



BSR S3 Ecosystem

Policy Guidelines



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Short Project Description

The flagship EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Policy Area Innovation (EUSBSR PA INNO) platform project on S3, '**BSR S3 Ecosystem**' (Interreg Baltic Sea Region, 2018-2022) is aligning various EUSBSR S3 initiatives to better steer investments across the Baltic Sea region (BSR). The platform builds on the experiences of Interreg BSR funded EUSBSR PA INNO S3 projects LARS, BSR Stars S3, Smart-up BSR and GoSmart BSR/ GoSmart&Excel BSR, as well as Interreg Europe funded S34 Growth, BIOREGIO, ClusterFy and TraCS3. Recent developments and experiences, also based on the outcomes of BSR S3 Ecosystem platform project, offer valuable tools and guidance for the effective and coordinated utilisation of EU 2021-2027 opportunities in BSR sub-regions. Even more importantly, they provide a strong basis for more strategic S3 development and cooperation to improve European competitiveness.

The BSR S3 Ecosystem project has been underpinned by a highly experimental and interactive process, bringing together BSR (and wider EU) innovation actors from policy, research / science and industrial perspectives, to sharpen the focus of innovation collaboration efforts across the macro-region.

The purpose of the policy guidelines is to present our general recommendations for implementing the BSR S3 Ecosystem in the Baltic Sea Region. It's based on the conclusions of the project and its's analytic and reports presented during out project timeline.

- Adopting an S3 ecosystem approach – across the BSR – to deliver the Green Deal's twin transitions will be essential / It is important to ensure that the Green Deal's twin transition agenda embraces an inclusive approach, acknowledging highly differentiated needs of different groups of stakeholders and different territories across the BSR (S3 offers an holistic framework to achieve this.).
- It is clear that continuous support and investment is required to create sustainable foundations for joint S3 / innovation collaboration across the BSR, which can shift from a 'project to process' orientation. The learning from the BSR S3 Ecosystem project revealed that a significant gap exists to achieve this. Regions from across the BSR have strong capacity building needs to embed their S3 priorities in their innovation plans and investments. The transformational change which lies ahead (e.g. responding to Covid recovery, energy supply and security, digital transition) requires whole system responses, to pivot towards holistic solutions for a green recovery.
- The new Interreg BSR programme sets out a pathway for BSR-focused collaboration. There is a significant opportunity to play a key role in delivering this ambition by bridging the S3-related learning and knowledge from the S3 Ecosystem project with Priority 4 of the new Interreg BSR programme. This links to 'Pillar 1: Project Alignment Support' of the Hub prototype.



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- Pillar 3 – the most complex and ambitious of the three pillars – proposes an experimental testing ground to bring together BSR quadruple helix innovation actors. This could also provide the momentum for a stronger BSR response to new EU funding opportunities in areas such as I3 and EIEs.
- Overall, the Interreg BSR S3 Ecosystem Advisory Hub project has generated a new evidence base and set out core parameters and foundations for its set-up. It has also engaged a wide range of actors from both ‘supply’ and ‘demand’ sides, who have expressed strong interest in the Hub and its potential added value. Moreover, the project has acted as a critical enabler of the recent successful application - through the BSR S3 Directors’ Network - to take part in the new PRI Pilot Action.
- The new programming period could see a progression of this work through a strategic exercise in diffusing learning from the project across the BSR, together with the guidance manual. The project has adopted a strong sustainable S3 orientation. This will require significant upgrading in the context of the Pilot Action and the tools/methods which will evolve as a consequence of this new approach. The BSR could play a leading role in these efforts, not least if the territory was to operate as an ERA Hub.
- BSR S3 Directors’ Network, its PRI Pilot Action and the S3 and the EUSBSR Policy Area Innovation can work together towards the creation of a place-based and sustainable ecosystem orientation to underpin the macro-region’s approach to Smart Specialisation.
- Overall, a higher level of political commitment will be required if the Hub is to become a reality. This is a pre-requisite to transform governance structures, long-term commitment and a new investment trajectory.
- Strong and continuous regional support, capacity building and investment is required to create sustainable foundations for joint S3 / innovation collaboration across the BSR, which can shift from a ‘project to process’ orientation.

The above recommendations are more described in the different reports of the BSR S3 Ecosystem Platform project.