

B7 FACILITATOR'S NEWSLETTER

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>B7 Policiea and Positons</i>	2
<i>Success with EU Funds</i>	2
<i>The best webpage?</i>	2
<i>B7 Folk High Schools</i>	3
<i>B7 Handicraft</i>	3
<i>Stone-Days</i>	3
<i>Calendar of Events</i>	4

WHAT DOES ENLARGEMENT MEAN FOR THE B7 ISLANDS?

The B7 Co-operation has worked, for many of the 14 years of our existence, towards EU membership for Saaremaa and Hiiumaa. A lot of financial and people support from Bornholm, Gotland, Rügen, Åland and Öland has been devoted to achieve this. Well, what do we do now?

We have nearly achieved one of our major goals. A successful referendum and all the B7 islands are members of the EU.

Now, instead of a situation where our Estonian partners lacked capital for investment, or investment in people and institutional capacities, it is perhaps "the wealthier partners" of the B7 that will lack finance for capital and human resource projects to support their development after 2006.

EU funding, particularly Structural Funds, form a key part of the investment funding available to our islands. We need to ensure we have that opportunity after 2006. The B7 is launching a major push to ensure that the B7 islands can continue to receive the equivalent of an Objective 2 or Objective 1 Programme.

We need to put our politicians to work on our behalf. To lobby for the B7 islands.

At the Annual Conference on Öland in December 2002, B7 politicians decided that focused lobby activities were essential.



The B7 has asked Knud Andersen, Jan Lundgren and Hannes Maasel to lead this work. But they need the support of the B7 Board and the islands to give them the material and the arguments to champion the islands cause.

As regions in a rich member state we have a problem. As islands with permanent handicaps we can lobby for continued EU support. As part of this work the B7 is, at present, preparing **"Position Papers" and a brochure of "Success Stories for EU Interventions"** in which your island is assisting.

We plan to present a status of the work of the "Political Lobby Group" at the B7 Steering Committee meeting on 28 April and the Conference on 29 April.



Kopu Lighthouse, Hiiumaa

B7 ENLARGEMENT CONFERENCE, HIIMUMAA

Kärdla Culture House, Hiiumaa 29 April 2003

This is a key event in the B7 Hiiumaa Chairmanship and in the history of the B7. All the islands have been working to create and be part of a dynamic and competitive Baltic Sea Region. This is a milestone in that process.

First aim of the conference is to analyse the political changes and challenges in the Baltic Sea Area, now and after accession.

Second aim is to analyse the role of the islands, particularly the Estonian, at the

geographic heart of the Baltic Sea.

Third aim is to introduce new possibilities of co-operation within the EU common area of regional policy.

Key speaker are Mr Lennart Meri (former President of Estonia), H.E. Ambassadors of United Kingdom, Ireland, Norway, Head of the EU Commission Delegation in Estonia John Kjaer, representative of the Nordic Council of Ministries, and political leaders of Baltic Seven Islands.

What is B7's policy or position on:

Structural Funds
 Transport
 Education
 Business Development
 Common History
 Culture
 Democracy &
 Governance
 Environment and Energy
 Fisheries
 Healthcare
 ICT
 Tourism
 CAP
 (Common Agricultural
 Policy)

B7 POLICIES AND POSITIONS

Last year the B7 produced its "Strategy for the Future". In this we presented our 4 Objectives and the priorities of the B7 islands. Well what do we want to do about these priorities?

What do we want to achieve in the areas of:

Business Development
 CAP (Common Agricultural Policy)
 Common History
 Culture
 Democracy & Government
 Education
 Environment and Energy
 Fisheries
 Healthcare
 ICT
 Structural Funds
 Tourism
 Transport

Our Strategy says we want to:

- Lobby for a Structural Funds programme after 2006.
- Exchange experience and ideas.
- Run projects to develop the islands.
- Be better organised.

In order to further define what we want to concentrate our energies on, the B7 is preparing a series of "Position Papers". These are designed to be short succinct and to the point.

The Position Papers will guide us in our future actions, the projects we support, and the initiatives we take. The work of our politicians, board, work group members and supporters.



