



The Macro-regional Strategies during challenging times

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A new political context

Challenges ahead:

- Twin transition: innovation – sustainability to a green and digital economy
- For a prosperous future: stable and functioning democratic systems
- Even more apparent in the light of the COVID crisis: we need to rethink our pattern of producing, consuming, commuting:
on the way to a **new (and better) normal!**

Investing in a long-term green transition

On 21 July 2020 EU leaders agreed to a comprehensive package of EUR 1824.3 billion that combines the multiannual financial framework (MFF) of EUR 1074.3 billion with an extraordinary recovery effort under the Next Generation EU (NGEU) instrument of EUR 750 billion.

- REACT-EU: EUR 47.5 billion (bridge between current and long-term transition)
- Green transition:
 - Ambition of the Commission: for Europe to become the world's first climate neutral economy + transform into a circular economy
 - This is what the European Green Deal is all about
 - Cohesion Policy: a key investment tool to deliver it

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Digital transition:

- Sustainability transitions
- Cohesion policy to invest in the digital transitions to close the gaps
- Strengthen the regional innovation eco-system

European Green Deal

European Green Deal



LEADING THE TRANSITION TO A HEALTHY PLANET

- A **Climate Law** to lock in commitments and raise ambition
- **Earmarking 25%** of the EU budget for climate
- Greening the **European Semester**
- Comprehensive programme of legislation
- **Green investment needs** of around €470 billion per year



European Green Deal

Complementarities:

MRS and the EGD have common priorities and challenges:

- The sustainability dimension is prominent in all the MRS
- Priorities common to all the MRS – environment and climate change, **connectivity**, research & innovation and (sustainable) economic development - are related to key actions of the EGD
- Most of the EGD challenges can be tackled only joint efforts

European Green Deal

Potentials:

MRS offer a cooperation platform “fit for purposes” for supporting the implementation of the EGD actions, which provides the following:

- Coordination of funds and actions + joint initiatives for making the best use of the multiple and diversified funding opportunities and resources needed in order to face the EGD common challenges (current embedding process is key!)
- Cross-sectoral approach for implementing the EGD actions, which are strongly interconnected
- Multi-level governance and stakeholders involvement for ensuring the contribution of all the relevant actors to the EGD implementation

European Green Deal

Mutual benefits:

MRS support the EGD implementation and the EGD provides a common MRS vision:

- MRS can help the EGD implementation on the ground with coordinated regional and local initiatives, taking into account the territorial specificities of a certain geographical area
- MRS can help the implementation of the EGD in the Western Balkans (and the future Green Agenda for Western Balkans), as Western Balkans countries play an important role in the achievement of the Adriatic-Ionian and Danube Strategies objectives
- The EGD offers a common policy framework and common objectives to the MRS, and therefore it provides a common vision (within each MRS and also across the four MRS)

EUSDR - The way ahead

Third Report on the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies - COM(2020) 578 final:

- Powerful **tool** to support economic, social and territorial development and integration, and to foster good relations with neighbouring countries
- Provide a ready and operational **cooperation framework** to ensure better coordination of actions, investments and projects within their territories.
- Can play a significant role in helping MRS countries and regions to **tackle the post-COVID-19 crisis** by implementing, in a coordinated manner, the European Green Deal and the European Digital Strategy, which are the cornerstone of Europe's growth strategy.

EUSDR - The way ahead

Third Report on the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies - COM(2020) 578 final:

- As the MRS do not have their own resources, success or failure of the MRS is ultimately linked to their capacity to ensure that EU, national, regional, and other public and private funds are aligned with the priorities of the relevant strategy. **Embedding!**
- Role with regard to the **enlargement process**. The cooperation between EU Member States and countries of the Western Balkans in the Adriatic-Ionian and Danube strategies enables convergence to EU policies to substantiate their perspective for EU membership.

