



Case Study

Topic 03: Territorial Dimension and Integrated Approach

Germany

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List of abbreviations

CF	Cohesion Funds
CLLD	Community-Led Local Development
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EMFF	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
IB	Intermediate Body
IN	Integrated tools
ITI	Integrated Territorial Investment
LAG	Local Action Group
MA	Managing Authority
OP	Operational Program
ROP	Regional Operational Program
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SUD	Sustainable Urban Development

Germany

Integrated instruments

The only federal state that combines support from various funds within the CLLD implementation is Saxony-Anhalt. In other countries, the CLLD itself is not implemented, however, under the rural development programs implementation of LEADER continues. Most countries perceive the combination of all three funds as complicated, given the allocation and complexity of the ERDF and ESF drawing rules (the differences from the rules of the EAFRD that they were accustomed to under LEADER) they did not see the multifund approach as an added value. ITI is implemented by a single federal state, Schleswig-Holstein. In other federal states, Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) is implemented in a different form than ITI.

Positive aspects	Negative aspects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Formulation of opinions and priorities at the local level ▶ High level of co-financing ▶ Good cooperation and effective communication between the MA and the MAS ▶ Regional offices of the MA ▶ Multi-fund, concentration of control at one place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Thematic limitation of areas of support ▶ Administrative burdens ▶ The "lax" approach of some MAS

Key aspects of the integrated instruments

1 Formulation of opinions and priorities at the local level
 Inclusion of local institutions and inhabitants and the possibility of influencing and contributing to the development of the place of their residence is one of the reasons for many (especially young) residents to live in the given place (i.e. not to move to larger cities).

2 Good cooperation and effective communication
 A system of several working groups focused on various topics, composed of representatives of the MA and heads of individual MAS, was created.
 The existence of several regional offices set up by the MA. Continuous mentoring / education of MAS representatives.

3 The "lax" approach of some MAS
 In some cases, local actors do not like to adequately devise the development strategy. This means that the most relevant projects are not selected or only very few activities are performed in the CLLD area.

4 Administrative burdens
 The whole process of CLLD implementation is administratively too demanding, not only because of the European legislation but also because of the one at Federal states level.



1. Basic characteristics of the ESIF system

Number of operational programs (OP/ROP)	Number of territorial units (NUTS1/NUTS2/NUTS3)
47 (3/44)	16/38/401

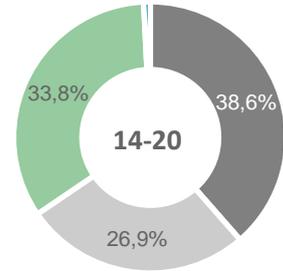
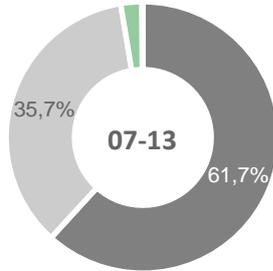
Total allocation planned (according to the programming period and according to the fund)

Total allocation
(mil. EUR)

