

ONE BSR Newsletter 2/2014

Welcome to read the fourth ONE Baltic Sea Region Newsletter

The ONE BSR project started in September 2012. The objective of the two year project was to market the whole region and its different parts by developing joint promotional services and test them in practice, to make positive publicity of the BSR lifestyles and to encourage the “we-feeling” of the Baltic Sea Region. The final conference of the project celebrated and closed the successful ONE BSR project in Helsinki, on September 4, 2014.



The final conference reviewed what has been achieved and also looked to the future. The conference’s closing session shared the most important participant take-a-ways and future perspectives with the attendants. An extensive article in this newsletter summarizes the talent retention session of the final event.

Photos of the conference here: <http://onebsr.eu/final-event/>

Read all interesting articles in the newsletter below or online at the ONE BSR website www.onebsr.eu/newsletters.

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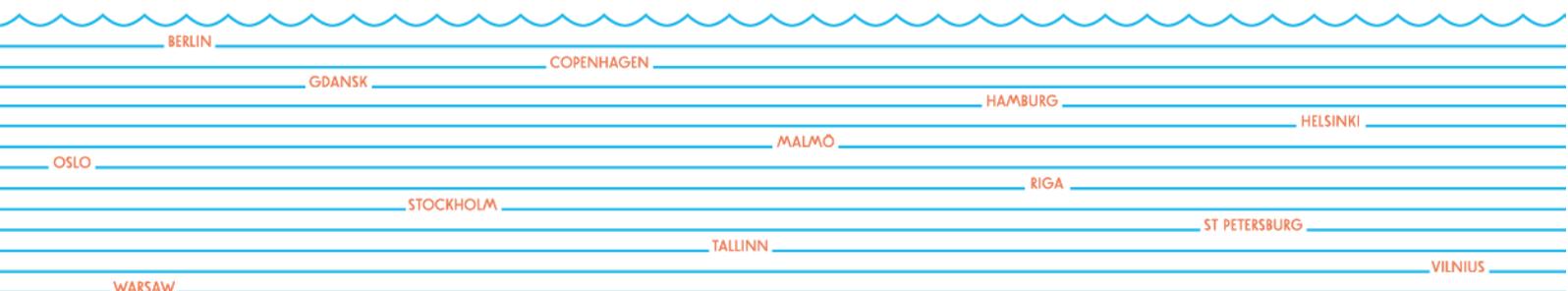
TALENT RETENTION IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION: WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE THE REGION MORE COMPETITIVE

ONE BSR final conference, “Baltic Sea region global competitiveness: challenges and opportunities” took place on the 4th of September 2014 in Helsinki, Finland. It brought together organisations that have been working with attracting talents and investors to the Baltic Sea region and increasing the regions’ competitiveness as a tourist destination. The focus of the conference was on the ONE BSR project results and the methods of taking the work further once the project is finished. One of the take-home messages was that ONE BSR is a very good example of regional cooperation that needs to be shared with other stakeholders in the region.

Baltic Sea region needs international talent

Considering the demographic situation and the need for further investments in the BSR, the important question for the whole region is not whether we should be working with talents, but what approaches should be used, both on national and regional level. The holistic approach is to think in terms of “brain circulation”. We should see talents in the region as part of a value chain of talent attraction, talent retention, and talents leaving and becoming ambassadors for the BSR. In order to successfully brand the region, the stakeholders need to work with the whole value chain.

Case studies of talent retention issues in Helsinki, Tallinn, and Stockholm were an important part of Talent retention package of ONE BSR. These presented examples of challenges and strategies being implemented in the BSR during the conference. Estonia has been working on promoting its higher education and has seen an increase in the number of international students. Grants for hiring international R&D experts are now available to companies and organisations. The country’s migration policies are also changing, making it easier for talents to move to Estonia.

