



## MEMO/GUIDANCE PAPER

### Cluster recommendations to the transport priority in the BSR Programme 2014-2020 (Output 5.4/5.5)

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#### Introduction

The paper presents a synthesis of findings featured in Output 5.1 report, which has mapped experiences accumulated in the implementation of the cluster projects and other relevant initiatives invited to the cluster meetings. That specific bulk of knowledge was compared with the then available description of the transport priority in the new Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014 - 2020 in order to identify gaps and missing thematic areas.

Another inspiration for this paper has been given by Output 2.3 report, which summarises cluster experience with transport greening measures, in a form of BSR blueprints.

The paper is aimed to provide guidance to the programming bodies on possible new or widened aspects in the thematic portfolio of the transport priority that stem from the cooperation heritage among transnational and cross-border projects dealing with transport and regional growth in the Baltic Sea Region.

#### Strategic context of the transport development in the BSR

The cluster cooperation promotes a vision of a **sustainable multimodal transport system** that efficiently serves the trade exchange between the Baltic Sea countries, between the BSR and the neighbouring areas, and between the EU and other global economic powers.

The envisioned system is composed of the following elements:

- A grid of transnational multimodal transport corridors for better external accessibility of the Region, with well-developed cross-border sections to secure interoperability of national transport networks.
- Interregional and regional transport links, which improve access from the transnational corridors to local and regional production areas and customer markets.
- Ports, airports and intermodal terminals - acting as interfaces between land, sea, inland waterway and air transport modes, well connected with their respective hinterlands.
- Efficient local and regional public transportation, contributing to better mobility within commuting areas and to more compact settlement structures.
- Innovative solutions in logistics and in traffic monitoring systems, including alternative fuels /propulsion technologies, ICT/ITS concepts for more efficient operations, technological measures to improve intermodality (e.g. technical and organisational measures to increase load factor or to improve modal split by developing solutions for non-craneable containers).
- Platforms for cooperation between public administration, research and business sector to identify potentials and pave the way for future investments.
- Compatible and consistent transport planning and management processes between the governance levels and across the administrative borders.

According to the Macroregional Transport Action Plan, a strategic document developed through cooperation among the transnational and cross-border projects co-funded by the EU, the path to attain this vision must reflect the specific geographical and socio-economic situation of the Baltic Sea Region. One of the analysed scenarios, named green scenario, seems to best suit this purpose. The green scenario promotes well-coordinated public policies, positive market response and public acceptance in an attempt to improve sustainable growth as well as to increase socio-economic and territorial cohesion of the Baltic Sea Region. One of the instruments to achieve it is a **network of sustainable, multimodal and green transport corridors**, which shall connect, cross and integrate different parts of the Region's territory.



The view of consolidating actions towards a sustainable multimodal transport system in the Region is shared by the European Commission. It is one of the key objectives of the **EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region** (cf. Action Plan document from February 2013, page 147). The Strategy takes note of a recent drive for innovation and environmentally-friendly transport solutions evident through green corridors initiatives, which bring together various stakeholders and actions in order to provide greener international logistics services.

This brings us to a conclusion on a need for setting the transport priority of the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020 in the aforementioned strategic context. The Programme may become a **laboratory** for testing the measures proposed in the **EU White Paper on Transport** in the specific macroregional conditions (through a placed-based approach), with a particular focus on promoting innovative approaches to managing both hard and soft elements of the transport system. Thereby, the Baltic Sea Region may be successfully branded as an **innovative transport area** and a **benchmark** for other European macroregions.

Based on the accumulated cluster experience in working out transport greening solutions in cooperation with the business stakeholders, we propose to open the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020 to actions, which:

- demonstrate a greening of transport in practice (through seed/experimental activities in technology, freight and passenger logistics, stakeholder management, urban mobility etc.);
- test, verify and/or disseminate innovative transport and logistics business models (utilised by the industry) throughout the Region, and transform the results/consequences to policy conclusions at respective governance tiers;
- elaborate solutions in transport and logistics in all dimensions of sustainability (environment, economy, technology and society);
- add a sustainable regional growth and territorial cohesion context to investment measures to be carried out in other programmes and initiatives (e.g. TEN-T);
- support the macroregional perspective of developing a sustainable multimodal transport system and a network of transport corridors covering the whole BSR.

### Complementarity to the TEN-T core network corridor actions

The Action Plan document of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region stipulates (page 149) that while the due priority is given to the TEN-T core network corridors, both the TEN-T core and comprehensive network should be implemented on time.

