



FACTSHEET

NON-TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION



- **SUMMARY**

This factsheet provides an overview of the achievements gained by the transnational projects within the **Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme 2014-2020** thematic priority “**Innovation**” and the objective “**Non-technological innovation**”. In this factsheet, you will find examples of the projects’ solutions. For more information visit the **project library**. Many of these projects contributed to progress towards the objectives of the **EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)** and helped to advance the implementation of the EUSBSR action plan in the policy area of innovation.

Besides, some of the projects’ solutions can help developers of new project ideas see what has already been developed and what could be a new step toward more innovative societies under the new objectives of the **Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme 2021-2027** “**resilient economies and communities**”, “**responsive public services**” as well as “**circular economy**”.



What?

The projects tackled the following challenges and opportunities:

- Poor social inclusion, especially for vulnerable groups in rural areas;
- Lacking integration of circular approach in the existing and new business models;
- Obstacles to business development (such as slow incubation and commercialisation processes, untrusty business counselling);
- Unexplored potential of digital technologies.

Who?

The solutions are for municipal organisations, social service providers, business support organisations, incubators, SMEs, start-ups, sectoral agencies as well as schools, universities and research institutions.

- **ACHIEVEMENTS**

Exploring paths towards inclusive growth

Support to SMEs in development of furniture for seniors (Baltse@nioR)

- A set of functional furniture prototypes for seniors guides art school students, designers, architects and furniture companies on how to integrate new technologies into traditional furniture (e.g. a magic mirror that displays personalised messages, a ReAbleChair that collects data on sit-to-stand movements, or a smart chair helping in physical rehabilitation);
- Knowledge database on the seniors' needs and preferences regarding kitchen, bedroom and upholstery furniture;
- Knowledge database on reliability and warranty contains tools that enable to calculate the reliability of cabinet furniture joints and whole furniture constructions made from wood-based materials;
- Virtual library compiles data from Denmark, Germany, Finland, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland and Sweden, including publications, tools, furniture prototypes and tested design methods for furniture for seniors;
- A set of manuals and guidelines to new furniture design working methods with regard to the seniors' preferences and safety requirements.

Empowerment approaches in rural areas ([SEMPRE](#))

- The empowerment handbook for social service providers to develop new or improve existing social services involving service end-users, especially vulnerable groups in rural areas;



- Guidebook for empowerment training and building the empowerment competence of social service providers with recommendations and tools to develop training modules for social service delivery;
- Organisational roadmap for social service providers focuses on co-creation principles in service development and design;
- Brochure “Co-creating social services” compiles 26 user-driven micro-projects to inspire social service providers, public authorities, NGOs and service user groups.

Circular economy model in practical solutions

Eco-design tools for more sustainable products and services ([Ecodesign Circle](#))

- The sustainability guide for eco-design on how to work sustainably in product and process design. It includes business models for the circular economy, principles of eco-design and company business cases;
- The travelling exhibition “rECOnsider design” covers 30 eco-designed products in four categories: “learning - playing”, “enabling moving”, “consuming – eating”, and “dressing – wearing”. It aims to make the visitors reflect on their daily habits;
- EcoDesign audit integrates design thinking and circular economy requirements into an organisation’s product and service development process, in particular for small and medium-sized enterprises;
- Training programme” EcoDesign Sprint” for SMEs and design agencies.

Practical steps on how to work on circular procurement in a municipality ([Circular PP](#))

- The report on how to ensure circular procurement in municipality contains practical insights and hands-on tips, as well as success factors like simplification of procedures, clear communication of priorities or sub-division of procurements;
- Easy-to-read brochures for decision- and policymakers contain the best practices and recommendations on circular procurement;
- Animated video and infographics on circular public procurement with an overview of the related processes, market engagement, the resource loop, circularity strategies, and circular tenders’ criteria. The material can be used by municipal organisations willing to introduce a circular approach in e.g. procurement and purchase of services.



Improved conditions for business development

Strategic framework for boosting consumer cleantech innovation ecosystems ([SmartUp Accelerator](#))

- SmartUp Accelerator network hosts a platform that contains a knowledge database of the consumer cleantech business. It is run and used by mostly municipalities, sectoral agencies and incubators, start-ups, investors and big companies;
- SmartUp Accelerator Model, functioning as an interactive platform, guides on interactions and interlinkages of start-ups, intermediaries and investors in consumer cleantech;
- “SmartUp Accelerator Testbeds” report equips start-ups, intermediaries and investors with key learnings from successful efforts to achieve a new market entry and to develop testbeds.

Tools for business counselling tailored for owner-managers of SMEs ([SNOWMan](#))

- Counselling toolbox guides through the 6-step counselling process (introduction, vision, identification of challenges and needs, strategy and action plan, operationalisation, measuring and evaluation outputs). It helps business intermediaries establish a trustful relationship with owner-managers during counselling;
- Online portal “6-steps for innovation” offers a protected data storage box including the data on business intermediaries from Poland, Lithuania, Denmark and Finland offering counselling support;
- The train-the-trainer curricula presents a structure for the training for business intermediaries that offer counselling support to SME owner-managers.