EUSDR - The way ahead

MRS facing the challenges of Covid 19

Get used, rethink, think in new ways:

- Digital challenge: different platforms, different security requirements, we are not all on the same level in digital development
- New requirements on how to organise and lead meetings
- Need to save ongoing initiatives
- Closed borders – counterproductive
- Cannot meet in person: an arena is lost
- Difficulties during the spring, now getting a bit easier
- Can even start up new initiatives (flagship project, other projects)

EUSDR Action Plan revision

Intensive process: started in May 2018, 85 actions identified

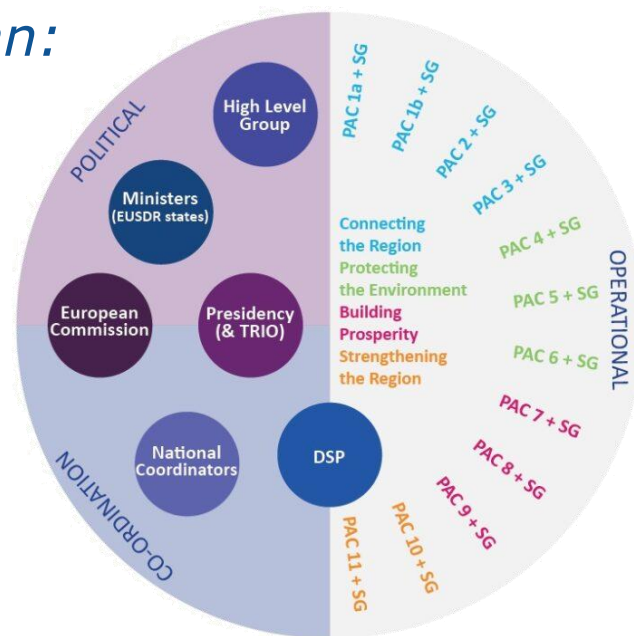
Bringing the EUSDR „from words to action“

Aim and purpose of the revised Action Plan:

- Update of the 2010 document
- More strategic guidance
- Compatibility (embedding)

Basis for the revision:

- Consolidated input from NCs and PACs
- Online consultation, public hearing (participation of the broad public)
- Commission input
- Lessons learnt, empirical data, studies, other



Implications for PA 1B

Puts it in the framework of new or reinforced policy areas: i.e. the EU Green Deal and sustainable development, climate change

Links it to the Cohesion Policy objectives for 2021-2027:

- **PO 1, "a smarter Europe";**
- **PO 2, "a greener Europe"; and**
- **PO 3, "a more connected Europe"**
- *Specific policy objective(s):*
 - **developing a sustainable, climate-resilient, intelligent secure and intermodal TEN-T**

Eight actions to cover PA 1B

- ACTION 1: To bring to completion the **TEN-T** (rail and road) core network crossing the Danube Region, overcoming the difficulties and the bottlenecks, and taking into account environmental, economic and political challenges, particularly in the cross-border sections
- ACTION 2: To support the implementation of the **Rail Freight Corridors** (RFC) forming part of the European rail network for competitive freight (Reg. 913/2010) with extension to candidate and neighbouring countries
- ACTION 3: To enhance cooperation between air traffic stakeholders in order to **improve regional connectivity** and prepare a plan to implement shorter plane routes
- ACTION 4: To ensure sustainable **metropolitan transport systems** and mobility
- ACTION 5: To improve the **regional/ local cross-border infrastructure** and the access to rural areas by facilitating secondary and tertiary transport infrastructure
- ACTION 6: To develop further nodal planning for **multimodality**
- ACTION 7: To develop further **Intelligent Traffic Systems** by using environmental-friendly technologies, especially in urban regions
- ACTION 8: To raise awareness for **road safety** and encourage exchange of best practices

Projects!

DTP: **SABRINA** (Safer Bicycle Routes in Danube Area)

DTP: **DANUBE CYCLE PLANS** (Policies, plans and promotion for more people cycling in the Danube region)

IPA: HU-SRB project **CBC-BIKE** (Horgos-Röszke-Szeged - The good way connects everyone)

ADRION: the "**ADRIAPASS** - Integrating multimodal connections in the Adriatic-Ionian region"

Vistra (Common Vision for the Danube Region transport) b)

DRIS (Danube Region Intermodal Strategy) c)

DAirNet (Danube region Air Network Development) d)

Traianus RFC (Black Sea – Northern Adriatic Sea Rail Freight Corridor)