

Annual Implementation Report 2020

Citizen's Summary

This is a summary of a report on Central Baltic Programme's activities in 2020. It presents key points and highlights from the year.

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1. Central Baltic Programme 2014–2020 in a nutshell

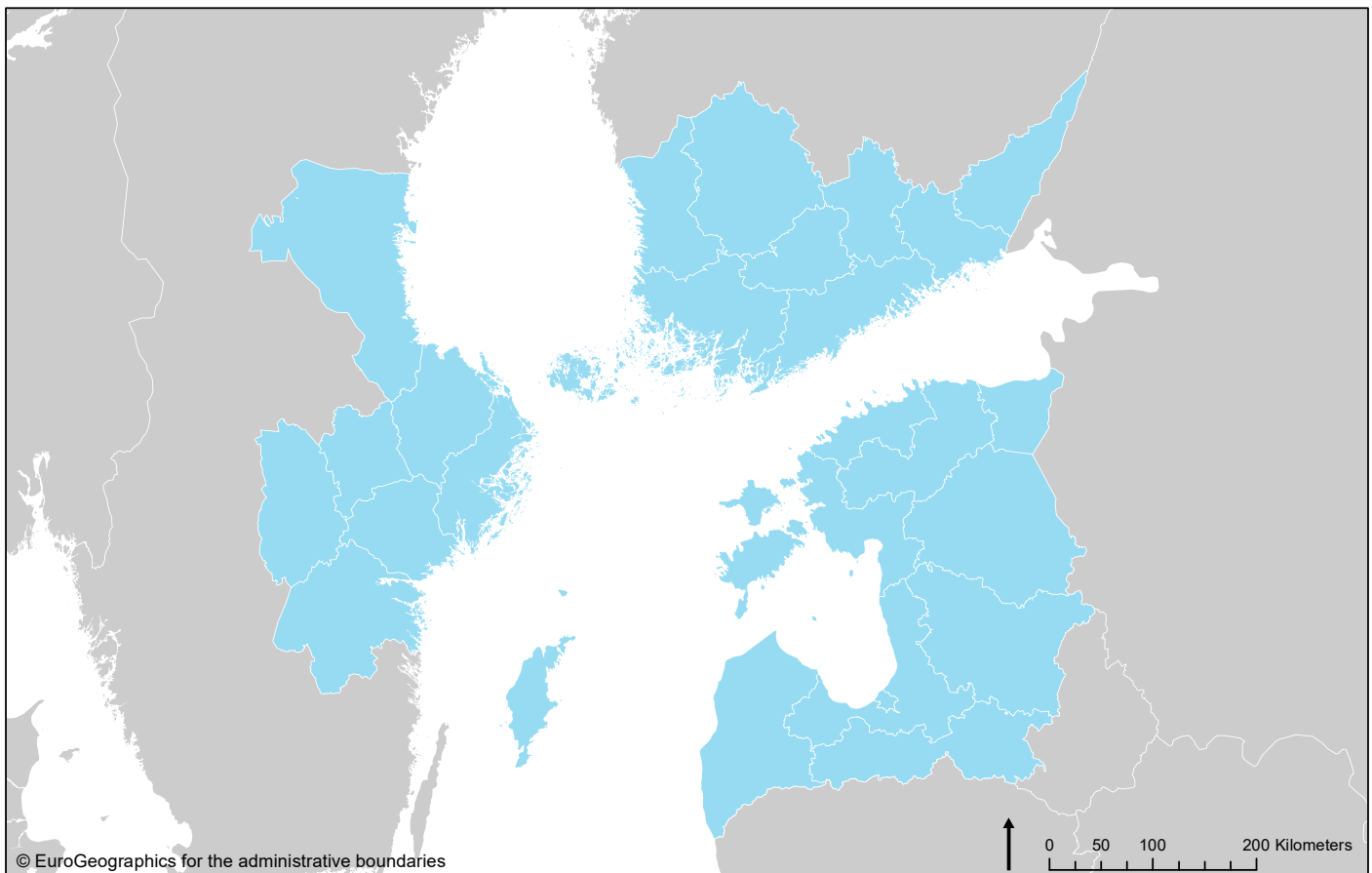
We are very happy that you are interested in the Central Baltic Programme 2014–2020.

Our programme has been set up to fund cross-border cooperation between Finland (including Åland), Estonia, Latvia and Sweden. Our projects are working together to solve joint problems or support joint possibilities of the Central Baltic region. In a nutshell, we are part of the Interreg community improving life in the EU through cross-border cooperation, one project at a time.

The programme supports projects in four priorities:

1. **Competitive economy**
2. **Sustainable use of common resources**
3. **Well-connected region**
4. **Skilled and socially inclusive region**

Central Baltic Programme 2014-2020
programme regions



2. Where are we?

The programme in numbers

The programme has allocated 100% of European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) resources and reached some important achievements.

Current status

137

contracted projects

811

partners

132 M€

allocated from the European Regional Development Fund

Forest Trail hiking route.

Number of financed projects per priority

34

competitive economy

35

sustainable use of common resources

23

well-connected region

45

skilled and socially inclusive region



3. Covid-19: The new reality for project and programme management

This year 2020 would have been another regular and busy year of project implementation, but the Covid-19 pandemic has tested the ability of managing the programme and project implementation. We are very inspired and happy for our projects who have shown great innovative and learning spirit in navigating turbulent times.

Depending on the stage and the content of the project, some were able to adapt quickly and effectively, while others have faced more challenges and may need to prolong their duration. Starting and ending projects were able to change their plans while projects nearing the final stage were in a more complicated situation. This was the case for projects creating, for example, Vocational Education and Training curricula that required to be piloted among students, or joint export missions to far markets that couldn't be realised. Whilst some achievements might have to be postponed if the restrictions continue for longer period, all projects are doing their best to reach the objectives and results.

