



# Baltic Sea Region

Programme 2007-2013

## Newsletter December 2012

### Highlights

- Five projects will receive grants for extension stage
- Next steps in the preparation for 2014-2020
- Seed money facility to start in February 2013
- Interview with Britta Schmigotzki, Project Manager
- Interview with Corinna Günther, Certifying Authority

### Five projects will receive grants for extension stage

Five projects received green light from the Monitoring Committee to start extension stage activities: ABOWE, Longlife Invest, Best Agers Lighthouses, Baltic Compact and PlasTEP+. The extension projects will implement investments and test solutions developed during their "main" stage.

The Monitoring Committee of the "Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013 met in Riga on 27 November 2012. The next meeting is planned for June 2013 in Estonia.



Ute Neumann, Eeva Rantama (JTS), Iruma Kravale (Monitoring Committee Chair, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia), Susanne Scherrer (MA/JTS)



Sebastian Stålfors (Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications of Sweden) and Ulf Savbäck (Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth) and Radomir Matczak (Marshal's Office of Pomorskie Region)



### Longlife Invest (extension of Longlife)

*The implementation of the planned Lithuanian Longlife pilot project as a dormitory for Klaipeda University*

The project will contribute to designing and constructing a new energy-efficient dormitory with minimised operational costs for the University of

Klaipeda. The technical building equipment purchased by the partners will be selected from the prototype catalogue (selection of pre-certified materials, innovative technologies) developed within the main stage project. The dormitory will be audited according to the benchmarks and standards of a sustainable building that were established by the Longlife main stage project.

### Total Project Budget:

1,535,000.00 €

### ERDF co-financing:

1,249,250.00 €

### Lead partner:

DE, University of Technology Berlin

### Project partners:

3 LT, 2 PL, 1 DE



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



**ABOWE**

(extension of REMOWE)

*Implementing Advanced Concepts for Biological Utilization of Waste*

The objective of this project is to test semi-industrial, mobile pilot plants for the two

technologies that were developed in the framework of the REMOWE project (biorefinery and dry digestion). The pilot plants will be designed, manufactured and tested with selected waste materials from selected potential investors.

**Total Project Budget:**

1,026,709.00 €

**ERDF co-financing:**

1,572,531.75 €

**Lead partner:**

FI, The Municipal Federation of Savonia University of Applied Sciences

**Project partners:**

1 EE, 1 SE, 1 DE, 1 PL, 1 FI, 1 LT

**PlasTEP+**

(extension of PlasTep)

*Attracting investments in plasma-based air and water cleaning technologies*

The main stage project PlasTEP aimed to increase awareness and support for plasma technology applications in the field of environmental

protection among the public and at policy level. During the extension stage 6 field tests will be carried out for different applications and different pollutants with regard to the reduction of NOx/SOx, volatile organic compounds (incl. odours), air pollution resulting from bio energy production, maritime supply and timber processing industries.

**Total Project Budget:**

313,265.00 €

**ERDF co-financing:**

242,198.75 €

**Lead partner:**

DE, Technology Centre Vorpommern

**Project partners:**

2 PL, 1 DE, 1 DK, 1 SE, 1 EE

**Best Agers Lighthouses**

(extension of Best Agers)

*Strategic Age Management for SME in the Baltic Sea Region*

In the main stage phase Best Agers developed strategies on how to make use of the huge potential of employees aged

55+. Based on these results, the extension stage project Best Agers Lighthouses focuses on active age management in companies. A jointly developed methodology to measure effects of pro-active age management will be applied in eight medium sized companies organised by the facilitating partners.

**Total Project Budget:**

1,300,344.21 €

**ERDF co-financing:**

1,650,974.98 €

**Lead partner:**

DE, Academy of Economics Schleswig-Holstein

**Project partners:**

3 DE, 3 LT, 2 FI, 1 LV, 1 PL, 1 SE

**Baltic COMPACT**

(extension of Baltic COMPASS)

*Collaborative management planning and action for agriculture and environment in the Baltic Sea Region*

Following up on the main stage project Baltic COMPASS, the project mainly aims

at introducing, testing and adapting a bottom-up management support concept in agro-environmental planning. At the same time, investments to demonstrate the conversion to advanced technical solutions related to biogas and drainage management will be implemented.

**Total Project Budget:**

1,937,738.63 €

**ERDF co-financing:**

1,513,050.79 €

**Lead partner:**

SE, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

**Project partners:**

2 LV, 1 SE, 1 DE, 1 DK, 1 FI

**Next steps in the preparation for 2014–2020**

**Legislation for 2014–2020**

The European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Council continue discussing the new legal framework for 2014–2020 following the principle of “nothing

is agreed before all is agreed”. The Joint Programming Committee (JPC) for the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014–202 is closely following the development, especially the European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) Regulation.

