



European  
Commission

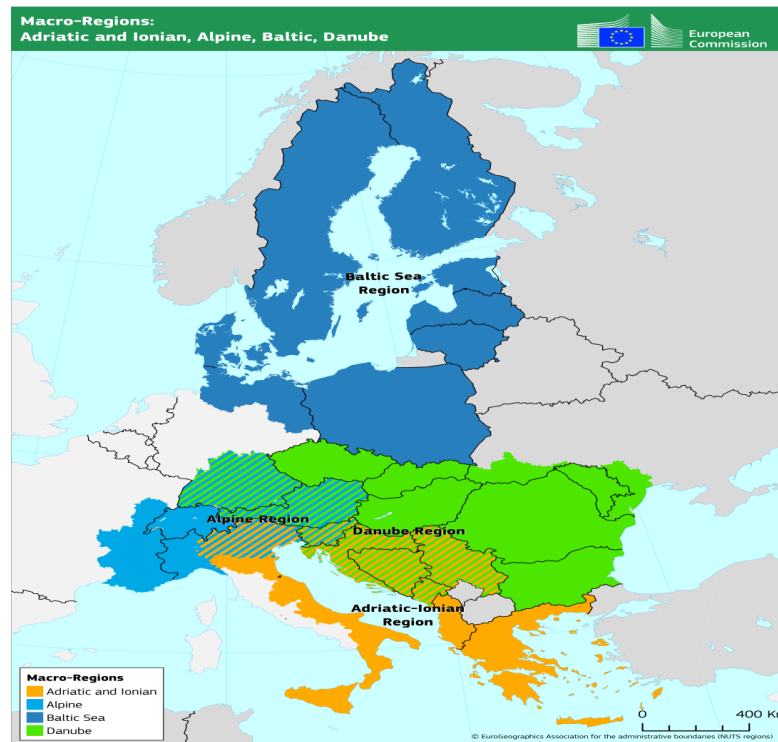


## The importance of Regional Identity

### EU macro-regional strategies

Networking Works, Vilnius 14 September 2017

# Macro-regional strategies



# The basic idea

- A set of issues of strategic importance can be identified for a wider geographical space
- There is agreement on which countries/regions to be included
- Shared challenges and opportunities can be translated into a limited set of goals or objectives
- These goals or objectives should be associated with indicators allowing to monitor progress towards concrete goals
- The participating countries should display on-going commitment to the strategies by harnessing adequate institutional capacity for their implementation

# Added Value of MRS

- Tackling regional inequality and promoting territorial cohesion
- Greater integration and coordination
- Improved policy development
- Results in terms of projects, actions, decisions, networks
- Value for money
- Promoting multi-level governance
- Improved cooperation with neighbours

# Report on the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies

They are at different stages of implementation since 2009:

The oldest:

***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 project results

***EUSDR*** – implementation on track and better culture for cooperation but still some issues (decreasing political momentum, issue of administrative capacity in none-EU countries)

***EUSAIR*** – strong political commitment (cf. Ioannina Declaration) 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, very vigilant on keeping the momentum

# Persisting challenges – though to a varying degree

- MRS gradually integrated in policy planning at EU level, but more sporadically at national/regional level. Room for improved coordination among countries
- Governance remains the cornerstone of MRS success. Should also be improved
- Monitoring system still missing to inform decision making
- Bridging the gap between MRS and funding opportunities is an issue
- Strong communication strategies are needed

## How to make better use of MRS potential

- *More effective governance systems (better internal coordination within and between countries, appropriate administrative support)*
- *Stronger focus on results (in line with the 2014-2020 cohesion policy period, search for stronger policy impact of the projects)*
- *Alignment with ESIF programmes on selected priorities and synergies with other funding instruments*
- *MRS nurturing cooperation with third countries.*



## **MRS and links with future cohesion policy**

- *How can synergies and complementarities between MRS and relevant national or regional programmes supported by the ESIF be strengthened to maximise impact?*
- *Should transnational programmes be (functionally) further aligned with MRS or other transnational cooperation frameworks and initiatives?*
- *How the governance system of MRS, including the respective roles of all relevant actors, could be further improved?*

**Thank you for your attention**

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/policy/cooperation/macro-regional-strategies/](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/cooperation/macro-regional-strategies/)

<http://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/>

<http://www.danube-region.eu/>

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<http://www.alpine-region.eu/>