

“Branding a Macro-region: the case of the BSR”

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About Baltic Development Forum (BDF)

- An independent non-profit, agenda-setting, networking organisation with members from governments, large companies, major cities, institutional investors and business associations in the Baltic Sea Region
- Facilitate and develop new initiatives, partnerships and international contacts to stimulate growth, innovation and competitiveness in the Baltic Sea Region and its 11 countries
- Founded and chaired by Uffe Ellemann-Jensen



About Tendensor



Services:

- ✓ Place branding processes and projects.
- ✓ Advising cities, destinations, regions and countries on place branding and attractiveness.
- ✓ Training courses for 'place managers'.
- ✓ Measure the identity and image of places with the 'Attractiveness Index'.

Outline

I. Macro-regions

II. 'Branding the Baltic Sea Region'

III. BaltMet Promo – Creating promotional Baltic Sea Region products for tourists, talents and investors in the global markets

IV. Discussion

But first..

1. What would be the main challenges for the Baltic Sea Region in terms of building a brand?



I. Macro-regions

Some are defined by natural characteristics..

The wider Black Sea region



The Alps region

..others are mainly politically created



Some have a long tradition of political cooperation..



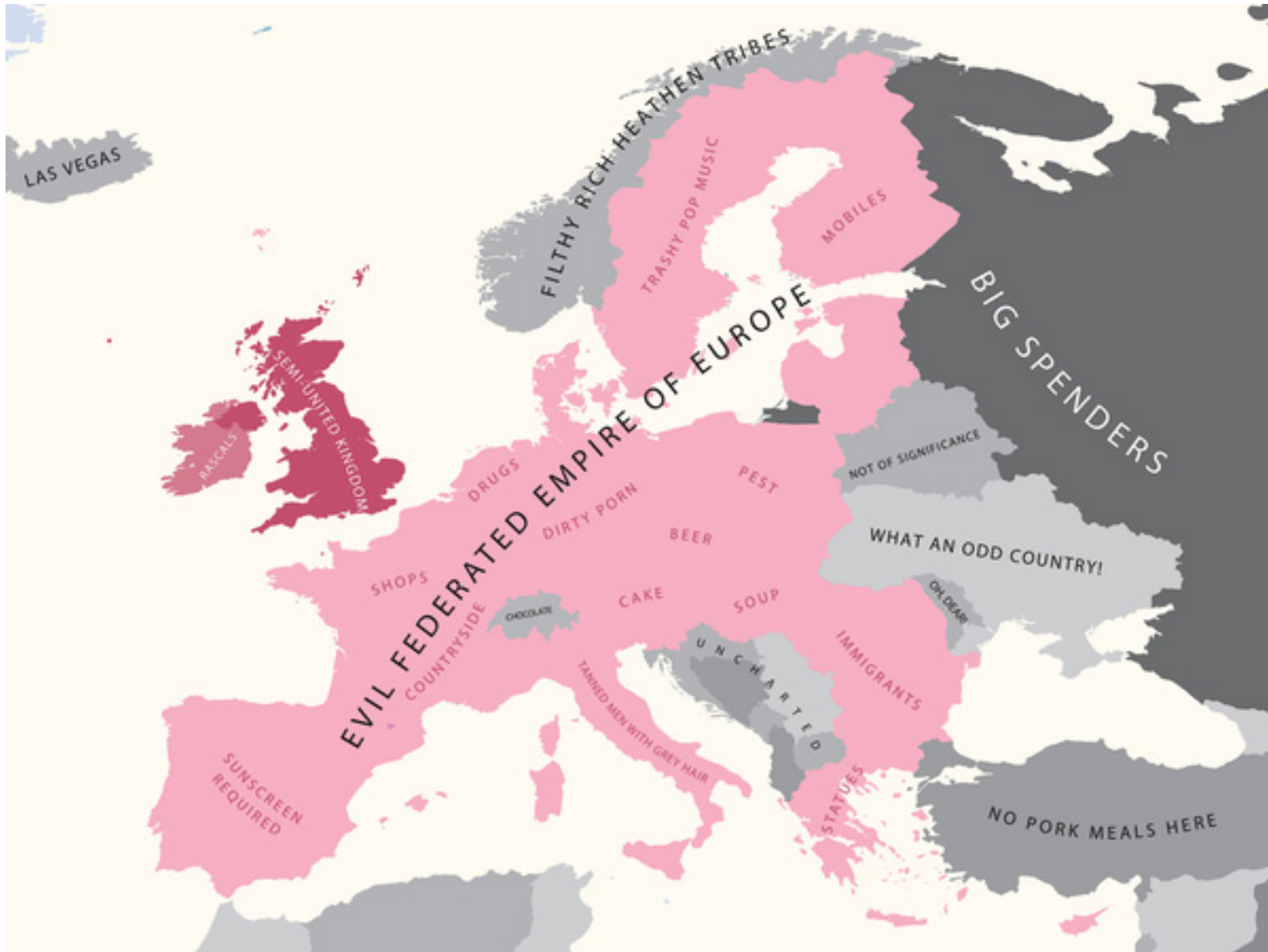
..for others it's a newer thing



Some regions have strong political institutions..



