

# Success with EU Investments...



## WE ALL WANT SUCCESS

### All of our islands want success!

But islanders know that for the benefits of the island life they have chosen, there are costs and inconveniences.

Rules that make good sense in the heart of Europe can become constraints on islands.

Whatever way one looks at the problem **islands are faced with permanent constraints**. And if we are to develop a fair and equitable society for all the citizens of the country and Europe, then special measures need to be taken.

There are not too many venture capitalists on Baltic islands, nor industry clusters - except perhaps tourism. The chance of a Digital future fell to earth along with Ericsson's share-price. Transport costs for goods and people are higher. Tertiary education often does not exist. So **the best and the brightest leave the islands**.

**National competition strategies** are based on a very limited number of "growth engines", often based around a few major cities. Governments fear competition from other countries and major centres more than the problems of less developed regions, such as islands.

The challenge for the Baltic Islands is to develop growth strategies that create jobs. To develop win-win situations. To do this islands must ensure that they can deliver high quality basic services. For this islands need investment.

**Structural Funds** form a cornerstone for development and investment on islands.

**Structural Funds** make the difference for development opportunities.

Here are some **stories from the islands** of the B7 that try to demonstrate what they have done, and what we are doing with EU funding.

### Success Stories from the Islands

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## WHAT ARE ISLAND ISSUES?

### THE ISLANDS DIMENSION

**Islands** have permanent constraints that put them at a comparative and competitive disadvantage to the mainland.

**Islands** often cannot or do not know how to benefit from the single market.

**Islands** need to develop win-win strategies with their neighbouring regions.

**Baltic Islands** have a small population base, face geographic constraints, but must still be able to offer their citizens the basic range of services and quality of life compared to the mainland.

### Typical Island Issues.

- Accessibility - transport limiting development.
- Comparative disparities with major city regions in the country.
- Limited markets
- Limited tertiary education and training opportunities.
- State commitment for lagging regions.
- Technological backwardness.
- Tighter budgets
- Total population and population in employment decreasing.
- Younger citizens moving to the mainland and a greater proportion of elderly.

## Bülow Monterossi Concept på Nexø Havn

Bülow Monterossi Concept er ny glas-køkkenserie, hvor råproduktionen foregår i Polen, mens forædling og færdigbehandling sker i Nexø

Bülow Glas Bornholm har på én gang samlet og udvidet en del af sine aktiviteter i et gammelt pakhus på havnen i Nexø.

Her er indrettet varm- og koldtglasværksteder, designværksted, lager- og pakke faciliteter samt mødelokale og showroom. Der er tale om et såkaldt multifondsprojekt, hvor der til anlægsinvesteringerne er koblet uddannelsesaktiviteter i form af kurser i særlige glasforædlingsmetoder.

Overalt i det gamle, delvist restaurerede pakhus er en livlig aktivitet. Det skyldes blandt andet travlhed med produktion af det nye Bülow Monterossi Concept – en ny glas-køkkenserie, hvor råproduktionen foregår i Polen, mens forædling og færdigbehandling sker i Nexø.

I 2003 får konceptet en ny start med de rigtige farver, og forventningerne til en fortsat salgssucces er store. »Produkterne har solgt godt fra Snogebæk Glashytte, hvilket ofte giver os en god indikation på salgspotentialet,« forklarer Pernille Bülow. Indførelsen af den nye produktionsmetode, hvor råproduktet leveres klar til videre forarbejdning, har

medvirket til at skabe fire nye arbejdspladser. Der er tale om medarbejdere, der har gennemgået en kursusrække, hvor de er blevet undervist i slibemetoder, sandblæsning og anden forædling af glasset. Pernille Bülow vurderer, at der kan blive behov for at ansætte yderligere fem-seks personer .



