

Joint Operational Programme Black Sea Basin 2014-2020

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Spotlight on the Joint Operational Programme Black Sea Basin 2014-2020

A positive lesson of the pandemic is that we can adapt really fast. Programme management structures and beneficiaries had to deal with a new reality. While we have hit pause on most of our face-to-face activities, we quickly adapted to the new reality in all aspects. The biggest challenge we've faced during the lockdown was to learn to communicate, teach, meet and collaborate on virtual platforms. Find out in this issue of our newsletter how our projects continue to work together.

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AgriTradeNet BSB383 meeting original goals and being completed

1st Call for Proposals

On 1st of December 2020, the project *Sustainable Agricultural Trade Network in Black Sea Basin* ended its implementation period.

The work, challenges and results are presented in the interview with the project manager, on the next page.

-  **Lead Beneficiary**
● Traders' Association of Thessaloniki (Greece)
-  **Beneficiary 2**
● Chamber of Commerce and Industry Bourgas (Bulgaria)
-  **Beneficiary 3**
● Galati Foundation for the Promotion of Small and Medium Sized Private Enterprises (Romania)
-  **Beneficiary 4**
● Public Association "Business Advisory Center" (Republic of Moldova)
-  **Beneficiary 5**
● Demirkoy Municipality (Turkey)
-  **Beneficiary 6**
● Institute of Market Problems and Economic & Ecological Research/ National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Ukraine)

Main results



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AgriTradeNet at the end

Interview with Apostolina Tsaltampasi, Project Manager of AgriTradeNet



Q: How can you shortly describe the experience?

A: AgriTradeNet was a great experience for us, because of the nature of the project that brought us close to local agricultural producers from all partner countries, as well as because we had the chance to cooperate with countries outside the EU and expand our target groups' networking.

Q: Which was/were the biggest challenge(s)? How did you manage to overcome it/them?

A: The biggest challenge was clearly the covid-19 outbreak that affected our life and the development of the project as a consequence. We had to delay initially and then to replace some transnational activities for the closing of the project, but we believe that with the "substitute" activities we managed to achieve the original expected results, based on the spirit of transnational cooperation of the project.

Q: Do you consider that the project fulfilled its purpose?

A: Yes, as mentioned above we consider that the project fulfilled its main purpose which was to train and involve local agricultural enterprises into cross-border networking and potential business cooperation. Although some face-to-face events were not possible to be organized because of the travel restrictions, we made use of alternative thinking and of online tools to overcome these difficulties as much as possible.

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Q: Please shortly introduce the aim of the Producers database developed within the project and its dynamic.

A: *The Producers' Database which is freely accessible through the project's official website is an example of alternative thinking, because initially it was not planned to be that large based on the application. However, we built it, organized it with information, photos and other business contact details from local producers in each country, and disseminated it widely into our events, newsletters, etc. especially after the covid-19 restrictions, as a means to achieve increased visibility of the local products and cross-border cooperation between importers and exporters. We believe that the dynamic of the platform had been very big during the later part of the project's implementation, but it will be a valuable tool for the follow-up of our project's activities as well.*



Q: Did you create complementarities/synergies with other BSB projects?

A: *Yes, with "Marine and River Litter Elimination New Approach MARLENA" (BSB139) under the environment objective: Demirkoy Municipality will provide a chance to the local producers from Demirkoy for proper registration of their local cooperative and producing the products in line with the local environmental legislation; with the project "Facilitate the trade of agro-food products in the Black Sea Basin (FTAP)" to establish a sustainable partnership in order to encourage the trading of agro & food products in Black Sea Basin; with project "Let's cycle at the Black Sea LetsCYCLE" (BSB 998). Synergy can be seen in cycling routes through places of production of agricultural commodities that are geographically identified.*

Q: Do you consider BSB for funding your further project ideas?

A: *Yes, we will consider the BSB programme to check if we can apply further potential ideas!*



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Black Sea Basin projects in webinars

1st Call for Proposals

Face-to-face events were reshaped and moved on virtual platforms.

7 projects shared their experience

Webinar - Entrepreneurship and Innovation

On 30 June, 2020, TESIM project delivered a webinar dedicated to the thematic analysis of the ENI CBC projects working on 4 clusters of the Economic development sector: Entrepreneurship; Business & SMEs; Skills development and Open innovation.

Two particular field experiences were shared - the role of disruptive information technologies for smart cities thanks to Croboddit project within South-East Finland - Russia CBC Programme; and the relevance of boosted managerial skills of MSES in tourism sector as promoted by the project "For a better SME management CerTour II" (BSB17) funded by ENI CBC Black Sea Basin Programme 2014-2020.