As the concept of TEN-T core network corridors will be given prominent attention in the future EU transport policy, especially for transnational transport links, the BSR Programme should concentrate on and deliver valuable input in **connecting the core network corridors to secondary and tertiary (regional/local) transport networks**, bearing in mind e.g. the challenge of reaching remote and sparsely populated areas in the demographic change conditions.

Another important issue recommended for the Programme is to optimise the **added value** of the core network corridors for the **sustainable regional growth**. There is uncertainty if that specific aspect will be duly tackled in the TEN-T Programme through the work of corridor management platforms.

Following the core network corridor logic, which exceeds borders of the Baltic Sea Region, administrative levels and sectors, the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020 should provide mechanisms that **assure cooperation** with neighbouring programme areas or across different programme priorities to complement core network corridor development from a regional perspective. This also relates to inclusion of EU's eastern neighbours and farther located transit countries (Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Kazakhstan etc.) in joint activities (e.g. dealing with removal of non-infrastructure-related bottlenecks, such as those associated with border crossings or procedures, rules and regulations, along transnational transport corridors).

Mechanisms for information exchange should be installed from the very outset to improve the interface between Programme-funded projects, EUSBSR PA Transport and other relevant funding programmes and initiatives. This may facilitate cross-programme synergies and magnify programme/project results.





## Greening of transport

Greening of corridors and transport chains has become a substantial direction of actions in the relevant EU and BSR strategic transport documents. The cluster partnership acknowledges that the key challenges presented at the programming workshop in Riga in April 2013 refer to this aspect. However, the **efficiency of transport systems** shall be strengthened in the new programme, to ensure a well-functioning **interaction** between all modes of transport. An efficient transport system is the backbone of international trade and welfare in the BSR. In specific circumstances this might even allow for promoting the road transport mode (especially city logistics and last-mile transportation).

A shift of cargo on more sustainable transport modes can only be realised, if it is economically attractive for shippers. Ecological aspects are mostly not pivotal, which implies that a more efficient and competitive transport system/chain is the **key factor** for a shift of cargo to more environmental friendly modes of transport. Barge/inland shipping services as well as short sea shipping might play a crucial role if explicitly promoted in the Programme.

**Urban mobility**, including city logistics, is an important factor to investigate and improve. The ongoing trend of inward migration (into the cities) results in logistical problems as infrastructure is not easily extendable (costs are high and space is limited or not available). Additionally, the aging society plays a role; it will demand and make use of its mobility needs.

### Recommended actions:

- Actions strengthening capacity, efficiency and quality of intermodal nodes and transport chains (incl. last-mile transportation);
- Actions improving the hinterland connections of BSR sea ports in order to secure a sustainable and efficient transport chain;
- Actions exploring the potentials of inland waterways as hinterland link for sea ports and other transport hubs for improved access to TEN-T network;
- Actions to improve urban mobility.

## Multilevel governance in transport

The specific cluster experience relates to the **harmonisation of policymaking and management schemes** along transnational transport corridors in the Baltic Sea Region, irrespective of their status in the TEN-T network. Several projects in our cluster have already established or are close to establishing **corridor management bodies** (e.g. associations, alliances, forums) to ensure a smooth transfer of information, streamlining of development priorities and coordination of activities between the involved public and private stakeholders.

In that respect, the cluster partnership has worked out effective methods to **engage the business sector** in corridor development, planning and implementation. Our observations lead to a statement that the understanding of needs, priorities and strategies of the private companies is a pre-requisite to come up with a successful and feasible plan for improving infrastructure and services along the transnational transport corridor.

The Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020 can act as a lighthouse initiative in actively engaging private companies in the territorial cooperation projects - on par with a wide variety of public actors representing various competence areas. This may in particular apply to facilitating and enhancing of **management organisations along corridors** that are not qualified as TEN-T core network corridors yet still perform important role for conveying intercontinental and international freight and passenger flows across the Baltic Sea Region.

Another reference scale in that respect are **cross-border integration areas**, which experience dynamic growth in freight and passenger flows and lagging behind public policies and strategies to sustain them in long term.

## Cluster cooperation

We have found the cluster cooperation instrumental in providing a streamlined regional level contribution to the strategic transport planning in the Baltic Sea Region. The cluster has created a **neutral meeting place** for projects to jointly work on green transport solutions, harmonise outputs and to communicate outcomes to the target audience in a consistent manner.



The cluster partnership has become a **serious partner** for the European Commission and Transport Priority Area Coordinators in a dialogue on transport and regional growth policy developments.

We see a need a clear benefit to **promote the cluster initiative** in the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020 and we postulate to launch it from the very outset, in order to offer better opportunities for the projects from all application rounds to synergise and minimise overlaps.

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