14-20: 27 913

▲
07-13: 24 733

- ERDF
- CF
- ESF
- EAFRD
- EMFF



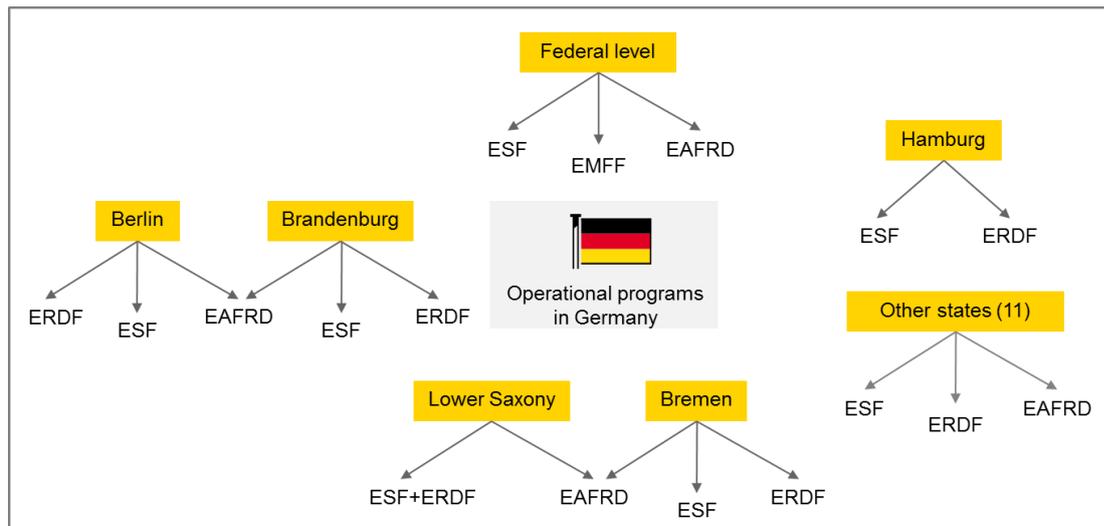
Overview of operational programs

The ESIF implementation is strongly decentralized and consists of:

- ▶ 1 federal ESF program;
- ▶ 1 federal EAFRD program;
- ▶ 1 federal EMFF program
- ▶ 15 state ERDF programs;
- ▶ 15 state ESF programs;
- ▶ 1 joint state ESF/ERDF program in Lower Saxony;
- ▶ 13 state EAFRD programs.

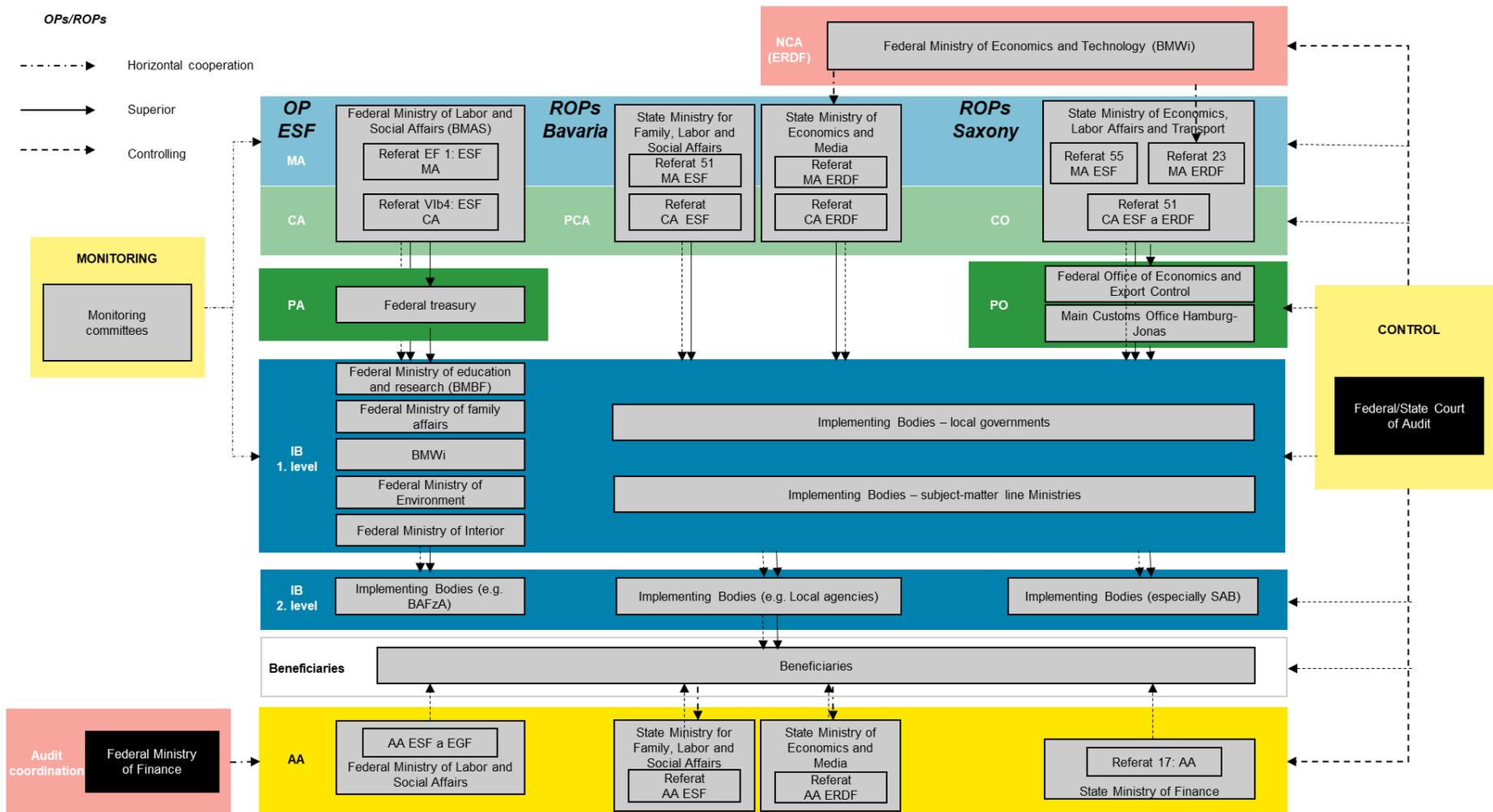
The following scheme illustrates the distribution of operational programs per fund in particular states in Germany:

