



A Community Initiative on transnational co-operation

Baltic Sea Region INTERREG III B Neighbourhood Programme

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**International conference: From Community Initiative INTERREG III
to European Territorial Co-operation**

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Warsaw, Poland**

Belarus
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
Germany
Latvia
Lithuania
Norway
Poland
Russia
Sweden





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Ad 1. Diversification of programme area

The programme covering 100 million inhabitants speaking 11 languages living in 8 EU Member States and 3 neighbour countries seeks to combine:

- 3 historically differently organised economic spaces (former EC, EFTA, COMECON)
- 3 different administrative traditions: Scandinavian, Eastern European (former Soviet dominated) and Continental European
- 3 differently organised political systems (parliamentary democracy, presidential democracy, authoritarian regime)
- 3 different Christian religious cultures





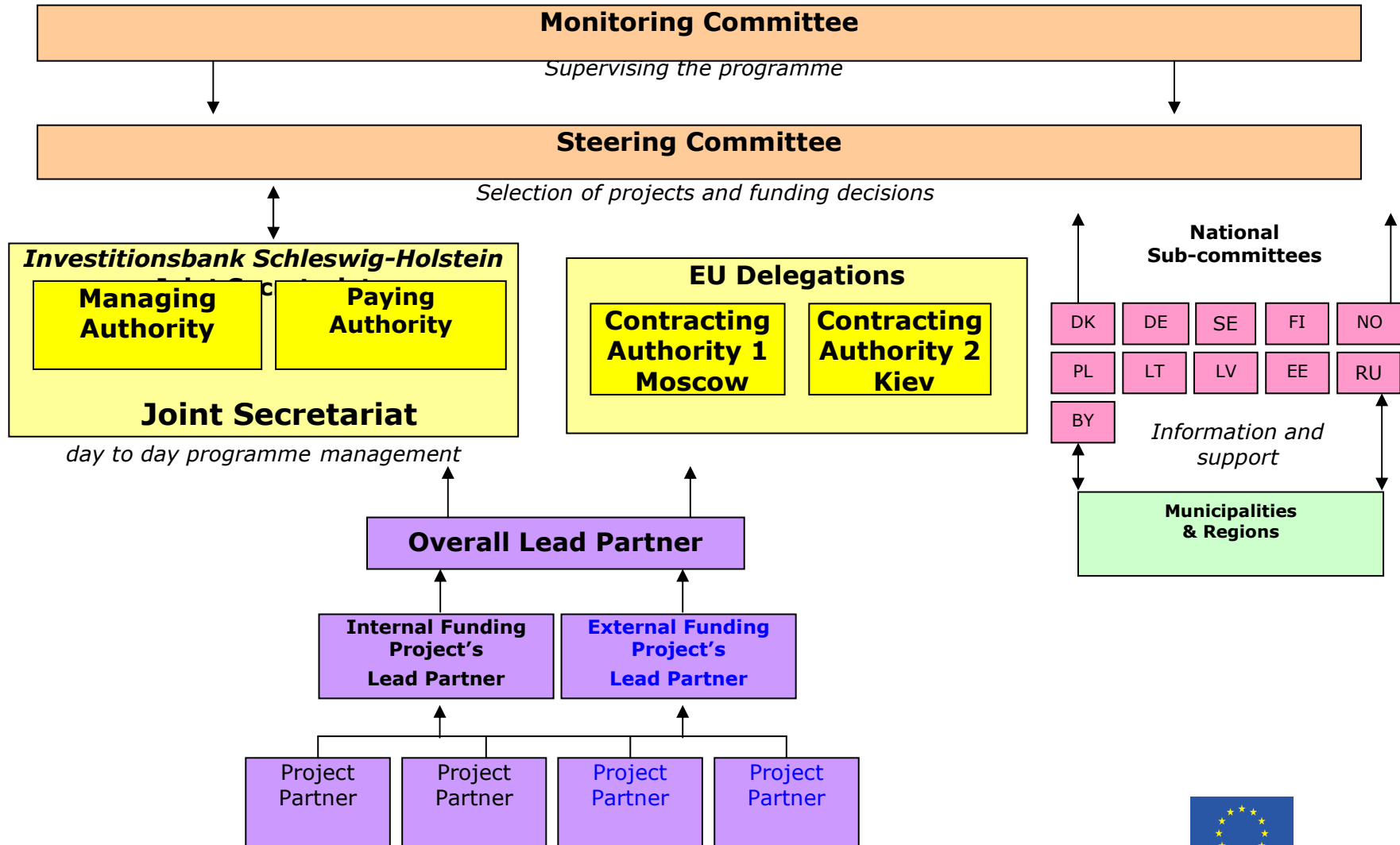
Turning Points in programme history: The “ever changing environment” of implementation!

