picture of the audience that EUSAIR wants to reach through its communication - and more specifically for its events - we analysed the contact database, first as a whole, then by country.

2.2.1. EUSAIR global database: national authorities in the lead

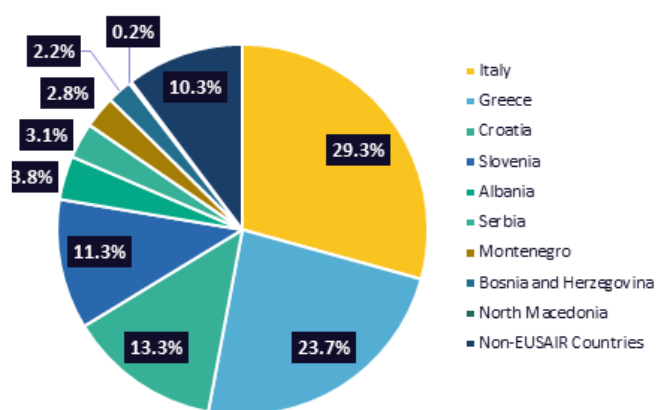
EUSAIR's current events database contains 2311 individual contacts, which is less than the database used for the newsletter (4284 contacts)²⁴.

These contacts include people from EUSAIR member countries as well as from other European and non-European countries: **90% of the contacts are from inside and 10% from outside EUSAIR countries.**

If we look at the countries of the contacts in the database, we see that **Italy rules the pack, with 677 contacts, i.e. 29% of the total number of contacts**, followed by Greece (547 contacts, 23.7%), Croatia (308, 13.3%) and Slovenia (262, 11.3%), while the rest of the countries are poorly represented: Albania (88), Serbia (72), Montenegro (65), Bosnia and Herzegovina (50) and North Macedonia, the last country to join EUSAIR (4 contacts only).

Graph 38 - Distribution of contacts by country (all database).

²⁴ As the database used for the newsletter only contains e-mail addresses, without name or other classification, only the analysis provided in the previous point was possible for this database. The database used for the events was more complete, allowing a much more detailed analysis.

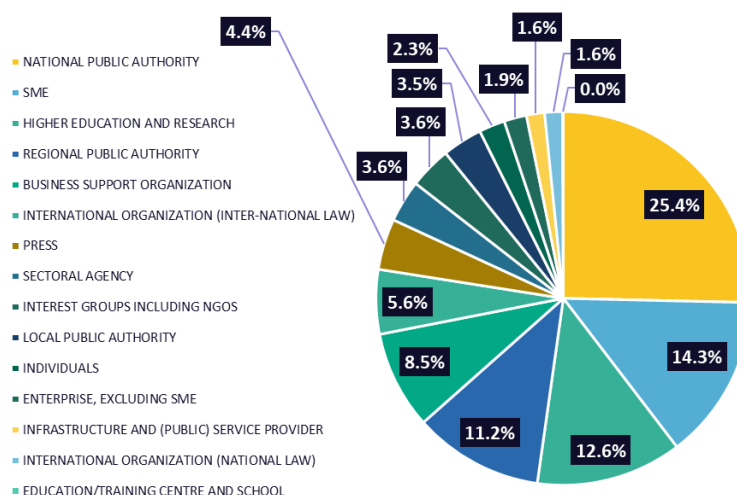


Now analysing the type of contact present in the database, we notice **a predominance of national public authorities** (25.4%), followed by SMEs (14.3%), higher education and research bodies (12.6%), regional public authorities (11.2%) and business support organisations (8.5%).

This first overview testifies of a large variety of stakeholders, with public bodies as well as private actors. Although this variety is positive, we can still observe some surprising figures, with a rather small proportion of international organisations (5.6%), press members (4.4%) or interest groups such as NGOs (3.6%).

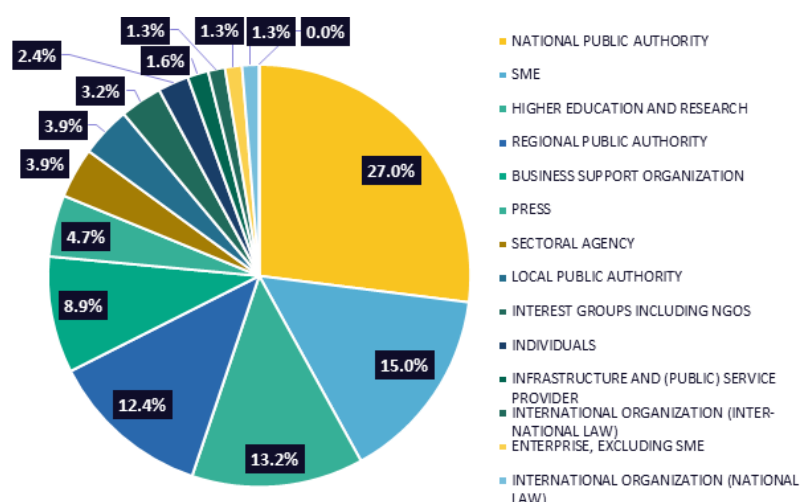
Another important point to underline is that the category “education, training centres and schools” has only 1 contact in the database, which is, moreover, not located in an EUSAIR country. A surprising data in comparison with the results of the survey among EUSAIR Facility Point members, according to whom this audience was one of the most frequently contacted.

Graph 39 - Distribution of contacts by type of organisation (all countries).



If we only analyse the distribution of stakeholders for the EUSAIR countries (thus excluding countries outside the macroregional strategy) the figures are more or less similar.

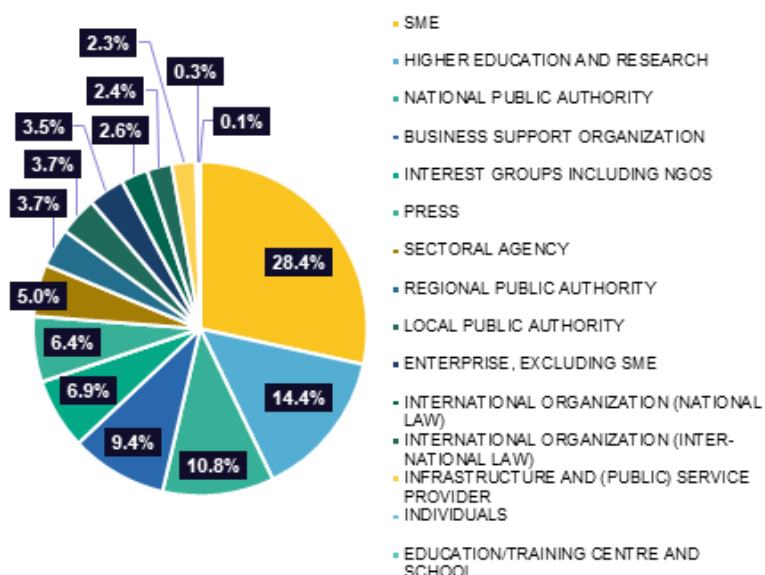
Graph 40 - Distribution of contacts by type of organisation (EUSAIR countries).



Taking a closer look at the organisations, and removing those with more than one contact in the database, we notice that the 2300+ contacts actually represent **992 different organisations**.

Consequently, in terms of unique organisations, we see that the most represented organisations are SMEs, followed by higher education and research institutions, national public authorities and business support organisations. **As a result, national and regional public authorities lose a few places in the ranking, while SMEs remain at the top of the ranking.**

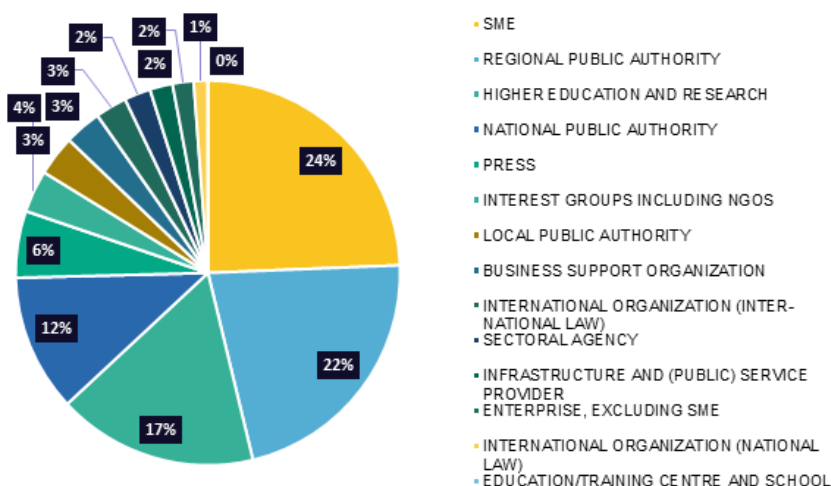
Graph 41 - Distribution by type of organisation (removing duplicate organisations).



2.2.2. Italy

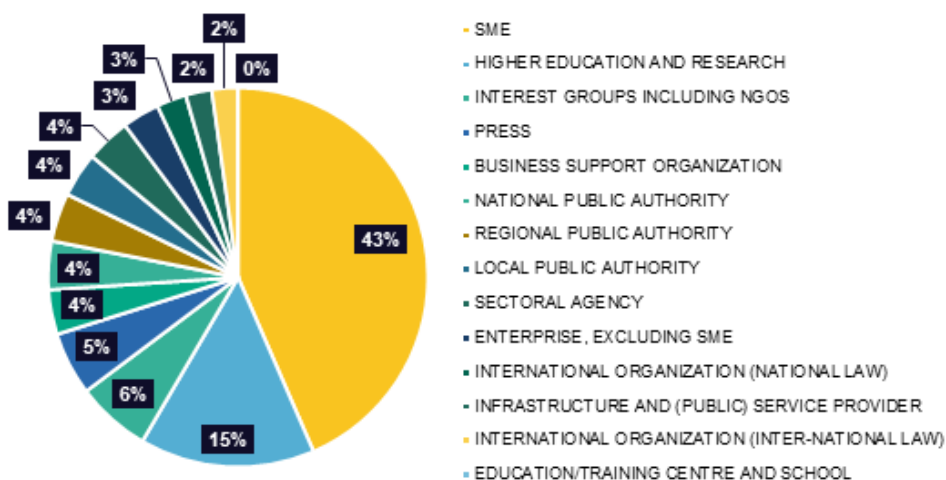
In the analysis of **Italy's 677 contacts**, we see that these are mostly constituted of SMEs (24%), followed by regional public authorities (22%) and higher education and research bodies (17%).

Graph 42 - Repartition of EUSAIR Italian contacts according to their sector.



If we analyse unique organisations (by removing duplicate organisations), SMEs are still leading but in bigger proportions (43%), followed by higher education and research bodies (15%) and interest groups (6%).

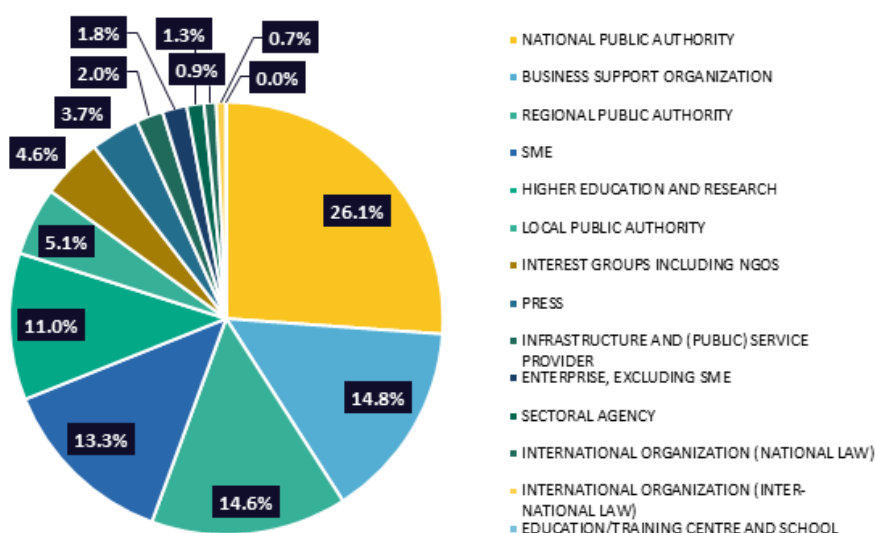
Graph 43 - Repartition of EUSAIR Italian contacts according to their sector (removing duplicate organisations).



2.2.3. Greece

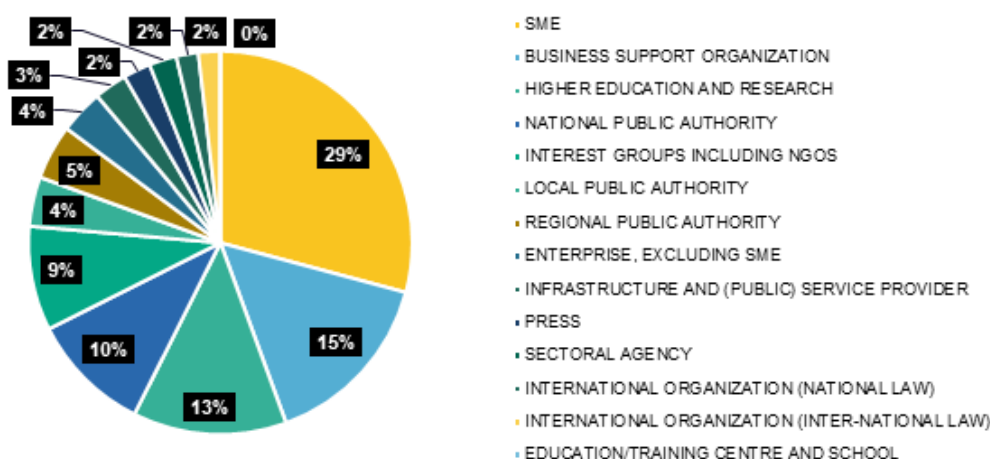
Greece counts 547 contacts, the biggest part of them being national public authorities (26.1%), followed by business support organisations (14.8%) and regional public authorities (14.6%):

Graph 44- Repartition of EUSAIR Greek contacts according to their sector.



Taking a closer look at the repartition of unique organisations, we see that SMEs take the first place (29%), followed by business support organisations (15%) and higher education and research bodies (13%), while national public authorities come fourth.

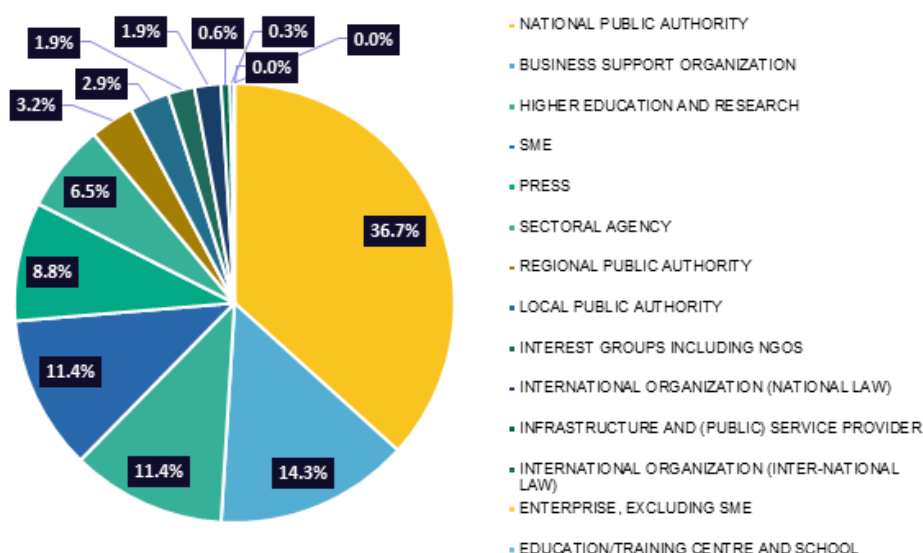
Graph 45 - Repartition of EUSAIR Greek contacts according to their sector (removing duplicate organisations).



2.2.4. Croatia

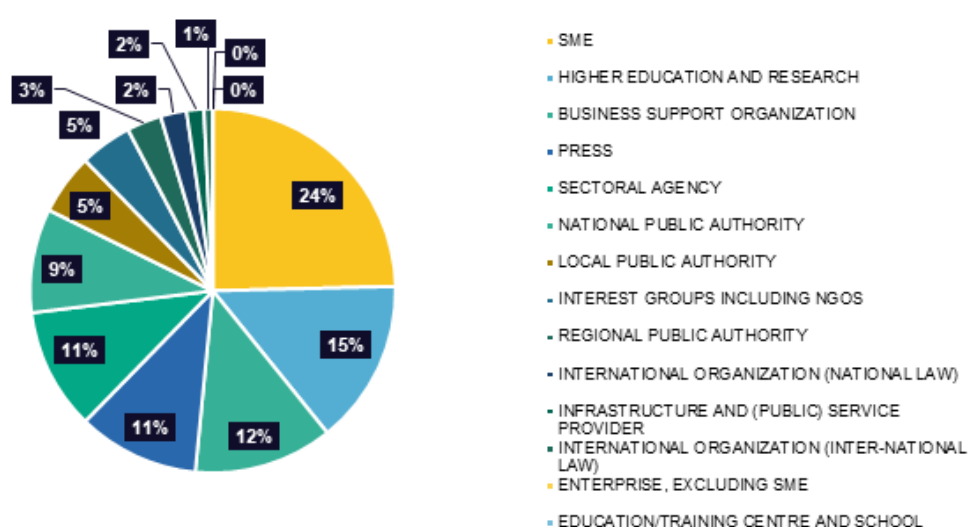
Croatia has 308 contacts, with a majority of national public authority addresses (36.7%), followed by business support organisations (14.3%) and higher education and research bodies (11.4%).

Graph 46 - Repartition of EUSAIR Croatian contacts according to their sector.



In terms of unique organisations, SMEs are once again the biggest part of the database (24%), followed by higher education and research institutions (15%) and business support organisations (12%).

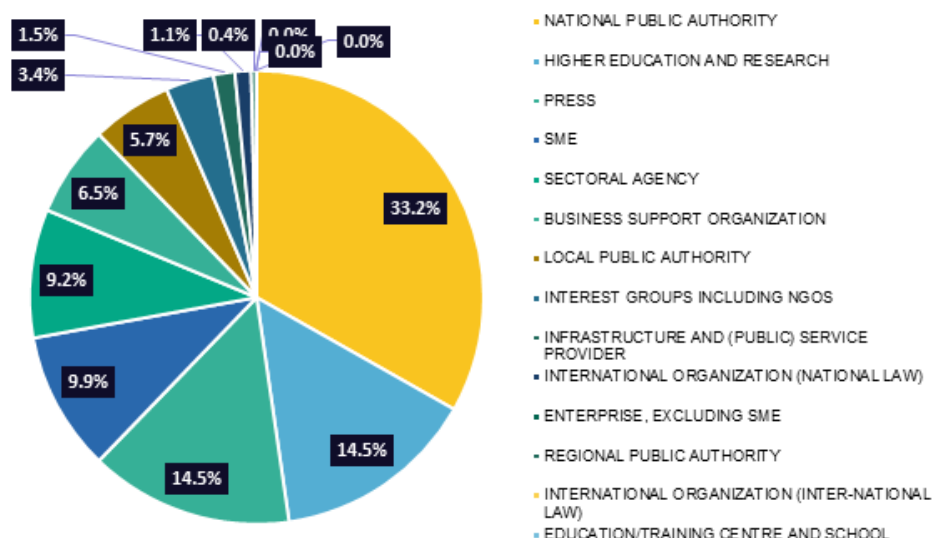
Graph 47 - Repartition of EUSAIR Croatian contacts according to their sector (removing duplicate organisations)



2.2.5. Slovenia

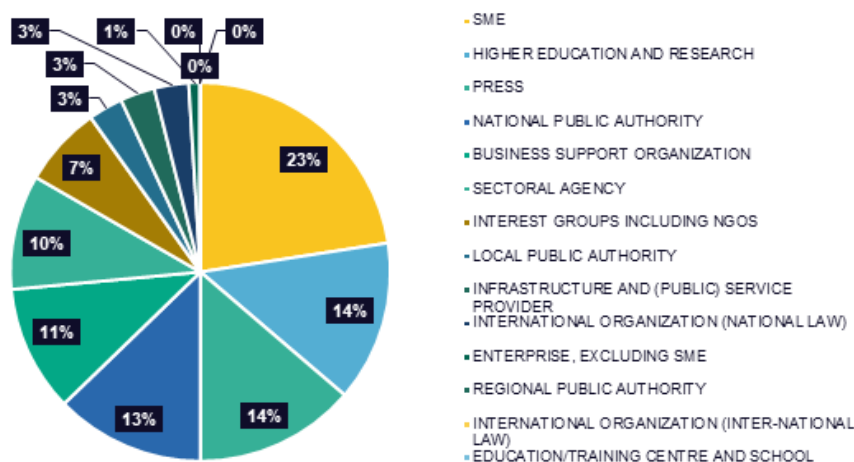
Regarding **Slovenia**, **262 contacts** are counted: 33.2% of whom from national public authorities, followed by higher education and research bodies (14.5%) and the press (14.5%):

Graph 48 - Repartition of EUSAIR Slovenian contacts according to their sector.



Figures are quite different if we analyse unique organisations, with a bigger proportion of SMEs (23%), followed by higher education and research institutions and the press.

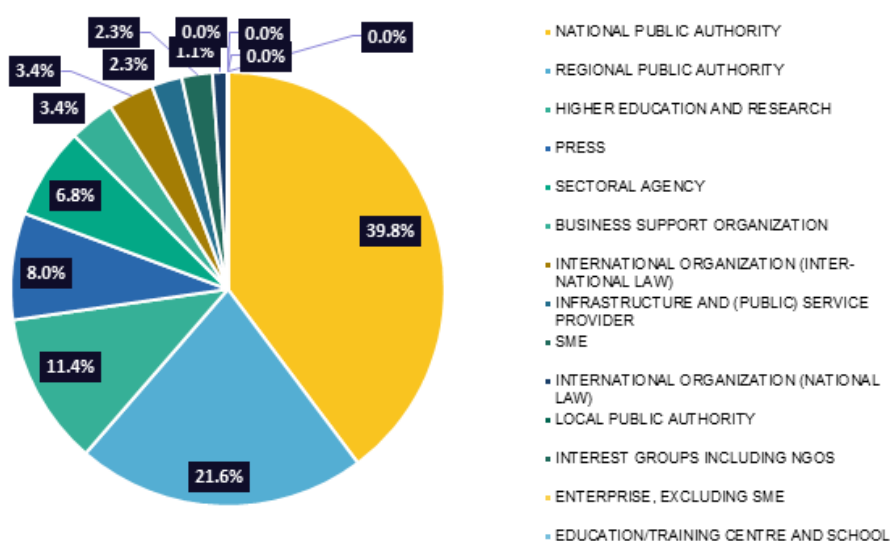
Graph 49 - Repartition of EUSAIR Slovenian contacts according to their sector (removing duplicate organisations).



2.2.6. Albania

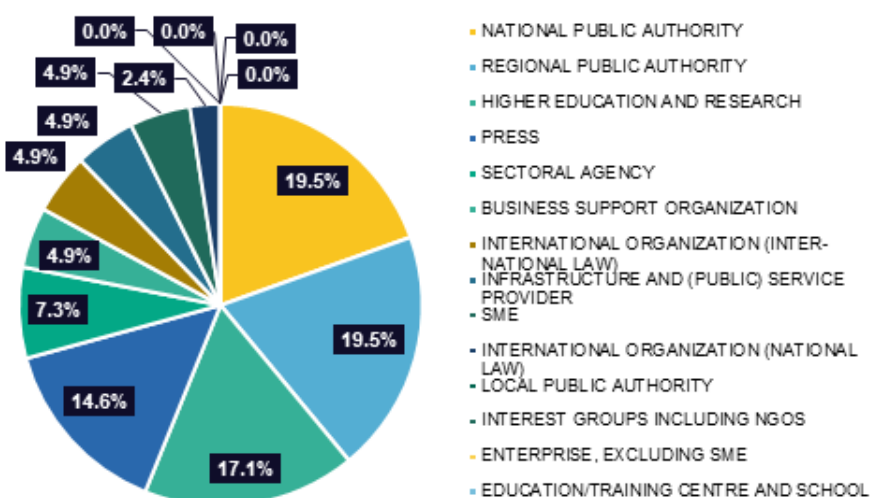
Albania counts 88 contacts, largely comprised of national public authorities (39.8%), followed by regional public authorities (21.6%) and higher education and research bodies (11.4%):

Graph 50 - Repartition of EUSAIR Albanian contacts according to their sector.



The ranking remains similar when we take a look at unique organisations, although figures slightly differ, as we can observe in the following graph:

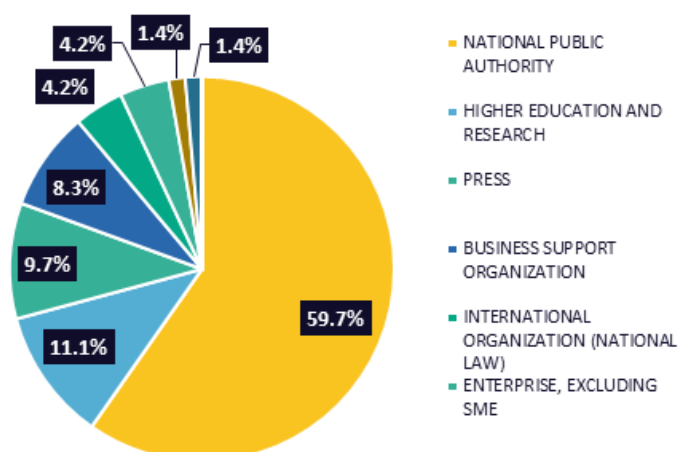
Graph 51 - Repartition of EUSAIR Albanian contacts according to their sector (removing duplicate organisations).



2.2.7. Serbia

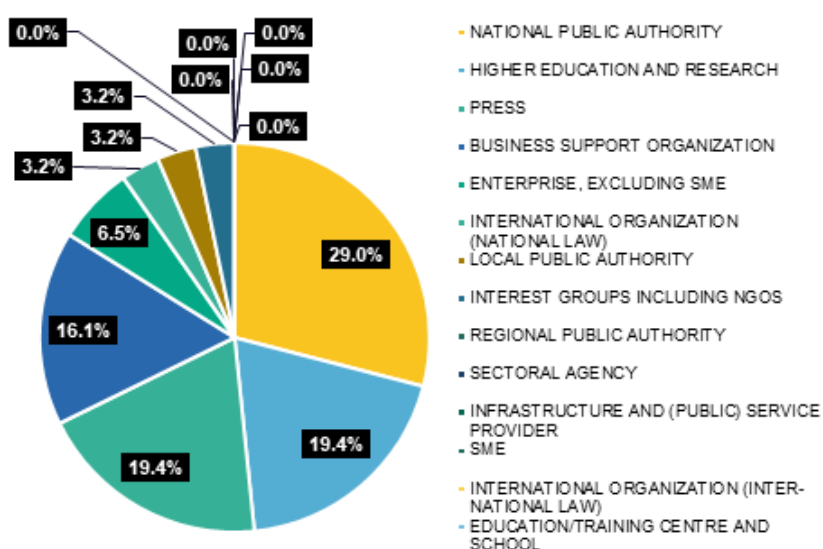
When it comes to **Serbia**, **72 contacts** are found, 59.7% of whom are national public authorities (6 out of 10!), 11.1% higher education and research bodies and 9.7% press members:

Graph 52 - Repartition of EUSAIR Serbian contacts according to their sector.



This order remains similar when we analyse unique organisations, but the exact percentages differ, national public authorities becoming less important.

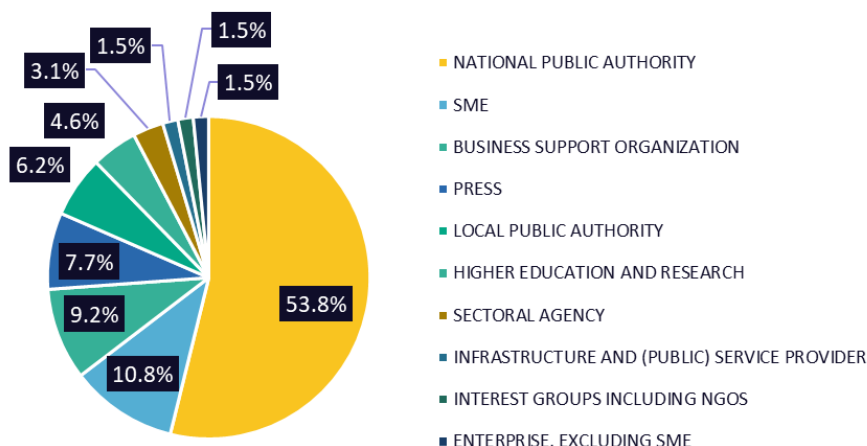
Graph 53 - Repartition of EUSAIR Serbian contacts according to their sector (removing duplicate organisations).



2.2.8. Montenegro

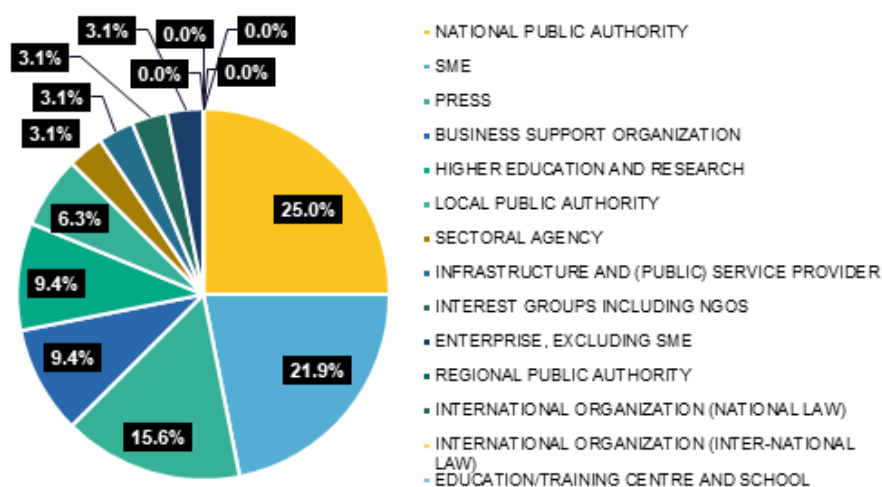
Montenegro counts 65 contacts, with 53.8% of national public authorities, 10.8% of SMEs and 9.2% of business support organisations:

Graph 54 - Repartition of EUSAIR Montenegrin contacts according to their sector.



In terms of unique organisations, national public authorities remain the majority (25%), followed by SMEs (21.9%) and press (15.6%).

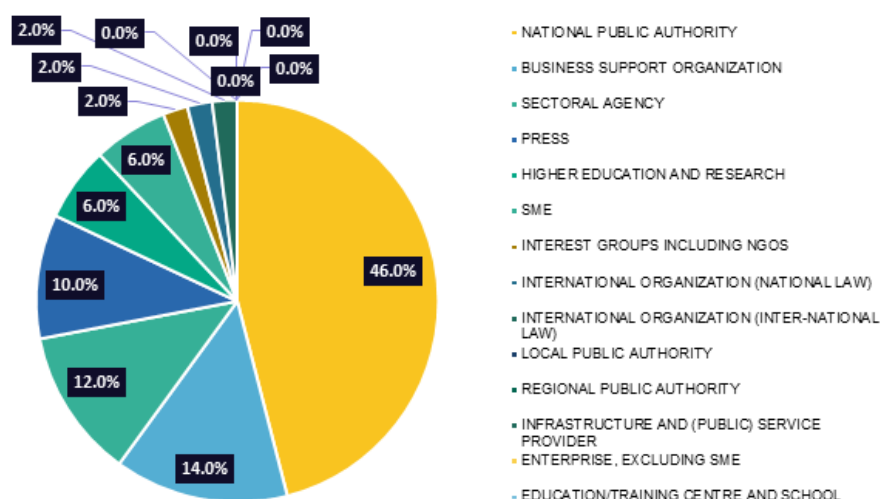
Graph 55 - Repartition of EUSAIR Montenegrin contacts according to their sector (removing duplicate organisations).



2.2.9. Bosnia and Herzegovina

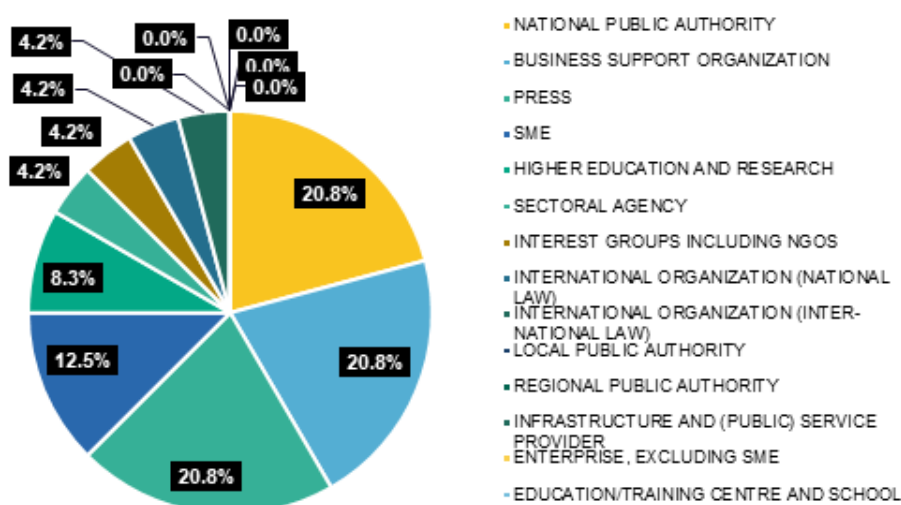
Bosnia and Herzegovina has 50 contacts, mostly national public authorities (46%), followed by business support organisations (14%) and sectoral agencies (12%).

Graph 56 - Repartition of EUSAIR Bosnian events contacts according to their sector.



Figures slightly differ when we remove duplicate organisations, as national public authorities, business support organisations and the press each account for 20.8%.

Graph 57 - Repartition of EUSAIR Bosnian events contacts according to their sector (removing duplicate organisations).

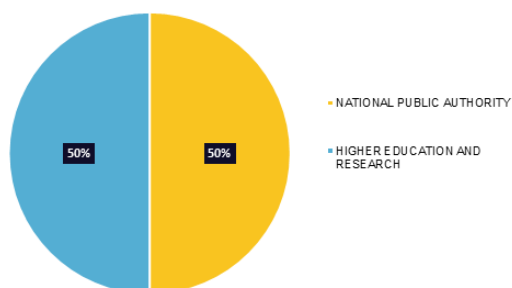


2.2.10. North Macedonia

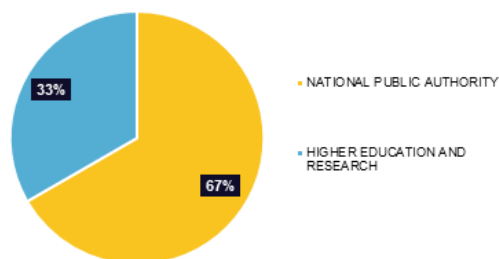
Finally, **North Macedonia** has a very low number of contacts, i.e. only four, 2 of whom are national public authorities and the other 2 higher education and research bodies. This low number is probably due to the fact that North Macedonia was the last country to enter EUSAIR.

If we remove duplicate organisations, we see that national public authorities become the most important type of organisations for North Macedonia. However, it is to be noted that the number of contacts is so small that it is difficult to draw conclusions for North Macedonia.

Graph 58 - Repartition of EUSAIR North Macedonian contacts according to their sector.



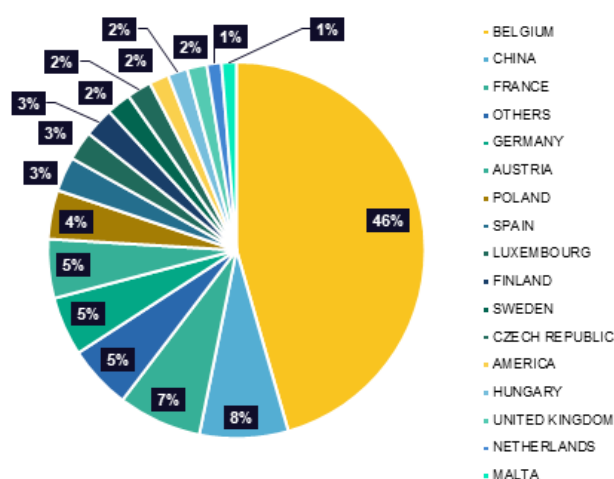
Graph 59 - Repartition of EUSAIR North Macedonian contacts according to their sector (removing duplicate organisations).



2.2.11. Non-EUSAIR countries

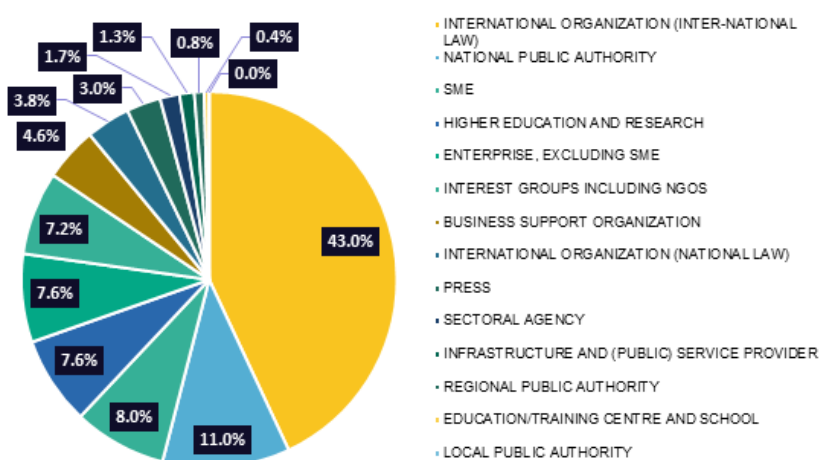
Finally, 237 contacts were from other countries (non EUSAIR countries). The following chart shows which countries are represented and the type of contacts:

Graph 60 - Repartition of EUSAIR other contacts according to their country.



In terms of countries, we see that the top non-EUSAIR country is Belgium, which is expected as it is the place of most European institutions. China comes second with 8% (or 18 contact names) in the EUSAIR database. When taking a closer look at China's contacts, we see that most of the contacts are travel services organisations. Other countries that are part of EUSAIR events database are France (7%), Germany (5%), Austria (5%), Poland (4%), followed by other countries that are less represented.