Bülow Monterossi

Samlede omkostninger  
(anlægsprojekt):  
EU-tilskud:  
Statstilskud:  
Fond:

DKK 2.773.000  
DKK 415.950  
DKK 415.950  
Regionalfonden

## Ole Almeborg A/S –New Production Facilities

In March 2001 Ole Almeborg A/S received investment aid from the Objective 2 programme for the establishment of a factory with storage facilities and purchase of production equipment for the production of drawbars. The sale of the drawbars was based on a purchase commitment with BT AB in Sweden.

According to the contract between the two companies, Ole Almeborg is to be permanent sub-supplier of 125,000 drawbars per year over a period of five years. The drawbars will be used for BT AB's own production of pallet-jacks.

The contract comprises a binding five-year commitment for the supply of drawbars at the value of between 60 and 90 mill. DKK. Apart from a six months delay due to purchaser circumstances, the contract works according to the plan.

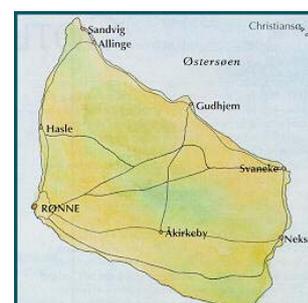
The sub-supplier agreement has made it possible for BT AB to meet the new quality standards of i.e. Japanese buyers. In consequence, Ole Almeborg A/S takes part in a network of sub-suppliers, comprising India, Taiwan and China.

The project has resulted in the employment of 18 unskilled workers on Bornholm. The workers have received the necessary training in co-operation with the Regional Labour Market Council of Bornholm.

Total costs: DKK 6.500.000  
EU-funding: DKK 975.000  
State-funding: DKK 975.000  
Fund: ERDF  
Programme: Objective 2

# Bornholm

Country: Denmark  
EU Member, Objective 2 Region  
Area: 587 km<sup>2</sup>  
Population: 44,000  
Shortest distance to mainland: 138 km



## Structural Adjustments of Objective 1 Regions Investments into Economic and Tourist Infrastructure

Rügen being part of the objective 1 region Mecklenburg – Western Pomerania received millions of Marks and Euros during the last 12 years. From the National Programme, ERDF part A, there were supported measures such as

- the erection or extension of business premises if new jobs were created and in order to strengthen the economic competitiveness,
- the development of industrial, technology or research parks,
- investments into tourist infrastructure in order to extend the season and to raise the quality of tourist facilities
- the building of hotels, sea piers (picture: Sea Pier in Ostseebad Sellin) and recreational facilities, of cycling roads and bridle paths
- investments to restore castles and manors and other historical buildings

By the end of year 2002, with all the investments done - most of them could not have been done without the considerable fundings - 5,894 permanent jobs have been secured.

Total amount of investments:	€ 1,299,400,000 (as per September 2002)
EU grant:	€ 482,000,000
Fund :	ERDF
Programme:	Objective 1



Seebrücke Sellin day and night

## Basic Renovation of Narrow-Gauge Railway Station Binz

Community administration Binz

“Rügener Kleinbahn” as an historic public transport is an important element of Rügens tourist infrastructure. Every year 63 % of all tourists coming to the island of Rügen use this transport that is connecting the bath resort Göhren with the town of Putbus and the port of Lauterbach. From Lauterbach port tourists have a direct ferry connection to Poland.

The general renovation, restoration of wooden entrance hall structure, rebuilding of the southern wooden terrace according to preservation requirements for historic monuments and according to modern building standards are necessary to maintain the Binz railway station for the next decades and the tourists visiting Rügen and its historic transport Rügener Kleinbahn.

Total amount of investment:	€1,140,000
EU grant:	€ 950,200
Fund:	ERDF
Programme:	Interreg IIIA



Rügener Kleinbahn

# Rügen

Country	Germany
EU Member,	Objective 1 Region
Area:	974 km <sup>2</sup>
Population:	75,000
Shortest distance to mainland:	7 km



## Enhancing Human Resources Development in West Estonian Islands

The **Phare 2001 project** Enhancing Human Resources Development in West Estonian Islands has a two-fold objective:

- to boost human capital by enhancing education and skill levels
- improve the employment prospects of the unemployed, particularly the long-term unemployed and persons excluded from the labour market within the target region of West Estonian islands.

