



THE EU POST-2020 SMART SPECIALISATION AGENDA: BOOSTING COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH INNOVATION COOPERATION

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The European Commission's proposals for the next generation of Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) emphasise the continued relevance of, and increased demand for, place-based and innovation-driven collaboration. The post-2020 S3 proposals set out a clear expectation for innovation performance to be underpinned by interregional investments.

The political network of the Baltic Sea Commission welcomes this direction, and would like to draw particular attention to:

- 1) The role of its Regions who remain the catalytic driving force of Europe's industrial success. Nonetheless, the challenges faced in an increasingly competitive global marketplace call for new efforts to accelerate innovation performance;
- 2) The new ambition for Smart Specialisation, combining a place-based focus on regional innovation competitiveness, with new momentum for interregional collaboration to underpin the EU's post-2020 sustainable growth agenda;
- 3) The proposed new instruments of European Territorial Cooperation must offer an incentive to all regions to benefit from improved coherence and alignment across regional Smart Specialisation priorities and investment frameworks.

The Baltic Sea Region has benefited from an S3 logic in the current programming period where it has witnessed a significant boost to the performance of regional innovation ecosystems. The post-2020 S3 will further collaboration efforts and will see the creation of new, and the further development of existing, innovation-driven partnerships across the Baltic Sea.

The political network of the Baltic Sea Commission wants to position its Regions at the forefront of the EU's industrial innovation ambitions, where improved global competitiveness will be driven by stronger collaboration between its innovation actors and assets across its connected territory. Smart Specialisation provides a pathway to guide this effort.

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission voices its support for the interregional focus of the EU's post-2020 proposals on S3. This offers the strategic direction to build new, aligned efforts in unlocking innovation investment across funding frameworks (at regional, national and EU levels) and to create new value for EU competitiveness through:

- further developing its innovation collaboration commitments expressed in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the role of Policy Area Innovation as a key driver of this effort;
- reinforcing its commitment to sustainable development as a driver of challenge-driven and innovation-led cooperation across the BSC regions, delivered through its “quadruple helix” innovation partners (from science and research, industry, the public sector and citizens and communities).

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission stands ready to embrace the new interregional dimension to the post-2020 S3 agenda and its associated instruments and underpinning methods. This will strengthen its regional efforts towards successful industrial transition, and will drive innovation performance, supported by digitalisation and technology-driven opportunities.

The Baltic Sea Region's commitment to the EU's Bio and Circular Economy efforts and its ambitions for sustainable Blue Growth will remain critical enablers of innovation performance. The EU's proposed post-2020 architecture for Smart Specialisation reinforces the Baltic Sea Region's S3 ecosystem ambitions, supported by cooperation through Policy Area Innovation.

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission welcomes the ambition signalled by the EC to position the post-2020 Smart Specialisation agenda at the heart of a sustainable EU innovation investment effort. This will strengthen how Baltic Sea industries (and especially SMEs) rise to the challenges they face in the global marketplace.

The political network of the Baltic Sea Commission commits to championing a revitalised effort for Baltic competitiveness, extending its reach for further innovation collaboration across the EU, while investing in a sustainable future for its citizens.



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The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) brings together some 160 Regions from 25 States from the European Union and beyond.

Representing about 200 million people, the CPMR campaigns in favour of a more balanced development of the European territory.

It operates both as a think tank and as a lobby group for Regions. It focuses mainly on social, economic and territorial cohesion, maritime policies and accessibility.

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