Graph 61 - Repartition of EUSAIR other contacts according to their sector.



When analysing the type of organisations of non-EUSAIR country contacts, we see that 43% are international organisations, which makes sense as a large proportion of them are located in Belgium. National public authorities come second (11%), followed by SMEs (8%).

2.2.12. An unequal representation of countries

The analysis of the database per country allows us to draw various conclusions. The first one is that there is **an irregularity in the number of contacts per country**, as stated before. While Italy counts 677 contacts in EUSAIR database, North Macedonia has only 4. If the number of contacts can of course be linked to the size of the country, these figures remain highly unproportional.

Another conclusion is the fact that **in 8 countries out of 9, national public authorities are the most represented type of contact in terms of total number**. The only exception is Italy, in which SMEs are the most represented (24%). In all countries, the **least represented type of contacts is education/training centres and schools**. However, it must be noted that higher education and research institutions are generally well-represented.

The analysis was also conducted **in terms of unique organisations** by removing duplicate organisations, which is also important to take into account. Results are quite different from those of the total number of contacts, as we notice that **SMEs become the most represented organisations (28.4%)**, followed by higher education/ research institutions (14.4%) and national public authorities (10.8%).

In the analysis of unique organisations, it must also be noted that countries that are most represented in the database (Italy, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia) are responsible for these results, with SMEs being the most represented in terms of unique organisations for those countries, while less represented countries all have national public authorities as most represented unique organisations.

2.3. Conclusion: challenges to go 'local'

When it comes to the current structure of stakeholders on EUSAIR communication tools, we have observed a common institutional ecosystem for all communication tools, i.e., the website, newsletters, and social media.

However, it is important to stress that reaching different categories of stakeholders is equally as essential, and maybe even more essential for EUSAIR in order to fulfil its mission of “connecting the institutions with the people”. Therefore, reaching local and regional actors should be just as important but seems challenging for EUSAIR.

Indeed, online, the general public and local actors do not seem to be targeted in priority, while social media for example could be a great way of communicating with this audience and expanding the organisation's reach, understanding and impact.

Although the EUSAIR database linked to the events highlights a wider range of audiences, especially SMEs and higher education and research centres, it is still necessary for the contacts made via this database to be fruitful. However, as explained above, EUSAIR does not seem to have achieved its objectives in terms of reaching audiences such as SMEs, education/ training centres / schools, business support organisations or local public authorities.

This analysis also showed that some categories are still lacking representation, such as international organisations, and above all, that some EUSAIR countries are more represented than others (mainly Greece, Italy, Slovenia and Croatia), while other countries (mainly non-EU countries) are underrepresented.

This confirms the trend observed on EUSAIR communication tools, according to which EUSAIR communication, although aiming to speak as one, currently reaches some countries more than others.

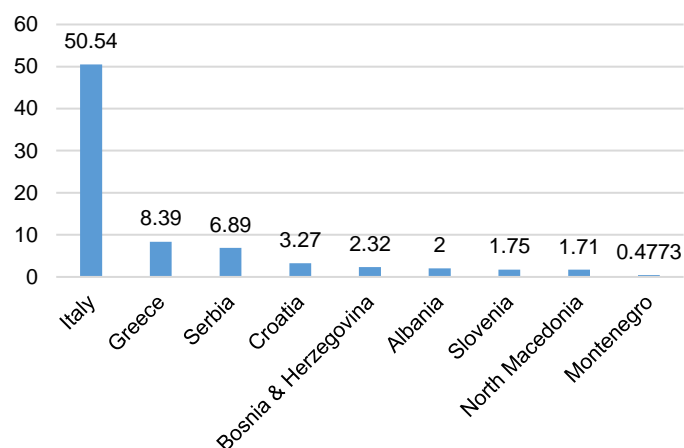
3. Digital needs and behaviours of the potential stakeholders and partners

3.1. Internet users: disparities between smartphone and desktop

Is the population of the Adriatic-Ionian region present online? The analysis below, based on the latest DataReportal report²⁵, will highlight the most recent figures related to the use of the Internet in the 9 EUSAIR member countries.

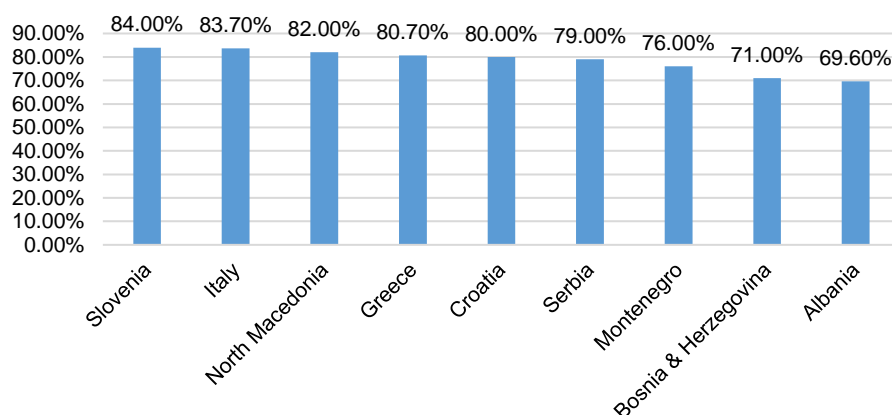
Unsurprisingly, the trends are in line with the number of inhabitants per country, with the most populous countries having the highest number of internet users, i.e., Italy, Greece and Serbia. However, if we consider the **proportion of the population using the Internet**, we can notice that **the Slovenian population is the most connected** (84% of the total population), followed by Italy (83.7%) and North Macedonia (82%). On average, **78% of EUSAIR's population is active on the Internet**.

Graph 62 - Population (in millions) using the Internet in EUSAIR countries.



Graph 63 - Percentage of population using the internet in EUSAIR countries.

²⁵ DataReportal, 2021 Digital Report, [link](#). Reports produced by Simon Kemp (Kepios), with the support of various partners, including Hootsuite and We Are Social.

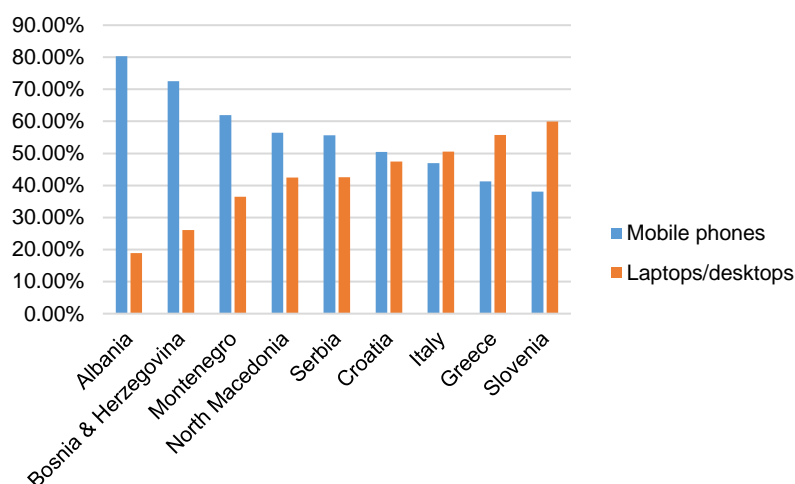


Using what device do people in the Adriatic-Ionian region connect to the Internet? On average, 56% of the total population of EUSAIR countries connected to the internet use their mobile phone to do so. Laptops/desktops hold the second spot with 42%, followed by tablets with a mere 2%.

If we analyse the trends in each country, we notice great differences in the use of devices. **While 80% of internet users connect via their phone in Albania, this number is just 38% in Slovenia, which favours laptops/desktops (60%).** For instance, while Slovenia, Greece and Italy prefer to connect via laptop or desktop, the other countries predominantly use their telephone.

This is a valuable piece of information for digital communication, which underlines the need to think about each tool, each communication for both smartphone and desktop formats, e.g., the newsletter.

Graph 64 - Share of web traffic by device in EUSAIR countries.



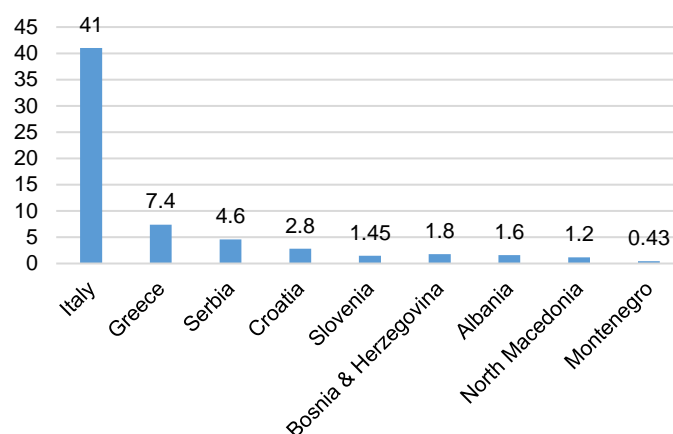
3.2. Use of social media: a winning quartet

Is the population of the Adriatic-Ionian region fond of social media? The analysis below, based on the latest Hootsuite report, will highlight the most recent figures related to the use of social media in the 9 EUSAIR member countries.

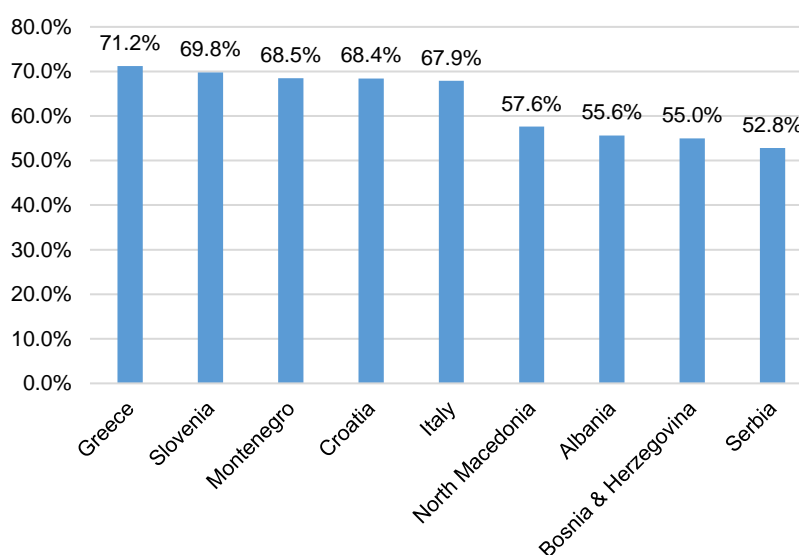
Counting all social media together, Italy is obviously the country with the most social media users, in terms of number of inhabitants, followed by Greece and Serbia. These data are in line with the population statistics of these countries, which are indeed the 3 most populated countries in EUSAIR. Slovenia, on the other hand, which has fewer inhabitants than Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and North Macedonia, counts more social media users than these countries.

If we consider the **proportion of the population present on social media**, we effectively notice that Greece and **Slovenia** are the two countries with the highest proportion of social media users. The other countries seem to be equally connected to social media: the total average population in EUSAIR countries present on social media being 63%. This confirms that social media are indispensable to reach a large population.

Graph 65 - Population (in million) present on social media in EUSAIR countries.



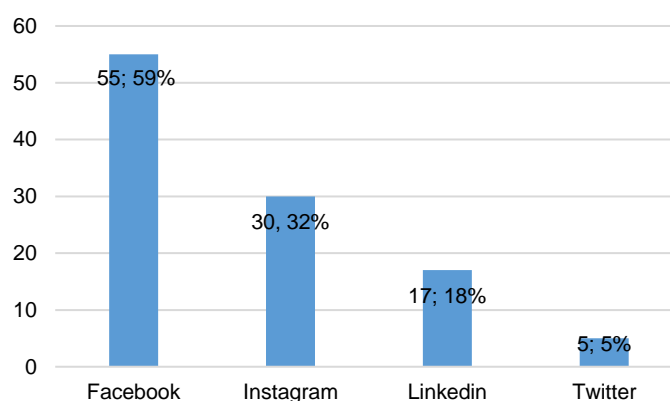
Graph 66 - Percentage of population present on social media in EUSAIR countries.



If social media is popular, what are the most used platforms in the Adriatic-Ionian region? To no one's surprise, the most widely used social media platforms in the Adriatic-Ionian region are, in order of number of users, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter.

For instance, 55 million people in the Adriatic-Ionian region (out of a total population of 94 million; i.e., 59% of the Adriatic-Ionian population) are present on Facebook, 30 million on Instagram (32% of the region population), 17 million on LinkedIn and 5 million on Twitter.

Graph 67 - Number of users per social media platform in EUSAIR countries, and percentage of the total EUSAIR population.



Across all EUSAIR member countries, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter form the top 4 most used social networks, **with the exception of Slovenia and Serbia, where Snapchat comes in third, before LinkedIn and Twitter**²⁶.

3.3. Facebook: the number 1, also in the Adriatic-Ionian region

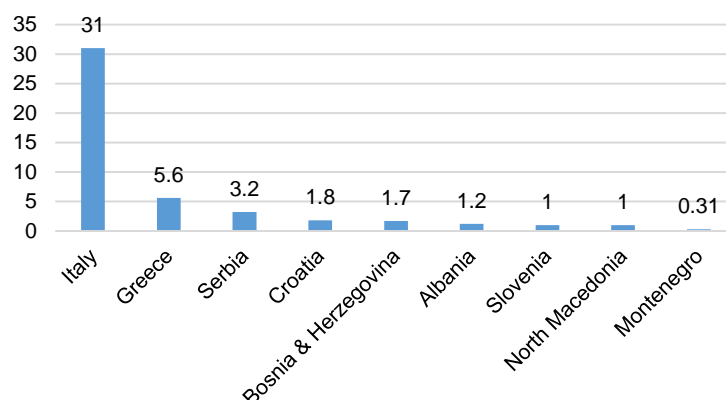
As number 1 social media in the Adriatic-Ionian region, Facebook has been analysed in depth via the tool [Facebook Audience Insights](#) in order to get more information on the behaviour of the region's populations. Indeed, around 60% of the EUSAIR population is present on Facebook, which makes it the most interesting platform to reach a wide audience.

If we look at the number of Facebook users in each country, we can see that Italy, Greece, and Serbia, the 3 most populated countries, are the most represented on Facebook.

²⁶ DataReportal, 2021 Digital Report, [link](#). Reports produced by Simon Kemp (Kepios), with the support of various partners, including Hootsuite and We Are Social.

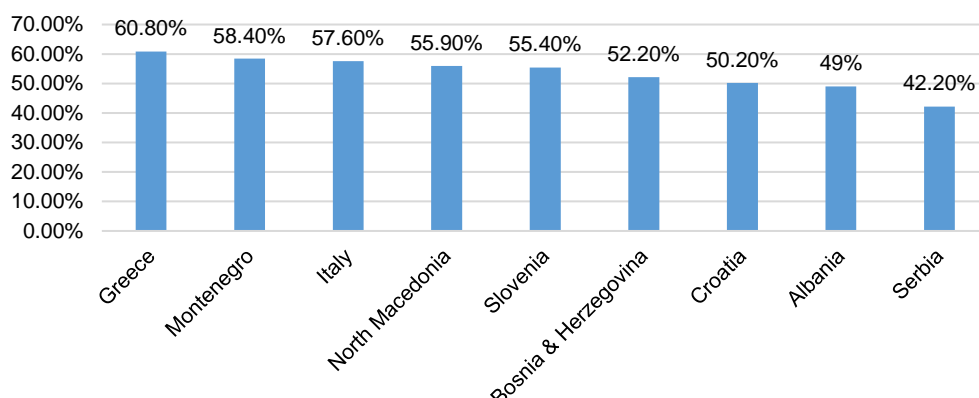
Therefore, **organically, it will be more likely to reach Italians, Greeks, and Serbs** on the social network.

Graph 68 - Population (in million) present on Facebook in EUSAIR countries.



In terms of percentage of the total population, **Montenegro is at the top of the ranking**, alongside Greece and Italy. With more users connected to Facebook throughout the country, it will be possible to reach a more diverse audience in Montenegro compared to Serbia, for example, where 42% of the population is on Facebook.

Graph 69 - Percentage of population present on Facebook in EUSAIR countries.

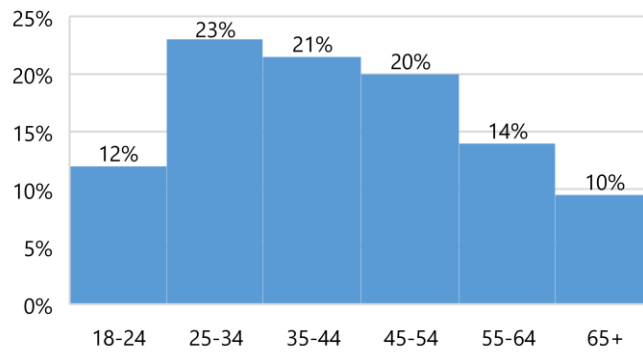


If we analyse the distribution of Facebook users in the region in terms of age and gender, we notice that Facebook is used equally by women (49%) and men (51%), but that certain age categories are more represented on the social media.

Concerning the age, the **most important age group are the 25-34 years old representing 23% of the Adriatic-Ionian audience on Facebook**. The age distribution of the Adriatic-Ionian audience on Facebook is quite evenly distributed among the groups, meaning it is possible to reach all age groups on this platform.

Compared to the total users on Facebook, we notice a slight divergence in terms of the ages of the audiences. Indeed, while in general, the Facebook audience is mainly made up of people aged 18-34 (55% of the total social network audience), the age category most represented on the social media in the Adriatic-Ionian region is that of 25-44-year-olds (44% of the total audience). **The audience in the Adriatic-Ionian region is thus older than the overall general Facebook audience.**

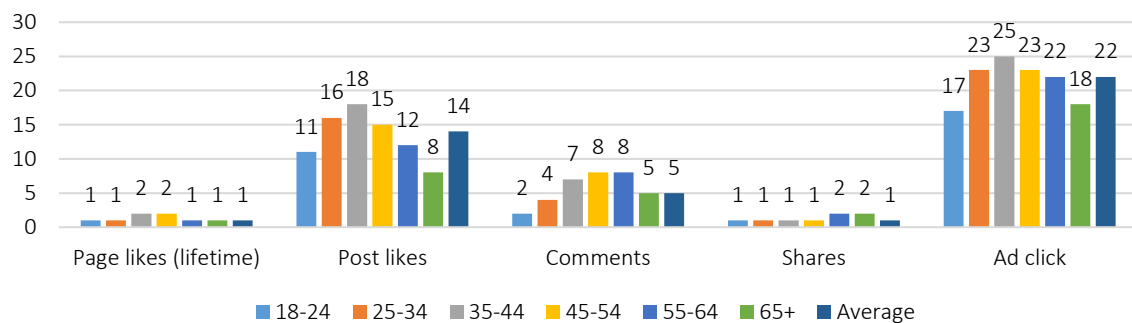
Graph 70 - Age distribution on Facebook in EUSAIR countries.



Moreover, again with regards to the age, the next graph represents the Facebook activity for each of these groups over a month. Such indicators are interesting as they allow for us to know who is more likely to display a certain behaviour on the EUSAIR page or posts or which age category to target according to a specific goal.

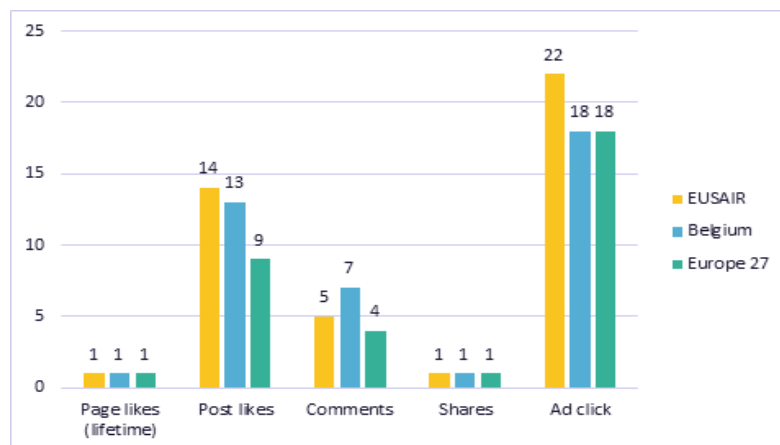
In accordance with the general trend on Facebook, we notice that the age categories 35-44 and 45-54 are the most active, especially with regards to reacting to advertisements and commenting on posts. 18–24-year-olds, the least numerous on the platform, are also the least active.

Graph 71 - Facebook activity per month based on the age group.



Compared to the 27 member countries of the European Union, as well as Belgium alone, we notice that EUSAIR member countries tend to react more in terms of post likes and ad clicks.

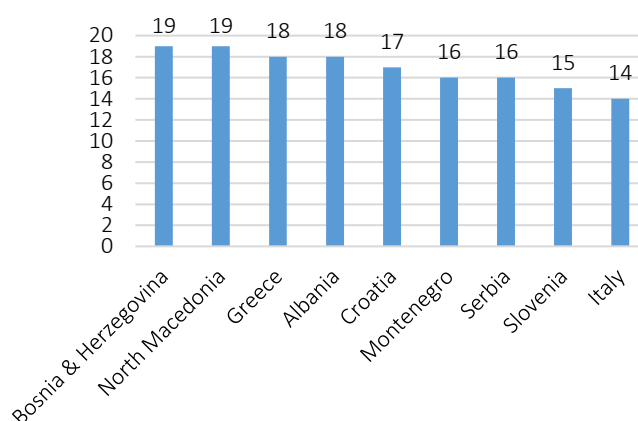
Graph 72 - Facebook activity per month, comparison between EUSAIR and other regions, or countries.



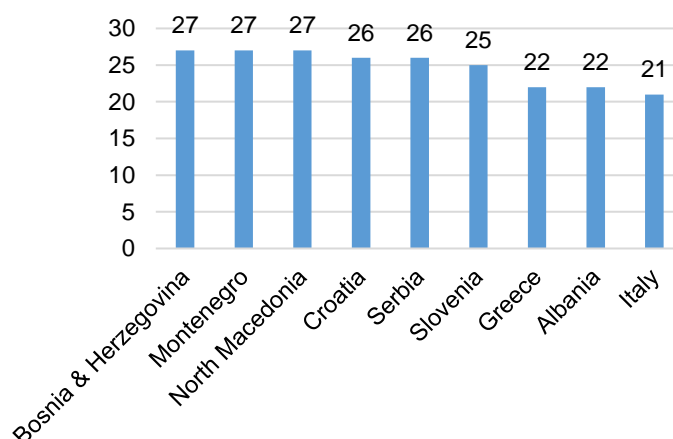
The following is an analysis of Facebook activity in the different EUSAIR member countries. Although the gaps in terms of average engagement - in terms of posts likes - are not large, we can see that some countries, such as **Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Greece tend to like the content more** than, for example, Italy.

The same trend emerges for engagement with Facebook ads. Once again, Italy is at the bottom of the rankings, with the fewest average interactions per month.

Graph 73 - Average number of posts likes per month per country.

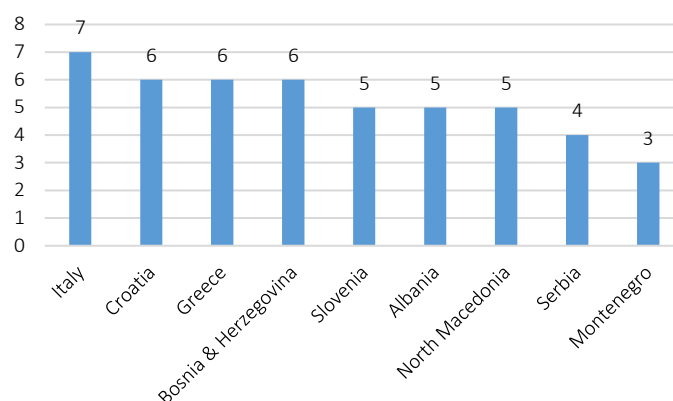


Graph 74 - Average number of ads clicks per month per country.



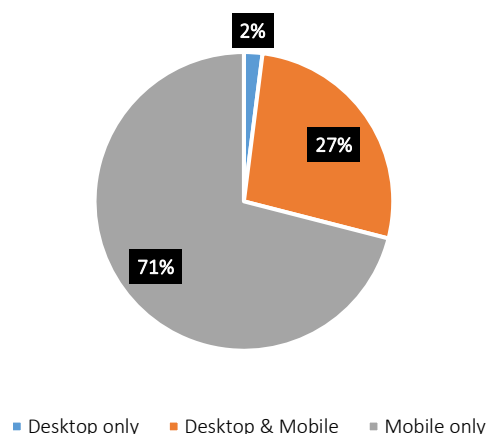
However, although Italy likes and clicks less than the other EUSAIR countries, it likes to raise its voice. The country is at the top of the ranking when it comes to commenting on Facebook posts. It is therefore likely that Italians, Croatians and Greeks make the most comments on EUSAIR publications.

Graph 75 - Average number of posts comments per month per country.



Last but not least, Facebook also reports that 98% of its users in the Adriatic-Ionian region access their account via mobile phones (mobile-only 71%; desktop + mobile 27%). This is valuable data in terms of your visual strategy on Facebook. For example, a video should be always posted with subtitles so that people understand the video when using their phone without sound in a public space, wherever they use their mobile phone.

Graph 76 - Devices used in EUSAIR country to access Facebook.



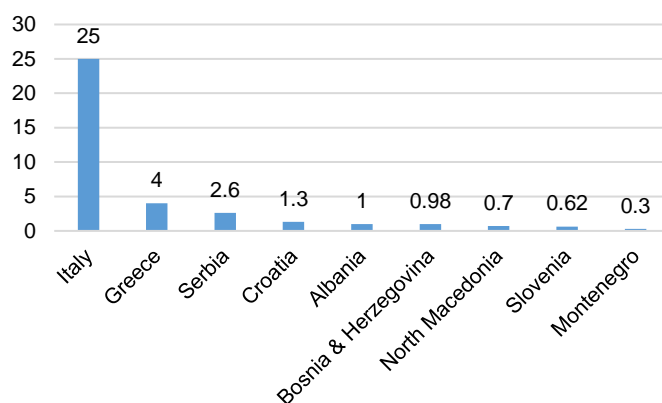
3.4. Instagram: a more youth-related audience

Second most used social media in EUSAIR countries, Instagram is currently not invested by the macroregional strategy. However, the younger audiences gathered in the platform are no less interesting for EUSAIR.

Please note that it is possible for any organisation with a Facebook page to create advertisements on Instagram, without necessarily having an account on that social media. A strategy to consider in case of sporadic campaigns aimed at a younger audience.

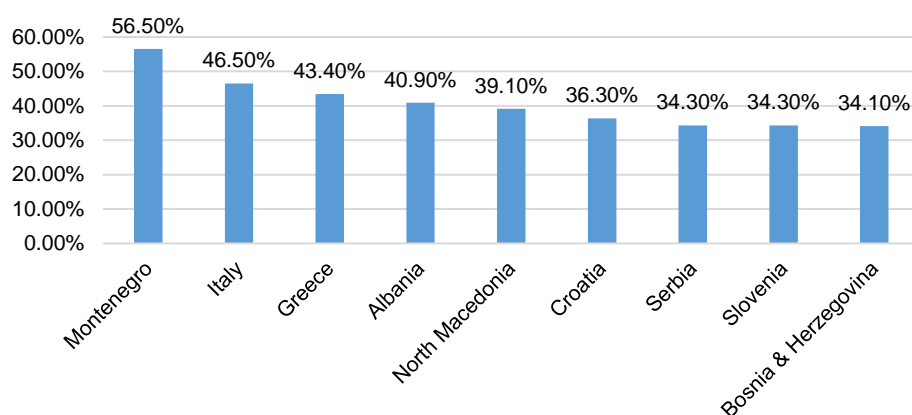
If we look at the number of Instagram users in each country, we can see that Italy, Greece, and Serbia, the 3 most populated countries, are the most represented on Instagram.

Graph 77 - Population (in million) present on Instagram in EUSAIR countries.



Considering the total population, **Montenegro is – once again, like with Facebook - at the top of the ranking**, alongside Italy and Greece. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia and Serbia, on the other hand, only around 30% of the population is on Instagram. However, as explained, Instagram remains the number 2 social media platform in all EUSAIR countries.

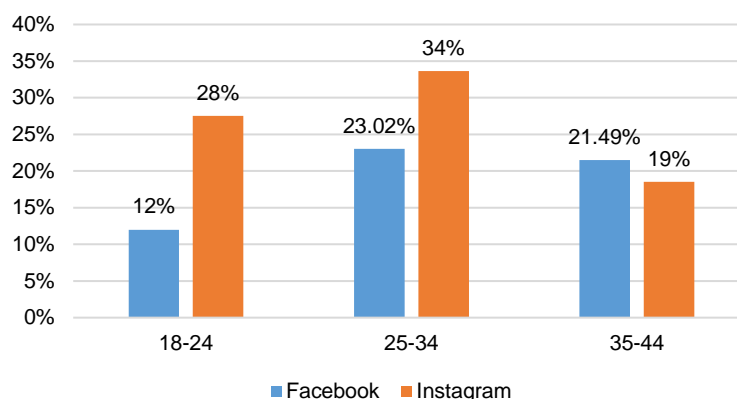
Graph 78 - Percentage of population present on Instagram in EUSAIR countries.



In terms of the age categories present on Instagram, in the EUSAIR countries, we observe that the audience is younger than the one on Facebook. Hence, **the 18-24 age category is more than twice as present on Instagram compared to Facebook (28% vs. 12%)**. While the 25-34 age group is also more represented on Instagram, the 35-44 age group is slightly smaller.

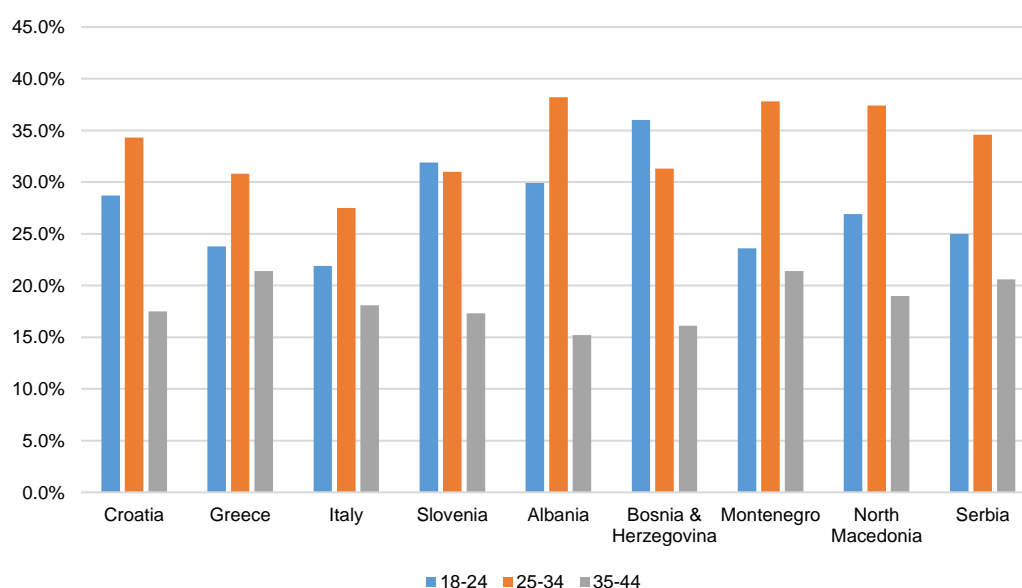
As such, 18-34 years old constitute the biggest part of the Instagram audience, i.e., 62% of the EUSAIR population is present on Instagram.

Graph 79 - Average percentage of population present on Instagram (compared to Facebook) in EUSAIR countries, per age category.



Although in the majority of EUSAIR countries the most represented age category is 25-34, there are some exceptions. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia have more 18-24-year-olds on Instagram.

Graph 80 - Average percentage of population present on Instagram per age category and per country.

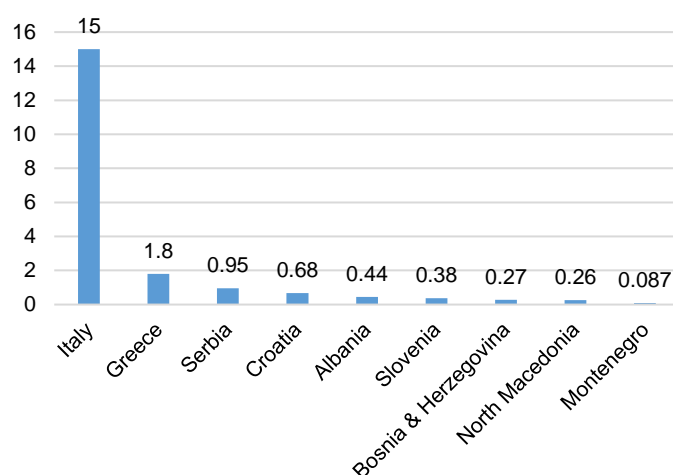


3.5. LinkedIn: a varying use from one country to another

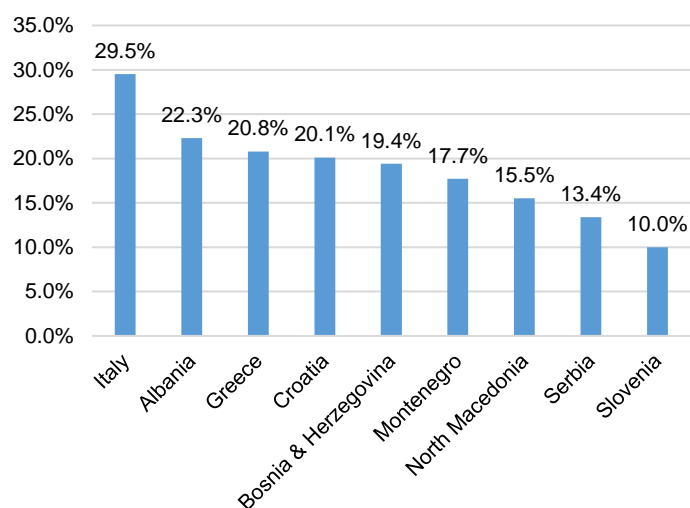
Contrary to the social media presented previously, Italy, which has the most users on LinkedIn, is also the **country with the highest percentage of users, with almost 30% of its population present on LinkedIn.**

Apart from Croatia, Greece and Albania, represented by more than 20% of their population on LinkedIn, the EUSAIR member countries are not all that present on this platform, with **Slovenia and Serbia closing the ranks with just 10% and 13% of the total population present on LinkedIn.** This is in line with the results highlighted above: these two countries are the only two where Snapchat ranks third among the most-used platforms, after Facebook and Instagram.

Graph 81 - Population (in millions) present on LinkedIn in EUSAIR countries.

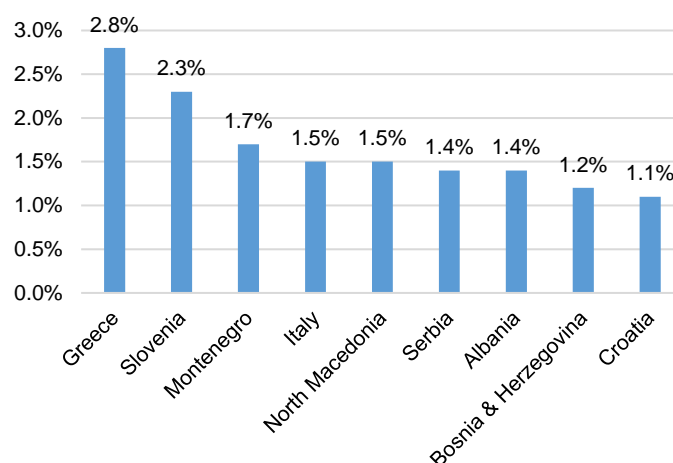


Graph 82 - Percentage of population present on LinkedIn in EUSAIR countries.



Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the countries at the bottom of the ranking, such as Slovenia, Montenegro and Northern Macedonia, show positive developments from year to year.

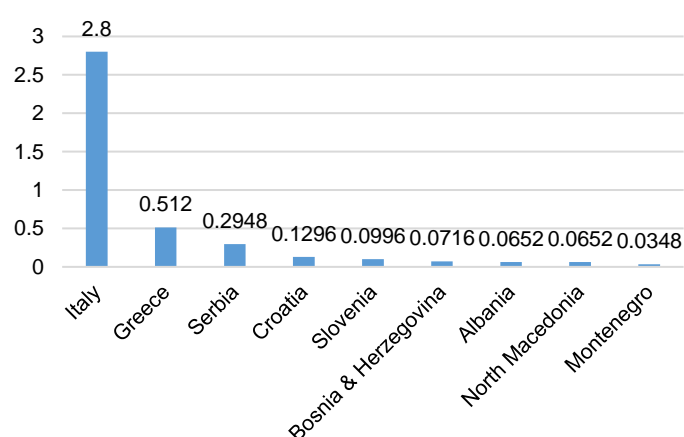
Graph 83 – Evolution of the total number of LinkedIn users per year, per country (from 2020 to 2021).



3.6. Twitter: a decline throughout the region

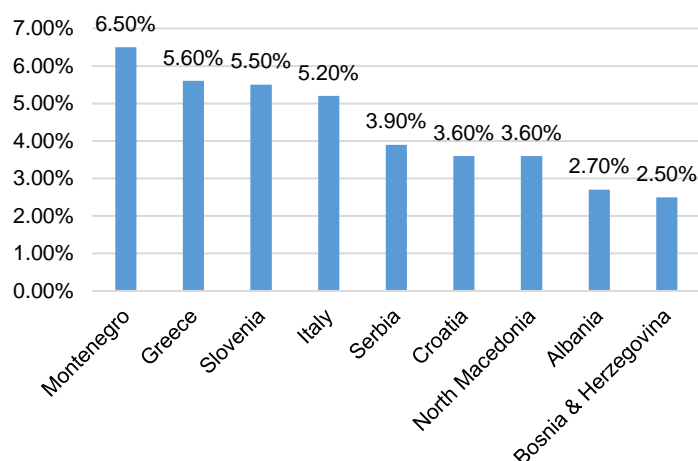
Being a more specific social media platform, with seemingly more complicated rules, Twitter has a smaller audience.

Graph 84 - Population (in million) present on Twitter in EUSAIR countries.



