

Reduce, reuse, rethink: connecting EU macro-regions

13 June 2019 (10:45-12:15)

[10th Annual Forum of the EUSBSR](#), Gdansk, Poland

Guideline for the session

Background

10th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) is organised in Gdansk on 12-13 June 2019. The theme of the Forum is "Circular and sharing economy as an answer to demographic changes and environmental challenges in the Baltic Sea Region". Organisers underline that three main thematic sessions of the Forum include:

- 'Going circular – a pathway to well-being in the Baltic Sea Region';
- 'Business-driven approach to a circular economy in the Baltic Sea Region';
- 'Demography and circularity in the Baltic Sea Region: interdependent or disconnected?'

More information on the official Forum website strategyforum2019.eu.

Since the first Forum of the EUSBSR, Interact has been actively contributing to these events by organising sessions, running and contributing to discussions, participating in networking villages.

In its task to support exchanges across EU macro-regional strategies (MRS) and mutual learning, Interact is organising this session in close collaboration with its partners. We see MRS as frameworks for more functional, focused and efficient regional development, and framework for the coordination of efforts.

The focus of the session

The session '**Reduce, reuse, rethink: connecting EU macro-regions**' will be looking at the MRS as frameworks for regional (territorial) development.

This workshop is arranged around three keywords ‘REDUCE’, ‘REUSE’ and ‘RETHINK’ MRS. The session will be run in three short slots (20-25 min each), where:

- **REDUCE** will address most important territorial developments and especially those trends to consider in MRS frameworks. How can MRS focus on the most crucial trends and address those?
- **REUSE** will ask what past experience can we reuse, i.e. build on, to address the most important trends?
- **RETHINK** will ask how to change, broaden and empower collaboration to address these trends in MRS context?

This session is an opportunity to step out of the MRS and take a more distant look on these defined strategic frameworks.

Territorial trends and challenges influence MRS. The question is - to what degree MRS can adjust to changing environments and to respond to most urging trends? Are MRS responsive and flexible enough? How to keep the focus in MRS work?

The session is foreseeing ongoing connection with the audience.

Speakers and Moderators

We are pleased to present to you very interesting panel of speakers and a general line of your input to the discussion. The session will be building on your knowledge and experience and we do not expect your thorough preparations. We encourage you all to be spontaneous, proactive and interactive!

- **Bettina Rafaelsen, COWI**

Bettina is involved in the ongoing review of the EUSBSR. In this session, she will share her observations on territorial trends and MRS implementation. How MRS can respond to broader policies (like UN Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals)? What experiences from the EUSBSR and other MRS are worth to build up on? Bettina will be able to reflect on relevant findings from the study ‘EU macro-regional strategies and their links with Cohesion Policy’¹.

- **Stasa Mesec, Facility Point for the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR), Slovenia**

Stasa is representing a lead partner of Facility Point project supporting the implementation of the [EUSAIR](#). In addition to operational support to the EUSAIR governance, Facility Point supports new initiatives within the EUSAIR, such as cross-pillar collaboration; strategic project development; stakeholder involvement. What can one learn from these experiences? Currently EUSAIR undergoes an analysis of ‘Improving the impact of territorial wide area cooperation in the Adriatic-Ionian region’², addressing main recent changes in the Adriatic-

¹ EU macro-regional strategies and their links with Cohesion Policy, COWI, 2017

² [Improving the impact of territorial wide area cooperation in the Adriatic-Ionian region](#), OECD, 2019

Ionian area, considering further development potentials and the role of multi-level governance. How MRS framework helps here?

- **Jean-Pierre Halkin, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission**

DG REGIO has always been a strong supporter of macro-regional cooperation. What are the most urging territorial trends and challenges MRS need to respect? In a time when we programme Cohesion Policy post-2020, it is crucial to consider newest trends and to address them. What are those issues we need to focus our attention on? Are MRS efficient frameworks for regional development leading to better Europe?

- **Jacek Szlachta, Warsaw School of Economics, Poland**

Through his daily responsibilities and assignments, Jacek is involved in the territorial development discussions. He is one of the experts working in ESPON programme project 'A Territorial Reference Framework for Europe'. What are upcoming territorial development trends we can envisage? What challenges and changes we may expect? Are MRS frameworks responsive and flexible enough to provide a framework for more efficient territorial development?

- **Luca Ferrarese, Interreg Central Europe**

Luca is representing Interreg Central Europe programme 2014-2020. The Programme supports cooperation between the broad scope of stakeholders across borders in Central Europe. Moreover, the Programme says '*...with our funding, we support transnational cooperation like yeast supports baking. We are the small but important ingredient that helps innovative yet isolated ideas grow...*'. What changed role Interreg Central Europe can play in connecting macro-regions? What innovative ways of support could be thought?

- **Esa Kokkonen, The Baltic Institute of Finland, Policy Area' Innovation' Coordinator, EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region**

In his role as director The Baltic Institute of Finland and the EUSBSR Policy Area 'Innovation' coordinator, Esa well sees strong bound between developments in Europe and role of the EUSBSR in the process. Challenges related to smart specialisation, innovation, research and development in certain geography could be sufficiently addressed only through cooperation. Is the EUSBSR helping in making macro-region as whole more innovative, competitive and smart? What MRS can offer to institutions, regions and countries?

