

Round table - Baltic programme post 2020: Which priorities?

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More than 40 participated and they represented all types of beneficiaries: public sector (state, region, local levels), business and NGO sectors.

The following concrete thematic priorities were proposed, and discussed:

- Social issues and improving the local involvement in areas such as nature protection and in the cultural area
- Rural development, and issues like depopulation
- SME development, with directly involvement of SME's
- Digitalisation
- Education, with activities such as joint study programmes
- Connectivity between the regions

A lot of more general inputs also came to the future programme:

- Focus should be on the future challenges rather than former successes
- Identical ETC programmes regarding priorities should be avoided
- SB programme should become even more userfriendly, i.e. focus on simplification, guidance of potential beneficiaries including in how to get national fundings
- Introduction of a Social Interpersonal Mechanism to ensure more long-lasting relations among stakeholders / beneficiaries
- More room for small investments
- More tangible results and (bigger) strategic projects

The round table started with a question: Will we have a South Baltic programme post 2020 – and the answer from the moderators were: YES, we believe so – referring to the conclusions of the European Council 12th April 2018 about the future Cohesion Policy.

In here the Council STRESSES the European Commission for a continuation not only of CBC type of programmes, but also CBC programmes across the maritime borders. The European Parliament has similar opinion. But of course there is still a good reason to continue lobbying, as no final decisions have been taken yet.

Link: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/04/12/delivery-and-implementation-of-cohesion-policy-post-2020-council-adopts-conclusions/pdf>