EU Macro-regional Strategies:
A New Mode of European Governance?

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What is Macro-regionalization?

- **Macro-regions**
  - cover a **number of administrative regions** but with sufficient **issues in common** to justify a single strategic approach (European Commission 2009)
- **Macro-regionalization**
  - aims at the building of **functional** and **transnational** regions, including **subnational** authorities, of EU **member and partner countries**
- **Recent development:** Baltic Sea Region; Danube, Adriatic Sea, North Sea, Alpine Region

Drivers for Macro-regionalization

- Increasing *heterogeneity* of EU member states
- Governance of *common pool resources* (regional seas and river systems) requires cooperation at macro-regional scale
- *Common* historical and cultural *roots* (Hanse, Habsburg/Austro-Hungarian Empire)
- *Territorial cooperation* (Article 174 Lisbon Treaty); EU Structural Policy
- → *Need for macro-regionalization*

Characteristics of Macro-regionalization

1. From **nation-states** to **macro-regional** clusters comprising for example regional seas and river systems (water systems; bio-regions)

2. From **territorial** to **functional regions**; macro-regions may overlap (from MLG I to MLG II)

3. *Internal* plus *external* dimension of European integration

4. *Transnational* dimension, territorial cooperation as transnational cooperation, INTERREG

5. *Subnational* dimension; cities, micro-regions, stakeholders, citizens

Theoretical Approaches

- Macro-regionalization and *differentiated integration* (not nation-state oriented)

- Macro-regionalization and *regional innovation* (transregional learning within and among macro-regions)

- Macro-regionalization and *re-scaling* (between EU and member state)

- Macro-regionalization and *multi-level governance* (from territorial to functional regions)

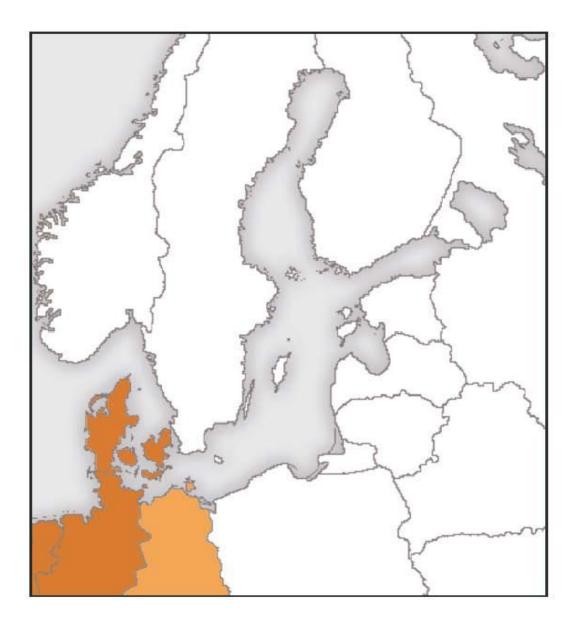# Macro-regionalization: from territorial to functional regions

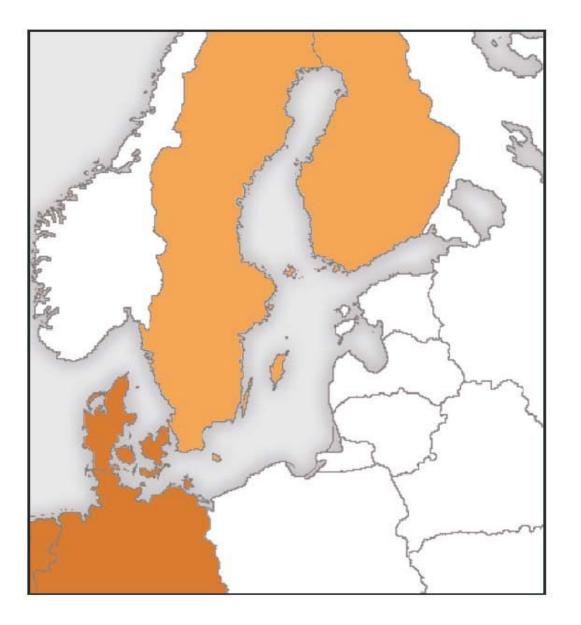| Types of Regions	Territorial regions	Functional regions
Types of Spaces	- Territorial spaces - Defined by political and administrative territories	- Functional spaces - Defined by functional relationships
Boundaries	- Distinct and stable boundaries - Shift of competencies between levels (devolution, decentralization)	- Flexible, shifting territorial boundaries - May differ from territorial boundaries - Intersecting memberships
Tasks	- Multi-functional institutions - Tasks and responsibilities clearly defined	- Task-specific institutions
Institutional design	- Traditional forms of regional governance	- New forms of regional governance such as public-private partnerships - Regionally integrated networks Inter-municipal and inter-regional cooperation

