



# BSR TransGovernance

Multi-level governance to better align transport policies

The BSR TransGovernance project aims to demonstrate how multi-level governance models, tools and approaches can contribute to a better alignment of transport policies in the Baltic Sea Region at various administrative levels and better incorporation of the business perspective.



# BSR TransGovernance

## Theory

### Basic understanding of multi-level governance

Governance in society has changed from a hierarchical one, with regulations and administrative policy instruments, to a more horizontally defined, characterised by cooperation and negotiation between stakeholders. Political institutions have become more dependent on other societal actors (firms, households, interest organisations) and international organisations. Central policies are no longer done in isolation; several autonomous initiatives are implemented at the regional and municipal level (e.g. greening of city logistics, mobility management, development of alternative fuels) and they are to various degree connected to policies at national and EU levels. Also, the responsibility for the design and implementation of policy measures is increasingly delegated to other levels, both upwards (e.g. the EU), downwards (regions, municipalities) and outwards (market, civil society).

The decision-making process itself is crucial for the implementation of programmes and measures of various kinds. They may come in effect of joint projects involving partners with different decision-making powers. Multi-level governance is a way to improve the decision-making.

The concept has two dimensions, the **'vertical' dimension** means an interaction between the different levels, namely EU, state, region and municipality, in some cases also sub-regional and sub-municipal level, in other words - the ones that have a decision-making power (governing). Since the different levels may be directly involved in the implementation of the decisions, they

ought to participate in the decision-making process. However, they should also be invited for collaboration. Here, states differ in the degree to which they allow sub-national levels to participate in decision-making.

The other dimension, named **'horizontal'**, refers to cooperation arrangements between entities at the same governance level and includes also so called non-governmental organisations. The decision-making capacity is in that dimension weaker.

Both dimensions can be combined and evolve into various network forms. The emerged networks may aspire to take independent decisions but also may serve the leading actor to gather sufficient knowledge before making a decision. However, sometimes the networks can become efficient and focused on the members' interests rather than on more general policy interests.

Multi-level governance is - in the opinion of many researchers - an approach to utilise the potential of hierarchical, market and network governance by bringing a mixture of reasoning, knowledge, responsibility, awareness, engagement and action. It has to look into the future in contrast to conventional systems where - due to their focus on institutions and regulations - the 'sudden change' and the unforeseen impact are frequently excluded.

## The Project

### Challenges of multi-level governance in the Baltic Sea Region

The BSR TransGovernance project is built on the experience of past cooperation at the macroregional, mesoregional (cross-border) and corridor level, and stands as a direct follow-up to the projects of TransBaltic, EWTC II and Scandria that were benchmarked in the 2011 progress report on the EU Baltic Sea Strategy. The project started in 2012 with 23 partners from nine countries. The total project budget is 1.865 MEUR.

In general, the BSR TransGovernance project aims to demonstrate how multi-level governance methods can help better align transport policies in the Baltic Sea Region at various administrative levels and better incorporate the business perspective for the sake of greener and more efficient transport. The project places particular focus on developing and testing joint planning and implementation frameworks for transport policies at such reference scales, which have witnessed a long process of cooperation across the national borders with involvement of public and private stakeholders, and/or which have gathered a vast evidence for multi-level governance actions.

#### These include:

- **MACRO** - related to the overall Baltic Sea Region (BSR) area, including Norway, North-West Russia and Belarus;
- **MESO** - related to cross-border integration areas with high dynamism of passenger and freight flows, also in the transit relation;
- **CORRIDOR** - related to transnational multimodal transport corridors crossing the BSR territory;
- **MICRO** - related to the sites where intermodal terminals have been/are going to be localised.

## In-depth information

### Background and problematic

One of the thematic areas in the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, called Priority Area Transport, addresses a need to 'improve internal and external transport links' and perceives coordination of national transport policies and actions as one of measures to ensure a harmonised transnational development of the transport system.

Strategic processes facilitated by the EU Baltic Sea Strategy have resulted in a number of stakeholder platforms and meeting places to jointly discuss solutions to transport development challenges in the area. Fuller integration of approaches, which would enable better development and alignment of transport policies at various governance tiers, face a number of challenges.

#### These include:

- Lack of mechanisms to translate recommendations from the joint studies (e.g. Baltic Transport Outlook) to the national transport planning procedures;
- Lack of operational concepts how to streamline implementation of the PA 11 with the joint transport planning process of the Northern Dimension (Northern Dimension Partnership on Transport and Logistics) and the EU Eastern Neighbourhood Policy;
- Absence of a joint framework for national, regional and local transport policies in dynamically developing cross-border integration areas;
- No clear schemes how to absorb inputs from the past transnational projects implemented by public and private stakeholders from several countries - in the national transport planning process;

- Lack of mechanisms to embed results of jointly prepared strategic documents (programmes, action plans) in political and administrative structures at all reference scales (transnational corridors, cross-border areas, the whole functional macro-region) to avoid revisiting of the initiatives in effect of new political elections or organisational changes;
- Lack of operational schemes to harmonise transport policies at different governance tiers with business concepts, in order to achieve seamless handling of freight flows in transnational multimodal corridors.

## Project partners

### Region Blekinge - Lead partner

Ronnebygatan 2  
37132 Karlskrona, Sweden  
Contact: Mathias Roos, mathias.roos@regionblekinge.se

Region Skåne, Sweden  
Joint Spatial Planning Department Berlin-Brandenburg, Germany  
LAKES-Lahti Regional Development Company, Finland  
Swedish Transport Administration, Sweden  
East West Transport Corridor Association, Lithuania  
Municipality of Karlshamn, Sweden  
Hanseatic City of Rostock, Germany  
Planning Association Region Rostock, Germany  
Lund University, Sweden  
Self-government of the Warminsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship, Poland  
Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Competence Centre of  
Intermodal Transport and Logistics, Lithuania  
Guldborgsund Municipality, Denmark  
Latvian Transport Development and Education Association  
(LaTDEA), Latvia  
Transport Innovation Network  
(Co Maritime Development Center of Europe), Denmark  
Port of Karlshamn, Sweden  
Klaipeda State Seaport Authority, Lithuania  
City of Helsinki, Finland  
Tallinn Urban Planning Department, Estonia  
JSC "Lithuanian railways", Lithuania  
NetPort.Karlshamn, Sweden  
Foundation Baltic Development Forum, Denmark  
Eastern Norway County Network, Norway

[www.transgovernance.eu](http://www.transgovernance.eu)

