



# **EUSBSR** EU STRATEGY FOR THE BALTIC SEA REGION



SUOMEN ITÄMERI-INSTITUUTTI  
THE BALTIC INSTITUTE OF FINLAND



## Cooperation with Norway from the point of view of a Policy Area Coordinator

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# EUSBSR Policy Area Innovation: New Action Plan 2021-

## Added value:

### Policy Area Innovation (PA INNO)

- promotes a globally competitive position within innovation for sustainable economic growth in the BSR, and provides a strong platform for an enhanced macroregional collaborative ecosystem for innovation, research, SMEs and digitalization.
- enables shared learning through knowledge-transfer activities
- creates and strengthens networks across the Baltic Sea region
- aligns resources and regulations e.g. through co-ordination of funding sources
- facilitates the joining up of forces in common programs and investments and in the development of solutions for common challenges; and
- enhances BSR's profile, visibility and attractiveness as a partner of choice for international innovation cooperation within and beyond the BSR.

# EUSBSR Policy Area Innovation: New Action Plan 2021-

## EU or other policy framework

PA Innovation is related to the following EU- regional - and international strategic frameworks:

- European Strategic Cluster Partnerships (COSME)
- Smart Specialisation Strategy
- Digitising European Industry, in particular the support to Digital Innovation Hubs that can support SMEs with their digital transformation
- Activities to support cultural and creative industries
- Digital Single Market
- EU Blue Bioeconomy Roadmap and Bioeconomy Strategy
- Policy goals of Horizon Europe
- A new Circular Economy Action Plan for a Cleaner and More Competitive Europe

The innovation AP is to be **linked to the Green Deal**, support for R&I being a cross-cutting element of the pact. It will also be directly linked to certain texts of the Green Deal: the new industrial strategy, the new circular economy action plan, the farm-to-fork strategy

# EUSBSR Policy Area Innovation: New Action Plan 2021-

## Key PA achievement so far

- PA INNO has helped versatile BSR innovation cooperation to evolve into strategic and complementary actions with stronger impact and more scalable results.
- PA INNO flagships such as BSR Stars, SUBMARINER Network, ScanBalt, Baltic Science Link and BSR Digi co-lab have produced numerous interesting and highly relevant results and new solutions e.g. in the fields of research collaboration, health, blue growth, bio/circular economy and digital economy.
- PA INNO experiences and results on transnational S3 are providing strong evidence and basis for the next wave of S3 in the next EU programming period.
  - Related to this, a network of ERDF Managing Authorities (MA Network) has been established to develop proposals on transnational S3 collaboration, embedding EUSBSR to ERDF. Pilot projects on clean technologies and digital transformation have been created under the MA Network.
  - results of various (regions-lead) PA INNO flagships on S3 are now being scaled up in connection with BSR S3 Ecosystem project

## Action 1: Challenge-driven innovation

- Macroregional challenge-driven innovation policies and actions **aim at fostering disruptive, breakthrough and market-shaping innovations to respond to the 21st century social, environmental, and economic grand challenges in the BSR** (*e.g. climate change, resource efficiency, demographic change, pandemics, rapid urbanization, healthy living and aging, clean energy, inclusive societies, sustainable food and feed production and various environmental challenges of the Baltic Sea*).
- Building on the strong background and experience on challenge-based innovation cooperation, and leveraging and scaling up the successes and best practices, stronger innovation ecosystems can be created and **common BSR challenges tackled by developing shared solutions and related new pan-Baltic value chains**.
- **The aim is to turn challenges into opportunities for sustainable growth in BSR.**

## Action 2: Digital innovation and transformation

**Digital transformation is a societal change in BSR. Emerging digital technologies** such as AI, VR/AR, blockchain, robotics and Internet of Things (IoT) are key tools to tackle societal challenges, facilitate new businesses, innovations, services and more sustainable, usable and vital living environments and infrastructures, and develop BSR innovation (e.g. smart city initiatives) and startup ecosystems.

### **Objectives:**

- to develop common standards for interoperable public and private solutions (e.g. e-identity) and promote harmonizing of data - supporting transfer of solutions across BSR, new market opportunities and globally more competitive digital ecosystems.
- to give businesses and public service providers opportunities to analyze, evaluate, develop, co-create and test new ideas and services together.
- to promote knowledge sharing and institutional capacity building within digitalization to facilitate digital transformation and bridge digital divides in BSR.

## Action 3: Co-creative innovation

**Innovation ecosystems (local, regional or sector-based)** are emerging as key frameworks for economic and innovation activity also in BSR. Transnational platforms and change agents are needed to connect BSR innovation ecosystems. Co-creative and open innovation as key innovation methods.