**Thematic focus of the Programme 2014–2020**

At its third meeting in Riga, on 27 and 28 November 2012, the Joint Programming Committee worked on the thematic focus of the future Programme.



The Joint Technical Secretariat of the current Baltic Sea Region Programme had carried out a survey among transnational organisations and institutions, enquiring about their needs and interests for future transnational cooperation.

In addition, a thorough analysis of relevant transnational and national strategies, policy papers and actions plans had been carried out by COWI Consulting as part of the ex-ante evaluation of the new Programme. The Programme will not only refer to Europe's growth strategy "EU 2020" focusing on the European Union to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy, and on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region as its macro-regional policy framework. The objectives of the Programme will also consider numerous other relevant development policies of the region including e. g. Russia's Northwest Strategy.

At its meeting, the Joint Programming Committee accepted the analysis presented by the JTS and by COWI, and added strategic national viewpoints

deriving from national development plans. As a result, it became obvious that at least the following three thematic objectives will be addressed by the new Programme including its future projects:

- Strengthening research, technological development and innovation
- Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency
- Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures

The list is not exhaustive. Further topics may be added in the course of the discussions, and when the final EU Regulations will have been adopted.

#### Next steps

The thematic objectives of the new Programme will be further developed by the Joint Technical Secretariat of the current Programme. The collection of relevant statistical data has not been completed yet; e. g. up-to-date data for Russia and Belarus are still lacking.



*Niels Bjerring Hansen (Danish Business Authority), Michael Koch-Larsen (Danish Regions), and Flemming Monberg Mouritsen (Danish Ministry of the Environment Agency for Spatial and Environmental Planning)*

The Joint Programming Committee's Task Force will meet in early 2013 to agree on further directions of the programming process, and to discuss draft proposals. It is also planned to organise thematic workshops with experts and stakeholders of the region to define more precisely the needs for transnational cooperation in the three given fields.

The next meeting of the Joint Programming Committee will be held in Estonia on 11-12 June 2013.

## Seed money for projects implementing the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region



Starting from February 2013 project ideas corresponding to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region can apply for support through a newly established seed money facility. The support will range from 30,000 to 50,000 euro and will be granted to partnerships consisting of at least three organisations for up to one year. In total 1.3 million euro will be made

available from a special budget deployed by the European Parliament. The fund will be managed by the Rostock office team of Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein also managing the Baltic Sea Region Programme. Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein (IB) is a non-profit making development bank owned by the German federal state of Schleswig-Holstein.

The facility is designed to support the preparation of applications to different EU and national funding sources e.g. the structural funds programmes 2014-2020. Seed money will cover planning of project activities and budget as

well as investigation of potential funding sources.

Interested organisations are invited to submit their application at any time. Funding decisions will be made four times a year by a group of stakeholders including the priority area coordinators of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. A website will soon be established. The Swedish Institute and the Council of the Baltic Sea States are also operating seed money facilities - yet of different nature. If you require additional information please contact us at [seed@eusbsr.eu](mailto:seed@eusbsr.eu) or visit the seed money website <http://seed.eusbsr.eu>.





**Interview with Britta Schmigotzki, Housing Initiative for Eastern Europe (IWO e.V.) in Berlin**



*Britta studied Urban and Regional Planning at the Technical University in Berlin and holds a postgraduate degree "MA in Central and Eastern European Studies" from the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. She has been working as a researcher and project manager in the field of housing in Central and Eastern Europe for more than 12 years. A special focus of her work is on the further development of large housing estates and the energy efficient refurbishment of multi-storey buildings. Since 2004, she's been a project manager at the Housing Initiative for Eastern Europe (IWO e.V.) in Berlin, where she coordinates, among others, projects "BEEN – Baltic Energy Efficiency Network for the Building Stock" and "Urb.Energy – Energy Efficient and Integrated Urban Development Action" – both part-financed by the Baltic Sea Region Programme.*

**What is the role of the Housing Initiative for Eastern Europe (IWO e.V.)?**

*It is an association of private and public partners who aim at a market-oriented and ecological development of the housing and construction economy in Eastern Europe. To reach this aim, IWO as a registered association and NGO implements and coordinates projects that provide solutions for the energy efficient refurbishment of the Eastern European multi-storey housing stock. Several of our projects are supported by the European Union.*

**What is your daily business?**

*My tasks are initiation and coordination of projects for the energy efficient refurbishment*

