



ESF Transnational Platform

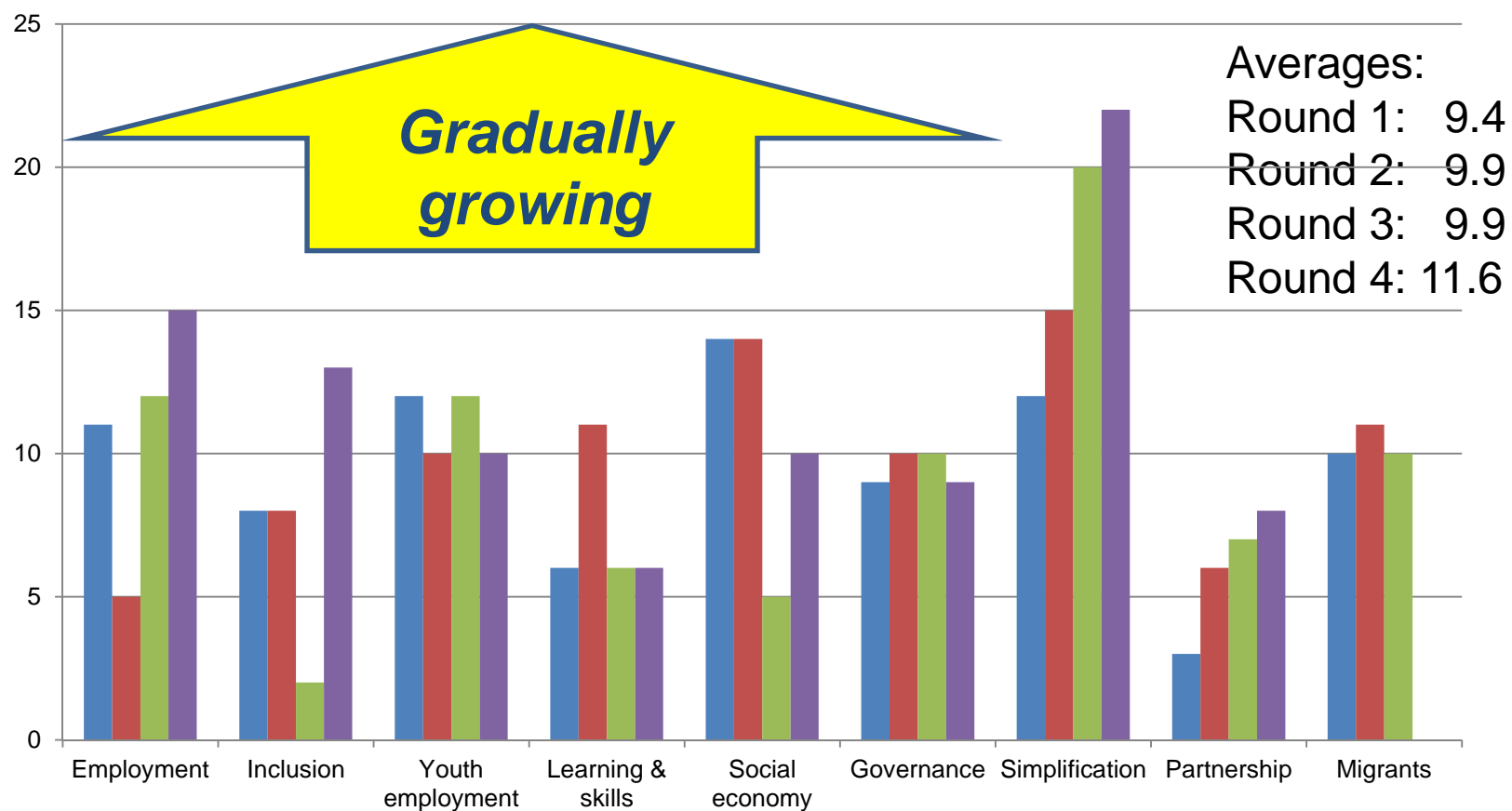
Networks produce results – Impact Task Force launched