Webinar - Online Workshop Black Sea projects on coastal and maritime tourism, maritime transports, fishery and aquaculture, digitalization. Gaps and opportunities

International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS), Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation BSEC and EU Maritime & Fish (DG MARE) in cooperation with European External Action Service - EEAS, the Balkan and Black Sea Commission of CPMR - Conference of peripheral maritime regions and ENI CBC Black Sea Basin Programme 2014-2020 organized on 2 October 2020, an online workshop for Black Sea projects on coastal and maritime tourism, maritime transports, fishery and aquaculture, digitalization, with the aim to identify opportunities for potential flagship projects in the region. The workshop was organized around 4 thematic sessions during which projects' representatives briefly presented the projects in order to facilitate the further discussions. The Black Sea Basin projects "Joint Cultural Heritage - Source for Development of Entrepreneurship in the Black Sea Basin TREASURE" (BSB371) and "Development of Sustainable Cultural Tourism in the Black Sea Basin CULTOUR-BSB" (BSB117) were presented during the session Coastal and maritime tourism. Project "Improving the existing competences and developing new ones in the aquaculture and fish products trade sector DACIAT" (BSB461) was introduced in the session dedicated to the Fishery and aquaculture.

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Interreg Annual Conference 2020

The conference and thematic workshops went virtual this year.

At the thematic workshop on PO 1 - A Smarter Europe by Promoting Innovative and Smart Economic Transformation, the representative of the lead beneficiary of the Black Sea Basin project "Piloting Modern Trading Opportunities in Agriculture through the Creation of an Innovative Online Platform - AgroNet" (BSB294) shared the project's experience on developing a multi-language online trading platform, www.agrodeals.net, which provides agribusinesses with free access to business links and information vis-à-vis the Black Sea context. The platform provides road mapping information for agribusiness actors on 'what to sell, where to sell, how to sell' and 'what to buy, where to buy, how to buy' as concerns a variety of agricultural goods and services.

The AgroNet project was presented to the Interreg annual event by the ENI CBC Black Sea Programme 2014-2020 as an innovative and successful project.

Sustainability in the Black Sea regional cooperation: Advancing the Black Sea Synergy and the European Green Deal

The event was online on 16 November 2020 by the EEAS and the European Commission. The focus was on the projects supported by EU in the Black Sea region and on developing discussions linked to regional cooperation and to the European Green Deal elements.

The objective of the event was to enrich the visibility for EU support to actions of regional cooperation, particularly related to Green Deal elements.

During the event, the third session was dedicated to cross-border cooperation in connection with the Danube and was moderated and coordinated by DG REGIO. The representatives from two Black Sea Basin projects were invited to present their projects. While the representative of "Waste Free Rivers for a Clean Black Sea MWM-GMR" (BSB457) focused during its presentation on the lessons learned from previous project and on the cross border cooperation aspect of the programme/project, the representative of the "Improved online public access to environmental monitoring data and data tools for the Black Sea Basin supporting cooperation in the reduction of marine litter MARLITER" (BSB138) focussed on the project synergies with the Danube Strategy.



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Black Sea Basin community

2nd Call for Proposals

The programme is moving forward and for 30 projects from the second Call for proposals Grant contracts have been signed, with a total value of 26.5 million euro, 24.4 million euro from ENI funds.

Now the Black Sea Basin community reached 54 projects. The last two projects are expected to be signed in the first part of next year.

The list with the awarded projects is published on the programme website: www.blacksea-cbc.net.



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What's NEXT?

Interreg NEXT Black Sea Basin Programme 2021-2027

Regarding the preparation of the next programming period, the following important steps were taken in 2020:

- finalization of the Joint Programming Committee's set up and its first meeting held in January 2020, where Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration from Romania was reconfirmed as Managing Authority;
- collecting and analysis of statistical data necessary to substantiate the Territorial Analysis during February-September 2020;
- elaboration of the first draft of the Territorial Analysis during September-October 2020;
- confirmation of the geography of the programme during September-October 2020;
- second meeting of the Joint Programming Committee held in December 2020, when agreed to start consultations with stakeholders in the participating countries in January 2021 on the first draft of the Territorial Analysis of the eligible area of the programme, while the final version of the Territorial Analysis expected to be approved at the next meeting of the Joint Programming Committee.

New section open on the programme website: [Interreg NEXT BSB!](#)



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Best Wishes for a Joyful
Holiday Season!

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Joint Technical Secretariat
of Joint Operational Programme Black Sea Basin 2014-2020

December 2020

Joint Operational Programme Black Sea Basin 2014-2020 is co-financed by the European Union through the European Neighbourhood Instrument and the participating countries:

Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine.

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