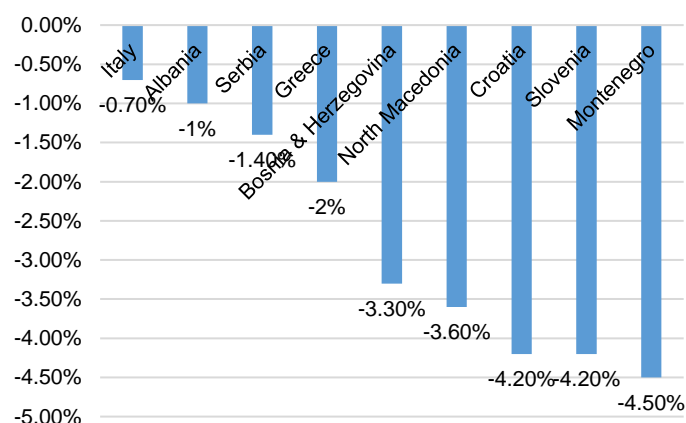
As was the case for Facebook and Instagram, Greece and Montenegro are the countries with the highest percentage of their population present on Twitter. Slovenia comes in 3rd position, ahead of Italy.

Graph 85 - Percentage of population present on Twitter in EUSAIR countries.



Moreover, unlike other platforms, of which the audience grows year after year, Twitter's audience is declining. This trend is clearly visible in all EUSAIR member countries.

Graph 86 - Evolution of the total number of Twitter users per year, per country (from 2020 to 2021).

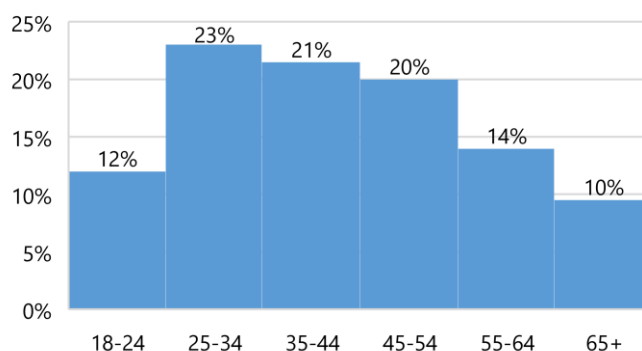


3.7. Reaching the Adriatic-Ionian Youth

In this section, a focus on youth will be made, in order to understand the behaviour of the younger generations in EUSAIR countries. Indeed, youth is an important part of the population that has not been specifically targeted in past EUSAIR communication.

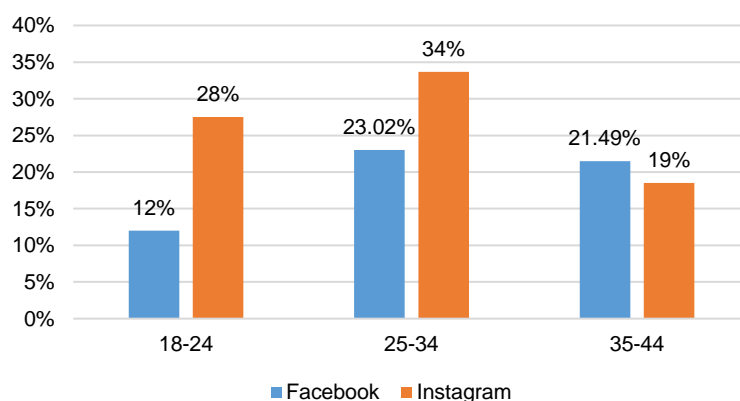
As far as **Facebook** is concerned, we observe that the audience in the Adriatic-Ionian region is slightly older than the overall Facebook audience, with a majority of 25-44 year-olds (44% of the total audience). With 18–24-year-olds making up for only 12% of Facebook audience in the region, it is not the most recommended platform to reach youth in EUSAIR countries.

Graph 87 - Age distribution on Facebook in EUSAIR countries.



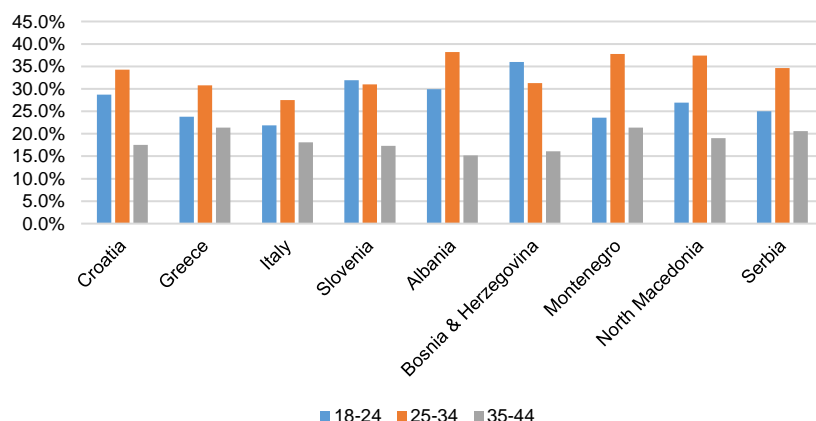
Instagram, however, generates a lot of interest among young people in the region, with its audience being younger than on Facebook. Indeed, the presence of 18-24-year-olds on Instagram more than doubles their Facebook presence (28% vs. 12%). The 18-34 age group represents the biggest part of Instagram audience in the EUSAIR region, i.e., 62% of EUSAIR Instagram users, as we can see in the following chart:

Graph 88 - Average percentage of population present on Instagram (compared to Facebook) in EUSAIR countries, per age category.



The next chart also shows high percentages of youth presence on Instagram in EUSAIR countries. Although in the majority of EUSAIR countries the most represented age category is 25-34, there are some exceptions: Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia have more 18–24-year-olds on Instagram.

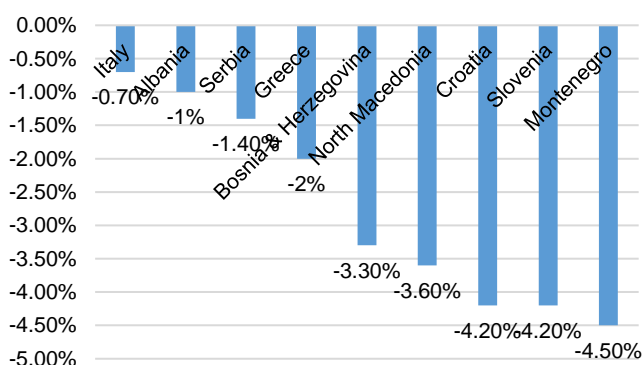
Graph 89 - Average percentage of population present on Instagram per age category and per country.



Instagram is thus a highly valuable platform when it comes to reaching youth. It is all the more important to note that it is possible to create advertisements and to build presence on Instagram without necessarily creating an account on the platform, thanks to the possibility of creating Instagram ads via a Facebook page.

Twitter is a platform that generally reaches large audiences of different age groups, including young audiences, with Twitter's biggest audience being 25 to 34 years old (28.9%), followed by 35 to 49 years old (28.2%)²⁷. However, it is not the most recommended platform to reach youth in the Adriatic-Ionian region, as we notice a clear declining trend in Twitter's audience in EUSAIR countries.

Graph 90 - Evolution of the total number of Twitter users per year, per country (from 2020 to 2021).



LinkedIn, due to its professional character, is not a platform targeting a young audience, and therefore more popular among older users, with 46-55 year olds most likely to use the site²⁸.

Finally, a recent global trend is the growing popularity of **TikTok** among young generations, with 41% of TikTok users worldwide belonging to the 16-24 age group. While TikTok was

²⁷ Hootsuite, 36 Twitter Stats All Marketers Need to Know in 2021, [link](#).

²⁸ Hootsuite, *Top LinkedIn Demographics That Matter to Social Media Marketers*, 11/30/2020, [link](#)

already part of popular social media before lockdown, growth has been in the triple digits as a result of the sanitary crisis²⁹. In Europe, TikTok recorded a daily growth of over 250% in 16-24 year-olds in 2020³⁰. TikTok is fast becoming part of the youth day-to-day lives. The success of this platform can be explained by its story-driven character, as telling a story is one of the most powerful ways of communicating with an audience.

TikTok consists of short videos packed with content, feeding directly into young people's desire to kill time and find entertaining content on social media³¹.

The social media aims to reach large audiences and is viral in nature, which explains the strong engagements observed among younger generations. Although precise data and figures are still lacking for most EUSAIR countries about TikTok, we can already say that Italy appears as the country in which TikTok is the most popular, with 9.8 million Italians using TikTok every month, and 30% of them are aged between 18 and 24. However, due to its mostly 'fun' character, it is not a platform recommended for institutional purposes, as it consists more of viral content, made of 'challenges' and 'real-life' short videos.

To sum up, the feeling is that youth has not been a priority target in EUSAIR communication until now, as the social media channels currently used by EUSAIR don't reach this part of the population. In an objective of reaching EUSAIR youth, it seems highly recommended to start using Instagram as the main platform to target this part of the population. The good news is that this is easily attainable, as Instagram and Facebook are linked, and advertising on Instagram can be achieved through Facebook. Please note that TikTok was also identified as a popular youth platform, but not adapted to an institutional framework or EUSAIR purposes.

²⁹ Global Web Index, *TikTok's challenge in Europe*, 8/10/2020, [link](#)

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

4. Broadening the macroregional ecosystem

4.1. Rethinking the current stakeholders' structure

Successful communication is all about delivering the right message to the right audience through the right channel, at the right moment.

Knowing the audience is therefore essential for successful communication. Beyond their profile, it is important to know their habits and the messages that interest them.

There is no doubt that the EUSAIR audience is multiple and diversified. As a result, EUSAIR currently classifies its stakeholders into 15 categories, depending on the type/profile of organisation, and based on the country in which they operate.

Table 11 – EUSAIR current stakeholders categorisation

N°	Category
1	Local Public Authority
2	Regional Public Authority
3	National Public Authority
4	Sectoral Agency
5	Infrastructure and (Public) Service Provider
6	Interest Groups (including NGOs)
7	Higher Education and Research
8	SME
9	Business Support Organization
10	International Organization (National Law)
11	International Organization (Inter-National Law)
12	Enterprise (excluding SME)

13	Education/Training Centre /School
14	Individuals
15	Press

Although this classification is already an excellent way of categorising stakeholders, we regret the fact that contacts are not organised in 'pillars' as well, which is a key element in determining EUSAIR's activities.

In addition, the analysis of EUSAIR's current contacts shows a certain inequality of coverage from country to country. It is, however, essential to ensure good coverage and a sufficiently solid contact base in each country, for each pillar and each type of organisation.

Moreover, if any successful communication is based on a good knowledge of audiences, it is because not every message is good for every audience. For instance, organisations more focused on the Blue Growth pillar will not necessarily be interested in information related to Sustainable Tourism and *vice versa*.

The great danger of uniform communication to all stakeholders is the waste of share of voice. By categorising, you exponentially increase your communication. The aim of better categorisation is therefore to communicate more sparingly and therefore in a more targeted way. This reduces the global share of voice but considerably increases the impact of the communication and therefore the mobilisation of the audience.

The ultimate objective? Creating an almost Pavlovian reflex in the consciousness of the targets: *"if EUSAIR communicates towards me, then I will necessarily be interested"*.

As such, the better EUSAIR will know its different audiences, the more accurately it will be able to communicate with them.

Refining EUSAIR's stakeholder classification is therefore a must have for relevant and successful communication.

4.2. Distinguishing acquired stakeholders from those to be acquired

In order to build an effective communication strategy, it will be important to recognise the 'strength' and importance of each stakeholder. To do this, it's important to consider, upstream of the distinction by type of organisation, a differentiation between two types of stakeholders.

First, the "internal" stakeholders, i.e., the members of the current governance structure and the major partners of the macro-regional strategy, which have the decisional power and are the current ambassadors of the EUSAIR, even if they do not act sufficiently as such.

These audiences are already "acquired" and ready to rally for the EUSAIR cause. Such stakeholders therefore require much less energy but will need to be consolidated in order to transform them into real 'champions' within the Adriatic-Ionian region.

Communication-wise, it will be necessary to first of all ensure a good understanding of these audiences who are the best ambassadors for EUSAIR. Therefore, communication will need to focus first on successfully reaching these stakeholders, with the right messages and through the right channel to give them all the necessary tools to make the most of their role as ambassadors.

Secondly, the “external” stakeholders, i.e., the current and potential beneficiaries of the EUSAIR projects/activities, the audience impacted by EUSAIR projects/activities, the press, etc. constitute the most important category of stakeholders to considerably extend the knowledge and impact of EUSAIR in the region.

Also classified by pillar, it will be important to make a clear distinction between the stakeholders already in contact with EUSAIR and ‘acquired’, and those who need to be targeted in order to build bridges between institutions and citizens to tackle the challenges of the macro-region. To extend the scope of EUSAIR, it is the second category in which most energy will have to be invested.

Consequently, to consolidate its position in the Adriatic-Ionian region, EUSAIR needs to make a clear distinction between its current stakeholders and its potential targets, for each of the pillars of its strategy and in each of the countries on an equal level.

In this way, once its targets have been clearly defined, with clear objectives for each, a targeted communication strategy can be implemented.

4.3. A broadened database in the 9 EUSAIR countries and beyond

On the basis of the observations made through the analysis of the current EUSAIR database, an extension of contacts has been carried out in each of the member countries of the macro-regional strategy and beyond³².

This extension, which was aimed at filling the current gaps in the database, was carried out by communication experts from the ComUnity.Pro network agencies based in each EUSAIR country, therefore providing local expertise and knowledge.

The new database was created on the basis of various elements. To simplify integration into the current database, the new contacts follow the current categorisation of organisations (with a number from 1 to 15 depending on the type of organisation).

Moreover, for each of the new contacts, the **corresponding pillar has been included**. In case of overlapping pillars, the different areas have been included.

In addition, to simplify multi-channel communication, the **different communication tools** used by each organisation have been added: website, social media, newsletters, and events.

Finally, for each organisation, a key contact has been included as well as a general contact for the whole organisation.

Table 12 – Information to be included in the EUSAIR database

³² Complete list provided in a separate Excel spreadsheet.

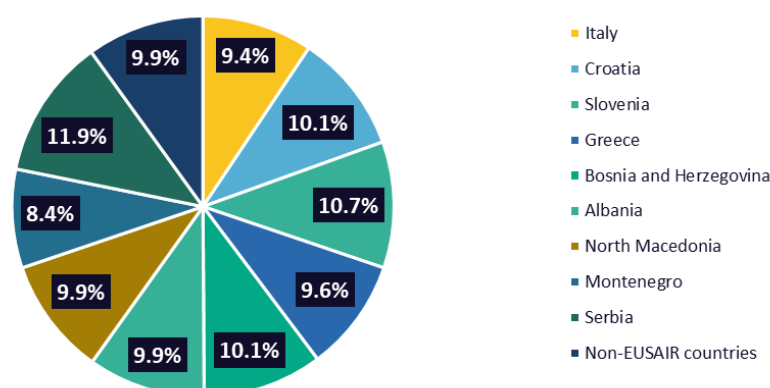
elements
Name of the organisation
Type of organisation
EUSAIR Main Pillar concerned
Country
Description of the organisation
Website
Facebook page
Twitter handle
LinkedIn page
YouTube page
Other relevant Social Media
Newsletter/Blog/etc.
Event organised by the organisation
Gender
Contact name
Contact surname
Contact function
Contact e-mail
General organisation e-mail

Contact phone number

General organisation phone number

A total of 513 new organisations were included in order to expand the current EUSAIR database, with an average of 50 new contacts per EUSAIR country. **The current EUSAIR database was therefore increased by almost 60%.**

Graph 91 - Breakdown of new contacts by country.

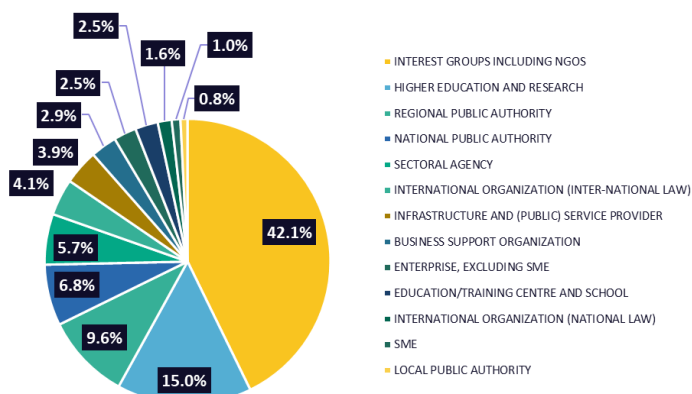


With national public authorities forming the bulk of EUSAIR's current contacts, the focus has therefore been on other type of organisations such as interest groups, including NGOs, and education-related organisations (to reach younger audiences).

However, as public authorities are an important element in the EUSAIR stakeholders, key organisations not included in the current EUSAIR database have also been added in each country.

Given the importance of the press in communication - in a more general approach - it will obviously be important, in the future, to extend contacts with relevant journalists at local, national and international level.

Graph 92 - Distribution of the types of organisations added to the extended database.



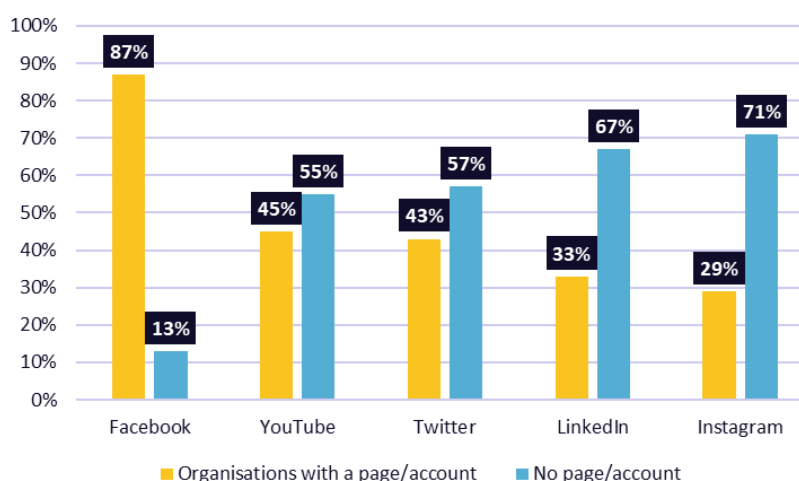
If we analyse the tools used by the organisations added to the EUSAIR database, several trends emerge.

Firstly, while **all organisations have a website** (apart from a few rare exceptions), not all of them use a newsletter or news section to inform their public.

Also, in terms of social media, **Facebook remains the leader, with 87% of the organisations having a Facebook page.**

Slightly less than half of the organisations have a YouTube or Twitter account and only about a third have a LinkedIn or Instagram account.

Graph 93 - Social Media used within the new contacts.



The extension of the contact database here is a first step towards a more extensive communication of EUSAIR. Indeed, by targeting the different communication targets in a refined way, based not only on countries, but also on types of organisations, pillars and the 'strength' of these organisations, we will ultimately be able to multiply the results of the communication.

From experience, if we communicate cost-effectively with these new contacts, using the right tools and adapted messages, we will be able to automatically convert even more potential new partners, through the strength of sharing, whether on social media or even newsletters.

How to build bridges with these contacts? Through which channels? With what messages? These different elements will be addressed in the creation of an integrated communication strategy.

Conclusions Task 2: Efficiently communicating with each of the stakeholders

After analysing, in the interim report of Task 1 '*Analysing the current status quo in terms of digital communication strategy*', the way EUSAIR currently communicates online with its stakeholders, we now looked more closely at the targets of this digital communication: *who are EUSAIR's current audiences? How does EUSAIR communicate with them? How does EUSAIR differentiate between these audiences? Which tools are used for which audiences?*

First of all, in view of the complexity and heterogeneity of EUSAIR's governance structure, divided into multiple actors from the different countries of the macro-regional strategy, it is noteworthy that a platform - accessible to all upon registration - has been set up to facilitate exchanges between the parties: EUSAIR Stakeholders Platform.

Following the existence of such an 'internal' platform, it is to be expected that other communication tools, rather of an 'external' type such as social networks, would be more oriented towards other stakeholders, outside the governance structure. However, the analyses show that the different digital communication tools - website, newsletters, social media - all target the same institutional audience.

However, EUSAIR, in its communication plan and its various tools - such as its events contact database - expresses its desire to reach and engage audiences outside this institutional sphere.

For instance, an analysis of its contact database revealed that EUSAIR aimed at proprietarily targeting SMEs, education/ training centres/ schools, business support organisations and local public authorities as well as NGOs. However, the contacts in this database reveal a much bigger focus on national public authorities (27%), even if SMEs - with 15% of the contacts – come second in terms of number in the database. Education/ training centres/schools or NGOS, on the contrary, are scarcely present in the database, making it impossible to achieve the desired objectives with regard to them.

Moreover, although the macroregional strategy aims to communicate with one voice, equal to all member countries, it turns out that some countries are more affected by the communication than others. Since a lack of coordination between the different member countries is certainly at the root of this significant imbalance, establishing clear processes is more than necessary to reach and mobilise each key player in the Adriatic-Ionian region with equal force.

The analysis carried out in each EUSAIR member country, as well as in Brussels for the pan-European side, and aimed at extending the database, has allowed a first rebalancing of the audiences in the different countries, thus correcting some 'gaps' in the current database.

The basis of any communication strategy is the establishment of clear objectives linked to clearly defined audiences. In order to achieve its objectives, EUSAIR will then need to clearly identify and structure its audiences. This will allow the creation of a perfectly aligned communication strategy, highlighting the key messages to be delivered to each pre-defined audience, as well as the key platforms to be invested in to deliver these messages effectively.

The analysis of the different digital communication channels - carried out in this report - will then serve as a first basis for determining the best platforms to invest in based on EUSAIR priority audiences.

Thanks to a clear restructuring of its audiences and the identification of 'acquired' stakeholders and those 'to be acquired', there is no doubt that EUSAIR will exponentially increase its impact, bringing at the same time an unprecedented added value in terms of energy savings: communicating in a effective, targeted and relevant way to clearly defined audiences will undoubtedly allow the strategy to radiate within the Adriatic-Ionian basin.

After having analysed the EUSAIR current stakeholders and how the macroregional strategy communicates with them; after having analysed how people use digital tools in the EUSAIR countries; after having broadened the list of stakeholders and potential partners, we will now, together, develop a digital communication strategy in line with the objectives set for the coming years.

TASK 3 – BUILDING A PROPER RESULTS-DRIVEN DIGITAL STRATEGY AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

Introduction Task 3

“A goal without a plan is just a wish.” Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

There is no doubt that an online presence is essential in today's world. However, an online presence makes no sense if it is not thought through beforehand. This is exactly what makes the difference between a player and a winner. You need skills, you need perseverance, you need consistency and last but not least the will to non-stop surpass yourself and not to act like others.

This is the goal that we have been seeking by producing this document.

After six years of implementation, the EUSAIR aims at further increasing its visibility, awareness, interest, and attractiveness among stakeholders and partners, and at ensuring appropriate communication of policy-related information to internal and external parties.

The ultimate goal is to have a true impact in the region, increase the number of synergies and thereby create a virtuous circle thanks to which the EUSAIR will have paradoxically less to do in terms of evangelisation, allowing the macro-regional strategy to concentrate itself in piloting.

The objective for the next years? In a first stage, promoting awareness of the EUSAIR at the different levels, from local to international, building on the multi-level governance and ensuring the involvement of public, economic, civil society, and environmental partners. In a second stage, achieving such credibility that one can be known and recognised by the population as such, so that it forms a true community.

It is therefore crucial, to meet such objectives, that the EUSAIR reaches the engaged audience and grows said audience so that it can be found by potential partners, develop new partnerships as well as foster relationships and operations with existing parties and stakeholders. This must be translated into a strong and coherent (digital) communication strategy which will engage the entire ecosystem, giving the EUSAIR the means to achieve its ambitions.

The digital approach presented in the following report is the result of various analyses and meetings with the teams that build EUSAIR on a daily basis. Based on the digital communication audit carried out earlier this year, the analysis of EUSAIR's current audiences, surveys and a workshop held at the beginning of June 2021, we were able to gather a wealth of information and gain a better understanding of how the EUSAIR will be able to achieve the objectives it has set for itself.

Although digital communication is key to achieving the objectives, it should however not stand alone and should remain coherent and find its place among all the other actions carried out by EUSAIR (field actions, events, press).

The communication strategy that will be developed will be based on the identity of the EUSAIR, the 'current' EUSAIR: the starting point to define an appropriate approach.

From audience profiling to key messages, channels to consider and Key Performance Indicators to measure, we will then further define the strategy.

On this basis, we will, in the next and final report, fine-tune the overall digital communication strategy and amplify the communication with concrete tips and tricks (format, tone of voice, timings, targeting, etc.) to enable the EUSAIR to clearly assume a facilitating role within the Adriatic and Ionian region, and *in fine* become a reference platform for managing macroregional challenges.

1. Starting by laying the foundations for the current EUSAIR

Any organisation which aims at communicating externally and generating engagement needs to seduce its defined audiences. To seduce, they have to generate trust. And to generate trust, they have to be confident. To do so, each organisation and all the people communicating in its name need to know it perfectly: from its identity to its ambitions, personality, strengths, and weaknesses.

This first section will aim at clearly defining the EUSAIR's identity, based on the mission and vision defined in June 2020. It will then summarise the digital identity of the macro-region, building on the communication audit to finally gather all the observations and analyses within a global SWOT matrix whose aim will be to guide our choices for the definition of a digital communication strategy.

1.1. Outlining the EUSAIR's identity

To thrive, organisations need the support and engagement of their key stakeholders. Thanks to a mission and vision statement that engages, and an identity clarifying the important role or purpose the EUSAIR plays in the Adriatic-Ionian region, all the people involved in the macro-regional strategy will understand all the better why they should support the EUSAIR and become its ambassadors.



THE 5 WORDS: “When you think of EUSAIR, what are the first 5 words that come to your mind?” Survey to participants of the workshop “Towards a (new) digital communication strategy for the EUSAIR” (7th June 2021) – ©Vademecom.

The good news is that the communication audit and the surveys carried out earlier in 2021 have shown that the mission and vision of the EUSAIR are well understood by the people who ‘make’

EUSAIR on a daily basis. Indeed, the word ‘cooperation’, which is an integral part of the identity of the macro-regional strategy, is the most quoted word to define the EUSAIR³³.

The integration of the EUSAIR’s mission and vision statement by its stakeholders is a key first step in establishing the strategy: **everyone agrees that cooperation is the watchword!** But how to generate this cooperation? This will be developed in the following sections.

Let us thus start with the basics: who is the EUSAIR? From its vision and mission, defined in June 2020, we will dig a little deeper into the definition of the overall identity of the macro-regional strategy.

DEFINITION	How to define the EUSAIR?	EUSAIR is a unique cooperation instrument that allows countries of the Adriatic-Ionian region sharing the same current or future challenges and objectives to work together in order to find solutions and implement them.
VISION	What does the EUSAIR believes in?	The EUSAIR believes in joint multi-level solutions for common challenges in the Adriatic-Ionian Region.
MISSION	What is the ‘raison d’être’ of the EUSAIR?	The EUSAIR aims at connecting people and institutions to build a common understanding of cooperation, to the benefit of all involved countries (to the peace and security of the entire area, and in line with the EU policy objectives for a greener, low-carbon and more connected Europe).
AMBITION	What does the EUSAIR want to evolve towards?	The EUSAIR aspires to build a harmonised, integrated, sustainable and stronger Adriatic and Ionian region.
POSITIONING	How does the EUSAIR want to position itself in relation to its competitors? How does it characterise itself?	With four EU Member States (Croatia, Greece, Italy, Slovenia) and five non-EU countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia), the EUSAIR allows to create synergies among countries in the Adriatic-Ionian Region to solve current or future common challenges.
PERSONALITY	What relationship does the EUSAIR want to have with its audiences?	In order to “connect people to institutions”, the EUSAIR needs to

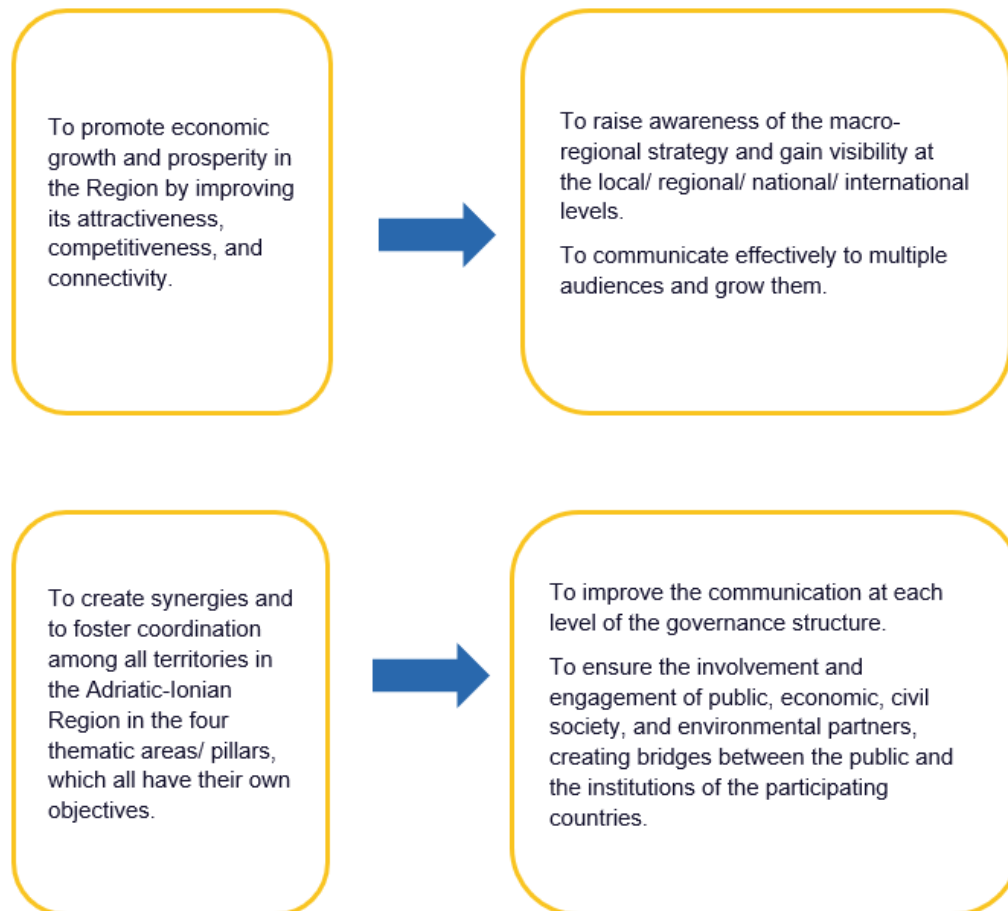
³³ Online survey to the participants of the workshop “Towards a (new) digital communication strategy for the EUSAIR” (7th June 2021).

		become the real bridge between the Adriatic-Ionian regions/the institutions that manage them and the anyone who benefits from the action of the EUSAIR or contribute to solving current/future challenges.
PROMISE	What does the EUSAIR propose concretely to its audiences?	The EUSAIR aims to promote economic and social prosperity and growth in the region by improving its attractiveness, competitiveness, and connectivity.
REASONS TO BELIEVE	Why can we believe in the EUSAIR's promise?	Since its creation, the EUSAIR has funded 500+ macro-regional cooperation projects.
TONE/STYLE	In which way does the EUSAIR want to develop its messages?	The tone is both institutional and close to the public ("connect people to institutions"), with the objective of creating a sense of belonging to the Adriatic-Ionian region.
CONSTRAINTS	What should not be forgotten?	The cultural, technological, political and language differences of each EUSAIR member country.

1.2. Converting generic objectives into online communication objectives

In general, the objectives of the macro-regional strategy are:

From a communication point of view, these objectives can be translated as follows:



Conversion of generic objectives into online communication objectives – ©Vademecom

Where does the EUSAIR stand in achieving these objectives? How to make sure to achieve them in the long term? Through which channels? With which means?

By analysing the current situation in terms of digital presence and bringing together all the previous analyses into a SWOT matrix, we will be able to determine whether the EUSAIR is currently on track to achieve these objectives and make the necessary adjustments for improvement.

1.3. A look back at the digital communication audit

Now that the macro-regional strategy is well defined, it remains to be seen whether this identity is well translated online and enables it to reach its objectives, which is what matters to us in building a digital communication strategy.

The table below compiles the observations made during the digital communication audit, for each platform analysed. This data will help us to establish a strategy for each channel and to define concrete objectives for each.

	FACEBOOK	TWITTER	YOUTUBE	WEBSITE	NEWSLETTER
NAME	Eusair Facility Point (@EusairFacilityPoint)	Eusair (@EusairPoint)	EUSAIR Facility Point	adriatic-ionian.eu	Seasonal titles or event titles (ex: Spring 2019)
CONTACTS/ followers	684 (June 2021) + 23% since February 2021*.	1.264 (June 2021) + 8% since February 2021*.	53 (June 2021) + 20% since February 2021*.	15.000 visits in 2019.	4284 subscribers
AV. POSTING FREQUENCY	2 to 4 a week, irregular.	2 to 4 a week, irregular.	74 videos in total.	5 to 10 news per month.	2 to 4 newsletters a year, irregular.
ENGAGEMENT/ VIEWS	Engagement rate of 8.7% in 2020 (above industry average).	Engagement rate of 1.45% in 2020 (above industry average).	Average number of views: 60. Average percentage of the video viewed: 11.4%	Average visit duration: 4 minutes.	Average opening rate of 42% (above industry average). Average click-to-open rate of 15% (above industry average).

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TOPICS	83% of the posts about events (53% EUSAIR events, 30% other EU events), followed by 7% of the posts related to the pillars.	66% of the Tweets about EUSAIR events, followed by 11% of the Tweets related to the pillars (mostly Tourism, 60%).	87% of the videos about EUSAIR events, 9% about general promotional videos.	<p>Different sections: About EUSAIR, Funding sources, Media centre, Library, Contacts.</p> <p>Homepage: Latest news, followed by highlights and events.</p> <p>70% of news articles on event recaps, policy updates and documentation.</p>	Varied content with strong highlight of events and partnerships.
IMAGERY	Mainly Teams and PowerPoint screenshots. 9% of the posts with no visual at all.	Mainly Teams and PowerPoint screenshots. 23% of Tweets with no visual at all.	Videos in English, with English speakers (81%). 7% of the videos with subtitles.	EUSAIR's visual identity is not clearly displayed and highlighted on the website. Some news articles lack visuals.	Simple and coherent, but lack of emphasis of the different sections.
AUDIENCE	A working-age population from Greece, Italy and Slovenia, institutional ecosystem.	Institutional audience mainly, current partner organisations.	Young Slovenian audience.	NA	Mostly Greece, Italy, Slovenia and Croatia.

*Evolution since the Audit of Digital Communication (Task 1).

Whether it concerns the website, newsletter or social media, the table clearly shows that **communication currently revolves around EUSAIR events**, with little emphasis on general awareness about the EUSAIR itself, its activities and the concrete results of its actions (on a partner and more local level).

In terms of tools, the website, and the newsletter, which are currently used to maintain and capitalise on the relationship with current stakeholders, are the preferred tools for the communication team. Nevertheless, social media, which allows to extend the scope of possibilities by reaching new stakeholders, should not be disregarded when considering the communicational objectives of the macro-regional strategy: *to promote awareness of the EUSAIR at the different levels, from local to international, to build on the multi-level governance and ensure the involvement of public, economic, civil society and environmental partners.*

Based on the above figures, we can conclude that the EUSAIR digital communication is thought of in **a reactive way, in the short term, without any concrete strategy or underlying objectives**. Indeed, if communication is most often focused on events it does not currently aim at increasing visibility in general, at reaching new targets or at creating understanding on specific key themes/pillars.

1.4. EUSAIR (Digital) Communication SWOT Matrix

Presented in the Task 1 report, the SWOT matrix is an analytical tool frequently used to establish the basis of a communication strategy. By analysing the strengths and weaknesses of an organisation, as well as its (external) opportunities and threats, the SWOT matrix provides an overall view of an organisation's performance and the actions to be taken.

The SWOT matrix below includes the key results of the digital communication audit as well as the ones from the target group and stakeholder study, the surveys conducted with the European Commission (DG REGIO) and Facility Point, and information shared at the workshop held on 7 June 2021. The matrix below therefore provides an overview of the different analyses conducted so far.

	GENERAL COMMUNICATION	DIGITAL COMMUNICATION	STAKEHOLDERS & TARGET GROUPS RELATIONS
STRENGTHS	<p>Lots of communicational material available.</p> <p>Detailed and clear governance structure and repartition of areas within member countries.</p> <p>Willingness to rationalise the approach to communication, make progress and take actions on a rational basis.</p>	<p>Intense event communication.</p> <p>Growing use of social media (even still low).</p> <p>Good engagement rate on social media.</p> <p>Transparent and extensive information on the website.</p> <p>Growing and regular content on the website (even still low).</p>	<p>Integrated approach: governments work together.</p> <p>Extensive stakeholders' network (governance structure), with exchanges facilitated by the EUSAIR Stakeholder Platform.</p> <p>Large pool of experts (Thematic Steering Groups) from different countries.</p> <p>Willingness to reach out and communicate more with external groups.</p>
WEAKNESSES	<p>Lack of recognition and understanding of the name EUSAIR: vulnerability of the EUSAIR brand.</p> <p>No clear communicational objectives.</p> <p>No leader in defining objectives/strategy: no one currently in charge of the strategical side of communication.</p> <p>Vague communication plan, with no Key Performance</p>	<p>Lack of communication on 'concrete' actions/ results.</p> <p>Visual identity poorly represented/ lack of clear visual identity on digital channels.</p> <p>Lack of varied textual and visual content on social media.</p> <p>Limited online audience (very low number of followers).</p>	<p>Lack of recognition and understanding of the name EUSAIR: vulnerability of the EUSAIR brand.</p> <p>Difficulties of collaboration between stakeholders among the current detailed structure: lack of involvement and proactivity of all the governance structures.</p> <p>Communication focused on local, regional, and</p>

	<p>Indicators nor performance tracking.</p> <p>Little human resources managing the entire communication and imbalances in human resources per country.</p> <p>Difficulties of collaboration among the current detailed structure: no clear roles for the partners qua communication, nor good information sharing between member countries.</p> <p>Difficulty of communicating as 'one voice'.</p> <p>Lack of recognisable spokespersons, human faces representing the EUSAIR.</p> <p>Uniform communication for all stakeholders/pillars.</p>	<p>Irregularity in posting content (social media and newsletters) and lack of proactivity in publishing content (reactive communication).</p> <p>Lack of representation of some countries online.</p> <p>Absence of results tracking (performance, engagement, etc.).</p>	<p>national public authorities at the detriment of large companies, SMEs, and other actors 'on the ground'.</p> <p>Imbalance in target groups identification and relations in the participating countries: audience more developed in some countries (mostly EU member states, to the detriment of neighbouring countries).</p> <p>Lack of alignment of priority target groups.</p>
OPPORTUNITIES	<p>Take advantage of the pool of experts (Thematic Steering Groups) from the different countries.</p> <p>Take advantage of 'influencers'/multipliers to raise EUSAIR understanding and awareness (e.g., use the force of communication of local government to spread the EUSAIR messages).</p> <p>Take advantage of external consultants' expertise.</p> <p>Involvement and communication support of the European Commission (DG REGIO) in the communication strategy (e.g., communication experts, social media advertising, translation tools, etc.).</p> <p>Synergies with 'coopetitors' (DG NEAR, Adrion, Berlin Process, etc.): turning competitors into partners.</p> <p>Cooperation with other macro-regional strategies (transport, energy networks, tourism or environment protection), even more knowing that most EUSAIR countries are also members of other MRS.</p>		
THREATS	<p>Budget limitations.</p> <p>Disparities between member countries (human resources, political, cultural, linguistic, technological).</p> <p>Emergence/competition of new/other macro-regional organisations/programmes (e.g., China).</p>		

Although cooperation is the watchword, the lack of collaboration between countries and members of the governance structure is slowing down the achievement of EUSAIR's objectives.

