Stock taking

Post Scriptum to Panel 2:

Macro-regional strategies
communicators discussion

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Double bill

Offering two features:

- Stojan Pelko's *Element of comparative **analysis** of four MRS communication strategies*

- Matevž Medja's *Outline of the method, process, and areas of work in order to **optimise** communication strategies*

both commisioned by *Regional Development Agency Posavje* (RRA Posavje) as part of the preparation process for the *EU Macro-regional Strategies Conference on Media and Communication – **Know thy** neighbor*, Portorož, 2017.

Analysis
Table of content

1. Intro
2. Content Analysis

   EUSBSR   EUSAIR   EUSALP   EUSDR
3. Detection of common strategic points and key tactical tools
4. Best practices
5. Recommendations

Optimisation
Table of content

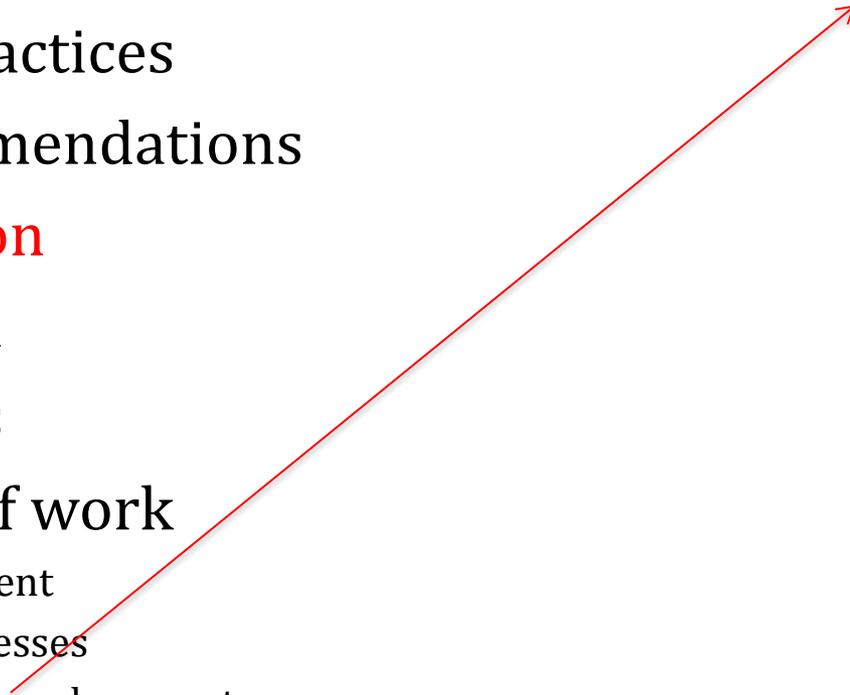# And today's
table of content?

analysis

1. Common strategic points and key tactical tools
2. Best practices
3. Recommendations

optimisation

4. Method
5. Process
6. Areas of work
   A. Content
   B. Processes
   C. Tools and support

1. Common strategic points

Macro-regional Communication Strategy	BALTIC	ADRIATIC- IONIC	ALPINE
MISSION / AIM / GOAL	**strengthen** EUSBSR **position** increase the **awareness** of the EUSBSR promote the **results** it delivers measure the **impact** it gives show the **benefits** it provides for the countries involved and ordinary people	**Advocacy** that informs and motivates <u>leadership</u> to create a supportive environment to achieve EUSAIR's objectives. **Social mobilization** that engages and supports the participation of <u>target groups</u> in order to raise demand for or sustain progress toward EUSAIR's objectives. **Attitude-changing communication** that involves (face-to-face) dialogue with <u>individuals</u> or target groups so as to promote and sustain behaviour change.	**strengthen** EUSALP **position** increase **awareness** of EUSALP projects and programs promote its **results** measure its **impact** and show the **benefits** it provides at European, national and regional level