Scheme no. 1: German state OPs



2. Simplified scheme of the implementation structure

Scheme no. 2: Simplified scheme of the implementation structure



*MA, IB, CA, PA might be subjects of AA's audit

3. Answers to the evaluation questions

3.1. What bodies or actors are involved in this allocation? How is quality planning and the associated degree of decentralization of this strategic planning being ensured? What risks are associated with this? How is the partnership principle grasped and anchored in the territorial dimension?

How are the territorial development strategies developed? What is the methodological support at the national level / level of the MA? Who approves these strategies? How is their implementation monitored and evaluated? How are they linked to national strategies?

How are the territorial strategies developed and who defines the territory?

When does the LAG become the LAG in other member states, are there any standards for assessment that the LAG needs to meet? How does the LAG participate in the project selection?

How do the cities operate within ITI, are they always an IB?

The only federal state that combines grants from various funds within the CLLD implementation is Saxony-Anhalt. In the other countries, the CLLD is not implemented, however, it can be recognized under the LEADER rural development program implementation.

The rural development programs are implemented in thirteen federal states (the Bremen City State has joined the implementation of this program in Lower Saxony and the City of Berlin joined Brandenburg, the City of Hamburg does not have any rural development program). Most of the states perceive the combination of all three funds as complicated, taking into account the allocation and complexity of the ERDF and ESF rules (there are differences from the rules of the EAFRD that they were used to in LEADER) so they did not see the multi-fund approach as added value.



CLLD implementation in Saxony-Anhalt

The state of Saxony-Anhalt has a very long and strong tradition in the implementation of LEADER, for several decades (according to its MA). There is a well-functioning network of local action groups mostly led by experienced managers. Within the LAG, communication is well set up so the local partnerships work well. Within the preparation for the current period, Saxony-Anhalt decided given well-functioning LEADER that it would be good to try to support LAGs from the other funds (ERDF and ESF) as well.

The combination of all three funds (ERDF, ESF and EAFRD - each fund is implemented by a separate operational program) is used by almost all LAGs. CLLD / LAGs cover the entire territory of Saxony-Anhalt, with the exception of the three largest cities of Magdeburg, Halle and Dessau-Rosslau.

The local action groups have defined their own structure and functional areas they cover. No more significant structural requirements have been established by the MA. The determination of such requirements may be considered for the next programming period.