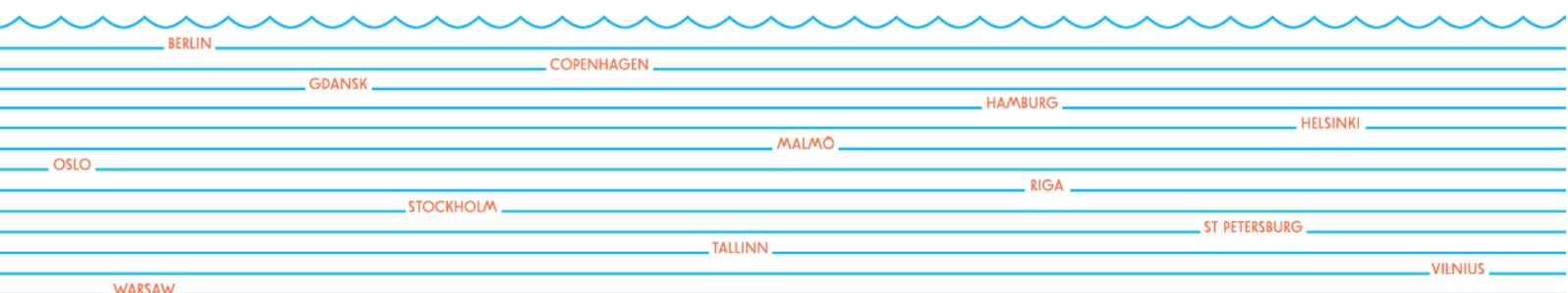




In Finland, one of the biggest problems for talents is the lack of professional Finnish language skills. Finland's Ministry for Education and Culture is now reforming higher education, including Finnish courses in the curriculum for international students. In order to bring students and potential employers together, European Social Fund and City of Helsinki are giving support to Entrypoint Mentoring Programme for Young Internationals. The programme is hosted by HERIEC (Helsinki Region Immigrant Employment Council), launches in September 2014 and will continue until April 2015.

More than half of Swedish life science companies can be found in Stockholm-Uppsala region. Career opportunities and access to creative work environment make it an attractive place for both talents and businesses. The challenges of attracting and retaining life science professionals to Stockholm-Uppsala region include housing shortages, difficulties in finding jobs for accompanying spouses and problems when it comes to integrating into the Swedish society. In order to establish good relocation services for newly arrived talents, there is also a need for better dialogue between universities, government organisations and businesses. One of the ways of making Sweden more attractive is to market its other strengths, such as nature, safety, free education and generous parental leave benefits.

Another important result of the Talent retention work package was the publication of toolkit on talent retention in the Baltic Sea region. The toolkit was commissioned by the Swedish Institute together with Tendensor and presented during the conference. The main purpose of the toolkit is to inspire officials and public servants in the region to work more with talents. It presents a strategic roadmap for working with talent retention, concrete tools, and a discussion of ideas for future collaborations in the region. *The toolkit is freely available and can be downloaded [here](#).*



Future strategies

Panel discussion on talent retention issues concluded the first conference session, focusing on stakeholders, challenges and future strategies. The panellists were **Nikolaj Lubanski**, Director, Talent Department, Copenhagen Capacity, **Laura Kirss**, Analyst, Praxis Center for Policy Studies, **Marcus Andersson**, Partner, Head of Operations, Tendensor AB, **Tine Horwitz**, CEO, Consortium for Global Talents, member of ONE BSR Talent Retention Advisory Board, **Kurt Bratteby**, Head of Department of International Relations, Swedish Institute, **Nannette Ripmeester**, Director, ELM (Expertize in Labour Mobility), **Christine Chang**, Senior Advisor, Lead partner of EXPAT project, Uusimaa Regional Council. The first subject that came up during the discussion was the fact that talent retention is not one of the explicit priorities of the EU interregional cooperation funding during 2014 – 2020. It means that the issues of talent retention require further promotion internationally. When it comes to BSR branding, the challenges include presenting a coherent picture when marketing BSR countries to talents and closing the gap between international talents and companies. The importance of engaging the talents in the work was pointed out, as well as the need to roadmap the region and identify the strongest companies and brands and make them attractive. BSR also needs to develop innovative strategies, such as a common system allowing employers in the region to “share” jobseekers and unsolicited applications. In summary, the key issues are holistic approach and thinking in terms of human capital.



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PORTFOLIO OF BALTIC SEA REGION IMAGES AND IDENTITIES

What is the Baltic Sea Region all about? You're welcome to ask questions, find answers and create a framework for investigating and creating an identity and branding profile of the region with a toolkit provided by the Portfolio of Baltic Sea Region Images and Identities, which was published shortly prior to the closing of the project.