The project will also contribute with the other approved measures for the region under the Phare 2000 programme to addressing some of the regional economy's weaknesses and deficiencies especially those associated with peripherality and late development, which place the Islands at a competitive disadvantage relative to the rest of Estonia.

The project will contribute towards strengthening the capacity of the training institutions network to provide wider access to initial and continuing education to different target groups by increasing the number/ range of courses based on preset occupational standards and matching them with the labour market requirements.

The network of training providers will include, **Kuresaare Vocational School (RTC)** and **Tallinn Technical University College** in Saaremaa; **Suuremoisa Vocational School (VS)** and **Tuuru Foundation** in Hiiumaa.

Special attention will be paid to the development of higher vocational education courses.



Tuuru Centre, Hiiumaa

## The Special Pre-Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (SAPARD)

The Special Pre-Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (SAPARD) aims to support the efforts made by the Central and Eastern European Candidate Countries to prepare for their participation in the Common Agricultural Policy and the Single Market.

It has two major objectives:

- first, to implement the "acquis";
- second, to solve priority problems in the field of agriculture and rural development.

The Multi-annual Financing Agreement (MAFA) lays

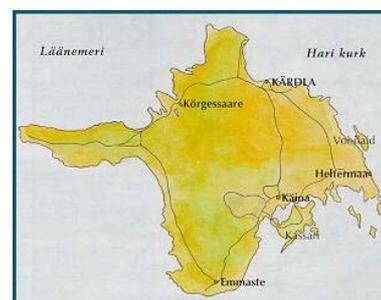
down the Union's management and control rules for SAPARD for the whole period of the programme (2000-2006) and includes the principle of full decentralisation of programme management, the application of the EAGGF clearance of accounts procedure and differentiated appropriations.

The support received by farmers and agricultural firms on Hiiumaa in 2001 was EEK 4.911.795

Six applications were approved in 2002. Support support EEK 8.200.000

# Hiiumaa

Country:	Estonia
Future EU Member:	Future Objective 1 Region
Area:	1019 km <sup>2</sup>
Population:	11,400
Shortest distance to mainland:	22 km. (1½ hours by the ferry)



## MEDIS & DIAS-net

### Hiiumaa participates in two ICT projects:

**MEDIS** (the 5<sup>th</sup> framework programme, IST – 1999 – 20896, Models for European Digital Islands, PU)”.

Hiiumaa, as a partner, tested the Planning Manual for Information Society elaborated by the project. This Hiiumaa pilot project lasted from March to June, 2002, during which period 5 thematic work groups were established, held meetings and proposed measures for the Info Society Strategy 2002-2007.

All five Municipalities and County Government approved the Strategy. The Strategy is published at <http://www.mv.hiiumaa.ee/medis/>

The amount of the Hiiumaa pilot project budget was €50 000.

### DIAS-net project

(5th Framework Programme of European Research - Platform for the Development of the Information Society in the European Islands and Isolated Regions IST-2001-35077),

A demonstration project under the action line 2, creating an innovative platform and network of European islands and isolated regions that will be built up using the results of European R&D projects.

The project activities will have a clear and measurable impact to use of structural funds in the remaining period 2000-2006.

More than 50M€ in projects and actions will profit from the results of the project and its demonstrators.

Hiiumaa considers this project as implementing stage of the IS Strategy and concentrates on elaborating sub-projects on:

- GIS and public administrations services;
- Life-long learning; Social inclusion;
- Prolonging the tourism season.

This will be achieved by co-financing different projects with the DIAS-net resource.

Project homepage is:

<http://www.dias-net.org/>

The amount of the Hiiumaa budget in the project is 58 000 Euros.



