



EUSBSR Support

TOWARDS POLICY IMPACT: building capacity together

Excerpts from draft material for future PAC / HAC Manual
(Flagship: Concept and Guidelines)

The EUSBSR Support
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Flagship as a modus operandi: Concept and Guidelines for design

Inputs to Policy Area Coordinators, Horizontal Action Coordinators and Flagship Leaders

FLAGSHIP as a modus operandi in the EUSBSR

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Concept of Flagship

This paper describes the concept of Flagship and can be used as Guidelines for developing flagships, by Policy Area Coordinators and Horizontal Action Coordinators.

”Flagship” as a modus operandi should not be confused with earlier employed ’flagship projects’ (subject to ’labeling’). Whereas the name itself might be debatable and a better name might emerge (e.g. ’creative platform’ has recently come to be used), the essence of Flagship is by now well-defined in the Strategy.¹

What is Flagship and How is it different from projects?

A Flagship is a strategic action born to respond to *a particular macro-regional challenge* for which it *gathers relevant stakeholders* from different levels of governance (and society). Thus, thematic objectives and targets of the Strategy are achieved through *a particular way of collaboration* between them.

Flagships exist both within a single Policy Area/Horizontal Action, or between PAs and/or HAs (which makes the impact even larger and such flagships even more strategic).

Flagships are developmental, collaborative environments / processes that are designed to enact larger policy impact on selected macro-regional issues, within the thematic areas.

In essence, not only do flagships produce larger thematic impact – by design, they change *the HOW* of international collaboration:

¹ *Labeling flagship projects* is an activity still practiced in some Policy Areas; it can still be used in case of stand-alone projects or in contexts where prerequisites for a proper flagship are not obvious/not there yet.

- Flagship is a **home to actors** that seldom (or never) participate in projects but whose participation gears up the impact (e.g. ministries and agencies, civil society actors and business companies...).
- Flagship **does not end** as long as the challenge it targets persists – and it can become a **home to projects and other formats**.
- Flagship **can change course** if the original one has not worked out or the landscape has changed.
- Flagship **can align different forms and sources of funding**, due to its multi-level stakeholder set.
- Flagship, in its culture, is **inclusive, agile and built on voluntary commitment** of various level actors, to the common good.

Similar to transnational projects, Flagships should follow the principles of

- **macro-regional relevance** (the challenge/issue chosen, its origin or/and effect is larger than nation-wide)
- **transnationality** (preferably, all the Strategy's member states should be involved, at some point in time)
- **complementarity of perspectives** (flagships look for as many diverse perspectives on the challenge/issue chosen).

The most significant differences from Project, are that

- flagship *does not have to delimit the scope* of the issue at hand - while projects often have to choose a problem / an aspect of a problem, which effectively delivers a partial solution to the issue
- flagship's outcome and effects are *formulated in terms of policy impact* – while projects often pursue tangible deliverables of more practical character
- flagship produces outcomes of many different sorts, tangible and intangible, that *cannot all be foreseen at the outstart* – while projects aim at delivering pre-defined results
- flagship is not limited to a fixed partnership/competence and *can take onboard any available competence needed for tackling the issue*, at any point in time
- flagship is *not limited in time* and can work as long as the issue is active – while projects are always time-bound

- flagship is designed in a way that *reality-check and dissemination of outcomes happen in real time* – while projects tend to plan evaluation and dissemination as separate activities that often take place post-project
- flagship can be *funded by multiple sources from various governance level* – while projects most often has a single source of funding, not rarely conditioned by political interests.

This is what happens in flagships

- Different-level stakeholders **gather around an issue of macro-regional significance**, that needs to be addressed through cross-sectorial, multi-level collaboration (*such as integration of vulnerable social groups in society*)
- Collectively, they **explore the issue** from their different vantage points, and decide **what impact the flagship is to produce** (in terms of action and policy) that leads to a more systemic solution to the issue. Doing this, they assess **existing policy prerequisites** and **identify policy gaps**.
- They agree on the **working formats and activities**, over time, that allow them to learn from each other's experiences, draw on available resources and – most important - **co-create solutions and policy recommendations** for forwarding the issue to solution.

In each of the Policy Areas of the EUSBSR there might be 1-6 flagships, each has a **Flagship Leader**. The flagships' objectives are coherent with the Action Plan, while their formats, stakeholder sets and concrete activities are flexible enough to allow for emergent issues when they surface.

Flagship seems to be the most strategic of the formats in use. It does take some time to understand their full potential and learn to design and manage them. The Policy Areas which are built on Flagships, become exceedingly more productive and produce a significantly larger impact than projects and even project chains can ever do.

Flagship design

The following elements should be included in the flagship design work:

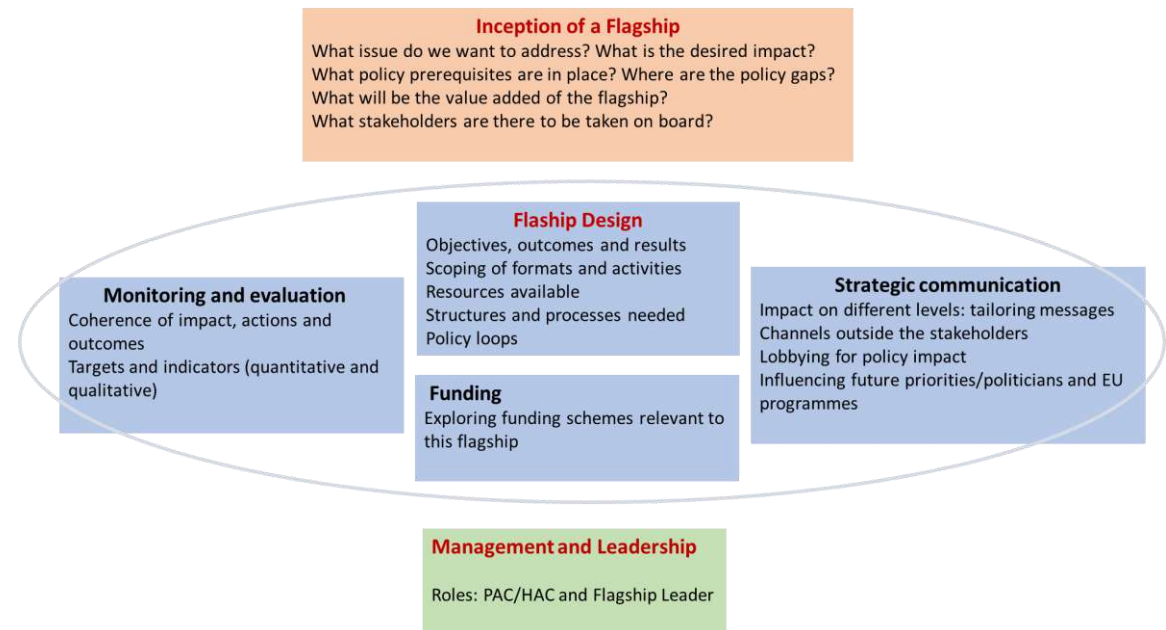
i. Inception: issue, gaps and impact

ii. Flagship design:

- Objectives, outcomes and results
- Stakeholder engagement
- Scope of formats and activities
- Resources
- Structures/processes
- Policy loops
- Monitoring and evaluation: targets and indicators
- Strategic communication
- Funding

Management and leadership roles

- Policy Area Coordinator
- Flagship Leader



The following sections are to guide Policy Area Coordinators and Horizontal Action Coordinators in practical flagship design work. *Facilitated flagship design workshops* are currently offered by the officers of HA Capacity, who are happy to share their experience and assist PACs/HACs when needed.