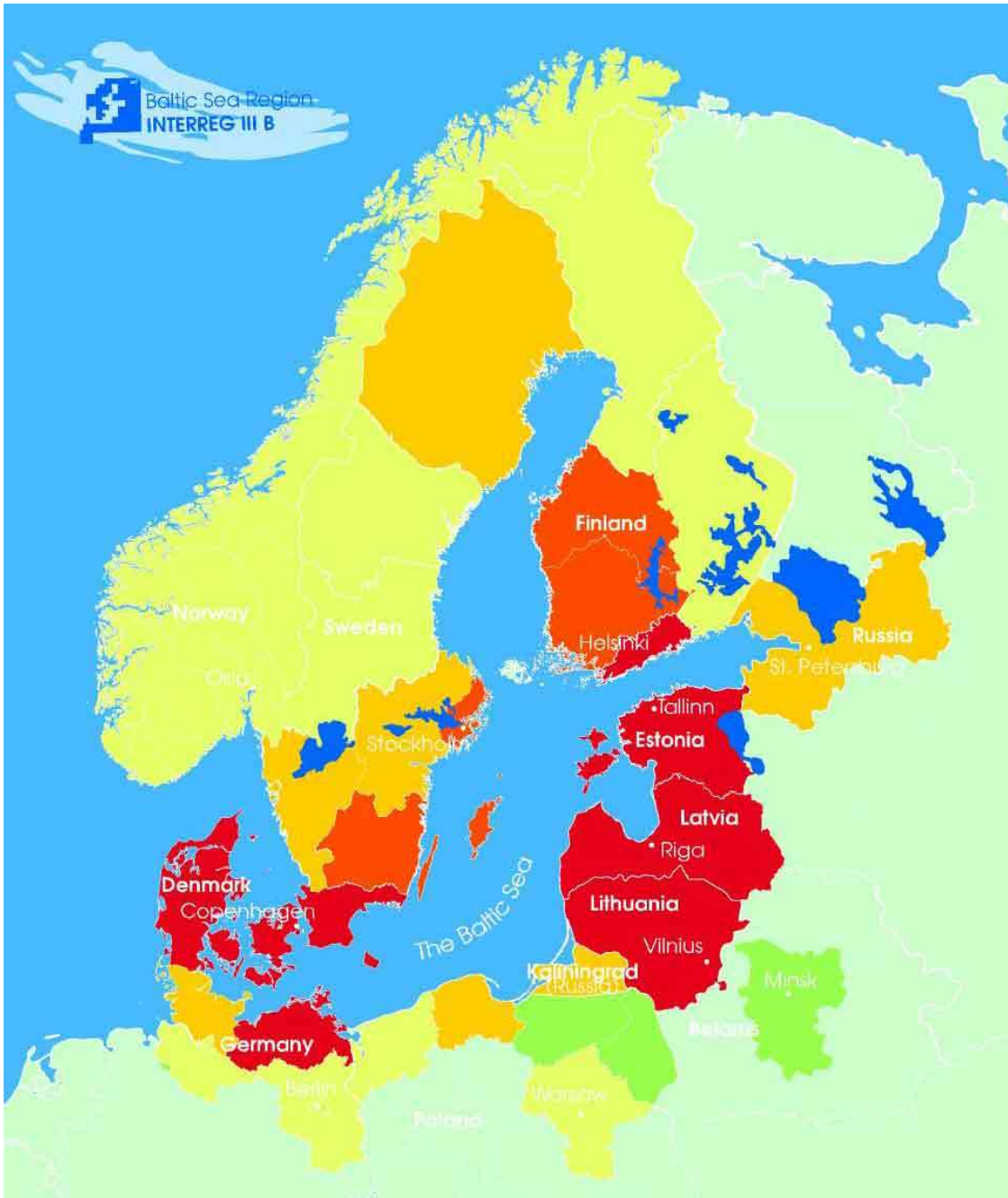
Closure of INTERREG IIC and approval of the IIIB programme (first round was launched in 2001)	September 2001
Introduction of Priority 4 (border regions)	January 2002
EU enlargement - from PHARE to ERDF	May 2004
Introduction of IIIA priorities (cross-border)	May 2004
Transformation to Neighbourhood Programme	October 2004
<u>Future challenges</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Objective 3 – Territorial cooperation programme• Introduction of European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)	2007 - 2015





Ad 1. Organizational structure





2. Statistics: Baltic Sea Region

Most active Polish cities:

No of partners:

Gdansk	62
Szczecin	34
Warszawa	31
Gdynia	19
Olsztyn	12



2. Statistical data

Total ERDF budget (only III B priorities)	120 MEUR
Total number of projects approved in 8 rounds (<i>the final 9th round (Taxis) still open</i>)	120
Number of projects with Polish partners	85
Total number of PL partners in all those projects	279*
Financially benefiting from the programme ERDF	154*