The Strategy - phase 1

## Projects that make a difference...

1. Establishment of Eurohouse. 1996-1998. total 160 000 eur, EU 120 000. Phare CBC.
2. Deepening of Kuressaare bay and building a yacht harbour. 1998-99 (finance memorandum 1996). Total €1,796m. EU 900 000. Phare CBC.
3. Development of nature tourism in West Estonia. 1996-97. total 560 000. EU 400 000 eur. Phare CBC.
4. There are also Koigi marsh on Saaremaa and Orjaku bird observatory on Hiiumaa.



Kuressaare Bay

# Saaremaa

Country: Estonia  
Future EU Member, Future Objective 1 Region  
Area: 2922 km<sup>2</sup>  
Population: 39,000  
Shortest distance to mainland: 7 km (30 minutes on the ferry)



## Sustainable Water Supply in the B7 Islands (B7 SUSWAT)

### Background

Most islands depend on local water supply, and development of both agriculture, industry and tourism is depending on good water supply. Shortage of water and poor protection of the water resources are often problems in islands and intensive water extraction can deteriorate wetlands and other nature elements.

The objectives for the this co-operation project was:

- to enhance knowledge and information exchange concerning water supply
- to encourage integration of water supply planning in the spatial planning process
- to develop ideas for water protection and water savings and
- to demonstrate new solutions in planning and management of sustainable water supply in islands.

The project ran from January 1999 – May 2001.

All 7 islands took part with several civil servants and experts in water supply.

The main output of the project has been some interesting reports and one pilot project in each island. At a major B7 Environmental Conference in island of Rügen, Germany, in December the results of the project were presented and discussed.

The two most important reports from the project are

- **Planning and management of Water supply in B7 islands – Status 1998** (90 pages), with a comparing inventory of the water supply situation in the 7 islands (90 pages), and
- **Idea Catalogues** (153 pages), with 22 articles, each describing possible new solutions and ideas regarding sustainable water supply planning and management in islands.

Both reports are available in English and Estonian.

The pilot projects were chosen to fit the demand of each island but also to demonstrate some of the ideas from the catalogue-report:

*In **Hiiumaa** and **Saaremaa** new water supply systems were established: in Hiiumaa a small plant with treatment facilities in the village of Lauka (200 inh.) to be used as local demonstration plant and in Saaremaa a new water treatment equipment for a restored waterworks in the town of Orissaare (1500 inh.).*

*In **Öland** a test plant was established to demonstrate new methods to reduce organic matters in surface water to be infiltrated to groundwater.*

*In **Åland** investigations for a new water supply of the village Degerby (200 inh.) was conducted.*

***Gotland** conducted a total mapping of the islands groundwater resources suitable for sustainable extraction from single wells.*

*In **Rügen** threats from salt (chloride) in soil and groundwater were monitored, and*

*in **Bornholm** were developed detailed guidelines for how to implement local action plans for widened protection of groundwater protection.*

Total costs: 300,200 € (EU partners) + 250,500 € (non-EU partners). Total: 550,700 €

EU funding: 162,900 € (EU partners) + 200,400 € (non-EU partners). Total: 363,300 €

Fund: ERF

Programmes: Interreg IIC (for EU partners) and PHARE/INTERREG (for non-EU partners)



Water!

## The Success of Limestone

A direct spin-off from the B7 Stone Day Activities in 2001 and 2002 is the new Objective 2 project "Öländsk kalksten" /Limestone from Öland.

After the second, very successful, B7 Stone Day on Öland in September 2002 the municipalities on Öland in co-operation with private entrepreneurs working with limestone decided to continue the process of this work in a more widespread project.

The result is a three year project with support from the Objective 2 – programme.

**Stakeholders** in the project are the municipalities of Borgholm and Mörbylånga in close co-operation with four private companies that have a total of more than 140 employees. The project is still open for more companies to participate.

Co-financers in the project are the Öland Bank Foundation and Kalmar Regional Council.

### There are two main aims with the project:

- Creating a better understanding between private entrepreneurs working with limestone and the various authorities responsible for regulations for nature and businesses.