Fruitful cooperation can only be established through the development of a clear strategy, based on key messages, with precise objectives per channel and, most importantly, a strategy understood and easily manageable by each of the members.

2. Developing a strategic approach for a better digitalisation of EUSAIR

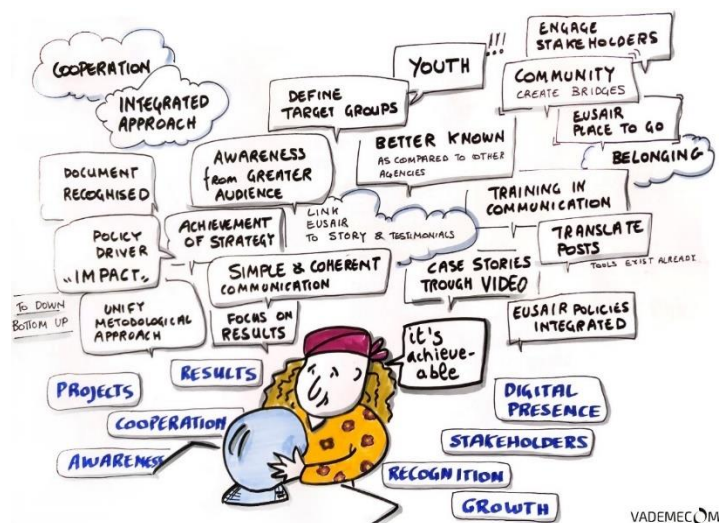
It is obvious that the EUSAIR **lacks a clear and integrated (digital) communication strategy** that is understood and implemented by all stakeholders.

The absence of a professional and dedicated team devoted to the building and implementation of a communication strategy has made **the current communication reactive** - with no clear objectives pursued, content planning, or performance measurement - **and institutionally oriented**, with no engagement of target groups outside the current governance structure.

As a result, communication is very much focused on the structure (who runs what, who is in charge of what) and on the 'meta' side of the macro-regional strategy, with high-level political matters (like the topics discussed at internal events) rather than on **what the EUSAIR is working on** and **how and why it is beneficial for the region and its inhabitants**, concretely.

Let there be no mistake, the objective will not be to reach the population at large, but to go and find, within the inhabitants of the macro-region, the people who can play a role in the logic and policy of the EUSAIR (fishermen, Head of a tourist office, Director of a Chamber of Commerce, Harbour master's office, Head of a Fireman brigade, etc.).

Our primary target, to build on the digital communication strategy, will be the people currently involved in the EUSAIR: a strong network of partners in different local, regional, and national institutions and organisations that are part of the current governance structure.



“Cristal Ball” – Workshop “Towards a (new) digital communication strategy for the EUSAIR”
(7th June 2021) – © Vademecom.

With cooperation at the heart of its ambitions, the EUSAIR will need to promote the collaboration of all the people and organisations in its governance structure before it can ensure the involvement and engagement of public, economic, civil society, and environmental partners, creating bridges between the public and the institutions of the participating countries.

However, the heterogeneity of the governance structure is as much a strength as a weakness to overcome. And one of the obstacles is clearly the struggle for each member region/country to find the right balance between the interest of its region/country on one side and the common interest for the whole Adriatic-Ionian region on the other side.

In this sense, and in order to override these flaws, it is crucial to **establish concrete bases for collaboration** between each of the parties, particularly in the implementation of the digital communication.

The approach? The development of a content strategy on the macro-regional level, embedded into a local, regional and national context.

1. Simplified and structured information sharing processes

One of the points that came up most often in our discussions and analyses was the lack of concrete content on the macro-regional strategy. While the EUSAIR possesses a multitude of documents or reports on its functioning, its governance structure, nothing is communicated on **its results, its impact, and its concrete role within the Adriatic-Ionian region.**

The reason? A clear **lack of information sharing** between the members of the governance structure.

However, the EUSAIR will only be able to position itself as a key player in the macro-region if it is **considered as a real expert, facilitator, and aggregator** for the whole Adriatic-Ionian region. And such an ambition cannot be achieved with a nice governance structure, not only. EUSAIR will have to prove its legitimacy in the macro-region in order to shine, first of all within it, but also beyond, in the whole of Europe and internationally.

How can this be achieved? By **producing expert, reliable, high value-added content** for each of its audiences, in each of its pillars.

With cooperation at the centre of the macro-regional strategy, internal (but also external) communication processes need to be implemented to simplify information sharing and ultimately enable better digital communication.

The EUSAIR must become a media, a reference, a source of information for its members and partners.

In concrete terms, the aim will be to identify who needs what and therefore who should provide what to whom within what timeframe and in what form.

To do so, it will be important to develop **clear processes** between all those who hold information that can be relayed online. This way, everyone will know how to collect information, who to provide it to, when, how to translate it and how to decline in multiple impacting digital content... for integrated communications.

2. Integrated communications

Information is at the centre of communication, but the way it is presented, its form, tone and medium are incredibly important in ensuring the message is properly assimilated. The magic of communication is that **one piece of content can be used in many ways** for different channels, receivers, and purposes.

The objective? **Creating bridges between the different digital communication channels**, but also drawing parallels with traditional media such as the press, in order to keep a **coherent image** of the EUSAIR through all its communications, online and offline.

In concrete terms, we will provide you with the keys to turn one piece of information into social media posts, visuals, videos, blog articles, newsletters, press communications, etc., and a methodology to share them. A perfect return on investment for one single piece of information collected.

3. Powerful stories and achievements

Everyone loves stories and it's a safe bet that the EUSAIR target groups do too. To spread the EUSAIR key messages throughout the Adriatic-Ionian region, we want **to tell its wonderful stories: the best way to attract, capture and engage an audience.**



Digital Storytelling” – Workshop “Towards a (new) digital communication strategy for the EUSAIR”
(7th June 2021) – © Vademecom

The focus? The Others. **Talking about others** will allow the EUSAIR to better radiate. Giving will allow the EUSAIR to better receive. By **highlighting 'heroes'** from the Adriatic-Ionian area, the EUSAIR will emerge **stronger**.

In concrete terms, we will rely on a well-tested process to obtain and collect valuable information and will provide you with key tips to share these stories in an engaging manner.

We will also come with new stories, powerful stories that surpass the Adriatic-Ionian region, and stories that will also reflect the priorities of the European Union, notably in terms of youth, Green Deal and Recovery.

The content strategy– for all type of content produced, and especially on social media – will consist in relying on the influence and popularity of key partners and starting building links with them (governments, ministries, associations, public services, etc.) to amplify the EUSAIR communication.

Through a logic of monitoring and seeding (detailed further in the document), the aim is to talk about the EUSAIR.

4. Policy of 'champions'

By highlighting the stories and 'heroes' that make up the region, we want to develop a policy of 'champions', encouraging everyone to share their stories, projects, results, ideas, etc.

By putting forward certain organisations (over others), we will create a **virtuous circle of sharing and relaying information** thanks to the visibility thus obtained.

The ultimate goal is to create **real ambassadors** for the EUSAIR, that will be the human faces representing the strategy, allowing to generate engagement.

In concrete terms, practical guidelines to duplicate the engagement of your publications, increase your visibility and sympathy with other actors and capitalise on 'ambassadors'/'champions' communications will be shared.

5. Creating a sense of pride and belonging

The best way to engage people is to make them part of a **dynamic community**, make them become part of a collective spirit.

To create this community, we need to generate a common identity, a **pride of belonging** to the Adriatic-Ionian region.

In concrete terms, to develop this pride, we will need to highlight what makes the region unique, exclusive, attractive, a true pride generator.

Obviously, all this cannot be achieved solely through digital communication, but must be integrated into a global communication strategy, with campaigns that go beyond the boundaries of digital to take shape in field actions.

In the same vein, digital actions will resonate with actions on the ground, such as events, and in traditional media, such as the press, which in turn will be used for digital content, thus completing the loop.

Example: If we promote a “sustainable tourism fair” from Slovenia on social media, we will raise the EUSAIR visibility among the organisers of the event, and possibly to many actors of the sector in Slovenia, an important one in the region's economy. As such, the organisations will 'see' EUSAIR, take an interest in it and, in the best case, invite representatives of the macro-regional strategy to the events (beyond digital). In the long term, the EUSAIR could become a key participant in the event for its organisers, which will only increase its visibility within the whole region.

Top-down (from decision-makers to the operational) or bottom-up (from actors on the ground to decision-makers)?

Currently, based on the EUSAIR Communication Manual*, the top-down or bottom-up approach is only envisaged within the governance structure.

The risk is that this will result in 'inbred' communication, which will cause the whole dynamic to be lost. As the secret of digital communication is to create a snowball effect, we are certain that the EUSAIR project will only succeed if we address the issue of top-down and bottom-up by bursting the bubble, beyond the governance structure.

We therefore envisage a mix of top-down (to share a vision, a direction, an inspiration, an impetus) and bottom-up (to capture experiences from the field, pragmatic innovations, illustrations that will give even more substance to the EUSAIR project).

3. Better understanding the engaged audience, key targets, and potential partners

Knowing the audience is essential for successful communication, which is all about delivering the right message to the right audience through the right channel, at the right moment. Beyond their categorisation, it is important to know their needs, their objectives, how to reach them and the messages that interest them.

The previous analyses of the EUSAIR communication tools and stakeholders showed that the **EUSAIR is mainly and almost exclusively currently targeting, but also visible, among institutional stakeholders**, i.e., EU, national, regional, or local institutions and EUSAIR governance structures.

There is no doubt, however, that the EUSAIR **ambitions to target a diversified audience**. This is demonstrated by its contacts database, even though it shows many disparities in terms of types of organisations/audiences and countries targeted.

Indeed, some target groups are still lacking representation, and some EUSAIR countries are more represented and engaged (mainly Greece, Italy, Slovenia, and Croatia) compared to other countries (mainly non-EU countries).

1	Local Public Authority
2	Regional Public Authority
3	National Public Authority
4	Sectoral Agency
5	Infrastructure and (Public) Service Provider
6	Interest Groups (including NGOs)
7	Higher Education and Research
8	SME
9	Business Support Organization
10	International Organization (National Law)
11	International Organization (Inter-National Law)
12	Enterprise (excluding SME)

13	Education/Training Centre /School
14	Individuals
15	Press

Current audience categorisation of the EUSAIR

In order to strengthen the digital visibility of the EUSAIR, it will be essential to:

- Refine the database with more information on each stakeholder and their involvement, as well as a categorisation based on the pillars³⁴ (as proposed in the report of Task 2).
- Extend the database with a greater balance between the stakeholders reached in each country (as provided with the report of Task 2).
- Better qualify the type of stakeholders, to determine exactly how to reach them and in what way (which will be provided in the next pages).



Defining and explaining “Top Targets” – Workshop “Towards a (new) digital communication strategy for the EUSAIR” (7th June 2021) – © Vademecom

The previous analyses have enabled to identify two types of audiences for the EUSAIR:

Firstly, we identified the **internal stakeholders**, i.e., the members of the current governance structure and the major partners of the macro-regional strategy, which have the decisional/

³⁴ Digital Communication Strategy for EUSAIR - Intermediate report - Task 2: Identifying and mapping all the groups of EUSAIR stakeholders and partners – March 2021.

operational power and are the potential current ambassadors of the EUSAIR. These audiences are already "acquired" and therefore require much less energy but will need to be consolidated in order to generate greater cooperation, make a true team out of them and transform them into real 'champions' within the Adriatic-Ionian region.

Secondly, we identified different **target groups**, e.g., current projects partners, higher education, research centres, SMEs, the press, etc. For these audiences, it will be necessary to raise their awareness on the EUSAIR, on its achievements and to make sure they understand the implications the macro-regional strategy plays for them (business/ day-to-day).

To consolidate its position in the Adriatic-Ionian region, we will need to focus our efforts – in the shorter term - on all the current potential 'ambassadors' of the EUSAIR and use them, in parallel, to start reaching the targets groups.

To understand how engage and reach them, the EUSAIR needs to better define the audiences above. Profiling each audience will indeed guide the choice of the best digital communication channels and tools to achieve the EUSAIR's objectives.

3.1. Profiling the EUSAIR internal stakeholders

Audiences already ‘acquired’ with the objective to generate greater cooperation and make them act as ambassadors of the EUSAIR.

Target Group	Who are they?	Current relationship/ Level of knowledge of the EUSAIR	What do they need?	What can we expect from them?	What are their key drivers?	Which online communication channels and tools can be activated? (Actions from EUSAIR platforms but also on targets' platforms) *
NATIONAL AUTHORITIES (Part of the EUSAIR governance structure)	Ministers for EU Funds/ National IPA Coordinators and Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the participating countries.	Part of the EUSAIR governance structure (political level). Take strategic decisions on the EUSAIR. Participate to the EUSAIR strategic meetings.	Visibility in their respective countries and beyond, showing dynamism with new projects. Proof of success of the actions taken/ true achievements. Funding.	Acting as ambassadors in their respective countries, and for the whole region (sharing results, information, stories), be the human faces of the EUSAIR.	EFFICIENCY & PRACTICALITY Often solicited, they need clear communication materials, key results, and tools to easily relay them (toolbox), increasing their visibility.	To reach and engage them, we will first count on the newsletters (as we already have their contact details). Social media will be used to involve them in the external communication. Talking about them on social media will make them talk about the EUSAIR. Ready-to-use posts will be provided to them to allow them to easily publish EUSAIR-related content on their personal accounts and the accounts of their organisation (Ministry/ National accounts). Twitter and Facebook will be leveraged at first (i.e., the platforms the EUSAIR is using right now). Depending on the channels their own organisation uses, EUSAIR-related content should also be drafted for other

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						<p>social media and provided to the stakeholders for publication.</p> <p>We will take advantage of events they are participating to in order to shoot testimonials/ create video content with them. Content that will be promoted internally and externally (newsletters, website, social media, press).</p>
GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS (GB)	National Coordinators from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and from the national administration responsible for coordinating EU funds in the countries, Pillar Coordinators, Commission services, European Parliament, Committee of the Regions (CoR), etc.	Part of the EUSAIR governance structure (coordinating level). Ensure coordination between the EUSAIR, existing regional cooperation organisations, and TSGs. Participate to the EUSAIR strategic meetings.	Information from all projects/ countries. Proof of success of the actions taken. Funding.	Supporting the EUSAIR content, acting as ambassadors. Relaying the EUSAIR information on their respective channels (countries/ regions, DG REGIO, DG MARE, DG NEAR, CoR, European Parliament, etc.), be the human faces of the EUSAIR.	<p>COOPERATION, RESULT & SIMPLICITY</p> <p>Communicating as one voice implies collaborating to gather content and results. Easy and clear information-sharing processes.</p>	<p>Ibid.</p> <p>In addition, the Stakeholder Platform will be considered as the most important tool to collect, share, relay information between the members of the Governing Board, and with potential target audiences.</p>
THEMATIC STEERING GROUPS (TSGs)	One per pillar, chaired by a tandem of countries (EU and non-EU).	Part of the EUSAIR governance structure (implementation level). They generate and coordinate strategic projects.	Leverage their efforts/ projects to gain visibility for the EUSAIR and their respective organisations in the region. Privileged contacts with potential project initiators on the ground, and the	Gathering valuable information on projects, key numbers, contact information and relaying information on the EUSAIR at the project level.	<p>CONTACTS & COOPERATION</p> <p>Thanks to increased contacts with appropriate, relevant target groups in each pillar and each country they will</p>	<p>The Stakeholder Platform will be used as the tool to collect, share, relay information between the TSGs members and the Governing Board, with simplified and structured processes.</p> <p>In addition, the EUSAIR website, the newsletters and social</p>

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			EUSAIR Governing Board.	Initiating contacts for projects.	be able to implement the EUSAIR strategic objectives.	media will be used to relay all the work undertaken by the TSGs.
EUSAIR FACILITY POINT (FP)	Project partners from all participating countries.	Part of the EUSAIR governance structure, providing support to the GB and TSGs. Conceived as an instrument to promote and facilitate the implementation of the EUSAIR.	Coordination and regularity in information sharing, with clear processes and up-to-date information, mastery in digital communications.	Collecting and relaying valuable information on projects, key numbers, contact information to external stakeholders. Become digital communications experts.	HARMONY (coherence, coordination), CONSISTENCY & SIMPLICITY To spread the word on the EUSAIR, they need clear and up-to-date content from the different parties, with clear processes of information sharing.	<p>Collaboration between the FP and the other members of the Governance Structure will materialise through the Stakeholder Platform, facilitating exchanges.</p> <p>The EUSAIR Website, newsletters and social media will be used to relay the results of those exchanges (key facts, numbers, trends, studies, project information, etc.).</p> <p>In charge of the day-to-day communication, FP members will oversee the creation of a consistent, coherent, and engaging calendar of content for all platforms (social media, website, newsletters).</p> <p>We will take advantage of events to shoot testimonials/ create video content with them and their partners, as well as ensure live coverage of the event sessions. This content will be promoted internally and externally (newsletters, website, social media, press).</p>
PARTNER NETWORK	Institutions and organisations related to the Adriatic – Ionian	Current partners of the EUSAIR, they often meet and share.	Visibility for their respective organisations. Support in the	Act as support for common objectives and projects. Sharing	VISIBILITY & CO-CREATION	The partner network can be reached (receive EUSAIR content) and engaged (provide

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	region (Uni Adriatic, Adriatic Ionian Euroregion, AIC Forum, etc.)		development of joint projects. Transparent information, and clear sharing processes (best practices in the region).	data, reports, analyses. Expert views.	Growing their own visibility and developing more cooperation in the Adriatic-Ionian region.	<p>content, relay information) via the newsletter, and therefore the website which will be promoted via the newsletter, but also via the Stakeholder Platform and social media.</p> <p>Social media will be used to involve them in the external communication. Ready-to-use posts will be provided to them to allow them to easily publish EUSAIR-related content on their personal accounts and the accounts of their organisation. Twitter and Facebook will be leveraged at first (i.e., the platforms the EUSAIR is using right now). Depending on the channels their own organisation uses, EUSAIR-related content should also be drafted for those social media.</p> <p>We will take advantage of events to shoot testimonials/ create video content with them. This content will be promoted internally and externally (newsletters, website, social media, press).</p>
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As explained in the approach, the content strategy will consist in relying on the influence and popularity of key partners to amplify the EUSAIR communication.

Through a logic of monitoring and seeding, the aim is to talk about Others in order to make them talk about the EUSAIR.

* The approach on the online communication channels and tools that can be activated for each audience will be further detailed in the following pages.

3.2. Profiling the EUSAIR target groups

Audiences to be reached to extend the visibility of the EUSAIR throughout the Region and beyond, ensure the involvement and engagement of public, economic, civil society, and environmental partners, creating bridges between the public and the institutions of the participating countries.

Target Group	Who are they?	Current relationship/ Level of knowledge of the EUSAIR	What do they need?	What can we expect from them?	What are their key drivers?	Which online communication channels and tools can be activated? (Actions from EUSAIR platforms but also on targets' platforms) *
LOCAL, REGIONAL, NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITIES (outside the GB)	(Inter)-national governments, regional and local representatives.	Public authorities are already in contact with the EUSAIR, but low awareness of projects/ achievements/ possibilities.	Visibility in their respective area and beyond, showing dynamism with new projects. Solutions to current problems, for their citizens.	Acting as relay in their respective area, spreading the word to their citizens (privileged contacts with EUSAIR targets).	VISIBILITY & PRACTICALITY Partnering with EUSAIR and sharing information (toolbox), they can increase their visibility and contribute to a better Adriatic-Ionian region for their citizens.	To raise their knowledge on the EUSAIR, newsletters will be used to inform them (and consequently the EUSAIR website/ news articles). Digital communication will be used to invite them to key events. On social media , their accounts will be monitored to help the EUSAIR initiate the conversation with them, connect and create bonds. Engaging with their content and talking about them on social media will make them engage with the content and talk about the EUSAIR.

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CURRENT PROJECTS PARTNERS	Regions, municipalities, ministries, universities, associations, research centres, chambers of commerce, etc. in the participating countries.	Good contact and awareness on the EUSAIR, but low engagement.	Additional funding opportunities. Visibility and recognition for their project. Ready to use content and promotional materials (made by the EUSAIR).	Act as ambassadors of the EUSAIR, spreading the word on their project and how the EUSAIR supported them (success stories, quotes, testimonies).	RECOGNITION & FUNDING By raising awareness on their project and acting as ambassadors, they demonstrate how they were able to solve common/global challenges, with new funding opportunities at stake (recognised approach).	<p>Current project partners will constitute the primary source of impacting information on macro-regional strategy. We will engage them through the creation of content about them (video/case stories, web articles, newsletters, and social media posts) aimed at highlighting their organisation and their project.</p> <p>On social media, their accounts will be monitored. The EUSAIR will engage with their own content (like, share) to make them engage with the EUSAIR content as well.</p> <p>We plan to provide new projects with a toolkit to best communicate about and with the EUSAIR, particularly on social media.</p>
BUSINESSES AND SMES	Business and SMEs active in the 4 EUSAIR pillars (ports, Horeca, fisheries, aquaculture, blue/green technologies, transport, or energy companies, etc.)	Low contact and awareness of the EUSAIR.	Business opportunities and development potential for their business. Clear information on impact for their business.	Engage with the EUSAIR. Acceptance of the projects and ideas for a stronger Adriatic-Ionian region.	ATTRACTIVENESS An attractive and highly promoted Adriatic-Ionian region is beneficial to all entrepreneurs/SMEs/ companies of the area.	<p>Business and SMEs will be targeted via social media first, to engage them afterwards with the EUSAIR content outside social media (visiting the website/ news articles, subscribing to the newsletter).</p> <p>On social media, key accounts will be monitored. The EUSAIR will engage with their own content (like, share) to make them engage with the EUSAIR content as well. Best practices among them will be</p>

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						highlighted on the EUSAIR's platforms.
HIGHER EDUCATION & RESEARCH	Universities, research centres.	High contact with the EUSAIR, low awareness.	Visibility, recognition of their experts, network, and work at regional/ EU/ international level. Ready to use content and promotional materials.	Benefiting from experts, reports, analysis, data in various fields of the 4 pillars.	<p>RECOGNITION</p> <p>By collaborating with the EUSAIR, they can promote their programmes to improve their image at national, EU or global level.</p>	<p>Ibid.</p> <p>In addition, ready-to-use posts will be provided to partner higher education institutions to allow them to easily publish EUSAIR-related content on the accounts of their organisation.</p> <p>Whenever possible, video content will be produced with key spokespeople testimonials/ experts' views. Content that will be promoted internally and externally (newsletters, website, social media, press).</p>
BUSINESS SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS	Business Incubators, innovation centres, accelerators, living Labs, chambers of commerce and industry, business centres, etc.	Moderate contact with the EUSAIR, low awareness.	Business opportunities, visibility. Clear information on projects, results, and impact for their business.	Benefiting from ideas, reports, analysis, data in various fields of the 4 pillars.	<p>CO-CREATION</p> <p>By finding solutions for common global challenges, they can grow the business/ attractivity of the Adriatic-Ionian region.</p>	Ibid.
EDUCATION CENTRES, SCHOOLS	Training and education centres, schools, reaching young citizens of the Adriatic-Ionian region.	Moderate contact with the EUSAIR, low awareness.	Didactic content (theoretical/ practical). Clear, impactful, and engaging information.	Raising awareness on the EUSAIR and co-creating with future ambassadors (youth being a	<p>EDUCATION</p> <p>Educating on the benefits of cooperation to boost</p>	Via the website , the newsletters and social media , the aim will be to reach out to education centres and schools by providing them with quality content (video

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				priority for the EUSAIR).	the Adriatic-Ionian region.	<p>material, infographics, web articles).</p> <p>On social media, key accounts will be monitored. The EUSAIR will engage with their own content (like, share) to make them engage with the EUSAIR content as well. Best practices among them will be highlighted on the EUSAIR's platforms.</p>
NGOS, PUBLIC SERVICE INSTITUTIONS	Associations (local, regional, national, international) and public service (culture, tourism, etc.) of the region.	Low contact and awareness of the EUSAIR.	Recognition (subsidies) and support for their activities and projects.	Ideas, data, reports, analysis, and co-creation to solve common challenges.	<p>COOPERATION</p> <p>Partnering with a macro-regional strategy can lead to recognition and enable to solve their challenges.</p>	<p>Content inspired from data, reports and analysis by NGOs and public services institutions will be used by the EUSAIR in its communication, creating bridges with those organisations, and co-creating.</p> <p>The content will be highlighted on social media, the website (news articles) and via the newsletter.</p> <p>On social media, key accounts will be monitored. The EUSAIR will engage with their own content (like, share) to make them engage with the EUSAIR content as well. Best practices among them will be highlighted on the EUSAIR's platforms.</p> <p>Whenever possible, video content will be produced with key spokespeople testimonials/ experts' views. This content will be promoted</p>

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR EUSAIR – TASK 3

						internally and externally (newsletters, website, social media, press).
PRESS	Both mainstream and vertical press.	Moderate contact with the EUSAIR, low awareness.	Impacting stories, attractive for their audience. Data, facts, contact with projects managers, visuals.	Increasing the visibility of the macro-regional strategy through engaging stories.	<p>NEWSWORTHY STORIES</p> <p>Engaging stories to increase readership.</p>	<p>All content prepared and published by EUSAIR, and its partners can be used for press communications (web articles, videos, visuals, reports, etc.).</p> <p>In order to keep journalists informed, a press newsletter will be set up.</p> <p>On social media, key media/journalists will be monitored. The EUSAIR will engage with their own content whenever coherent.</p>
YOUTH	18-30 years old. Citizens of the participating countries.	Low contact and awareness of the EUSAIR.	Give a purpose to their actions, for a better future. Inspiring and engaging stories.	Engaging them and collecting their input (fears and hopes) for a better tomorrow, potential solutions. Key audience for the future of the EUSAIR.	<p>PURPOSE & FUTURE</p> <p>Joint solutions today can tackle the challenges of tomorrow, for a better Adriatic-Ionian region.</p>	<p>Mobile, social media, video, influencers/ peer-to-peer communication are the keywords to reach young people online.</p> <p>To engage them, it will be necessary to rely on meaningful content, relayed via 'young' social media (Instagram, Tik Tok). However, it will first be necessary to take the time to align the communication on the current platforms used by the EUSAIR before investing in new platforms.</p>

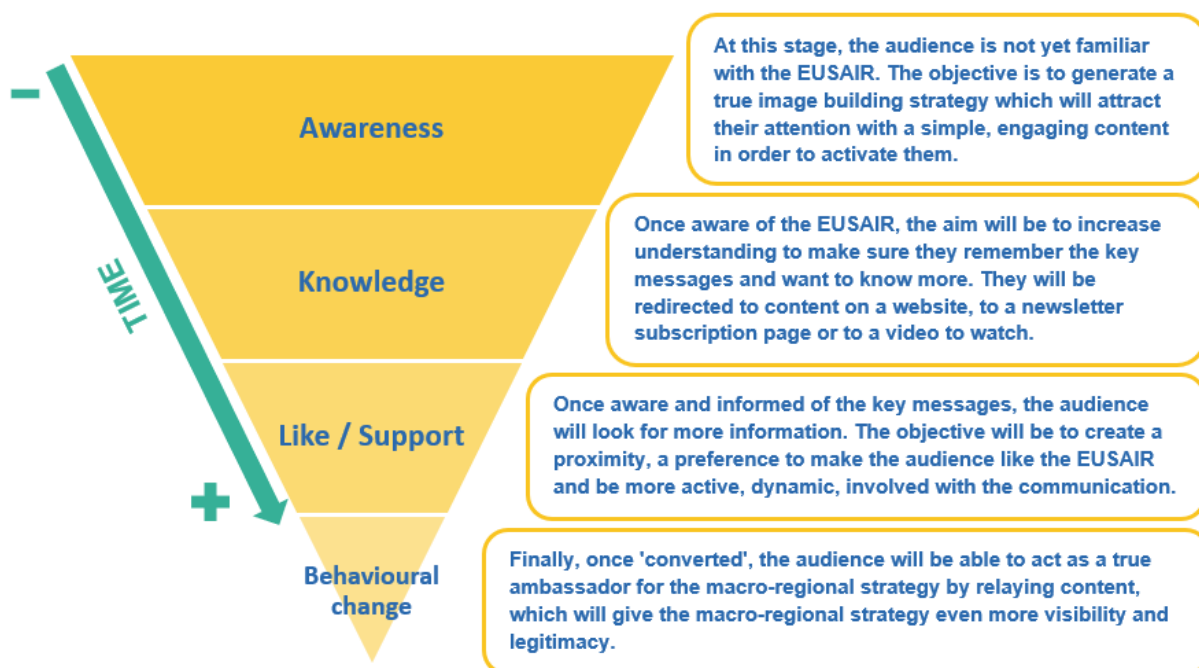
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OPINION LEADERS/ INFLUENCERS	Representatives of the civil society (university professors, influential entrepreneurs, YouTubers, etc.).	Low contact and awareness of the EUSAIR.	Recognition and support for their activities. Messages impacting for their communities. Increase of their audience.	Engaging them to take advantage of their reputation/ notoriety on a certain audience, to better deliver key messages.	RECOGNITION & VISIBILITY Collaborating with a macro-regional strategy will strengthen their reach in the region.	Identify the opinion leaders of EUSAIR's targets (whether university professors, young YouTubers, or entrepreneurs) to better deliver the messages. Testimonials (video and web articles), social media posts: we will use content creation to reach the audiences of these opinion leaders.
INDIVIDUALS	Citizens of the Adriatic-Ionian regions, tourists.	Low contact and awareness of the EUSAIR.	They want to live in an attractive and strong region. Engaging and clear stories.	Sharing experience and ideas for a better Adriatic-Ionian Region.	IMPACT EUSAIR projects have a direct impact on their lives for a more attractive, competitive, and connected region.	Via testimonials (video and web articles), social media posts, the aim will be to reach out to the citizens of the macro-region by providing them with content on the impact of the EUSAIR in their lives.

3.3. Clarifying current levels of communication effects for each group of audience

To achieve the expectations mentioned for each audience, it is necessary to start by determining their level of knowledge of the EUSAIR.

From awareness (knowing the existence of EUSAIR) to knowledge (understanding who EUSAIR is) to liking and support (liking and endorsing EUSAIR's messages) and behavioural change (being engaged and acting for the EUSAIR), each audience is currently at a different stage and the online communication will have to take into account this broad spectrum of current knowledge in relation to the macro-regional strategy.



Based on the AIDA (Awareness, Interest, Desire, Action) model.

Visual based on AIDA model ©Vademecom.

The **internal stakeholders** currently know the EUSAIR, understand it and endorse its messages but lack of real actions online: creating and sharing content about the EUSAIR, liking social media posts, taking part in videos for online purposes, sharing key information on reports, projects, etc. For this audience, the aim will be to ensure they endorse the EUSAIR messages (Like/Support) in order to *in fine* convert them as ambassadors of the macro-regional strategy (Behavioural change).

The identified **target groups** are at different stages of knowledge of the EUSAIR. The majority of them has no idea that the EUSAIR exists. It will take, at first, more energy to reach them, and get their attention (Awareness). Another part of the target groups currently knows the EUSAIR but does not clearly understand the impact of the macro-regional strategy: it will be important to provide them with key numbers and facts on the EUSAIR (Knowledge). In the longer term, the

objective for these audience will be to engender a sympathy for the EUSAIR, and engagement (Like/Support) to hopefully convert them as well in ambassadors of the macro-regional strategy (Behavioural change).

3.4. Categorisation of the audiences per level of communication effects

To facilitate categorisation, we have grouped all audiences into 5 categories, and established their level of knowledge.

- Governance structure (all internal stakeholders).
- Current and potential partners.
- Local and regional actors of the Adriatic-Ionian region (public authorities not part of the governance structure, businesses, research centres, higher education, schools, NGOs, influencers, etc.).
- General public (including youth).
- Press.

Such a classification makes it possible to better determine which channel, which tool, which format, which strategy to use for which audience, according to their current level of knowledge of the EUSAIR.

Depending on the stage of knowledge of our audiences, the digital communication objectives will also vary. It is important to keep these objectives in mind for any communication that will be made to a specific audience. This will guide the way we deliver messages to audiences.

Effect per audience	Awareness	Knowledge	Like/support	Behavioural change
Governance structure			✓	✓
Current and potential partners		✓	✓	✓
Local and regional actors of the Adriatic-Ionian region	✓	✓	✓	✓
General public	✓	✓	✓	✓

Press	✓	✓	✓	✓
Communication objectives	<p>Create online visibility of the EUSAIR among new targets and current stakeholders.</p> <p>Identify success stories, collect testimonials, and promote projects supported by the EUSAIR online.</p>	<p>Increase the online visibility and reach of the EUSAIR (social media, website, newsletters, videos) on proprietary accounts/ channels.</p> <p>Increase the number of success stories and testimonials collected.</p>	<p>Grow and engage the online audience of the EUSAIR on proprietary accounts/ channels.</p> <p>Increase the online visibility of the EUSAIR on external accounts/channels (blogs, websites, social media, online press).</p>	<p>Create and identify online EUSAIR ambassadors.</p> <p>Collect input and ideas from target audiences and stakeholders online.</p> <p>Co-create online with engaged audiences.</p> <p>Have audiences proactively generating content on the EUSAIR.</p>

Note that the aim is of course to bring all the major audiences to a high level of awareness of EUSAIR but also to gain their support and involvement with the EUSAIR. This table is therefore not fixed in time.

4. At the core of the content strategy: the Message House.

4.1. Building the EUSAIR Message House

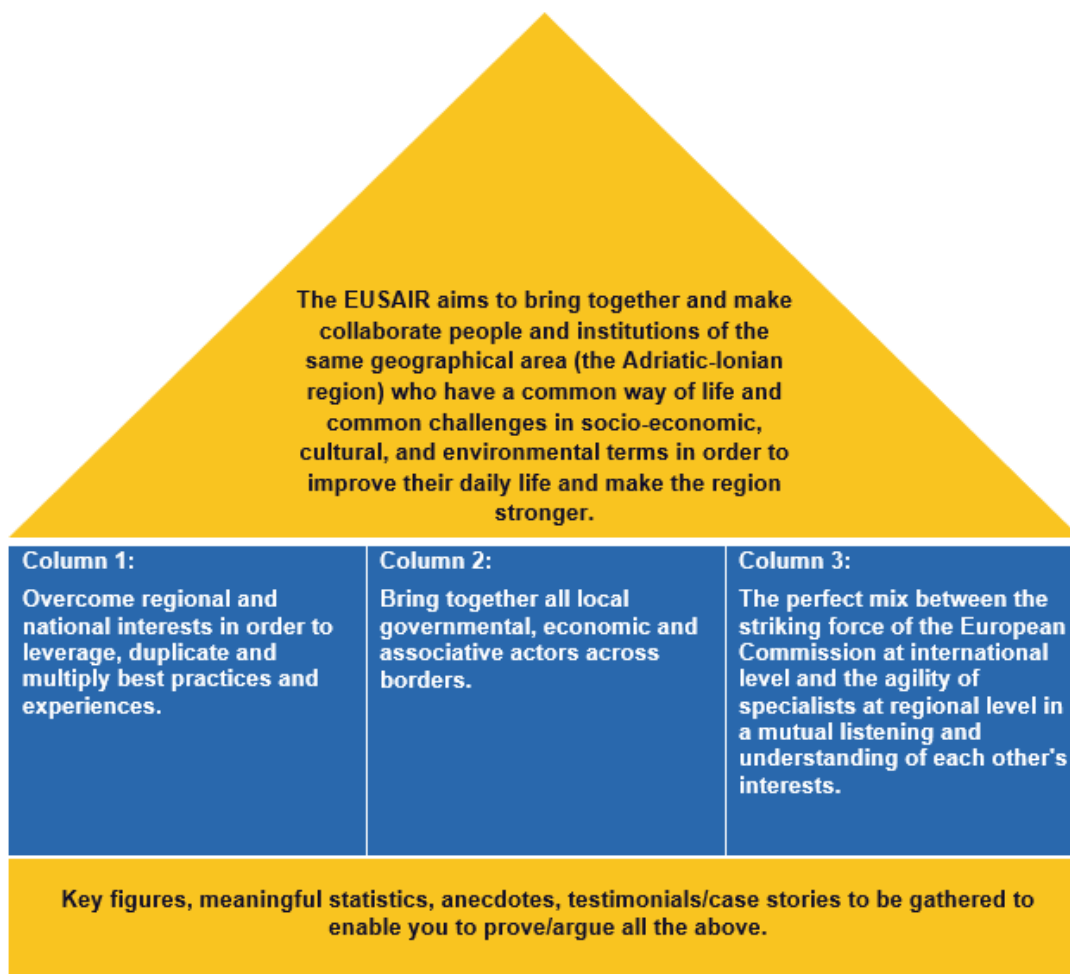
In contrast to the construction industry, a message house is built from the roof to the basement: with the aim to give, step by step, more 'body' to the communication and therefore strengthen it the further down you go, from the general (roof) to the details (foundation).