Altogether, there are 23 LAGs operating in Saxony-Anhalt, which cover approximately 1.7 million inhabitants out of a total of 2.2 million people living in the state (i.e. approximately 77%). The largest LAG covers approximately 146,000 inhabitants, the smallest about 15,000. The most common size of the LAG is about 50-70 thousand inhabitants.

LAGs do not have a specific legal status, they act as legal entities - associations. The MA has defined only a few basic rules on the conditions for the LAG establishment. Their fulfilment and compliance are controlled by the MA (particularly, the local authorities must be in a minority position

in the LAG, part of the LAG must cover the civil sector, churches, local SMEs, farmers etc.; the partnership must have a formalized document; the LAG must not cover the territory of the three largest cities).

The MA allocates the budget to the individual LAGs in particular due to the size of the territory and the population. Furthermore, the MA approves local development strategies, but only formally (in terms of meeting basic parameters), it does not affect their content. In the project selection process, the LAG creates the order of projects and defines the fund to be used for each project funding. The LAGs do not declare their own calls. The MA provides the LAG with a methodological support in developing the strategy (it has a basic manual on how the strategies should be developed and it gives the feedback). The MA does not control the linkage of local development strategies to another national strategies.

The local development strategy must include:

- ▶ the definition of the territory it covers,
- ▶ number of inhabitants affected (must be in the range of 10,000 to 150,000 inhabitants);
- ▶ local development needs (SWOT analysis),
- ▶ a strategy description, including the definition of measurable objectives and the manner they are evaluated,
- ▶ way of local people involvement in the development activities / strategy implementation,
- ▶ a stipulation of objective criteria for a non-discriminatory and transparent project selection process.

ITI is also implemented by a single federal state, Schleswig-Holstein.

Germany is a federal state and in the case of the ESIF, the federal government is responsible "only" for the preparation and management of the Partnership Agreement and the allocation of funds. The implementation of the Partnership Agreement itself is in hands of the individual states. This also leads to the differences in implementation (implementation structure, procedures, etc.).

In the course of the current period preparation, the EC stipulated that in the case of ITIs, the individual functional areas (cities) must obligatory become intermediate bodies. However, Germany rejected this approach. Implementation of the ESIF has a long tradition and practice in Germany, including the area of territorial dimension (its implementation in the 2007-2013 programming period was assessed as successful). The integrated tools and territorial dimension itself has a long and successful history, but the problem was that not all the procedures and principles of the territorial dimension complied with the EC's requirements for the rules and procedures for ITI implementation.

The individual states rejected ITI and did not understand why the implementation system needed to be changed. Some states, which started the preparation of the 2014-2020 programming period very early (e.g. Baden-Württemberg), originally counted on the use of territorial dimension tools. However, when they found out how complicated the ITI system defined due to Article 7 of the ERDF Regulation was, they decided not to apply the ITI tool at all.

The Article 7 can be implemented through a variety of approaches and instruments. Germany and its states have decided not to use the ITI tool in the course of the current programming period (except for Schleswig-Holstein). However, this does not mean that sustainable urban development is not supported within the ESIF - on the contrary, approximately 13% of ERDF funds have been allocated to this purpose.



ITI Implementation in Schleswig-Holstein

The decision to use the ITI tools in Schleswig-Holstein was rather of a political nature. This state has more developed eastern part so the ITI serves in particular as a tool for the development of the western part of the territory.

The ITI territory was already defined in the ERDF OP Schleswig-Holstein. The reason for choosing a particular ITI functional area was the fact that the federal government already launched the so-called West Coast Initiative in 2012. The Operational Program follows its implementation and represents another (very significant) source of funding. A total of EUR 30 million is allocated to this ITI initiative.

