



Baltic Sea Region

Programme 2007–2013

Newsletter November 2013

Highlights

- Well on the way towards the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014–2020
- Approval procedure of the Operational Programme
- Seed Money Facility: interest at record high
- Review: Trans European Transport Network policy TEN-T Days 2013



Well on the way towards the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014–2020



Representatives from the programme countries met on 10–11 October 2013 in Berlin to prepare a decision on the Operational Programme by the Joint Programming Committee to be taken in December in Tallinn.

“We are well on the way to finalising the major parts of the programme document by December 2013”, says Kadri Jushkin, chair of the Joint Programming Committee (JPC). The Programme countries represented in the JPC recently agreed on the first draft of the Operational Programme (OP).

No major budget changes expected

The future programme budget is expected to be at a similar level as the current programme. Some 220 million EUR European funds were allocated for the period 2007–2013. The figures for 2014–2020 will be known in November. By that time the Member States will have decided how to share their national parts of EU funds among the different European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) programmes.

Objectives defined in line with Europe 2020

Further to the main topics of the future programme being set by the JPC in June 2013, the programme countries subsequently discussed a set of specific objectives (see diagram). These objectives derive from the Europe 2020 strategy – the first approach to aligning all EU funds to one joint goal: for the EU to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy.

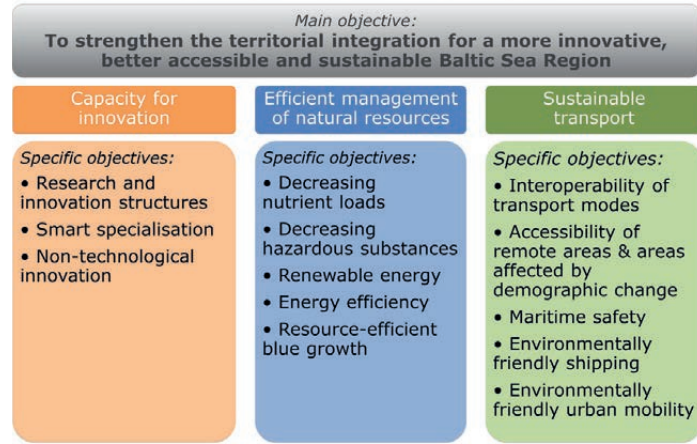
The Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014–2020 contributes to Europe 2020, in particular by providing co-financing for innovation, management of resources and sustainable transport (see objectives).

Anchoring regional strategies in the Programme

The Programme will continue to be one of the financing instruments to help implement projects under the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). In addition, Programme funding will be set aside to support the work of the Priority Action Coordinators and Horizontal Action Leaders of the EUSBSR. Furthermore, it is envisaged to continue the EUSBSR Seed Money Facility in a similar way but with Programme funding.

In addition, the Russian Northwest Federal District Development Strategy will play a special role. Representatives of the Russian Federation repeatedly indicated that Russia would like to participate in the programme on equal terms with the EU member states and Norway. Moreover,

Objectives of the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014–2020 (as of 10/2013)



considering only the EU Strategy would produce an incomplete picture of the region. Subsequently, the Task Force agreed that the development objectives of the Northwest Federal district, as part of the Baltic Sea region, would need to be better reflected in the Programme’s overall aims.

Next steps

The Managing Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat will revise the draft Operational Programme (OP) based on the comments made by the Task Force. In December 2013, the Joint Programming Committee will approve the major parts of the OP in anticipation that the new EU legislation will finally be adopted on 21 November as announced by the European Commission’s representatives.

In parallel, an assessment of the environmental effects of the implementation of the programme is being carried out.





Approval procedure of the Operational Programme

Any EU Programme has to comply with national and EU legislation on environmental standards. To this end, firstly, the environmental authorities in every country have to give an opinion on the draft of the Operational Programme (OP). The opinions are compiled in a report called "Strategic Environmental Assessment" (SEA). Following this, a public consultation process on the Operational Programme will be organised in every programme country. Information

on the public consultation will be available on eu.baltic.net. After the consultation comments have been reviewed, the Joint Programming Committee will be able to give the final approval of the Programme. The final draft will be sent back to the countries for single national approval by the responsible governments, and only afterwards, can the Programme be submitted to the European Commission. It is planned to launch the Programme in autumn 2014.



Colin Wolfe (2nd from left), head of unit of DG REGIO's Competence Centre Macro-regions and European Territorial Cooperation supported the discussion of suitable support mechanisms for the implementation of the EUSBSR during the task force meeting on 10 October.

