



## **Contribution of the Atlantic Transnational Network to the Atlantic Macro-Region project**

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### **Table of contents**

1.	Introduction .....	2
1.1	Context .....	2
1.2	Objectives of the contribution.....	2
2.	Towards the creation of an Atlantic Macro-Region .....	3
2.1	Key elements for the creation of an Atlantic Macro-Region .....	3
2.2	Common challenges and objectives .....	4
2.3	Thematic priorities .....	8
2.4	Governance Model .....	9
3.	Conclusion and conditions for success .....	10

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Context

The Atlantic Arc is a transnational geopolitical area facing common economic, social, and environmental challenges and is increasingly becoming a periphery of the EU. This peripheral status of the Atlantic region, due to its location in the west of the European Union, presents a risk. However, paradoxically, it also constitutes an undeniable advantage as a gateway to the Atlantic (United Kingdom, Ireland, America) and Africa, which must be strategically reinforced. The geographical position of the territories bordering the Atlantic should not lead to political, social, and economic marginalization. To avoid such marginalization, the geographical position of the Atlantic seaboard must be promoted as a geopolitical strength and a development opportunity at all levels<sup>1</sup>.

Since 2010, European regional stakeholders of the Atlantic Arc have expressed their willingness to enhance the coordination of their strategies and strengthen cooperation, a goal supported by the Atlantic Transnational Network (ATN). These regions propose to implement this cooperation through the creation of a European macro-regional strategy.

A macro-regional strategy of the EU is a political framework that enables countries and regions within a specific geographical area to address and resolve shared challenges or better leverage their common potential. These countries can benefit from cooperation without adding an extra administrative layer, allowing them to tackle common and shared challenges. Currently, there are four macro-regional strategies in Europe: the Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the Strategy for the Danube Basin, the Strategy for the Alpine Region, and the Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region.

In May 2023, the Atlantic Arc Commission<sup>2</sup>, the political representation body of Atlantic regions at the European level, adopted a political declaration in Cardiff, in which its members renewed their call for the creation of an Atlantic macro-regional strategy.

The Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union proposed a resolution for the establishment of this macro-region, which is currently awaiting approval.

The ATN aligns itself with the Atlantic Arc Commission's call for the creation of an Atlantic macro-region, to which this work seeks to contribute.

## 1.2 Objectives of the contribution

The Atlantic Transnational Network (ATN)<sup>3</sup>, as a representative network of socio-professional stakeholders in the Atlantic area, aims to contribute to the debate on the creation of an Atlantic macro-region. It seeks to express its position on existing proposals put forward by other actors, identify key success factors, and provide new contributions in terms of content and governance. The goal is to establish an inclusive and effective cooperation model that benefits Atlantic territories if such a framework were to be implemented.

Respecting the identity of each territory, this study aims to identify common challenges across the Atlantic seaboard while exploring synergies that could be strengthened through coordination between governments and institutions at different levels. The territories involved may be municipal, regional,

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<sup>1</sup> "Contribution to the EESC in favor of an Atlantic Macro-Region" – Document prepared by the Atlantic Transnational Network (ATN)

<sup>2</sup> <https://cpmr-atlantic.org>

<sup>3</sup> <https://rta-atn.org>

national, or supranational. What matters for a macro-region is the scope of its cooperation, rather than its natural or physical boundaries<sup>4</sup>.

Building on the work and studies of the Atlantic Arc Commission, as well as various macro-regional research initiatives, this contribution seeks to define key priorities and a governance model that meets the expectations of organized civil society while improving the coordination of actions between the European Union and its regions.

## 2. Towards the creation of an Atlantic Macro-Region

For the ATN, the creation of an Atlantic macro-region cannot be conceived without integrating the success conditions outlined in the following sections, in order to ensure that this tool is relevant and efficient.

### 2.1 Key elements for the creation of an Atlantic Macro-Region

**Currently, several independent cooperation frameworks exist in the Atlantic region<sup>5</sup>:**

- Atlantic Maritime Strategy (transnational cooperation between states and the European Commission),
- Atlantic Arc Commission (political cooperation among Atlantic regions, part of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions),
- INTERREG Atlantic Area Program (European funding instrument dedicated to cooperation),
- Atlantic Transnational Network (ATN) and other civil society networks,
- European Network of Atlantic Cities (Atlantic Cities).