On Öland, more than 84% of the island area is regulated – nature reserve, national parks etc. All these regulations make it difficult for entrepreneurs to carry on their businesses. The project will try to find a mutual understanding from both sides for the conditions of the common situation.

Seminars and public hearings will be arranged.



The start  
WGE B7 Stone Days



Oländsk kalsten

- The other part of the project will try to make the stone-branch more well known to the public. Providing information about the skilled craftsmenwork in the industry but also information about the importance of the branch and what conditions they act under.

The stone industry will invite to study visits, open house activities etc

The project has just been running for about two months. But already a number of other stakeholders – University Colleges, National Board of Stone Industries, to mention a few – have contacted us wanting to learn more about the project and the ideas behind it.

People with long experience in the fields of business development and rural development say that have never seen a project with so high potential. Then they should consider that they have only seen the beginning so far.

# Öland

Country	Sweden
Future EU Member,	Objective 2 Region
Area:	1,342 km <sup>2</sup>
Population:	25,000
Shortest distance to mainland:	6 km



## Gotland Interactive Park (GIP)

Municipality of Gotland

An insular region like Gotland, relatively far off the mainland, has an obvious competitive disadvantage in comparison with many other regions when it comes to transports. During the work on the regional growth agreements – a plan with prioritised measures for regional growth – a SWOT-analysis identified interactive media as a future field of business where Gotland had relatively good possibilities. The regional partnership, which stands behind the regional growth agreements, then in turn pinpointed the project “Gotlands Interactive Park” as the most prioritised project in that field.

Gotland Interactive Park aims at creating a centre for development of knowledge, exchange of ideas and business. The centre shall lead to the creation of new, successful and sustainable growth companies within the field of interactive media.

The municipality of Gotland and the Gotland University have a shared responsibility for the project. But there are also other organisations involved, such as;

Svenska Spel – the state owned lottery and gambling company, which has its headquarter and development unit placed on Gotland, Interactive Institute – a national Swedish R&D institute within the field of interactive media and Interactive Island – a network for Gotland-based companies in interactive media and closely related businesses. Gotland Interactive Park, as a concept, consists of all these organisations.

The companies, the Baltic Art Centre – an international centre for art – and the Interactive Institute are today located in a former warehouse in the vicinity of Gotland University. Within the framework of the project they work together on issues of common interest. One of the central ideas of Gotland Interactive Park is the combination of business and art. As a result of the common location an interesting meeting between business, art and R&D will take place. The interaction will lead to a creative and productive climate that is fruitful for both business life and art. Svenska Spel is also an important engine in the project. Due to the growing market of internet-based gambling they are in constant need of new and improved products.

As a result of the project cooperation in business has been achieved in various constellations. Together they form a cluster that attracts other companies as well as contribute to the creation of new companies. Furthermore a college education called GAME – Gotland Art and Media Education – has been established. It combines both technology and art. A motion picture-studio has also been built up in cooperation with the Interactive Institute. The establishment of the business park is an ongoing process. The project continues with further development of the cooperation with in the park and the establishment of incubation for new companies.



Advertising Gotland in Stockholm

Total costs:	€ 4 794 000
EU Grant:	€ 1 702 000
Fund:	ERDF/ESF
Programme:	Objective 2 Islands

# Gotland

Country	Sweden
EU Member,	Objective 2 Region
Area:	3,140 km <sup>2</sup>
Population:	57,300
Shortest distance to mainland:	90 km



## Viking Plus

Gotland University

During the work on the regional growth agreements – a plan with prioritised measures for regional growth – a SWOT-analysis identified thematic tourism as a business with potential for growth. It would complement and develop the already strong tourism sector in Gotland. The Vikings and the Viking age is, also internationally, a theme that is not only interesting from an archaeological point of view, but also exciting and mythical. Few other parts of Scandinavia have so many findings of treasures and archaeological objects from the Viking age as Gotland.