Master tool to commercialise biomarkers ([BIC](#))

- The “Master Tool” guides researchers and product developers, step by step, through the technology readiness levels and each phase of the biomarker (markers providing information on the health status of a person) commercialisation. The “Master Tool” allows users to access the tools designed by the project (e.g. Biomarker commercialisation review tool, in Vitro diagnostics regulatory tool, and other) in one place.

Framework for business development of the game industry ([Baltic Game Industry](#))

- Strategic framework for business development of the game industry includes strategies, regulations, and schemes introduced or supported by public authorities. It helps to shape more efficient framework conditions for business development of the game industry. The framework is useful for policymakers when they design their policies and for the industry representatives to better understand the processes that might limit business development from the public side;



- The interactive map of the digital game industry illustrates the state of the art across the Baltic Sea region, comprising a SWOT analysis of the current framework in each country, good practices, key policy stakeholders as well as incubation capacities;
- Game incubation roadmap functions as an online tool and illustrates solutions for effective game incubation. The roadmap offers not only advice and knowledge but also guidance towards relevant information depending on "setting", interest levels, background, available financial and human resources;
- Virtual reality best practice catalogue explains the special challenges that arise when game developers and other domain experts collaborate. It specifies what is needed to ensure good communication across expertise and business culture boundaries.

Training on how to transfer business from owner to successor ([INBETS BSR](#))

- The evaluation tool for company owners and potential successors enables to estimate the company's value before starting business transfer negotiations;
- Train the trainer programme trains business support organisations to become qualified business transfer coaches;
- A 562 hours comprehensive training course for entrepreneurship students and potential business successors. It focuses on the development of skills needed for a successful business transfer process, as well as learning the basics of business transfer.

Collaboration between audio-visual industries and education, health care and tourism sectors ([CM](#))

- Report on the emergence of cross-innovation systems presents an in-depth analysis of cross-innovation observed in audio-visual industries that couple with education, health care and tourism. It is for policymakers, academic institutions, companies in education, health care and tourism sectors about cross-innovation opportunities and empirical research that strengthens cooperation between audio-visual industries and the three others.



Enhanced integration of digital technologies

Tools for mass customisation and integration of IT technology into clothing ([SWW](#))

- The database of 3D body scanning measurements presents an analysis of interviews and 3D body scanning data from 547 workers in the military services, chemical and construction industry in Estonia, Finland, Latvia and Poland. It is for SMEs who innovate their production lines and manufacturing of more tailored and customised work wear;
- New prototype of the smart workwear presents testing results and an analysis of smart fabrics. It covers also integration and safety sensors and electronics into workwear (e.g. solutions for a better protection of workwear users from hazardous environments or difficult climate conditions).

New business models in local food distribution ([Baltic Sea Food](#))

- E-platforms for food distribution in the Baltic sea region, initially based on the Swedish case and developed in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, Germany, Russia (Pskov oblast), Denmark, and Norway. They improve SMEs' access to food networks/distributors for ordering, communication, accounting or diversification of offers;
- A series of regional business models for SMEs that include the introduction of the new target customer group "Business gifts and food souvenirs as well as the new marketing and sales channel "Contact events and fairs".

Innovative solutions to prevent lifestyle-related diseases ([BaltCityPrevention](#))

- The EiNi app, available on Google Play, supports adolescents to establish a nicotine-free lifestyle by reducing or quitting tobacco or snus. The app includes tasks like physical activities, breathing exercises, writing exercises, to distract, activate or calm down the user so that the urge to smoke or take snus would pass.
- Knowledge exchange online platform for representatives of public health authorities e.g. health professionals in municipalities, school nurses and others who are interested in implementing health promotion interventions.

Digitalisation toolkits to advance towards a single digital market ([DIGINNO](#))

- Digitalisation toolkits focus on the digital transformation of SMEs to evaluate their level of adopting digital technology. They help SMEs to improve and decide on digitalisation of operational processes;
- Feasibility studies and show-case roadmaps cover cross-border e-government services such as eCMR (electronic consignment notes), cross-border Know-Your-Customer (a process for obliged legal entities to perform customer due diligence), cross-border business registration and cross-



border e-Receipt services. These tools help public institutions to exploit the opportunities of digitalisation;

- Overview of policy-related ideas and recommendations on how EU and national policies can support transnational digital collaboration and address challenges for SMEs. It is for policymakers to make them “cross-border minded” when they develop their policy initiatives.

TAGS: non-technological innovation, business support, transforming business models, SMEs and entrepreneurship, public procurement, circular economy, social innovation, social inclusion, silver economy, resilient economies and communities, eco-design, eco-innovation, innovation ecosystem, responsive public services, community integration, citizen empowerment.