& Key tactical tools

Macro-regional Communication Strategy	BALTIC	ADRIATIC- IONIC	ALPINE	DANUBE
TOOLS	Internal communication Visual identity Digital platforms Tools, events and publications Media	Intranet Stakeholder platform EUSAIR website Social media Public events Media coverage Publications and branded material Establishing an (annual) award – optional	Communication materials Events and seminars Websites Newsletters Mailing Press Social media	EUSDR website Priority Area websites (12) Newsflash Social Media – Facebook, Twitter Printed materials Factsheets/ Infographics/ Onepagers Visual identity

Key tactical tools

Macro-regional Communication Strategy	BALTIC	ADRIATIC- IONIC	ALPINE	DANUBE
TOOLS **Web & social** **Printed** **Events** **Media**	Internal communication Visual identity **Digital platforms** Tools, **events** and **publications** **Media**	Intranet Stakeholder platform **EUSAIR website** **Social media** Public **events** **Media coverage** **Publications** and branded material Establishing an (annual) award – optional	**Communication materials** **Events** and seminars **Websites** Newsletters Mailing **Press** **Social media**	**EUSDR website** Priority Area websites (12) Newsflash **Social Media – Facebook, Twitter** **Printed materials** Factsheets/ Infographics/ Onepagers Visual identity

Key tactical tools

Macro-regional Communication Strategy	BALTIC	ADRIATIC- IONIC	ALPINE	DANUBE
TOOLS **Web & social** **Printed** **Events** **Media** **outstanding**	Internal communication Visual identity **Digital platforms** Tools, **events** and **publications** **Media**	Intranet **Stakeholder platform** **EUSAIR website** **Social media** Public **events** **Media coverage** **Publications** and branded material **Establishing an (annual) award –** optional	**Communication materials** **Events** and seminars **Websites** Newsletters Mailing **Press** **Social media**	**EUSDR website** Priority Area websites (12) Newsflash **Social Media – Facebook, Twitter** **Printed materials** **Factsheets/ Infographics/ Onepagers** Visual identity

Key tactical tools

Macro-regional Communication Strategy	BALTIC	ADRIATIC- IONIC	ALPINE	DANUBE
TOOLS **missing**	Internal communication Visual identity Digital platforms Tools, events and publications Media	Intranet Stakeholder platform EUSAIR website Social media Public events Media coverage Publications and branded material Establishing an (annual) award – optional **Visual identity**	Communication materials Events and seminars Websites Newsletters Mailing Press Social media **Visual identity**	EUSDR website Priority Area websites (12) Newsflash Social Media – Facebook, Twitter Printed materials Factsheets/ Infographics/ Onepagers Visual identity **Media** **Events**

2. Best practices

If we are to detect few **best practices** for partners in this process of co-creation and participation to reflect upon their potential future use, we would divide them into **three categories**:

I. Strategic accents

- Baltic »linkage« between messages and <u>concrete, tangible projects</u>

- Adriatic-Ionian distinction between *»advocacy to leadership and social mobilisation of target groups«*

- in general, focus on <u>»translating« key topical pillars into communication messages that »tell stories«</u>.

Best practices

II. Formal processes

- Baltic concrete list of <u>Work Packages</u>
- Adriatic-Ionian and Alpine insistence on <u>monitoring, evaluation and budget importance</u>

III. Implementation successes

- In general, transparent and useful spread of information on <u>web pages</u> (especially the Danube one)
- Baltic brochure »for the beginners« gives the best example of clear, but appealing <u>language and messaging</u>.
- Alpine visuals (web!) sets the standard for the importance of <u>visual side of overall communication.</u>

3. Recommendations

Anticipating future debate about potential **horizontal coordination** of four EU MRS Communication strategies, and trying to avoid any new, »meta« level above the four of them, **three sets of recommendations** might be useful:

I. Experience Exchange

- **Meetings** like the one in Portorož allow participants to focus on concrete challenges they are facing in daily communication process (from tenders and verification process to comparing production prices and exchange of best practices).

