



th CONFERENCE on the Evaluation of EU Cohesion Policy

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Shaping Transitions with Evidence



Impact Evaluation of EU Funds' Investments on the Implementation of the European Union Baltic Sea Region Strategy



Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania

FUNDS COVERED

► ERDF, CF, ESF, JUI

PROGRAMMING PERIODS

► 2007-2013, 2014-2020

PROGRAMMES COVERED

All national and international sources of financing, having contributed to the implementation of the Baltic Sea Region Strategy (BSRS) in Lithuania in the periods of 2007-2013 and 2014-2020, including multiple Lithuanian operational programmes, EU sectoral programmes, bilateral, trilateral and multilateral European Territorial Cooperation programmes, as well as European Economic Area and Norwegian financial mechanisms.

THEMATIC OBJECTIVES

All thematic objectives are covered (excluding TO11)

TYPE OF EVALUATION

► Impact 

YEAR OF COMPLETION

► 2020

MAIN OBJECTIVES

The aim of the evaluation was to determine how EU funds and other sources of financing in Lithuania contributed to the implementation of the European Union BSRS. In order to achieve this aim, three tasks of the evaluation were set:

I. To assess the relevance of the implementation of the BSRS, as well as the sufficiency, coherence and efficiency of financial resources from different sources for achieving objectives of the BSRS

- II. To assess how specific objectives and measures of the priorities under the 2014-2020 Operational Programme for the European Union Funds Investments in Lithuania directly contributed to the implementation of the BSRS and gauge the impact of investments
- III. Propose how to further international cooperation in solving the problems of the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) in the period of 2021-2027.

METHODOLOGY USED

Analysis of documents, secondary sources, monitoring data and publicly available information, analysis of intervention logic, comparative analysis, meta-analysis, expert evaluation, semi-structured interviews and case studies.

DATA SOURCES

Documents, evaluations and studies, monitoring data, publicly available information, representatives of national institutions in charge of coordinating the implementation of the BSRS and implementing various investment programmes in Lithuania.

MAIN FINDINGS

The evaluation revealed that during 2009-2020, actions relevant to the BSRS in Lithuania were financed from at least 41 different funding sources. Lithuanian project implementers, alone or with foreign partners, participated in more than 2.7 thousand projects that contributed to the implementation of the BSRS, the total financial volume of which exceeded 5.6 billion EUR. From a financial perspective, the projects implemented in Lithuania contributed the most to the achievement of the Strategy's goals in the fields of transport, aquatic environment and energy. However, more active regional cooperation was observed in the bio-economy and

innovation projects, which more often involved intentional partnership among BSR countries, specifically aimed at the development of the BSR. The added value of the BSRS, as a platform for promoting cooperation at macro-regional level, in the BSRS policy areas of civil protection, culture, tourism and education is low, in the fields of environment, transport and energy - medium, while in the areas of bio-economy and innovation - high. More than a quarter of investments that contributed to the implementation of the BSRS also contributed to the goals of climate change mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

CONCLUSIONS

Relevant projects in the BSRS contributed to the implementation of the Strategy mostly incidentally and indirectly, but created various benefits for different sectors of the Lithuanian economy and groups of society. In the absence of a funding source specifically linked to the BSRS, the political focus on the implementation of the BSRS in Lithuania is low - the Strategy is usually considered as existing "only on paper" and the implementation coordination system in the country is insufficiently effective. BSRS added value in investment planning and implementation in Lithuania is quite low.