*Danube region meeting
Vienna, 4 May 2017*

Toby Johnson, Team leader

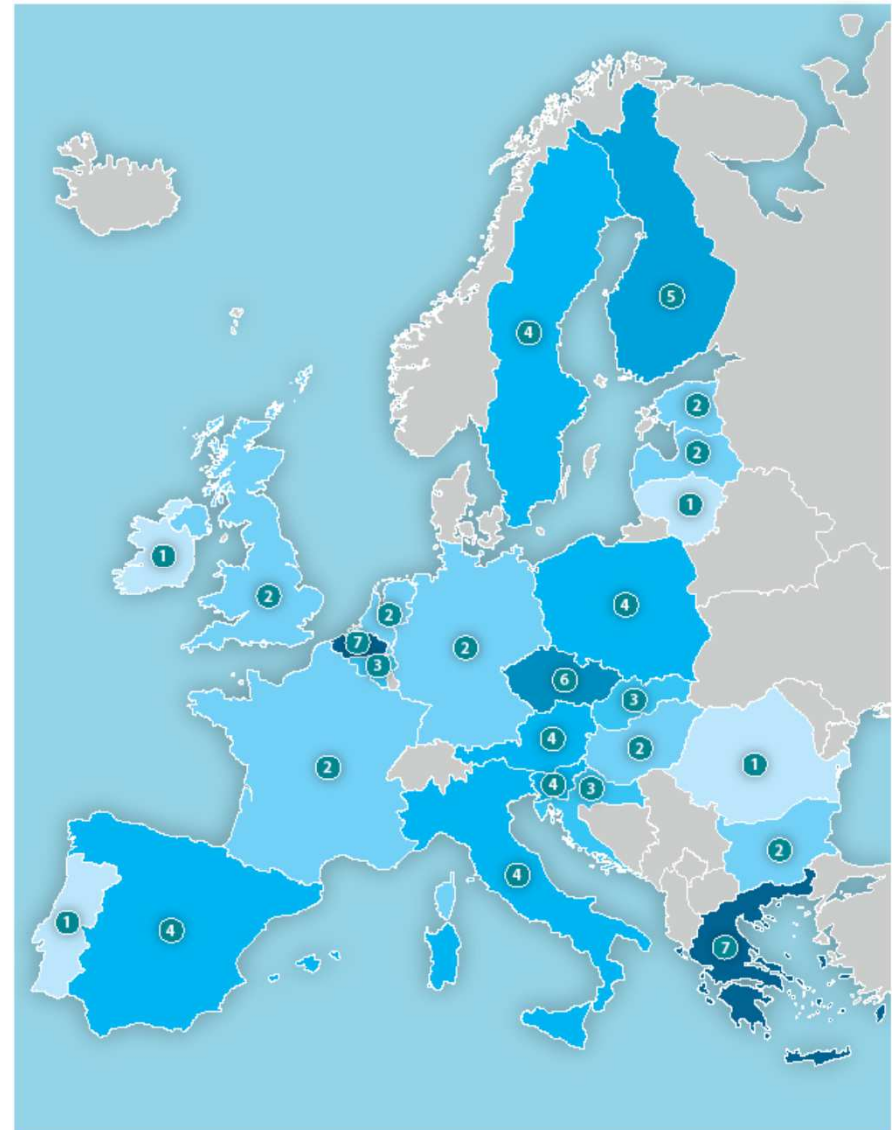


TN participation – Member States

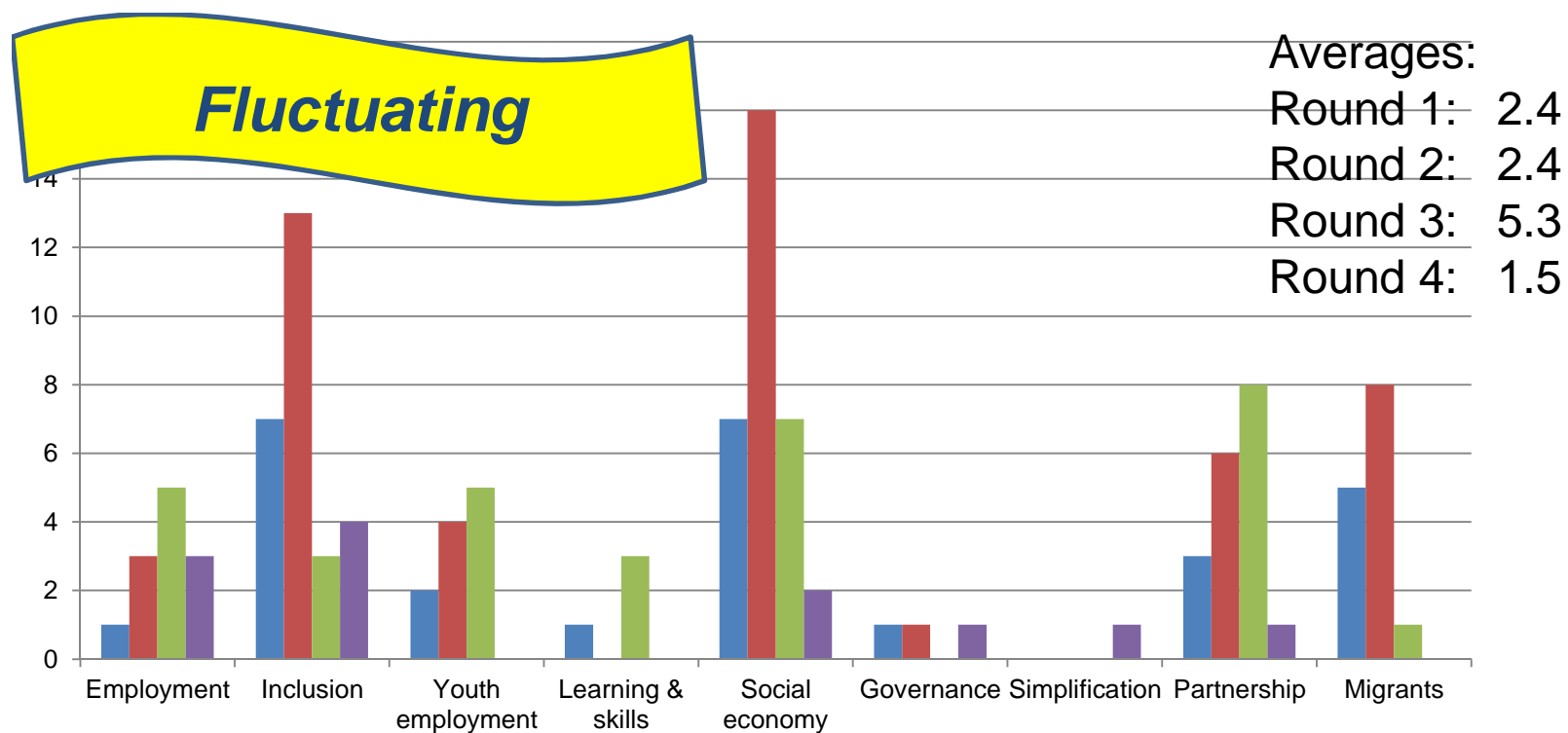


TN participation

**How many TNs does
each country take
part in?
(3+ meetings so far)**



TN participation – stakeholders





Recent TN activity

- *Employment – visit to Cité des Métiers, Paris*
- *Inclusion – Deinstitutionalisation seminar*
- *Youth – visit to Jugend Aktiv Plus, Hamburg*
- *Learning & skills – visit to Forem Environnement, Mons*
- *Partnership – visit to Ballyfermot/Chapelizod Partnership, Ireland*
- *Social economy – Bratislava presidency conference, Ljubljana SE Europe conference*



Recent products

- *Newsletter no. 3*
- *Technical Dossier 2 – calls for proposals*
- *Employment – white paper on service integration*
- *Youth – sharing paper on service integration*
- *Simplification – map of 257 SCOs*
- *Governance – paper on strategic management*
- *Youth – sharing papers on outreach and client activation (forthcoming)*
- *Partnership – coproduction paper (forthcoming)*



Upcoming TN meetings

Thematic Network	Date	Place	Topic
Inclusion	4-5 May 11-13 October	Brussels Tallinn	Homelessness Deinstitutionalisation
Youth employment	11-12 May	Prague	Client activation
Learning & skills	16-17 May	Rome	Work-based learning
Social economy	8-9 June	Prague	Municipal SEs
Simplification	8-9 June	The Hague	EU-level SCO's etc.
Migrants	18-19 May	Liège	Skills recognition
<i>Annual conference</i>	<i>1-2 June</i>	<i>Brussels</i>	



Annual conference, Brussels, 1-2 June

Inspiration – practice - future

- *250 people*
- *4 inspirational sessions:*
 - *future of ESF*
 - *future of inclusion*
 - *future of training & work*
 - *future of policy-making*
- *12 interactive workshops*



Questionnaire on TNC calls – December 2016-January 2017

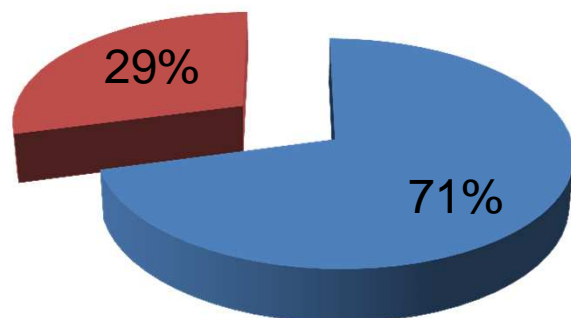
**52 responses from
24 countries**

BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, EE, EL, ES, FI, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK

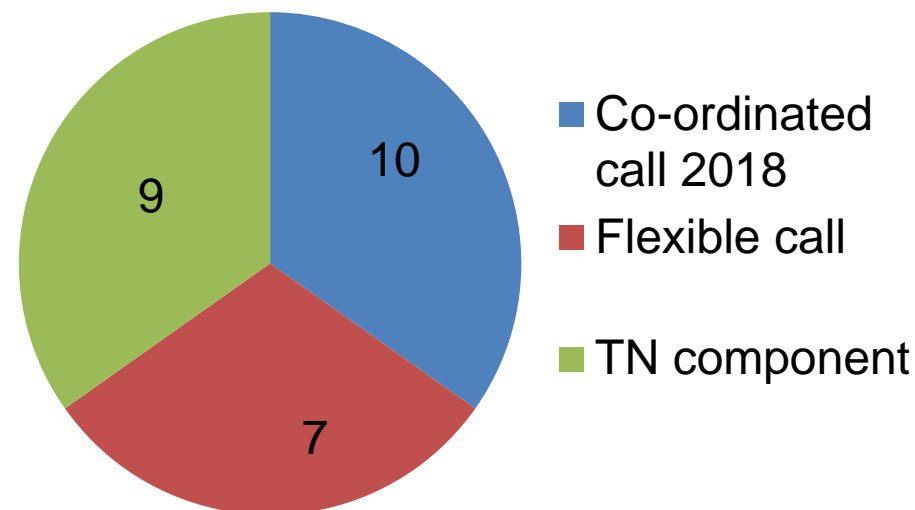
How many MSs are going to finance transnational projects?

Member States (24)

- Transnational projects envisaged (17)
- No transnational projects (7)



17 Member States envisage transnational projects





Member States which will take part in the 2018 coordinated call:

BE (2 OPs), BG (2 OPs), DE (*Länder*), EE, FI, IE, IT (2 OPs), PL, PT, SE

Member States which will launch a transnational call (outside the coordinated call):

BE, BG, ES, HR, HU, NL, PL

Member States which allow a transnational component in their 'national' calls:

BG, CZ, DE, FI, HR, HU, LT, SE, UK



In which themes will the Member States launch the 2018 coordinated call?

Employment

- BE (2 OPs), **BG**, EE, FI, IE, IT, PL

Youth employment

- BE (2 OPs), **BG, DE**, EE, FI, IE, IT, SE

Inclusion

- BE (2 OPs), **BG, DE**, FI, IE, IT, PL, SE

Social economy

- BE (2 OPs), **BG**, IT, PL, SE

Learning and skills

- BE (2 OPs), **BG**, FI, IE, IT (2 OPs), PL, PT

Migrants

- BE (2 OPs), IE, SE

Governance

- **BG**, IT



Lessons learnt from the first Coordinated Call in 2016

- ❖ More countries need to participate
- ❖ All MSs need to stick to the agreed timetable, which would need to take into consideration different project assessment periods
- ❖ A single, standard Transnational Cooperation Agreement (TCA) should be used by all MSs
- ❖ Use of database should be obligatory
- ❖ Don't add unnecessary requirements in the call – keep it simple!
- ❖ Need for clearing house facility for 'orphan projects'



How many MAs are interested in taking part in the Task Force on transnational calls?

22 MAs from 16 countries



Aim of the Impact Task Force (ITF)

- Assist Member States to prepare and implement transnational calls, by building capacity and facilitating agreement on the conditions for the next co-ordinated call
- Provide individual coaching at the request of Managing Authorities
- Moderate online forum for discussions and questions by Managing Authorities:
<https://ec.europa.eu/esf/transnationality/forums/impact-task-force>
- Help Member States to set up national/shadow networks
- Monitor outcomes of transnational calls (co-ordinated and flexible)
- Contribute to gathering evidence of the impact and added value of transnational activities in view of the preparation of the next programming period.