*(EER) of the housing stock. My special focus is on the new EU member states. Furthermore, I often act as an expert for EER within the projects.*

*I deal with the urgent need to improve structural and thermal efficiency of the multi-family housing stock constructed between 1950 and 1990 in Europe – this is particular the case in new EU member states and other post-communist countries as e.g. Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. At the same time, a large number of housing estates and their neighbourhoods are characterised by a rather poor quality of the residential environment and infrastructure facilities. All European cities are concerned - they have to make their housing stock and the surrounding urban structures more energy efficient in order to implement EU climate and energy policies.*

**How did your journey into the energy efficient refurbishment start?**

*The problem of low energy and structural quality of the multi-storey building stock in CEE and insufficient urban development planning is a legacy of Socialist times but has been aggravated by the housing and urban policies implemented (or better: not implemented) after 1990.*

*I was on a study visit in an Eastern European large housing estate in 1999 when coordinating my first Interreg IIC project for CADSES area. I noticed that the flats in multi-storey buildings had been privatised to the sitting tenants. People were satisfied, as ownership was seen as something valuable after so many years of Communism – the huge obligations and financial consequences did not matter. I was very sceptical that the residents with their mixed social background would be able to maintain and renovate their large buildings*

*and I was telling the responsible stakeholders e.g. in the municipalities that privatisation of flats constitutes an obstacle for the organisation of renovation measures. Nobody was really listening to this. In the meantime, most stakeholders in the new EU member states are aware of the problems privatisation has brought... Unfortunately, housing ownership still prevails (in most CEE countries over 90%) and no functioning rental or social housing markets exist...*

**Is there a solution?**

*Together with the partners in the Urb.Energy project we examined the question of how to upgrade these residential areas. Some of the partners already had substantial experience as for example, from the mid-1990s on, large parts of the prefabricated buildings in Eastern Germany were subject to extensive refurbishment programmes. Within the Urb.Energy project, the partners analysed such existing approaches and even more important, prepared Integrated Urban Development Concepts (IUDC) for selected pilot areas. Each pilot area identified its specific problems, prepared the concept, took out certain aspects of the IUDC and prepared an investment concept that is intended to be implemented after the finalisation of URB.Energy.*

**What is an Integrated Urban Development Concept?**

*Firstly, the municipal stakeholders supported by experts and planners examine both - problems and potentials in the residential areas. They analyse relevant aspects for the development of the neighbourhood or district, e.g. demographic conditions, environment, infrastructure, buildings. Then they set targets and check what can be realistically implemented in a particular time period and*



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*with existing support instruments. Residents of the area shall be involved in the process and introduced to the results and ideas.*

*An IUDC is a basis for major and minor measures that shall be implemented in urban neighbourhoods. Energy efficiency is one important criterion in an IUDC. The concepts have no legal implications (compared to e.g. land-use plans). Yet, they are a commonly used planning approach to deal with urban districts. After the project partners complete their analysis for the selected pilot areas, they drafted IUDCs and prepare concepts on how to implement selected measures. Now they intend to start with smaller or larger investments.*

**Who will benefit from these measures?**

*Beneficiaries of the Urb.Energy concepts are municipalities and residents. The problem of low energy efficiency and waste of energy is especially relevant for the residents living in the flats and paying an ever increasing share of their monthly income on energy. The municipalities need to start the implementation of strategies and policies for the sustainable development of their urban neighbourhoods in order to tackle current problems in their cities. The IUDCs*

*developed by the partners will also support other municipalities in their tasks. Those responsible for the energy efficient refurbishment of residential buildings, i.e. city administrations, housing associations, building administrators, and the residents, need to deal with the problems in the building stock and they can use the Urb. Energy results to create energy efficient urban neighbourhoods in their cities.*

*Due to information and awareness campaigns which were implemented in the partner countries on local and national levels, the various stakeholder, incl. local residents, gained a different perspective on the issues of energy efficiency in buildings and on possible ways for improving the residential neighbourhood.*

**Did your job change a lot during the project life?**

*My job has not changed much - we still strive to improve the housing situation in Eastern Europe. There is still a lot to do. Our focus changed slightly and we fortunately see increased recognition with the EU as regards the topic "energy efficiency in buildings and urban areas". Currently, we pay more attention to the implementation of measures. After two projects supported by the Baltic Sea*

*Region Programme (BEEN and Urb.Energy) which provided the strategic background for increased energy efficiency in residential buildings and urban neighbourhoods we now aim for an actual realisation of investment measures. Unfortunately, the extension stage of Urb.Energy project - Urb.Energy.ACT - was rejected by the Baltic Sea Region Programme. The partners were very disappointed.*