- **Stefan Jugović, Ministry of EU Integration, Serbia**

The MRS are frameworks supporting better integration of Europe. Therefore, it is crucial to discuss how territorial development trends support pre-accession countries on their way to integration. Stefan is representing not only the Facility Point partnership but also upcoming Serbian Presidency of the EUSAIR (chairmanship for the EUSAIR). So, we will hear how important it is for the pre-accession country to be an active partner in EU discussion on the EUSAIR and territorial development.

In addition to the speaker panel, we will have a short commentary from the floor by **Michał Tuszynski, Gdynia Port Authority SA, Poland**.

Michal is representing regional level stakeholder, a partnership of Interreg flagship project [TENTacle](#) (2016-2019)³. One of the key messages from the project is *‘to support co-ownership, co-responsibility and co-creation. Bottom-up corridor governance initiatives should be encouraged’*. What more regional stakeholders could do for the macro-region?

Session moderators: **Baiba Liepa**, Interact and **Kai Böhme**, Spatial Foresight.

Agenda

We will have seven speakers and one short prepared commentary for the session.

It makes the session more challenging for moderators and interesting for the audience.

Your inputs will show diversity of perspectives that are all interconnected by the keywords ‘territorial framework’ territorial needs and trends’ and ‘MRS.

As mentioned above, we will group your inputs around three keywords: **‘REDUCE’, ‘REUSE’ and ‘RETHINK’**.

The session will be divided into three parts (each 20-25 min, including discussion) with short statements (up to 4 min) from you and reflections from other invited speakers and the audience.

The proposed agenda for the session is described below:

A) REDUCE:

What are most important territorial developments in Europe? What are those most important trends to consider in MRS frameworks? How can MRS reduce to/focus on the most urging trends?

We will invite **Jacek Szlachta and Jean-Pierre Halkin** to join us on the stage and to highlight (through up to 4 min input) what are big/ overall trends that will shape territorial development in the decade(s) to come? What trends should be addressed in/by MRS?

All other speakers (seated in the first row) will be invited to complement initial inputs.

Audience will engage (through app <https://www.menti.com/> using their mobile devices) to share their views on most urging territorial trends by using keywords. Keywords automatically will display on the screen. It will allow us for further reflections and discussion.

³ The flagship TENTacle is interconnected with other two Interreg Baltic Sea Region projects: NSB CoRe, Scandria@2Act, in order to develop the EU TEN-T Core Network Corridors intersecting the Baltic Sea Region. All three projects jointly work on suitable recommendations for decision making in the transport policy for the entire Region.

B) REUSE:

What past experience can we reuse, i.a. build on, to address territorial developments/trends? How do these trends influence delivery of MRS? Are MRS flexible enough to address territorial trends and territorial challenges?

Following the same structure, we will ask **Bettina Rafaelsen** and **Stasa Mesec** to join the stage and, building on their experiences, to share (up to 4 min input) what are those experiences in the MRS delivery that we need to build on? To what trends MRS are the best frameworks to reply?

We will ask all other speakers to complement initial inputs.

Michal Tuszynski, will provide prepared comment (from the audience) reflecting on the questions - what is an opportunity MRS give to regional stakeholders? What should MRS cooperation keep and strengthen? How to connect lessons learnt from regional level to macro-regional and EU levels (policies)?

C) RETHINK:

How to change, broaden and empower collaboration to address territorial developments/ trends in MRS frameworks? How to build collaboration beyond the formal setting of a fund/programme, region, country, macro-region? What are practical suggestions to it?

Stefan Jugović, Esa Kokkonen and Luca Ferrarese will share their thoughts on how to consider territorial developments/trends in delivering MRS and for territorial development. How to boost cooperation?

The same as above, after short inputs by the speakers, we will address other panellists and audience for their additional thoughts.

For this part of the session (RETHINK) we will engage audience addressing the question: **What can I do (in my work/position/institution) to better respond to territorial trends?**

In addition, through the online app, we will ask participants to share keywords replying to the question:

What can I change preparing for post-2020?

Practicalities

The session '**Reduce, reuse, rethink: connecting EU macro-regions**' will be held in the morning of the 2nd day of the Annual Forum of the EUSBSR.

The date for the session is **13 June at 10:45–12:15**.

The session is held in the Concert Hall (you can check how it looks like [here](#)).

The session is run as a moderated discussion with **no PowerPoint presentations**.

186 Forum participants registered for this session.

To be able to start the session on time, please arrive to the Concert Hall at 10:30 at the latest. It will give us enough time to introduce you to other speakers of the session and meet us – moderators. Technical session setup will be done.

Technical arrangements for the session are not yet known but will be communicated to you at earlier convenience. We prefer having a standing session with you joining moderators on the stage and getting back to the 1st row of the seats, as the session goes.

In case of any questions regarding the session, please address Baiba Liepa, Interact (baiba.liepa@interact-eu.net, +358 40 1599 430)