- There could be an attempt of shared platform with best practices (*EU MR Communication Archive*), but we would rather motivate communication experts to dedicate **one hour per week for on-line working session** (video conference, Skype …).

3. Recommendations

II. (More) Professional Implementation

- In order to have storytelling with invididuals in the heart of communication, there is an essential need to hire **experienced communication professionals** also in the process of implementation (and not only in drafting Communication strategies): journalists, copywriters, public-relation specialists.

III. Joint Distribution

- Any attempt to coordinate messages on the same patern would create serious problems due to different target audiences. But at the same time, **a joint program in collaboration with several public broadcasters** (at national, regional or even local level) can create an interesting combination of different voices, images and messages – promoting not only macro-regional diversity, but also common European values and priorities.

4. Method

In order to approach the optimization of communications strategies, with the aim of being as concrete and effective as possible, we propose to follow a modified Double Diamond Design Process, as initially defined by the UK Design Council.

The Double Diamond Design Process was primarily developed to support the development of products and services, but it is applicable to a wide variety of processes. It is a sequence of developmental phases, consisting of two stages with two phases each.

4. Method

A. "Do the right thing" stage

The first half of the process is intended to discover and define the tasks worth being done. Well done 'Discover' and 'Define' phases ensure that we are solving the right problems, enhancing the quality of solutions, and saving time and resources. The result of the first stage is a brief for a second stage.

4. Method

B. "Do the thing right" stage

The second part of the process is all about solving problems identified in the first stage and implementing solutions. It is important to have the first stage completed and signed off by all stakeholders to avoid going back to basics at this stage – which is meant exclusively to address the issues defined in the previous stage.

The process is further divided into **four distinct phases**:

1. Discover   2. Define   3. Develop   2. Deliver
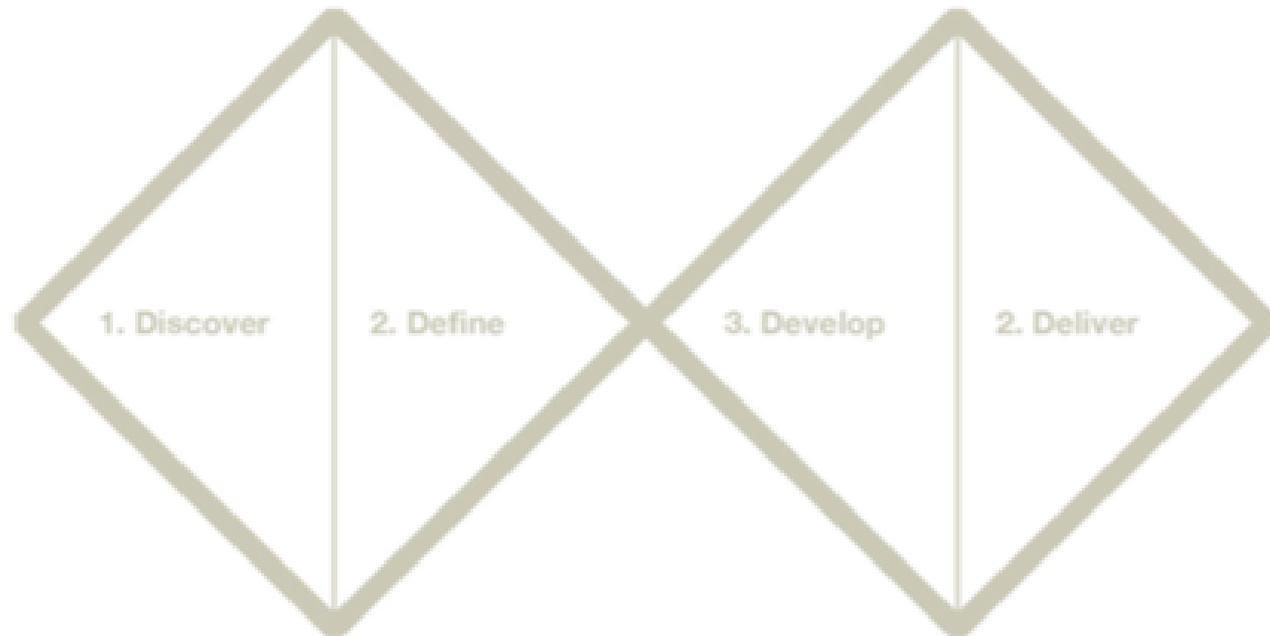
Discover

The start of a project is a period of discovery, gathering information and insights, identifying user needs, and developing initial ideas.

