

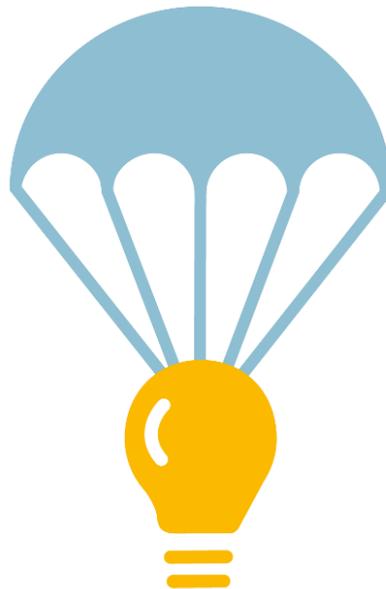
Meeting of macro-regional coordinators



23-24 January 2019

New directions for macro-regions: unlocking innovation capacity and performance

[Hotel Marshal Garden](#), 50 B, Dorobantilor Boulevard, District 1, 010574
Bucharest, Romania





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Outlines

EU macro-regional strategies (MRS/Strategy) address common societal and ecological challenges shared within a wider territory. The Strategy can help towards coordinated development and implementation of EU policies. The MRS meet the need for a more integrated Europe where policy-makers, governments and stakeholders are addressing challenges across borders, integrating various policy sectors and taking multilevel governance as their guiding principle. The MRS point to a new Europe where different perspectives are incorporated to find a more effective way of addressing common challenges. Neighbouring countries are involved in the MRS, therefore the Strategies are not just tools for supporting integration within the European Union but also across the whole of Europe.

Four existing MRS are at different implementation stages, but there are similarities between them. The MRS are very much alike in terms of thematics, functioning and implementation processes. Each strategy aims to achieve set objectives, defined targets and indicators adopted by Action Plans accompanying the MRS.

We, the Interact Programme, support the development of new ways of cooperation involving the macro-regional framework. Moreover, we work to raise awareness about the MRS, develop pilot models for coordination and cooperation within the MRS, and strengthen dialogue across funding programmes, creating synergies to support the MRS. Furthermore, the Council Conclusions¹ on the implementation of the MRS request that Interact supports exchanges across the MRS. Taking this into account, and in addition to our other support services to the MRS, we have been organising meetings of the MRS thematic coordinators (policy area coordinators/ priority area coordinators/ pillar coordinators/ action group leaders) since 2017.

The proposed meeting of the MRS coordinators will deal with the topics of innovation, smart specialisation, R&D.

Objective

Primarily, the meeting aims to kick-off the discussion across the Strategies' coordinators and other relevant institution/organisations and funds on common topics: innovation, smart specialisation, R&D. Moreover, we aim not only to encourage sharing current experiences and practices in implementing selected thematic priorities of the MRS, but also to investigate the potential for closer cooperation and coordination across the MRS – unlocking innovation capacity and performance.

¹ Council Conclusions on the implementation of the macro-regional strategies, 8461/17 as of April 2017; Council Conclusions on the added value of the MRS, 22 October 2013.



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Day one

Wednesday, 23 January 2019

12.00 – 13.15

Registration and welcome lunch

13.15 – 13.45

Welcome, introductions and working methods

Baiba Liepa, Programme Manager to support EU macro-regional strategies, Interact III Programme

Radu Gorincioi, National Coordinator for the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Alison Hunter, Moderator of the meeting, Economic and Public Policy Consultancy

13.45 – 15.00

Pitch Presentations: state of play of research and innovation in the EU macro-regional strategies

Questions and Answers

Group discussion ‘Current practice, future visions’

Macro-regional coordinators/representatives presenting the following themes:

- *Universities serving the innovation ambitions of macro-regions;*
- *Technology infrastructures –access to industry, from across the macro-regions;*
- *Role of platforms and networks to build innovation capacity in the macro-regions;*
- *Improved action planning for innovation performance.*

Joint discussion, feedback on the themes

Objectives of the session:

- a) present brief overview of importance of their topic to the innovation performance of macro-regions (based on feedback from a group);
- b) summarise implementation progress and experiences in addressing specific actions (related to the topic under focus) within the MRS;
- c) raise awareness across the group of how macro-regions are delivering on innovation objectives and ambitions;
- d) create momentum for further effort and action in areas noted above, by working in collaboration across the macro-regions.

15.00 – 15.30

Coffee break

15.30 – 16.15

Keynote speech ‘Macro-regions and S3: state-of-play and beyond 2020’

Peter Berkowitz, Head of Unit for Smart and Sustainable Growth, Directorate-General Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission



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Questions and Answers

Objectives of the session:

- a) provide an update on the S3 agenda and its intended direction for post-2020;
- b) highlight the role macro-regions have played (to date) in the S3 agenda and suggest areas for further development and opportunity;
- c) provide insights / advice into the added value which S3 can play in the macro-regions, in terms of wider strategic issues such as governance, connectivity and collaboration across the macro-regions.