- **To scale up the use of co-creation among BSR SMEs** through improving their capabilities and absorptive capacities to efficiently turn market demand driven ideas into innovations
- **To connect innovation ecosystems across BSR** through developing and piloting systematic models and practices to engage BSR SMEs, researchers, test facilities and end users in co-creation activities
- **To facilitate the understanding and change of mindset among policy-makers** and SMEs to scale up practical co-creation activities in BSR and
- **To promote transnational cooperation and SMEs access to RDI infra**, and transnational exchange and joint development between Innovation Infrastructure Organisations and incubators.

## Norway in EUSBSR PA INNO flagship projects 2014-2020

- **BSR Stars S3** - Stimulating smart specialization ecosystem through engaging SMEs in open innovation processes (Sør-Trøndelag County Authority)
- **BSR S3 Ecosystem** (Sør-Trøndelag County Authority)
- **LARS** - Learning Among Regions on Smart Specialisation (Oppland County Authority)
- **DIGINNO** - Digital Innovation Network (The Brønnøysund Register Centre)
- **BALTSE@INIOR** - Innovative solutions to support BSR enterprises in product development aimed at raising comfort and safety of seniors home living (NTNU/Norwegian University of Science and Technology)





# Opportunities for Norwegian partners in EUSBSR PA INNO projects 2021-2027

## For regions / regional innovation ecosystems and clusters:

- **BSR S3 Ecosystem Support Programme (based on the S3 platform project results especially on circular bio-economy), and other sector/S3 priority-specific S3 initiatives (e.g. on blue growth, health, industry 4.0, smart cities)**
- Supporting the Green Deal and transition objectives, the macro-region is taking significant strides in preparing the ground for an upgraded approach to S3 – one which can be readily aligned to the EU's new drive for sustainable growth through an EU innovation ecosystem orientation, strongly underpinned by **strategic value chains**
- For example, there is a very new evidence base for the macro-region to take forward an interregional innovation agenda with **circular bioeconomy (CBE)** at its core
- Strengths e.g. in **bioenergy** have been identified, which have – until now – remained under the radar. Furthermore, there is significant scope to align efforts across the **macro-region's biorefinery infrastructures** and to further explore the **role of digitalisation** as a means to transform and diversify existing CBE-related strengths
- The post-2020 S3 agenda offers a significant guiding framework for the BSR to achieve these aims, supporting the uptake and diffusion of underpinning technologies to **support the BSR's industrial transition agenda**



# Opportunities for Norwegian partners in EUSBSR PA INNO projects 2021-2027

## Other interesting topics with strong Norwegian innovation assets, competencies and organisations:

- **Digital Innovation Hubs**
  - Digital Norway (active in EU DIH projects such as H2020 project TRINITY)
  - SINTEF, Trondheim
- **Blue Growth**
  - strong maritime and ocean economy clusters in Norway: GCE Node (Kristiansand), Blue Maritime Cluster
- **Smart cities**
  - Smart Cities Norway Network
  - Nordic Smart Cities Network
  - Nordic Edge, Stavanger
- **Start-up ecosystems**
  - Oslo Startup Ecosystem
  - Startup Norway
  - Startup support programme by Innovation Norway



# Policy learning and cooperation opportunities through EUSBSR Policy Area Steering Groups

## Common structure for Rules of Procedures of EUSBSR Steering Groups based on the EUSBSR Action Plan:

- Policy Areas (PAs) represent the expertise in their respective areas of activity and ensure the implementation of the Strategy and the Action Plan. Having an overview of the relevant sectors, PAs hold policy discussions and identify key ways to achieve the EUSBSR Objectives through different means of actions and determine how to best implement the required solutions
- PAs are managed operationally by PA Coordinators (PACs), supported and guided strategically by their respective Steering Groups (SGs)
- **SG members are representatives of the national or regional governments of EUSBSR Member States.** The SG may be an existing cooperation body within the PAC organisation, if appropriate and approved by the NCG
- **SG members have two kinds of tasks. On the one hand, they represent their governments in their respective SG. On the other hand, they perform their tasks as focal points at the national level**
- **SG members should come from key ministries or authorities in the relevant field.** They should have sufficient capability, mandate and resources to fulfil their tasks as required by the EUSBSR
- An SG may also invite representatives of non-EU neighbouring countries or organisations to join the group as members or observers **(Norway has been in PA INNO SG from the beginning through Innovation Norway. PA INNO warmly encourages and welcomes active Norwegian involvement)**
- SGs should convene at least twice a year. Online meetings are encouraged.
- The SG Presidency should rotate among the SG Members, normally on an annual basis. SGs make decisions by consensus.





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