Please remember that the best flagships are those which are *co-created* by a group of people who represent different perspectives on the issue in question.

Inception of the Flagship

In your multi-perspective group, you might want to explore the questions below. Please always refer to your **PA/HA Action plan**.

Thematic issue

With the base in your Action plan, what thematic issues of macro-regional character call for your attention? Please elaborate on why it calls for a macro-regional response.

e.g. youth unemployment is high in the BSR because of the existing gap between education and labour market. It is 'macro-regional' because (1) the region is economically integrated and we see macro-regional employment patterns; (2) the countries have worked out powerful methods and tools for combatting youth unemployment, and we can learn from each other.

Desired future / when the flagship is enacted

What is the desired impact of your effort? What does the target area look like when the flagship is enacted?

e.g. Youth unemployment is EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS: the stakeholders of various levels collaborate with solutions and policies. Reduced number of early school leavers and youth in NEET-situation ('not in employment, education and training). Young refugees are integrated in shorter time (job, apartment etc). The stakeholders perceive international cooperation as something natural, integrate transnational cooperation in own strategies.

Thematic policy field: state of affairs

What policy prerequisites are in place? Where are policy gaps that impede the desired vision?

e.g. National definition of "people in NEET- situation" differ very much, which leads to that national programmes have different focusm priorities and even culture – it is difficult to agree on the common direction and scope of work and engage national stakeholders.

Stakeholders and contributors. Stakeholder Engagement

The **'right' set of stakeholders on board** is YOUR MOST STRATEGIC WEAPON when you design a flagship - it is that principal feature of flagships that makes them so 'smart' and efficient.

The stakeholder set should include representatives of various levels of governance (national, regional, local) and/or spheres of society (e.g. social partners, NGOs). Getting the right composition will almost automatically give you **several advantages at the same time**:

- You will get the fullest and most realistic picture of the issue you intend to address – the various stakeholders' perspectives work as pieces of puzzle that together build a **systemic understanding of the issue and dynamic at play** (e.g. policy gaps existing at certain levels)
- You get a set of **motivated contributors** each of whom is likely to have **knowledge, approaches, methods and tools** that they use to combat 'their part' of the issue – together they might come **closer to a systemic solution**
- The various stakeholders is likely to have experience of funding thematic activities, or **have access to funding available at their level** – combined, these resources might fund your flagship or some parts of it
- Each of the stakeholders has **own established channels to policy-levels and other decision-making levels**. It enables you to build the so called **'policy loops'** - processes for delivering the flagship outcomes to these levels, along the way.
- Consequently, your flagship's **communication strategy** can easily be built on the stakeholders' natural channels, using their fora, communication strategies and even personnel.
- It will be easier to find a skillful and motivated **Flagship Leader** within this stakeholder set and establish various support processes and motivating implementation culture.

Considering the benefits to be harvested from having serious and internally motivated Stakeholders, the Policy Area Coordinator and the Flagship Leaders should make **stakeholder engagement** one of the mission-critical activities in their work, alongside with **creating and managing flagship processes** as such – in order to channel the stakeholder engagement to **creating tangible results** within the PA/HA. Doing one without the other does not make much sense.

Stakeholder Engagement: Fuel for growth of PA/HA and Key to well-performing Macro-Region

The PA/HA Development Model² uses Stakeholder engagement as the vertical axis that helps to define the Phases of development of a Policy Area/Horizontal Action – the broader the scope of Stakeholders the more opportunities for cross-PA/HA collaboration, the more policy- and funding dialogues, the more societal participation – and ultimately, more cohesion within and between thematic areas, and more collaboration in Europe.

To attract wider stakeholder circles, some flagships introduced **membership-based participation** (free of charge, e.g. flagship School2Work in PA Education, ca 70 members at the moment). The members have various degree of participation/commitment – from active contribution in projects and processes, to information exchange and networking. What keeps them together is the flagship communication environment which allows them to determine the level of their ambition and flexibly move between the actions.

Together with your colleague, explore the following perspectives of **Stakeholder engagement**.

Who’s perspectives are important for defining the issue at hand? Which stakeholders are there to be taken on board the flagship? Please think in terms of multi-level governance and civil society actors, too.

e.g. experts and policy makers, public authorities and organizations, research institutions, private sector actors and social partners (specify, e.g. youth centres, public employment offices...)

² PA/HA Development Model is briefly presented in Appendix A

Initial stakeholder analysis: what are their contribution (resources) and their potential benefits? *Please do for each of the stakeholders – articulating their interests and contributions will enable good work distribution, and help each one ensure commitment of their home organisations. It will also help to balance the different perspectives in the flagship.*

Stakeholder	Their perspective/unique take on the issue / governance level or role in the society	Potential contribution	Potential benefit/expectations
Stakeholder 1			
Stakeholder 2			
Stakeholder 3			
Stakeholder 4			
Stakeholder 5			
Stakeholder 6			

Macro-regional value added of the flagship / Summary of intention and objectives

Reflect on the value added of your future flagship for the thematic work in the region: how the macro-regional perspective would bring value to national/local thematic efforts?

Formulate a brief passage describing the intention and objectives of the flagship.

*e.g. "The flagship 'School to Work' (S2W) consists of three so-called learning platforms. The platforms collect thematic research and analyse good examples (projects/actions/structures) of 'closing the gap'. This knowledge base feeds into **thematic working groups** (main activities in the flagship) where **new methods of closing the gap**, and **multi-level policy recommendations** are produced in **joint transnational development processes**" (S2W, n.d.: 1).*

Designing the Flagship

Activities, Outcomes and Results

Now that you have formulated **the intention/desired impact** and **the objectives** of your flagship (above), make sure they are properly connected to one or more Actions in the PA/HA Action plan.

You can now start planning for delivery. Use the template below to formulate and agree about **formats/activities, outcomes and results** of the flagship. Don't forget that these outcomes and results will not all be very specific and measurable – flagships are not projects, some of them will (and should) be more abstract than others. Having said this, *all of them* should be formulated and planned for – at a later design stage they will all get their own **indicators and targets**.

Consider also the **resources – of all sorts** – that are potentially available to the flagship through the set of stakeholders that will be contributing. At this stage, you might not be able to plan financial resources yet.

Always start with the first column – the vision of the flagship enacted – spend a good amount of time in each column – go back and forth between the columns to ensure coherence of impact, activities, outcomes and results. This will make it much easier to work with indicators and targets, in the next step.