First meeting of ITF was on 13-14 March 2017 in Brussels
(minutes and follow-up documents available in the online forum mentioned above)



Timetable for 2018 Coordinated Call

1	Impact Task Force agrees general Terms of Reference	By April 2017
2	Thematic Networks agree the subthemes and specific requirements for their theme (if necessary)	by July 2017
3	Launch of the calls within a 2-step procedure	3 rd -4 th quarter 2017
4	Start of preparatory phase of projects within a 2-step procedure	by March 2018
5	Official announcement of the 2018 coordinated call on MAs' websites and TN Platform website (giving individual timetables and themes of the calls)	by end December 2017
6	Launch of the calls in MSs	January-February 2018
7	Application deadline	11 May 2018
8	Projects start	October 2018

Simplified!

Transnational Cooperation Agreement

ESF Transnational Platform

Transnational Cooperation Agreement

Notes:

One TCA should be agreed and signed by all partners in a transnational partnership and attached by every partner to their application to the relevant Managing Authority in their own country.

This TCA describes only the joint transnational element to which the partners will contribute; it does not necessarily include any other activities which partners may carry out under their national funding agreements.

TCA should be put on the online ESF TNP platform (www.transnationality.eu) by one of the partners (and linked to all the other partners).

1. Short description of transnational project

1.1 Name of transnational project:

1.2 Rationale and objectives:

- short summary of the problem addressed, target group, common interests;
- common transnational objectives of the partners;
- products, outputs, intended outcomes;
- added value of transnational activities

1.3 Work programme and working methodology:

Planned transnational activities	Time schedule for products, outputs and outcomes	Contribution and responsibilities of each partner	Intended results
ex: conference	date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - venue and catering (Partner 1) - experts (Partner 1) - translation (Partner 2) 	Dissemination of the information and the project product among local authorities from country 1 and country 2

ESF Transnational Platform

1.4 Organisation and decision-making:

- role and tasks relating to the co-ordination of the TCA;
- arrangements for decision-making;
- methodology of sharing information;
- working language(s).

2. Signatures of partners

Each partner undertakes to carry out the tasks and fulfil the duties set out above as part of the transnational project, on the condition that they are granted funding (if applicable).

If for whatever reason any of the partners is not granted this support, this TCA must be amended or cancelled. Subject to the agreement of their respective Managing Authorities, the resulting 'orphan' partners may amend the TCA, optionally including new partners, and explore with their Managing Authorities how the grant contracts can be amended.

Signed by all the partners [repeat this section for all partners]:

2.1 Partner 1:

Name of organisation:

Address:

Website:

Signed by legally authorised representative:

[signature]

Place and date of signature:

Name of representative:

Position of representative:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Budget for transnational work (in EUR¹):

Funding source:

TPI number²:

2.2 Partner 2:

Name of organisation:

Address:

Website:

Signed by legally authorised representative:

[signature]

Place and date of signature:

Name of representative:

Position of representative:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Budget for transnational work (in EUR¹):

Funding source:

TPI number²:

¹ For foreign currencies please use ECB currency converter: <http://sdw.ecb.europa.eu/eurConverter.do>

² The TPI or Transnational Project Identifier is the number given automatically to a project when it is created into the ESF partner search database: https://ec.europa.eu/esf/transnationality/partners-search/?t%5B%5D=bundle%3Aest_tnc_project



Forthcoming transnational calls in the Danube region

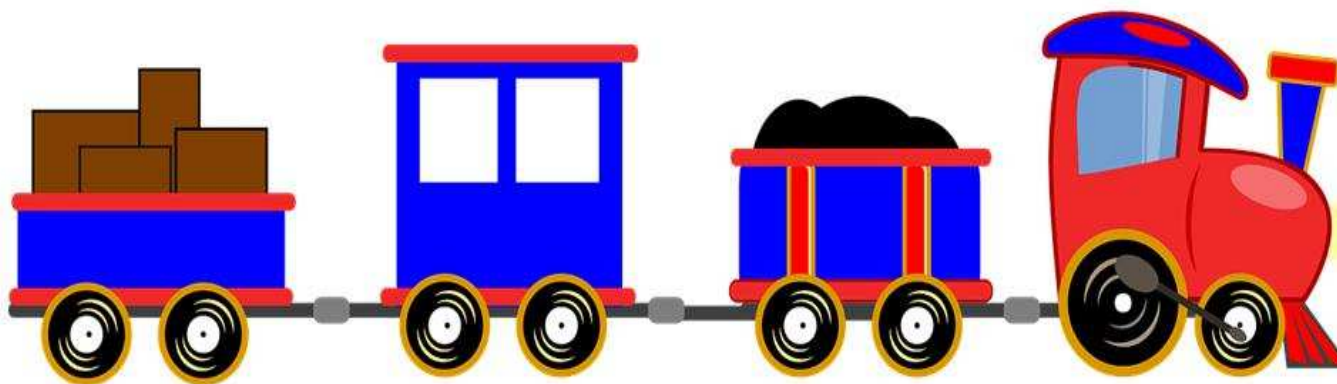
MS	Launch	Deadline	Themes	Budget
2018 Coordinated Call				
BG	Jan-Feb 2018	11 May 2018	Employment, Inclusion, Youth, Learning & skills, Social economy, Governance	
DE (Bremen)			Inclusion, Youth	
Flexible approach				
BG	2018-19		governance – calls for civil servant training with an optional transnational component	<€15m
CZ	summer 2017		employment – calls with optional transnational component	€7.4m
DE			IdA youth mobility 2015-2019 (federal) employment, youth employment, mobility, learning & skills – transnational component possible in regional calls (Brandenburg, Hamburg, Saxony-Anhalt, Schleswig-Holstein)	€46.6m total IdA c. €4.2m in regions

HR	1st Q 2017		learning and skills – possible transnational component	
	2nd Q 2017		1st Q 2017 TN call learning and skills	€2.5m
	1st Q 2018		2nd Q 2017 education	€7.5m
	2018		1st Q 2018 TN call on public administration	?
HU			social economy and employment	?
			Economic Innovation and Development OP: transnational component possible in some calls e.g. quality development of the VET and adult training system, preventing early drop-outs from vocational education, social entrepreneurship	
	by 31 March 2017	May 2017 (project start July 2017)	inclusion and learning and skills (OP Human Resources Development)	€16m



Next steps for the Impact Task Force

- ❖ Agreed General Terms of Reference for the 2018 coordinated call – circulated on 31 March 2017
- ❖ Organising a workshop on the use of the online database (partner search tool etc.).
- ❖ Reflect on creating subgroups for specific themes or macro regions (can be done within/alongside the Thematic Network or macro-regional meetings, using online tools etc.). Forum topics set up for MRSs.
- ❖ Exchange of experience and brainstorming around different assessment methodologies (esp. added value of transnationality), project indicators and evaluation.
- ❖ Mutual learning on simplified cost options within transnational projects (guidance note under way).
- ❖ Further discussion on alternative partner search options (co-organising partner search forum with financial contribution of Member States around March 2018).
- ❖ Plan 'orphan project matching' activities in September 2018.
- ❖ Possibility for individual coaching. Member States should contact AEIDL directly.



**If any other MS wants to join the the coordinated call –
you are more than welcome!**

Just contact ESF Transnational Platform for assistance:

esf@aeidl.eu

Tel. +32 2 736 1890

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

An Example



European Union

European Social Fund ESF

Seizing opportunities, safeguarding employment!

