

The **Botnia-Atlantica programme** is a cross-border cooperation programme intended to co-fund projects within the Botnia-Atlantica area.

European Territorial Cooperation

The programme is one of several **European Territorial Cooperation** programmes, co-funded by the **European Regional Development Fund** of the EU.

European Territorial Cooperation is one of the objectives of the structural funds (Objective 3) in the programming period 2007-2013. The territorial cooperation programmes are 1) **cross border**, cooperation between region at common borders, 2) **transnational**, countries or regions cooperate within larger geographical areas, and 3) **inter-regional**, regions in all parts of Europe cooperate.

A similar cooperation was earlier carried out under the Interreg heading. The Kvarken-MittSkandia Interreg IIA and IIIA programmes were implemented 1995-1999 and 2000-2006 respectively.¹

The Botnia-Atlantica Programme

The Botnia-Atlantica programme covers a larger area than the Kvarken-MittSkandia programmes. The area includes the regions **Ostrobothnia**, **Central Ostrobothnia** and **Satakunta** in Finland, **Västerbotten** and **Västernorrland** as well as the municipality of **Nordanstig** in Sweden and the **Nordland** region in Norway.

The regions Southern Ostrobothnia in Finland and Gävleborg (except Nordanstig) in Sweden participate as adjacent areas in the programme.

The programme was allocated **30,4 milj. €** by Finland and Sweden of their share of funds for cross border cooperation. The programme is also funded by **2,8 milj. €** from the Norwegian government. Additionally there is a regional co-funding from the three countries of similar size as the above mentioned. The total budget of the programme is consequently **66,6 milj. €**.

A **proposal** for the programme has been worked out by the participating regions on a regional level. The proposal has been delivered to the governments of the three countries. After being appraised by the governments, the proposal will be sent to the European Commission for approval.

The proposal will probably be sent to the commission in March 2007. The commission has four months to approve the proposal.

The programme gives possibilities to finance projects within **six themes**:

- o environment
- o communications
- o cohesion

- o competence
- o business
- o society

The programming document will give more specific information on the themes.

Funding of Projects

The programme will finance projects **between the participating regions**. Projects between Finland and Sweden, between Sweden and Norway, between Finland and Norway and between all three countries are possible. In every project there must be participation from at least two regions in two countries. Projects with more than two regions or countries do not get an advantage

Normal **projects** (called establishing projects in the programme) can have a lifetime of max. three years. Innovative projects, for max. one year, can be carried out to test new ideas and new partnerships. Successful innovative projects can be followed by normal projects. There will also be a support for creation of new cross border networks.

Every project shall have a **joint development**, a **joint funding**, a **joint staff** and a **joint implementation** across the border/borders. A **lead partner** has the responsibility for the project and will handle the EU-money.

There is supposed to be a national public **co-funding** of the same amount added to the EU-funding.

The programme is managed by the management authority, located at the County Administration of Västerbotten. Information, assessment of applications and follow up of projects will be carried out by the joint secretariat.

You will find additional information on www.botnia-atlantica.eu ²

Botnia-Atlantica



¹ The Interreg IIA programme funded 80 projects while the Interreg IIIA programme has funded 75 projects. The IIIA programme has allocated all money, but some projects still continue during 2007.

² The web address www.botnia-atlantica.eu will be launched in the winter. For the time being there will be information on www.kvarken-mittskandia.nu