- The roof is what we call the umbrella statement/the baseline: how are we going to translate, in our communication, EUSAIR's objectives?
- Each column of the message house aims to support the baseline by translating it into concrete terms.
 - The first column aims to pinpoint what the EUSAIR is going to solve, what the EUSAIR is going to tackle: this is the core message n°1.
 - The second column shows what makes the approach unique: this is the core message n°2.

- The third column is the secret of success, the explanation on why it is working: this is the core message n°3.
- The basis of the message house is formed by conversion/persuasion points: these are concrete examples (figures, statistics, reports, testimonials, etc.) that support the 3 core messages by proving that it works.



EUSAIR Message house building questions – ©Vademecom



EUSAIR Message house – ©Vademecom

4.2. How to use the Message House for the EUSAIR's digital communication?

The Message House above will serve to **conceptualise each production** (social media posts, videos, website, newsletters), which will allow for coherence within all EUSAIR's digital communication, and beyond!

Indeed, the messages used in digital communication can also be amplified and resonate with actions on the ground and in traditional media, such as the press.

The key messages above should therefore be **declined based on the audiences, on the pillars**, but also on the countries and regions part of the EUSAIR.

If each stakeholder must integrate this message house in order to be able to relay a common vision of the EUSAIR, regardless of their country, they will also have to take part in the build-up of a real database to **feed the foundation of the message house**.

All the **global figures, evidence, statistics, testimonials** that are used as proof points must be the same throughout the region (i.e., if the Greeks talk about the desertification of the seabed, they must refer to the same figures and data as the Italians or Bosnians, giving various examples that will be shared by all, such as the return of tuna). However, this also means that there is a need for **country-specific figures** that will be put into the global context of the EUSAIR.

Content is king in communication. We will therefore have to build a ‘treasure’ of case stories, statistics that are linked to regions, countries but also to the macro-region, and most importantly **make them available to all** to allow the EUSAIR to become a reference and reliable source of information for its members and partners.

4.3. How to gather the information to support the messages?

The approach considered is to increase information sharing between the different people involved in the macro-regional strategy (cross borders, cross pillars).

Example: Each country lead partner must provide, in the next quarter, 5 impactful statistics of the effect of EUSAIR in each pillar, with at least two case stories for each pillar, which fit in 10 lines.

In addition, the EUSAIR will have to proactively go ‘fishing’ for information within the partner institutions, such as the different European institutions that can have an impact in the different pillars of EUSAIR (DG MARE, DG ENER, DG REGIO, etc.), as well as on the ground with their privileged contacts (Chamber of Commerce, etc.).

Example: Each year, the European Commission organises numerous awards, such as the RegioStars (GD REGIO), to which particular attention should be paid if projects from the EUSAIR region are taken up, as it was the case for RegioStars 2020.

In order to simplify, structure and above all automate this information sharing, it will first of all be important to set up a contact database in each partner institution for the collection of this information, to put in place a clear process for sharing (with a form) but also to configure automatic monitoring systems (in particular a Google Alert on different keywords and a press clipping service).

The objective will be to gather all this content, digest it and share it proactively to all EUSAIR stakeholders (website, direct email), but also towards a wider audience (social media, press, events). This business intelligence tool will not only help the EUSAIR to communicate to the outside world but will be an essential internal communication tool to further motivate, persuade and mobilise its stakeholders on the usefulness of the project and its evolution... to create a sense of commitment and ownership.

To facilitate the collection of the information, a process and template will be provided in the next report (Tasks 4 & 5: Fine-tune and amplify the overall communication strategy).

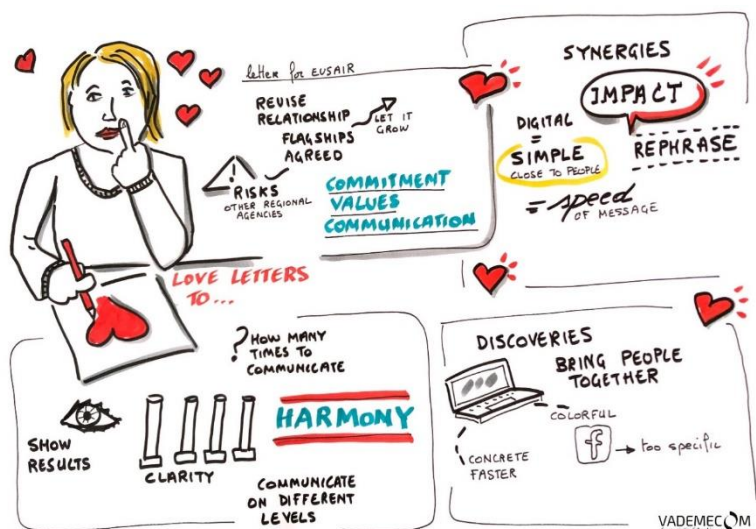
4.4. How to take advantage of all the data gathered?

All the information collected to support the messages will be used in a variety of digital communications: articles on the website, news items in newsletters, social media posts, visuals, videos, case stories, banners, etc. and will be deployed through the channels below.

5. Leveraging the perfect channel mix for greater cooperation and visibility

The EUSAIR is currently working on its online visibility through various channels and tools: website, e-mailing, online collaboration platform (the Stakeholder Platform), social media (Facebook and Twitter) and a YouTube channel.

In the following points, we will determine the strategy envisaged for each platform in order to achieve the objectives of the EUSAIR and discuss future possibilities, in the long term, through the adoption of new platforms or tools.



“Love Letters to the EUSAIR” – Workshop “Towards a (new) digital communication strategy for the EUSAIR”
(7th June 2021) – © Vademecom

5.1. EUSAIR Stakeholder Platform

5.1.1. Starting point for generating collaboration and implementing the content strategy

With around 1000 members, the Stakeholder platform is the centralised communication, community, and collaboration instrument of the EUSAIR. It aims to increase stakeholder engagement coordination and implementation processes.

However, the platform is currently not used to its full potential by members and only a few ones are responsible for the majority of the content that is published.

Following the chosen approach of simplifying and structuring information sharing, the current Stakeholder Platform, and especially its members, are the ideal **starting point to implement the digital communication strategy**. Because content is king, it will be a priority to leverage the

Stakeholder Platform **to collect, compile and then propagate high value-added content on the EUSAIR.**

To make sure the Stakeholder Platform can become the concrete expression of cooperation within the EUSAIR, it is essential that everyone involved in the governance structure - but also any partner member of the Stakeholder Platform:

- is made aware of its existence (starting point).
- is made aware of the new content sharing strategy and of the processes that will be put in place to facilitate sharing and harvesting information.
- receives and understands the tools to simplify these processes.
- Beyond these practical elements, it will be important on the technical side:
- To create a list of all the members of the Stakeholder Platform and generate data to get to know them better (who are they, where do they come from, what are their interests?).
- To review the design of the Stakeholder Platform towards a more user-friendly interface.
- To foresee a clear and visible section dedicated to all projects, with explanatory sheets, visuals and contacts for each of them.
- To foresee a clear and visible section with key data on each of the pillars of the macro-regional strategy.
- To foresee a section to provide the information (e.g., completing a form), available for appointed people/ to be validated.

Of course, as all the members of the Stakeholder Platform are already 'aware' of the EUSAIR and have 'knowledge' about it, let us not forget to use the platform to remind them to 'support' the macro-regional strategy on its different external channels, to increase its visibility, and to engage them to make them real ambassadors (behavioural change).

5.1.2. Towards a reference database on cooperation in the Adriatic-Ionian region

It should also be remembered that the Stakeholder Platform is **accessible to anyone who applies to join** it. Although used as an internal communication tool, the platform also conveys an **image of the EUSAIR externally**.

Moreover, in order to make EUSAIR a fully-fledged media to provide high value-added information on the macro-region, one of the long-term objectives will be to promote the platform to external audiences: regional, national or international organisations looking for best practices and potential new partners.

5.2. EUSAIR website

5.2.1. A value for each audience

The website adriatic-ionian.eu is currently set up as a platform to divulge two types of information: generic information on the macro-regional strategy and its structure, and latest news on events, calls of proposals as well as EU policy developments. As such, the website is very institutionally oriented and clearly built for the members of the governance structure who already know EUSAIR.

Although very complete on the organisational structure, the website does not contain any content explaining the 'why' of the macro-regional strategy and even less content on its impact and achievements in the macro-region (persuasion/conversion points).

By its very nature, an organisation's website is visited:

- by people who know the organisation and are looking for specific information (e.g., a journalist looking for information on the strategy or a member of the European Commission looking for a contact address of the head of a Pillar). In this case, the visitors proactively entered to the website: our objective will be important that these people **easily find the information** they look for.
- by people who have been redirected to the website via another platform (a call to action on social media, newsletter) to know more about the macro-regional strategy in general or to read a specific news article. In this case, the visitors were brought to the website without having planned to be there: our objective will be important to catch their attention to **make them stay on the website** and surf on the different pages.

The website's audience will therefore be just as diverse as EUSAIR's and will therefore have just as many different levels of knowledge as EUSAIR's audience.

Currently, the website is in the first scenario presented: it is visited by people who already know the EUSAIR. And to extend the visibility of the macro-regional strategy, the website should now **also be designed as a destination where impactful information on the macro-regional strategy** can be found for anyone who is not yet familiar with EUSAIR.

5.2.2. The leading platform for developing content strategy and engaging the audience

Exchange and interactivity are essential qualities offered by digital communication. In this way, the website cannot therefore simply display pages of content, it must allow the user to establish a **conversation with the EUSAIR**. In an effort to create ambassadors for the region, the website should therefore also be designed **to activate and engage audiences**.

This can be expressed through the **creation of high value-added content**, published in the 'News/Blog' section of the website.

From infographics to testimonials/interviews of personalities of the macro-region, through the highlighting of macro-regional projects and initiatives, the objective will be to create a **varied content** (in terms of themes/pillars, highlighted countries, and form).

These contents featured on the website will then be **declined** into multiple posts for social media, articles for the newsletter, videos or even pitched for media coverage, thus allowing economies of scale in terms of effort, time, and money.

We would recommend that the EUSAIR works with copywriting experts (and graphic designers) to establish editorial calendars, write impactful articles, and convert them into multiple formats, from social media to videos or infographics.

To engage even more specific audiences, the translation of articles into national language should be considered.

5.2.3. Towards an enhanced user experience

The technical aspect must obviously also be taken into account when creating content. In addition to supporting EUSAIR's image, the regular publication of content ensures the **good referencing** of websites. It is therefore appropriate to ask the question of what content will both engage the audience and allow a good referencing? (Based on strategic keywords).

Given the increasing use of the mobile to surf the Internet, the website must obviously be perfectly mobile-friendly; even more seeing the strategy aiming at creating more **bridges between communication channels** (notably social media > website).

To do this, we recommend that EUSAIR surrounds itself with a team specialised in website creation and SEO.

5.2.4. Doorway to conversion

Besides being a powerful image tool, the website is also a **powerful email marketing tool**: it is the starting point to build up a highly qualified database, which can be used for the distribution of newsletters.

5.2.5. Bannering and SEA

In the longer term, and for specific campaigns such as the promotion of a key event, a macro-regional competition, or a call for ideas across the region, EUSAIR may consider the purchase of advertising space on other websites, including online media (bannering, sponsored articles) as well as the development of a Search Engine Advertising campaign (Google Ads, YouTube, Display).

Digital channel	Actionable at which level	Audiences	Objective
EUSAIR website	Knowledge Like/ support Behavioural change	Primary audience: current and potential partners, local and regional actors of the Adriatic-Ionian region Secondary audience: governance structure, general public, press.	To turn it into the reference information platform on the macro-regional strategy. To propagate a dynamic image of the macro-region through the regular publication of valuable content.

5.3. Newsletters

If used properly, the newsletter is a powerful communication tool. It gives the image of an active and dynamic organisation and allows to share news, and proactively inform the readers. The newsletter is therefore an opportunity to promote the macro-regional strategy thanks to high-value content, redirecting to the website (improving its traffic), or external platforms (partners' website).

5.3.1. A newsletter for each audience

The success of a newsletter will depend on the relevance of the content to the target audience. As the EUSAIR addresses a variety of stakeholders, on a variety of topics (pillars), it is important to produce not one but several newsletters according to the interests of each audience.

To do so, knowing and refining the current newsletter database should be the starting point. On this basis, it will be easier to determine what type of content to produce for each audience, each newsletter. The aim is certainly not to produce a newsletter for each identified target group, but rather to avoid being too generic by finding a reasonable balance.

A possible structure is as follows:

- a newsletter for all members of the governance structure, possibly split according to pillars, once a month.
- a newsletter for the press, once a month.
- a newsletter dedicated to a wider audience of potential partners, once a quarter.

Of course, not all topics should be unique, but can be reused from one newsletter to another and rephrased according to the audience.

5.3.2. Consistency and regularity as watchword

To be effective, the newsletter must not only be coherent with its targets, but also coherent in itself and with each other: all e-mailings must be clearly identifiable with a clear visual identity, have a unified overall structure (refined according to the newsletters), and must convey the key messages of the macro-regional strategy.

Regularity is clearly an asset: irregular dissemination will indicate irregular management and may be understood as a lack of content and achievements to share.

Here again, EUSAIR can call on copywriting experts to deliver effective newsletters.

Digital channel	Actionable at which level	Audiences	Objective
Newsletter	Like/ support Behavioural change	Primary audience: governance structure, current and potential partners, press (with targeted newsletters). Secondary audience: local and regional actors of the Adriatic-Ionian region.	Promote cooperation within the macro-region. Increase the visibility of the EUSAIR to a variety of audiences. Generate traffic to the website and the articles it contains.

5.4. Social Media

With a modest presence on Twitter and Facebook, EUSAIR currently suffers from low visibility on social media, with content that is very event-oriented and aimed at a target audience that is already 'familiar' with the macro-regional strategy.

Before thinking of investing in new social media platforms in the short term, it is essential that EUSAIR first strengthens its presence on Facebook and Twitter, while boosting its video content (YouTube).

The advantage of Facebook and Twitter is that we can – from the beginning of the implementation of the strategy - rely on the influence and popularity of key partners (Governing Board, for example) - who are present on such media - to amplify our communication. This is not currently the case on younger platforms such as Instagram or Tik Tok.

The strategy envisaged will therefore firstly aim to consolidate EUSAIR's visibility on these platforms. And the first point to do this concerns the name given to its platforms: EUSAIR or EUSAIR Facility Point mean nothing to most people. "EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region" already gives more information. It is therefore crucial to start by **aligning the social media platforms with the EUSAIR identity**: by clearly announcing who we are and what we want to achieve.

The second step will be to start building links with influential people and organisations (governments, ministries, associations, public services, etc.) already involved in the EUSAIR. Through a logic of monitoring and seeding, the objective will be to talk about others so that they talk about the EUSAIR.

It is also important to be surrounded by experts in copywriting and social media to ensure coherent and professional communication.

5.4.1. Twitter, to build and reinforce bridges with current and potential partners in the institutional world

Twitter, first of all, is the most natural platform for the EUSAIR: the macro-regional strategy is currently aimed primarily at the institutional world, and it is on Twitter that the latter is most active.

The first step of our strategy will be to **activate the existing stakeholders** on Twitter, to create bridges with them and engage them (support/behavioural change).

- To do so, **a seeding strategy** will have to be put in place: because giving is important to receive, the EUSAIR will have to be engaged itself with the accounts of others, not only by liking, commenting, or retweeting their content but also by involving them into its own communication (highlighting the initiatives of others).
- In order to reinforce the cooperation among the people involved in the governance structure, the EUSAIR should provide them with **a toolbox and ready-to-use Tweets** to help them relay the EUSAIR's key messages among their own audiences (via the profile of a Minister or the account of a partner organisation), and **in their national language**.

Twitter is also a great platform to generate awareness and knowledge and **reach potential new partners**: by **monitoring partner organisations' accounts**, EUSAIR will be able to easily follow their content, react to them (to congratulate initiatives for example), and retweet their content. Such a seeding strategy will allow EUSAIR to increase its visibility with these organisations, their leaders and thus create new links to expand Adriatic-Ionian cooperation.

This monitoring and seeding strategy also applies to organisations similar to EUSAIR, both within the region and beyond, allowing the **creation of links with 'coopetitors'**.

If immediacy is the watchword on Twitter, this does not exclude the **creation of a content calendar**, decided well in advance.

The content will have to be coherent (in terms of messaging and visual identity) and varied in terms of topic and format (static images, carousels, videos). It will be used to provide general information on the macro-regional strategy (to an institutional/B2B audience, potential partners), to create a sense of pride in the macro-region by highlighting its achievements (to members of the governance structure), to highlight both internal and external best practices (to potential partners and coopetitors). Tweets in national language will also be envisaged for specific campaigns.

A clear content calendar will allow for the maintenance of a regular presence of EUSAIR on Twitter, throughout the months.

During events of the macro-regional strategy, Twitter should be **used as an immediate relay** of information, with live Tweeting, live streaming, videos of key speakers, etc.

Combined with **good community management**, which will allow to monitor and react to the latest trending topics, the EUSAIR will have the keys to relay its key messages within the Twittersphere.

Lastly, because each digital communication platform is part of a global ecosystem, **links between channels** will have to be created: encouraging partner organisation to tweet on particular dates or event via an information in the newsletter, promoting content published on the website or videos published on YouTube in a Tweet, etc.

Digital channel	Actionable at which level	Audiences	Objective
Twitter	Awareness Knowledge Like/ support Behavioural change	Primary audience: governance structure, current and potential partners. Secondary audience: similar initiatives in the region and beyond, press.	Strengthen links with the governance structure. Create bridges with current and potential partners, with 'coopetitors'. Monitor the activities of partners and 'coopetitors'.

5.4.2. Facebook, to extend the reach of the macro-regional strategy, attracting local and regional partners

Although Facebook is a less institutional platform than Twitter, all potential partner organisations are present on it. For instance, **87% of the organisations** - at local, regional, and national level - that have been proposed for the extension of the current EUSAIR database (mostly NGOs, higher education and research institutions) are present on Facebook, and 43% on Twitter³⁵.

These organisations are therefore particularly reachable via Facebook.

Facebook should be used to create **awareness, knowledge, and sympathy** about the EUSAIR, conveying its achievements and impact on the macro-region, providing additional information about the why of the strategy and highlighting the personalities (human faces) behind the macro-regional strategy.

As **local/regional institutions and organisations** are often more active on Facebook than on Twitter or any other platform, it will be important to strengthen links with them via Facebook which will also be used to **keep up to date with news from the ground**.

³⁵ Digital Communication Strategy for EUSAIR -Task 2: Identifying and mapping all the groups of EUSAIR stakeholders and partners.

Posts in national language should also be considered for specific campaigns.

On Facebook as well as on Twitter or any other 'social' platform, a **seeding strategy** will have to be set up, through reinforced community management and monitoring. Ready-to-use posts (in national language) will also have to be created for partners to facilitate their engagement.

During events of the macro-regional strategy, Facebook can also be **used as an immediate relay** of information, with live videos. Facebook should also be envisaged as an event platform in itself, creating momentum with the audience, by creating videos with experts (live or Premiere format), online conferences, etc.

In the longer term, Facebook will serve as a platform for **promoting co-creation initiatives** among the inhabitants of the macro-region, and for encouraging them to take action.

Digital channel	Actionable at which level	Audiences	Objective
Facebook	Awareness Knowledge Like/ support Behavioural change	Primary audience: local and regional actors of the Adriatic-Ionian region, current and potential partners, general public. Secondary audience: governance structure.	Generate visibility at a local and regional level. Create bridges with current and potential partners. Monitor the news of the region at large. Engage the inhabitants of the region at large.

5.4.3. YouTube, towards a video content strategy

In addition to all the textual material, the content strategy also - and even more so nowadays - encompasses video content.

While YouTube is currently used as a simple storage location for replays of EUSAIR events, the ambition will be to transform this archiving location into a **'modern library'**, into a cosy corner where users will not only be able to experience and relive events online, but also discover and enjoy **educational, informative videos** about EUSAIR and its activities.

The video format will have to be strongly developed in the short, medium, and long term to support EUSAIR's messages. From testimonials and case stories on existing projects to inspiring statements from the 'human faces' behind EUSAIR, to animations explaining the logic of the macro-regional strategy and its impact: all content should be transferable to video.

With the rise of mobile, and the viewing of videos without sound, the addition of subtitles is inherent to the success of videos. Subtitles in English and national languages should therefore be considered for each video.

Far from being restricted to YouTube, the videos should be **relayed and promoted via the website, newsletter, and social media**, with the determination **to be used and reused by partner organisations** and other stakeholders.

Digital channel	Actionable at which level	Audiences	Objective
YouTube/ video content	Awareness Knowledge Like/ support Behavioural change	Primary audience: governance structure, current and potential partners. Secondary audience: local and regional actors of the Adriatic-Ionian region, general public.	Build up a video content library to relay, support and facilitate the understanding of EUSAIR's key messages.

5.4.4. Investing in social media paid advertising

Successfully reaching new potential partners through social media requires a coherent, efficient and consistent seeding strategy, and a lot of time.

In order to effectively deliver messages to a specific audience, the creation of social media ads (on Twitter and Facebook) is an asset of choice to be integrated in the digital strategy. By creating accurate audiences and consistent advertising goals, the targeting of audiences will be all the easier.

To increase EUSAIR's visibility beyond its current partners, it is therefore recommended to include a social media advertising budget in the digital strategy.

5.4.5. Developing a presence on other social media

In the short term, it is recommended to **focus on the platforms currently used by EUSAIR to make them stronger and more impactful**. There is no point in embarking on new challenges when the codes of the current social media platforms have yet to be assimilated.

In the medium and long term, however, it will be useful to evaluate the digital strategy in place to determine the need to invest in new platforms.

Among the social media we would recommend at first **Instagram and LinkedIn** (second and third most used social media in the EUSAIR participating countries).

- To attract the attention of a younger audience (18-34 years old), Instagram may be a next platform to invest in. By leveraging the **Story and video formats**, which can significantly increase awareness and engagement, the EUSAIR will be able to breathe new life into and expand its visibility within the macro-region. Moreover, Instagram is also the ideal

platform to run campaigns with **influencers**, who will be the voice of EUSAIR towards a young target audience, the future of the macro-region.

- Please note that while we do not recommend launching an Instagram account for the EUSAIR in the short term, we do recommend starting by creating Instagram ads via the Facebook page. It is indeed possible for any organisation with a Facebook page to create advertisements on Instagram, without necessarily having an account on that social media. A strategy to consider in case of sporadic campaigns aimed at a younger audience.
- From a more B2B point of view, LinkedIn is a platform to consider for building bridges with the academic, business, and entrepreneurial world.

Other platforms can be invested in the shorter term, like **Flickr**, an image and video hosting service that can be used to compile event picture to easily share with external stakeholders, such as journalists.

Trendy social platforms such as TikTok (a video-sharing social media massively used by pupils and students) or Twitch (a video live streaming service) are also worth keeping an eye on in the future.

5.5. Summary

The table below summarises which platform should be used to reach and engage which stakeholder.

The members of the governance structure, for example, are already familiar with the EUSAIR. The objective is to engage them with the Stakeholder Platform but also with the newsletter, which will retarget them to the news page of the website. We, however, do not aim at redirecting them to the homepage, or the About page of the website, as they already know the EUSAIR. On social media, this institutional audience will be more present on Twitter than on Facebook. Twitter, in priority, will therefore have to be invested to engage them.

Primary and secondary targets per channel	Governance structure	Current and potential partners	Local and regional actors of the Adriatic-Ionian region	General public	Press
Stakeholder Platform	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
EUSAIR website	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Newsletters	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Twitter	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Facebook	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

YouTube	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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✓ : primary targets, ✓ : secondary targets, ✓ : thirdly targets

We could also summarise the above table by the effects of the communication, rather than by the audiences. Depending on the desired effect - awareness, knowledge, support, behavioural change - some channels are more beneficial than others.

For example, a website as such does not generate awareness, but a well-targeted social media post can do, and arouse a person's attention to a topic or an organisation. Social media is therefore a perfect tool to raise awareness. To give people the opportunity to find out more about a topic or an organisation, social media content can redirect to a website which will perform a 'knowledge' role.

The same goes for the newsletters, people who subscribe for a newsletter are people already aware of an organisation, who already learned more about it, and want to stay aware of its news (support, like).

Effect per channel	Awareness	Knowledge	Like/ support	Behavioural change
Stakeholder Platform			✓	✓
EUSAIR website		✓	✓	✓
Newsletters			✓	✓
Twitter	✓	✓	✓	✓
Facebook	✓	✓	✓	✓
YouTube	✓	✓	✓	✓

5.6. Digital vs. traditional channels

A digital communication strategy makes no sense without a global communication strategy. The two must therefore be integrated, convey the same messages, and pursue the same objectives.

All the information that will be deployed via the channels mentioned above will of course come from other communications (e.g., annual reports, event conclusions) but will also be a source for the development of other communication actions beyond digital.

As an example, all the information collected by the governance structure will allow to create videos or social media posts as well as to build a communication towards the press. This communication towards the press can then be relayed (press articles) via social media and via the website, thus creating a virtuous circle of information-sharing, saving time, resources, and effort.

6. Planning the online communication

6.1. Short-, medium- and long-term objectives

Any action, tool or strategy must be evaluated. To do so, the communication strategy has to be based on one or more objectives which should be:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time-Bound

In terms of timing, objectives have been designed for the short term (3 months), the medium term (1 year) and the long term (5 years). As time goes on, it will be necessary to review these objectives.

Indeed, the objectives presented below do not take into account possible campaigns that will be launched in the coming months/years. They are therefore an initial basis for launching the communication strategy and will have to be revised as actions are undertaken online in order to better reflect the reality of the field.

The actions envisaged in the short term reflect a reality achievable by the teams in place, accompanied by professionals. The budget and human resources invested in communication will obviously have an impact on the achievement of these objectives.

	Smart objectives		
	Short-term 3 months	Medium-term 1 year	Long-term 5 years
WEBSITE OF THE STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM	<p>Provide a survey to each member to profile them, understand their intentions, with a target response rate of 60%.</p> <p>Clearly communicate to all members on the information-sharing process, with an increase of 20% in the number of sessions after 3 months and the collection of 5 impactful statistics of the effect of EUSAIR in each pillar and at least 2 case stories for each pillar.</p>	<p>Review the overall structure of the Stakeholder Platform, to make it more user-friendly.</p> <p>Ensure a good balance among the members in the countries represented.</p>	<p>Convert the Stakeholders Platform into a reference media (different types of access based on the profile), with more than 3000 members who are external to the governance structure in 5 years.</p>

EUSAIR WEBSITE	<p>Website reviewed structure approved within 3 months.</p> <p>At least the homepage already reviewed (clearly indicating what is EUSAIR) and the 'About' section taking into account the Message House.</p> <p>Increase of 20% in the number of page views for the homepage and 'About' page.</p> <p>Regular publication of 'blog'/news articles: at least 2 per week, each week.</p> <p>Increase of 40% in the number of page views for the 'News' page.</p>	<p>Website reviewed structure implemented (user- and mobile-friendly).</p> <p>Check/update of the generic information once a month.</p> <p>Regular publication of 'blog'/news articles: at least 3 per week, each week.</p>	<p>Maintaining a user- and mobile-friendly website, regularly checked/updated (at least once a month for the generic information).</p> <p>Regular publication of news articles: at least 4 per week, each week.</p>
NEWSLETTER	<p>Restructuring of the EUSAIR Newsletter subscribers (who, what, opening rates) to know which information to provide to who.</p> <p>New approved template, with use of a professional platform, enabling to gather precise data.</p> <p>Distribution of 1 newsletter in the new format, with an opening rate above 40%, and an average click-to-open rate of 15%.</p>	<p>Creation of distinct newsletters per audience.</p> <p>From 1 newsletter per month (press, governance structure) to 1 newsletter per quarter (potential partners).</p> <p>Increase of 30% in the number of subscribers, with an opening rate above 30%, and an average click-to-open rate of 15%.</p> <p>Ensure a good balance among the subscribers in the countries represented.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of subscribers, quality of the database.</p>
TWITTER	<p>Create a list of organisations and hashtags to follow (ensuring a good balance in the member countries).</p> <p>Increase of 30% in the number of followers or reaching the 1600 followers' threshold in 3 months.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of mentions of the EUSAIR (tags) from other accounts (depending on basis numbers to be calculated).</p> <p>Increase in the number of followers or reaching the 5000 followers' threshold.</p> <p>Average engagement rate of 3%.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of mentions of the EUSAIR (tags) from other accounts (depending on basis numbers to be calculated).</p> <p>Increase in the number of followers or reaching the 20.000 followers.</p> <p>Average engagement rate of 3%.</p>

	<p>Average engagement rate of 3%, after 3 months.</p> <p>Min. 3 Tweets a week (aside events coverage).</p> <p>Min. 3 Retweets a week.</p>	<p>Min. 4 Tweets a week (aside events coverage).</p> <p>Min. 4 Retweets a week.</p>	<p>Min. 5 Tweets a week (aside events coverage).</p> <p>Min. 4 Retweets a week.</p>
FACEBOOK	<p>Create a list of organisations to follow/monitor, ensuring a good balance in the member countries.</p> <p>Increase of 50% in the number of followers or reaching the 1000 followers' threshold in 3 months.</p> <p>Average engagement rate of 9%, after 3 months.</p> <p>Min 3 posts per week on various topics, not only events (case stories/testimonials, facts/ stats), among which 1 post per week about a EUSAIR event, a partner event or close initiative (even beyond Europe) to put the EUSAIR initiative in perspective and make it stand out.</p> <p>Min. 2 shares per week of other accounts' posts.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of mentions of the EUSAIR (tags) from other accounts (depending on basis numbers to be calculated).</p> <p>Increase in the number of followers or reaching the 3000 followers' threshold.</p> <p>Average engagement rate of 9%.</p> <p>Min. 4 posts a week (aside events coverage).</p> <p>Min. 2 shares a week.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of mentions of the EUSAIR (tags) from other accounts (depending on basis numbers to be calculated).</p> <p>Increase in the number of followers or reaching the 20.000 followers.</p> <p>Average engagement rate of 9%.</p> <p>Min. 4 posts a week (aside events coverage).</p> <p>Min. 2 shares a week.</p>
YOUTUBE	<p>Create 5 videos with key spokespeople of the EUSAIR, relaying the messages of the macro-regional strategy.</p> <p>Develop a concept for one informative/ educational video on the EUSAIR and its impact on the region, and one video concept per pillar.</p>	<p>Create one video a month with spokespeople of the EUSAIR and partners on the achievements of the macro-regional strategy.</p> <p>Create 5 informative/educational videos on the EUSAIR (general and pillars).</p> <p>Increase the number of followers to 300.</p>	<p>Create one video a month with spokespeople of the EUSAIR and partners on the achievements of the macro-regional strategy.</p> <p>Create one video a month on projects of the EUSAIR.</p> <p>Create 5 informative/educational videos on the EUSAIR (general and pillars).</p> <p>Increase the number of followers to 1000.</p>

6.2. Anticipating crisis communication

From the moment you start communicating in an optimal and regular way, you have to consider the possibility of criticism, threats, misappropriation, defacing and even hacking.

When EUSAIR will launch this professional communication campaign, it will be necessary to think about the risks **BEFOREHAND** and, among other things, to draw up a list of all the criticisms or biased questions that could put the organisation in difficulty with, inevitably, the answers to respond.

If, on the one hand, external communication exposes yourself more, on the other hand you generate a real image that allows you to be stronger and more credible. The objective is therefore to generate more trust and to make sure you don't appear fragile in the face of the crisis or a possible online defacing campaign.

To do so, in a crisis communication, there are two elements that count:

- the **accuracy** of the response,
- the **speed** of the response.

These elements will shape the judgment of the party challenging you online but also and above all of the whole audience that will witness it (the question/ reproach/ criticism and its answer).

This is where a crisis can be transformed into a communication opportunity **IF, and only if,** you prepare in advance.

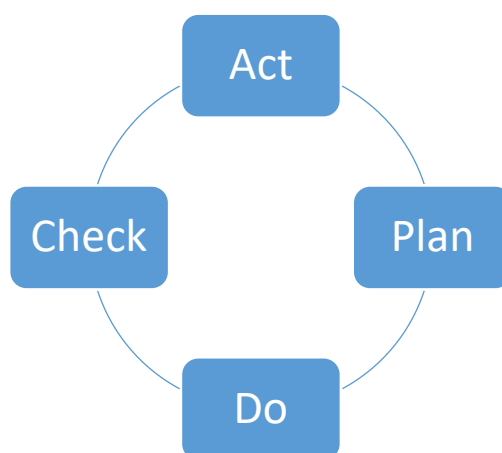
Keeping also in mind that such crisis is defined by two things: an inflation of demand for information on the one hand and a retention of information on the other. As in the law of supply and demand, information is then more valuable, and therefore needs to be well prepared.

7. Measuring the impact of digital communication

What is never evaluated has no chance of being improved!

Rather than seeing evaluation as a school report, we can see it from a medical perspective: identifying the flaws, the shortcomings of a tool, a strategy, a system in order to be able to design a precise plan for optimisation.

The Deming circle, illustrating the PDCA method, for Plan, Do, Check, Act, illustrates the process to be put in place, like a virtuous circle, to continuously improve communication. Measurement (Check) is very important in the process to enable continuous improvement based on figures and concrete data.



Deming Circle, by William Edwards Deming, who popularised the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) model in the 1950's.

To reach the set objectives (after 3 months, 1 year or 5 years), **regular monitoring**, which we recommend doing **every month**, will make it possible to follow the evolution of the communication (via Key Performance Indicators, KPIs) and to readjust the actions implemented.

DIGITAL CHANNEL	KPIs to measure
WEBSITE OF THE STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM	Survey response rate Webpage visits Number of sessions Duration of the sessions Number of information collected, per pillar, per country
EUSAIR WEBSITE	Webpage visits Number of sessions Duration of the sessions Number of page views Customer journey (from which page to which page)

	<p>Website bounce rate</p> <p>Number of articles published per week</p> <p>Most viewed articles</p>
NEWSLETTER	<p>Opening rate</p> <p>Click-to-open rate</p> <p>Most clicked news</p> <p>Frequency of the newsletter</p> <p>Number of news per newsletter</p> <p>Number of subscribers, per country, per type of audience</p>
TWITTER	<p>Number of followers</p> <p>Number of Tweets per week, per month</p> <p>Topics of the Tweets per month</p> <p>Number of Retweets of other accounts</p> <p>Total impressions</p> <p>Engagement rate</p> <p>Number of engagement</p> <p>Total ads budget</p> <p>Average CPM</p> <p>Average CTR</p>
FACEBOOK	<p>Number of followers</p> <p>Number of posts per week, per month</p> <p>Topics of the posts per month</p> <p>Number of shares of other accounts posts</p> <p>Total impressions/ reach</p> <p>Engagement rate</p> <p>Number of engagements</p> <p>Total ad budget</p> <p>Average CPM</p> <p>Average CTR</p>
YOUTUBE	<p>Number of videos produced</p> <p>Number of subscribers</p> <p>Number of views</p> <p>Average % of view per video</p>

8. Budgeting the digital communications

The estimated budget below considers the services of experts in copywriting, digital communication, and graphic design/ video creation. The time and human resources of the Facility Point and the governance structure are not taken into account here.

DIGITAL CHANNEL	KEY ACTIONS/ MEDIUM TERM	ESTIMATED BUDGET
Website of the stakeholder platform	Survey to partners and analysis Creation of clear processes for sharing information and communication Update of the website (Communication managed by the Facility Point)	To be defined in function of the external supplier, the complexity of the website.
EUSAIR website	Update of the website (and monthly update by the Facility Point)	To be defined in function of the external supplier, the complexity of the website.
	Copywriting of 3 articles per week on the website, i.e., 12 per month (144 a year)	Around 500 € per article (of around 400-500 words), i.e., around 72.000 € a year.
	Monthly reporting (Google Analytics)	Around 4.000 € a year.
Newsletter	Creation of a new template Distribution of 1 newsletter per month (press, governance structure) to 1 newsletter per quarter (potential partners), i.e., 12 governance structure newsletters, 12 press newsletters and 4 partners newsletters (28 newsletters a year) Reporting for each newsletter	Between 750 and 950 € per newsletter, i.e., between 21.000-26.000 € a year.
Twitter	Management from A to Z: Review of the global identity of the page Creation of a list of organisations to follow, and hashtags Creation of a content calendar, with 4 tweets a week, i.e., 16 a month Reserve for the coverage of events (live tweeting)	Around 50.000 € per year.

	<p>Community management, with seeding strategy (incl. retweets)</p> <p>Twitter ads budget (250 € per month at first) and management of the ads</p> <p>Reporting once a month</p>	
Facebook	<p>Management from A to Z:</p> <p>Review of the global identity of the page</p> <p>Creation of a list of organisations to follow/monitor</p> <p>Creation of a content calendar, with 4 posts a week, i.e., 16 a month</p> <p>Reserve for the coverage of events (live posting, streaming)</p> <p>Community management, with seeding strategy (incl. shares)</p> <p>Facebook ads budget (250 € per month at first) and management of the ads</p> <p>Reporting once a month</p>	<p>Around 50.000 € per year.</p>
YouTube	<p>Creation of one video testimonial a month with key spokespeople and partners</p> <p>Creation of 5 informative/education videos on the EUSAIR</p>	<p>From 2.500 € per video (excl. subtitles and eventual kms).</p> <p>In the case of testimonials, it will be necessary to think about bringing together key speakers, at events for example, in order to reduce travel costs.</p>
Translations	<p>The budget does not take into account the translations envisaged for social media posts, visuals (such as infographics), video subtitles. We estimate that around 25% of all content should be translated into a local language.</p>	

Conclusions Task 3

“The first strategy of war is an armed force that is fully mobilised and consumed with the desire to win.” Napoleon Bonaparte

With cooperation at the heart of its mission, the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region must make every effort to foster collaboration between the teams within its governance structure. Unfortunately, this ambition is far from reality. The lack of mobilisation and constructive interactions, especially in the provision of key information, is detrimental to the successful achievement of the objectives set by the macro-regional strategy.

To foster coordination, promote initiatives and create synergies among all territories in the Adriatic-Ionian Region, the EUSAIR must start with itself.