The project “Viking Plus” aimed to build on Gotland’s cultural heritage, by developing the islands cultural tourism, and strengthening the regional identity and awareness.

The project originated in science and archaeological excavations on Gotland. The latter because of the idea that culture and history as business is based on research, that leads to knowledge that subsequently is presented as accessible information. The best channel identified for presenting that material was through guided tours and exhibitions at the excavations and the Internet site “Digital guide to Gotlands Viking age”.

The theme and network “Gotland Viking Island” is now established. The Gotland University and the Municipality of Gotland will together. The project has lead to jobs in that visitors centre. The centre has also given spin off effects and lead to a positive and



Looking into our Viking past

Dan Carlsson

fruitful atmosphere in the parish in question with more jobs as a consequence. Perhaps the most appreciated and successful activity so far, though, is the possibility for international students and amateurs to take part in actual archaeological excavations during the summer season.

Total costs:	€ 721 000
EU Grant:	€ 278 000
Fund:	ERDF
Programme:	Objective 2 Islands

## Form Gotland

The County Administration of Gotland

An increasing national and international competition increases the need for developing, remodelling and creating new products. To be able to strengthen the competitiveness through qualified and qualitative product development, small companies, especially in rural and remote region like Gotland, need to enhance their competences.

The aim of “Form Gotland” was to strengthen the competitiveness in a number of selected and expansive small local companies within the manufacturing industry, by focusing on the distribution of knowledge and competence on design.

The project also aimed at identifying new markets for products from Gotland and to achieve higher market share in existing markets. Finding new and common channels for marketing was essential here.

The method used for implementing the main idea was networking and cooperation with professional designers. Companies and designers were carefullu

chosen. Products and areas with potential for development in the companies were identified together with potential new markets. Key persons in the companies attended seminars on basic design and on the role of professional design in the development of competitive products.

“Form Gotland” was very successful. Today several of the companies who took part have expanded and increased their revenues. The main achievement of the projects is that it has established a well functioning network between many of the companies involved, as well as a innovative and productive design climate in the region.

The project also contributed to strengthening Gotland as a trademark for quality products.

Total costs:	€ 223 500
EU Grant:	€ 29 400
Fund:	ERDF

## Åland – the Countryside Arena

The business development project @Åland- Landsbygden Arena (Åland – the Countryside Arena) started more than a year ago led by the Åland Chamber of Commerce.

The project, co-financed by European Regional Development Fund, has been able to offer approximately 40 companies in Åland's countryside, as well as in the archipelago, opportunities for tailor-made development patterns with several lines of specialisation.

"Business as the power of development" and "To make business" represent two of these development models. The project aims at increasing profitability by focusing on the customer and by studying the business from the customer's perspective. Developing the business-owner's capabilities in sales, price-

setting, management and service, improves enterprise competences.

The starting-point for the model is the business-owner's knowledge of their own company. Based on this experience a model for improving the strengths and decreasing the weaknesses respectively, is created by incorporating new competences. Great emphasis is placed on providing the participants with a more business-minded way of thinking.

This three-year project will continue until February 2005.

Total costs:	€ 819 638
EU Grant:	€ 163 928
Fund:	ERDF
Programme:	Objective 2 Åland Islands

## Competence development for adults

In the autumn of 2000 Åland Chamber of Commerce initiated an extensive education programme with the aim of offering 150 actively working Ålandic adults an opportunity to participate in a competence development programme in several different spheres. The versatile adult education programme takes the different qualifications of the participants into consideration, and thus provides an appropriate way to combine work and studies.

The project has focused on the life-long learning concept. The objective was to support and improve their chances for gaining success through business knowledge, economics, and language skills. Examples of chosen fields of specialisation were the Internet/multimedia, economics, languages, law, and, to a certain extent, environmental management systems. The project was co-financed from the European Social Fund. The project finished in December 2002, and expectations were considered fulfilled. Of the Project's 151 participants 61 % were between 40 and 64 years of age. Females comprised 63 % of the participants.