The West Coast Initiative is a strategic development document based on the program statement of the Schleswig-Holstein state government. It is a response to the concern that the development of the West Coast region may not be sufficient and may lag behind the overall development of the state. The effort is to promote the creation of sustainable value in the region and to create new jobs. Given the potential of the area, the Initiative focuses mainly on energy (especially renewable energy) and tourism.

In September 2014, the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs (MA) announced a two-tier ITI competition. The candidates could sign up their "concepts" from a defined functional area. The candidates could be regional actors (actors based in a defined territory) - municipalities, companies, universities, research institutions, associations and chambers. Each proposed concept had to define its territory - it could be the size of a part of a town, urban area, rural area, sub-regional or interregional level.

The concept had to include:

- ▶ the definition of the territory it covers,
- ▶ integrated spatial development strategy for the defined areas,
- ▶ overview of activities to be implemented,
- ▶ inclusion of at least two investment priorities from different priority axes of the OP.

The drafted concepts had to be submitted by March 2015. A total of twelve concepts, each containing six to seventeen project proposals (or project "contours"), were presented. The so-called ITI panel, made of regional actors and MA's representatives, examined the presented concepts, evaluated them on the basis of evaluation criteria and selected nine of the twelve concepts to be concretized and further developed in the second phase of the competition. This selection was subsequently approved by the Western Coast Council.

The aim and task of the second phase of the competition was to further elaborate the previously selected concepts - with concrete and detailed project descriptions. These were to be submitted in the second phase of the competition until the end of April 2016.

The ITI Panel evaluated the developed concepts using the list of criteria and finally selected eight concepts. These eight concepts contain a total of 81 projects, of which 42 are eligible for ERDF funding. The total volume of investment is approximately 136 million EUR (i.e. more than the allocation under the operational program, the federal budget serves as another source of funding). This selection was approved by the Western Coast Council.

The West Coast Council was established in 2013 and meets approximately once a year. The Council is composed of 29 representatives from the region - these are representatives of local governments, universities, economic and social partners, etc. The Council is chaired by a representative from the federal government. The Council does not solely deal with the ITI implementation within the ESIF, but it also manages the entire West Coast Initiative.



In 2014, the so-called Regional office was established at the Council's initiative. Its part are so-called project scouts who inform and advise local actors in the preparation of concepts, projects, partner search, etc. The Office also carries out ongoing monitoring and fulfilment of established indicators. This regional office is run by the Norderelbe project company owned by the regional development agencies. The activity of the regional office is funded from the sources of the operational program, the federal government and the funding agencies.

This ITI implementation system supports and contributes to the continuous improvement of the regional networks and cooperation between participants and areas.

In the other states, Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) is implemented in a different manner than ITI. In some countries, such as Brandenburg or North Rhine-Westphalia, there are even quasi-ITI tools. In the case of Brandenburg, the main difference between ITI and their approach is that the functional areas (cities) do not have the role of an intermediate body.

In North Rhine-Westphalia, even cities (5 functional areas) have the role of an intermediate body. They are in charge of all major implementation processes, the MA's role is mainly programming and control. The role of the Intermediate Body is not stipulated by the contract between the MA and the IB but by the legislation at the state level. These cities have had a similar role in territorial instruments for several decades, so they are used to it. Under the ERDF program, approximately 12% of funding is allocated to the SUD. The projects are selected according to their compliance with the integrated development plan (these plans have their own tradition, they did not appear just because of the ESIF implementation in this programming period).

Generally, in Germany, projects supported under the SUD must be in line with the local development strategies (which arise independently to the ESIF - see the answer to the question 3.7). These must be in line with territorial plans. This is one of the main criteria, any link to any other state or federal strategy is not required.

3.2. What topics are addressed within the territorial dimension and integrated tools? Are there areas supported solely by the territorial dimension and integrated tools?