In 2022, the European Economic and Social Committee issued an opinion on "The Implementation of EU Macro-Regional Strategies," highlighting that macro-regional strategies (MRS) play a key role in social, territorial, and economic cohesion and contribute to the European integration of neighboring countries. These strategies are based on an intersectoral and multi-level governance approach, with implementation involving the reduction of bureaucratic procedures without creating new bureaucracy, minimizing the distance between the EU and local governance, and ensuring direct involvement of representatives from states and regions.

For the ATN, as expressed in its previous work, the evolution of the Atlantic Strategy towards an Atlantic macro-regional strategy could improve coordination between these different cooperation frameworks, enhance coordination between land and maritime issues, and strengthen the political weight of the strategy through multi-level governance.

**Regarding the relevant scope of this Atlantic macro-regional strategy,** the ATN proposes that it be aligned with the "Atlantic Corridor" and include the following countries and regions:

- Spain: regions along the Atlantic Arc washed by the Cantabrian Sea (Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria, and the Basque Country), as well as Navarre, Castile and León, Extremadura, and Andalusia,
- Portugal: North, Centre, Lisbon, Alentejo, Algarve,
- France: Nouvelle Aquitaine, Pays de la Loire, Normandy, and Brittany,
- Ireland: North-West Regional Assembly,
- United Kingdom: Wales (currently outside the EU),
- Islands: Canary Islands (Spain), Azores and Madeira (Portugal).

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<sup>4</sup> Gonzáles Laxe, Fernando: "El lugar de las Macro-regiones en el marco de la cooperación europea: presente y futuro" - Summer Course Conference on Macro-Regional Strategies: A New Strategic Framework for European Territorial Cooperation – Santander, September 2023.

<sup>5</sup> CESER de l'Atlantique, Atlantic Macro-Region, an opportunity to seize?

The diversity of these territories in terms of geography, culture, economy, society, and politics must be overcome by seeking common elements that allow for integration, cohesion, coordination, collaboration, development, and joint growth through the implementation of a common governance policy. This will require political, institutional, and social commitment, both public and private, across all territories.

**For the ATN, the conditions that must underpin the project for the creation of a macro-region are as follows:**

- The project and strategic plan must be tailored and attractive to encourage voluntary engagement and active participation from stakeholders. In this regard, the risk of competitive logic must be neutralized by adopting a strengthened partnership approach, taking into account the structural differences of the actors and the cultural and linguistic barriers that may weaken the effectiveness of collective action.
- One of the main advantages of macro-regional projects is the sense of proximity and involvement of civil society and local partners, for whom the European Union (or their own states) may sometimes seem distant or inaccessible to convey their specific needs and interests. In this sense, macro-regions serve as an intermediary channel between the local or regional level and the national or European level. This requires significant efforts in information dissemination and training at various territorial levels.
- Macro-regions are multi-level cooperation areas involving central and regional administrations from different member states, which is a crucial condition for the success and implementation of the respective strategies.
- A macro-regional framework must address challenges that go beyond the administrative boundaries of regions and thus need to be addressed more broadly and with a global vision. This includes the ecological, digital, and social transitions in the production and marketing of products, in response to dysfunctions suddenly revealed by the COVID pandemic or wars.
- Information sources should not be dispersed; it is therefore advisable to centralize or channel all the most relevant information through a central point, mainly via websites and social media. In this way, thanks to this central information and communication point, everything relevant or urgent related to the macro-region should be easily and directly accessible.
- The most appropriate decisions and measures cannot be taken without consulting those they concern. Therefore, flexible and transparent consultation mechanisms must be established to ensure the respect of commitments and the inclusion of local actors from the earliest stages.
- All actions to be undertaken must involve different generational layers, starting with the information, training, and consultation of the youth population, and extending to our elders, as we are all stakeholders in the objectives of the macro-region<sup>6</sup>.

## **2.2 Common challenges and objectives**

To identify the thematic priorities for the creation of an Atlantic macro-region strategy, the ATN has highlighted the common challenges currently faced by the territories along the Atlantic coast, which could benefit from enhanced cooperation.

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<sup>6</sup> In this regard, the European Economic and Social Committee plans to exchange officials (similar to the Erasmus university program) and organize forums with representatives from civil society and social partners within the EU.

The main economic and social challenges are related to energy sources, communications, transportation, tourism, fisheries, agriculture, and environmental threats such as climate change, water scarcity, and marine pollution.

Atlantic regions also share significant differences between rural areas and large cities, where the issues, goals, and implementation mechanisms are very different, particularly in terms of environmental sustainability (ecological transition), digital transition, and the scope of public services.