The examples below are from the flagship School2Work (PA Education). Please pay attention **to the guiding questions** in each column.

NAME of Flagship: **School2Work (S2W)**

Target area / issue: **Youth employment: closing the gap between education and labour market**

Brief description: "The flagship 'School to Work' (S2W) consists of three so-called learning platforms. The platforms collect thematic research and analyse good examples (projects/actions/structures) of 'closing the gap'. This knowledge base feeds into **thematic working groups** (main activities in the flagship) where **new methods** of closing the gap, and **multi-level policy recommendations** are produced in **joint transnational development processes**" (S2W, n.d.: 1).

Impact / Effects	Action /Action Plan	Resources/Stakeholders	Activities	Outcomes	Results
What does the target area look like when the flagship is enacted?	Which Action in the Action Plan does this flagship address?	Who can bring about change? Who are the relevant stakeholders for this purpose?	What activities contribute to reaching the desired impact?	Through what means can the added value of flagships manifest?	What tangible/visible/ transferable results are there?
<p>Youth unemployment is EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS: the stakeholders of various levels collaborate with solutions and policies.</p> <p>Reduced number of early school leavers and youth in NEET-situation ('not in employment, education and training).</p> <p>Young refugees are integrated in shorter time (job, apartment etc).</p> <p>The stakeholders perceive international cooperation as natural, integrate transnational cooperation in own strategies.</p> <p>Member organisations have learned to co-create and collaborate on this complex common challenge.</p>	<p>Action 1: Combatting early school leaving and improving transition from education to labour market</p>	<p>Public Employment Services</p> <p>Schools (teachers/ counsellors)</p> <p>Social Insurance Agencies</p> <p>Health care providers</p> <p>NGOs (youth/parental)</p> <p>Social partners</p> <p>Businesses</p> <p>Early school leavers and NEETs</p>	<p>Creating several Thematic Working Groups, for producing action and policy recommendations (recruiting from all 8 countries)</p> <p>Designing structured co-creative processes in TWGs facilitated by process leaders (e.g. 4 co-creative meetings and process in-between, per TWG)</p> <p>Recruiting and training 4-5 process leaders/facilitators for co-creative processes in the TWGs.</p> <p>Regular and ad-hoc policy dialogues with relevant stakeholders (local, regional, national and EU).</p> <p>Facilitated study visits for TWG participants.</p> <p>Support to emerging projects and partnerships that can lead to applications for funding.</p>	<p>Well-performing TWGs, with good mix of perspectives</p> <p>Existing methods are processed and further developed for macro-regional use; new methods created; policy recommendations developed for bridging policy gaps.</p> <p>Study visits organized and learning outcomes are integrated in TWG-production.</p> <p>New ideas developed into projects and submitted.</p>	<p>Policy dialogues took place and policy recommendations were delivered to relevant policy levels</p> <p>Further developed and new methods were documented in a database; methods are implemented in member organisations and/or disseminated to relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Study visits result in improved performance /changes in home organisations' practice.</p> <p>New projects funded and contributing to the flagship.</p> <p>A well-functioning web page is established and serves the needs of S2W; presenting the database of methods, featuring policy recommendations; new members of S2W; ongoing and emerging projects.</p>

Indicators and Targets³

Now that you have scoped the main Activities and formats of the flagship, defined the Outcomes and tangible Results – **setting indicators** should be a pretty straightforward exercise.

As you go through your flagship design, you notice that some of the activities, outcomes and results are **thematic** (WHAT you work with, *e.g. a social issue*) while others have to do with HOW you organise the work on achieving those – **formats and processes** (*e.g. co-creative workshops*). The set of indicators should relate to both types of outcomes.

Here are some examples to guide you, from the S2W-flagship, the content of the table is the same as above, please scroll down for **Possible HOW-indicators**.

Impact / Effects	Action / Action Plan	Resources/Stakeholders	Activities	Outcomes	Results
What does the target area look like when the flagship is enacted?	Which Action in the Action Plan does this flagship address?	Who can bring about change? Who are the relevant stakeholders for this purpose?	What activities contribute to reaching the desired impact?	Through what means can the added value of flagships manifest?	What tangible/visible/ transferable results are there?
<p>Youth unemployment is EVERYBODY’S BUSINESS: the stakeholders of various levels collaborate with solutions and policies.</p> <p>Reduced number of early school leavers and youth in NEET-situation (‘not in employment, education and training).</p>	Action 1: Combatting early school leaving and improving transition from education to labour market	<p>Public Employment Services</p> <p>Schools (teachers/ counsellors)</p> <p>Social Insurance Agencies</p> <p>Health care providers</p> <p>NGOs (youth/parental)</p>	<p>Creating several Thematic Working Groups, for producing action and policy recommendations (recruiting from all 8 countries)</p> <p>Designing structured co-creative processes in TWGs facilitated by process leaders (e.g. 4 co-creative meetings and process in-between, per TWG)</p> <p>Recruiting and training 4-5 process leaders/facilitators for co-creative processes in the TWGs.</p>	<p>Well-performing TWGs, with good mix of perspectives</p> <p>Existing methods are processed and further developed for macro-regional use; new methods created; policy recommendations developed for bridging policy gaps.</p> <p>Study visits organized and learning outcomes are integrated in TWG-production.</p>	<p>Policy dialogues took place and policy recommendations were delivered to relevant policy levels</p> <p>Further developed and new methods were documented in a database; methods are implemented in member organisations and/or disseminated to relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Study visits result in improved performance /changes in home organisations’ practice.</p>

³ This section provides guidance for setting targets and indicators on the level of flagship – **the operative level** of your PA/HA. The set of flagship-level indicators should be seen in a broader context and integrated in the overall Monitorig and Evaluation system of the Policy Area or Horizontal Action in question (the guidance for creating such a system on **the PA/HA strategic level** is suggested in the document “Towards the coherent EUSBSR” that was included in the set of materials for Module 4 of EUSBSR Support; available upon request from HA Capacity). It is the responsibility of the PAC/HAC to ensure the overall coherence and intra-PA integration, while the Flagship leader assumes responsibility for delivering on the flagship level.