The priorities in the CLLD implementation in the state of Saxony-Anhalt are as follows:

- ▶ Within the ERDF, the CLLD focuses only on several priorities, in particular on improving the energy efficiency of schools, nurseries and out-of-school sports facilities and on repairing major cultural buildings (cultural heritage buildings).
- ▶ Projects supported from the ESF focus on the social consequences of demographic and structural change, local labour-oriented micro-projects, cooperation between schools and local businesses for professional orientation and preparation (focusing on young people).
- ▶ Projects implemented under the EAFRD are mainly focused on the infrastructure for the regeneration and development of villages (e.g. developing cycling routes, repairing old churches, etc.), developing basic services and rebuilding villages in rural areas and developing the potential for agriculture and tourism development.

The priorities in the ITI in the state of Schleswig-Holstein focus on two main topics:

- ▶ Renewable energy and energy efficiency in the coastal area including the island of Helgoland. The region is particularly benefiting from the development of wind power. The ITI aims to consolidate positive developments in the energy sector and create a clear profile of competences for the West Coast.

This also applies to the research and development and demonstration projects in the field of renewable energy and energy storage technologies, infrastructure measures as well as measures for energy optimization of public infrastructure.

- ▶ Resource-saving tourism. The topic is key to the West Coast because the tourism industry is an important sector and employer. Constantly an increasing attractiveness of the area as a holiday destination and full use of its potential are crucial factors for economic performance and employment. These include measures to protect, promote and develop the natural and cultural heritage, but also the compatibility of environmental protection, conservation of resources, conservation of monuments as well as sustainable urban development and brownfield recycling.

3.3. What are the success factors and the barriers to the success of allocating ESIF funds only to selected territories and/or through integrated tools?

What are the elements that enable the success of integrated tools or, on the contrary, the barriers to successful implementation of integrated tools?

For the **successful CLLD implementation**, the following aspects are crucial from the MA's point of view in the state of Saxony-Anhalt:

- ▶ Formulating opinions and priorities at the local level, i.e. involving not only local institutions but also local residents. The opportunity of influencing and contributing to the development of the area of residence is one of the reasons why people (especially young people) live in the place (i.e. do not to move to larger cities).
- ▶ The high level of co-financing was also of a key interest in the use of the CLLD, namely up to 90% of the cost.
- ▶ Good cooperation and well-functioning communication between the MA and the LAG. A system of several working groups focused on various topics has been established, composed of representatives of the MA and heads of individual LAGs. These groups usually meet four times a year and discuss, in particular, the current problems and their solutions.
- ▶ A number of regional offices founded by the MA contribute to good communication and cooperation. Their role is particularly methodical and supportive, they are not involved in the project administration process. Continuous mentoring/training of the LAG representatives is beneficial. On the other hand, the number of persons and actors involved in communication sometimes complicates the situation and is also more demanding on MA's management.
- ▶ Possibility to support activities under the CLLD from all three funds (EAFRD, ERDF, ESF) / three operational programs and concentration of management of these programs in one place - Saxony-Anhalt Ministry of Finance.

On the contrary, **barriers to successful CLLD** implementation are considered:

- ▶ Limited support for only particular thematic areas within the operational program. The potential and demand from the LAG is far wider than the current program allows.
- ▶ In some cases, LAGs or local actors do not like to devote their development strategy adequately or do not take it seriously. This means that the most relevant projects are not selected or only very few activities are carried out in the CLLD area.
- ▶ The whole process of CLLD implementation is so administratively demanding not only because of European legislation but also because of the state level. The biggest problem of the EAFRD administration lies in the area of eligibility of costs. Even due to demanding administration, the process of preparing the whole period is particularly demanding and takes a lot of time.

For the **successful ITI implementation**, the following aspects are key in the state of Schleswig-Holstein:

- ▶ Political support for the entire West Coast Initiative and interest in the successful implementation of the Initiative and its sub-projects and activities.