Launching conference of the new Trans European Transport Network policy TEN-T Days 2013



Participants jointly travelled on the conference train from Riga to Tallinn. Photo by Ellen Kray

Around 1000 stakeholders in European transport policy met in Helsinki, Riga and Tallinn for discussion and networking on 15-18 October 2013. Prior to the main event in Tallinn, a meeting on the "motorways of the sea" started out in Helsinki and the Rail Baltica/Rail Baltic in Riga. The participants joined the conferences on the train (Riga-Tallinn) and on the ferry (Helsinki-Tallinn), and made their journey to the main conference event in Tallinn.

the launch conference of the TEN-T policy for the next programming period 2014-2020 and beyond, as it follows the general agreements on new TEN-T policy and the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) - its main EU financing vehicle. The new transport policy is more focussed than its TEN-T predecessor. It has a strong emphasis on the nine most important European transport (core) corridors, which need to be installed by 2030 prior to the broader (comprehensive) network expected to be finalised

by 2050. The financing vehicle CEF will be well equipped with 26 billion EUR (three times as much as before).

The transport projects and the transport cluster financed by the Baltic Sea Region Programme were present. The project partners are working on how to include the Baltic Sea regional development perspective into the stakeholder process foreseen for the development of TEN-T core corridors in the Baltic Sea region.



Transport projects of the Baltic Sea Region Programme met with policy officer Gudrun Schulze from DG Move (middle) and discussed possibilities to use regional BSR transport expertise in the stakeholder involvement process of TEN-T. Photo by Marina Rimpö

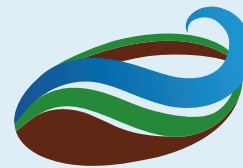


This year's annual TEN-T conference can be considered

Part-financed by the European Union
European Regional Development Fund and
European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument



Baltic Impulse Cluster



BALTIC IMPULSE



More than twenty people engaged in projects that deal with water quality issues decided, last year, to push forward their project work in a new project format: the project cluster.

This concept was implemented for the first time within the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013: projects dealing with related topics joined forces to synthesise their results and to increase their outcomes' visibility. Four clusters were set-up around the themes of "Energy", "Water", "Innovation" and "Transport". The water cluster "Baltic Impulse" has presented two publications, the results of a year of intense discussions and interaction and thus successfully concluding the cluster project.

Final Report: Sustainable resource management for a healthy Baltic Sea

The report deals with biogas, waste water and contaminated sediments as well as governance frameworks for water management. It is written for farmers, (waste) water managers, public authorities responsible for water management and many others.

It shows that we still have to go a long way if we want to "heal" the Baltic Sea by 2021, as the Baltic Sea Action Plan envisages. The authors summarise the main recommendations from nine transnational BSR projects tackling eutrophication and hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea: Baltic Compass, Baltic Deal, Baltic Manure, Beras Implementation, COHIBA, Presto, PURE, SMOCS and Waterpraxis.

Take a closer look at the outcomes of six years of cooperation between scientists, practitioners and decision-makers from eleven countries in the final report (electronic format only).



Brochure: Baltic Impulse – Saving the Baltic Sea Waters

How does transnational cooperation actually work? What do people gain from it? Who can contribute and in which ways? This brochure highlights some very specific examples: Farmers sharing techniques to reduce negative effects of farming on the Baltic Sea Water quality, waste water managers discussing how to handle ever increasing amounts of sludge, and scientists from the HELCOM community compiling knowledge essential for fighting hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea.



Publications online and offline

Both the final report and the brochure can be downloaded at <http://eu.baltic.net/Water.21793.html>. If you like the brochure, and would like to help us show others how transnational cooperation solves common problems around the Baltic Sea, please contact us at info@eu.baltic.net to receive print copies.





Seed Money Facility: interest at record high

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The first 14 seed money projects approved in June 2013 have started work towards future projects helping to reach the objectives of the ten priority areas of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (Innovation, Energy, Health, Education, SME, Tourism, Bio, Agri, Culture and Transport) and two horizontal actions (Neighbours, and Sustainable Development/Bio-economy). You will find more about the projects at <http://seed.eusbsr.eu/index.php/projects>.

The number of recent applications for Seed Money exceeds, by far, the available funds (0.6 million EUR). During the second decision round (April-September 2013), the Seed Money Secretariat received 68 eligible applications, requesting more than three million EUR funding from the Seed Money Facility. The applications cover a wide range of topics contributing to the majority of the Priority Areas and Horizontal Actions of the Action Plan of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The Priority Area Crime is an exception: there are no



Seed Money projects addressing this area so far. During November-December 2013 the Seed Money Committee will decide which projects are to receive funding.

The Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein, host of the Seed Money Secretariat, is currently in discussion with the European Commission on options for additional funds for seed money projects.



For **further information** please go to eu.baltic.net and feel free to contact the Joint Technical Secretariat.



Rostock office
Phone +49 381 45484 5281
Email info@eu.baltic.net

Riga office
Phone +371 67357373

Calendar of Programme events

Event	Date	Place
Annual Forum for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region	11-12 November 2013	Vilnius, Lithuania
Meeting of the Joint Programming Committee 2014-2020	3-4 December 2013	Tallinn, Estonia
Meeting of the Monitoring Committee for the Baltic Sea Region Programme	4 December 2013	Tallinn, Estonia



The Baltic Sea Programme 2007–2013 is investing in Europe's future by fostering sustainable growth of the region.