<p>Young refugees are integrated in shorter time (job, apartment etc).</p> <p>The stakeholders perceive international cooperation as natural, integrate transnational cooperation in own strategies.</p> <p>Member organisations have learned to co-create and collaborate on this complex common challenge.</p>		<p>Social partners</p> <p>Businesses</p> <p>Early school leavers and NEETs</p>	<p>Regular and ad-hoc policy dialogues with relevant stakeholders (local, regional, national and EU).</p> <p>Facilitated study visits for TWG participants.</p> <p>Support to emerging projects and partnerships that can lead to applications for funding.</p>	<p>New ideas developed into projects and submitted.</p>	<p>New projects funded and contributing to the flagship.</p> <p>A well-functioning web page is established and serves the needs of S2W; presenting the database of methods, featuring policy recommendations; new members of S2W; ongoing and emerging projects.</p>
<p>Possible indicators (TWG-related: HOW)</p>					
Level of Impact / Effect	Action Plan (What/Thematic)	Level of Stakeholders	Level of Activities	Level of Outcomes	Level of Results
<p>Number of TWGs in the flagship</p> <p>Stable performance of TWG (continue producing desired outcomes)</p> <p>TWGs have inherent 'staying power' regardless of funding availability (e.g. participants invest in their travels for physical meetings)</p>	<p>e.g. EU 2020 benchmark on early school leavers</p>	<p>Stakeholders are relevant to the issue</p> <p>Stakeholders represent various levels and/or spheres of society</p> <p>All member states are represented</p> <p>TWG members become members of the flagship</p>	<p>Number of TWGs</p> <p>Process leaders are recruited and trained</p> <p>Number of TWG meetings</p> <p>Policy dialogues take place in all the member states, and level of dialogues</p> <p>Number and quality of facilitated study visits</p> <p>Number of support workshops in the process</p>	<p>Quality assessment of TWG (terms of reference exist)</p> <p>Participants' satisfaction with the level of own engagement and co-creation processes</p> <p>Number of methods processed and co-created</p> <p>Number of policy recommendations</p> <p>Number of project ideas and partnerships generated</p>	<p>Database of methods and practices, regularly updated</p> <p>Policy recommendations are delivered to policy levels</p> <p>Participating organisations report that they use produced outcome for own benefit</p> <p>External dissemination evident in the member states</p> <p>Initiated projects are funded</p> <p>Number of visitors to website</p>

Structures and Processes (part of HOW)

The complexity of flagships lies in that we have **to keep our attention on two perspectives at the same time** – the HOW (*i.e. processes that bring people with various perspectives together for collaboration*) is equally – if not more – important than the WHAT (*i.e. thematic*) aspect of the work.

Flagship is by definition, more complex than a single project. To create a home for different work formats, we have to build a number of structures and processes. Some of them will have more to do with the 'production of outcomes' while others – with management and decision-making.

Most of the processes below are to be performed by joint efforts of the Policy Area Coordinator and the Flagship Leader – skillful Flagship Leaders are definitely a success factor for PA/HA performance. While they take care of 'production' the **PAC/HAC can focus on their primary job - consolidating the PA/HA as such, achieving and communicating the aggregated impact against the Action Plan.**

Processes for producing the outcomes that lead to impact	Processes for management and decision-making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flagship design (collaborative process) • Ensuring funding (or initial funding) • Strategic communication of flagship (flagships within the PA) • Engagement of stakeholders in MLG-perspective • Building the flagship-policy loop (process for delivering the outcomes to the policy level), with help of Policy Area Focal Points as well as the Steering groups and the participating Stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal structures and processes for coordination, prioritisation, organisation between the implementers/stakeholders • Monitoring and Evaluation of the flagship • Process for collective reflection and adjustment of the flagship • Process for integration of the flagships' impact, processes and outcomes into the overall PA/HA-impact • Flagship Leader-related processes (selection, training)

Please think over the processes above, and decide – together with the stakeholder – which of them are important for your collaboration, and how you can make them a part of your flagship work. One of the processes – **Building the flagship-policy loops** – is referred to below.

Building the flagship-policy loops: Policy Area Focal Points (PAFP)

One implementing stakeholder within the EUSBSR is **Policy Area Focal Points (PAFP)**. They exist at the national level and are supposed to be important bridges between the member states and Strategy, in aligning policy-making that happens in member states with the EUSBSR. Unfortunately, their potential has been under-used by the implementing stakeholders until now. HA Capacity has recently developed a capacity building programme (in four modules) that should bring together Policy Area Focal Points (PAFP), members of steering groups, National Coordinators (NC) and Policy Area Coordinators (PAC). More on that in due time.

Policy Area Focal Points (PAFP) are appointed by the Member States, often a line ministry with a clear purpose of supporting the process of implementation of the EUSBSR, within a certain thematic area of policy work. Thus, it is essential that a PAFP – both as a national institution and an individual – is committed to working for the macro-region, **bridging between the national, regional and local agendas and the macro-regional strategy**.

A Policy Area Focal Point represents a specific Policy Area of the EUSBSR, in the home country. PAFP facilitates the information flow on relevant policies in the home country with the PAC and vice versa, disseminates information on policy proposals and new methods developed in the EUSBSR to relevant actors in the home country. Guided by the principle of Multi-Level Governance (MLG), PAFP connects stakeholders in the home country with the PACs and flagships, and vice versa.

As a liaison in member states for all matters regarding the PA concerned, the Policy Area Focal Point has the following scope of task⁴:

1. Functioning as a focal point for the PA in the home country by:

- a. participating in national coordination regarding the EUSBSR;
- b. providing information on the PA to authorities or the public, whenever requested;
- c. identifying relevant contact persons in the home country for activities and flagships;
- d. assisting PAC to communicate and giving visibility to the policy area/horizontal action;
- e. ensuring that decisions on the policy area/horizontal action are communicated to the relevant stakeholders.

⁴ Source: The EUSBSR Action Plan

2. Liaising regularly with the PAC in order to:

- a. contributes to policy discussion within the policy area concerned;
- b. attend relevant activities, e.g. steering committees, meetings and conferences, of the PA; and ensure continuous EU relevance in areas/actions not exclusively coordinated by Member States;
- c. provide information on activities and projects in the home country of relevance to the policy area/horizontal action;
- d. convey positions to the PA; and ensure they are nationally consolidated among the authorities and stakeholders concerned.

Potentially, the role of the PAFP in facilitating the “policy loops” – *the process for delivering the outcomes to the policy level* – is instrumental.

On the other hand, it should not be the only channel “from flagship to policy” – each Policy Area and every Flagship should make use of THE INTERNAL RESOURCES, such as the Stakeholders and the Steering groups (all of them representing the member states at some level) for bridging the outcomes, in particular, policy recommendations created by flagships, to the political level they have access to.

Your **flagship Stakeholder analysis** should be extended to include the awareness of those levels:

Stakeholder	Access to a political level or other types of decision-makers	How can it be used by the flagship / Policy Area / Horizontal Action?
Stakeholder 1		
Stakeholder 2		
Stakeholder 3		

Funding

The complexity of a flagship in terms of scope of impact and diversity of stakeholders, presents a challenge but also a huge opportunity for funding them.

On the one hand, it is unlikely that a single programme can fund the whole flagship – and alignment of funding from various sources is needed, which implied that a PAC/HAC/Flagship Leader should have good awareness of available EU funds at the various governance levels.

On the other hand – and it is the smartest feature of a flagship – **its financial perspective naturally follows its stakeholder-set**. Each stakeholder tends to have good knowledge of available funding for their ordinary activities or projects, and many of them are quite experienced in obtaining funding. Flagships should surf on this opportunity.

A good exercise for you as a PAC/HAC can be doing **extended Stakeholder analysis** (originally, you did it when scoping the flagship, [see here](#)).

Extended Stakeholder analysis: FUNDING PERSPECTIVE			
Stakeholder	Potential contribution to the flagship	Potentially available funding at the level of the stakeholder	Comment
Stakeholder 1			
Stakeholder 2			
Stakeholder 3			
...			
What can the flagship funding scheme look like?			