- ▶ The involvement of a regional office, run by institutions with experience in drawing the ESIF, implementation of territorial instruments and regional development.
- ▶ Consulting and support to local actors from the regional office, that led to the creation of high-quality concepts and project concepts. At the same time, the regional office contributes and encourages local cooperation, or cooperation of various local actors.
- ▶ The ability to implement projects not only supported and funded by the ITI (ESIF). The other projects are financed, for example, from the state budget. In creating concepts and preparing project plans, their creators were not limited by the ESIF thematic focus and its rules but could fully focus on the needs of local development.

On the contrary, the **barrier to successful ITI** implementation in Schleswig-Holstein is considered as:

- ▶ A certain barrier is the fact that the implementation of projects funded by the state (i.e. outside ITI / ESIF) is administratively simpler. Individual actors do not have such a strong motivation to implement ESIF projects.

3.4. How to set up the territorial dimension most effectively to avoid unnecessary administrative burden on the actors of the implementation structure or the beneficiaries, while maintaining its use transparent?

How to set the implementation of integrated tools to be simple (or as simple as possible) and at the same time transparent? How to set up a MA / IB / local government relationship (MAS, ITI) - connection to IT systems, providing audit trails etc.?

According to the MA of the state of Saxony-Anhalt, it is important for the effective **CLLD** implementation to cooperate with all relevant bodies (ministries) associated with the various funds involved – the ERDF, the ESF and the EAFRD. The aim is to set as much as possible uniform/common rules for the projects selection and implementation (e.g. project selection criteria have been developed jointly and are more or less uniform). It is also important to build a structure in which activities do not duplicate - that was ensured in Saxony-Anhalt that the MA for all funds is a single institution, namely the Ministry of Finance of Saxony-Anhalt. This simplifies many processes and also enables effective cooperation, coordination and communication.

It is important for the recipients that they have a permanent contact person in a regional office to help them with the preparation and completing the application (including for example, pre-checking of compliance with all fund conditions).

3.5. How have the elements of the territorial dimension, including the integrated tools, been implemented or anchored in the national legislation or in the ESIF methodical setting?

In the Czech Republic, it is mainly enshrined in legislation (Section 18 of Act No. 248/2000 Coll., On Regional Development Support) and in methodological guidelines (in particular Methodology of the use of integrated tools). How is it solved abroad? How is the role of the LAG (or ITI) anchored in legislation? Do ITI have the form of an intermediate body, or how do ITI/MAS work legally to ensure the implementation of the LAG?

Within the **CLLD** implementation in the state of Saxony-Anhalt, no specific legislation related to the territorial dimension has been identified. From the methodological point of view, a methodological manual for the CLLD based on a similar document of the European Commission was created.

Similarly, no specific legislation or methodological documents related to **ITI** have been identified.



3.6. Is there an assessment of the impacts of allocations on the territory (or how is the impact measured - e. g., the Territorial Impact Assessment for assessing the potential territorial impact of projects/strategies/policies)?

How is the impact of integrated tools implementation on the territory assessed? What are the results of these evaluations?

The Federal Ministry of the Environment is planning a comparative study on the integrated tools implementation, but this will not probably be available until 2019.

In Saxony-Anhalt, the CLLD implementation and its benefits and impacts are monitored both at the level of the MA and at the level of the individual LAGs. It is planned to carry out evaluations based on the monitoring indicators.

The benefit of allocations to the territory is also regularly monitored, the MA is in continuous contact and dialogue with the individual LAGs, thus it deals with a continuous monitoring and evaluation of the benefits to the territory.

3.7. How is the territorial dimension addressed outside the integrated tools - is there a document similar to the Czech National document of the territorial dimension?

How does a given country support a territorial dimension outside the integrated tools? Is there a similar document/procedure to the Integrated Instrument Guidelines (MPIN) and the National Document to the Territorial Dimension (NDÚD)?

The legal framework for urban development and urban regeneration consists mainly of the federal construction law promulgated with the consent of all the federal states. The responsibility for the cities regeneration and development lies on municipalities themselves. The federal government and individual federal states support cities and municipalities through financial programs to support them.