Members of the B7 Board on Rügen: Reet Kokovkin, Jörgen Samuelsson, Jørgen Kvist, Henrik Eybye Nielsen, Claes Kullberg, David Hunt, Gunnar Aldestam, Rainer Feit

SUCCESS WITH EU FUNDING

At a well attended meeting in DG Regio last year we were asked the famous question 'What positive results can you show from EU investments?'

The evaluation from that meeting was put very succinctly by Claes Kullberg: **"We could have been better prepared!"**

Each island, as decided at the Annual Conference, is busy producing a short text and a picture for two of their EU funded projects.

Together with summaries of the BEST and SUSWAT projects successfully completed by WGE, these will be put together in a brochure.

The EU Commission is coming under increasing pressure to prove that its regional development policies are working and not resulting in the skewing of investment towards 'concrete and training' as presented in an article from the Economist recently



Presenting B7 in Brussels

PREPARING FOR 2004

The B7 Chairmanship year goes very quickly. Just ask Saaremaa and Öland. No sooner had they started, than the year was almost over.

It takes a lot of preparation to form a Secretariat to support the activities of the B7; a Chairmanship programme with a cohesive theme. Plus the time to put together the project applications to get the extra financing in place to carry out the programme.

It is easy to under-estimate the hard work this requires. Every e-mail has to be followed up by a phone call to ensure that B7 activities have not disappeared off the bottom of someone's to-do list.

Good luck Rainer and Martina!

WHICH ISLAND HAS THE BEST PAGE ON WWW.B7.ORG?

Have you checked out the B7 website lately? www.b7.org

Last year it was **Öland and Hiiumaa** that were battling for the best island page. Trying to utilize the opportunity to advertise their islands.

Now Rügen has really stormed forward with a revamped page that shows a lot of flair. They have also updated their contacts page with new pictures.

Come on Bornholm, Gotland, Saaremaa and Åland! Surely Rügen is not that far ahead in the ICT stakes? Is there no one who could pep-up your pages?



Rainer Feit and Martina Schwinkendorf from Rügen.
 - Preparing the B7 2004 Chairmanship year -

B7 FOLK HIGH SCHOOL NETWORK

The B7 Islands Folk High Schools Network's (FHS) goal is life-long learning. Based on the ideas of N.F.S Grundtvig, B7 Folk High School is co-operating and learning through exchange of experience, ideas and human resources.

The FHS Network maintains that:

- lifelong learning is a continuous process from "cradle-to-grave".
- Individuals, as an integral part of the community, through life-long learning help our communities to be more democratic, just, and sustainable.
- learning experiences must honour:
 - the full range of expression, of heart, mind, and body;
 - the partnership between students and teachers in a dialogue of free and critical

inquiry;

- the community experience (history, mythology, etc.), including analysis which probes its history in light of its current needs;
- the democratic experience, especially valuing the "common person."

The FHS Network has recently completed a major project application to the EU Socrates programme and is awaiting the results.

It has also been awarded money by the B7 to continue the work started under the 2002 B7 Öland Chairmanship by Gunnar Alkdestam and Behnn Edvinsson and is being continued under the B7 Hiiumaa Chairmanship by Mare Ellen and Aivi Telvik



The County Governor of Hiiumaa Hannes Maasel, Gunnar Alkdestam and Reet Kokovkin Museum

B7 HANDICRAFT NETWORK

The aim of the "B7 Handicraft Network Project" is to create a network of people dealing with tourism and multicultural handicraft and support traditional local handicrafts based on local natural resources.

For example the important role of reeds and handicrafts in the local economy of islands is directly connected to the objective of restoring the semi-natural grasslands.

Landscape maintenance provides raw material for wood handicrafts - juniper and pinewood, for example. Market research and well-informed pricing are needed to make the practice of these crafts profitable.

Cattle and sheep farming enables artisans to use locally produced leather and wool. Making of woollen knitwear is a traditional branch of local handicrafts. It is certainly worth keeping up!



Caption describing picture or graphic.

Cooperation between handicraft societies and individual craftspeople will contribute to the establishing of the handicrafts network in the Baltic Sea region.