Another common challenge is the aging population and declining birth rates, as well as migration flows, which put pressure on social protection systems.

Among the obstacles to overcome, strategies must be developed to address the barriers and disadvantages posed by the peripheral position of the Atlantic region in relation to Europe. While this location undeniably positions it as the entry and exit point for international trade, it also carries the risk of insufficient attention to its interests, loss of competitiveness, attractiveness, and the capacity to secure a prosperous future.

Finally, the differing political and administrative organization of states and regions is another hurdle to address.

In all cases, a new model for education, training, and research is necessary.

Based on these shared challenges, the ATN has identified, in a detailed but non-exhaustive manner, common projects that could benefit from enhanced cooperation on the Atlantic scale facilitated by a macro-region:

### **In the field of infrastructure and transport**

Including infrastructure and transport within the working framework of the Atlantic macro-region could help facilitate the following:

- Investment in the creation, renewal, and maintenance of road, port (including their role as catalysts for the blue economy<sup>7</sup>), rail, and inland waterway infrastructure, as well as logistics platforms, industries, storage centers, and natural and tourist environments across the entire Atlantic region.
- Achieving the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) for the Atlantic Arc, particularly in cross-border areas and in line with future directions of the TEN-T and the Connecting Europe Facility (2021-2027).
- Improved governance for planning and implementing cross-border sections of the Atlantic corridor linking the Iberian Peninsula to Northern Europe.
- Establishing and developing sea-land-air and rail-inland waterway-port connections to structure the transport system along north-south and east-west axes. The goal is to connect people and goods between ports, airports, roads, rail, and inland waterways. This includes the multimodal connection of the Atlantic corridor with other corridors and eliminating bottlenecks.
- Investment in new port development and management models (including their role as hubs for the blue economy).

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<sup>7</sup> Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions (March 2021): "A New Approach for the Atlantic Maritime Strategy. Atlantic Action Plan 2.0."

- Promotion and investment in the complete development of the TEN-T sea motorways connecting islands to the mainland.
- Creating links between ports and surrounding areas to facilitate mobility for people and the movement of goods.
- Developing the European green ports network.
- Deploying short-sea shipping.
- Contributing to reducing the carbon footprint through the upgrading of transport (freight and passenger), fishing, and aquaculture fleets with innovative green ships.
- Ensuring alignment of national transport plans with the objectives of the Trans-European Networks for Energy (TEN-E), which are drivers of cohesion, development, and employment in different regions.
- Interconnecting in terms of digitization, production, and use of renewable energy.
- Deploying 5G networks and services to enable the rapid and secure development of communications, technologies, and smart services, especially in transport and energy sectors<sup>8</sup>. This will extend broadband coverage to rural and isolated areas.

#### **In the field of health**

The regions of the Atlantic coast also share common issues in the health sector. The turning point represented by the COVID pandemic must drive us to adopt health prevention measures, promote healthy habits (nutrition, sports, stress management, etc.), and prepare to face emergencies in order to minimize their consequences. Health programs should focus particularly on the prevention of occupational risks and workplace safety.

The aging population, one of the advancements of our time, should not lead us to neglect care and attention for the elderly, without ignoring the costs involved.

#### **In the field of industry**

The Atlantic macro-region could contribute to developing a green and sustainable industrial plan, fitting within an ecosystemic approach, accompanied by a long-term vision focused on innovation and competitiveness for the development of various sectors, including planning for land-sea interactions.

#### **In the fields of agriculture and fisheries**

The primary sector plays an important role in maintaining economic and social activity along the Atlantic coast. The macro-regional framework could initiate and carry forward a collective reflection on transforming current instruments of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), involving regions as managing authorities. A greater involvement of European regions in the governance and implementation of CAP is essential to develop policies and measures that support the sector's transition, considering regional diversity<sup>9</sup>.

Without abandoning traditional models of agriculture and fisheries, new sustainable models for exploitation, management, distribution, and marketing of products must emerge.

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<sup>8</sup> Declaration of the Atlantic Arc Commission, adopted on May 23, 2023, in Cardiff (Wales).

<sup>9</sup> Declaration of the Atlantic Arc Commission, adopted on April 10, 2024, in Sines (Portugal): "Vision and Action Plan for a Prosperous Atlantic Arc by 2030, Towards an Atlantic Macro-Region".

The macro-regional framework could also provide an opportunity to rethink and collectively address the common fisheries policy, including the definition, regulation, and protection of marine protected areas and the development of sustainable fishing models to reduce bycatch and overfishing.