Founding Members

1952

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Old Member States

New Member States

1973

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Old Member States

New Member States

1990

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Old Member States

New Member States

1995

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Old Member States

New Member States

2004

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The Baltic Sea
Drainage Basin

UNEP
GRID
Arendal

0   600 km

N

POLAND

CZECH REPUBLIC

UKRAINE

Brno

Morava

Thaya

Váh

SLOVAKIA

Chernivitsi

Danube

Lech

Isar

Inn

Augsberg

Munich

Vienna

Bratislava

Budapest

Tisa

Debrecen

Prut

Siret

AUSTRIA

HUNGARY

Buzau

SWITZERLAND

Mura

Marcal

Sio

Somes

Mures

MOLDOVA

Zala

Szeged

Crisul Alb

ROMANIA

Drava

Zagreb

Novi Sad

Galati

CROATIA

Sava

Arges

Ialomita

Braila

ITALY

Olt

Vedea

Bucarest

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

Belgrade

Craiova

Sarajevo

Great Morava

Danube

Drina

SERBIA

Osam

Bla
Se

Adriatic Sea

BULGARIA

Tyrrhenian Sea

MACEDONIA
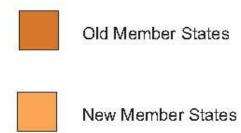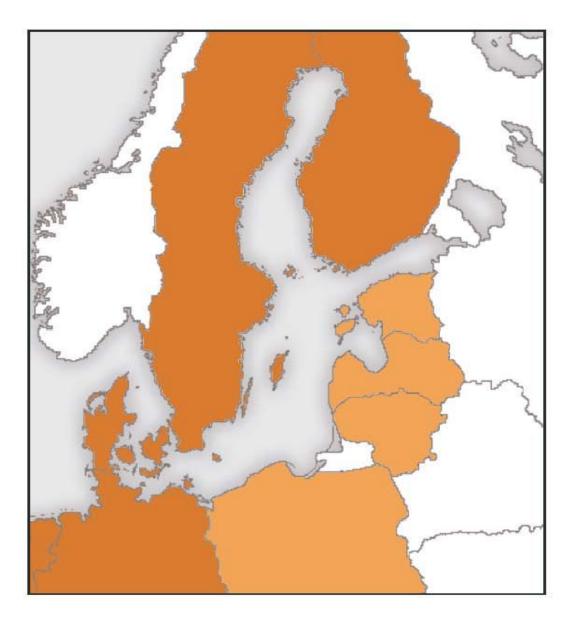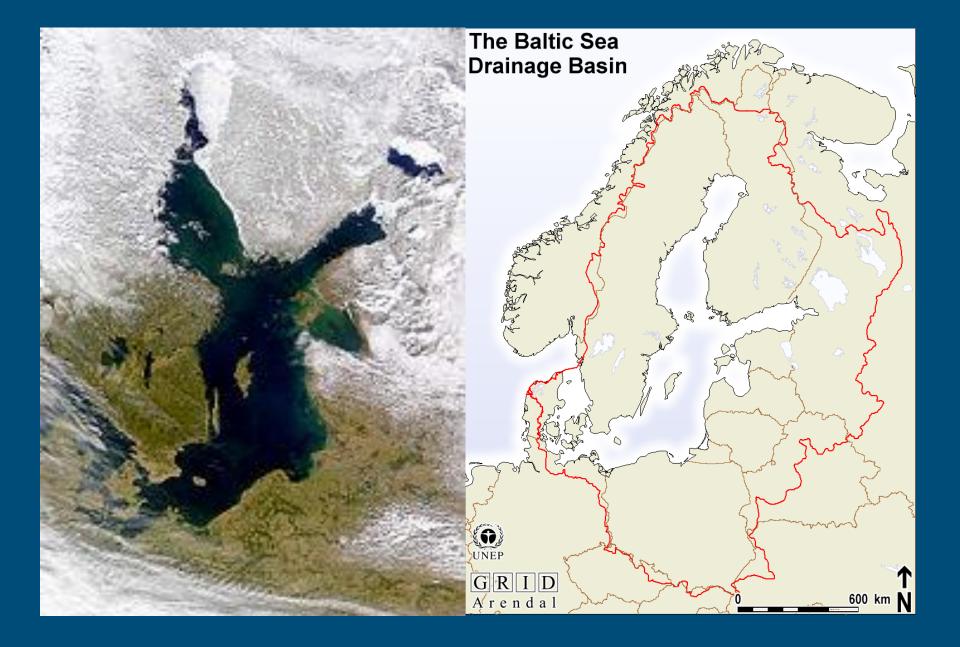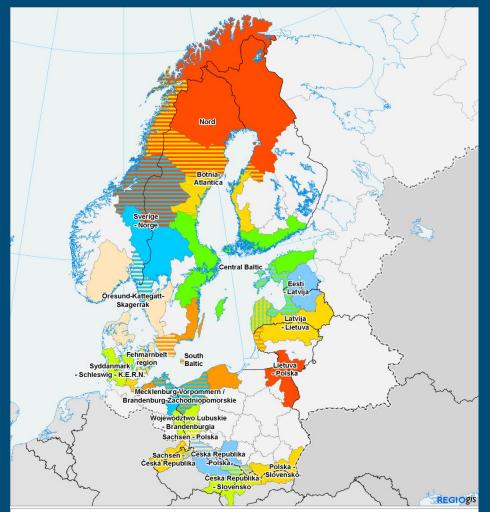
Aegean Sea