Europe according to the UK..



Source:

<http://alphadesigner.com/project-mapping-stereotypes.html>

..others have no political identity, but boast powerful images based on a shared cultural and/or historical identity..

- Scandinavia
 - 'Scandinavian vikings', 'Scandinavian design/furniture', 'Scandinavian masters/open', 'Scandinavian Airlines' etc. etc.
- Mediterranean region
 - 'mediterranean lifestyle/culture/holidays/food/diet' etc. etc.

Some are firmly established as single tourism destinations..



...others are trying to market themselves as a single tourism destination..



Greater Mekong Sub-region



Some regions are used in the marketing of other regions and places..

- *'The Øresund Region – a gateway to the Baltic Sea Region'*
- *'Innsbruck – the Capital of the Alps'*
- *'Hungary – the essence of Europa'*
- *'Malaysia – truly Asia'*



..and some at the expense of others..

- *'Estonia: Nordic with a twist'* (instead of 'Baltic')
- *'Slovenia – the sunny side of the Alps'* (instead of 'Balkan')
- *'Croatia - the Mediterranean as it once was'* (instead of 'Balkan')

Some regions are used in brands or as home markets..

- Finnair – ‘we know the *nordic sky*’
- SAS – ‘it’s *Scandinavian*’ and ‘we bring *Scandinavia* out in the world and back again’
- Telia-Sonera – ‘provides telecommunication services in the Nordic and Baltic countries’
- Nordea – ‘the largest financial services group in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region’



FINNAIR



Scandinavian Airlines

TeliaSonera


Nordea 

II. 'Branding the Baltic Sea Region'

Background and timeline

- Discussion initiated in 2001 at BDF Summit – Wally Olins hired by BDF
- Idea laid fallow until 2004 – brought up in the context of the ‘Baltic Sea Initiative’ for competitiveness of the BSR – ‘international visibility’ became priority area
- ‘Branding the BSR’ 2005-2007 – series of events and meetings – Simon Anholt hired as consultant
- Several challenges encountered – e.g. lack of financing – idea to apply for EU funding emerged  BaltMet Promo Application 2007-2009

Specific challenges for the BSR

- Coordination and management – no decision-making authority
- Multiple stakeholders, multiple identities and multiple target groups 
 - No strong common identity, weak identification
 - No established image
 - Lack of unity of purpose
- Competition with national/sub-national initiatives
- No clear definition of the region (which countries, how many inhabitants?)

Regions and brand image

Mediterranean **diet**

Mediterranean **lifestyle**

Mediterranean **holiday**

Mediterranean **architecture**

Mediterranean **landscape**

Regions and brand image

Baltic Sea Region **diet?**

Baltic Sea Region **lifestyle?**

Baltic Sea Region **holiday?**

Baltic Sea Region **architecture?**

Baltic Sea Region **landscape?**

Regions and brand image

Mediterranean diet (1 020 000)

Mediterranean lifestyle (77 600)

Mediterranean holiday (75 100)

Mediterranean architecture
(62 600)

Mediterranean landscape
(60 800)

Baltic Sea Region diet (248)

Baltic Sea Region lifestyle (3)

Baltic Sea Region holiday (22 900)

Baltic Sea Region architecture (1 889)

Baltic Sea Region landscape (7 137)

Regions and regional cooperation

Region

Cooperation

1. Mediterranean Region, 2 490 200

1. Baltic Sea Region, 87 900

2. Nordic Region, 2 408 000

2. Nordic Region, 59 893

3. Baltic Sea Region, 433 100

3. Mediterranean Region, 41 965


4. Benelux Region, 364 280

4. Visegrad Region, 1006

5. Visegrad Region, 139 170

5. Benelux Region, 452

Opportunities for the BSR

- ‘Know thyself, know thy audience’  Perception analysis
- Political context – the EU Strategy for the BSR, already strong bottom-up *cooperation* strengthened and coordinated with top-down policy
- Business context – Global leadership in ‘Green’ and ‘digital/mobile’ sectors (‘green’ and ‘smart’ region)
- ‘Dare’ to find a niche
- More external marketing and more coordination between existing efforts

III. BaltMet Promo

***Promotes the entire Baltic Sea Region
in global markets***

Outline

- I. About BaltMet Promo
- II. Overall research – ‘Place Branding and Place Promotion Efforts in the BSR – a Situation Analysis’

Facts about BaltMet Promo

- **Funding:** European Union, Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013 (European Regional Development Fund)
- **Duration:** Pilot Phase lasts for two years (2010 – 2011).

