



Baltic Sea Region (BSR) Programme 2007-2013. Priority 1: Fostering of innovations across the BSR

Project # 35 “INTERCOUNTRY BUSINESS INCUBATOR NETWORK” (“IBI Net”)

Lead partner: Riga Planning Region (Latvia)

Partners:

LATVIA: Riga Technical University

SWEDEN: Teknikdalen Foundation

POLAND: Municipality of Elblag City

GERMANY: Technology Centre of Western Pomerania

BELARUS: State Enterprise „Scientific - Technological Park BNTU „Polytechnic””

NORWAY: Innovation Centre Hedmark

Associated partner: RUSSIA: State institution „Leningrad Region Business Support Centre”

Project duration: 30 months / **Implementing period:** December, 2009 - June, 2012

Budget: BSR Programme 2007-2013 co-finances the project and its total budget is 677 050 EUR, including:

- Co-financing of European Regional Development Fund: 507 800 EUR
- Co-financing of European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument 2007-2013: 100 450 EUR
- Norwegian partners' co-financing: 68 800 EUR

Aims: “IBI Net” project aims at establishment and strengthening the trans-national business incubator network in BSR – the platform for continuous exchange of information, know-how and technologies in order to foster development of innovative and export oriented SMEs in the BSR.

Summary: Within the broader BSR development agenda the project will lessen differences in innovation performance and smoothening co-operation and coordination efforts among business support services, especially those provided by business incubators (BIs). The project results will advance entrepreneurship in BSR through increased quality and effectiveness of BI services. The project partnership will decrease the gap between the older and newer economies through transfer of best practices and management tools of BI from the partners from the West to East, Belorussia and Russia including. BI in partner countries have passed the so called ‘foundation’ and ‘development’ phase in creating physical incubation environments and relationship building to ensure the flow of business entities through BI. However, mature incubation phase requires ensuring high quality, flexible and fully sustainable service to SMEs that provides impacts on the wider economy. Thus, BI should build their management capacity for information, expertise and know-how sharing among similar BIs in the region, ability to raise finance for sustainable operation of BI and facilitating technology transfer between E & W. Thus the project will pursue unexploited opportunities of the networking among BIs in BSR to enhance the quality and effectiveness of business support services.

Activities:

- Benchmarking of BIs' services to identify development needs of BI in BSR to deliver state of art business support services fostering development of innovative and export oriented SMEs,
- Elaboration of recommendations about cooperation and development of the business incubators with aim to create open and innovations driven business support environment in the BSR,
- Establishment of IBI Net network joining business incubators in BSR for the purpose of international cooperation among management of business support structures allowing continuous exchange of experience and best practice,
- Capacity building of business incubators through introduction of ICT tools for analysing and development mapping of innovative and export oriented SMEs (incumbents),
- Elaboration of financial sustainability mechanisms for business incubators.

Planned results:

- International cooperation network of business support structures - IBI Net-established pooling experience, know-how and informative basis of partners enabling the provision of state of art services to innovative and export oriented SMEs in BSR,
- Know-how and methods of business incubators strengthened to support internationalization, strategic development and export efforts of SMEs,
- Financial sustainability instruments for business incubators identified based on best practice in BSR,
- Cooperation among business incubators and entrepreneurs fostered in BSR

Additional information:

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