



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE



EUSBSR
EU STRATEGY
FOR THE BALTIC
SEA REGION

EU Strategy for Baltic Sea Region

ERDF MA network



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Formed 19th of May 2016 in Warsaw

The MA network explores the opportunity of transnational collaboration funded by the ERDF structural funds (mainstream SF) programmes

Activating Common Provision Regulation Article 70

Ambition: to increase the geographical flexibility of ERDF funds to better contribute to the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)

History



EUSBSR was adopted in 2009 in agreement with Member States and Commission

Strategy adopted in the middle of SF 2007-2013 period: efforts focused on assessing how submitted projects contribute to EUSBSR. Flagship projects targeted heavily the transnational Baltic Sea Region Programme

2014-2020 ESIF programmes (incl mainstream ESIF) supposed to be aligned with Strategy: they do in thematic content, implementation remains national

Aim of ERDF MA network



Aim is to increase the coordination among ESIF programmes in the macro-region and to work out ways how to align funding across the region's mainstream ESIF programmes in practical terms

Composition: representatives of ESIF MAs/Intermediary bodies or line ministries, European Commission, PAC Innovation, Interact Programme, Interreg BSR and interested EUSBSR National Coordinators

Focus of work



Network chose to focus on Innovation, with sub-themes:

- Cleaner Growth
- Smart Blue growth
- Digitalisation

ESIF implementation had started by 2016 with many projects ongoing: MA network focused on identifying which projects could be complemented with transnational collaboration activities and how to do it in practice

Focus of work



- **Cleaner Growth**=> Clean tech projects. Adding a transnational component to ongoing ERDF projects=>solutions differ county by county
- **Smart blue growth**=>Cooperation to be organised between the regions of a transnational project; one component of Interreg BSR project
- **Digitalisation**=> cooperation components to be implemented by ongoing/already implemented ERDF projects; preparation financed by seed money from SI
- **Dream**: A joint call across ERDF programmes in the macro-region on a similar topic

Lessons learned



- Different priorities between regions
- No joint pot of funding for cooperation - regions have to spend their own finances for activities abroad and there is some resistance (mind-set is often to use ESIF explicitly inside region)
- Only a few support measures where Article 70 is explicitly included (exception: Sweden: Art 70 applicable throughout ESIF)
- Insufficient awareness in line ministries and implementing bodies about Art 70 + insufficient use even when included
- Project partners do not know about the cooperation possibility
- Difficult to engage partners into cooperation pilots in the middle of implementation period of their projects
- Art 70 not easy to use due to technical aspects in different OPs (esp. alignment issues if no new calls are introduced)

In addition



EUSBSR Horizontal Action Capacity will run a **capacity building programme for ERDF and ESF MAs**

Aim is to secure the embedment of the EUSBSR in the OPs of each MS: not just the declaration to support implementing the Strategy but also to describe the mechanism how this will be done => to develop a *modus operandi* for implementation of transnational cooperation component in the 2021+ period OPs.

Basis: Art 2.3.(b) of ERDF-CF Regulation proposal=>

Co-operation between regions and across borders is included as a horizontal objective => thus embedding co-operation in mainstream ESIF.



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Thank you!

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