### **In the fields of water, energy and environment**

The regions of the Atlantic coast face common challenges in terms of water quality, quantity, and availability, from upstream catchments to the Atlantic Ocean. Water is a shared heritage and an essential resource for all inhabitants, economic activities (agriculture, industry, construction, etc.), health, and the natural environment. However, the pressure on water resources will increase due to climate change (increased consumption, increased risks of drought and flooding). This will have numerous impacts on domestic, economic, and agricultural uses.

Common energy challenges and strengths, particularly offshore wind and green hydrogen deployment, have been identified as potential areas for cooperation that could leverage each territory's strengths to contribute to the development of decarbonized energy.

Finally, many environmental issues are also shared across the Atlantic coast. Incorporating these priorities into the Atlantic macro-region project could help foster:

- The adoption of resilient, joint measures to prevent and mitigate the effects of climate change, including coastal erosion and sea-level rise.
- The creation of an indicator system to track climate change impacts, enabling preventative actions or, where necessary, mitigating consequences.
- Integrated coastal zone management (ICZM).
- Development of a circular economy value chain.
- Decarbonization and the use of alternative fuels and clean energy sources through:
  - Networking and the creation of a European hydrogen bank.
  - Developing the Atlantic hydrogen corridor integrated within the ii-West corridor, including linking the Seine Valley to the Atlantic Pyrenees by 2030.
  - Expanding offshore wind, wave, and tidal energy through R&D.
- Efficient water management (both quantitative and qualitative) and control of marine (Atlantic Ocean) and inland (river basins) waste through:
  - Evaluation and prevention of hydrogeological risks in coastal and wetland areas.
  - Identification and protection of protected areas, focusing on coasts, marshes, wetlands, and forests.

### **In the fields of culture, traditions, and tourism**

Sustainable tourism must be a source of local development and employment within the circular economy framework. The macro-region could help balance maritime, coastal, and inland tourism across the Atlantic coast, encouraging sustainability and complementarity, as well as promoting cultural richness, local traditions, and gastronomy while ensuring the protection of natural and cultural heritage.

Without compromising the social and cultural identity of each population and their respective territories, global attractiveness should be promoted for the Atlantic region as a historical, heritage, and cultural melting pot.

While the coastal and inland areas that make up the macro-region offer attractive residential opportunities due to their location, climate, natural resources, and gastronomy, there is a need to develop and innovate in sustainable tourism. This tourism must align with other aspects, such as nature tourism, sports tourism, or cultural tourism, and analyse the impact of tourism in large cities.

The strategy for the Atlantic macro-region cannot overlook the modernization of the tourism sector as an area of smart specialization.

### **In the fields of education, training and research**

The Atlantic macro-region could contribute to addressing challenges in education, training, and research through the following actions:

- Support the development of high-quality university networks and training and research programs.
- Promote cooperation between the education sector, research centers, clusters, and industries to create an Atlantic ecosystem of smart specialization focused on green transition.
- Develop professional training and specialization to meet real employment needs at all levels.
- Foster the emergence of new activities and the modification or modernization of existing structures, which require new jobs and skills for workers.
- Develop alternatives to temporary or seasonal employment in certain sectors, such as tourism, fisheries, or agriculture.

Moreover, knowledge of territorial structures and the functioning of our institutions should begin in primary school so that our youth are aware of the macro-region they may be part of.

### **Concerning financing**

In terms of financing, it is necessary to coordinate existing and emerging channels and mechanisms at various institutional and territorial levels, striving for the greatest possible efficiency of resources.

## **2.3 Thematic priorities**

Based on the common challenges identified above, the ATN calls for the prioritization of key actions, considering their added value to the macro-regional approach, and in line with the Cardiff Declaration of the Atlantic Arc Commission<sup>10</sup>:

1. An innovative, fair, and sustainable Atlantic economy, including strengthening skills and training in key sectors of smart specialization.
2. An interconnected Atlantic space.
3. A climate-resilient Atlantic space.
4. Social and cultural cohesion in the Atlantic space.
5. Enhancing governance and cooperation within the Atlantic space.

These priorities would integrate the existing pillars of the Atlantic Maritime Strategy. Among all the identified challenges, it is clear that climate urgency, decarbonization, and connectivity (in the fields of transport, energy, and digitalization) can serve as strategic threads to mobilize all opportunities for collaboration and cooperation.

