



EU macro-regional strategies State of play and future perspectives

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Moving towards post-2020 cohesion policy package

- ❑ **White paper on future and launch of inclusive reflection process**
- ❑ Closely connected to the **preparation of the next Multiannual Financial Framework MFF**
- ❑ **Cohesion Forum** on 26-27 June 2017
- ❑ **Cohesion Report** to be published in autumn 2017
- ❑ **Impact Assessment** – internal preparations are underway but timing not yet established
- ❑ The adoption of the **legislative proposals** to follow the MFF proposal

Cohesion policy opened to reform – key investment policy for regions

- ❑ **Flexibility:** *Reconciling need for stable investment framework in the medium term, while remaining responsive to new emerging challenges*
- ❑ **Performance and the delivery of results:** *building on the strong focus on results and performance introduced for 2014-2020 (intervention logic, performance framework and reserve)*
- ❑ **Economic governance/structural reforms:** *Strengthening the relationship between cohesion policy and economic governance*
- ❑ **Simplification:** *Further simplification and a more result-oriented approach*

The success of the delivery of the 2014-2020 programme is the best basis to argue in favour of a strong cohesion policy for the future.



Important to continue to assess and build on results from the existing MRSs.



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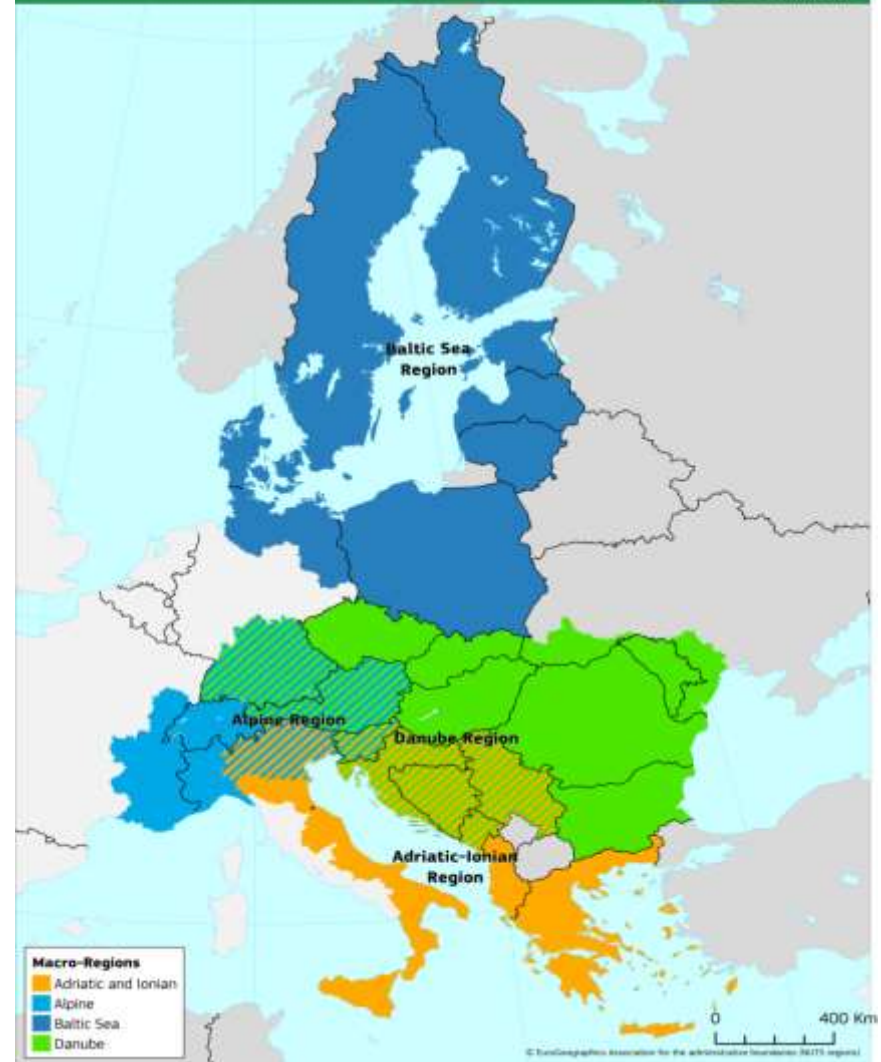
Macro-Regions:
Adriatic and Ionian, Alpine, Baltic, Danube



European
Commission

Report on the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies (MRS) and Council conclusions

- ❑ *Implementation of four current macro-regional strategies since 2009*
- ❑ *19 EU Member States + 8 non EU countries covering 270 million inhabitants*
- ❑ *Draw lessons in the light of post-2020 reform*





An important opportunity for European cooperation

- ❑ *A bottom up approach based on local, regional and national needs*
- ❑ *An appropriate framework for sectorial EU policies (transport, energy, innovation, environment...)*
- ❑ *More ESIF programmes engaging into MRS*
- ❑ *A way of promoting multi-level governance*
- ❑ *A new element to take account of when addressing challenges over borders (internal and external).*



State of implementation of MRS

MRS are at different stages of implementation since 2009

EUSBSR - a stable cooperation framework (more than 100 flagships and new networks) but needs to keep momentum and to improve policies coordination and content by building on projects results

EUSDR - implementation on track and better culture cooperation but still some issues (decreasing political momentum, issue of administrative capacity in non-EU countries)



State of implementation of MRS

EUSAIR - strong political commitment (cf. Dubrovnik Ministerial Declaration in May 2016) but shortfalls in implementation (human and funding resources)

EUSALP - quick start of actions/initiatives, largely driven by regions. Active participation of countries also required. Given the high expectations, to be very vigilant on keeping the momentum.

How to make better use of MRS potential

- ❑ *MRS gradually integrated in policy planning at EU level, but more sporadically at national/regional level. ⇒ Room for improved coordination within countries*
- ❑ *Contributions to the MRSs implementation in practice vary significantly across programmes. ⇒ Need to ensure a closer coordination between national and regional cohesion policy programmes and MRSs, synergies with other funding instruments*
- ❑ *Governance remains the cornerstone of MRS success. ⇒ More effective governance systems (better internal coordination within and between countries, appropriate administrative support)*
- ❑ *Robust monitoring system still missing ⇒ Stronger focus on results (in line with the 2014-2020 cohesion policy period, search for stronger policy impact of the projects)*
- ❑ *Strong communication strategies needed*

MRSs and future cohesion policy

What will make the real difference in practice to fully embed the MRSs into cohesion policy programmes:

- A clearer definition in the EU regulatory framework?
- Additional provisions in the operational programmes required thus better strategic planning?
- Enhanced coordination between actors?
- Closer monitoring of Commission?
- Stronger result orientation based on relevant indicators (Council Conclusions)?
- Is it sharing of good practices among the strategies?
- Should transnational programmes be (functionally) further aligned with MRS or other transnational cooperation frameworks and initiatives?

MRSs and future cohesion policy

- ❑ **MRS is a valuable strategic element in economic development** – MS/regions have commitment to deliver
- ❑ Enhancing provisions for **cooperation possibilities** between programmes (and regions)
- ❑ **INTERREG programmes and transnational programmes** are well-positioned to contribute to MRSs but should not be the **only** contributors.
- ❑ How to make policy implementation more **flexible**, to be able to respond to emerging national and European challenges, also within MRS framework
- ❑ **No more “one size fits all”** concept for the cohesion policy