



Baltic Sea Region

Programme 2007–2013

Conference Review



"The power of the Baltic Sea macro-region" Baltic Sea Region Programme Conference 2010

Jyväskylän Paviljonki, Finland,
30 November – 1 December 2010

Conference review

Despite of strikes and snow storms more than 300 people participated the Baltic Sea Region Programme conference in Jyväskylä.

The first day's discussion focussed on "Macro-regional strategies and future Cohesion Policy". Finland's minister for Economic Affairs, Mr Mauri Pekkarinen provided the opening statements. Several interventions from policy and research prepared the background for the panel discussion.

The fourth and most likely final call for project application was officially launched on the second day of the conference. For the first time, the Monitoring Committee had decided to restrict the call to selected topics. To encourage future applicants, several already ongoing projects presented examples of their achievements. Among those there were flagship projects of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. Researchers from Belarus and Russia demonstrated their benefit from participating in transna-



tional cooperation. Even though cooperation is not easy, there is a vivid interest in particular from the regional level of those countries.

The Conference has also been a joint effort made by Finland's local, regional and national authorities involved in transnational cooperation. On 1 January 2011, Finland will pass on the chairmanship of the Monitoring Committee (MC) to Ger-

many. Mr Harry Ekestam of the Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy, welcomed the new MC chairman, Mr Bernd Kloeke from the German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology.

You will find presentations, papers, list of participants and selected snapshots at eu.baltic.net.

Role of macroregional strategies in the EU's future Cohesion Policy needs further debate

Mauri Pekkarinen
Minister for Economic Affairs,
Finland



"The Baltic Sea Region Strategy contains many elements which can be best addressed in a macro-regional context but there are also things that are addressed by national policies and programmes – focussing is therefore needed", stated Finland's Minister for Economic Affairs, Mr Mauri Pekkarinen when opening the Baltic Sea Region Programme Conference in Jyväskylä, Central Finland.

The participants followed the discussions of Day 1 representing central, regional, local as well as EU public administrations and agencies, research institutions, and networks from the overall Baltic Sea area.

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"We must make the Baltic Sea region an example of sustainable development. This requires serious work and enhanced cooperation" stressed Finland's President Tarja Halonen in her video message. "The Baltic Sea Strategy can help set concrete goals in developing the region. We should seek to co-operate and to share experiences with other maritime regions. In addition to European level co-operation, it is important that regional cooperation receives attention."



Tarja Halonen
The President
of Finland

It is the first time in history that the EU has developed a tailor-made development strategy for a geographic macro-region – the Baltic Sea region. "Every macro-regional strategy has to have its own rationale", said Mr Colin Wolfe, representing the European Commission's DG Regional Policy when reflecting on lessons learnt from the process so far. These might differ from area to area. For the second EU strategy in the Danube area, Ms Anna Bérczi of the Hungarian ministry of foreign affairs

emphasized that a renewed partnership between neighbouring countries as well as strengthening the relationships with the Western Balkan countries was the most important strategic objective. An informed discussion on the opportunities and risks of macro-regional strategies followed including lively interventions from the audience.

Klaus Rave

Managing Authority of the Baltic Sea Region Programme, Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein



"The Baltic Sea is the pilot region in Europe to implement this new concept of a macro-regional strategy. We can build on a long tradition of transnational cooperation around the Baltic Sea."

Anna Bérczi

Head of Department, Office for the EU Danube Region Strategy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hungary



John Bachtler,

Director of European Policies Research Centre, Glasgow, UK



Mr John Bachtler, director of the European Policies Research Centre summarized results of the panel discussion in four points:

- The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region presents potential in both, symbolic and practical sense
- It is worth to look at the pre-conditions for having a macro-regional strategy before starting to design it

Colin Wolfe

Head of Unit, Regional Policy, European Commission



- There are operational issues that are not solved yet, e. g. the flexible but also complex approach to governance as well as the question how to involve external partners
- The relationship between macro-regional strategies and transnational cooperation needs to be further explored but also towards other concepts.

Ole Damsgaard

Director of Nordregio



"One of the common challenges are regional disparities of the economic performance: metropolitan areas more successful than other regions."



Martti Ahokas

Director, Regional Council of Central Finland



"It is my firm view that the Baltic Sea Programme and the EU Strategy must go hand in hand."

Harry Ekestam

Chairman of the Monitoring Committee in 2010, Ministry of Employment and the Economy, Finland



David Sweet

Policy Advisor to the Director General for Regional Policy, European Commission



"We want more flexibility and more funds for transnational cooperation."

"The EU Strategy is not so much a policy but an approach. It is not top-down only but based on multi-level and multi-partner participation. It is pragmatic and adaptive. But it is also difficult and scary and exiting. It is a new way of thinking."

Esa Kokkonen

Director, The Baltic Institute of Finland



"The EU Strategy has brought a new dynamism to the region. It is a common EU policy framework that will bring more support for flagship projects and will increase the impact of projects."

"The social dimension of development needs more attention. So far development concepts were very much oriented towards innovation and business but we need an integrated approach."



4th call for projects open from 1 Dec till 31 March 2011

Ms Kaarina Williams from the State Chancellery of Land Schleswig-Holstein, Germany opened the fourth call for project applications. The call is open from 1 December 2010 till 31 March 2011. Just in the week before the Programme Conference, the Monitoring Committee had agreed to put a focus on the fourth call: not all projects will be eligible. Flagship projects of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region that are in line with the priorities of the Baltic Sea Region Programme are encouraged to apply. In addition, the Monitoring Committee also identified several missing topics that are not yet tackled by the running 65 projects. Project ideas that address these missing topics

are welcome to apply for funds as well.