Funding considerations

Traditionally, transnational projects in the BSR tend to be funded by ETC programmes (such as Interreg). Now that we are moving towards more complex working formats, *e.g. flagships*, Interreg programmes (relatively small programmes in the EU funding family) become less and less suitable. In terms of allocated funds they amount to about 2,8% of the total EU cohesion budget (which is 32% of the total EU budget). Besides, not all of the EUSBSR thematic objectives are included in the scope of the Interreg programmes.

The lion share of the EU development funds are allocated nationally and regionally, through the **ESIF** (the 'mainstream programmes') such as **ESF, ERDF, EARDF, EMFF**. Sector programmes (such as **Erasmus+, Horizon Europe**) are successfully employed by many thematic actors (such as educational and research institutions).

Several successful experiments are going on where the EUSBSR implementing actors attempt to tap into the mainstream programmes which are designed to tackle more complex, social challenges and apply longer-term approaches. The problem is that the mainstream programmes funds are allocated nationally and have very little experience in testing 'internationally bridging' the national funds, despite the provisions made (ESIF Article 70).

It looks like constructive dialogue between the Macro-Regional Strategies and the ESIF programmes has started, and the value of the MRS as strategic frameworks for ensuring cohesion has been acknowledged by the Managing Authorities in all the member states. Now we need to **design and test cooperation and coordination mechanisms**, and also put efforts into increasing the capacity of the Managing Authorities' officers to work with flagship-like processes and not only projects.

In the EUSBSR, thanks to the efforts of some Policy Areas, four formalised networks of Managing Authorities are up and running (for ESF, for ERDF, for EARDF, and for EMFF). Already today, they try to respond to our thematic priorities and coordinate thematic calls. HA Capacity will launch a capacity building programme for two of the networks, this year.

But we do need precedents – real-life strategic initiatives and flagships to test, if we want the mainstream funding become really mainstream for our purposes. We encourage you to consider using the mainstream programmes, take contact with your national Managing Authorities and the MA networks, and discuss cooperation.

The table below briefly summarises the kinds of programmes/funds and other facilities potentially available for funding your flagships or elements of your flagships.

Programme	Can be used for	Potential difficulty	Availability for various stakeholders
Interreg, CBSS, Swedish Institute	Seed funding (Step 1) Inception (scoping) of a flagship, <i>e.g partner search, identifying partnerships</i> Feasibility studies	One needs to plan Step 2 and present the idea already when applying for Step 1	All
ETC programmes (Interreg Transnational/Cross-border)	Design, develop and test the flagship	Max 3 years, they go quickly considering the complexity of the task. Should be framed as, and will be assessed as, a project – which means the partnership is closed/limited. Administration is extensive, workload on partners large which often means people have no time to think more strategically, about Step 3 and beyond.	All
ESIF (ESF, ERDF, EARDF, EMFF)	When you want to involve more partners (incl social partners), consolidate the flagship. Up to 7 years. Scope can be more flexible, to accommodate changes along the way.	Relatively inexperienced in handling international component (Article 70) in practice. The PAC has to actively manage the process until the relationship with the programme has stabilised.	ALL
Sector programmes (Erasmus+, Horizon)	Complement to ESIF for specific actions within flagships (e.g. mobilities, research capacity)		Thematic stakeholders

Please also use this valuable resource (EuroAccess) for exploring your flagship’s potential funding:

<https://www.eurovienna.at/en/EuroAccess-Macro-Regions>

Strategic communication: collaboration between PAC/HAC and Flagship Leaders⁵

It goes without saying that flagship-related communication is **a part of overall Policy Area- / Horizontal Action communication strategy**. What is to be communicated, by whom and to whom?

Flagships are essentially "the workshops" where the thematic outcomes and results are produced - seeing to that is the responsibility of the Flagship Leaders. Aggregating outcomes from all the flagships, analysing them, drawing conclusions on the PA/HA-level, and communicating them is the responsibility of the PAC/HAC.

Policy loops - processes for delivering the outcomes to the policy- and decision-making levels, described above - should exist both *on the flagship-level* (ideally, performed by the flagship stakeholders) and *on the PA/HA-level* (ideally, performed by the members of the Steering group, representatives of the member states).

Policy Area Coordinators and Flagship Leaders should agree on *what, how, to whom, and when* they should communicate their work, and stay in regular dialogue with each other. Maintaining the dialogue help **both parties do a good job:**

- the PAC will always know what is happening in their area and can present the outcomes to the national-level coordinators (such as the National Coordinators),
- the Flagship Leaders will be informed of the overall development of the Policy Area and possibly, emerging issues outside the flagship that could be used as input to the flagship's processes and performance.

Here are some suggestions around what should be communicated, to whom, and by whom, that you could discuss with your Steering groups and Flagship Leaders – and arrive at your **PA/Flagship communication strategy**.

⁵ This section builds further on the theme of strategic communication of Macro-Regional Strategies, presented earlier (in Module 4) in the document "On the way to coherent EUSBSR: Inputs for the management and evaluation of Policy Areas and Horizontal Actions" available from HA Capacity (as well as in the EUSBSR Support Dropbox)

What should be communicated	Possible message/content	To whom, by whom
Impact, outcomes and results of the flagships	EUSBSR adds value to other forms of international cooperation: WHAT is achieved through the strategy/by PA/HA/Flagships	European institutions National political/governance levels Financers/investors Civil society General public <i>(through the stakeholders and their natural channels, through national Policy Area Focal Points, also through arranged thematic fora)</i>
Flagships as a modus operandi platforms that gather stakeholders for co-creation of solutions to our common issues	HOW the results are produced: Innovation in bringing actors on the ground into collaborative actions AND policy work, emerging new narrative: from "ensuring compliance and coordination between national institutions" to "citizen involvement, and peer-based, multilevel co-creation and collaboration for policy and action".	National political/governance levels Financers/investors Civil society organisations General public
Need of political support to macro-regional collaboration around our common issues	Message to the policy- and decision-making levels (macro-regional, national, regional, local): political support is crucial for us to succeed, get involved, join.	Politicians of various levels <i>(ideally, through the stakeholders and their natural channels, also through arranged policy dialogues)</i>
Stories of the flagship stakeholders, participants and witnesses of impact on the ground	Participants describe their co-creation experiences (co-creating policy with other stakeholders can be a unique experience for an individual or an organisation previously not involved in policy creation), how they implement outcomes at their different levels, what they reflect on when thinking of Europe today.	European institutions National political/governance levels Financers/investors Civil society organisations General public
Funding should and can be aligned for combatting larger issues	Flagships are good ways to align funding available on various levels, and thus increasing the aggregated impact of the investments	European institutions National political/governance levels Financers/investors

Management and Leadership Roles ⁶

The primary job of the PAC and HAC is that of **COORDINATING the outcomes and impact of the various working formats** employed within the Policy Area/ Horizontal Action – and **DELIVERING the aggregated information** (a) internally: to the National Coordinators, and (b) externally: to bodies and organisations of the political level that are engaged in the thematic work. Running flagships is the job of **the Flagship Leader**.

