



## CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IS A GO?

50 applications received during the first call of the Programme

In general presentations, we always emphasize that although our Programme consists of the Central Baltic Programme, the Southern Finland – Estonia Sub-programme and the Archipelago and Islands Sub-programme, these three parts form the one Central Baltic INTERREG IV A Programme – or, more simply, 1+1+1 is 1. If 1+1+1 is 1, then 25+20+5 is also 1, as during the recently closed first call for applications we received 25 project applications for the Central Baltic Programme, 20 for the Southern Finland – Estonia Sub-programme and 5 for the Archipelago and Islands Sub-programme. One could continue with statistical data concerning the average budget, number of project partners, etc., these projects have. However, focusing on such kind of data, one might easily forget that cross-border cooperation is more than figures, and that the success of cross-border cooperation and herewith the Central Baltic INTERREG IV A Programme 2007-2013 depends on the quality and impact of the projects to be funded rather than on the number of received applications or amount of allocated money. To ensure high quality, the projects which will receive co-financing must be carefully chosen by the Programme's three Steering Committees, this requiring a thorough and detailed assessment of the project applications. At present, this important task is conducted by the Joint Technical Secretariat with, first, the technical admissibility and, if passed, the content assessment. Finally, the Steering Committees will choose the most qualitative and strategically relevant projects to make the Central Baltic area an area where people want to live, work and invest.

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Cross-border cooperation is a go? No! Cross-border cooperation is already ongoing. Cross-border cooperation starts much earlier than with the positive funding decision. Cross-border cooperation starts already at the moment when two project partners from different countries or regions meet for the first time to discuss their project idea and possible application for the Central Baltic or any other cross-border cooperation programme. Cross-border cooperation starts with the joint development of the project idea and application. One could say that the approval by the Steering Committee is awarding already successfully conducted cross-border cooperation rather than being the starting point for it. However, also projects which are not approved for co-financing under the 1st call for applications in the Central Baltic INTERREG IV A Programme 2007-2013 should not be overly disappointed despite the negative Steering Committee decision. Such a funding decision can also be seen as a starting point to improve and further develop the original project idea and application for a later call for applications, taking into account the reasons behind the rejection (which will be communicated to each project individually). And it can not be said often enough that there is no harm being in close contact with the Joint Technical Secretariat during the drafting of a project application. In this regard, let me invite you to contact us and use our services whenever necessary.



*Merike Niitepõld from the JTS Sub-secretariat Tallinn consulting with project developers from Turku Provincial Museum.*

● **Philipp Schwartz**

*Head of the Joint Technical Secretariat*

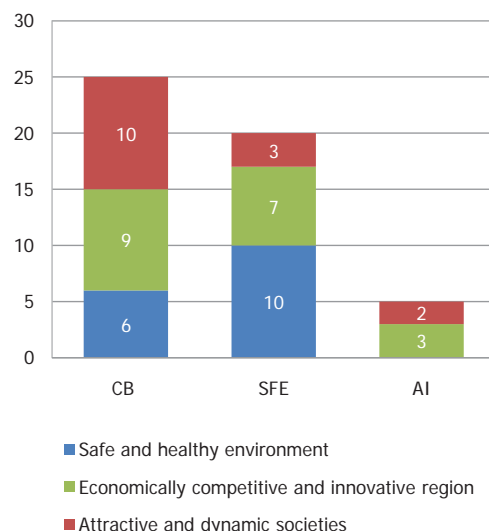
### First call for project applications was open June 18 - September 18, 2008

*The Joint Technical Secretariat of the Central Baltic INTERREG IV A Programme received 50 applications during the first call for applications applying for 37.5 MEUR of ERDF funding from the Programme in total. The average planned budget for a single project is 960.000 EUR of which the applied ERDF funding is on average 750.000 EUR (78 %).*

*The assessment of the applications is ongoing. The funding decisions will be taken by the Steering Committees of each (sub-)programme in mid-December 2008.*

CB Central Baltic Programme  
 SFE Southern Finland - Estonia Sub-programme  
 AI Archipelago and Islands Sub-programme

**Number of received applications by (sub-)programme and priority**





## WHERE DO EU PROGRAMMES COME FROM?

### Preparing the Central Baltic INTERREG IV A Programme 2007-2013

The idea of a Central Baltic programme started emerging soon after the Commission had published its proposals for regulations of the programme period 2007-2013 during the summer of 2004. Higher ambitions for territorial cooperation – previously known as Interreg – were announced. New rules increased the number of eligible regions, especially in Sweden. Was there going to be many new programmes or should the aim be to form larger entities, based on previous programmes? The Commission and Sweden clearly favoured the latter. There was also clear interest in Sweden for cooperation with regions in the Baltic states. At the same time, the viability of the small Skargarden programme was put into question. In spring 2005, an idea to adjoin the Interreg IIIA programmes Southern Finland – Estonia and Skargarden was presented. Later that year, the responsible national authorities of Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Sweden and Åland got together to discuss the possibility of an even larger programme, incorporating additional areas from Sweden and Latvia. In December 2005, an initial agreement was reached on starting the preparation of a Central Baltic programme, strongly supported by the Commission.

Preparation of the new programme was launched in spring 2006. In the mandate to the relevant national and regional authorities, the member states defined the programme area, sub-programme structure and main features of the management structure, including the appointment of the Regional Council of Southwest Finland to act as Managing Authority of the programme. The Regional Council was given the practical responsibility for coordinating the programming process. A Joint Programming Committee (JPC), consisting of representatives of all core partners was to have the overall responsibility for the preparation and be supported by four working groups.

Between June 2006 and March 2007, the JPC held four meetings and the working groups over thirty meetings. In addition, three meetings were held with the Commission

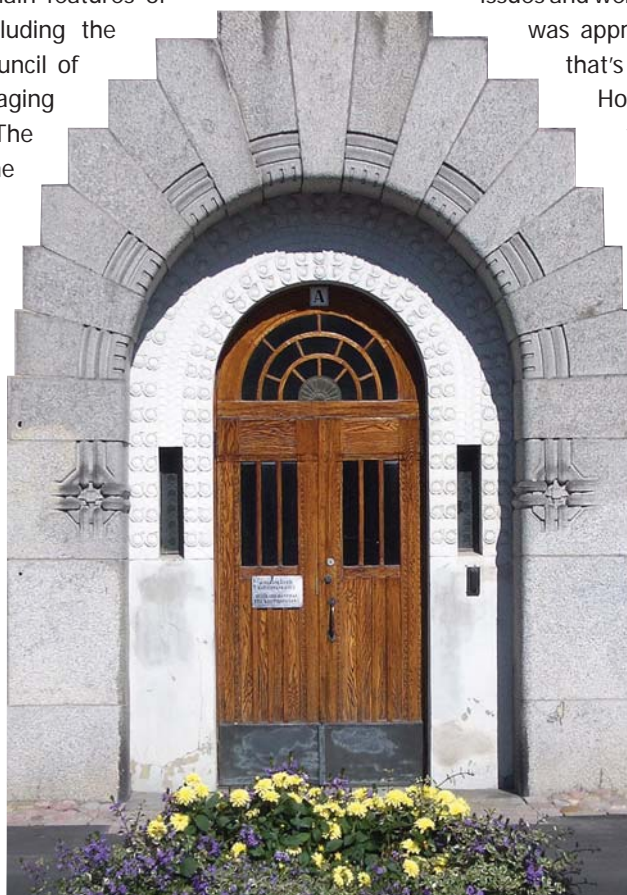
services. An ex-ante evaluation and strategic environmental assessment were carried out by an external evaluator. Public consultations were arranged in early 2007 in all participating countries. The JPC agreed on the general content of the programme at its meeting in March 2007 and set up a smaller group to finalise it. The programme was formally submitted to the European Commission on 19 June 2007.

The preparation of the programme can be characterized as a highly interactive process involving all core partners in the area, an active dialogue between programming bodies and the ex ante evaluators and the Commission, and extensive input from the wider public. Those participating in the various preparation bodies could give accounts of intensive discussions, where initial confusion gradually gave way for a common understanding of aims, strategies and structures. Given the large and complicated programme area and the partly new partnership with varying interests and different experience from programme work, it can be seen as an achievement in itself that a final programme draft could be agreed only a few months behind the original schedule.

Due to the active involvement of the Commission in the preparation process, consultations on the submitted programme could be concentrated on a few management issues and went rather smoothly. The programme was approved on December 21, 2007 and that's where this brief account ends.

However, an enormous amount of work has been done since autumn 2007 to put all the practical arrangements in place for implementing the programme. Now we are finally getting into the "meat" of the programme – selecting those projects for funding that will give the biggest contribution to the attainment of programme goals. The journey has just begun.

● **Harry Ekestam**  
Chairman of the  
Monitoring Committee



3 weeks

4 countries

5 events

## Central Baltic INTERREG IV A Programme launched by 460 people in May-June

The long and intensive Programme preparation came to its end when the implementation of the end result, the Central Baltic INTERREG IV A Programme 2007-2013, was launched officially at altogether five events in the participating countries in June 2008. The events were a success and gathered over 460 people interested in the Programme and its future.

### Main Launch Event Turku, May 29, 2008



*Per-Olof Berg from Sweden giving insights on the second priority of the Programme: an economically competitive and innovative region*



*Mikko Fritze from Estonia presented ideas behind the cultural capital year 2011 in Tallinn*

### Riga Opening Event June 11, 2008



### Tallinn Opening Event June 13, 2008



### Mariehamn Opening Event June 16, 2008



### Stockholm Opening Event June 18, 2008



*Presentations and more photos at [www.centralbaltic.eu](http://www.centralbaltic.eu)*

## DIFFERENT VIEWPOINTS TO THE PROGRAMME

### ON A LARGE SCALE

#### News from the closest neighbouring cooperation programmes

Now that the first call for projects for the Central Baltic Programme is closed, it could be interesting to have a look at the first calls of some of the neighbouring programmes and, in this way, set the Programme within its larger context.

*The South Baltic Programme*, financing cooperation between regions in Southern Sweden, Denmark, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Polish coast regions and Lithuania, received 17 applications in the first call and approved 4 of these. The second call will be launched as from 20 October. For more information, click [www.southbaltic.eu](http://www.southbaltic.eu).

The transnational *Baltic Sea Region Programme* has closed its first call, resulting in 109 applications. The project selection meeting will be held on 23 October. In that meeting, the timing of the second call will also be decided. The highest number of applications was received for the priority "Attractive and competitive cities and regions" (43) and for priority "Fostering innovations" (37). Partners from Russia and/or Belarus are involved in 86 project proposals. For more information, click [www.eu.baltic.net](http://www.eu.baltic.net).

The *Estonia-Latvia Cross-border Programme* approved its first five projects in June; a further 2 projects were approved in September. For this programme, the applications can be submitted any time – no calls are organised. For more information, click [www.estlat.eu](http://www.estlat.eu).

For information on all territorial cooperation programmes of the EU, have a look at the Inforegio webpage of Directorate-General Regional Policy of the European Commission at [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/cooperation](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperation), where you can also follow the preparations of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

● **Ulla Ropponen**

*European Commission, DG Regio*

### on a small scale

#### Working days at the Joint Technical Secretariat

From the very first days, life at the Joint Technical Secretariat has been busy: the phone has been ringing, emails have been coming in and the calendar has filled up with appointments.

Much of our work consists of contacts with project applicants or people who want to get to know the Programme. In order to respond to this need, we have already carried out a number of different seminars in the Programme region. We will continue with seminars, info stands and other ways of being visible, giving out information and reaching potential applicants.

Consultations with project developers are maybe the most interesting part of the job. There is such a variety of themes, activities and partnerships! The main challenge for us now is that we are doing everything for the very first time. Many surprising questions pop up, and we need to react quickly.

We deal with projects at every stage of their life-cycle: we support the development of projects, assess project ideas and support and monitor projects when they are up and running. So far we have only dealt with the very first stage of the cycle. As we'll move to the next stages soon it will be fascinating to follow projects from start to finish.

The JTS will be approachable and helpful throughout a project's lifespan. After all, we and the projects work for the same aim: carrying out good projects that make the Central Baltic INTERREG IV Programme 2007-2013 a success in its own right.

● **Merike Niitepõld**

*JTS Sub-secretariat Tallinn*

# INTRODUCTION TO THE JOINT TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT (JTS)

Who does what in the Secretariat?

## Main office, Turku Finland



**Philipp Schwartz**  
*Head of the JTS*

All contact information  
available at  
[www.centralbaltic.eu](http://www.centralbaltic.eu)



**Bo Storränk**  
*Programme Manager*  
Central Baltic Programme



**Tiina Keinänen**  
*Programme Coordinator*  
Central Baltic Programme



**Sonja Palhus**  
*Project Coordinator*  
SFE and AI  
Sub-programmes



**Linda Talve**  
*Information and*  
*Communications Officer*



**Niina Hedborg**  
*Financial Officer*



**Maria Pikkarainen**  
*Financial and*  
*Administrative Assistant*

## Sub-secretariat Mariehamn, Åland



**Ann Nedergård**  
*Programme Manager*  
Archipelago and Islands Sub-programme

## Sub-secretariat Tallinn, Estonia



**Merike Niitepõld**  
*Programme Manager*  
Southern Finland-Estonia Sub-programme

**Johan Ahlbäck**  
*Project Coordinator*  
Archipelago and Islands Sub-programme  
Starting on November 1, 2008

**Liina Tuulik**  
*Project Coordinator*  
Southern Finland-Estonia Sub-programme  
Starting on October 22, 2008

## Info Point Riga, Latvia



**Signe Raikstīņa**  
*Info Point Manager*

## Info Point Stockholm, Sweden



**Annika Claesson**  
*Info Point Manager*  
  
*Info Point Coordinator, recruitment ongoing*

## BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE PROGRAMME



### 1/5: REGIONAL COUNCIL OF SOUTHWEST FINLAND

#### Active involvement in regional and international issues

The Regional Council of Southwest Finland represents a form of regional governance which is based on the Finnish model where the highest decision-making belongs to the democratically elected Assembly of Regional Council and Board of the Regional Council. The national duties and responsibilities of the Regional Council have grown in the recent years. In addition to this, the Council has been honoured to receive new, challenging tasks of EU programme implementation, which we have accepted with great pleasure.

During the first part of year 2006, Estonia, Finland/Åland, Latvia and Sweden mandated the Regional Council of Southwest Finland for the Central Baltic INTERREG IV A Programme's duties of the Managing, Certifying and Audit Authorities. This is a notable increase to the more ordinary duties of the Council which, among other things, consist of regional development, spatial planning and promotion of regional interests. With the increase of tasks, the number of staff is growing from nearly 50 to over 60 employees, and the financial responsibility and volume of the payments to the project-owners are multiplying the number of monetary transactions. It is of major importance to the Regional Council to implement the Programme in a fluent and flawless way to the satisfaction of both the European Commission and the Member States/Åland.

Through the implementation of the Programme, the Council is also strengthening the international status of Southwest-Finland especially in the Baltic Sea Region.



Southwest Finland is already the most "Baltic" province of Finland for many historical reasons. This has been stated in our strategy, according to which the development of the new, growing economic area of the Baltic Sea region is essential. Special attention is being paid to the environmental state of the Baltic Sea, economic integration and the development and safety of sea transportation, as well as to the intensification of cooperation in the field of research and development. The role of the Council as the Managing Authority responsible for the implementation of the Central Baltic INTERREG IV A Programme is creating excellent opportunities for tightening the interrelations of the region. The new Programme will also open up significant financial resources for joint projects. A programme of over 100 MEUR makes it possible to achieve concrete and tangible results not only in Southwest Finland but throughout the programme area.

I am pleased with the challenge offered to the Regional Council and wish everyone involved in and implementing the Programme the greatest success. I am especially looking forward to new, innovative, effective and sustainable projects. I fully agree with the European Regional Development Fund's slogan "Investing in your future", and hope that the funding channelled by the Central Baltic INTERREG IV A Programme will bring about a great deal competitiveness and attractiveness to the region.

● **Juho Savo**

*The Region Mayor of Southwest Finland*



**The Central Baltic INTERREG IV A Programme 2007-2013**

...is a new cross-border co-operation programme under the European Territorial Cooperation Objective with an allocation from the European Regional Development Fund of more than 100 MEUR for the years 2007-2013. The Programme gives out funding to projects with project partners from at least two of the participating countries.

**Participating countries:**

- Estonia
- Finland including Åland
- Latvia
- Sweden

**The Programme has three parts:**

- Central Baltic Programme
- Southern Finland – Estonia Sub-programme
- Archipelago and Islands Sub-programme

**The common priorities of the Programme**

- Safe and healthy environment
- Economically competitive and innovative region
- Attractive and dynamic societies

**The Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS)**

The JTS has its staff of 14 people spread over 5 locations: Turku/Finland, Mariehamn/Åland, Tallinn/Estonia, Riga/Latvia and Stockholm/Sweden.

The JTS assists project preparation and implementation. Read more about the staff on page 6 of this newsletter.

**The Programme language**

...is English. All official documents of the Programme are therefore in English only.

The JTS does provide consultation and information in all the languages of the Programme area.

**More information:**

...and the possibility to subscribe to the Programme's mailing list

[www.centralbaltic.eu](http://www.centralbaltic.eu)

**The Managing Authority (MA)**

The MA with its 3 employees is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the Programme. The MA is located within the Regional Council of Southwest Finland.

**The Certifying Authority (CA)**

The CA consists of two people and is responsible for approving the statements of expenditure and payment claims. The CA is located within the Regional Council of Southwest Finland.

**The Audit Authority (AA)**

The AA is a one-man office responsible for verifying the functioning of the management and control systems. The AA is located within the Regional Council of Southwest Finland.