As for the work in supporting the projects, we have moved onto digital platforms and tools that facilitate connection and collaboration. The communication highlight of the year involved walking along the trails developed by Central Baltic projects as part of the European Cooperation Day Walks (EC Day Walks).

In Estonia and Sweden we walked alongside routes in cooperation with the project Lakesperince, in Finland we, in collaboration with Urban Eco Islands, visited the island of Vasikkasaari whilst in Latvia we hiked with project Forest Trail as a part of the Lampa conversation festival. Finally on the Åland islands we walked on Kökar a part of the pilgrimage route of project St Olav Waterway. To involve local inhabitants in the walks and at the same time to promote our project paths notwithstanding the COVID-19 restrictions, we launched a campaign on Instagram asking local inhabitants to send us photos of their walks under the hashtags: #ECDay2020, #Interreg30 and #CentralBaltic. We encourage everyone to get to know the trails, by walking on them at their convenience.

EC Day walk on Forest Trail hiking path, Latvia.



4. Project stories

We are happy to share with you a glimpse of cross-border cooperation projects and their concrete results. The Central Baltic Programme has contributed to the development of solutions which will remain useful in the long run, as the examples below illustrate.

• Long distance cross-border hiking trail – The Forest Trail project

Forest Trail project developed a long-distance hiking route (named as Mežtaka in Latvia and Metsa Matkarada in Estonia) from Riga to Tallinn. The hiking route is ~1060 km long and leads through the most forested lands in both countries: Riga and Riga Region, Gauja National Park, Northern Gauja Forestland, Veclaicene Forestland in Latvia and Haanja Upland, Setomaa, Lake Peipus Shore, the North-Estonia Coastline in Estonia. The route is divided into 50 single-day trail sections, but length and difficulty vary therefore each hiker can choose the most suitable section.

Currently, the project is in the middle of the implementation – the trail is developed and marked, each of 50 sections has a map with information about highlights of the route and practicalities related to the shops in the vicinity, accommodation and the availability of the public transport. Project website contains all relevant information for hiking.

Forest Trail is designed as a part of the international European long-distance hiking route E11. Moreover, this route will be connected also with the route developed in Latvia-Lithuania programme. The total length of the route will be ~2140 km (102–114 days) km.

Information about the project:

- **Programme Priority:** P2 Sustainable use of common resources
- **Programme Specific Objective:** 2.1. Natural and cultural resources developed into sustainable tourist attractions
- **Duration:** 01.04.2019–31.12.2021
- **Total budget:** €1 215 720
- **ERDF:** €960 419

Project partners:

- Latvijas lauku tūrisma asociācija Lauku Ceļotājs (LV)
- Vidzemes Plānošanas Reģions (LV)
- Rīgas Plānošanas Reģions (LV)
- MTÜ Setomaa Turism (EE)
- MTÜ Peipsimaa Turism (EE)
- Dabas aizsardzības pārvalde (LV)
- AS Latvijas Valsts Meži (LV)
- MTÜ Eesti Maaturism (EE)
- MTÜ Ökokuller (EE)

Project website: www.baltictrails.eu

1. EC Day walk in Vasikkasaari, Finland (top left).
2. EC Day walk alongside lake Peipsi, Estonia (bottom left).
3. Map of Forest Trail hiking path (bottom right).





INSURE project, Södra stranden in Sweden.

• New methods to prevent hazardous substances from reaching the Baltic Sea – the INSURE project

Contaminated sites containing hazardous substances are a threat to the environment in all countries around the Baltic Sea. In order to tackle this challenge, the project INSURE focused on finding solutions to stop the distribution of these substances.

The project was a cooperation between partners from Sweden, Finland and Latvia aiming to decrease leakage from contaminated sites to reduce the inflow of hazardous substances and toxins into the Baltic Sea.

Contaminated areas often are complex with several contaminants in different media like soil, ground- and surface water, sediments and buildings. The project tested different methods in pilot areas to know what method would be suitable at what type of site. This allowed to develop new methods and improve the work of supervision and enforcement.

As a result of this project work, a practical database of contaminated sites was developed in Latvia where the municipalities are using the information for territorial planning. Another example is the new GIS tool that supports the visualisation of the contaminated sites. All tools are available on the project website.

Several enterprises have started to plan their work with contaminated sites in a new way where they include the work with contaminated sites in the

self-monitoring process and plan their work in a more structural way. Through knowledge and cooperation across borders, various sites and methods have been evaluated and can function as a model for future to prevent hazardous substances from reaching the Baltic Sea.

Information about the project:

- **Programme Priority:** P2 Sustainable use of common resources
- **Programme Specific Objective:** 2.4. Reduced nutrients, hazardous substances and toxins inflow into the Baltic Sea
- **Duration:** 01.09.2015–31.08.2019
- **Total budget:** €2 423 009
- **ERDF:** €1 877 434

Project partners:

- Länsstyrelsen Östergötland (SE)
- Latvijas Vides, ģeoloģijas un meteoroloģijas centrs (LV)
- Motala kommun (SE)
- Populus group Oy (FI)
- Vidzemes plānošanas regions (LV)
- Helsingin yliopisto (FI)
- Valmieras pilsētas pašvaldība (LV)

Project website: www.insureproject.se

5. Keep an eye on the Central Baltic

The preparations for the next Central Baltic Programme 2021–2027 is well advancing.

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We warmly invite you to read stories about our projects and their achievements on the project database: database.centralbaltic.eu

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