04.05.2017 | Vienna



Hamburg

AGENDA

- 01 ESF - TNC in the Baltic Sea Region
- 02 Common Themes
- 03 Project Selection
- 04 Support
- 05 Success Factors



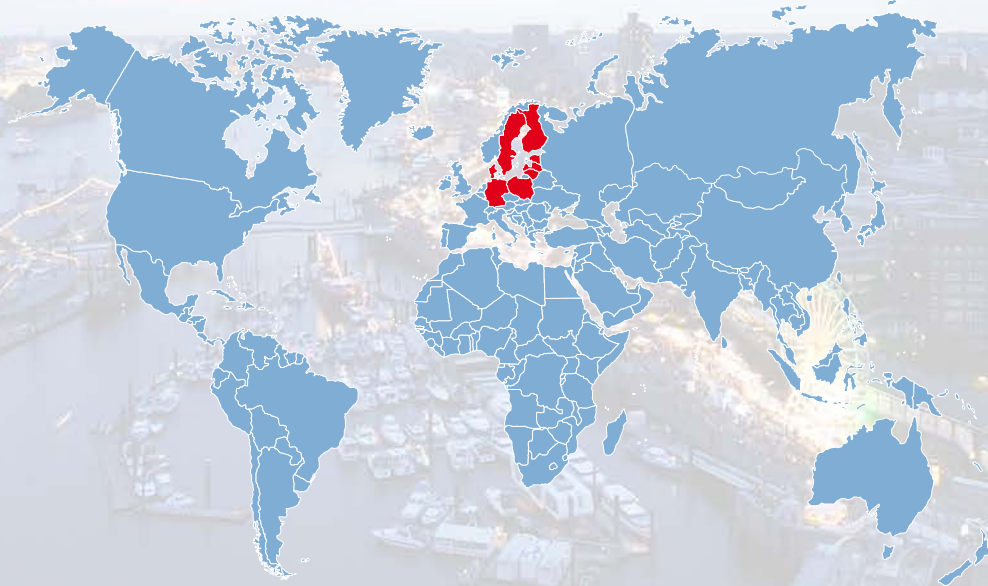
European Union

European Social Fund ESF
Seizing opportunities, safeguarding employment!



Hamburg

THE BALTIC SEA REGION



PLATZHALTER FÜR DEN PRÄSENTATIONSTITEL



TNC IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

BACKGROUND

- Started around 2012/2013
- Programming Periode 2007-2013

CHALLENGES

- Almost no support provided by European Commission
 - No coordination (themes / calls / partner search etc.)
- Today: Flexible approach

COMMON THEMES FOR COOPERATION

SELECTION OF COMMON THEMES FOR COOPERATION

- Based on national / regional operational programmes

THEMES ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 10 / ESF-REGULATION

- Youth Employment
- Employment
- Inclusion
- Learning and Skills
- Migrants
- Social Economy
- Partnership
- Governance
- Simplification

PROJECT SELECTION

HANDPICKED SELECTION OF PROJECTS

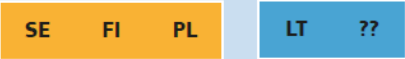

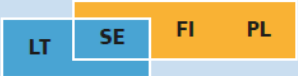
- Target group: NEETS

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

- Sweden (3 or 4 new projects with a special emphasis on tnc)
- Germany / Hamburg (1 project already running, now with additional tnc-component)
- Poland (1 project, joined later)

PROJECT SELECTION

REFERENCE TO TECHNICAL DOSSIER NR. 2

Ways to add new partners to a TCA			
a	New projects form entirely new TCAs This suffers from the disadvantage that the choice of new partner countries is likely to be small	2016	
b	New projects are added onto existing TCAs. TCA is amended This seems the best option. It requires MAs supervising existing TCAs to facilitate their revision to include one of more new partners	2017	
c	Overlapping TCAs New projects form a new TCA which overlaps with an existing TCA because they have one partner in common. The existing and new TCAs work in co-operation as sort of cluster TCA.		

SUPPORTING THE NETWORK START

PERSONAL MEETING

- People need to get acquainted with each other

PARTNER SEARCH FORUM

- Participation of the projects at one partner search forum organised by the Polish Center for European Projects

INVITATION TO BSN-ESF MEETINGS

- Projects were invited to attend some BSN-ESF meetings

PROCESS

1

Common themes for collaboration

2

Carefully selected projects

3

Personal meeting

4

Support through BSN-ESF

SUCCESS FACTORS

SUCCESS FACTORS

- Concentration on one common theme
- Start with hand picked projects
- Partner search forum / opportunity to meet with each other

Pilot project for School 2 Work

IMPROVMENTS

- Common Framework (Coordinated calls, Database, Support structure)
- Transnational cooperation agreement



Project Presentation – Come In & Mission Possible

By **GSM Training & Integration GmbH**

Hamburg, 04.05.2017

What is „come in“?



Training & Integration

„Project come in – we move something!“

An ESF – project in Hamburg for young adults to increase their vocational integration



Target group: NEETs



Training & Integration

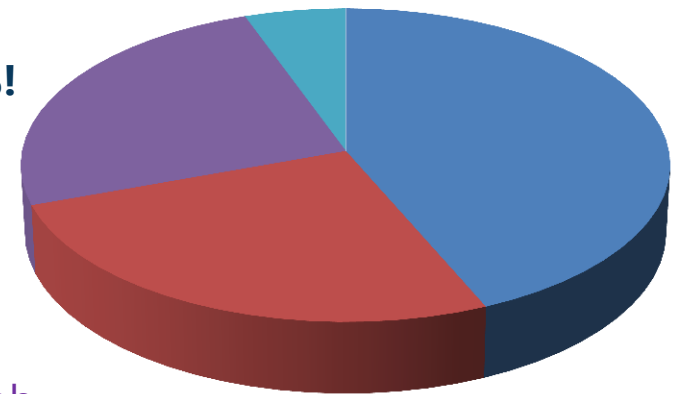
Young people between 18 and 25 who ...

- don't have any or only a bad school certification.
 - show placement and integration constraints.
 - refuse or broke up any contact or relationship to Jobcentres.
 - couldn't be reached yet with politically assisted measures for the labour market.
 - are unemployed
 - partly show social and/or mental health problems
 - partly looking for living places
 - partly having debts
- Access to us: through the Youth-Employment-Agency-Central (YEA) Hamburg



Our success story (until 31.12.2016)

- 2712 young people were mobilized and integrated into our project
- We take care of the participants in 4 different locations in Hamburg; e.g. in one we currently have 65 participants
- Until the end of 2016 we were able to place 1329 participants. **This makes a placement ratio of 49%!**
- We placed participants as follows:
 - 43,5% job contract
 - 26% vocational, school or supported training & education
 - 25% further politically assisted measures for the job market
 - 5,5% other (e.g. longterm internship, army, boarding qualification)



Our support and methods



Training & Integration

We go up to our participants

- We approach our participants with an open-minded and unprejudiced as well as respectful and resource-oriented attitude.
- We actively **contact** our participants – if necessary with **house visits** at the beginning or during participation. (**7000 contacts per year**)

We train in small groups

- We train them about the importance of continuity and reliability through day structures. (**breakfast together**)
- We offer different trainings, such as Job Application Training, Basic Competencies, German & Maths, English, General Education, Computing or Sports.
- We teach them about different competencies, e.g. social or action-oriented competencies.



Our support and methods



Training & Integration

We promote and support everyone

- Consulting and individual coaching
- Competence measuring
- Individual company and support, e.g. when looking for a new apartment
- Support through psychological counselling and control of debts
- Help to find an internship, vocational training or job
- Individual post-care for 6 month
- Work testing/check-out in cooperation with Jugendbildung Hamburg



Transnational partnership since Sept. 2012



Training & Integration

Networking is an important successfactor of our company to guarantee sustainability and respectively quality of our work. Therefor we started working with a transnational network called **MISSION POSSIBLE**, that includes the projects:

- UngKOMP (Stockholm, Sweden)
- KOMBACK (Vetlanda, Sweden)
- Vägval-Framtid (Dalarna, Sweden)
- (Light my Power (Lubuskie, Polen))
- Association ROUDEL (Carcassonne, France)
- Mission locale jeunes (Narbonne, France)
- Riksförbundet för Social och Mental Hälsa (Hägersten, Sweden)
- Hanze University (Groningen, Netherland)
- Moving on (Halmstad, Sweden)



What we do

The EU-network "Mission Possible – transnational cooperation for a successful future for drop-outs and NEETs" was established in 2012 to add for the partner projects the value of an international perspective to their work and to exchange experiences and contribute with knowledge, using three different methods:



Exchange of successful methods

Every partner project of the network has its own methods to handle the challenges and work successfully with the target group. We share the best ones to improve our work and expertise.



Mobility of participants

We want the best for our participants: Go to another country, meet people of their age, get new education, improve their self-worth, broaden their horizon and their motivation, which all affects their social and vocational integration positively.



Exchange of professionals

We inspire each others work in frequent transnational meetings and through hospitalations and job shadowings in projects of our network partner. Thereby we get more motivation and new ways of professional working.

Network meetings



Training & Integration

Highlights from 2016:

- 06.-09.07. 2016: **Transnational network meeting** of „Mission possible“ at the Almedalen, in Visby, Schweden.



Flagship SCHOOL 2 WORK since 2014



Training & Integration

Highlights from 2016:

- 07.-09.11.2016: **Flagship meeting „School 2 work“** and participation of the **Annual forum of the EU Strategy for Baltic Sea Region** in Stockholm, Sweden EU Strategie für den Ostseeraum (EUSBR) in Stockholm, Schweden.



