



FACTSHEET

SMART SPECIALISATION IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

Interreg
Baltic Sea Region



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● SUMMARY

This factsheet provides an overview of the achievements gained by the transnational projects within the **Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020** thematic priority “**Innovation**” and the objective “**Smart specialisation**”. In this factsheet, you will find examples of the projects’ solutions. For more information visit the **project library**. Many of these projects contributed to progress towards the objectives of the **EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)** and helped to advance the implementation of the EUSBSR action plan in the policy area of Innovation.

Besides, some of the projects’ solutions can help developers of new project ideas see what has already been developed and what could be a new step toward more innovative societies under the new objectives of the **Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme 2021-2027** “**resilient economies and communities**” as well as “**circular economy**” and “**blue economy**”.



What?

The projects tackled the following challenges:

- Unveiled potential in bioeconomy and circular economy, including digital transformation;
- Improving policy tools to implement smart specialisation strategies and innovation;
- Filling knowledge gaps in blue growth research and innovation smart specialisation strategies;
- Unexplored opportunities for economic growth through transnational learning and how to link the learning to smart specialisation.

Who?

The solutions are for public and regional authorities responsible for the implementation of smart specialisation strategies in e.g. blue growth, bioeconomy or circular economy, as well as innovation community, business support organisations, SMEs, higher education and research institutions.

• ACHIEVEMENTS

Towards prosperity in bioeconomy, circular and blue economy

Regional and national authorities are better equipped to engage SMEs in open innovation ([BSR Stars S3](#))

- Policy brief “Developing and Managing Innovation Ecosystems in the Circular Economy” outlines the main aims and features of a digital monitoring tool. It guides on how to support the development and management of effective innovation ecosystems, through e.g. open data sharing among regional innovation actors;
- Visualisation tool compiles data about a circular economy ecosystem. The tool provides a basic overview of the local circular economy and allows to monitor circular economy sub-ecosystems;
- Policy brief “Inclusive Digitalisation in the Baltic Sea Region” examines whether inclusive digitalisation is an important instrument for promoting regional growth and development in rural areas. The brief covers possible initiatives and policies that help local businesses achieve successful digital transformation;
- Policy brief “Industrial Symbiosis in the Baltic Sea Region” describes current practices and guidelines on new initiatives of industrial symbiosis.

Shared ideas in bioeconomy development thanks to a new networking platform Biobord ([RD12Club](#))

- “Regional Bioeconomy Profiles”, a collection of statistical data on bioeconomy, includes ideas on the possible development areas in bioeconomy. It serves as a basis for so-called “Joint Action



Plans” that describe the short, medium and long-term actions that the rural regions can implement in transnational cooperation. The plans were jointly developed by regional authorities (partly by the authorities dealing with national smart specialisation strategies in bioeconomy), business, and academy;

- “Biobord platform”, functioning as a networking forum, connects and supports bioeconomy developers such as small and medium-sized enterprisers around the Baltic Sea region. The platform and its operation model are designed in an iterative, user-oriented service way. The operation model guides on the joint idea generation, sharing and assessment.

Tools for public authorities in coastal regions to improve smart specialisation strategies in blue economy ([Smart Blue Regions](#))

- Report on new blue growth policy measures contains the analysis of six regional blue growth research and innovation smart specialisation strategies in Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Poland and Sweden. The measures include cluster-type initiatives, platforms for connecting business and technology, adequate state funding and internationalisation of complex projects;
- Monitoring system supports regional and national administrations in assessing their research and innovation smart specialisation strategies (RIS3) in blue growth. It compares real characteristics, needs and developments of the blue growth sector with the priorities in the RIS3;
- Study on blue growth cooperation opportunities guides public and private actors in blue growth on developing cooperation projects. It presents blue growth focus areas (blue medicine, machinery and technology, energy and life science), stakeholders (business support organisations, higher education institutions and research institutes) and resources based on the analysis of blue RIS3 in Germany, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Poland and Sweden.

Growth through business development and innovation

Improved knowledge and tools for innovation intermediaries ([EmplInno](#))

- Regional Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3) recommendations for innovation intermediaries such as business support organisations, science parks, universities in small and medium-sized cities. The RIS3-recommendations provide hands-on guidance and lessons learned for better management and implementation of RIS3;
- Synergy and empowerment concepts compile innovative ideas of applying RIS3 for boosting the regional growth. The concepts cover six business fields, specifically energy, food, health, life



science, ICT, maritime industries and advanced materials. The concepts compile knowledge to implement innovative ideas of adapting and using RIS3 for the growth of different regions.

Better guidance for cities on the implementation of smart specialisation strategies ([Smart-up BSR](#))

- Book on smart specialisation strategy implementation provides an overview of how international partners contributed to smart specialisation strategy creation. It outlines also how the prioritisation of regional spearheads has been achieved in the Baltic Sea region;
- Guide for organising innovation camps addresses regional decision-makers, especially those new to the innovation camp methodology. It contains easily-to-implement instructions for innovation camps and explains why camps are effective innovation instruments for addressing local and trans-regional issues;
- Leaflet about cities as innovation platforms presents a collection of guiding concepts and frameworks to help cities as enablers for innovation. It allows to reflect on possible pathways to building innovative skill sets, attitudes, strategies, policies, and initiatives;
- Guide on regional pilots includes a group of activities around the concept of thematic piloting (active healthy ageing, smart city, climate change, circular economy) as a method to increase innovativeness at the inter-regional level.

Fostering transnational cooperation and peer learning

Intensified transnational cooperation based on smart specialisation approach ([GoSmart BSR](#))

- Trans-S3 methodology aims to provide a ‘recipe’ on how to elaborate and manage transnational smart specialisation. It is for the regions that want to intensify their collaboration based on the smart specialisation concept and look for policy tools for internationalisation and innovation at the transnational level;
- “Transnational Innovation Brokerage System” (TIBS) is a network of skilled brokers based in Lithuania, Poland, Estonia, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Latvia, and Finland. TIBS brokers evaluate the needs of companies, provide tailored solutions and focus on innovation opportunities through building partnerships with international innovators.

Policy tools to improve transnational learning among the regions ([LARS](#))

- Policy advice contains hands-on recommendations on how to work with a smart specialisation strategy and methodologically link transnational learning with smart specialisation. The focus is on analysis, visions, governance, priorities, policy mix, monitoring, which are obligatory steps



defined by the smart specialisation platform in Seville. The material is useful for partner organisations like regions, counties, universities as well as any practitioners of smart specialisation;

- Report on policy transfer contains a guide for selecting the good practices identified through a quadruple helix innovation network gap-analysis. The good practices overview covers e.g. circular economy (Germany), cluster of forest technology (Sweden), metal industry (Latvia), bioeconomy (Lithuania) and the contribution of practices to innovation ecosystems. The best practices are summarised on the basis of the knowledge exchange among e.g. regional administrators and policymakers.

TAGS: smart specialisation, resilient economies and communities, responsive public services, bioeconomy, circular economy, blue economy, eco-innovation, innovation ecosystem, transforming business models, business support, SMEs and entrepreneurship, digital technologies, digital transformation, internationalisation.