The approach thus envisaged to counteract the lack of cooperation between countries is based on the development of a content strategy, which is anchored both in the macro-region and in each member country/region, but also in all European institutions.

With simplified and structured information sharing process, allowing integrated communications but also the sharing of powerful stories and achievements, the EUSAIR will have the keys to develop a policy of champions within the Adriatic-Ionian region, and hopefully create a sense of pride and belonging of all actors and citizens in the longer term.

All this strategy will only be wishful thinking if we do not manage to develop empathy reflexes that will allow us to talk to the others about themselves: a rare skill that pays off!

By refining EUSAIR's current and potential audiences, highlighting their needs and how to leverage them, EUSAIR will now be able to communicate to them by tailoring its key messages and using the right digital channels.

From social media to websites, newsletters, and the implementation of a video creation logic, EUSAIR will first have to consolidate its current communication before considering an expansion towards other tools and channels.

With a revised website, in line with a global content strategy (creation of regular articles), the leveraging of the Stakeholder Platform and a professionalised use of social media, the EUSAIR will with no doubt rapidly be able to better promote prosperity and growth in the region and improve its attractiveness, competitiveness and connectivity.

To achieve its objectives, it will have to invest much more time and expertise in its digital communication, be it locally and/or globally.

Seeing the huge potential of the EUSAIR, following clear objectives, and regularly monitoring the performance of digital communication actions will enable to constantly improve its communication. This will allow the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region to undoubtedly become a reference platform for the management of macro-regional challenges.

TASKS 4 & 5 – FINETUNE AND AMPLIFY THE OVERALL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Introduction Tasks 4 & 5

Six years after its implementation, the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) lacked a clear digital communication strategy. Instead of grappling to find its way forward, it now has a concrete plan to optimise its online presence in order to increase its visibility, awareness, interest, and attractiveness among stakeholders and (potential) partners, therefore ensuring appropriate communication to internal and external parties. A crucial first step before broadening the scope and reaching the largest audience possible on a local, regional, national, and international level.

Following the objective to grow said audience, develop new partnerships as well as foster relationships and operations with existing parties and stakeholders, the digital strategy developed (Task 3) focuses on content - anchored both in the macro-region and in each member country/region, but also in all European institutions - and the emergence of ambassadors who will relay this content.

But the creation of ambassadors would be in vain if among the very people who run EUSAIR on a daily basis, this notion is not concretised. How can EUSAIR be promoted and made to stand out if we cannot count on our own people? The content strategy relies on potential ambassadors, the potential ambassadors rely on the content strategy ... We are in a loop that can only become virtuous if everyone is involved and initiated in the most optimal way.

With this in mind, the following pages aim to finetune the overall communication strategy through the creation of processes that will enable the content strategy to be launched and implemented quickly.

The first section will focus on a simplified, structured, and automated method of collecting and sharing high value-added information between the multiple EUSAIR stakeholders within the governance structure.

We will then propose an integrated approach that ensures that key messages are comprehensively amplified through every communication channel, allowing synergies and economies of scale between each channel and for every type of content.

After, we will define the best way to share information across all channels, with practical tips to start implementing the strategy and reaching the objectives.

Finally, we will amplify communication with advice tailored to the EUSAIR's current situation on each of its channels.

This document, which concludes the work of implementing a digital strategy, aims to give the people who run EUSAIR on a daily basis all the keys to move in the right direction and make the EUSAIR a reference platform for the management of macro-regional challenges.

1. Collecting and relaying valuable information

1.1. EUSAIR Stakeholder Platform, the key channel to pass on knowledge

The Stakeholder Platform is the EUSAIR centralised communication, community, and collaboration instrument. Set up as the preferred knowledge sharing tool of the macro-regional strategy, it aims to increase stakeholder engagement coordination and implementation processes.

Managed by the Marche Region - Productive Activities, Education and Labour Department in the framework of the EUSAIR FP, the Platform currently regroups around 1000 members and includes:

- a **Searching Channel**, where stakeholders can find out more about existing projects as well as consult trends reports and documents on their respective Pillar.
- a **Sharing Channel**, where the community can share content, ideas, and events with other stakeholders.
- a **Learning Channel** that will be further developed in the coming months.

Such a platform is a godsend given the desire to develop a content strategy on the macro-regional level, embedded into a local, regional, and national context.

With such Searching and Sharing channels, the collection and relaying of information should be like clockwork! And yet ...³⁶

3 out of 4 surveyed members of the Facility Point explain that the process of information exchange within the EUSAIR is not easy, with some countries not contributing to the provision of information in the same way as others.

A situation which they feel is detrimental to EUSAIR's communication ... leading to a low score of 4/10 on the question "how would you rate the ease to communicate around EUSAIR".

A view also shared by the European Commission stakeholders interviewed on the subject: 45.5% of them believe that the EUSAIR participating countries do not contribute equally to the content. This number is specifically significant as there are no positive replies (the other remaining neutral or without an opinion).

There is, however, a lot of information shared via the Stakeholder Platform: a multitude of documents or reports on the EUSAIR functioning, its governance structure, but nothing on **its results, its impact, and its concrete role within the Adriatic-Ionian region**.

This does not mean that such content does not exist, on the contrary: **much is kept in the dark and rarely shared** with the rest of the people involved in the macro-regional strategy.

³⁶ Survey conducted in 2021 dedicated to EUSAIR's Facility Point members (4 members) / Survey conducted in 2021 dedicated to EUSAIR's external stakeholders and relayed to a total of 98 individuals at various divisions of the European Commission – out of which 22 completed the survey (for a 22.4% return rate) – Results presented in Tasks 1 & 2.

Following the approach of simplifying and structuring information sharing, the current Stakeholder Platform and especially its members are the starting point in the implementation of the digital communication strategy.

Since content is king, it will be a priority to leverage the Stakeholder Platform **to collect, compile and then propagate high value-added content on the EUSAIR**.

Strategy summary for the Stakeholder platform (based on Task 3):

Stakeholder platform			
ACTIONABLE AT WHICH LEVEL	AUDIENCES	OBJECTIVE	SHORT-TERM KPI'S (3 MONTHS)
Like/support Behavioural change	Primary audience: governance structure. Secondary audience: current and potential partners (all organisations that wish to benefit from best practices).	To make the Stakeholder Platform a real hub for collaboration and information sharing between members of the governance structure but also with external partners. To turn it into a comprehensive library of the EUSAIR's achievements in the macro-region (projects database).	Provide a survey to each member to profile them, understand their intentions, with a target response rate of 60% (details hereunder). Clearly communicate to all members on the information-sharing process, with an increase of 20% in the number of sessions after 3 months and the collection of 5 impactful statistics of the effect of EUSAIR in each pillar and at least 2 case stories for each pillar.

1.2. Starting with the people, their needs, habits, and duties

The first step to establish the process is to identify who needs what and therefore who should provide what within what timeframe and in what form.

The survey European Commission stakeholders indeed showed that it is rather unclear who the point of contact is for sharing information: 30% does not know who to address, 9% does and the other answers are neutral or marked as 'not applicable'.

In the current instance, namely digital communication, we will start from the Facility Point, and more specifically from the team in charge of digital communication. However, such a process should also apply to each pillar representative, each country/region, each partner.

- **Who?** The members of the Facility Point in charge of digital communication.

- **Needs what?** Key figures, meaningful statistics, anecdotes, testimonials/case stories, illustrations (pictures, films, infographics) to support the EUSAIR key messages.³⁷
- **From whom?** All members of the Governance Structure who holds key information in their field (Ministers for EU Funds/National IPA Coordinators and Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the participating countries, Governing Board members, Thematic Steering Groups partners, partner network).
- Figures on the employment rate in the maritime sector, study on the impact of Covid for the tourism sector, effect of forest fires on the region's wildlife, analysis of key information on projects related to cooperation in the Adriatic-Ionian region, expert view on bird migration, etc.
- **Within what timeframe?** Each month the members of the Facility Point must take stock of the available and necessary information to establish the next content calendars for the website, the social media and the newsletter.
- **In which format?** Documents, videos, images, infographics, Power Point, etc. which will then be translated into web articles, social media posts, newsletter articles, videos, etc.

Nonetheless, it remains difficult to know who to contact to collect this type of information. How do we know who has this treasure trove of information? To make it easier to understand, let us create **a survey to be circulated to all members of the Stakeholder Platform.**

The objective will be to understand who is currently present on the Stakeholder Platform, who is active on it, how do they use the platform? What information do they consult? And above all, what information do they have in their possession in relation to the macro-region?

That said, in order to structure and above all automate this information sharing, it will be important **to set up a contact database of all the people/organisations that can provide you with high-value content.**

The Blue Growth Pillar produces an annual activity report on the region? Make sure to know when it is published and who is responsible for it.

Who? Which organisation? Which role?
Linked to which pillar? In which country/region?
What information? How often is it updated? What format?
Contact details?

Once this valuable information has been collected, it will be easier to 'hunt' for content. Of course, the aim is for everyone to 'play the game' within the governance structure. In no circumstances should an organisation have to do a weekly 'content chase'.

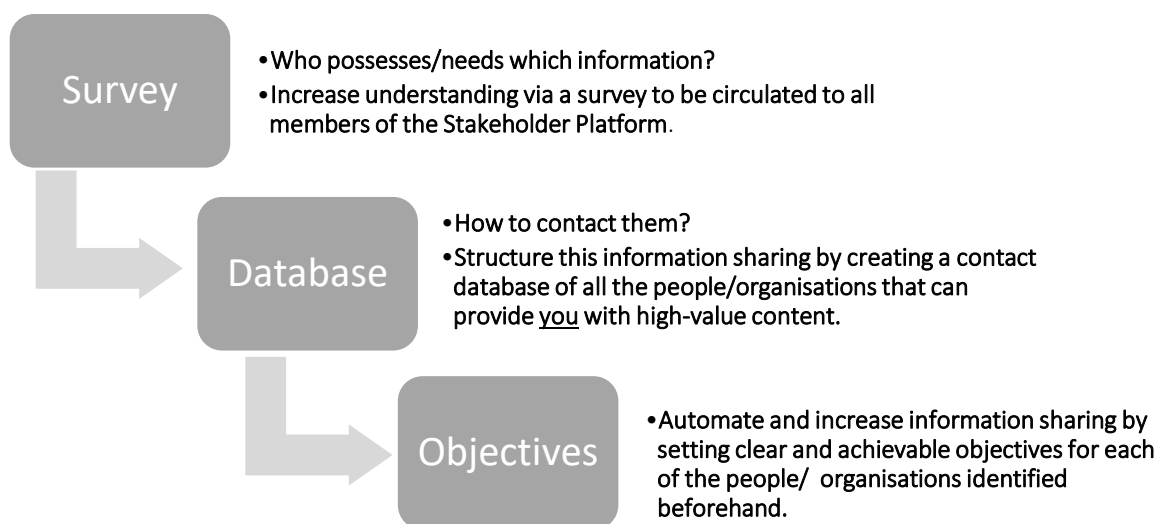
As such, it will be **important to set clear and achievable objectives for each of the member organisations of the governance structure** identified beforehand in order to

³⁷ Based on the EUSAIR Message House (Task 3).

increase information sharing between the different people involved in the macro-regional strategy (cross borders, cross pillars).

Example: Each pillar coordinator must provide, in the next quarter, 5 impactful statistics of the effect of EUSAIR in the pillar, with at least 2 case stories for each pillar, which fit in 10 lines.

It is time to create new habits, new processes, new goals for everyone involved in the macro-regional strategy.



1.3. Automating the collection and sharing of processes

With the Stakeholder Platform at disposal, it goes without saying that the collection and sharing of information will not be done via simple e-mail exchanges. An automated process should be set up via the Stakeholder Platform (Sharing and Searching channels).

As such, the structure of the Stakeholder Platform should be revised for even easier, readable and user-friendly sharing and access, with:

- a clear section for all projects funded in the macro-region, with ‘identity cards’, visuals and contacts for each of them.
- a detailed form accessible for the Thematic Steering Groups partners/project managers to automatically send out the information on each project.
- a clear section dedicated to generic information on the EUSAIR, the participating countries, the sectors of the pillars, etc. with labels to better target and identify the information (sector, country, format of the information, etc.).
- *Are you looking for a video produced with the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs on the importance of cooperation for the preservation of the seabed? The video should be accessible via the Stakeholder Platform and easy to find through specific tags and filters.*

The objective will be to make such content available to everyone involved in the EUSAIR to prevent valuable content from getting stuck on a Partner Project's computer without ever having the opportunity to be shown.

The role of the representative of the Facility Point in charge of the digital communication will be to gather all this content, process it and share it proactively via web articles, newsletters, social media posts, videos, etc.

The information sharing process put in place will not only help the EUSAIR to communicate to the outside world but will be an essential internal communication tool to further motivate, persuade and mobilise its stakeholders on the usefulness of the project and its evolution... to create a sense of commitment and ownership.

1.4. Beyond the Stakeholder Platform: fishing for information

Be careful not to limit yourself to the content that will be shared within the Stakeholder Platform. Far from remaining focused on the EUSAIR, the content strategy aims to **talk about others, to highlight 'hero' people and organisations in the macro-region**.

To make the digital content even richer and more engaging, it will be important to combine all the information obtained **with external input**: news, NGO reports, national statistics, etc.

The EUSAIR will have to **proactively go 'fish' for information within the partner institutions**, such as the different European institutions that can have an impact in the different pillars of EUSAIR (DG MARE, DG ENER, DG REGIO, etc.), as well as on the ground with their privileged contacts (Chamber of Commerce, etc.).

Example: Each year, the European Commission organises numerous awards, such as the RegioStars (GD REGIO), to which particular attention should be paid if projects from the EUSAIR region are taken up, as it was the case for RegioStars 2020.

By also subscribing to your partners' social media and newsletters, following the news, setting up Google Alerts and press clipping services, the EUSAIR will have all the tools to implement the digital content strategy.

2. The process towards an integrated approach

The content strategy aims to relay EUSAIR's key messages via a number of specific channels and to specific audiences. The objective of an integrated communication approach? Creating bridges between the different digital channels – and drawing parallels with traditional media - to spread a coherent image of the EUSAIR through all its communications, online and offline, and allow for efficient and cost-effective multi-channel communication.

The concept is simple: transforming a single piece of information into a multitude of content with high added value for the audiences. A perfect return on investment for one single piece of information collected.



Let's start from our Stakeholder Platform. A Project Partner has just uploaded information from the latest Pillar project 'Blue Growth' on the “monitoring of fish stocks in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas to assess the main elements for sustainable fisheries management”.

Based on the information provided, and thanks to the contact information provided, the person in charge of digital communication within the Facility Point can contact the person on site in order to obtain precise information about the project. He/she will be able to make sure that he/she has understood the ins and outs so that he/she can translate them in the best possible way into different formats.



With this additional information a briefing is created for a photographer who will go to the location to take pictures that will be published on various channels. **This will provide the EUSAIR with several quality illustrations to promote the project.**

At the same time, a film script is produced and discussed with professional film crews who will also travel to the site to shoot a video promoting the project and its added value for the Adriatic-Ionian region. **This will provide the EUSAIR with a general promotional video, which can be divided into several videos (interviews and cutaways), then uploaded on the YouTube channel.**



With the information provided and the visuals available, an article is written for the website, including quotes from the project partners and EUSAIR representatives involved in the project. **This will provide the EUSAIR with a detailed article on the project.**

With the information provided in the article, social media posts are created on various platforms. **About ten social media posts can be created and disseminated over time on the EUSAIR social media channels (key facts and numbers, quotes, polls, etc.).**





The project is of course highlighted in the newsletter as an example of achievement in the macro-region, and thus promoted to all newsletter subscribers within the Governance Structure and beyond. **An insert in the newsletter will redirect to the full article on the website.**

Stakeholder and partners then decide to relay the project on their own channels (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Commission, national NGO) as a best practice in the Adriatic-Ionian region. This only increases EUSAIR's reputation in the region and internationally.



After some time, new milestones are reached by the project, with beautiful case stories to highlight. The EUSAIR then decides to promote it in the press. **A press release is written** - including key information about the project but also macro information about EUSAIR. **Local, regional and national media are approached to arrange interviews.** New videos and images are produced shared with journalists.

The images produced are uploaded to the **EUSAIR Flickr account** for easy sharing with journalists. They are also be made available to all via **stock images platforms**, giving the project and the EUSAIR extra visibility.



The **press articles**, podcasts or video reportage generated put the project back in the spotlight. EUSAIR representatives were also interviewed, shedding further light on the EUSAIR.

Based on the new achievements of the project, **a new article is published on the EUSAIR website**, and promoted towards all stakeholders via the **newsletter**. The press articles and web article are **relayed on the EUSAIR social media** for greater visibility, and stakeholders and partners engage with the content on their own social media.



With so much promotional material available, the project can easily be shown as an example at internal and external events, during which **videos can be created with key stakeholders** on the project. It thus becomes an **'ambassador' of the EUSAIR projects at events.**

Etc.

Each piece of content created in this way reinforces the others, creating a virtuous circle of content.

For optimal performance, each piece of content presented should be managed and implemented by professionals (videographers, copywriters, social media managers, etc.).

3. Cross channels tips and tricks to achieve the objectives

All recommendations below take into account the communication audit and digital communication strategy carried out and developed in 2021 for EUSAIR. These tips and tricks are therefore based on EUSAIR's situation in June 2021.

3.1. A consistent visual identity

With so much content being shared online, be it newsletters, website articles, videos, or social media posts, it is important to have **a visual identity that is stable over time and easily recognisable**.

By always using the same colours, fonts and logo, readers will recognise the EUSAIR messages at a glance.

If a graphic charter has not been developed yet, let us use the EUSAIR logo as a starting point to determine the colours - and variations thereof - to be used throughout the communication. In terms of fonts, the European Commission works with the EC Square typeface. You will have to determine whether you wish to use this one.

Once a visual identity has been established, it is important to **stick to it on ALL platforms and in every detail**. The colour of Twitter accounts, for example, is customisable... so choose the right one via the options!

Also consider using templates that can vary slightly while still maintaining the same "identity". Whether it is your newsletters, website articles, social media visuals, or video intro and outro, prepare **a professional template** (including the EUSAIR logo) **and stick to it**.

Key action points

- Determine a graphic charter for the EUSAIR and share it to all stakeholders involved in communication.
- Develop templates for each format based on the graphic charter.
- Adapt the visual identity of the online communication platforms based on the graphic charter.

3.2. A recognisable name

As for the visual identity, **having a name that is recognisable and memorable** is essential for good communication and consistency. This applies equally to the titles used on the website, to the names given to social media pages and to those used for newsletters.

In all cases, the name should be clearly identifiable and recognisable. As already mentioned, there is no doubt that **the name “EUSAIR” does not make it clear who is talking** to us. It is therefore important for each tool used to clearly define who EUSAIR is:

the “**EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region**” (at first... and/or define a new name, which would be even more concrete).

A **baseline** could also serve to provide more information on your mission and vision to the audiences.

The first step is to change the name of the social media pages. Twitter, Facebook and YouTube should be named as “EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region” instead of EUSAIR Facility Point or EUSAIR Point.

On the website, the full name of the EUSAIR only appears in one the various logos on the top of the homepage and at the very bottom: people should however **clearly know and understand on which website they are, immediately, without searching**.

The same applies to newsletters, which must be consistent in the titles used: both the structure of the **main title** (for each newsletter that will be developed: internal stakeholders, press, partners) **and those of the newsletter sections**.

Key action points

- Adapt the name of each platform accordingly.
- Restructure the website homepage, with a short description on the macro-regional strategy at the very beginning.
- Develop a name for each newsletter and consistent names for each of the newsletters' sections.

3.3. An annual editorial calendar as a basis for the content strategy

The editorial calendar used for communication should be **built on the general calendar of the macro-regional strategy**, but also on that of its stakeholders, partners, and according to other macro-regional strategies and 'cooperators'.

There is no such thing as a ready-made calendar. You will need to **customise YOUR calendar to fit the strategy** as much as possible and to reflect who the EUSAIR is.

To this end, **monitoring** is a key tool in the content strategy: EUSAIR needs to be aware of what is happening in its scope of influence, especially in the sectors of activity covered by the pillars and in the countries that concern it.

A major event organised for the tourism sector in the region? The EUSAIR should be aware of this and include it in its calendar. The objective? Relay the information with an EUSAIR touch, highlighting the benefits of macro-regional cooperation for the sector.

By simply subscribing to your partners' social media and newsletters, following the news and setting up Google Alerts, the chances of missing a major event become minimal.

A devastating ecological accident for the Adriatic Sea has just happened? EUSAIR must be aware of this, and be able to quickly integrate this information in its calendar. The objective? Use current events to deliver key messages.

At the heart of the editorial calendar must of course be the **major European, national, and regional dates and events** (EU Week of the Regions and Cities, Serbian national day, Giornata delle Marche, etc.).

The Region of Marche in Italy celebrates an important date? The EUSAIR should cover this. The objective? Show its regional imprint and highlight the actors who shape EUSAIR to create a sense of belonging.

World days, annual campaigns of the UN, WHO or other organisations are all opportunities to create content related to EUSAIR and its partners. And let's not forget the seasonality (Christmas, the return of spring, the Football World Cup, the holidays, etc.).

The summer holidays mean a boom in tourism for the Adriatic-Ionian region. This is an ideal opportunity to highlight an EUSAIR project that impacts all tourists and local stakeholders in the sector.

Each key date that will be part of the editorial calendar will be an opportunity to highlight EUSAIR through the promotion of others: talking about European events to highlight the importance of cross-border cooperation, talking about a country's initiative to highlight a best practice, using an international day to highlight an EUSAIR project, etc.

In addition, the **development of the editorial calendar is a real internal public relations action:** mobilise each member of the Governance Structure to get their own key moments of the year and show them your willingness to highlight them on your channels.

Key action points

- Establish an editorial calendar with key dates for the whole year, month by month.

3.4. Regularity and variety for the content creation

Once the editorial calendar has been filled with the key dates and events of the year, it still needs to be completed to provide regular and varied content on the different EUSAIR platforms.

The aim will be to **'fill in the gaps'** but also to determine **how exactly to link a key event or date with content that makes sense for EUSAIR's objectives** and can include its key messages.

The first source for creating these links will be the **database of Adriatic-Ionian projects and initiatives** that will be initiated via the Stakeholder platform ([process of information sharing explained above](#)).

However, regardless of the source, the content can and must vary, so we recommend adapting it to keep your audiences interested (web articles, newsletters articles, videos or social media posts).

- Informative, educational publications
- Concrete activities, results, impact of your actions: powerful figures/statistics
- Testimonials

- Inspirational, emotional publications
- Fun, entertaining posts
- Content that shows the human face of the EUSAIR: "behind the scenes", especially during an event!

All this content should, of course, make it possible to pursue the strategy developed, which aims, among other things, to **share powerful stories and achievements**, not only about EUSAIR itself, but most of all **about the Others**.

When writing any kind of content: skip the 'me, myself and I', talk to your audience, make an effort of empathy.

By 'giving' a space of visibility to other organisations, you will gain sympathy, legitimacy and ultimately visibility too.

There is a gap between what you want to say and what your audience wants to read: the aim is to find out how to link the two, for the benefit of both parties.

Running out of inspiration? **Learn from others**: follow (and interact with) the content of inspiring organisations, see what works for them **and stand out!**

Key action points

- Create varied, 'rotational' content, sharing powerful stories and achievements.
- Talk about the Others, no "me, myself and I".
- Get inspired by other organisations and stand out.

3.5. Make the most of each of your communications

Every online communication, every digital statement must serve the objectives of EUSAIR. If you communicate, it is because you want to get something in return: gain visibility at a local/ regional/national/international level, ensure the involvement and engagement of public, economic, civil society, and environmental partners, create bridges between the public and the institutions of the participating countries.

To achieve your goal, tell your audience clearly what you want them to do, otherwise they will simply leave your website, continue scrolling on social media or delete your newsletter: **always include a call to action in your communications**:

- Read this web article.
- Share this content.
- Learn more on the website.

- Subscribe to the newsletter.
- Download this report.
- Contact us.
- Share your ideas.

In addition, to best engage your audiences, consider **translating key content into the national language of the target audience** (from a social media post to a web article, report, video subtitles or infographic).

Key action points

- Always include a call to action to your communications.
- Translate content in national languages when relevant.

3.6. Try, test, make mistakes and improve

Digital communication can give the impression that success will come quickly. A web article that is read thousands of times, a post that is liked by hundreds of people, a video that is viewed countless times, ...

This is the classic mistake: while digital communication is instantaneous, its effects are not necessarily so. A buzz is rare and often goes away as quickly as it arrived.

The rule in digital communication is **patience**: you will not see the results of your actions immediately, but don't get discouraged.

Online reputation is built day by day, content by content. Publish regularly, rigorously, and seriously, without waiting for the buzz. And above all, **analyse and draw conclusions** from the performance of your content.

What is never evaluated has no chance of being improved! Identify the flaws, the shortcomings of a tool, a strategy, a piece of content in order to design a precise plan for optimisation.

If the measurement culture is currently non-existent within EUSAIR, it will need to be put in place quickly to measure the evolution of the digital strategy.

Based on the Key Performance Indicators provided in Task 3, per channel, produce a short report - no one reads pages and pages of reports - on a regular basis, **every month**.

And since numbers alone mean nothing, draw conclusions, compare with benchmarks and the competition, study your evolution over time. This measurement culture is essential for a long-lasting and effective strategy.

Key action points

- Analyse the performance of your content and channels once a month and draw conclusions for improvement.

4. Tips and tricks per channel to achieve the objectives

4.1. EUSAIR Website

Towards a clear and regularly updated source of information and inspiration on the macro-regional strategy

According to the defined strategy, the aim is to develop the website from an 'internal' oriented platform, full of content for current stakeholders, to **a platform that really embraces its role in external communication**: i.e., a platform to learn more about the EUSAIR, its activity and its impact (and not focusing almost only on its structure and teams, which are of more interest to the 'internal' audience).

The governance structure should be a secondary audience, on the profit of current and potential partners as well as local and regional actors of the Adriatic-Ionian region (primary audience).

Strategy summary for the website (based on Task 3):

Website			
ACTIONABLE AT WHICH LEVEL	AUDIENCES	OBJECTIVE	SHORT-TERM KPIs (3 months)
Knowledge Like/support Behavioural change	Primary audience: current and potential partners, local and regional actors of the Adriatic-Ionian region Secondary audience: governance structure, general public, press.	To turn it into the reference information platform on the macro-regional strategy. To propagate a dynamic image of the macro-region through the regular publication of valuable content.	Website reviewed structure approved within 3 months. Have at least the homepage reviewed already (clearly indicating what is EUSAIR) and the 'About' section taking into account the Message House. Increase of 20% in the number of page views for the homepage and 'About' page. Regular publication of 'blog'/news articles: at least 2 per week, each week. Increase of 40% in the number of page views for the 'News' page.

4.1.1. Rethinking structure and information for better targeting

To become a clear source of information about the EUSAIR, it will be important to **revise the website in terms of structure and information provided**.

What is the first thing that people will see and read when they arrive at your website? How can you effectively redirect them to the section that interests them/you?

- To answer the first question, the priority will be to review the structure and visual identity of the homepage.
- To answer the second question, clear and sufficiently visible calls to action should be defined, including clear sections and sub-sections in the general structure of the website.
- Currently, different parts of the website seemingly overlap, and the content repartition appears ambiguous: Funding sources constitute an apart tab, but could fit in the About EUSAIR one, the Events and News appear in the Media centre tab, and the difference between Library and Media centre can be difficult to understand for lambda visitors.

Based on the benchmarking examples in Task 1, a clearer structure could be:

- Homepage
- Who (history, member countries, mission, vision, pillars, funding sources, etc.)
- What (achievements, library of projects, concrete examples of cooperation)
- How (governance structure, countries)
- News & Events (News, events, press, newsletters)
- Document Library (Reports)
- Contact

Let's start with the visual identity: from the website to the social media, from the newsletter to the website, from videos to photos, all communication must reflect the identity of the EUSAIR.

And because integrated digital communication mixes a variety of channels, the visual identity of your social media and posts will have to be aligned with that of your website: because people will likely be redirected to your website from your social media. The same goes for the newsletter: its visual identity should be in line with that of the website to which it will redirect.

The first step will therefore be to rework, first within the current website structure, then within the new one that will have to be thought out, **a visual identity that fits EUSAIR**: there must be no doubt about the website you are on:

- highlight the EUSAIR logo (not those of partners);
- use the colours of the logo (background colour, titles, visuals, etc.);

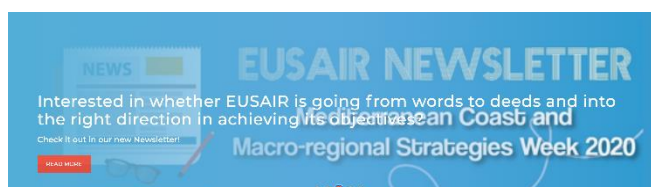
- reuse the shapes of the logo within the website;
- determine rules for the choice of visuals (photos or graphics).

A picture is worth a thousand words, and a video a million. Internet users do not have time to read pages and pages of information: use meaningful images and videos that support your key messages and perfectly illustrate them.

Once the visual identity of the website has been reworked, let us **make the homepage much more attractive, harmonious** and above all clear: the homepage, which is the point of arrival of the readers, should clearly indicate **who EUSAIR is and what EUSAIR does**. As such, the key information on the EUSAIR should appear **higher up in the page**.

Still on the homepage, the **use of sliders** is great to provide the latest information and redirect people to sections of the website. But these should **serve the website**: carefully select the visuals, which must speak for themselves (and above all avoid overlap between any text on the visuals and text on the slider).

- Use either images without text, on which you can include a text/call to action via the slider,
- either images that already contain text, without including a text/call to action in addition via the slider.



Screenshot of the slider with superposed text.

The user who arrives at your website will first look at your homepage and may then try to find out more about who EUSAIR is.

Currently, the 'About' page does not clearly define the 'why' of EUSAIR, its purpose, its impact for the Adriatic-Ionian region. In order to convince the user, and to make him/her intrigued, to spread the word about the EUSAIR around him/her, it will be essential to **take advantage of the message house** (elaborated in Task 3) in order to **build a presentation of the macro-regional strategy that makes sense and serves the interests of EUSAIR**.

Hence, this presentation will necessarily **include stories and achievements of the macro-regional strategy, talking about others rather than about itself**. A major overhaul of this section will then be necessary to give EUSAIR the means to achieve its ambitions.

In terms of language, although all organisations under the benchmark analysis use English as the main and only language for their website (Task 2), as well as EUSAIR, it could be worth considering translating the website into the national languages.

Key action points

- Rethink the structure of the website, based on the EUSAIR objectives and visual identity.
- Review the homepage and the 'About' page as a priority, with key information on the EUSAIR and a reflected visual identity.
- Rely on visuals to deliver messages.

4.1.2. Beyond articles on event recaps: a content strategy for the "News" section

To propagate a dynamic image of the macro-region, regular content, in the form of web articles, should be published. We foresee **at first 2 articles a week, i.e., 8 a month as a minimum**.

Of course, during busy periods, more than 8 articles per month can be published. **The important thing to respect is regularity**: it is not acceptable to publish 10 articles one month and only 1 the following month.

If currently, 45% of the web articles concerns event recaps, we should foresee the following share of content:

- 2 articles out of 8 maximum per month about key events (promotion and recap), i.e., **25% of event-related articles**.
- 2 articles out of 8 maximum per month about the EUSAIR itself (key milestones, reports, data on the macro-regional strategy), i.e., **25% of EUSAIR-related articles**.
- 4 articles out of 8 minimum per month about Adriatic-Ionian projects, initiatives, organisations (talking about the Others), i.e., **50% of projects-related articles**, with a balance between the pillars, and the countries.

Any article should be able to **generate engagement and involvement from readers**. It is therefore important to **include a call to action in every article** published on the website: *contact us, give us your opinion, take part in the survey, download the document, follow the event on our social media, share the infographic on your accounts, learn more in this article, watch the video, sign up for the newsletter*, etc. In a logic of synergy, also include a button allowing your readers to easily share any article on social media.

To engage even more specific audiences, the **translation of articles into national language** should be considered.

In terms of lengths, **the shorter the better**. For articles that require more explanation, set a limit of 500 words. The most important thing is to make the text readable: include subheadings, highlight quotes, include visuals (all of this, always following the graphic charter and template you will have defined).

Each article should be linked to **a visual**: this is essential not only for ease of reading, but also for sharing the article on other platforms. For example, if you want to share the web article on social media, a preview will be displayed automatically with the linked photo. For an optimal rendering, it is essential to properly reference each element on the website.

Key action points

- Publish regularly on the website (web articles), with a minimum of 2 articles a week and 8 a month.
- Diminish the number of articles related to events (max. 25%) on the profit of projects-related stories (min. 50%).
- Engage the readers and always include a call to action.
- Keep it short.
- Always include at least one visual.

4.1.3. Understanding and enhancing the journey of the readers

Where do visitors to your website come from? What do they do there? Which pages do they visit? How long do they stay? Where do they click?

Analysis of website statistics (via Google Analytics) is key to understanding the user journey and thus what they like or dislike. Such analysis, done on a regular basis, then allows decisions to be made about the website: revising the copy of a page, adding more visuals, including more frequent links, etc.

In the first instance, however, various techniques can be implemented – with an expert in User Experience - to improve the comfort of use of the reader.

Firstly, **mobile-friendly** is a must:

56% of the total population of EUSAIR countries connect to the internet use their mobile phone. Laptops/desktops hold the second spot with 42%, followed by tablets with a mere 2%*.

*Facebook Audience Insights

Always make sure that your website is perfectly readable on mobile, especially when it comes to images or graphics, and even more since social media will be used to redirect to the website. Indeed, Facebook, for example, reports that 98% of its users in the Adriatic-Ionian region access their account via mobile phones (mobile-only 71%; desktop + mobile 27%)³⁸.

Secondly, **the speed of loading** is key:

- Use .JPG format images instead of PNG format when not needed: in general, PNG is a higher-quality compression format. JPG images are generally of lower quality but are faster to load.

³⁸ [Facebook Audience Insights](#)

- Update the website to HTML5: HTML5 is a mark-up language used for structuring and presenting content on the World Wide Web. It is the fifth and last major HTML version that is a World Wide Web Consortium recommendation.
- Use HTTP/2 protocol: HTTPS secures the connection between a visitor's browser and the web server, ensuring data is encrypted and protected from intermediary actions. HTTP/2 allows for multiplexing (requesting multiple files at the same time). This significantly improves both site performance and server efficiency.
- Cache certain elements: caches are an extremely fast storage systems which hold the copy of the information to be accessed on a temporary basis, so that if that information is needed again, it can be fetched from the cache, allowing faster access.

Thirdly, **a good referencing** is a goldmine:

- Add Meta Description to the HTML code. Meta descriptions are types of meta tags in the HTML source code of a webpage. They describe the content of a website shortly and concisely and are therefore important indicators of a website's content to search engines. Without meta descriptions, search engines auto complete it and might just pick the first 160 characters from the page (which could be irrelevant as a description).
- Descriptions of images are also important in terms of referencing. Adding an 'alt text' to your images will allow search engines to understand their content. In addition, this text will be shown on your page if the image cannot be displayed.

Key action points

- Review the website with an expert in User Experience.
- Always check whether the content is perfectly readable on mobile.
- Regularly measure the performance of the website in order to take appropriate decisions on content, form and technical issues.

4.2. Newsletters

An opportunity to create ambassadors of the EUSAIR, spread the word and build bridges with other communities

When a user wishes to subscribe to an organisation's newsletter, it is because he or she is already in a phase of support, of sympathy with the organisation: he or she wishes to keep on top of its news because the content may possibly be useful to him or her.

A representative of an administration that is a member of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region must be able to stay informed of what is being implemented in the region: to be able to show the results of its actions, the impact of the strategy and ultimately share this information on its own information channels (and act as ambassadors for the EUSAIR).

A journalist covering EU affairs for a regional newspaper will want to keep up-to-date with developments in the macro-regional strategy and its activities and possibly relay the information.

A current or potential partner will want to see the projects around them with whom they can create synergies or be inspired by.

The newsletter will therefore **play an essential role in converting stakeholders or partners into real ambassadors for the macro-region.**

As previously defined (Task 3), it will be necessary to restructure the database, make it more attractive (format and content) and, eventually, adapt it to multiple audiences (governance structure, press, partners) to achieve the set objectives.

Strategy summary for the newsletters (based on Task 3):

Newsletter			
ACTIONABLE AT WHICH LEVEL	AUDIENCES	OBJECTIVE	SHORT-TERM KPIs (3 months)
Like/support Behavioural change	Primary audience: governance structure, current and potential partners, press (with targeted newsletters). Secondary audience: local and regional actors of the Adriatic-Ionian region.	Promote cooperation within the macro-region. Increase the visibility of the EUSAIR to a variety of audiences. Generate traffic to the website and the articles it contains.	Restructuring of the EUSAIR Newsletter subscribers (who, what, opening rates) to know which information to provide to whom. New approved template, with use of a professional platform, enabling to gather precise data. Distribution of 1 newsletter in the new format, with an opening rate above 40%, and an average click-to-open rate of 15%.

4.2.1. Getting to know the readers and better promoting the newsletter

The EUSAIR newsletter currently has over 4000 subscribers representing over 1200 different organisations³⁹ in the different countries of the macro-regional strategy and beyond (incl. Brussels-based stakeholders).

³⁹ Data collected based on the current database used for newsletters on the basis of the domain name of the various e-mails, deleting duplicate domain names.

However, apart from e-mail addresses, the database does not tell us anything about the audiences: who they are, what organisation or sector they come from, what country, what language they speak, what are their interests? Etc.

Such information would make it easier to target the content to be provided to the audience:

Many journalists subscribe to it? A newsletter dedicated only to this audience would be beneficial.

Tourism is a key interest for subscribers? We should focus on this pillar.

The first step will be to set up a more advanced newsletter subscription system, to **collect valuable information about your audience**, instead of just their email address, as is currently the case: name, surname, country, organisation, sector, language, interests.

Plus, your readers might not know exactly what to expect when they subscribe to your newsletter, clearly indicate the frequency, purpose, and key elements on the subscription page and /or in a welcome email.

As a second step, the newsletter will have to be promoted **to all members of the governance structure and key partners, in all countries**. Indeed, the current balance between countries is very poor, with a significantly higher presence of people from EU member states.