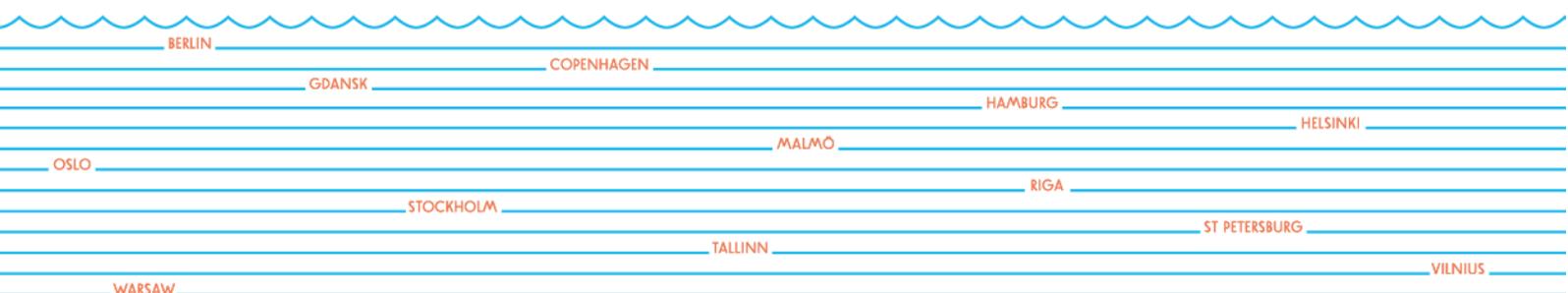
The portfolio presents the identity and image of the Baltic Sea Region as assets and values as well as narratives associated with these values. It is divided in three main parts: Narratives, a Cultural Map and Inventory of Elements and it can be explored from different perspectives – thematically, locally, or from a promotional point of view.

Clickable links, comments by the author, inventory and glossary are supporting you in examining the elements of the portfolio. The links to the hotspots on the Cultural Map and videos produced by the ONE BSR project take you to the original sources of the quotes used in narratives. Links to further reading of news pieces and blogs at the www.newswave.eu are also provided. The Portfolio of Baltic Sea Region Images and Identities invites all interested parties to discuss the subjects further with e.g. ONE BSR project partners on social media, or to give feedback to the authors.

See the portfolio pdf here: [Portfolio of Baltic Sea Region Images and Identities](#)



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PORTFOLIO PICTURES ON SHOW

The innovative illustrations on the pages of the ONE BSR **Portfolio of Baltic Sea Region Images and Identities** were on display at the Helsinki Comics Festival on September 5-7, 2014. The pictures were commissioned from four artists of the Baltic Sea region countries: *Gregor Hinz* (Germany), *Simon Vaeth* (Denmark), *Ingrida Picukane* (Latvia) and *Reetta Niemensivu* (Finland).



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Baltic Sea Region IPA's plan to continue cooperation

The Investment promotion agencies in the Baltic Sea region have met 7 times during the ONE BSR project. The aim has been to identify ways to cooperate and join forces in order to get more foreign investments to the region.

During the meetings, several topics have been discussed, possible areas for cooperation have been identified – and it has become evident that a will to cooperate exists. With a Business Plan, produced through interviews with all IPAs, a comprehensive list of many possible cooperation activities have been developed.

“In the end, it’s all about attitude and action”, says Micah Gland, deputy CEO of Helsinki Business Hub and one of the strongest advocates for regional cooperation. “Now that we know we have the right attitude, let’s just do it”, he summarized in the One BSR final event.

And they will. Even though the project has ended, the IPAs will meet again this year and this time it’s all about pitching for the concrete actions that they’ll do together. Ideas proposed so far include cooperation in attracting foreign venture capital, participating with a common offering to a foreign trade show, and harmonizing the way IPA’s measure their impact and results.

“The fact that IPAs have agreed to meet again later this year shows that the ONE BSR project has been successful in developing a common understanding among IPAs of the benefits of working together in the region”, says Flemming Stender, director of Baltic Development Forum.



Baltic Development Forum has proposed to take the coordinating and enabling role in future BSR IPA cooperation, which would allow the IPAs to concentrate on real concrete actions instead of coordination or bureaucracy. This, along with the concrete actions, will be decided when the IPAs meet later this year.

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THE ONE BSR WEB-SITE

After the actual ONE BSR project period, all materials produced during the project stay available on the ONE BSR web-site. Videos, toolkits, reports and other outcomes can be watched, read and/or downloaded even after the closing of the actual project time. Please note, however, that the site will not be updated any longer.

THANK YOU!

On behalf of the whole ONE BSR team we thank you for sharing our thoughts, ideas, perspectives and aims through the whole project period. Strengthened by the networks which have been created during the last two years, we trust that the work for the One Baltic Sea Region will continue and flourish on multiple platforms!

ONE Baltic Sea Region (ONE BSR) project aims to increase the competitiveness of the Baltic Sea Region by marketing it as one unity. Together with 17 partners from around the region, the project identifies key elements for the image and identity building of the region, and brings up the best that the region has to offer for international investors, talents and tourists.

Project Lead Partner: City of Helsinki
Ms Jenni Jäänheimo, Project Manager
jenni.jaanheimo(at)hel.fi
Tel. +358 9 310 23060
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