Quite often, before an initiative or a project becomes a flagship, the **PAC/HAC should take a lead in design work**. Parallel to that, the PAC/HAC (with strong support of the Steering Group) looks for a proper Flagship Leader, who can take over and assume responsibility for the flagship in question. The quicker you find a Flagship Leader the sooner you leave this operational space and go over to coordination.

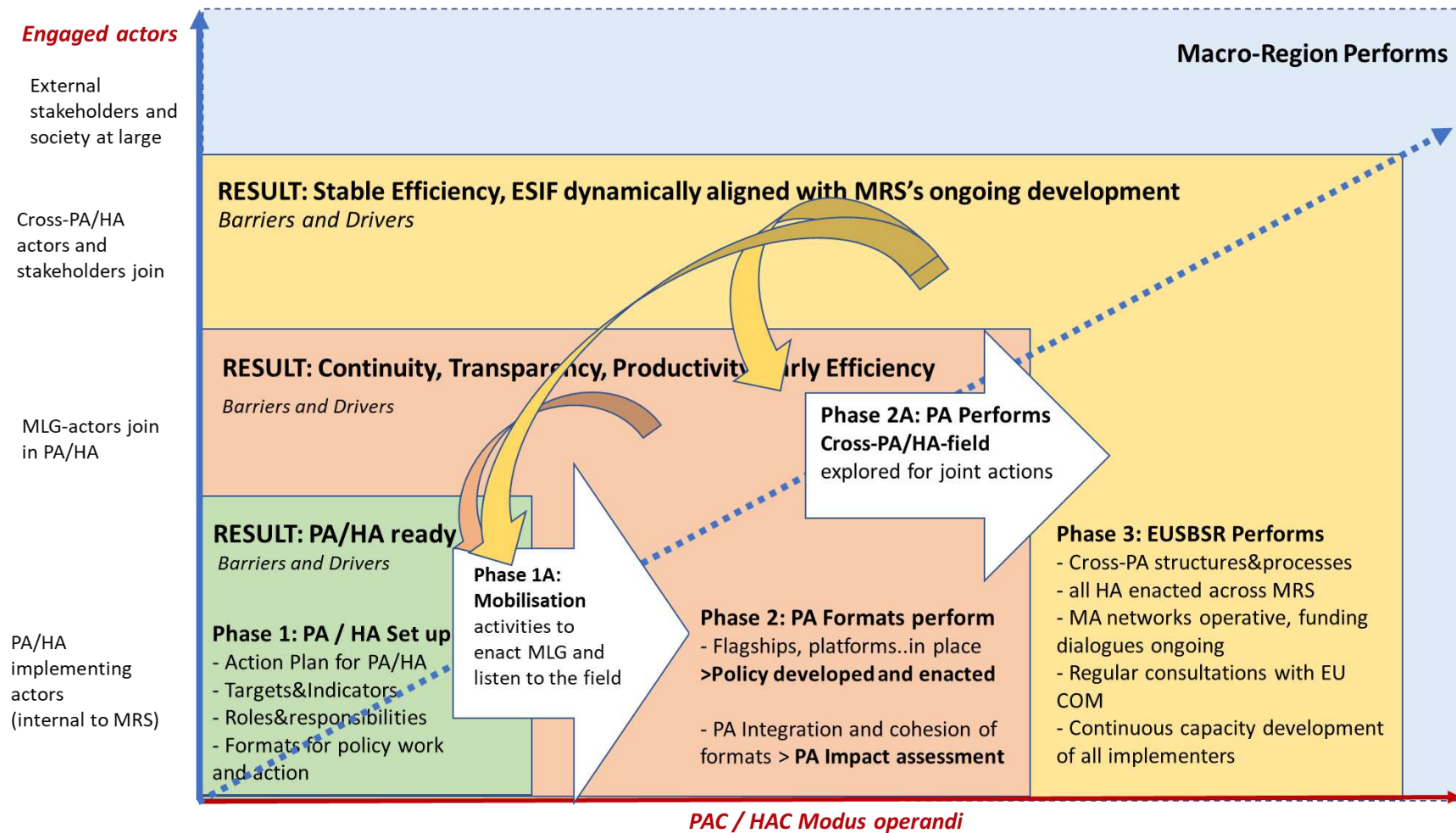
If your Policy Area or Horizontal Action is properly set (in other words, the work in *Phase 1/Setting up the PA/HA* is done), you should have a pretty good idea of how many flagships there are, how mature they are, what other formats are used. The Flagship Leaders become your team, and **your task is now to manage the team**.

The approximate scope of the PAC's management task, in relation to the flagships, is as follows:

- ensure that the flagships are monitored and evaluated, according to their plans, which enables you to include the data in your own, PA/HA-level monitoring and evaluation work
- set up a process through which outcomes and flagship impact are brought together, aggregated, analysed – and necessary adjustments are made to the flagships where needed, with reference to the Action Plan
- set up channels for delivering the outcomes/impact to the political level in the MLG-perspective, in collaboration with Policy Area Focal Point (where they exist) and the National Coordinators
- set up a system of strategic communication of the outcomes/impact – the function that you share with the Flagship Leaders who do it on the flagship level.

⁶ Tentative descriptions of the roles (the PAC, the HAC and the Flagship Leader) is enclosed in Appendices B, C and D to this document

Appendix A: PA / HA Development Model⁷



⁷ Adapted for PA/HA in the EUSBSR from COWI-report of the Study on Macro-Regional Strategies and their links with Cohesion Policy, 2017

Appendix B. Policy Area Coordinator (PAC) / Thematic coordinator: capacity needed for performance

Policy Area coordinators are appointed by the Member State, with a clear purpose of supporting the process of macro-regional implementation of the MRS, within a certain thematic area of policy work. Thus, it is essential that a PAC – *both as a national institution and an individual* – is committed to working **for, and on behalf of, the entire macro-region** rather than for a national agenda.

PAC's primary operational environment is a system of several interacting stakeholders/actors:

- national Policy Area Focal points in all the Member States,
- National Coordination body in the home country, and more remotely, the NC Group,
- Flagship leaders within the Policy Area,
- The Steering Committee/Steering Group of the Policy Area in question.

The Policy Area Coordinator is the executive in charge of the implementation of **the EUSBSR's Objectives and Sub-Objectives**, through the Policy Area's activity. Guided by the principle of **Multi-Level Governance (MLG)**, PAC facilitates the involvement of, and cooperation among, relevant stakeholders from the entire macro-region, in thematic, cross-level and cross-disciplinary **formats** (*such as flagships, project chains, collaboration platforms/thematic working groups etc*).

The activity within each Policy Area is guided by the corresponding section **of the Action Plan**. The PA Action plan is put together in a joint effort of the Steering Committee/Steering Group and the PAC.