**Given what you know now: Would you have acted differently back then? Would you do this again?**

*When looking back at a period of three years of work and cooperation I can of course see things that could have been done differently. But I think it's the best to learn and then improve in the future. And our joint work was really a success and a pilot approach for BSR cities. And yes, I would like to start a project again - now the focus would be slightly different - as we learned how valuable and motivating small pilot investment projects are, which have the potential to be multiplied all over the BSR, the partnership now strives for activities with tangible results, i.e. buildings and urban areas that are more energy efficient and climate friendly, providing an improved quality of life.*

**Baltic Sea Region Programme gathers stakeholder feedback via online survey**

As part of the preparation for the new programme period 2014-2020 the JTS has conducted a series of three online surveys to gather feedback from lead partners, project partners, first level controllers and other actors of the Baltic Sea Region Programme on the project level.

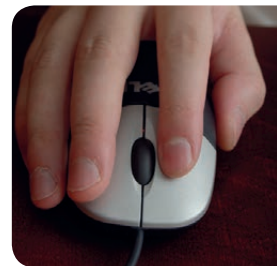
The surveys focused on topics such as financial reporting and first level control, the quality of

support provided by the Joint Technical Secretariat, the application process, activity reporting and the project management toolkit.

In total 618 of 3,000 stakeholders participated in the first two surveys, which equals an acceptable response rate of 21%. Valuable comments, practical experience and lessons learned were received that will feed the preparation

process of the future Baltic Sea Region Programme.

The third survey will be completed on 16 December. Afterwards the detailed evaluation of opinions and suggestions for simplification and facilitation of the future Baltic Sea Region Programme will begin. The results of the survey will be published in the beginning of 2013.



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**News from the Joint Technical Secretariat**

**Fiona Alsfasser**  
Programme Assistant



On 1 July, Fiona Alsfasser started her work as Programme Assistant at the JTS. She is replacing Edith Belusa during her maternity leave. Fiona was born in Bremen and studied Translations (Russian/English) and European Law at Ruprecht-Karls-University Heidelberg and Far Eastern State University Vladivostok.

Ute Neumann has returned from her maternity leave and continues her work as Programme Manager.

The flyer "Projects join forces in clusters" is now available for download at <http://eu.baltic.net/Publications.191.html>!



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*We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a successful start into the Year 2013!*



**Interview with Corinna Günther, Certifying Authority (CA) of the Baltic Sea Region Programme**



**What is your background?**  
*I studied business administration at the University of Applied Sciences in Wismar, where I obtained my diploma in 2005. My focus has been on accounting and controlling. Since 2003, I have been working for the Baltic Sea Region Programme.*

**What are your tasks as Certifying Authority?**  
*I have various tasks within my position. Most notably, I am responsible for the accounting towards the EU Commission and for requesting new funding for both - technical assistance and our projects. Within my position, I am also another control body at programme level. I am also responsible for liquidity management, reporting towards the Commission and other stakeholders, for running the accounts, documentation of payment flows and statistics, and for representing the programme at external and internal events. What is most interesting for the projects, though, is probably that I am the responsible person for initiating the payments to the projects. So, as soon as the treatment of a progress report is finished, I am the one who takes care that the projects receive their money!*

**You are also acting as a control body. What does this mean?**  
*EU funded programmes have several control bodies to ensure compliance with the Community and National eligibility rules. The aim of the checks performed by the Certifying Authority is to*

*verify that all projects' expenditure which is declared to the European Commission (Annex X of Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1828/2006) by the Certifying Authority is refundable. This includes checking whether the amounts declared have been paid by the project partners, whether all underlying transactions were lawful and all supporting documents were available and will be available for at least three years after the closure of the Baltic Sea Region Programme.*

*In order to ensure the fulfilment of these requirements, the CA is entitled to examine the reliability of the declared expenditure and first level control confirmations of projects' progress reports. This will be done through desk checks and where necessary on the spot at MA or intermediate body levels.*

**What are the most common issues you have to deal with?**  
*Most of my working time is devoted to liquidity management, making payments, and reporting towards other stakeholders. A significant share of my work also goes to updating statistics of various kinds.*

**Is there some advice you would like to give to our projects?**  
*Speaking from my own experience, there are actually two advices I would like to give to our projects in order to prevent unnecessary problems. First of all, do always document things properly in case of checks by third parties – you will find it much easier to respond to all kinds of questions if you did your documentation right from the beginning! And second, do always expect the unexpected... you might get checked by a third party when you least expect it, so be prepared. Good luck to all of you – I wish you a very successful project implementation!*