* **Calculation was based on total amount of PL partners involved in all projects, therefore if a certain institution is involved in eg. 3 projects, it was also counted 3 times.**





Top 5 Polish partners with the largest ERDF budget

Gdansk Maritime Institute	669,537.00
Institute for Logistics and Warehousing / ILIM	495,450.00
Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic	307,500.00
Gdynia Maritime University	285,645.75
City Hospital / Public Corporation of Healthcare Lebork	225,378.75





3. Allocation of Funds

ERDF funds: **120.0 MEURO***

National co-financing
from ERDF project partners: ~78.0 MEUR

(Average co-financing rate: 65 %)

Norwegian national: 6.0 MEURO

Norwegian project co-financing 6.0 MEUR

Neighbourhood Fund (Tacis) 7.5 MEURO

Technical Assistance **5%** ERDF +national co-financing: **50 %**

*not including the IIIA priorities





„N+2“ aspects

Reasons for N+2 decommitment:

- Late start-up of programme
- Underspending/ delayed reporting of projects
- Delays with centralised 1st level audit and control

Baltic Sea INTERREG III B Programme:

2004:	1.5 M EURO (Priority 4)
2005:	0 EUR
2006: calculated:	5-6 MEUR
following “JS Action Plan”	0 MEUR(!?)





... „N+2“ aspects

Joint Secretariat's Action Plan on de-commitment:

- ➡ Information to projects about state of individual spending and risk for de-commitment
- ➡ Seminars for financial managers
- ➡ Seminars for 1st level controllers
- ➡ Reminder to centralized 1st level control bodies to speed up checks;
- ➡ Interim financial reports (15 Nov)
- ➡ Implementation of de-commitment to projects.





4. Lead Partner principle in practice

Three projects with Polish LPs:

Baltic Fort Route, LP Municipality of Kostrzyn

aims at preparation of the tourist product based on the 20th century war fortifications.

InWater, LP Gdansk University of Technology

aims at improving the use of waterway network potential for transport, recreation and tourism activities

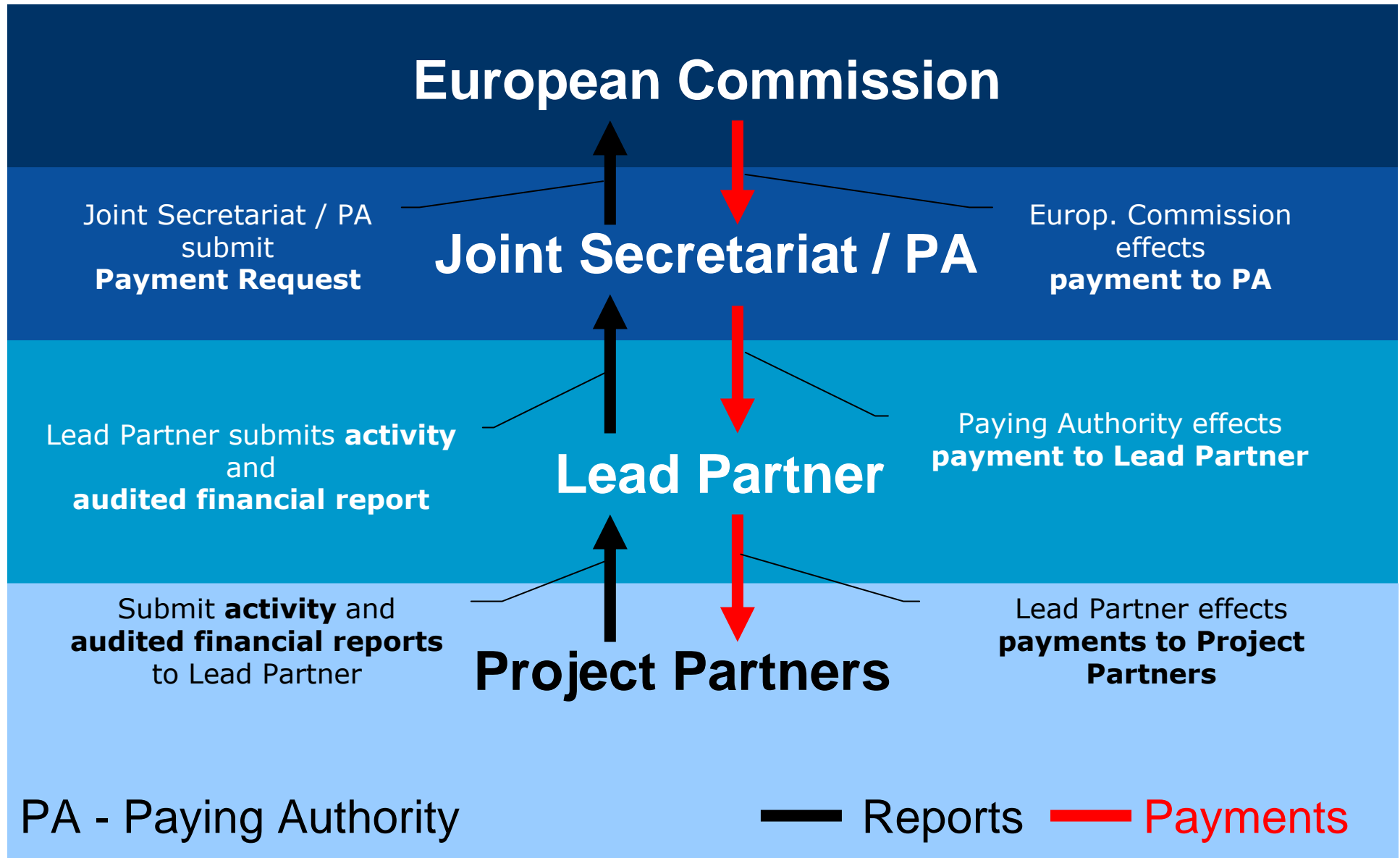
Seagull 2, LP Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic

aims at enhancing the institutional capacities of Euroregion Baltic in order to implement its Joint Development Programme.





Project implementation





5. Good practice at strategic level

- A **joint pool of ERDF funds** on a joint bank account without national “sub-accounts”
- Tasks of Managing and Paying Authority carried out **by single, competent institution** which is **not** a public authority
- **Lead Partner principle** (clear responsibilities between MA and project)
- Joint management structures/bodies including a **strong joint transnational Joint Technical Secretariat**
- **National sub-committees** responsible for disseminating information at national/regional level
- Work of Monitoring and Steering Committees facilitated by various **task forces.**





5. Good practice at operational level

General tools:

- **English** as official programme language
- An up-to-date **website** as most important info tool
- Project **database**

Related to project life cycle:

- **Pro-active project development** - Seed Money, Partner Search Forum, Information Seminars, Individual Consultations
- Application, assessment and approval –**Joint and transparent decision making** (unanimous decisions, clear documentation of assessment and approval)
- **Pro-active project implementation** - Lead Partner Seminar, Seminars for financial managers and auditors, Quality Workshops, Publicity and communication training etc.





6. Challenges for project partners

<i>Problem:</i>	<i>Way out:</i>
“Simple” Objective 1 programmes preferred (infrastructure investments)	Convince decision makers of added value of transnational networking and cooperation
Culture and language barriers	Learn English!
High technical and quality requirements of transnational projects	Invest in human resources – training of qualified staff in public administrations
Low awareness about the programme	Increased information activities at national and programme level
Considerable administrative workload	Make use of standardized tools, training, support actions!
Significant competition among projects	<i>... lobby at your decision makers....?! </i> 



7. Main features of the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007 -2013

- Enlarged Programme area (Germany, Russia, Belarus)
- Four transnational thematic priorities (Innovation, Accessibility, Environment, Settlement structures)
- European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) integrated in transnational priorities
- Mix of “strategic” top-down projects and bottom-up projects
- Transnationality: at least three partners from three countries
- Targeted or two-step calls for applications
- Only one Monitoring Committee supported by task forces
- Same Managing and Certifying authority + new Audit Authority
- JTS at Rostock & Riga.





Main features of the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007 -2013

Envisaged funding:

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF):
approx. **209 MEUR**
- European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI): approx. **22.6 MEUR (new!)**
- Norwegian national funding: **6 MEUR**
- Respective obligatory own co-funding from national/regional/local level
- Technical Assistance: **6 % ERDF + 30 %** national co-funding
- **10% rule and 20 % rule kept as options!**





Co-financing rate (**NEW!**)

The programme funds will cover:

- **up to 75 %** of eligible project costs generated by partners from Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Finland
- **up to 85 %** of eligible project costs generated by partners from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland
- **up to 50 %** of eligible project costs generated by partners from Norway
- **up to 90 %** of eligible project costs generated by partners from Russia and Belarus (ENPI)





Main challenges of implementing the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013

- To identify good methods and practices for joint implementation, audit and control of **ERDF + ENPI** funds
- To stand strong competition with related cross-border programmes
- To identify relevant “strategic” projects
- To make results of transnational cooperation more transparent and comprehensible to the normal citizens
- To provide pro-active support to project applicants and project partners with less Technical Assistance, ie. with less resources in the JTS
- **To open the first call for applications still in 2007!**





Thank you for your attention

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