About 1,000 miles (1,609 km) a

Structural Funds 2007 - 2013:
Cross-border programmes in Baltic Sea Region

Macro-regionalization in Practice

- ***No new*** legislation, institutions, and financial resources
- Tension between ***Europeanization*** and ***regionalization***
  - Common Fisheries Policies (RACs), Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Water Framework Directive
  - North/South divide
- ***Horizontal interplay/interaction***
  - Triangle: EU legislation (MSFD), macro-regional institutions (such as HELCOM), and macro-regional strategies (EUSBSR)
- ***Vertical interplay/interaction***
  - Sub-nationalization and transnationalization (UBC, BSSSC)

Baltic Sea Strategy and Danube Strategy

	Baltic Sea 2009	Danube 2011
Historical trajectory	- Antagonistic cooperation during Cold War - EU enlargement	- Antagonistic cooperation during Cold War - EU enlargement
Legal and institutional dimension	- Driven by EU Parliament, taken over by EU Commission - HELCOM (environmental cooperation); CBSS	- Driven by EU Commission - Danube Commission (transport)
Policy dimension	- Four pillars: (i) environmental cooperation; (ii) economic development; (iii) infrastructure; (iv) soft security - Action plans and flagship projects - Horizontal actions	- Four pillars: (i) infrastructure and transport; (ii) environmental protection; (iii) economic development; (iv) soft security - Actions plans and flagship projects

Conclusions

Macro-regional strategies

- have direct impacts on the *implementation of EU policies* at macro-regional scale (e.g., Marine Strategy Framework Directive)

- aim at *territorial cooperation;* require an alignment of project funding through the Structural Funds

- aim to improve *horizontal and vertical interplay* among the different *countries, subnational* governments, and *stakeholders* in the macro-region; *not* bound to *nation-state* level, flexible design

- *co-opt* existing *regional institutions* (e.g., Helsinki Convention)

- provide new opportunities for the *transnational* cooperation of *subnational* governments and *non-state actors*

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