Define

The second quarter is a definition phase, in which we try to make sense of all the insights and possibilities identified in the previous phase and set the strategy for the next stages.

Develop

The third quarter marks a period of development where solutions are created, prototyped, tested, and iterated. This phase helps to improve and refine the ideas.

Deliver

The final quarter where the resulting solutions are finalised and launched. The key activities and objectives during this stage are: final testing, approval and launch, targets, evaluation, and feedback loops.

Based on "Design Methods for Developing Services," UK Design Council, 2012

5. Process

Stakeholders

In addition to findings of initial "desktop research," it is important to include to the process main stakeholders, who deal with:

- Content conceptualizing and production
- Management of communication

They are the ones that can make or break the task ahead, and are those who will help assess the long-term viability of any proposed solutions.

5. Process

General approach

- The goal of the first stage (A – *Do the right thing*) is to: identify elements, processes, and tools that can be used by all four macro regions; and to identify the ones that must be specific for each region. In addition to comparative analysis and desktop research, we believe it is necessary to conduct interviews with the main players to gain insight into all aspects of the reality of managing the said strategies.

- The second stage (B – *Do the thing right*) will develop, design, and execute on the findings and briefings from the previous stage.

6. Areas of work

We recommend to the participants to consider
three levels of possible optimization:

- Common Content
- Participative Processes
- Innovative Tools

6. Areas of work

Common Content

- <u>content</u> shared by all strategies,

    describing their roles inside the EU, as well as general missions and mechanisms,

- <u>informational graphic</u> elements

    info-graphics, graphs, schemes, maps that represent the same shared content,

- common <u>audio and video material</u>,

- common <u>pictograms</u>

    that represent same shared content or/and navigation,

- common <u>typographic</u> system

    use of same fonts might reduce the licensing costs and simplify font management,

- common <u>visual identity</u> system

    using the elements from a common pool of symbols and color palette

- common <u>website content management system</u> template

    that would simplify the web maintenance.

6. Areas of work

Participative Processes

- After <u>cataloguing existing processes</u>,

    used to create and disseminate content,

- and <u>assessing good practices</u>

    that might be implemented by all strategies,

- we could set up a <u>periodic evaluation</u>

    of good and bad practices

- and <u>a common platform</u>

    to implement findings of the periodic evaluation.

6. Areas of work

Innovative Tools

The goal is to identify existing good practices or/and to come up with new solutions or tools that would help and support

- <u>the content creation</u>

  verbal, visual and informational elements; instructions, manual, and standards for content creation; shareable content created by one team but can be used by others

- <u>the management support</u>

  online forum to exchange lessons learned and asking colleagues from other regions for advice; periodic meting for update on new insights, initiatives and new topics.

A debate about <u>joint distribution of common content</u> is also relevant in this sense (a joint program in collaboration with several public broadcasters at national, regional or even local level).

Conclusion

- Proposed Double Diamond Design Process is flexible enough to be used in different ways, depending on what time and resources allow us. It is advisable to invest **enough time and effort** in the first stage and to get **the input of as many stakeholders as possible**, however it is possible to start the project on the basis of the conclusions of the comparative analysis: there is enough *low hanging fruit* to begin with.

- In any case, it is important that the conclusions and proposals from the first stage of the process are validated and signed-on to by all stakeholders before the second stage — the development and implementation — begins. Only in this way will we be able to provide operationally practical and thus long-term viable solutions.