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The Baltic Sea Network is a network by higher education institutions, regional development organisations and other organisations in the Baltic Sea Region (consisting of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Sweden). There are currently more than 30 partners in the network and the network is still expanding. The purpose of the network is to develop the Baltic Sea Region in accordance with EU policy.

Rationale

Building clusters and networks between regions and across borders in the Baltic Sea Region makes it possible to achieve more, to boost the international competitiveness of the region and thus to promote welfare. This is done through the exchange of knowledge and through shared development. Higher education institutions take part in developing their environments in co-operation with organisations in the business world and the public sector (e.g. local authorities). This co-operation may make use of programmes and funding opportunities run at EU level, by the Nordic Council of Ministers or nationally in each country.

How It Works

The network promotes international co-operation on projects between higher education institutions and other partners. Students may take an active part in these projects, which, in accordance with national regional development strategies, mainly focus on the following areas: Welfare, Business Skills and Management, Tourism as well as Information and Communication Technology, always taking sustainable development into account. Together we are creating a virtual Baltic centre of competence in education, research and development through networking, joint studies (also online), projects and enhanced mobility.

The network organises partner days and workshops where all partners have a chance to meet and plan future co-operation. The network serves as a great help when planning new projects and finding the right partners for them. Both the website and the internal platform of the network including discussion forums are in use of the network members. The network also offers information and support for obtaining project funding.

Focal Points of the Network

By *Welfare* we loosely mean people's material standard of life, social relationships and self-fulfilment. The welfare of the population is seen as a significant factor for the development of society as a whole, and services to increase welfare are an essential way in which we

can affect welfare and the experience people have of it.

The aim of the *Business Skills and Management* sector is to conduct world-class research activities and development operations to benefit the livelihood of the region, and to integrate these into educational functions.

The *Tourism* sector stands for the Baltic Sea Region as a one united tourism destination and co-operation area. The aim is to develop sustainable tourism strategies in the area and to create concrete co-operation between different players in this field.

The purpose of the *Information and Communication Technology* sector is to study, develop and apply new technologies, operating models and media customs, and to promote transformation into an information society.

Products

Together we have created an active network for the development of the Baltic Sea Region.

The network plays an active role in the regional innovation system.

Influential players in the business environment of the Baltic Sea Region participate in the network's operations.

Research and development activities are being carried out together by the higher education institutions and other organisations in the network in order to develop the Baltic Sea Region.

International, multidisciplinary student teams are carrying out development projects in the Baltic Sea Region.

The network's own website contains information on the actors and activities within the network.

Baltic Sea Network Website and Platform

The Baltic Sea Network has its own website for sharing all public information within the network. The events and activities of the network can be found on the website. The address of the website is www.balticseanetwork.org

The network also has an internal platform for working on the projects and initiating new projects between partners. All partners can add their comments, ideas and proposals to the platform.