B7 WORKING IN LITHUANIA

In September last year the B7 was asked to assist a Lithuanian municipality in their preparation for Structural Funds.

David Hunt and Jørgen Samuelsson gleefully accepted the task, put together the application together with Moletai Municipality and promptly forgot about it. We suddenly got a call in March of this year that we were needed to complete the project.

The result was a very professional seminar, with speakers from all the key ministries and parliament plus a 2,5 day workshop where Bornholm and Öland could present their experiences with very positive feedback from the 30 plus participants.

B7 STONEDAYS—A SUCCESS STORY FOR ÖLAND

The Stone-Days initiative started by the B7 Work Group Environment (WGE) has been a great success. The idea has so appealed to Öland that they have put together a project co-financed with EU ERDF money and enthusiastically supported by local companies in the stone businesses.

But what is happening in WGE. Once the most prolific group of people in the B7, carrying our not one, but two INTERREG IIC projects.

The B7 needs your zest! B7 people on the islands: help bring WG Environment back to life!

"B7 Stonedays - another great idea from WG Environment and a super success on Öland.

But where is WGE now?



B7 Islands Co-operation Network

The Facilitator's Newsletter
Ullasvej 17
DK-3700 Rønne
Bornholm

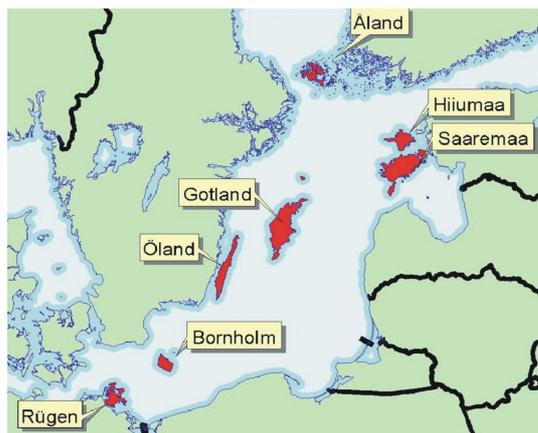
Phone: +45 5692 1304
Fax: +45 5692 2468
Email: ffdh@bora.dk

Look out for B7 on the
web at www.b7.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

What is happening around the Baltic in the coming months?

If you know of dates that should be added to this calendar please let me know at ffdh@bora.dk



Islands of the B7

MAR	02 Estonian National Parliamentary elections
	08 Referendum in Malta on EU accession
	23 Referendum in Slovenia on EU accession
	24-25 CBSS - Good Governance Seminar. Hosted by the Danish Parliament
	28 CPMR: The future of the regional policy in Prato, Tuscany.
APR	12 Referendum in Hungary on EU accession
	16 Signature of the Accession Treaty, Athens
	28 B7 Board & Steering Committee meetings
	29 Enlargement Conference Hiiumaa,
MAY	05-06 CoR - Seminar on Future of European Cohesion Policy, in Leipzig
	11 Referendum in Lithuania on EU accession
	16-17 Referendum in Slovakia on EU accession
	16-17 The CPMR Political Bureau will be meeting in Thessalonica
	16 Meeting EU-Ministers responsible for Regional Policy in Chalkidiki, Greece
	27 General Assembly CPMR Baltic Sea Commission Umeå, Sweden
JUN	08 Referendum in Poland on EU accession
	10-11 CBSS 12th Ministerial Meeting, Finland
	15-16 Referendum in the Czech Republic on EU accession
	20 European Council, Thessalonica
	?? Political Lobby Group, Brussels Event
	30 Seminar for regions on the Future Regional Policy, Brussels, DG REGIO
JUL	?? Presidential elections (elected by the parliament), Latvia
AUG	
SEP	Referendum in Estonia on EU accession
	Referendum in Latvia on EU accession
	B7 Conference on Health and Rehabilitation Hiiumaa
OCT	
DEC	Annual Conference and B7 Steering Committee - Hiiumaa
JAN	2004
MAY	Entry into force of the accession treaty *(General Affairs Council, 18.11.02)