Short term mobility of participants



Training & Integration

Highlights:

- 08.-14.11.2015: **Trinational exchange of participants** between the transnational network partners from come in Hamburg, 2 swedish projects and new french partners in Narbonne, France. We did a 1-week- theater- workshop. From 9 of our participants 4 were integrated shortly after it.



Challenges of transnational cooperation

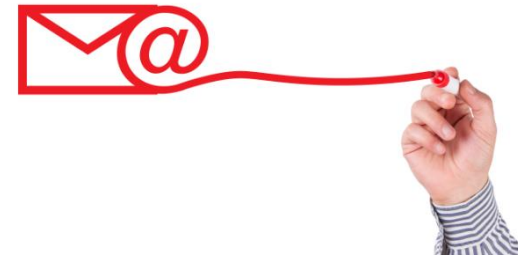
- Continuity of partner projects
- Withdrawal of decision-makers within the projects
- Too many partners
- Too less new inputs
- Lack of money



How can you give support?

Thanks for listening!

Please don't hesitate to contact us at any time.



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S2W
School to work

**A flagship within
the Baltic Sea Strategy.**



STRUCTURE

FLAGSHIP LEADER
Swedish Association of
Local Authorities and
Regions
Sweden

EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING
Knowledge platform
City of Turku
Finland

INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES
Knowledge platform
City of Turku
Finland

Integrate NEETs
Knowledge platform
Norden Association
Sweden

Monitoring and
Evaluation

Thematic working groups

Capacity building

Projects

Monitoring and
Evaluation

Thematic working groups

Capacity building

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Capacity building

Projects



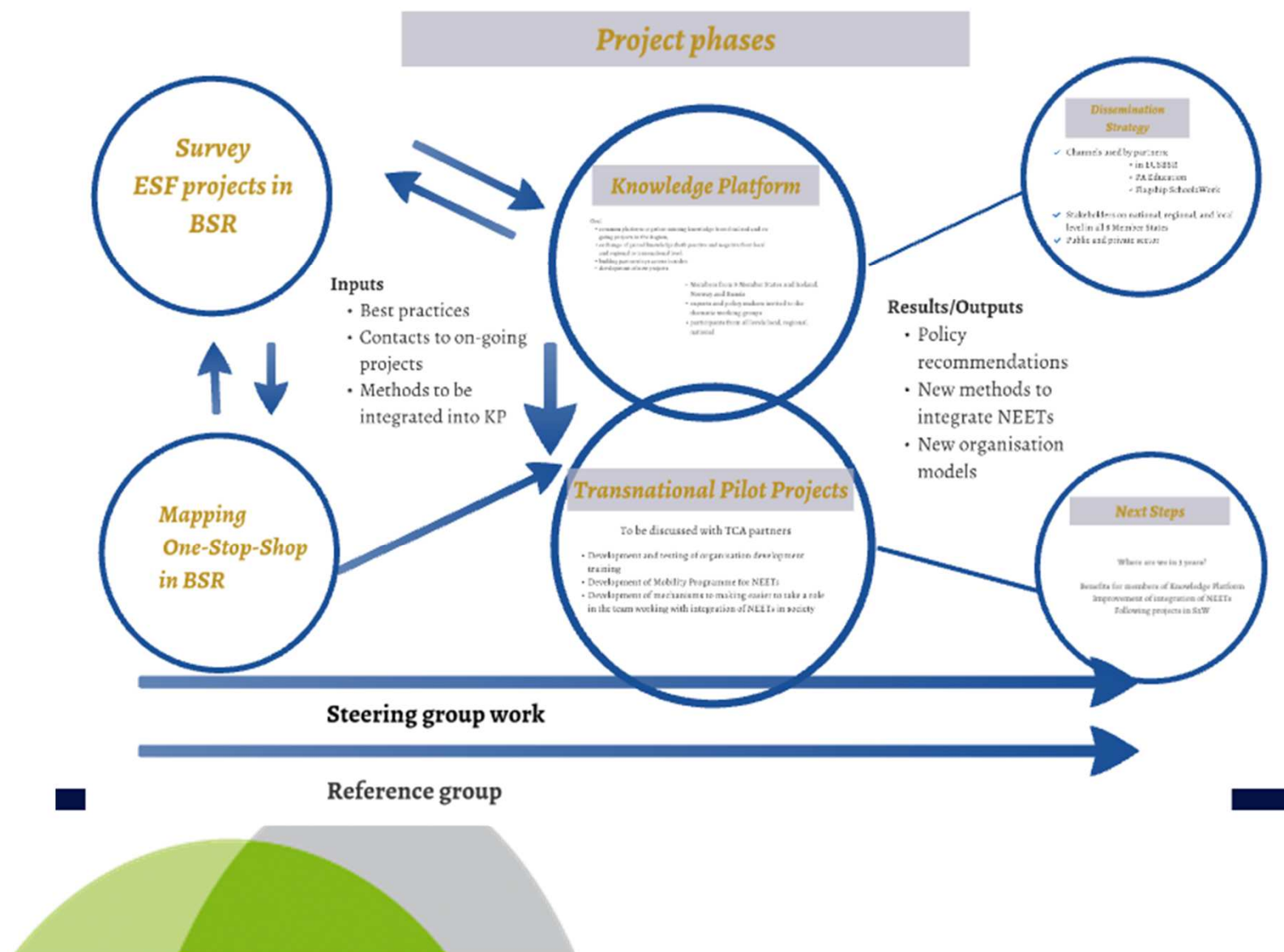
Integrate NEETs

- Develop and consolidate a **knowledge platform** with five thematic working groups
- A research team **building knowledge** on lesson learned from projects
- Building a **network of resource centres** (one-stop-shops) for capacity building



EUROPEAN UNION
European Social Fund

Integrate NEETs





Knowledge Platform

Members from 8 Member States and Iceland, Norway and Russia;
Experts and policy makers invited to the thematic working groups;
Participants from local, regional, national levels

Goals:

- building knowledge from finalized and on-going projects in the BSR;
- sharing knowledge from local and regional to transnational level;
- expanding a network of public, private and civil society organisations;
- initiate projects





Thematic Working Groups

Gather competences for joint development of methods and policy recommendations;

- civil society involvement
- labour market integration
- education and training
- entrepreneurship
- resource centres - “One-stop-shop”





Transnational Pilot Projects

To be developed;

- capacity building programme for key functions in resource centres (marketers, coaches and mentors)
- mobility programme with in-company training for NEETs



15 years supporting cooperation



www.interact-eu.net

Cooperation methods and tools of programmes to support macro-regional cooperation

3rd Meeting of ESF Authorities in the
Danube Region

4 May 2017 | Vienna

Jörg Mirtl, Interact Programme



Structure of the contribution

- Some general remarks
- Conclusions from the study
- Recommendations
- Role of Interreg Programmes
- Interact's activities

ESF Programmes analysed in the study (5 out of 23)

Country	Operational programmes	Total Union contribution and per funds, in million EUR
Bulgaria	Operational Programme Human Resource Development	Total (ESF): 939 (incl. 110 million for YEI)
Croatia	Operational Programme Competitiveness and Cohesion	Total: 10,676 ERDF: 4,321 ESF: 1,516 CF: 2,560 EAFRD: 2,026 EMFF: 253
Germany	ESF Operational Programme Baden-Württemberg	Total (ESF): 260
	Operational Programme Human Resources Development	Total: 2,613 ESF: 1,708 ERDF: 905
Slovenia	Operational Programme for the implementation of the cohesion policy for the period 2014- 2020	Total: 3,011 ERDF: 1,390 CF: 895 ESF: 717 YEI: 9

Strategic documents

The Human Resources Development Programme Hungary intends to

1. deepen the international and macro-regional dimension of its intervention and therefore intends (...)
2. to seize the opportunity for the cross-border and trans-regional application of operations outside the programme area.

The ESF Programme Baden-Württemberg

1. supports transnational cooperation as a horizontal objective under all priority axes (incl. technical assistance) with a view to
2. promote the European idea, to support mutual learning and to increase the European added value of ESF-funded interventions. Within this context, also a support of macro-regional partnerships that contribute to a successful implementation of the EUSDR is explicitly foreseen.