16.15 – 17.30

Panel: The current programming period: macro-regions, S3, innovation, R&D

Jorge Costa Dantas Faria, Policy and project officer for Nanomaterials, Advance Materials and Materials Characterisation, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission

Thorsten Kohlisch, Project Manager–Team Coordinator, Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform, Interreg Europe

Lina Stanionyte, Expert in transnational collaboration, macro-regions, Smart Specialisation Platform, European Commission

Prof. Dr. Miroslav Veskovíc, scientific expert, Coordination of scientific support to macro-regional strategies, Joint Research Centre, European Commission

Questions and Answers

Objectives of the session:

- a) provide fresh insights from EU institutional actors reflecting on how macro-regions are delivering on innovation objectives and ambitions;
- b) encourage discussion on progress, good practice, gaps and remaining challenges.

17.30 – 18.20

Group Work (1)

Creating an Action Framework

Discussion focus:

- 'Would like to share...' and 'Would like to learn...' (based on learning and stimulus from first round group discussions)
- Proposals for continuation of efforts after the event (in a group and across macro-regions)

Summary feedback from the Group discussion



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Objectives of the session:

- a) set the tone for strong cross macro-regional collaboration (both during this event and afterwards);
- b) create a framework to support and guide learning;
- c) consider identified priorities and focus areas for further cross-MRS development and suggest ways to address these.

18.20 – 18.30 Reflections from the Day 1

Alison Hunter, Moderator of the meeting, Economic and Public Policy Consultancy

20.00 – 22.00

Networking dinner

Restaurant [Joseph by Joseph Hadad](#), Str. Prof. Dr. Ion Cantacuzino nr.8, Sector 1, Bucharest, Romania

Day two

Thursday, 24 January 2019

08.30 – 08.45

Welcome coffee

08.45 – 09.00

Recap from Day 1 and Overview of Day 2

Alison Hunter, Moderator of the meeting, Economic and Public Policy Consultancy

09.00 – 10.15

Panel: The future programming period: macro-regions, S3, innovation and R&D

Roland Mayer-Frei, Programme Officer-EU policies, European Territorial Cooperation, Macro-regions, Interreg and Programme Implementation, Directorate-General Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

PhD Anna Sobczak, Policy Officer, Advanced Technologies, Clusters & Social Economy, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

Andrea Halmos, Policy Officer, Digital Innovation Hubs, digital transformation of SMEs, Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology

Ales Gnamus, Expert in energy, smart cities and engineering, Smart Specialisation Platform, European Commission

Objectives of the session:

- a) provide insights into how macro-regions can prepare for the EU's innovation agenda for the post-2020 programming period;
- b) discuss EU policy directions which generate and incentivise more strategic collaboration for innovation investment;



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- c) insights into how future EU policies will require a stronger collaboration effort (e.g. in clusters, innovation partnerships), to upscale efforts for improved innovation performance and international competitiveness.

10.15 – 10.45 Coffee break

10.45 – 12.15 **Group Work (2)**
Action Planning – this group, macro-regions, individuals

Summary feedback from the Group discussion

Objectives of the session:

- a) review high level actions generated on Day 1 (and revise, if necessary);
- b) consider how identified priorities and focus areas can be delivered and when;
- c) what effort is required (for this group, across the macro-regions and personally)?
- d) how can this be achieved?
- e) consider personal learning needs/capacity building to address the above;
- d) identify drivers and barriers that influence delivery of actions, and suggest how to better exploit drivers and eliminate barriers.

12.15 – 13.45 Lunch

13.45 – 15.00 **Group Work (3)**
Clarifying priority actions: What, How and When?

Summary feedback from the Group discussion

Objective of the session:

- a) summarise key priorities and focus areas (actions);
- b) discuss how to address those priorities;
- c) agree how the cooperation would continue after this meeting;
- d) elaborate proposals for continued group working beyond the event.

15.00 – 15.15 **Final reflections and next steps**
Closing of the meeting

Alison Hunter, Moderator of the meeting, Economic and Public Policy Consultancy

Baiba Liepa, Programme Manager to support EU macro-regional strategies, Interact III Programme



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Practicalities

Venue

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The networking dinner will be served in the Restaurant [Joseph by Joseph Hadad](#), Str. Prof. Dr. Ion Cantacuzino nr.8, Sector 1, Bucharest 20.00-22.00.

Travel

Every participant is responsible to take care of his/her travel.

Accommodation

Every participant is responsible for his/her accommodation arrangements.

Other information

Only registered participants will be accepted for the meeting. To register, please follow the link [here](#). The registration is open until 11 January 2019!

Any questions and uncertainties reading the event should be addressed to Baiba Liepa, (baiba.liepa@interact-eu.net, +358 40 159 9430).