*A survey conducted among European Commission stakeholders⁴⁰, showed that around ¾ of the respondents (who were targeted because of their involvement in macro-regional strategies) were not subscribed to the newsletter. The reasons given included, among others, the fact that they were **not aware of its existence**, but also the fact that they **did not easily find out how to sign up** (for those who knew it existed).*

In order to promote the newsletter easily, the **subscription process should be simple, clear** but most of all **visible**.

- On the website, an insert dedicated to the newsletter should be highlighted: on the homepage but also within the structure of the site (via the 'About' and 'News' sections, in particular).
- Social media should also be used to promote the newsletter subscriptions.
- Every email communication should be an opportunity to promote the newsletter (e.g., mass e-mail on events) or individual emails via a link in the signatures of EUSAIR contacts.
- Given the objective of relaying several newsletters, each of the newsletters should promote the others.
- Finally, for those who do not subscribe to the newsletter, it should continue to be posted on the website, with a link to subscribe, to receive it directly by email.

⁴⁰ Survey conducted in 2021 dedicated to EUSAIR's external stakeholders and relayed to a total of 98 individuals at various divisions of the European Commission – out of which 22 completed the survey (for a 22.4% return rate) – Results presented in Task 2.

Key action points

- Get to know your current subscribers.
- Implement a more advanced system for collecting information at registration.
- Indicate to the future readers what they might expect.
- Clearly promote the newsletter on all communication channels.

4.2.2. Engaging the audiences

The starting point in the generation of the engagement (or not) are **the ‘from’ line and the headline**.

These are the first thing the readers will read and will be the determining factor in whether they click to open the email or throw it in the trash:

- EUSAIR? EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region? Choose a recognisable, understandable and friendly name.
- The headline should be consistent in time (using the same phrasing, tone) and appealing. An effective subject line clearly describes what's inside your e-mail.
- Keep the headline short, with around 60 characters.
- Do not overuse punctuation marks or emojis.

43% recipients click the spam button based on the email ‘from’ name or email address. *

35% of recipients open emails based on subject lines alone*.

69% report emails as spam based on subject lines*.

* QuickSprout, How to Write a Newsletter, from Convince & Convert, [link](#).

Once the email is opened, the reader will be confronted with the **visual identity and the structure** of the newsletter:

- Create a newsletter template aligned with EUSAIR's visual identity but which is also attractive to the readers in order to promote and facilitate reading.
- Do your readers read your newsletter on desktop? On mobile? Make sure your template is readable on all devices.
- Make use of pictures and videos: emails that include visuals have a higher click through rate and open rate.

The **first lines of the newsletter** will be decisive: they will determine whether the reader continues reading the newsletter or not.

- Add an introduction welcoming the reader and presenting the key points of the newsletter.

Once these steps are completed, the reader will finally move on to **the content of the newsletter** itself. To keep the reader's attention, it will be necessary to put forward **content that is meaningful to them**, and not just to give information about EUSAIR (avoiding the 'me, myself and I').

- Be simple, consistent and to the point: readers have no time to waste.
- Plan clear sections that last over time, from newsletter to newsletter, so the readers immediately target the content that interest them the most: "Highlights"? "In the spotlight"? in order to avoid any confusion, also better distinguish the titles of the EUSAIR sections.
- Always include a call to action in the news that makes up your newsletter.
- Reuse the content of your website, but not only: always **bring a unique content to your newsletter**. The newsletter should provide the audience with something unique, that they cannot get on other channels. Do not simply regurgitate all the content from the website in the newsletter.

Research shows that the perfect length for a newsletter is about 20 lines of text, or 200 words maximum, for the highest click rates*

An average reader only spends 51 seconds reading a newsletter and only reads about 20% of the text on a page**.

*Campaign Monitor, How Long Should An Email Newsletter Be, link.

**QuickSprout, How to Write a Newsletter, from Convince & Convert, link.

Regularity is key: stick to a regular rhythm of newsletter sending (monthly or quarterly). During key events such as the EUSAIR Forum, a special newsletter could be issued.

BENCHMARKING STATS (MAILCHIMP)

The average email open rate for all industries is 21.33%*.

The average click rate for all industries is 2.62%*.

* Mailchimp, Email Marketing Benchmarks and Statistics by Industry, link.

In terms of language, although all organisations under the benchmark analysis use English as the main and only language for their newsletter (Task 2), it could be worth considering having newsletters in national languages to increase engagement.

Key action points

- Work on your sender and subject line.

- Create a template in line with the EUSAIR's identity.
- Add visuals for greater engagement.
- Include an appealing introduction.
- Build your content with your audience in mind.
- Add unique content through the newsletter.
- Be regular in the distribution.

4.3. Social Media

Twitter, Facebook to network and create bonds with influential partners; YouTube to illustrate the video content strategy

With a modest presence on Twitter and Facebook, EUSAIR currently suffers from low visibility on social media, with content that is very event-oriented and aimed at a target audience that is already 'familiar' with the macro-regional strategy.

Before thinking of investing in new social media platforms in the short term, it is essential that EUSAIR first strengthens its presence on Facebook and Twitter, while boosting its video content (YouTube).

To amplify the EUSAIR striking force through the macro-region, on social media, the strategy aims at **relying on the influence of current stakeholders and partners in the region**.

The whole point of the strategy will be to build links with influential people and organisations (governments, ministries, associations, public services, etc.) already involved in the EUSAIR and talk about them to make them talk about the EUSAIR.

Strategy summary for social media (based on Task 3):

DIGITAL CHANNEL	ACTIONABLE AT WHICH LEVEL	AUDIENCES	OBJECTIVE	SHORT-TERM KPIs (3 months)
Twitter	Awareness Knowledge Like/support	Primary audience: governance structure, current and potential partners. Secondary audience: similar	Strengthen links with the governance structure. Create bridges with current and	Create a list of organisations and hashtags to follow (ensuring a good balance in the member countries).

	Behavioural change	initiatives in the region and beyond, press.	potential partners, with 'coopetitors'. Monitor the activities of partners and 'coopetitors'.	<p>Increase of 30% in the number of followers or reaching the 1600 followers' threshold in 3 months.</p> <p>Average engagement rate of 3%, after 3 months.</p> <p>Min. 3 Tweets a week (aside events coverage).</p> <p>Min. 3 Retweets a week.</p>
Facebook	<p>Awareness</p> <p>Knowledge</p> <p>Like/support</p> <p>Behavioural change</p>	<p>Primary audience: local and regional actors of the Adriatic-Ionian region, current and potential partners, general public.</p> <p>Secondary audience: governance structure.</p>	<p>Generate visibility at a local and regional level.</p> <p>Create bridges with current and potential partners.</p> <p>Monitor the news of the region at large.</p> <p>Engage the inhabitants of the region at large.</p>	<p>Create a list of organisations to follow/monitor, ensuring a good balance in the member countries.</p> <p>Increase of 50% in the number of followers or reaching the 1000 followers' threshold in 3 months.</p> <p>Average engagement rate of 9%, after 3 months.</p> <p>Min 3 posts per week on various topics, not only events (case stories/testimonials, facts/ stats), among which 1 post per week about a EUSAIR event, a partner event or close initiative (even beyond Europe) to put the EUSAIR initiative in perspective and make it stand out.</p> <p>Min. 2 shares per week of other accounts' posts.</p>
YouTube	<p>Awareness</p> <p>Knowledge</p> <p>Like/support</p>	Primary audience: governance structure, current and potential partners.	Build up a video content library to relay, support and facilitate the understanding of	Create 5 videos with key spokespeople of the EUSAIR, relaying the messages of the

	Behavioural change	Secondary audience: local and regional actors of the Adriatic-Ionian region, general public.	EUSAIR's key messages.	macro-regional strategy. Develop a concept for one informative/ educational video on the EUSAIR and its impact on the region, and one video concept per pillar.
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4.3.1. Starting over on the right footing

Apart from the name of the page which should clearly reflect who you are, other elements are equally important to deliver key messages and achieve your goals:

- A clear description of the organisation being promoted, its mission, vision, objectives, as well as a presentation of the purpose and content of the page. The YouTube channel does not currently have a description identifying its authors, its function, and its objectives.
- The logo must be easily readable and remain unchanged over time: upload a profile picture showing the visual element of the EUSAIR logo (without the text).
- The cover, on the other hand, should be changed regularly (depending on important events or campaigns).
- The basic parameters must be regularly checked (many new features appear). The order of the Tabs on Facebook, a call-to-action button below the cover picture, the colour of the Twitter profile or the playlists on YouTube are notably elements to keep an eye on.

To propagate a dynamic image of the macro-region, regular content, with varied formats ([see below](#)), should be published (on Facebook and Twitter). We foresee **at first min. 3 posts/Tweets per week on various topics, i.e., min. 12 posts/Tweets a month**.

Of course, during busy periods, more than 12 posts and Tweets per month can be published. **The important thing to respect is regularity**: it is not acceptable to 30 posts one month and none during some periods of the year.

To help maintaining a regular presence, the creation of monthly content calendar for each social media is a must. Planning the posts and Tweets in advance – via the scheduling assistant of social media platform – allows for huge time gains.

If currently, 83% of the Facebook posts and 73% of the Tweets concerns events, we should foresee the following share of content:

- 4 posts/Tweets out of 12 maximum a month about a EUSAIR event, a partner event or close initiative (even beyond Europe) to put the EUSAIR initiative in context and make it stand out., i.e., **1/3 of event-related posts** (instead if 83% on Facebook and 73% on Twitter).

- 4 posts/Tweets out of 12 maximum per month about the EUSAIR itself (key milestones, reports, data on the macro-regional strategy), i.e., **1/3 of EUSAIR-related posts**.
- 4 articles out of 12 minimum per month about Adriatic-Ionian projects, initiatives, organisations (talking about the Others), i.e., **1/3 of projects-related articles**, with a balance between the pillars, and the countries.

On YouTube, and since video is the winning format of the moment, the short-term objective is to create videos with key spokespeople of the EUSAIR, relaying the messages of the macro-regional strategy (minimum 5 videos for the first months).

At present, the EUSAIR does not have a video that simply explains what the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region is and what it does.

To best disseminate and communicate who EUSAIR is and what it does and achieves, it will be important to start by developing concepts for informative/ educational video on the EUSAIR and one its pillars (as currently, event-related videos account for 87% of all content published on YouTube), and work with a professional crew to concretise them.

Key action points

- Work on the look and feel and settings of each of your social media.
- Publish regularly on social media, with a minimum of 3 posts/Tweets a week and 12 a month.
- Diminish the number of posts related to events (max. 1/3) on the profit of projects-related stories.
- Generate video content.

4.3.2. Communicating the EUSAIR presence on social media

According to the survey conducted among European Commission stakeholders⁴¹, 68% of the respondents did not follow the EUSAIR on social media.

If we look beyond the content of the pages, which is highly institutional and event-driven, the problem may simply be related to **promotion**: tell people around you that you have a Twitter or Facebook page, tell your partners what you plan to publish on it, and tell them if they or their organisation is featured in a publication.

In short, **talk about your social media... everywhere!** From the website to the newsletters, an event invitation or below your email signature, **the social media and links to your pages should be clearly visible**.

Also think about **making links between your social media**: on Facebook or YouTube, you can easily indicate links to your other social accounts.

⁴¹ Survey conducted in 2021 dedicated to EUSAIR's external stakeholders and relayed to a total of 98 individuals at various divisions of the European Commission – out of which 22 completed the survey (for a 22.4% return rate) – Results presented in Task 2.

Key action points

- Promote your social media on each communication channel and tool.

4.3.3. The way towards the activation of EUSAIR's stakeholders and partners

Long before thinking about the EUSAIR content, let's determine and list the people we would and should connect with on social media (esp. Facebook and Twitter) **to implement the monitoring and seeding strategy**:

- influential people sharing your values and who could relay your messages in a consistent way,
- competitors or coopetitors who position themselves on the same topics, and whose content can inspire you,
- (potential) partner organisations in the 9 EUSAIR countries and in the 4 pillars of the macro-regional strategy, whose content can be an added value for your audience,
- prominent media, which share stories from the macro-region,
- etc.

On Twitter, you will reach a more institutional audience (public authorities, ministers, representatives of the partner organisations, etc.) while on Facebook you will get the chance to reach a more local audience.

87% of the organisations - at local, regional, and national level - that have been proposed for the extension of the current EUSAIR database (mostly NGOs, higher education and research institutions) are present on **Facebook**, and **43% on Twitter**.

Once you have a list – with **a good balance in the member countries** - include their Twitter and Facebook handles, with links to their pages. Follow the content of these pages and interact with them:

- Follow 'as a page' on Facebook: on Facebook, pages can follow other pages. Take advantage of this functionality to make yourself known to others. Interact on other pages or groups in the name of the EUSAIR, creating content outside of your own page.
- On Twitter, to facilitate your monitoring, **consider creating 'Lists'**: Twitter Lists allow you to customise, organise and prioritise the Tweets you see in your timeline. You can create Lists of other accounts by group, topic or interest. Viewing a List timeline will show you a stream of Tweets from only the accounts on that List. You can also pin your favourite Lists to the top of your home timeline, so you never miss a Tweet from the accounts that are most important to you.
- Whether on Facebook or Twitter, regularly check the content of your monitored people and organisations: **like it** when interesting, **comment it** or **share it** to your

audience. Regularly share content from others (min. 3 retweets a week on Twitter and min. 2 shares a week on Facebook).

- Following the content strategy: talk about the Others: when relevant **give a space of visibility to the monitored people and organisations in your own content calendar**. You will gain sympathy, legitimacy and ultimately visibility too.

Key action points

- Establish a list of influential people and organisations to monitor on social media.
- Regularly engage with them and their content.

4.3.4. A customised content on each of the platform used

Every social media platform has its own unique way of presenting content, and therefore also its own type of audience. As such, it is important to adapt your content to the platform you will use, and to the audiences you particularly want to target via this platform.

Between Twitter and Facebook the content cannot be copied and pasted: while the same topic can be discussed, the form of the message must be adapted to the platform.

- Facebook, for example, is best-suited for content that is informative, entertaining, emotional and instantly shareable.
- Twitter is known for its trendy updates: share valuable stats, inspiring information or quotes that will prove your know-how of the macro-region.
- Use YouTube as a video content library to relay, support and facilitate the understanding of EUSAIR's key messages.

Each platform also has its own codes, in terms of character limit:

- Facebook post character limit: 63,206 characters... but that's too much. As with all content, be brief, keep your messages short: set a limit of max. 300 characters. Good to know: from 477 characters Facebook 'cuts' the text with a button "Show more".
- Tweets character limit: 280 characters. The change from the mythical 140 characters of Twitter to 280 was a relief for many. However, once again, it's better to keep it short! Try to deliver your message in about **150-200 characters**. Beware: on Twitter, each URL inserted, regardless of its size, counts as 23 characters.
- YouTube video title and description character limit: 100 and 5000 characters. Once again, it is recommended to keep it short, especially for the title. Currently, three-quarters of the videos uploaded on the YouTube channel have a very limited description (often with the title only; 28%) or no description at all (46%).

But also, in terms of formats:

- On Facebook, videos must be less than 240 minutes long; images can have a 1.91:1 or 1:1 ratio.
- On Twitter, videos must be less than 2 minutes and 20 seconds long; images should have a 16:9 ratio and Twitter Cards can have a 1.91:1 or 1:1 ratio.
- On YouTube, videos can last up to 12 hours.

While there are many other differences between the three platforms, these two examples show the importance of creating content appropriate to each platform.

Key action points

- Be aware of the specificities of each platform and take advantage of them to successfully deliver your messages.

4.3.5. Writing effectively on Facebook and Twitter

Writing for social media can't be improvised! Each platform has its own rules, determined by the nature and attitude of the audiences on it.

As explained [previously](#), the content published online should be varied (informative, educative, fun, inspirational, etc.) and aiming to share powerful stories and achievements, not only about EUSAIR itself, but most of all about the Others.

That being said, there are some tricks that can also be implemented for **effective content**:

- Get to the point: keep your messages short and clear, using the 5W method (who, why, when, what, where).
- Grab your reader's attention from the very first sentence with a punchy, engaging tagline.
- Place important information at the beginning of your posts (especially on Tweets as the number of characters is limited).
- Do not give everything to the readers: make them “hungry” to go further via a powerful [call to action](#) for each post and Tweet, using action verbs (download, check, visit, etc.).

You have put forward a CTA that links to your website? Make readers want to click on the link by not revealing everything. You have a video as a visual? Make them curious to know more by watching the video, etc.

- Be positive and optimistic. In an age where many gloomy messages are being broadcast on all media, positive/optimistic content is a way to stand out.
- Speak directly to your audience, avoid impersonal messages and jargon.

Key action points

- Understand and adopt social media writing style to successfully convey your messages.

4.3.6. Beyond the copy, taking care of the form of the content on Twitter and Facebook

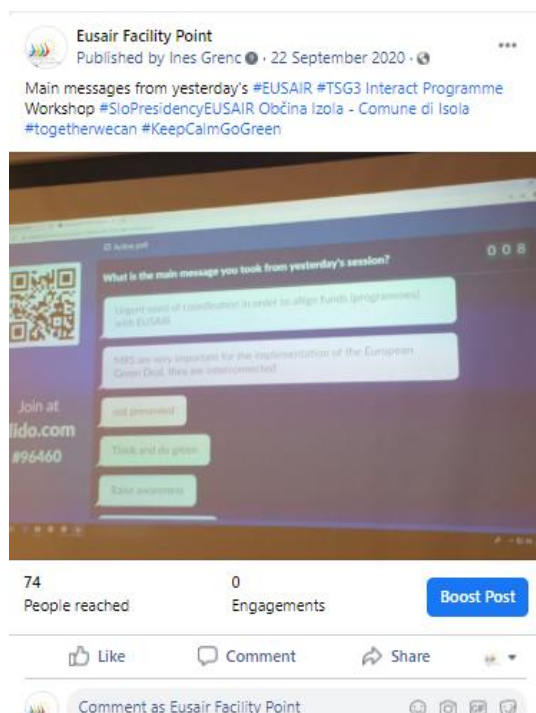
Beyond pure copy, there are some tricks to **get a message across more effectively on social media**:

- Make good use of emojis.
- Don't leave out hashtags, but don't overuse them: hashtags are more popular on Twitter than on Facebook. Try to include 1 to 3 # to your posts and Tweets.
- **Always** identify your stakeholders and partners' pages in your posts and Tweets. Good to know: on Twitter, you can tag up to 10 accounts in pictures.
- Exploit the potential of URLs shorteners.
- Take care of your visuals:
 - Always include a visual to your content (currently 9% of the Facebook posts, and 23% of the Tweets, have no visuals).
 - Avoid publishing Power Slides with a lot of text (currently 24% of the visuals on Facebook and 17% on Twitter).
 - Create your own visual identity and use different designs/templates for each type of post.
 - Vary the formats: Photos (in .png format for better quality), carousels, design with text, videos, Gifs, polls, 360° photos, stories, Twitter Cards, etc. and take advantage of any new format launched by a platform.

Key action points

- Social media is constantly evolving: take advantage of their features and codes and develop formats that work for your audience.

Facebook posts examples:



EUSAIR Facebook post of 22 September 2020 - Screenshot taken on 29/01/2021.

This post published on 22 September could easily drive more engagement. The main points to improve are the picture, which is not clear nor attractive enough, and the use of hashtags and tags (too many next to each other).

Here is a suggestion of how this post could be improved:

Take-home messages of yesterday's #EUSAIR and @InteractEU Workshop on the #EUGreenDeal 📌

- ◆ Urgent need of coordination to align funds
- ◆ Importance of macro-regional strategies for the Green Deal
- ◆ Need for a green transition

And you, are you ready to join the change? 💪 🌱
#SloPresidencyEUSAIR



This post has positive features: it is not too long, it asks an engaging question, and it uses an emoji. However, it can be improved easily. First, the post must come with a picture. Secondly, the URL is too long and should be shortened. Finally, more emojis should be used to make the text more ‘readable’.

Until December 7, a stakeholders' consultation from @EUMaritimeFish on #BlueEconomy is ongoing!

Any ideas on how to make the EU blue economy more sustainable, in line with the #EUGreenDeal? 🗣️

Share them here! 

www.bitly/12659EU

Eusair Facility Point
 Published by Ines Grenco · 19 October 2020 · 9

One could think of a bicycle as not complicated "machine" with simple principles of mechanic pushed by our force. Well, it is, and that is the beauty of it.

Also, when you compare number of jobs needed for production or selling of a bicycle in comparison to cars production and sale, it shows that it creates few times more jobs on the one million euros turnover.

You can see it as a bad thing if you are an investor, but if you are a person that cares about the environment, nature and human benefits, perspective changes and bicycle becomes an interesting hero for 7,5 billion people inhabiting the Earth.

The economic model in which everything is blurred in comparison to the growth and profit, needs to be left behind, if we do not want to end up in a resourceless environment, in which growth will be no longer possible!

#EuropeanGreenDeal #EUSAIR #UNAgenda2030

NUBER OF JOBS PER € MILLION TURNOVER

Activity	Jobs per € million turnover
bicycle production	3
bicycle sale	3
car production	1
car sale	1

Read by Open Access from [ResearchGate](#) - icons designed by [MaterialIcon](#) / [Freemix](#) - design website by [over](#) **Y&C**

71 People reached 3 Engagements [Boost Post](#)

2

Like Comment Share

Comment as Eusair Facility Point

Here is an example:

Did you know that the production of #bicycles creates more jobs than the production of cars per € million turnover? 🚲

Together, let's change the economic model for a greener and more sustainable one! ✅

Want to know more about the #UNAgenda2030 and its impact for the Adriatic-Ionian region? Click here 🖱️ [link](#)

#EUGreenDeal

Tweets examples:

EUSAIR Tweet of 25 January 2021 - Screenshot taken on 25/01/2021.



This example could be improved in three ways to be more effective. First, the text could be more engaging. Second, the visual should be in the right format. Finally, it is usually recommended to tag the maximum of 10 accounts in the picture: the more relevant accounts, the biggest reach. Moreover, tagging one's own account is not necessary, as the Tweet already appears on the profile.

Here is a suggestion of Tweet:

D-10 📅!

The #5thForumBelgrade will explore essential issues for the #EUSAIR region! Don't miss our session on #BlueGrowth and #Aquaculture, register before January 26! 🖱️ www.bitly/session135

#StrongerTogether

+ TAGS: @EUinmyRegion, @ElisaFerreira, @INTERREGADRION, @RegioInterreg, @Eusair_fp_GR, @eu_near, @EU_MARE, @AI_PS, @BBSC_CPMR, @AI_NURECC



EUSAIR Tweet of 23 April 2020 - Screenshot taken on 25/01/2021.

In this example, a visual is needed, and the text could be improved to be 'easier-to-read' (using emojis, hashtags, and shorter sentences).

Here is a suggestion:

📅 Save the date! The Mediterranean Coast and Macro-Regional Strategies Week 2020 will take place from 14 to 25 September! 📅

Keen on discussing the future of #EUSAIR? 🗣️ Stay informed! ➡️ link.adriatic-ionian.eu

#SloPresidencyEUSAIR

4.3.7. Maximise your reach and engagement on Twitter and Facebook

You have published content that highlights partners while allowing EUSAIR's key messages to shine through, you have taken into account the rules in terms of character count, hashtags or visuals... but how do you extend the reach of posts and Tweets and generate engagement?

Good community management is the key to creating links and generating more engagement: invite people who like your content on Facebook to follow your page, thank the accounts that retweet you on Twitter, respond quickly to questions and comments under your posts and Tweets. On Facebook, set up automatic and personalized Messenger replies.

In addition, to best engage your audiences, consider **translating key posts and Tweets into the national language of the target audience**. On Facebook, if you do so, you can **target your organic posts**: it allows you to narrow your audience and target the right people (based on gender, age, location, etc.), even for an organic post.

To reinforce the cooperation among the people involved in the governance structure, don't hesitate to **develop a toolbox as well as ready-to-use posts and Tweets for your key partners** (on specific campaigns) to help them relay the EUSAIR's key messages among their own audiences (via the profile of a Minister or the account of a partner organisation), and in their national language.

Beyond these tricks, the best strategy to increase your reach and engagement is to **regularly monitor the performance of your posts** in order to understand what works with your audience.

Key action points

- Do not underestimate the power of community management.
- Make your partners' work easier by providing them with ready-to-use content.

4.3.8. Promoting a real-life event on social media

Social media are obviously also a platform of choice to promote events... without going overboard by doing only that. Beyond the posts or Tweets that promote an event, you can take advantage of some features, to connect with your audience before, during, and after an event:

- Create an event page on Facebook;
- Post and tweet teasers with necessary details;
- Create a hashtag;
- Design a Facebook filter for the event;
- Show behind the scenes content;
- Live Tweet and post;
- Broadcast live via Facebook, Twitter (Periscope) and YouTube,
- Etc.

Paradoxically, real-life events are a unique opportunity to create content for the digital sphere:

- Gather key information on different topics, to reuse in social media posts,
- Benefit from pictures taken of key representatives (to upload on Flickr),
- Shoot short videos with key representatives and speakers on various topics (interviewees to be briefed before the event),
- Shoot ambiance videos for next year's teaser,

Etc.

Key action points

- Increase the reach of your events through social media and benefit from it to generate extra content.

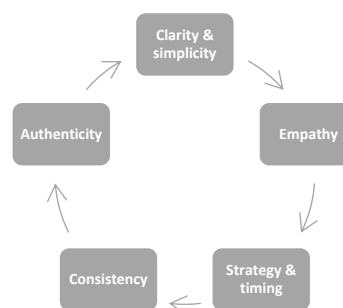
Conclusions Tasks 4 & 5

“Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work.” Peter Drucker

Beyond words, only practice, trial and error, measure and optimisation will lead to success... and above all good communication between all stakeholders!

Cooperation is clearly the key word and the only way to implement the above recommendations. Without the support and involvement of each member of the macro-regional strategy nothing can be achieved. It is only through the collaboration of all that we will be able to put in place a content strategy that ambassadors of the macro-region will awaken and make the EUSAIR shine inside and beyond its borders.

To be effective, institutional communication must be clear, simple, and based on empathy. The first lesson to take home from all this work is that "me, myself and I" communication is to be proscribed. It is now necessary to integrate the fact of being interested in the Others, sharing their experience, in order to ultimately be of service to other audience. In a word: EUSAIR's communication must adopt a logic of listening, dissemination and sharing.



We will initiate a true synergy and co-creation process based on best practices and a 'champion' policy which will lead to a virtuous circle in terms of coverage and impact.

Based on all the work undertaken, we, as communication expert, can already say that the EUSAIR initiative has a wonderful potential. Not only through the variety of topics that can be covered, but also through the extremely inspiring region it covers.

Having optimised communication and strengthened the use of existing channels, the clear aim is to broaden the scope and consider the use of new channels. Digital communication is not an end in itself. It will serve two purposes: First, it should support integrated communication, which should also include events, press relations, field actions and guerrilla marketing. Secondly, it should serve as an 'ice-breaker' to launch new initiatives towards more difficult-to-reach audiences such as young people.


This very document, which is now reaching its end, contains a multitude of tips and tricks that will help optimise every digital communication on a daily basis to make it more impactful and therefore more effective, so that the EUSAIR is no longer a mere geopolitical concept, but a reality on the ground as well as in the hearts and minds of people.

ANNEXES


1. Annexes

1.1. Task 1

1.1.1. Online Survey to EUSAIR Facility Point members



EU Strategy for the
Adriatic and Ionian Region
EUSAIR



EU Strategy for the
Adriatic and Ionian Region
EUSAIR

Survey - EUSAIR Communication Activities

Dear Madam,
Dear Sir,

In connection with the digital communication audit currently underway for EUSAIR, we would like to collect your impressions and feedback regarding the digital communication of the macro-regional strategy.

Indeed, in order to better understand the overall picture of the EUSAIR communication activities, it is essential to obtain the input of the people involved in EUSAIR communication activities.

This survey aims at gathering information that will complement our observations and analysis. The results collected will help elaborate an integrated (digital) communications strategy for EUSAIR.

Thank you very much for your time!

***Required**

Which organisation are you part of? *

☐ EUSAIR Facility Point

☐ European Commission

☐ Other: _____

Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 1 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.

Sharing and exchanging information between EUSAIR participating countries is a smooth process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All EUSAIR countries regularly share information to feed the EUSAIR communication.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All EUSAIR countries contribute in the same way to the content of EUSAIR communication.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is complicated to find content for digital communications (social media posts, videos, newsletters).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is complicated to create and manage the content for digital communications (social media posts, videos, newsletters).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much time do you spend on average working for EUSAIR communications?
*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1=10% of my time is dedicated to EUSAIR Communications ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 10=100% of my time is dedicated to EUSAIR Communications

Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 1 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.

What is according to you the main challenge encountered when it comes to communication activities within EUSAIR?

Your answer

List up to three positive and three negative aspects of the current EUSAIR communication.

Your answer

Do you agree with the following statements? *

	I strongly agree	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I strongly disagree	Not applicable
It is clear to me what EUSAIR is trying to achieve in terms of communication; I understand its challenges and objectives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
EUSAIR has a clear digital communication strategy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
EUSAIR is targeting clearly defined audiences via its online communication.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 1 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your general expertise in communication? *

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not experienced ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Fully experienced

What is your main communication strength? Select up to three options. *

☐ Corporate communication

☐ Internal communication

☐ Digital communication: website, social media, video

☐ Events management

☐ Storytelling/Copywriting

☐ Publications management

☐ Media relations

☐ Public affairs

☐ Brand and marketing

☐ Other: _____

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the ease to communicate around EUSAIR? *

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not easy at all ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very easy

Do you feel comfortable about communicating on EUSAIR? *

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not comfortable ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very comfortable

Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 1 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.

Why? Why not?

Your answer

In your opinion, who should be responsible for the EUSAIR communication within the current governance structure? *

Your answer


In terms of languages used, do you consider it important to communicate in the national language of each country or in English only? Do you sometimes communicate in the EUSAIR national languages? On which occasion / via which tools/platforms? *


Your answer

Next

Page 1 of 6

Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 1 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.

 EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region
EUSAIR

 EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region
EUSAIR

Survey - EUSAIR Communication Activities

*Required

Social Media Communication

Is there a specific Social Media team/ role in EUSAIR? Is it considered a full-time job? Is there a separation of roles (i.e. copywriter, community manager, graphic designer...)? Describe shortly. *

Your answer

How is the social media content calendar organised? (frequency of posts, type of posts, content, etc.) Describe shortly. *

Your answer

How much time do you spend on average working on EUSAIR Social Media?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1=10% of my time is dedicated to EUSAIR Social Media. 10=100% of my time is dedicated to EUSAIR Social Media.

Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 2 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your current command of Facebook?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Low proficiency ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Excellent proficiency

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your current command of Twitter?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Low proficiency ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Excellent proficiency

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your current command of YouTube?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Low proficiency ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Excellent proficiency

Why has Facebook ads sponsoring started on 23 January 2021? Describe shortly. *

Your answer

Have you already considered creating a EUSAIR LinkedIn page, as there is one for other macro-regional Strategies? Or other social media accounts (such as Instagram)? Describe shortly. *

Your answer

Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 2 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.

How would you describe the collaboration between EUSAIR countries in terms of social media? Describe shortly. *

Your answer

On Twitter, different accounts exist for relaying information. Who manages the different accounts (e.g. Greece)? What is the expected objective of these different communications? How is the link maintained between the different accounts? How is it coordinated? *

Your answer

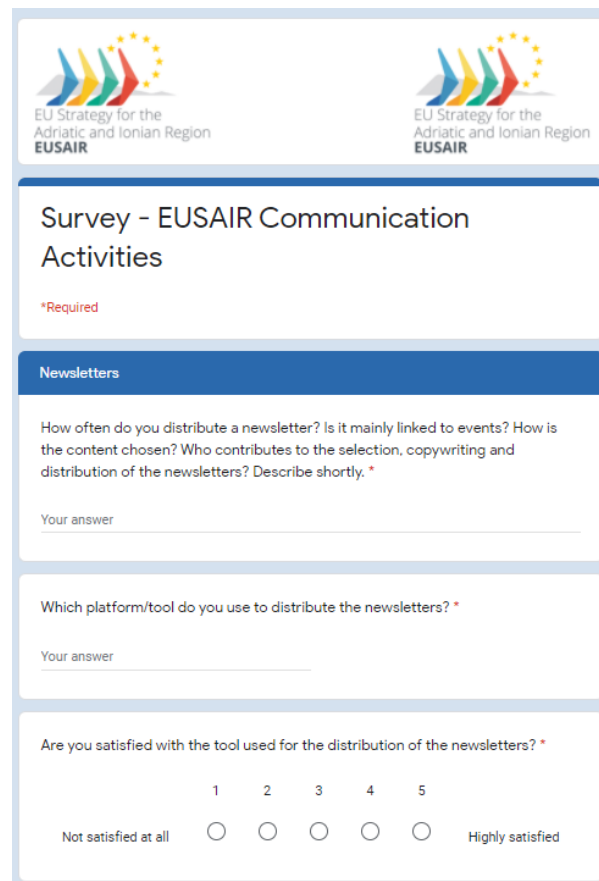
What are according to you the ways of improvement regarding the content creation and social media management processes? *

Your answer

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Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 2 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.



EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region
EUSAIR

EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region
EUSAIR

Survey - EUSAIR Communication Activities

*Required

Newsletters

How often do you distribute a newsletter? Is it mainly linked to events? How is the content chosen? Who contributes to the selection, copywriting and distribution of the newsletters? Describe shortly. *

Your answer

Which platform/tool do you use to distribute the newsletters? *

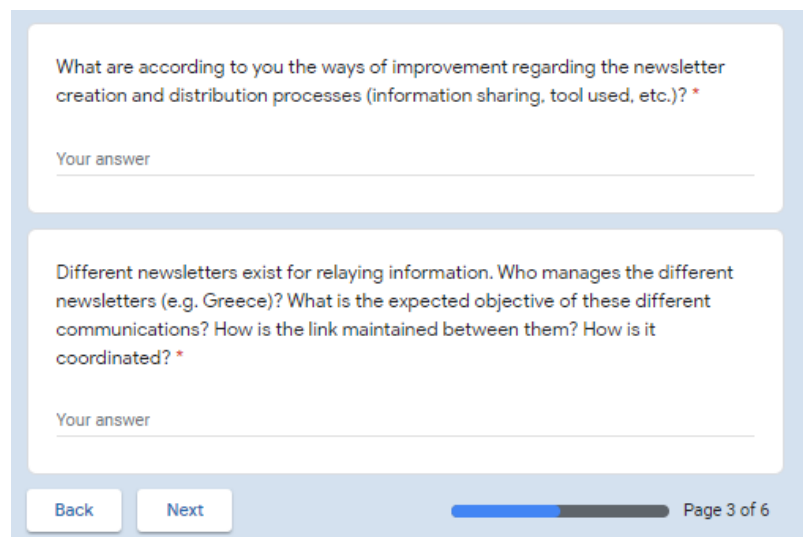
Your answer

Are you satisfied with the tool used for the distribution of the newsletters? *

1 2 3 4 5

Not satisfied at all ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Highly satisfied

Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 3 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.



What are according to you the ways of improvement regarding the newsletter creation and distribution processes (information sharing, tool used, etc.)? *

Your answer



Different newsletters exist for relaying information. Who manages the different newsletters (e.g. Greece)? What is the expected objective of these different communications? How is the link maintained between them? How is it coordinated? *

Your answer

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Page 3 of 6

Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 3 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.

Survey - EUSAIR Communication Activities

*Required

Website

How often do you publish website news articles? How is the content chosen? Who contributes to the selection, copywriting and publishing of the website news articles? How many people are involved? Describe shortly. *

Your answer

Are you satisfied with the tool/ CMS used for the edition of the website ?

1

2

3

4

5

Not satisfied at all

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

Highly satisfied



Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 4 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.

How easy is it to execute the below actions in your CMS? *

	Very easy	Easy	Neutral	Slightly complicated	Very complicated	Not applicable
Editing web content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Embedding videos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uploading images	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adding events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Posting new articles/ blogs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Posting a press release	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Updating team changes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Updating homepage banners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 4 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.



Survey - EUSAIR Communication Activities

***Required**

Press / Media Relations

Who is in charge of the EUSAIR Media Relations? Who is the spokesperson when it comes to EUSAIR stories? *

Your answer

How often do you produce and distribute press releases on EUSAIR? How many have you produced in 2020? And 2019? About which topic(s)? Describe shortly. *

Your answer

Do you communicate on the articles generated? Do you publish the press releases on your website? Describe shortly. *



Your answer

How often do you organise interviews with the press on EUSAIR? On which topic(s)? Have you developed relations with specific media/journalists? Describe shortly. *

Your answer

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Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 5 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.

Survey - EUSAIR Communication Activities

*Required

Stakeholders Communication

How often are you in contact with the stakeholders listed below? *

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
local public authority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
regional public authority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
national public authority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
local/ regional/ national SME	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
local/ regional/ national enterprise, excluding SMEs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
business support organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
international organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
education/training centre and school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
press	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 6 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021.

How do you usually get in touch with those stakeholders? Describe shortly. *

Your answer

Based on your various exchanges with key stakeholders, how would you rate their general knowledge on EUSAIR? *

	Poor knowledge of EUSAIR	Limited knowledge of EUSAIR	Good knowledge of EUSAIR	Great knowledge of EUSAIR
local public authority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
regional public authority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
national public authority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
local/ regional/ national SME	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
local/ regional/ national enterprise, excluding SMEs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
business support organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
international organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
education/training centre and school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
press	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

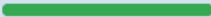
Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 6 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021

Would you like to add a comment/feedback based on the answers of the above question?