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<sup>10</sup> Declaration of the Atlantic Arc Commission, adopted on May 23, 2023, in Cardiff (Wales), complementing the thematic priorities outlined in the document "Contribution to the European Economic and Social Committee, for an Atlantic Macro-Region" by the ATN in 2012.



## 2.4 Governance Model

Among the necessary conditions for the creation of an Atlantic macro-region, the ATN identifies several important points related to governance:

- The Atlantic macro-region must be based on a strategy of complementarity and convergence, rather than competition between institutions, civil society, and the territories that make it up.
- Governance must also rely on the development of unified decision-making processes.
- Full and direct participation of regions in all governance bodies of the future macro-region.
- The governance model should promote a balance between the most developed areas and those that need the most development to avoid asymmetries and inequalities.
- Involvement of Atlantic socio-economic actors in the daily functioning of the macro-region to ensure they align with the priorities set and contribute to their implementation. Building an Atlantic macro-regional strategy must integrate the role of organized civil society within multi-level governance, particularly the role of CES and CESER. At the Atlantic level, organized civil society actors are already partially structured, both at the French level through the association “les CESER de l’Atlantique” and at the transnational level within the ATN.
- Capitalizing on the experience accumulated by the Atlantic Arc Commission during its 35 years of existence.

Based on these proposals, in the event of the creation of the Atlantic macro-region, the ATN supports the multi-level governance model proposed by the General Assembly of the Atlantic Arc Commission in the Sines Political Declaration, similar to the Alpine macro-region, based on the following bodies:

- Presidency: possibility held on a rotating basis, by both the states and the Atlantic regions.
- Steering Committee: Involving the various relevant administrations.
- General Assembly: It should bring together high-level representatives from the participating states and regions, the European Commission, and all stakeholders, such as Atlantic civil society networks.
- Stakeholder Involvement: Existing Atlantic actor networks and forums - the Atlantic Corridor Forum, the network of Chambers of Commerce of the Atlantic Arc, the network of Agricultural Chambers of the Atlantic Arc (AC3A), the Atlantic Transnational Network (ATN), the Atlantic Cities Network, or newly created ones (such as universities or clusters) - should be involved in governance.
- Rules of Procedure: Support the participation of stakeholders and civil society organizations in the various governance bodies so that they can express their views on the future direction of the macro-regional strategy, decide on areas of cooperation to address, and appoint coordinators for priorities and flagship projects.
- Technical Secretariat: A permanent secretariat responsible for advising and supporting stakeholders in defining new partnerships, ensuring the implementation of priorities, and contributing to the development of flagship projects.
- Observatory: It is proposed to create an Atlantic Observatory tasked with gathering knowledge and monitoring socio-economic trends affecting the Atlantic area. It would advise the General Assembly and could be supported by the ORATE (Observatory for European Territorial Development Network).

### 3. Conclusion and conditions for success

ATN supports the project aimed at enhancing strategic coordination and strengthening cooperation among regional actors on the European Atlantic area. In this regard, the evolution of the Atlantic strategy towards an Atlantic macro-region would be desirable if it enables improved coordination between the various cooperation frameworks, better understanding of the link between land and maritime challenges, and increased political influence of the Atlantic seaboard through multi-level governance.

However, in order to bring benefits to the Atlantic regions, the Atlantic macro-regional strategy should meet several essential conditions:

1. A global and inclusive action program: The strategy must be based on an action program co-constructed with all political actors and civil society, with a focus on social cohesion and equity across all territories.
2. Development of a shared risk culture: A common risk culture should be established to anticipate and prepare for the future of our territories and future generations.
3. Coordination and synergies with existing structures: The strategy must build upon existing mechanisms and structures to ensure a seamless connection between different areas of cooperation, particularly with the Atlantic Maritime Strategy.
4. Enhanced cooperative approach: It is crucial to eliminate any competitive logic by adopting a proactive and mutually beneficial cooperation approach.
5. Geostrategic openness of the Atlantic Macro-Region:
  - a) Demonstrate that the challenges identified within the Atlantic region are also European challenges requiring transnational cooperation.
  - b) Encourage interregional and transnational cooperation to address the needs of Atlantic regions, including their outermost maritime regions.
  - c) Consider the Atlantic space as a convergence point between Europe and the rest of the world, developing a transatlantic cooperation space.
  - d) Involve non-EU regions in this macro-regional cooperation space, with particular attention to the territories of the United Kingdom.
6. Appropriate governance and inclusivity:
  - a) Ensure the management of the strategy with active participation from member states and regions.
  - b) Mobilize civil society from the earliest stages of reflection and throughout the implementation process, with a particular focus on youth.
  - c) Entrust the management of operational actions to civil society organizations.
  - d) Create the conditions for a "structured dialogue" with civil society organizations, including CESERs, CESSs, and similar structures in other countries.
  - e) Implement a multi-level governance structure to ensure a territorialized approach to the strategy and involve all stakeholders, including civil society.