The PA Action plan provides both **strategic guidance** for the PA-development, and '**Actions**' **targeting desired policy impact** in the chosen areas. The Actions should be supported by one or several **implementation formats**, and **measurable targets and indicators** (*both tangible and intangible, both thematic and process-related*) should be designed for each of them. All targets and indicators should keep coherence to the overall objectives of the PA in question, and with the EUSBSR's Objectives/Sub-Objectives.

More specifically, the Policy Area Coordinator is in charge of

1. Implementing and following-up the Policy Area towards targets and indicators defined. Whenever relevant, reviewing the set indicators and targets.
2. Reviewing regularly the relevance of the Policy Area as described in the Action Plan. Proposing necessary updates, including the addition, modification or deletion of actions and flagships, to the European Commission.

3. Facilitating policy discussions in the Baltic Sea region regarding the policy area concerned.
4. Facilitating the development and implementation of actions and flagships defined under the policy area.
5. Conveying the relevant results and recommendations of on-going and completed flagships to the policy level.
6. Ensuring communication and visibility of the policy area.
7. Maintaining a dialogue with bodies in charge of implementing programmes/financial instruments on alignment of funding for implementation of the Policy Area and flagships.
8. Liaising and cooperating with other Policy Area Coordinators and Horizontal Action Coordinators in order to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of work on the EUSBSR implementation.
9. Monitoring progress within the Policy Area and reporting on it.

Policy Area Coordinator: capacity needed to perform the role

PAC strategic capacity

PAC is to be seen as both an institution and an individual, and attention is to be given to development of capacity of both. Some Policy Areas are built on existing institutions with established international / macro-regional cooperation practice, and even EU-level regulations/international agreements⁸. Other Policy Areas have no such prerequisites, and a basic institutional collaboration structure and strategic priorities have to be built before such a PA can deliver on policy impact⁹.

Strategic capacity within the Policy Area should be informed by seeing the MRS as a complex, interconnected, evolving system, and being aware of **the value added** that the PA in question brings to the implementation. It is therefore crucial that the Policy Area is 'properly set' in its initial phase (by joint efforts of

⁸ Referred to as 'brownfield Policy Areas' within the EUSBSR

⁹ Referred to as 'greenfield Policy Areas' within the EUSBSR

PA Steering Committee/Steering Group and the PAC)¹⁰. Provided this is done – objectives/goals are set, roles committed to, formats agreed, target and indicators set - the PAC's leadership can be focused on the **operational actions, results and outcomes**.

PAC operational capacity / Modus Operandi

Staying conscious of the strategic direction of the Policy Area, the PAC targets their effort to finding high-leverage formats for achieving the desired policy impact. In the EUSBSR, it is '**flagships**' – thematic, policy impact-driven collaboration environments/processes, homes of projects, collaboration/learning platforms, thematic working groups, policy dialogues etc. Such flagships can be developed for any Action defined in the PA Action plan; there could be one or several of them within an Action, and each has its set of targets and indicators. Each flagship is led by a Flagship Leader.

- PAC drives the execution of the PA Action plan through supporting flagship leaders, aggregating the impact of the flagships, analyse and communicate progress or lack thereof.
- PAC drives the development of the Policy Area as such, by mobilizing external actors (with MLG as the guiding principle), channels them to existing flagships/processes, initiates new formats/flagships.
- PAC keeps a broader EUSBSR perspective by interacting with other Policy Areas and Horizontal Actions, and other actors (including Managing Authorities of funding programmes), seeking synergy and broader impact.

To support PACS in their role, the EUSBSR Support¹¹ developed a generic **Monitoring Framework for Policy Area work** which helps them maintain attention on both strategic and operational aspects, and practically set targets and indicators of various types.

¹⁰ Three phases of development of a Policy Area are described in the PA Development Model that has emerged within the EUSBSR, inspired by the "Study on macro-regional strategies and their links with cohesion policy" commissioned by EU DG Regio, delivered November 2017

¹¹ EUSBSR Support is an ongoing capacity building programme for Policy Area Coordinators and Horizontal Action Coordinators

Appendix C. Horizontal Action Coordinator (HAC): capacity needed for performance

Horizontal Action Coordinators – as institutions - are appointed by the Member States, with a purpose of supporting the implementation of the MRS. Certain thematic areas are selected by the Strategy as **“horizontal”**, i.e. having potential to cut through the 13 Policy Area actions, as well as through the other Horizontal Actions – thus ensuring consistency of these actions along the horizontal theme in question.

Thus, a Horizontal Action supports the Strategy in two perspectives:

1. **Externally:** Creating awareness in the Member States, of the importance and ubiquity of the horizontal theme in question, as well as of macro-regional collaboration for reaching cohesive approaches
2. **Internally:** Bringing the horizontal theme in question into the planning and implementation of the HA/HA Actions through flagships and other formats.

By the nature of the task, a HAC – *both as an institution and an individual* – is committed to working **for, and on behalf of, the entire macro-region** and has no agenda on a specific national level.

Within the EUSBSR, the four Horizontal Actions (HA) are

- HA Capacity: Capacity building and involvement
- HA Climate
- HA Neighbours: Creating added value to the Baltic Sea cooperation by working with neighbouring countries and regions
- HA Spatial planning: Encouraging the use of maritime and land-based spatial planning in the macro-region and developing common approaches for cross-border cooperation.

The dual nature of a HA has implications on its Modus Operandi, and consequently on its Targets and Indicators. It is therefore essential that a Horizontal Action is set up in an intelligent way that intrinsically connects the two types of activities, where they create synergy. It is essential that a HA creates a **Steering Group that brings together representatives of both “external” and “internal” (to the EUSBSR) stakeholders.**

HAC’s operational environment – within the EUSBSR - is a system of several interacting stakeholders/actors:

- national Horizontal Action Focal points in all the Member States,
- Horizontal Action Coordinators (HACs) and other Horizontal Action Coordinators,
- the NC Group
- The Steering Group of the Horizontal Action in question.

- (optional, or at a later stage) Flagship leaders within the Horizontal Action in question.

The activity within each Horizontal Action is guided by the corresponding section **of the Action Plan**. The HA Action plan is put together in a joint effort of the Steering Group and the HAC.

The HA Action plan provides both **strategic guidance** for the HA-development, and **'Actions' targeting desired outcomes** in the chosen areas. The Actions should be supported by one or several **implementation formats**, and **measurable targets and indicators** (*both tangible and intangible, both thematic and process-related*) should be designed for each of them. All targets and indicators should keep coherence to the overall objectives of the HA in question, and with the EUSBSR's Objectives/Sub-Objectives.

More specifically, the Horizontal Action Coordinator is in charge of

1. Implementing and following-up the Horizontal Action towards targets and indicators defined. Whenever relevant, reviewing the set indicators and targets.
2. Reviewing regularly the relevance of the Horizontal Actions described in the Action Plan. Proposing necessary updates, including the addition, modification or deletion of actions and flagships, to the European Commission.
3. Facilitating policy discussions in the Baltic Sea region regarding the Horizontal Action concerned.
4. Facilitating the development and implementation of actions (initiatives, projects, flagships etc) planned.
5. Conveying the relevant results and recommendations of on-going and completed initiatives to the policy level.
6. Ensuring communication and visibility of the horizontal action.
7. Maintaining a dialogue with bodies in charge of implementing programmes/financial instruments on alignment of funding for implementation of the Horizontal Action.
8. Liaising and cooperating with Policy Area Coordinators and other Horizontal Action Coordinators in order to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of work on the EUSBSR implementation.
9. Monitoring progress within the Horizontal Action and reporting on it.