These programs have been running for several decades. Funds of European Union currently play in particular a role of another source of funding. Unlike most of other EU Member States, the territorial dimension and integrated approach in Germany did not arise due to the ESIF implementation.

Historically, this approach to the territorial dimension was based on the following principles:

- ▶ The main prerequisite for funding is the existence of an integrated local action plan, in which all measures to improve housing, labour and living conditions in the given area are coordinated strategically and timely.
- ▶ The municipalities are responsible for preparing integrated local action plans, applications for funding and implementation of the plans.
- ▶ Local governments (federal state administration units) advise municipalities on financial matters and authorize payments of funds.
- ▶ The Federal Ministry of Interior organizes and controls the federal program in terms of strategy and content and evaluates its implementation.
- ▶ Integration of different funds and resources that are interconnected in different areas of activity. Funds may come from the following sources:
 - ▶ European level (the ERDF and the ESF);
 - ▶ federal government programs (especially programs to finance urban development);
 - ▶ state government programs for urban development;
 - ▶ community resources;
 - ▶ private funds;
 - ▶ foundations.



Any documents similar to the Methodical Instruction for the Use of Integrated Instruments (MPIN) and the National Document for Territorial Dimension (NDÚD) were not identified.



OP Schleswig-Holstein (ERDF)

This operational program explains the reasons for not applying the CLLD, which also describes the use of the territorial dimension outside the ESIF:

„The use of the CLLD is not planned in OP ERDF. Schleswig-Holstein currently introduces a financing program comparable to the CLLD in all national urban development programs implemented in Schleswig-Holstein. Projects contributing to local development should be funded in currently supported areas. The decision on the projects selection and the amount of grants will be made by the local authority. Therefore, in order to avoid duplicity, the use of the CLLD within the ERDF is not planned.”

3.8. What knowledge does already exist about the functioning of the integrated approach and its evaluation against the standard thematic approach (i.e., allocation of resources through the operational programs)?

Is the current setting of integrated tools (in terms of process set-up and implementation structure) appropriate and effective (compared to other ways of supporting the territorial dimension)?

Method of funds allocation to selected territories without the use of integrated tools or with a combination of different tools.

The Federal Ministry of Environment is planning a comparative study on the integrated approach implementation, but this will probably not be available until 2019.

4. Project activity review

Total number of institutions approached

- ▶ 5

List of institutions approached

- ▶ State Ministry of Finance of Saxon-Anhalt – MA of EU programs
- ▶ State Ministry of regional development, environment and agriculture of Brandenburg
- ▶ German Association for Housing, Urban and Spatial Development – National URBACT Point for Germany and Austria
- ▶ State Ministry of Interior of Northrhine-Westphalia - MA of EU programs
- ▶ Research Group for Agricultural and Regional Development Triesdorf

List of studies, analyses, evaluations, and other relevant materials used

- ▶ ELER in Deutschland; Übersicht über die Nationale Rahmenregelung und die Programme der Länder; Programmübersicht 2014-2020
- ▶ Integrated territorial development: new instruments – new results?, June 2018, European Policies Research Centre Delft
- ▶ Leitfaden für Lokale Akteure zur CLLD, August 2014, EC
- ▶ Operationelles Programm des Europäischen Fonds für regionale Entwicklung (EFRE) in Schleswig-Holstein 2014-2020
- ▶ Perspektiven für die Westküste, 2014, Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Arbeit, Verkehr und Technologie
- ▶ Presentation Der CLLD-Ansatz in Sachsen-Anhalt als räumliches Instrument, 29. 6. 2018, MA ERDF/ESF Sachsen-Anhalt (Rosika Sander)
- ▶ Socially Integrative City in North Rhine-Westphalia Getting deprived urban areas back on track, 2010, Ministry for Economic Affairs, Energy, Building, Housing and Transport of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia
- ▶ The Urban Dimension in German Structural Fund Programmes 2.0, 2014, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety.