

# Strengthening Innovation Governance in Baltic Non-metropolitan Regions through Transnational Cooperation

# BSR

## InnoReg

Newsletter II / November 2011



BSR InnoReg partners in the final meeting in Brussels in June 2011

## BSR InnoReg – Did we achieve what we set out to do?

When BSR InnoReg started in 2009, the project consortium set out to execute a work plan that had three special focuses. With active participation of all project partners and stakeholders, all the goals of the project were achieved. Here is an overview of what the BSR InnoReg network has accomplished.

### 1) Strategic transnational approach to innovation promotion

The challenges of innovation promotion and business development organisations in non-metropolitan regions as well as innovation cooperation in the Baltic Sea region were discussed in the Baltic InnoReg Forum in Riga, Latvia, 18 June 2010. A year later, the Baltic Innovation Policy Memorandum, one of the main outputs of the project, was launched in the Baltic Innovation Policy Seminar in Brussels, Belgium, 16 June 2011. There is more information on the seminar on the next page.

### 2) Competence building for business development organisations (BDOs)

Based on the development processes in partner regions, BDOs' key competences for the future were identified (e.g. strategic thinking, informational competences, project management and networking skills, partnership competence, and international competence). The essence of BDOs' competence needs can be summarised as follows: "The win-

ner in this reality show is well-informed, ready for changes and ready to provide services for tomorrow's demand."

BSR InnoReg also organised four Transnational Training Modules (TTMs) for BDOs on topics like creativity, financing and support for start-up companies, and networking. The experiences of the TTMs were transformed into a training programme.

### 3) Innovation support tools and practices

Various innovation support measures were developed and tested by partners. The results were compiled into a handbook under topics such as user-driven innovation and living labs, innovation voucher models, start-up support and involving students in innovation processes.

Please read more on the following pages and online on the project website!

Johanna Vannes  
The Baltic Institute of Finland

# Baltic Innovation Policy Seminar

## Showcasing Regional Contribution to Europe 2020



As a closing event of a very successful project led by the Baltic Institute of Finland, the BSR InnoReg consortium organised the Baltic Innovation Policy Seminar in Brussels 16 June 2011. Around 100 representatives of regional and EU level decision makers and stakeholders from the fields of regional and economic development and innovation policy attended the seminar.

In the seminar, both current and future challenges in economic development and innovation promotion in the Baltic Sea region were discussed. The Baltic Innovation Policy Memorandum and its recommendations to further enhance economic development and foster effective innovation support measures in the Baltic Sea region served as a basis for discussion.

Speakers like Ms Pauliina Haijanen from the Committee of the Regions, Mr Anders Lindholm from DG Regio, European Commission, and Ms Anneli Pauli from DG Research & Innovation, European Commission,

welcomed the work of BSR InnoReg as very valuable for reaching the goals of Europe 2020 and its Innovation Union flagship. The Memorandum encourages non-metropolitan regions to invest in smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and to make long-term commitments to regional innovation cooperation.

BSR InnoReg is also appreciated to be the first finalised project co-financed by the EU Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007–2013 that has been prepared and implemented fully in line with the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

You can study the Baltic Innovation Policy Memorandum at [www.baltic.org/bsrinnoreg/mou](http://www.baltic.org/bsrinnoreg/mou)

Johanna Vannes  
The Baltic Institute of Finland

## Innovation Promotion in Baltic Non-metropolitan Regions

BSR InnoReg has brought together regional decision-makers to discuss the grand challenges' impact on the Baltic Sea region and to agree on the areas of activities that need to be strengthened through cooperation.

The key idea is that non-metropolitan areas need to create their own development policies. They need to be committed to long-term development activities and they need to emphasise quality to maximise the value of the human capital structure in all regions. We all need to work together to achieve this.

A clear regional profile can only be created by the region itself. Competitiveness depends increasingly on regional strengths and special qualities that need to be promoted regionally and globally. The combination of being globally competitive and regionally rooted strengthens the vision of the future. Quality and speed of regional development activities determine the regional responses to grand challenges.

The Baltic Innovation Policy Memorandum highly underlines the ever growing importance of quality human capital structure in the region. In the best case, it affects not only skills, competences and motivation of employees, but also attitudes, behaviour and comprehension, relational capital and organisational capital. In addition to education, lifelong learning and support of entrepreneurial culture, I would include in this category all new modes of innovation, as well as social and organisational competences.

Most innovation strategies target fast growing high-tech sectors. However, not all non-metropolitan regions have strong capabilities in these sectors. Services are the biggest, but often neglected sector in most of the countries and regions around the Baltic Sea. Many of the service sector activities, such as tourism and creative industries, are also growing quite rapidly. Small investment in innovation can produce significant added value.

Baltic Sea region cooperation in innovation policy has proven to be useful for metropolitan and non-metropolitan regions alike. However, there are still many opportunities and advantages provided by cooperation, which have not yet been fully exploited.

Moreover, regional decision-makers play a crucial role in supporting the development and competitiveness of the region. I highly invite all decision-makers to use this role at all emerging opportunities and levels. The

Memorandum provides you with recommendations which resulted from the common discussions. Do not hesitate to forward this message to support interaction and collaboration within the Baltic Sea region.



Marja-Riitta Mattila-Nurmi  
Council of Tampere Region

## BSR InnoReg in the Regions

### Brandenburg, Germany

In April 2011, ZAB - Brandenburg Economic Development Board together with the technology and start-up support centre in Neuruppin invited regional actors of the Ruppiner region, in the northwest of Brandenburg, to a get-together on the topic "electro mobility in the Ruppiner region". In the context of the BSR InnoReg project, ZAB supported the initiative "e-mobil" that concentrated on the development of new solutions in the mobility sector with the help of electro mobility and the focus on the Ruppiner region.

As a first step, the group of actors including companies from the energy sector, business development organisations and a hospital, concentrated on the networking of tourism and electro mobility in the Ruppiner region. In the workshop, the state of the art of electro mobility in the region was presented, participants were sensitised to the topic in order to remove prejudice, and people were brought together to find new partners.

The German newsletter of "e-mobil" can be downloaded under <http://www.tgz-neuruppin.de/medien/pdf/emob/emobnews.pdf>.

### Podlaskie Region, Poland

As part of their BSR InnoReg activities, the Podlaska Regional Development Foundation organised a study visit to Tampere, Finland for local authorities and representatives business development organisations. The study visit was planned in close cooperation with the Council of Tampere Region and 12 people travelled from Poland to Finland.



In Tampere, the participants visited the New Factory where they were introduced to the Demola project that brings together students of different disciplines and businesses to develop products and services and to solve real-life problems. The group also heard about innovation policy in Tampere region and visited Hervanta Science Park Campus, Nokia Innovation Center, and Tampere University of Technology.

Discussion on cooperation possibilities continues and the next step is a study visit from Tampere to Podlaskie region.



## Handbook on Innovation Support Tools & Practices – A Toolkit for BDOs

Within the BSR InnoReg project, the partner regions jointly developed and tested new innovation support instruments targeting user-driven and customer-oriented innovation, start-up financing and utilising of students in innovation processes. The Handbook on Innovation Support Tools & Practices summarises all the piloted activities, as well as the experiences gathered and recommendations formulated during the project lifetime.

The Handbook can help other business development organisations (BDOs) to develop their strategy and encourage them to test their own innovation support instruments.



Electro mobility in Brandenburg

### Riga, Latvia

The Latvian BSR InnoReg final seminar was jointly organised by the Latvian Technological Centre, State Regional Development Agency and Latvian Investment and Development Agency with active participation of the BSR InnoReg project partners from other countries. It took place in Riga, 6 June 2011. More than 70 representatives of business development organisations (BDOs), regional governments and other stakeholders participated in the event.

The main topic of the seminar was "Innovation Support Tools & Practices". During the event, a ceremonial signing of the Baltic Innovation Policy Memorandum by representatives of all regions of Latvia and two development agencies of Latvia took place. Project partners from different countries gave an overview of the pilot actions, results, shared experiences and lessons learnt throughout the project lifetime. They also made recommendations for organising similar activities in the future and discussed the opportunities for collaboration in order to increase the competitiveness of the Baltic Sea region.

During the seminar, a television group made a short video film on the seminar reflecting most interesting moments and making interviews with participants. The video film can be found on YouTube with the search words "BSR InnoReg innovaciju forums".



Signing of the Memorandum in Latvia



The handbook can be downloaded in English, German, Latvian and Lithuanian at [www.baltic.org/bsrinnoreg/handbook](http://www.baltic.org/bsrinnoreg/handbook)

Theresa Gleich  
ZAB - Brandenburg Economic Development Board



## BSR InnoReg Says Thank You

Throughout the project lifetime, we have been blessed with interested, supportive and experienced people that we have encountered in various seminars, workshops and networking events. It has been a pleasure to work with all of you and we would not have succeeded in achieving the project goals without external support and advice.

Special thanks go out to the Project Advisory Group, to the signatories of the Baltic Innovation Policy Memorandum, all the speakers and participants of our events and everybody who has contributed to our activities.

Looking forward to the next cooperation possibility

The BSR InnoReg Project Consortium



## Contact information

In any matters concerning the BSR InnoReg project, its outputs or possible cooperation requests, please contact:

Johanna Vannes  
Project Manager  
The Baltic Institute of Finland  
johanna.vannes@tampere.fi  
+358 50 516 0536