Your answer

Have you created bridges with key stakeholders on social media? How? With which ones in particular? Describe shortly. *

Your answer

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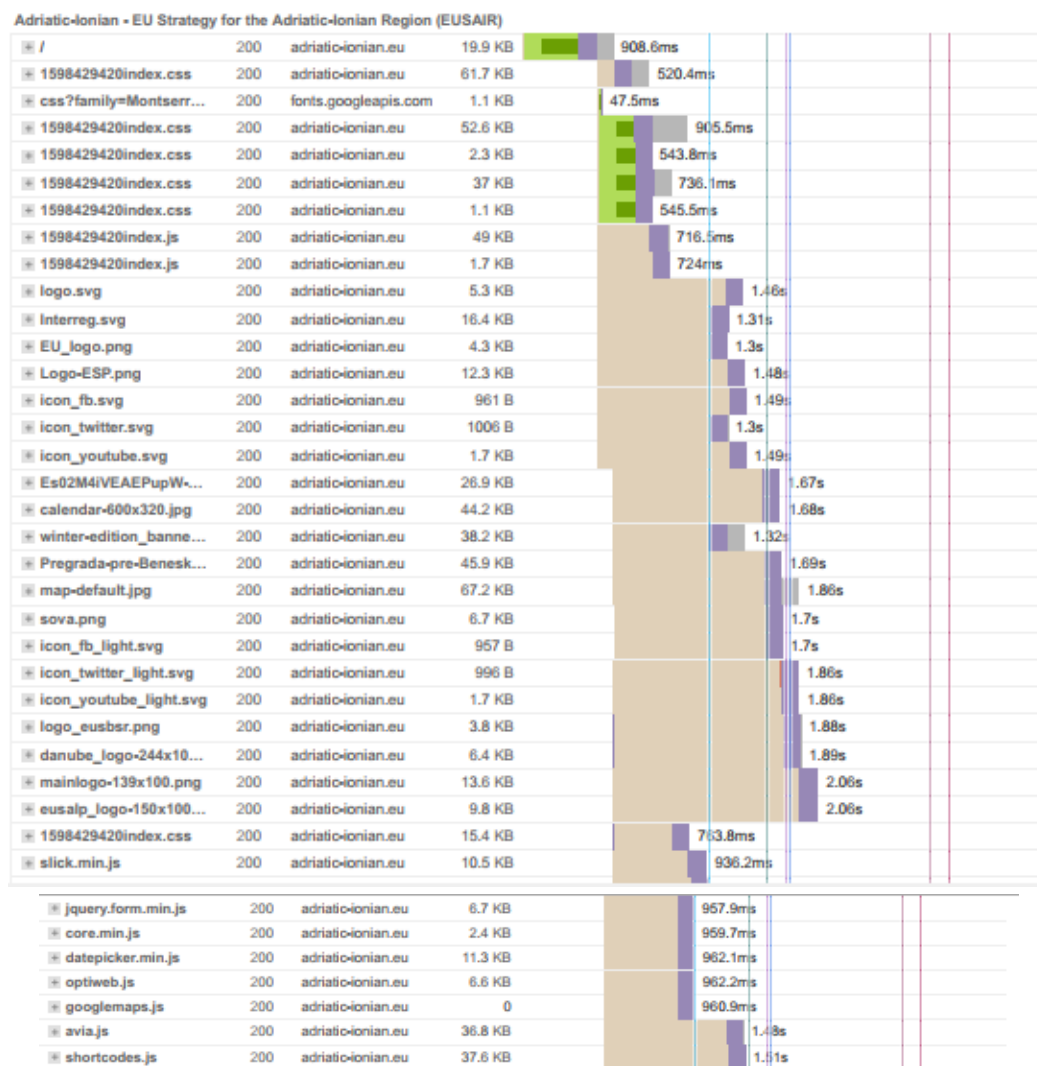
Internal Survey sent to EUSAIR Facility Point Page 6 - Screenshot taken on 08/02/2021

1.1.2. Website GTMETRIX Report

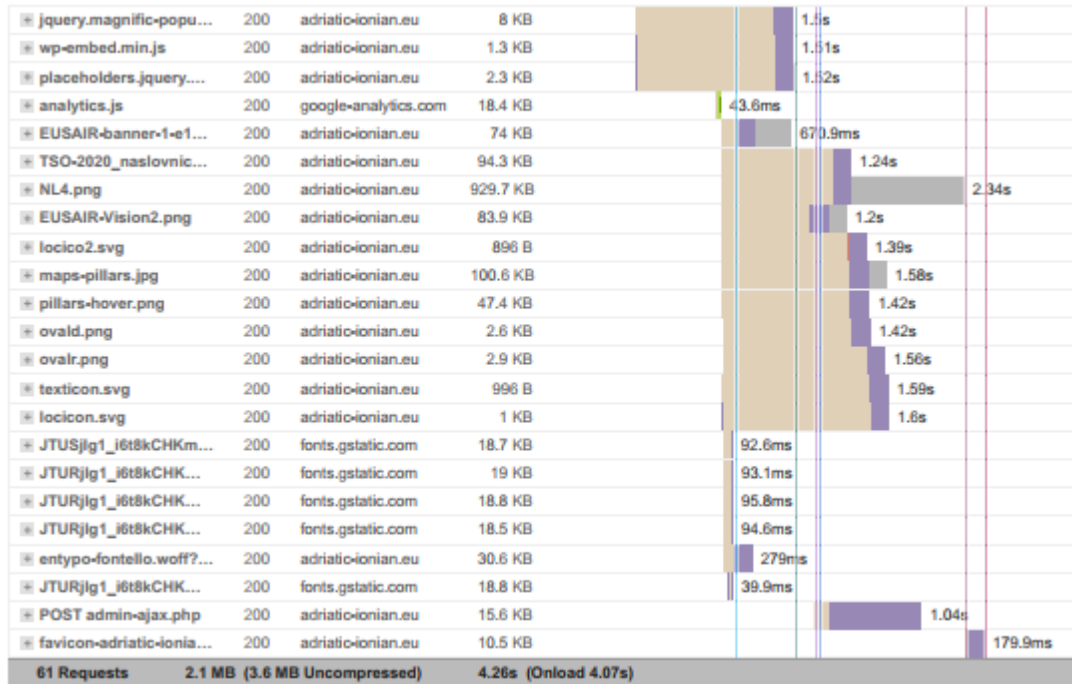


Website performance report by GTMETRIX – Overview.

The waterfall chart displays the loading behaviour of your site in your selected browser. It can be used to discover simple issues such as 404's or more complex issues such as external resources blocking page rendering.



Website performance report by GTMETRIX – Loading behaviour #1



Website performance report by GTMETRIX – Loading behaviour #2.

Browser Timings

Redirect	0ms	Connect	0.6s	Backend	183ms
TTFB	0.7s	First Paint	1.9s	DOM Int.	2.4s
DOM Loaded	2.4s	Onload	4.1s	Fully Loaded	4.3s

Website performance report by GTMETRIX – Browser timings.

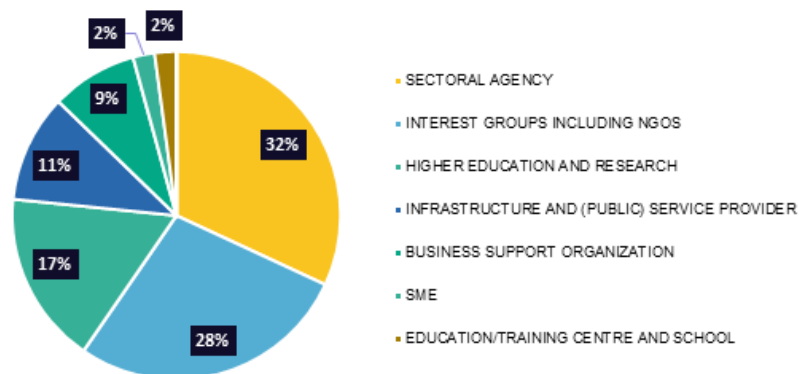
IMPACT	AUDIT	
High	Eliminate render-blocking resources	Potential savings of 2,650 ms
Med-Low	Use a Content Delivery Network (CDN)	50 resources found
Med-Low	Use HTTP/2 for all resources	54 requests not served via HTTP/2
Med-Low	Serve static assets with an efficient cache policy	51 resources found
Med-Low	Remove unused CSS	Potential savings of 158 KiB
Med-Low	Properly size images	Potential savings of 38 KiB
Low	Avoid large layout shifts	5 elements found
Low	Avoid an excessive DOM size	939 elements
Low	Use passive listeners to improve scrolling performance	
Low	Remove unused JavaScript	Potential savings of 50 KiB
Low	Serve images in next-gen formats	Potential savings of 1,053 KiB
Low	Efficiently encode images	Potential savings of 39 KiB
Low	Avoid chaining critical requests	25 chains found
Low	Defer offscreen images	Potential savings of 278 KiB
Low	Ensure text remains visible during webfont load	
Low	Avoid long main-thread tasks	3 long tasks found
Low	Avoid enormous network payloads	Total size was 2,183 KiB
Low	Reduce JavaScript execution time	0.3 s
Low	Reduce initial server response time	Root document took 180 ms
Low	Minify CSS	Potential savings of 10 KiB
Low	Minify JavaScript	Potential savings of 24 KiB

Website performance report by GTMETRIX – Points of improvement and priority level.

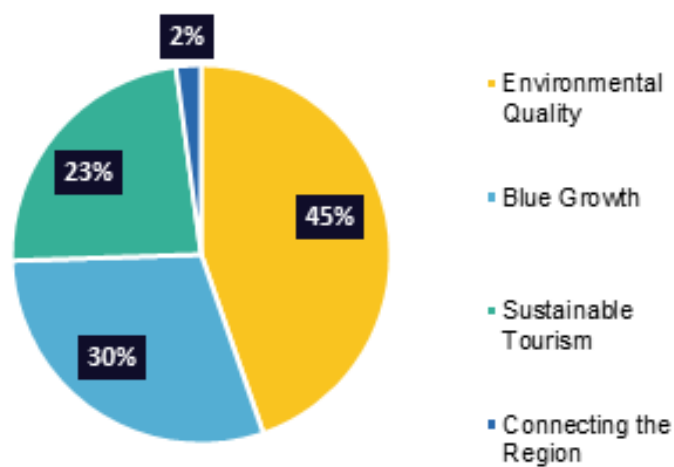
1.2. Task 2

1.2.1. Analysis of the extended database per country

Italy

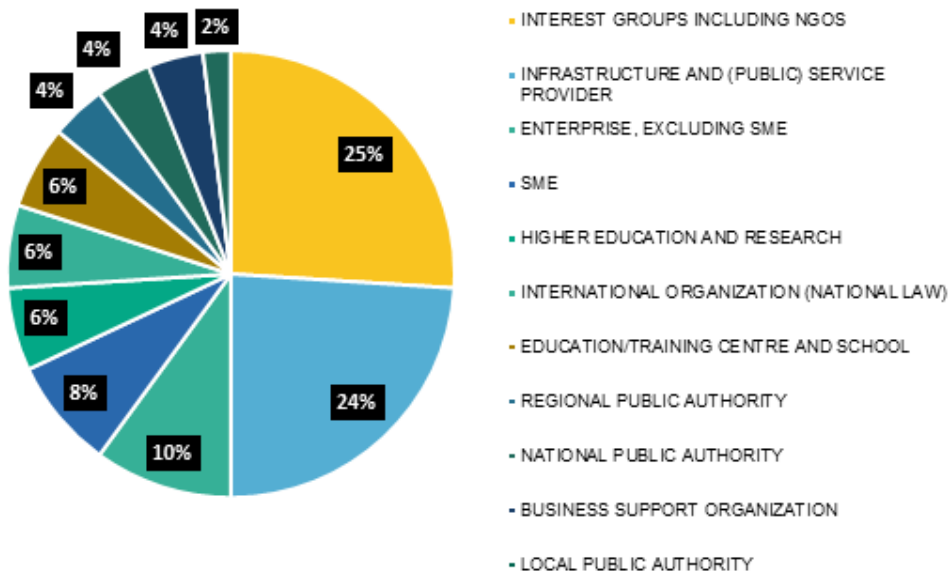


Distribution of Italian new contacts according to the sector.

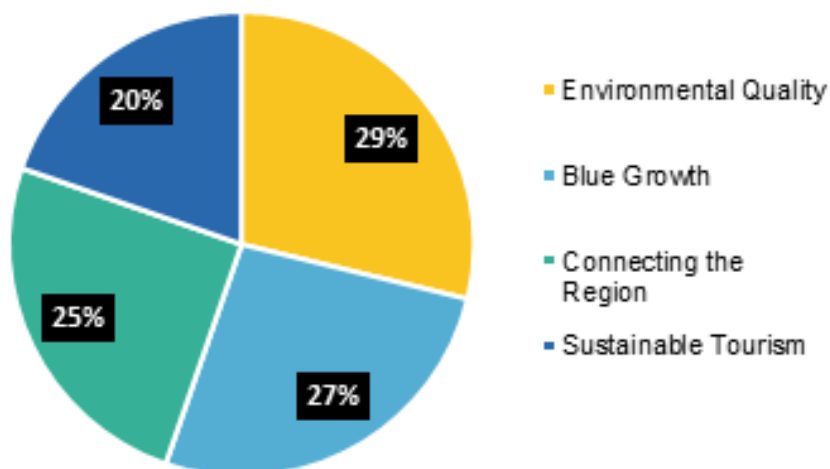


Distribution of Italian new contacts according to the pillar.

Greece

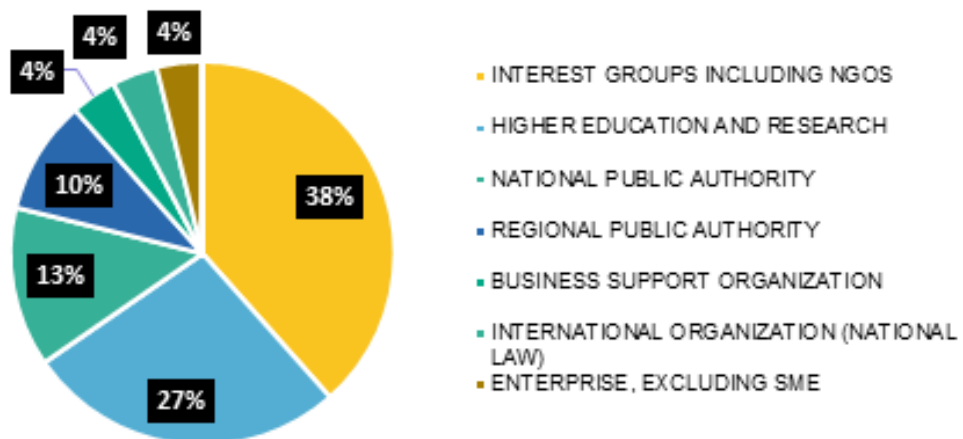


Distribution of Greek new contacts according to the sector.

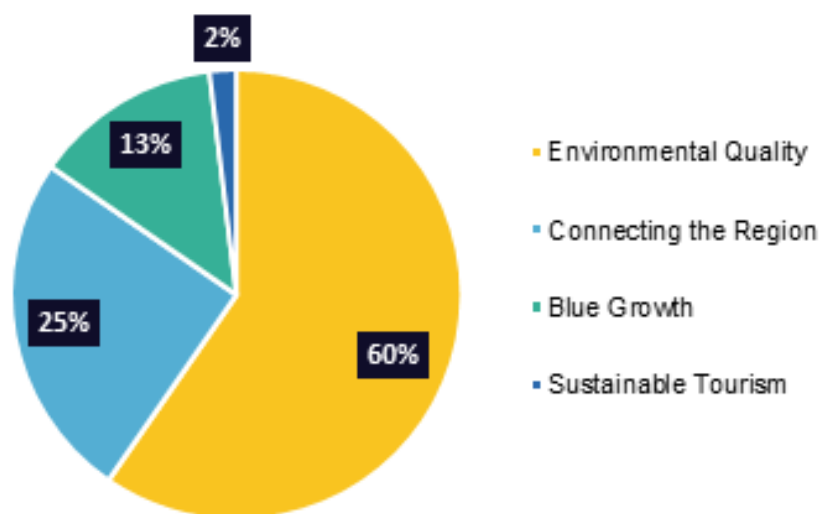


Distribution of Greek new contacts according to the pillar.

Croatia

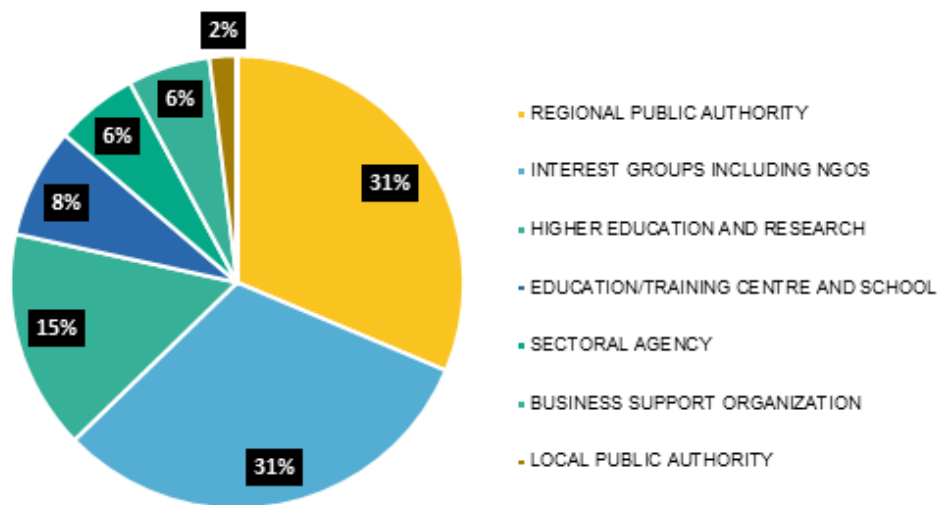


Distribution of Croatian new contacts according to the sector.

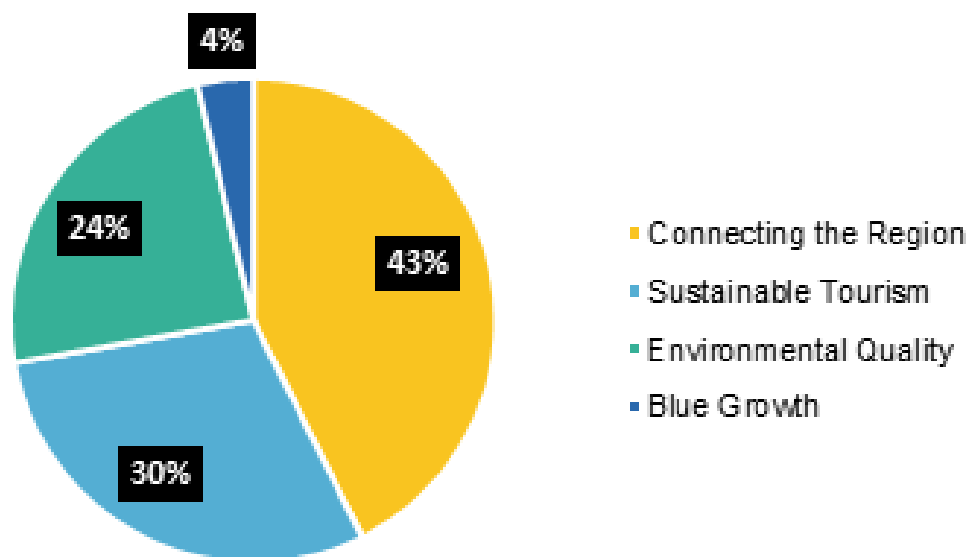


Distribution of Croatian new contacts according to the pillar.

Slovenia

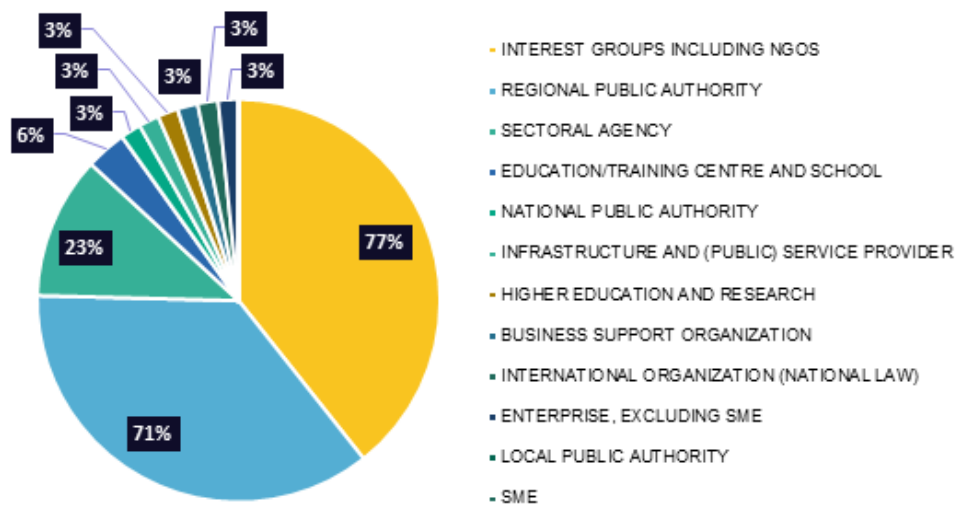


Distribution of Slovenian new contacts according to the sector.

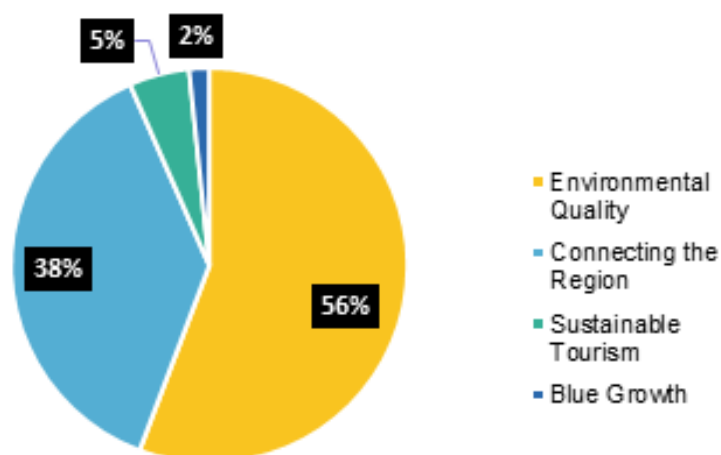


Distribution of Slovenian new contacts according to the pillar.

Serbia

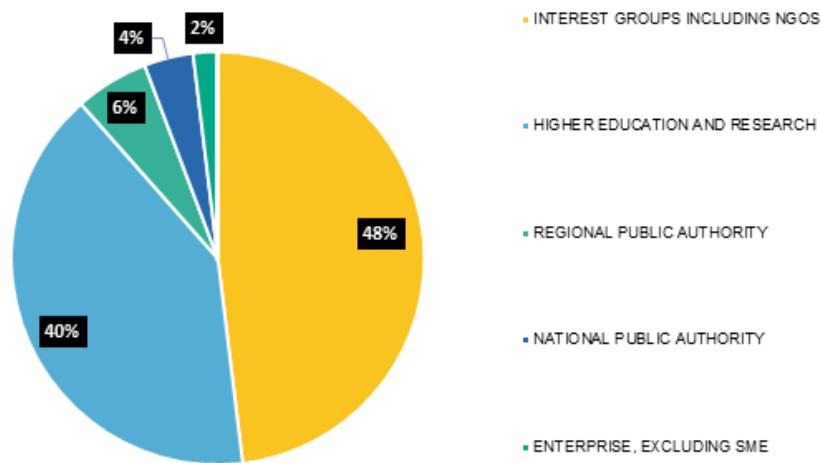


Distribution of Serbian new contacts according to the sector.

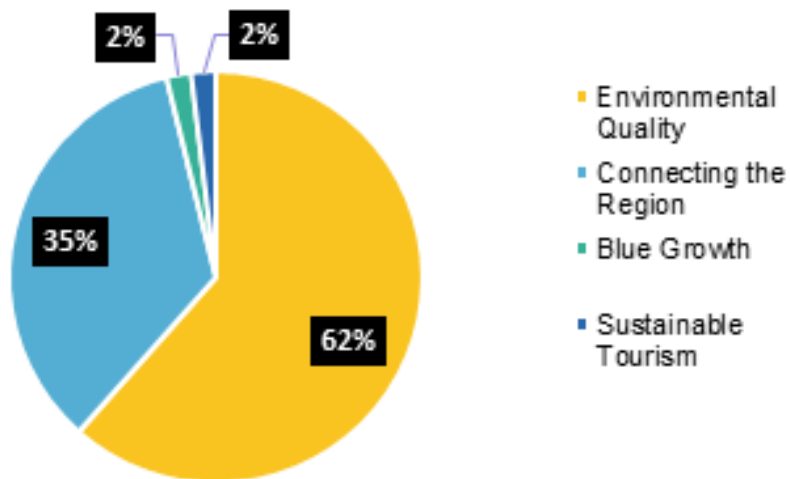


Distribution of Serbian new contacts according to the pillar.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

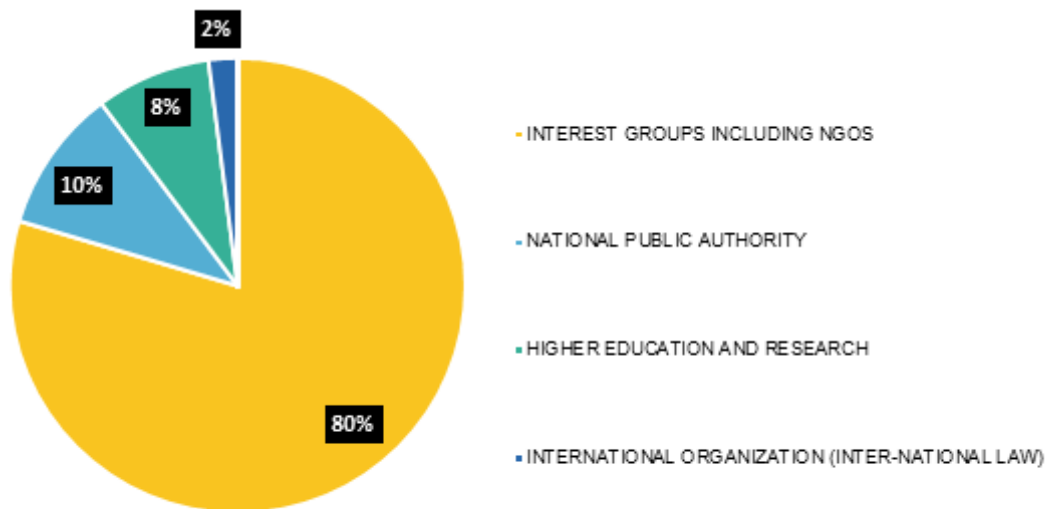


Distribution of Bosnian new contacts according to the sector.

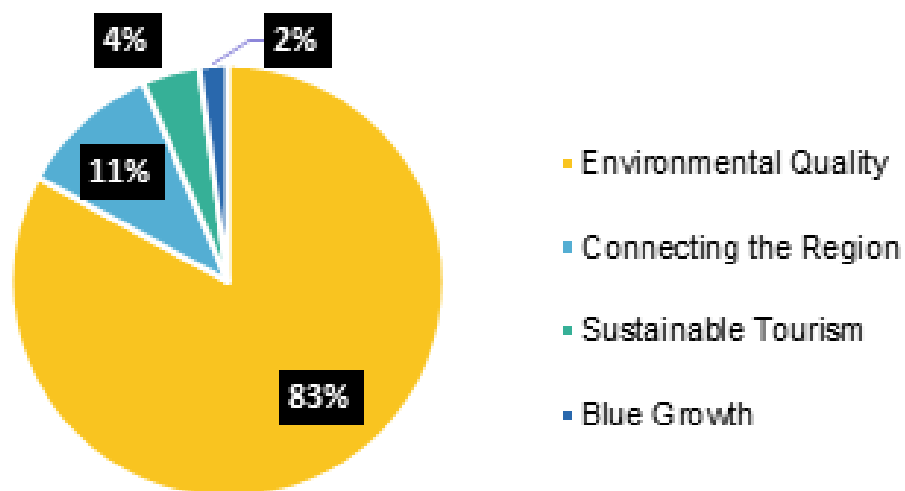


Distribution of Bosnian new contacts according to the pillar.

Albania

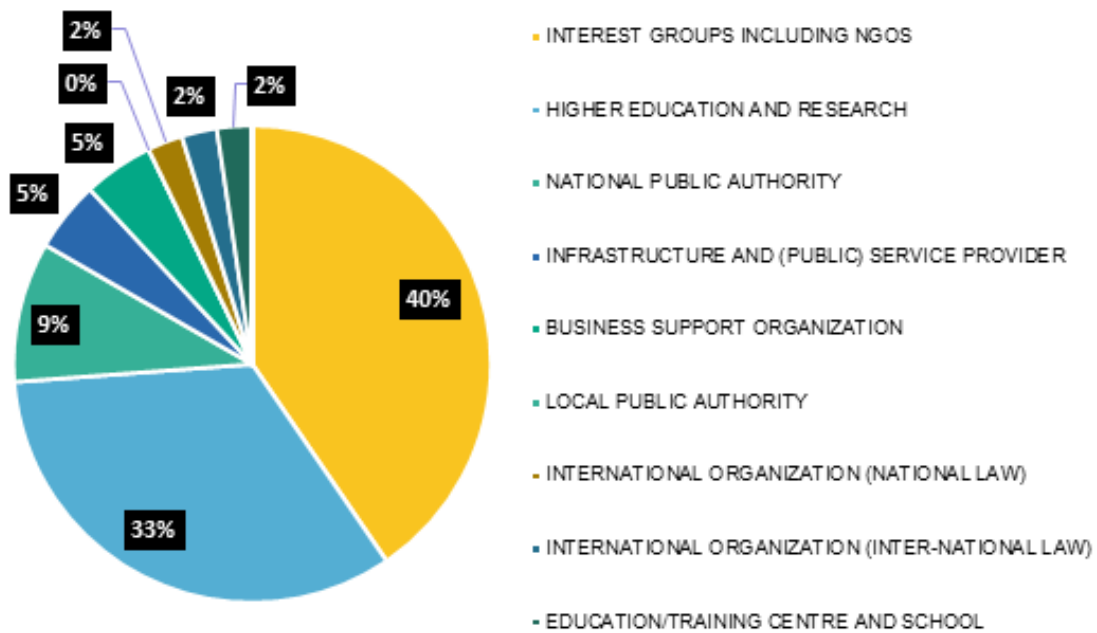


Distribution of Albanian new contacts according to the sector.

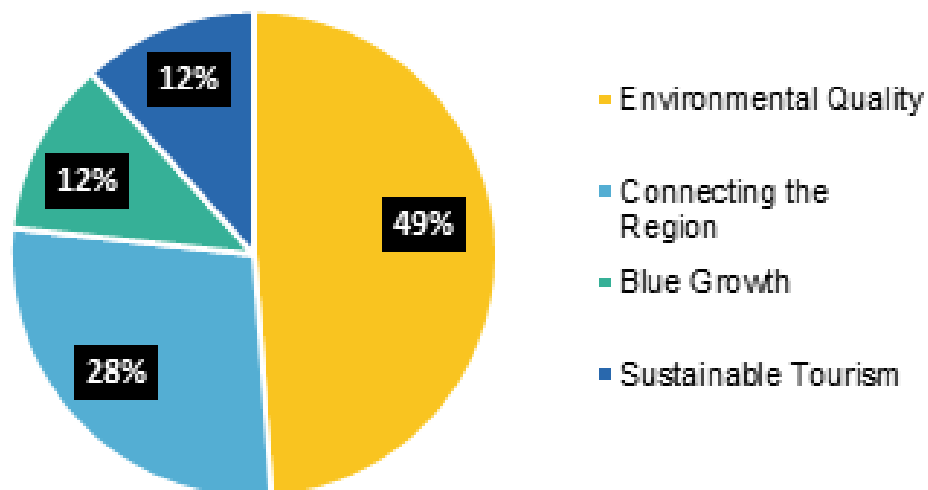


Distribution of Albanian new contacts according to the pillar.

Montenegro

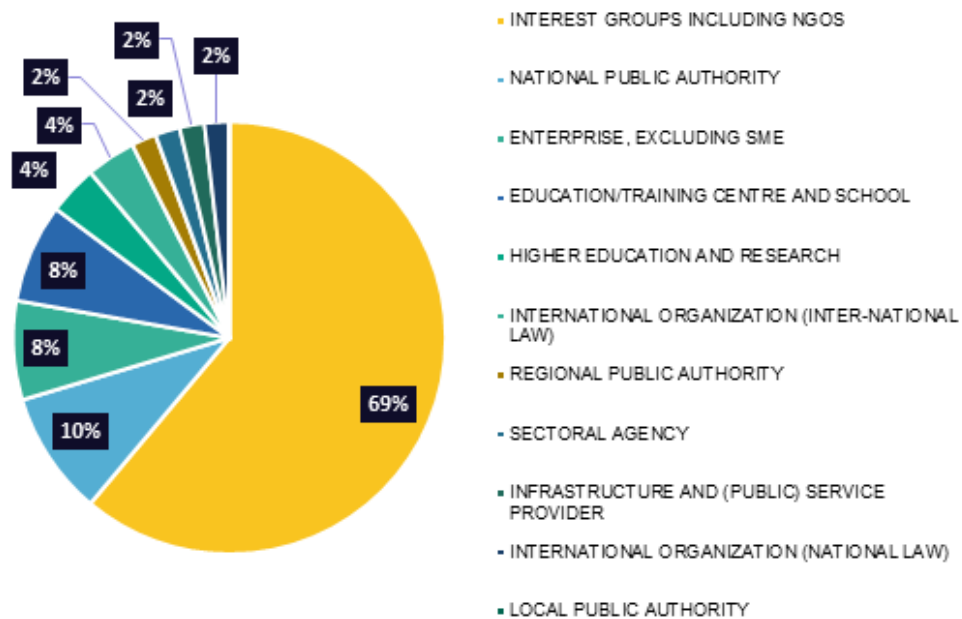


Distribution of Montenegrin new contacts according to the sector.

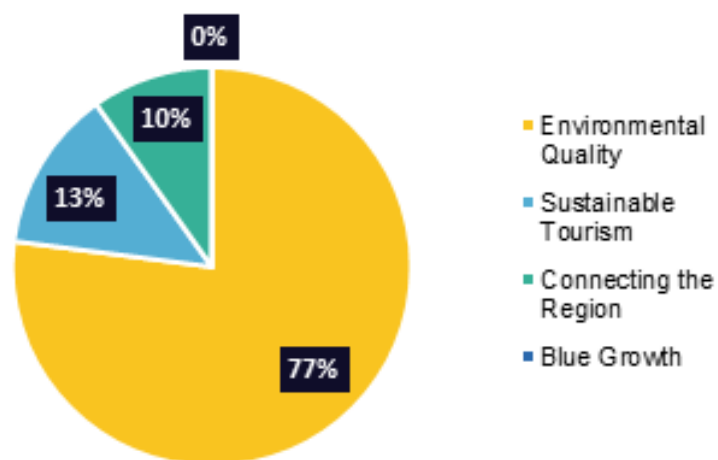


Distribution of Montenegrin new contacts according to the pillar.

North Macedonia

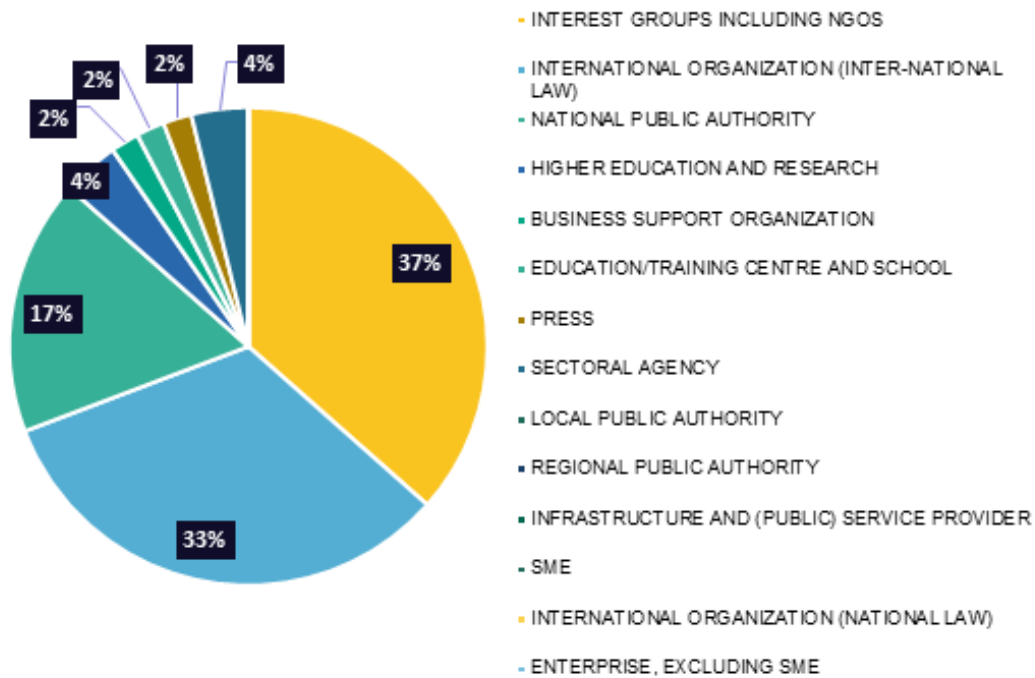


Distribution of North Macedonian new contacts according to the sector.



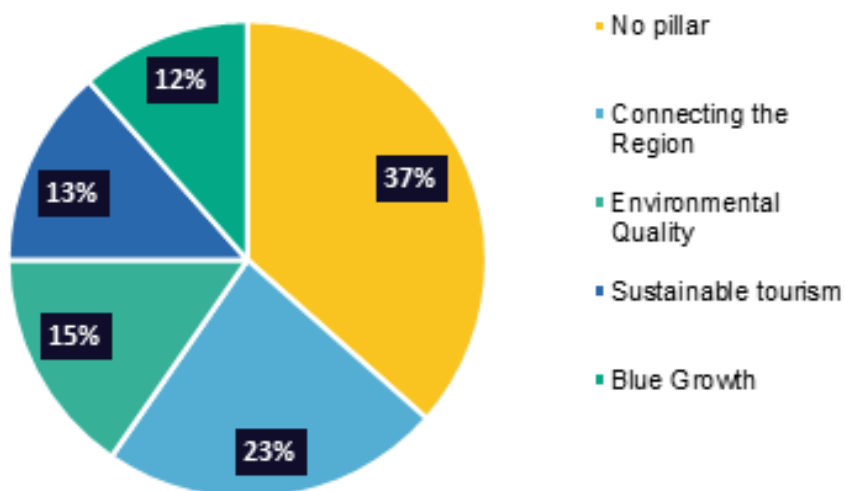
Distribution of North Macedonian new contacts according to the pillar.

Non-EUSAIR countries (Belgium-based organisations)



Distribution of new contacts outside the EUSAIR-countries according to the sector.

* national public authority = here, embassies of 9 EUSAIR countries located in Belgium.



Distribution of new contacts outside the EUSAIR-countries according to the pillar.

*No specific pillar = embassies and youth organisations.

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