Key messages: Achievements

- All programmes realise together a wide range of actions that ensure a systematic embedding of the EUSDR
- A majority of programmes involved national EUSDR stakeholders in their elaboration and sets out a coherent contribution to the EUSDR
- One third of the programmes “earmarked” parts of their funding for supporting an implementation of the EUSDR
- Most programmes are actively increasing their own awareness of the EUSDR
- Encouraging dynamic developments on some embedding themes
- One half of the examined EU funding programmes reached a high or medium degree of embedding

Key messages: Weaknesses (1)

- The provisions on macro-regional strategies in the EU regulations for the period 2014-2020 are lacking transparency and coherence.
- Many programmes have a substantial gap in their EUSDR-related intervention logic.
- Often lacking or inadequate guidance / assistance provided to bottom-up initiated operations supporting an implementation of the EUSDR.
- Little use is made of monitoring and evaluation activities for determining the programmes' contributions to the EUSDR

Key messages: Weaknesses (2)

- Little use is made of programme-level communication activities for raising awareness on the EUSDR
- Partially lacking involvement of national EUSDR stakeholders in the ongoing work of programmes
- Little cooperation and information exchange takes place with administrations or EU programmes in other Member States or non-EU countries
- One half of the EU funding programmes only reached a low degree of embedding, but several programmes have potentials for reaching a medium degree

Recommendations

- Include MRS into future legislation of ESIF and beyond
- Better communication of MRS, involvement of stakeholders by the programmes
- Develop guidance for project applicants with MRS actors and programmes, collect practice
- Exchange of experience among programmes
- Development of programme-level monitoring of MRS (indicators)
- MC meetings should increasingly consider MRS, involve key implementers of MRS (Even as members? New regulations ESIF/ECCP)
- More fund-related networks in the 4 MRS!
- Exchange of experience on embedding among programmes

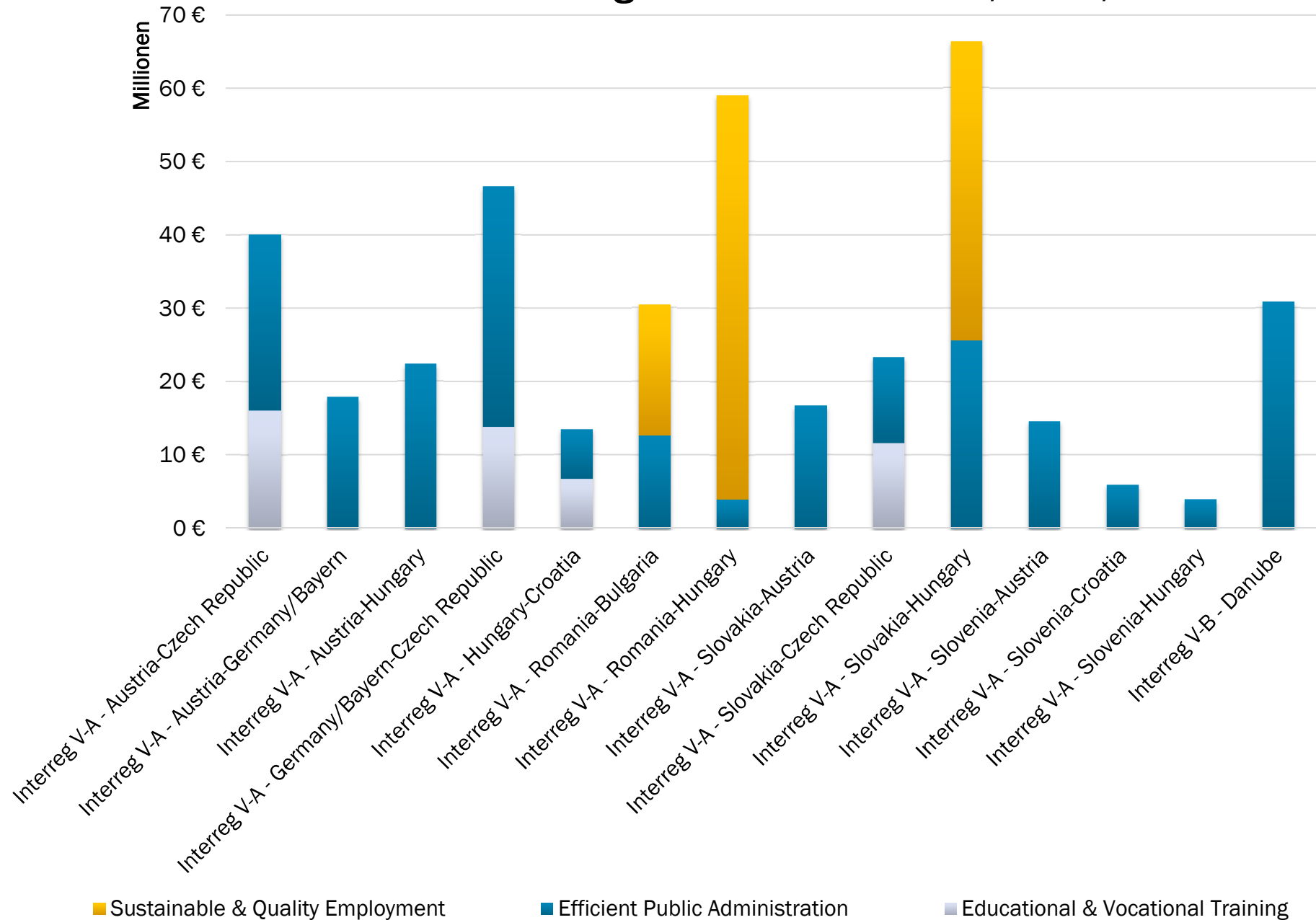
Contribution of Interreg to ESF-relevant Thematic Objectives

T08: Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility

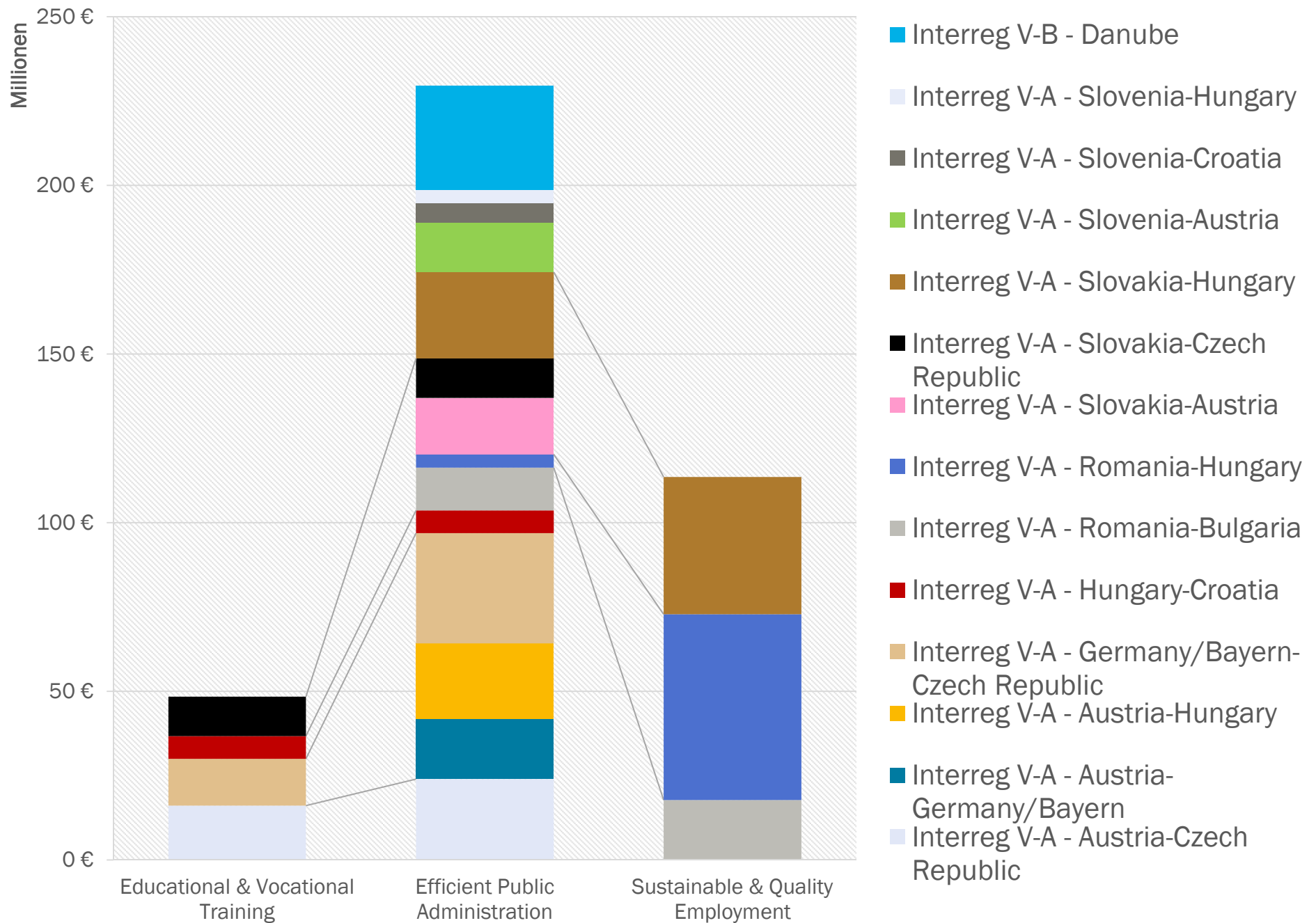
T010: Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning

T011: Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration

2014-2020 EUSDR Interreg investment into T08, T010, T011



2014-2020 EUSDR Interreg investment into T010, T011, T08



Interact networks combining funds and programmes

Capitalisation Networks

- Dealing i.a. migration, social inclusion, institutional capacity, transport
- Involving macro-regional strategies, mainstream funds are invited to participate

Networks of Interreg & beyond

- Activities related to the interaction between Interreg, mainstream funds and funding outside the ESIF (Horizon, Life, Erasmus+, COSME, etc.)
- Inter-programme cooperation and coordination
- Future support for MA networks?