**The ATN also defines the conditions for the success of the Atlantic macro-regional strategy:**

- A collective and clear political will, carrying a strategic vision that makes sense for the Atlantic territories and their populations.
- A commitment from the European Commission to provide this cooperation tool with operational capacities and ensure its sustainability and transferability.
- Acceptance of the long-term implementation of a macro-regional strategy.
- Taking into account structural differences between the actors and the cultural and linguistic barriers that may weaken the effectiveness of collective action.
- Better mobilizing the available funds and making them more efficient in order to carry out more projects to achieve the objectives of the strategy.
- Acceptance of the long-term investment (human, financial, etc.) needed to advance the project, with an interdisciplinary approach.
- Developing exchange tools to ensure monitoring and initiate a forward-looking approach at the Atlantic level.
- Drawing inspiration from the experience of existing cooperation spaces in terms of methods, tools, practices, successes, while avoiding past failures.
- Innovating to overcome obstacles to cooperation.
- Defining the necessary tools to assess the socio-economic and environmental impact of participating in the macro-regional project, with a focus on efficiency.
- Adopting a social and environmental responsibility approach.

ANNEXES  
Presentation of existing macro-regions

Macro-region	Creation	States	Key objectives	Actions	Issues
<b>Baltic Sea EUSBSR</b>	2009	8 EU / 4	Sustainable and Smart Growth	- EUSBSR Action Plan - Baltic Sea Strategy Center (BSP)	
<b>Danube Basin EUSDR</b>	2010	9 EU / 5	- Connect the region. - Environmental protection. - Promote prosperity. - Strengthen the region.	- EUSDR Strategy - European Green Deal - Youth participation - Strengthen cooperation	- Lack of financial resources - Low political engagement - Countries are facing broader global challenges: recovery from a pandemic, climate change, and digital transition.
<b>Adriatic and Ionian Sea Region EUSAIR</b>	2014	4 EU / 6	- Blue growth - Connecting the region - Environmental quality - Sustainable tourism	- EUSAIR Facility Point Project: Operational support for coordination and implementation - Support for governance - Youth council	- Oversized strategy - A very complex and diverse geography
<b>Alpine AUSALP</b>	2015	5 EU / 2	- Economic growth and innovation - Mobility - Connectivity - Cross-cutting governance policy	- Well-structured and long tradition thanks to the Alpine Convention and other initiatives.	- Some countries (Germany, Italy, Austria, and Slovenia) participate in other macro-regional strategies, which can lead to overlaps that they are trying to transform into complementarities.

*SOURCE : Report from the Commission ECO/609 to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation of EU macro-regional strategies [COM(2022) 705 final].*

### Example of governance established for the Alpine macro-regional strategy

In the governance of the Alpine macro-regional strategy, Alpine states and regions are involved on an equal footing. In particular:

- The presidency of the Alpine macro-region is held on a rotating basis by both states and regional authorities.
- States and regions are full members of the steering committee that coordinates and monitors the implementation of the strategy.
- The nine action groups, responsible for implementing action plans, bring together representatives from states, regions, and socio-economic actors, who share responsibility for the various thematic areas.
- It has a technical secretariat - hosted by the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (South PACA) Region - and receives funding from the INTERREG Alpine Space program. Its mission is to support and assist the different operators in the implementation of the strategy.

*Source : Basque Government - MEMO on the Atlantic macro-region, Basque Government*

This study was conducted under the presidency of **Javier Muñecas Herreras** (CES of the Basque Country).

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The Atlantic Transnational Network (ATN) was established in 2003 as a platform for civil society cooperation in the Atlantic space. The network currently brings together the organizations representing socio-professional groups from France, Spain, and Portugal (CESER of Brittany, Pays de la Loire, Centre-Val de Loire, Nouvelle-Aquitaine, Normandy; CES of the Basque Country, Galicia, Canary Islands, Andalusia, Extremadura, Castile and León; Forum Oceano) interested in the specific challenges related to the development of the European Atlantic area.

**For more information:** <https://rta-atn.org/en/rta-atn/>