Horizontal Action Coordinator: capacity needed to perform the role HAC strategic capacity

HAC is to be seen as both an institution and an individual, and attention is to be given to development of capacity of both. Strategic capacity within the Horizontal Action should be informed by seeing the MRS as a complex, interconnected, evolving system, and being aware of **the value added** that the HA in

question brings to the implementation. It is therefore crucial that the Horizontal Action is 'properly set' in its initial phase (by joint efforts of HA Steering Group and the HAC, and possibly with assistance of HA Capacity)¹². Provided this is done – objectives/goals are set, roles committed to, formats agreed, target and indicators set - the HAC's leadership can be focused on the **operational actions, results and outcomes**.

HAC operational capacity / Modus Operandi

Keeping in mind the dual purpose of Horizontal Actions within the EUSBSR, the HACs should be mindful in their choice of formats and activities – to be able to **create value in both "external" and "internal" dimensions**. The Horizontal Actions that are built around existing institutions/international networks/frameworks (*such as HA Spatial Planning*) seem to give more attention to the "external" dimension (which makes them resemble a Policy Area). Others, such as HA Capacity and Involvement, currently gives more attention to the "internal" dimension and works mostly for strengthening implementation capacity of Policy Areas.

The HA Modus Operandi should combine the tasks – it is suggested that **"keeping the two dimensions"** should become **an intention and a strategic criterion** to be applied for planning Actions and activities of the HA.

Horizontal Actions can initiate or participate in projects/project chains, create flagships, thematic working groups etc, initiated by PACs and other HACs – resulting in

- thematic impact (both theme awareness and thematic policy impact),
- broadening the scope, outreach and performance of the EUSBSR (through inter-PA/HA formats) and the performance of the BSR as a whole.

Seen in this way, Horizontal Actions can give extra leverage to all Policy Areas and the EUSBSR as a whole, in development in Phases 2 and 3¹³.

To support PACs and HACs in their role, the EUSBSR Support¹⁴ developed a generic **Monitoring Framework for Policy Area/Horizontal Action work** which helps them maintain attention on both strategic and operational aspects, and practically set targets and indicators of various types.

¹² Three phases of development of a Horizontal Action are described in the PA/HA Development Model that has emerged within the EUSBSR, inspired by the "Study on macro-regional strategies and their links with cohesion policy" commissioned by EU DG Regio, delivered November 2017

¹³ Referring to "Study on macro-regional strategies and their links with cohesion policy" commissioned by EU DG Regio, delivered November 2017

¹⁴ EUSBSR Support is an ongoing capacity building programme for Policy Area Coordinators and Horizontal Action Coordinators

Appendix D: Flagship leader (FL): capacity needed for performance

Flagship leaders are appointed by the Policy Area Coordinators, while the flagship themselves are adopted by the group of National Coordinators. Such flagships can be developed for any Action defined in the PA Action plan; there could be one or several of them within an Action, and each has its set of stakeholders, targets and indicators. Each flagship is led by a Flagship Leader.

The role of the Flagship Leader is to manage the flagship as *a joint transnational development environment/process* that targets a chosen macro-regional issue/concern. Flagship Leaders are 'operational' in supporting the implementation of the EUSBSR, within a certain thematic area of policy work, while Policy Area Coordinators manage the PA as a whole thus being more 'strategic'.

It is essential that a FL – *both as an institution and an individual* – is committed to working **for, and on behalf of, the entire macro-region** rather than for the home institution's agenda.

FL's primary operational environment is a system of several interacting stakeholders/actors:

- Policy Area Coordinators in own PA but if relevant, also in other Pas (if the flagship involves more than one PA).
- Fellow Flagship Leaders in own PA. Together with the PACs, the group of Flagship Leaders form a PA team.
- Policy Area Focal Points/members of PA steering group, for communication of results of flagship and for acquiring inputs from the member states to the flagship.

The Flagship Leader is the executive in charge of the implementation of the flagship. Guided by the principle of **Multi-Level Governance (MLG)**, FL facilitates the involvement of, and cooperation among, relevant stakeholders from the entire macro-region, in thematic, cross-level and cross-disciplinary **formats** within the flagship (*such as project chains, collaboration platforms/thematic working groups etc*).

The activity within each flagship is guided by the corresponding section **of the Action Plan**. The PA Action plan is put together in a joint effort of the Steering Committee/Steering Group and the PAC.

The PA Action plan provides both **strategic guidance** for the flagship-development, and '**Actions**' **targeting desired policy impact** in the chosen areas. The Actions should be supported by one or several **implementation formats/flagships**, and **measurable targets and indicators** (*both tangible and intangible, both thematic and process-related*) should be designed for each of the flagships. All targets and indicators should keep coherence to the overall objectives of the PA in question, and with the EUSBSR's Objectives/Sub-Objectives.

More specifically, the Flagship leaders is in charge of

1. Implementing and following-up the flagship towards targets and indicators defined.
2. Design suitable formats for the implementation such as project chains, collaboration platforms/thematic working groups etc.
3. Identify (ideally, together with the flagship Stakeholders) suitable funding of chosen formats and draft applications/assist in drafting.
4. Work for expansion of the group of engaged stakeholders in the flagship, recruit members to the flagship (for membership-based flagships).
5. Conveying the relevant results and recommendations of on-going and completed results, in cooperation with PAC, to the policy level.
6. Ensuring communication and visibility of the flagship.
7. Liaising and cooperating with other Flagship Leaders and if applicable, other Policy Area Coordinators and Horizontal Action Coordinators in order to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of work on the EUSBSR implementation.
8. Monitoring progress within the flagship and reporting on it.

Flagship leaders: capacity needed to perform the role

FL strategic capacity

FL is to be seen as both an institution and an individual, and attention is to be given to development of capacity of both. Some Flagships operate within PAs built on existing institutions with established international / macro-regional cooperation practice, and even EU-level regulations/international agreements¹⁵. Other flagships have no such prerequisites, and a basic institutional collaboration structure and strategic priorities have to be built before such a flagship can deliver on policy impact¹⁶.

Strategic capacity within the flagship should be informed by seeing the MRS as a complex, interconnected, evolving system, and being aware of **the value added** that the flagship in question brings to the implementation.

FL operational capacity / Modus Operandi

FL drives the development of the flagship, by designing and funding suitable formats and by mobilizing external actors (with MLG as the guiding principle), inviting them to take part in the various formats of implementation and to become members of the flagship.

¹⁵ Referred to as 'brownfield Policy Areas' within the EUSBSR

¹⁶ Referred to as 'greenfield Policy Areas' within the EUSBSR