The Joint Technical Secretariat will support applicants during the Lead Applicant seminar in Riga (19-20 January) and individual consultations in Riga and Rostock. There are enough funds left for several projects in each of the four priorities: fostering innovations, internal and external accessibility, Baltic Sea as a common resource and attractive & competitive cities and regions.

You will find more about the focus of the call and the missing topics in the announcement note at eu.baltic.net.

Kaarina Williams

Member of the Monitoring Committee, State Chancellery of Land Schleswig-Holstein, Germany



"We expect from projects transnational relevance, clear links to regional development, stress on pre-investment character and pilot investments and transferable results with high visibility."



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Susanne Scherrer

Director of the Joint Technical Secretariat Rostock/Riga



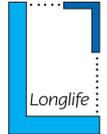
"Currently the Programme funds 65 transnational co-operation projects with more than 1000 partners. We look forward to more projects in 2011!"

Eeva Rantama

Project Team Leader, Joint Technical Secretariat



"With almost 30% of the Programme funds we support 22 flagships or projects that are part of the flagship project of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region."



Flagship projects well on the way

Several projects contributing to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region receive funds from the Baltic Sea Region Programme and have achievements they are proud to share. Four selected projects BRISK, EfficienSea, TransBaltic and BSR QUICK explained why funds invested in them bring value to the region.

Ulla Ahonen

Project BRISK, Project Officer, HELCOM Secretariat



"The BRISK Project pools resources of all Baltic Sea countries to combat oil spills."

Gertrud Hermansen

Project EfficienSea, Communication Manager, Danish Maritime Safety Administration



"E-navigation improves considerably maritime safety and the environmental state of the Baltic Sea."

Max Hogeforster

Project BSR QUICK, Project Manager, Hanseatic Parliament, Germany



"BSR QUICK brings at least 75 concrete, tangible Research & Development solutions, 250 business- and investment plans for companies."

Wiktor Szydarowski

Project TransBaltic, Project Manager



"We face rising intercontinental cargo flows. TransBaltic is preparing the Baltic Sea Region for the role of an efficient transport gateway area."



Partners from Belarus and Russia active as never before

The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) provides funds for the participation of partners from Belarus. The Belarusian partners are primarily interested in support to SMEs, ICT and transport development, waste water management, energy efficiency as well as rural and urban development. Despite challenges with language, national approval procedure and lack of experience 16 projects have partners from Belarus.

Aliaksandr Pakhomau
Project Baltic Compass, Central Research Institute for Complex Use of Water Resources, Belarus



"We assess water quality and perform field investigations in selected river basins in Belarus."

Organisations from Russia cannot use the ENPI funds as the financing agreement between EU and Russia was not signed. Yet 48 projects have active associated organisations from Russia.

Elena Selezneva
Project Longlife, Saint-Petersburg State University of Architecture and Civil Engineering, Russia



"We share knowledge and information for joint research as well as implement and monitor pilot project in Russia."

Elena Kolosova
Project Officer, Joint Technical Secretariat



"Projects involve Russian organisation in the project activities despite non-availability of ENPI funds as Russia belongs to the region and many development topics cannot be fully tackled without Russian participation. There is a lot of cooperation existing already."



Projects on display



Flagships projects of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region attracted participants of the conference with their exhibition stands. We learned about the projects and met the people that give their heats and time to the transnational cooperation.



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The conference was organised by the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013 in close co-operation with the Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Regional Council of Central Finland and the City of Jyväskylä. Jyväskylä has not only been selected as location because of its impressive conference infrastructure and the strong support from the

municipal and regional authorities to the event.

Jyväskylä, located in the heart of Finland, is a typical example for a developing region far away from the shores and harbours around the Baltic Sea. Bridging distances, creating future oriented business and quality job opportunities, as well as offering a high standard social

and natural environment are necessary to attract people to come and stay. Ms Anita Mikkonen, executive director of the Regional Council of Central Finland as well as Mr Markku Andersson, the Mayor of Jyväskylä explained how Jyväskylä and the surrounding region are managing these challenges.

Participants of the conference received a lesson on what it means to live in a region quite distant from metropolitan areas: Both the wintry weather conditions as well as a strike of airline staff heavily affected the travels both to and from the conference. Following this, everybody was convinced that more efforts need to be taken to improve transport infrastructure all over the region.

The next Baltic Sea Region Programme conference is planned for September 2012 in Norway and will be hosted by the Eastern Norway County Network.

Markku Andersson
Mayor of Jyväskylä



"Jyväskylä region is one of the main growth centres outside the capital Helsinki."

Anita Mikkonen
Executive Director of the Regional Council of Central Finland



"Central Finland is a region of collaboration, entrepreneurship and expertise."



The European Union's Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013 promotes regional development through transnational cooperation. Project partners from eleven countries including Belarus, Estonia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden work together in transnational projects. The partners mainly originate from the public

and non-profit making sector (regional and local administrations, universities, non-governmental organisations and networks). The total Programme funding is 236 million Euros from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) and from Norwegian national funding.

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Architecture, music and networking



Conference participants had space to network and explore the City of Jyväskylä and the region of Central Finland. The pre-conference programme on

30 November started with a visit to Keljonlahti power plant and continued with a seminar on bioenergy.

At the get-together we learned about the famous Finnish architect Alvar Aalto and visited one of his works, accompanied by music played by Marian Petrescu Trio.



The performance "River" of the Dance Theatre Kramppi during the opening.



The Finnish folk music played by KVARTTI, and the kantele-duo Väinämö-duo crafted atmosphere at the conference reception.



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