All those who started the course did not have formal functional competence required for their jobs. 46 %

of the participants claim that after completing the education they felt that they possessed the competence required for their jobs. A follow-up of participants will be conducted two years after the end of the project in order to study whether the results can be considered permanent.

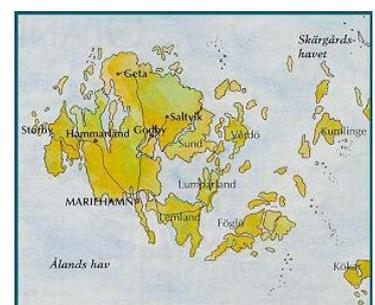
Total costs:	€ 1 377 676
EU Grant:	€ 206 885
Fund:	ESF
Programme:	Objective 3 Åland Islands



Caption describing picture or graphic.

# Åland

Country:	
EU Member:	Objective 2 Region
Area:	1527 km <sup>2</sup>
Population:	25,800
Shortest distance to mainland:	70 km.



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## The BEST Project (Baltic Exchange on Sustainable Tourism).

### Background

The Best Project was initiated as a result of the common Strategy for the B7 Island, which was adopted in Visby in May 1996. The main objective was to promote Sustainable Tourism in the islands.

The overall objectives of the BEST project were:

- To create an inter-island co-operation network to promote the development of sustainable tourism
- To establish common systems for Codes of conduct, bench-marking and quality control
- To adopt and publish a Green Paper
- To initiate at least three development projects
- To make a B7 contribution to the VASAB and Baltic Agenda 21 processes

In order to achieve those objectives, the BEST project, focused on:

- **Definition** (What is sustainable tourism all about?, State of the art, Best practice)
- **Positioning** (Which segments of the sustainable tourism market are the most promising for the B7 islands? How can the islands develop their comparative advantages into competitive advantages? How can spatial planning contribute to the development of sustainable tourism?)
- **Appearance** (How to appear on the market; Codes of conduct, Joint marketing efforts, Bench-marking)
- **Networking** (Exchanges and interlinks between stakeholders to improve communication and enhance sharing of information about strategies, experiences and know-how)

The **EU Interreg IIC** initiative supported the project. The overall budget for the project was, €360 000.

Partners in the project were the B7 member regions except the Estonian islands Hiiumaa and Saaremaa. This was due to that the PHARE programme did not approve financing. Hence, the Estonian islands were able to remain as associated partners in the project. Other associated partners were:

- Bornholm Research Centre, Nexö
- Gotland University College, Visby

- Estonian ECO-tourism Association, Pärnu and
- Société D'Eco-Aménagement, Montpellier

### Results

The project started as planned in April 1999. And it was completed in June 2001 with a final report. The project period was prolonged by three months mainly due to:

- All coordinators in the island had a lack of time so the pilot projects and final reports have been delayed according to the planned timetable.
- Things took a little bit longer time than expected.

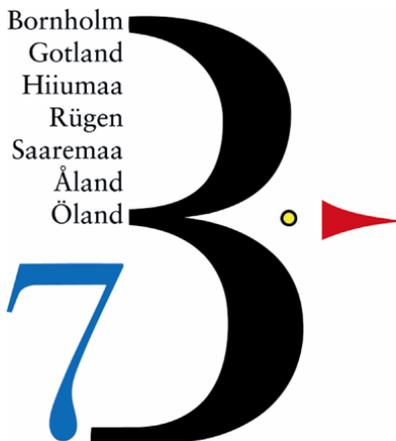
Besides these changes in the planned timetable, the project fulfilled the Action plan successfully.

### Conclusion:

The project has, of course, revealed, that we have different legislation, we have different organisations, and often different administrative and planning procedures and cultures in our islands and countries, but this did not reduce the need and the opportunities for interregional co-operation in the environmental field. On the contrary this makes networking with exchanges of experiences even more relevant.