Interact's contribution to the advancement of macro-regional strategies

- Cross-strategy thematic meetings (transport, climate)
- Exchange of the four transnational programmes supporting MRS
- Alignment of funding concept
- Studies and collection of practices
- Cooperation with academia (research on MRS)
- Participation and support to NC meetings, Annual Fora
- Cooperation with the Commission

Cooperation works

All materials will be available on:

[**www.interact-eu.net**](http://www.interact-eu.net)

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Position Paper of Germany's Federal ESF Managing Authority

for a new

Lean Fund Management

for the arrangement of ESF as of 2021

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Vienna, May 5th 2017



Initial Situation:

Complexity of legal provisions

- **multitude** of legal bases (provisions, guidelines, delegated acts...)
- **some come late with retroactive application** (legal certainty!?)
- demanding **programming procedure** (Partnership Agreement, ex ante conditionalities, strategic alignment)
- **designation procedure** as a prerequisite for reimbursement of expenses
- new **reimbursement procedure** with **annual account**
- extension of mandatory electronic data collection from 40 to **113 „data fields“** per project

Effects

- **low/late outflow of ESF means from European Commission** despite of considerable expenses/needs in member states
- **disproportionate temporal and financial expenditure** for administration and beneficiaries
 - sometimes programmes/projects are not even implemented
- **negative perception of ESF**

Position Paper for Lean Fund Management

General proposals

- **Set of rules of period 2014 – 2020 should remain in force** instead of issuing an entirely new set of rules → more legal certainty, continuity and clarity
- **Check of legal provisions regarding practicability, effectiveness and practicality for proper use of funds → continuation of expedient and deletion of inexpedient elements/procedures**
- **Legal requirements must be certain well before start of funding period**

Position Paper for Lean Fund Management

Proposals Part I

- Streamlining of **programming procedure** (e.g. relation of Partnership Agreement and Operational Programme)
- Continuation of ex ante conditionalities
- Streamlining of **designation procedure**
- further development of **thematic concentration**
- Continuation of **result orientation** whilst intensive reviewing the mechanisms „**performance framework** “ and „**performance reserve**“

Proposals Part II

- **Reduction of indicators**, focused on essential information for ESF funding (inter alia → collection of critical personal data only on a voluntary basis if at all)
- Review of nature and extent of **financial data collections** e.g. regarding analyzability
- Reduction of requirements in the fields of **electronic data exchange systems**
- Critical **analysis of payment claim and payment procedure** („annual account “)
- Development of additional **ways of simplification** that help minimising errors

Thank you for your attention



**3rd Meeting of
ESF Managing Authorities in the
Danube Region**

Haus der Europäischen Union
Wipplinger Straße 35, 1010 Vienna

**Lucio Battistotti and Jader Canè
European Commission
Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion**

A. INTRODUCTION

In a globalised world countries have become more interdependent and their specific problems have to be addressed in a different tailored and more geographically oriented approach.

EU macro-regional strategies (MRS) concern a number of EU countries and regions as a complementary framework to traditional EU and country policy on territorial and social-economic management.

They are designed to tackle common challenges: innovation driven growth, environment, cultural tourism or climate change, with a bottom-up approach involving national, regional and local actors (learning by doing together).

There are four strategies:

- Baltic Sea Region (EUSBR) endorsed by the EU Council in 2009;
- Danube Region (EUSDR) in 2011;
- Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) in 2014;
- Alpine Region (EUSALP) in 2015

EU MRS have now reached a critical dimension involving 19 EU and 8 non-EU countries.

Their objectives are fully in line with EU cohesion policy and political priorities.

EU MRS with their bottom-up approach adds value to the cooperation dimension of the EU cohesion policy. Being open to non-EU Member Countries MRS helps the countries to strengthen their links with the EU.

The EU MRS are based on three no's rules:

- No new legislation;
- No new funding;
- No new institutions.

EU MRS require concrete action on the field not new policy initiatives: European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), including INTERREG, can support them with other EU funding instruments and also national and private funds.

In a period of crisis of EU Institutions EU MRS could improve the perception of "Europe" by our citizens showing that cooperation between regions of different countries sharing common values is possibly in order to create a positive change in citizens' life (communication strategy must be strongly reinforced).

B.STATE OF PLAY

1. BALTIC SEA REGION (EUSBR)

- Country participation: 8 MS (Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland) and 4 non-MS (Russia, Iceland, Norway and Belarus). Strategy approved in 2009 by the EU Council.
- Long history of cooperation in the area between some of the participant countries
- The strategy is divided into three objectives (previously in 4 pillars) which represent the three key challenges of the strategy: saving the sea, connecting the region and increasing prosperity
- Challenges: improvement of the environment state of the Baltic Sea and connectivity in the field of energy and transport.
A third challenge will be the effective integration of migrants, especially with actions to be taken in the education sector.
- Best practices: the 7th EUSBR Annual Forum (Stockholm November 2016) took place at the same time and in the same place of the Baltic

Development Forum (BDF). BDF is a network for high level decision makers from business, politics, academia and media in the Region. This facilitates a practical and effective approach, based on the exchange of best-practices and active networking, that facilitate the implementation of real projects on the field (could be adopted by other EU MRS).

2. DANUBE REGION (EUSDR)

- Country participation: 9 MS (Austria, Croatia, Germany, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria), 3 potential candidate countries (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia), 2 neighbourhood countries (Ukraine, Moldova).

Strategy approved in 2011 by the EU Council

- The strategy is organised in 4 Pillars (connecting the region, protecting the environment, building prosperity, strengthening the region) and 11 thematic priority areas

- The 5th Annual Forum (Bratislava November 2016) motto was "Innovative flows: water, knowledge, and innovation in the region"
- Challenges/problems
 - Focus on research and innovation
 - Strong networking activities
 - One of the problems raised frequently: how to match projects with funds and particularly the attitude of several M.A. of EU structural funds that do not want to "lose the ownership" of the funds
 - Transnational governance is an added value when you put together people and stakeholders but could be and has been a problem when you implement real projects and you need funds.

3. ADRIATIC AND IONIAN REGION (EUSAIR)

- Country participation: 4 MS (Greece, Croatia, Slovenia and Italy) and 4 potential candidate countries (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia)
- Strategy approved in 2014 by the EU Council

- Strategy divided in 4 Pillars: blue growth, connecting the region, environment quality, sustainable tourism
- Challenges/problems:
 - EUSAIR is a relatively new EU MRS that has to find the right governance mechanism (difficult because 4 participants are non-MS in the Western-Balcans area!)
 - The dialogue between EUSAIR and ESIF programmes (labelling and funding EUSAIR projects) will be improved in the coming months
 - An interesting paper on "concrete actions for how EUSAIR can help strengthen the resilience of migration crises" has been presented to the governing board in October 2016 and will be adopted ASAP. The participating countries will develop a common platform in order to cooperate efficiently and put in place concrete actions in favour of refugees and migrants to be incorporated in an action plan.

4. ALPINE REGION

- Country participation: 6 EU MS (Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Slovenia) and 2 non-EU MS (Switzerland and Liechtenstein)
- Approved in 2015 by the EU Council
- Launch conference 25/26 January 2016
- 3 objectives: innovation and competitiveness, connectivity and mobility, environment and energy.
- Challenges/problems:
 - This is a new strategy but the area covered by EUSALP has a long tradition of cooperation in various framework
 - Governance will be crucial because of the large number of stakeholders involved and the presence of regions that are "economic giants" (Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg, Lombardia, Rhône-Alpes)
 - Special attention will be put on communication in order to restore the confidence of citizens/tax payers "in Europe" (a communication strategy has been recently approved).