The Steering Group members are in general pleased with the project, the process and the results. The project has had a theoretical approach and therefore not been to full satisfaction for all partners. The organisation with individual budgets and specific pilot projects has given the islands a lot of independence in how they want to work. On the other hand this independence has led to the overall project being divided into some smaller isolated project processes. One big frustration is that all coordinators unfortunately seem to have had to less time for being involved in a big project like BEST. The coordinators in the islands have been responsible both for running the project with activities and being project administrators. Periodically the administration takes all the time, especially for the lead partner.

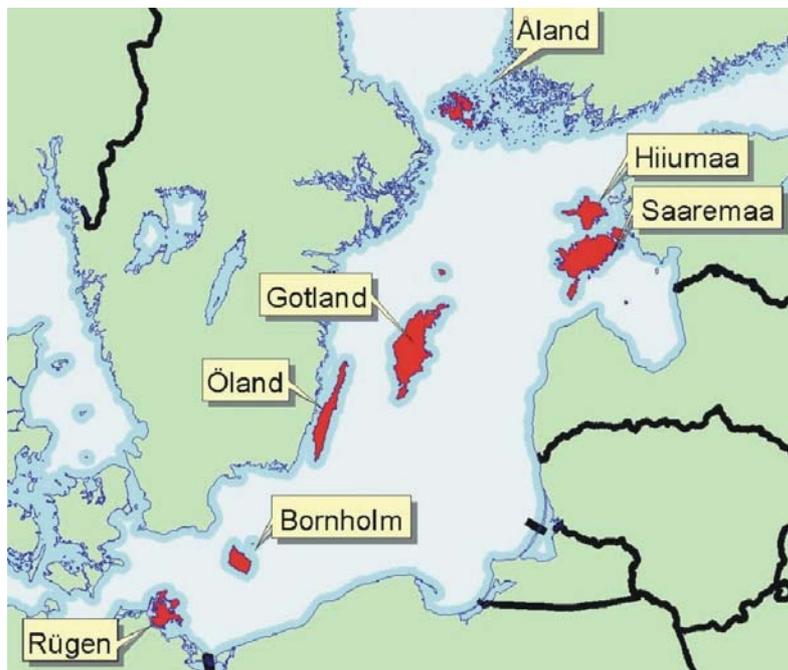
Bengt-Olof Grahn, Project leader (Report edited)



## B7 Islands Co-operation Network

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[WWW.B7.ORG](http://WWW.B7.ORG)



## WHAT IS THE B7?

**The B7 is a co-operation** of the 7 largest islands in the Baltic Sea from 5 different countries that began in 1989.

**The partners** of the co-operation are, Bornholm (Denmark), Gotland (Sweden), Hiiumaa (Estonia), Rügen (Germany), Saaremaa (Estonia), Åland (autonomous region of Finland), Öland (Sweden).

### The vision for the islands:

- The islands find themselves with a richer, smarter and happier population.
- The islands are also more in control of their own destiny than in year 2001.

The B7 has an annual rotating Chairmanship and Secretariat. In 2003 Hiiumaa holds the Chairmanship of the organisation and is responsible for the Secretariat.

### The principles of membership are:

- Each member is a Baltic Sea island.
- Each island contributes to the co-operation based on population size.
- The B7 co-operation is a partnership of equals.

The B7 islands believe that they can influence developments and better serve the interests of our islanders and achieve more as a co-operation than alone.

### Benefits and opportunities of the B7 Co-operation:

- An organisation that can lobby to promote island issues at the national and international level.
- A co-operation to exchange experiences and ideas.
- An organisation that works at the political, public official and grass roots level
- A co-operation to develop through interregional programmes, projects and focus groups.
- The framework for an extensive network

### Facts about the B7

- Co-operation started in 1989
- Has an annual, rotating Chairmanship and Secretariat.
- Has representation in Brussels since 1996.
- Workgroups: Environment and People-to-People.
- Runs Focus Groups to develop ideas and activities within areas such as transport and communication.
- Develops and implements large and small projects.



Project, projects, projects!