C. ESF AND EU MRS

- The legal basis for transnational cooperation in ESF during 2014-2020 programming period is Article 10 in ESF regulation (EU 1304/2013).

The cooperation between ESIF and EU MRS is provided by Article 2(31) of the Common Provision Regulation (EU 1303/2013).

The CPR (art 15(2)(a)(ii) and Annex I point 7.3) calls for Macro-Regional Strategies to be taken into account in the partnership agreements (Pas) and OPs, where appropriate.

The involvement of the ESF in the implementation of EU MRS can happen via ESF OPs by financing coordinated projects that contribute to MRS.

- It is very important to point out that transnationality in the context of EU MRS differs from transnational cooperation within ESF in many aspects:
 - Nature: MRS are a strategic framework not an instrument;
 - Objective: MRS are designed to address common challenges of a macro-region;

- Scope: transnational cooperation in ESF is limited to the implementation of ESF priorities;
 - Partners: MRS involve third countries;
 - Funding: MRS use diverse sources of financing (ESIF, national, public, private).
- Despite these important differences transnational cooperation under Art. 10 of ESF can be a tool to enhance the contribution of ESF to the implementation of the EU MRS. The active role of the ESF Managing Authorities is fundamental: M.A. may find profitable to focus transnational cooperation on specific regions or Member States by creating synergies with EU MRS. In practice this happens where regions or MS are involved in a MRS that covers key labour market (e.g. improving skills) and social inclusion challenges (migrants) which also correspond with themes that can be selected for transnational cooperation.

- Let me now make a hint also to financial instruments within the ESF, as they can also play a role within this framework, particularly in a context where efficiency and effectiveness of public policies need to be strengthened and public budgets are under pressure; as a matter of fact, FIs may provide a useful complement while helping leveraging additional resources for specific investments.
- In the ESF, we are now in a phase of implementation of this tool, and we try to address issues as its complexity, the difficulty to access the financial markets for ESF stakeholders (often not revenue-generating) and some discouragement by the Managing Authorities.
- To address this, a new approach is being considered within Fi-compass, a "capacity building service", aimed at FIs for ESF Mas: it has two main streams: initial and advanced capacity building. In both cases it would be

tailored-made for those MAs wanting to move forward in the matter.

- For information, Portugal was the first beneficiary of this approach, in order to foster the valuable initiative of setting up a Social Innovation Fund (SIF).
- Indeed financial instruments should not be considered as an alternative to grants under the European Social Fund operations nor should they be seen as instruments taking away financial resources from the ESF: this is not at all the case. On the contrary they represent a resource-efficient way of deploying cohesion policy resources in pursuit of the Europe 2020 Strategy objectives, targeting projects with potential financial viability. In such a context, they may play a role also for Macroregional strategies.

- As you know, EU MRS activities are managed by DG Regio D (Territorial Cooperation and Macro-Regions) particularly by Unit Regio D1 (Competence Centre, Macro-regions and European Territorial Cooperation) with 30 officials!
Other DGs deeply involved are: JRC (innovation is a priority in each MRS), MARE, GROW (PME) and NEAR (non-MS).
- Generally speaking, the implementation of EU MRS (especially for EUSAIR and EUSALP) is at a very early stage, except for EUSBR (Baltic Sea) where the cooperation between a certain number of countries on the Baltic Sea has a long and advantageous history and many projects have been completed.
- As underlined before, the role of Managing Authorities for the implementation of EU MRS is crucial.
Many MAs are involved considering the huge number of Regions and MS present in one or more MRS.

Prerequisites for Transnational Project Partnerships

- Findings from a recent Beneficiaries Workshop in Baden-Württemberg**

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Vienna, May 5th 2017



- In general terms: What are the motives for transnational partnerships? What is the added value?
- What strategies are there to prepare project partnerships? Which are promising?
- Forms of cooperation
- What are the success factors of transnational partnerships?
- What are the determining framework conditions for transnational partnerships? (legal, financial)
- Practical experiences

Motives and added value of transnational partnerships

- Project-related motives: e.g.
 - implementing project modules with the partner
 - jointly developing products, services etc.

Motives and added value of transnational partnerships

- Individual motives:
 - Motivation to go abroad > self-consciousness!
 - „Living Europe!“
 - Incentives for staff and participants
 - Innovative methods
 - Profiling the enterprise
 - Empathy for the situation in the partner country
- The best results are often coincidental and not the ones that were envisaged! Let's experiment!

Forms of cooperation

- Joint project meetings and workshops
- Study visits
- Exchanging (comparable) studies and scientific results
- Exchange of participants between the countries – principle of mutuality
- Etc...

What strategies are there to prepare project partnerships? Which are promising?

- Different phases:
 - Finding a partner
 - Jointly drafting a project
 - Launching the project
 - Project phase
- In general: Partners are not to be found on anonymous Internet platforms, but by personal contacts – instruments: thematic networks, long-term cooperation in any field, world cafe, open space,...

What strategies are there to prepare project partnerships? Which are promising?

- What is essential:
Good organization, well-chosen topics and participants
- Don't forget: The best results are often incidental –
„let's try something - together!“

Success factors of transnational partnerships

On the side of the partners:

- Capacity of transnational partners
- „Good will“
- Reliability
- Mutual trust
- Creativity
- Readiness to invest in development
- Skilled staff, readiness to qualify for transnational tasks
- Transnationality as a strategy
- Resources for transnational management

Success factors of transnational partnerships

In terms of organization:

- Low threshold, no high formal prerequisites
- Take on creative impulses
- Synchronize funding structures for both partners
- Transparent transnational budget
- Timely calculation of additional transnational costs
- Possible: co-financing through incentives
- Acknowledgment of travel expenses

Risk factors of transnational partnerships

- Turnover of organizing staff
- Mutual understanding
- Different cultures and mentalities
- Political restraints and reluctance
- Much time necessary to build up transnational partnership (minimum 2 years)
- Constant efforts necessary to keep in touch
- Lack of coordination and „leadership“

- Resilience regarding throwbacks
- Small budgets, esp. in the new Member States
- End of funding period cuts the bonds
- New framework conditions in each funding period

What are the determining framework conditions for transnational partnerships?

- EU-rules: transnational partnerships are highly welcome!
- Operational Programmes?
- Budget: Who pays for what? – Principle: each partner covers the costs for his own participants, no matter in which country they occur (travel costs, accomodation etc.)

Practical experiences

- first project starts with staff visits, tighter cooperation in following project(s)
- first project with modest success, second project much better

Thank you for your attention



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**MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND
SOCIAL POLICY
OPERATIONAL PROGRAM
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**



Human Resources Development Operational Programme

***New opportunities for transnational
cooperation***




HRD OP 2014 - 2020: Priority axes



**PA 1 “IMPROVING THE ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT
AND THE QUALITY OF JOBS”**



**PA 2 “REDUCING POVERTY AND PROMOTING
SOCIAL INCLUSION”**



**PA 3 “MODERNISING THE INSTITUTIONS IN
THE AREA OF SOCIAL INCLUSION,
HEALTHCARE, EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND
NON-DISCRIMINATION AND WORKING
CONDITIONS”**



PA 4 “TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION”



PA 5 “TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE”



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PRIORITY AXIS TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION



- **19 761 375 EUR (ESF+National funding)**
- **All ESF Thematic objectives are covered**
- **At least one partner from another EU Member State**
- **Contribution to social innovation**
- **Specific focus on Danube Strategy**

FIRST EXPERIENCES WITHIN TNC

Operation Transnational and Danube partnerships for Employment and Growth

Objective	Interregional and transnational cooperation between partners from member states of the EU by transfer and implementation of social innovations, best practices etc.
Components	Component 1- 15 000 000 BGN Component 2 – 5 000 000 BGN (only Danube countries!)
Total Budget	20 000 000 BGN
Project Duration	End of 2018
Project Budget:	min. 50 000 BGN.; max. 200 000 BGN
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified innovative practices – 340 • Transferred innovative practices - 230

FIRST EXPERIENCES WITHIN TNC

- **Call launched on 3rd January 2017**
- **Deadline for submission of projects – 5th April 2017**
- **Projects submitted C 1 – 166**
- **Projects submitted C 2 – 23**
- **Evaluation until 19th July 2017**
- **Project start – September 2017**

LESSONS LEARNT



➤ **Specific allocation for Danube partnerships**

➤ **Extra points for projects along the Danube coast**

➤ **Info campaigns in 5 big cities**



➤ **Partner search**

➤ **Not coordinated timing under the flexible approach**

➤ **Funding by the foreign partner**

➤ **Different TCA**



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**MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL
POLICY
REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA**



**Thank you very much for
your attention!**

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