Extension Phase is planned to be launched for 2012-2013 ('BaltMet Brand-ID')

- **Budget:** 2,8 MEUR (2010-2011) + *approx. 3 MEUR* (2012-2013)

Partners

- City of Helsinki (Lead Partner)
- Aalto University School of Economics (Coordinator)
- Baltic Development Forum
- City of Berlin
- City of Warsaw
- Greater Helsinki Promotion Ltd
- The Research Institute of Finnish Economy
- City of Riga
- City of Vilnius

Associated Organisations

- City of Malmö
- Oslo Teknopol
- City of St. Petersburg
- City of Tallinn
- Wonderful Copenhagen
- Baltic Sea Region networks
- National institutions:
 - investment promotion agencies
 - national tourism promotion agencies
 - cultural agencies

Mission

BaltMet Promo promotes the entire Baltic Sea Region globally and strengthens the BSR identity both at home and abroad, by

- jointly designing and promoting BSR services and products for tourists, talents and investors
- mapping branding initiatives and energizing interregional co-operation in branding
- testing a method how to do collaborative place promotion for a large region like BSR – the method could be transferable to other target markets and subject matters/sectors

Pilots in action

- Tourism Pilot
- Talent Pilot
- Investment Pilot

Tourism pilot..



...attracts more Japanese travellers to the BSR with a BSR travel package
"Live like locals"

Investment pilot..



...attracts international investment projects to the BSR with an BSR **investment guidebook** promoted at world trade fairs

Talent pilot..

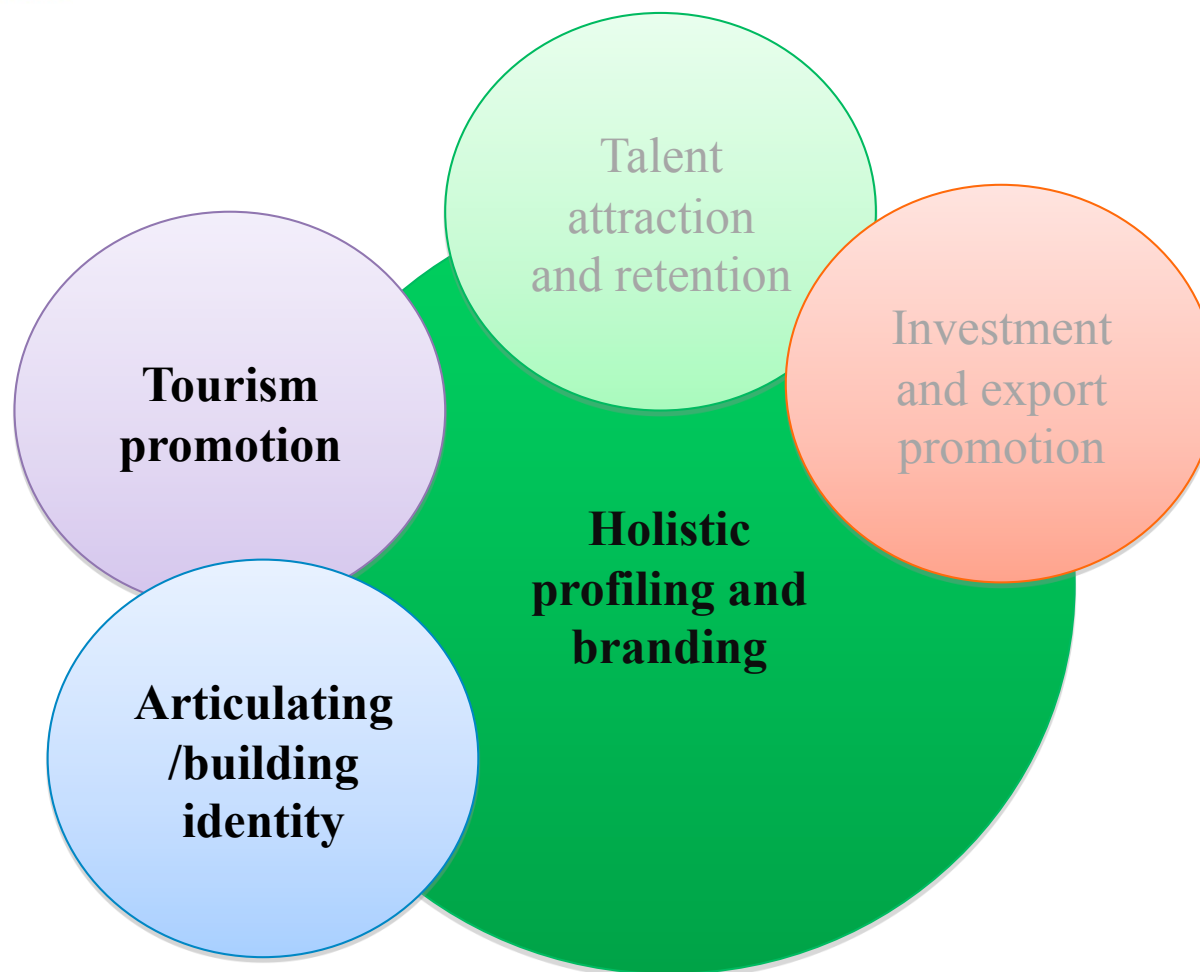


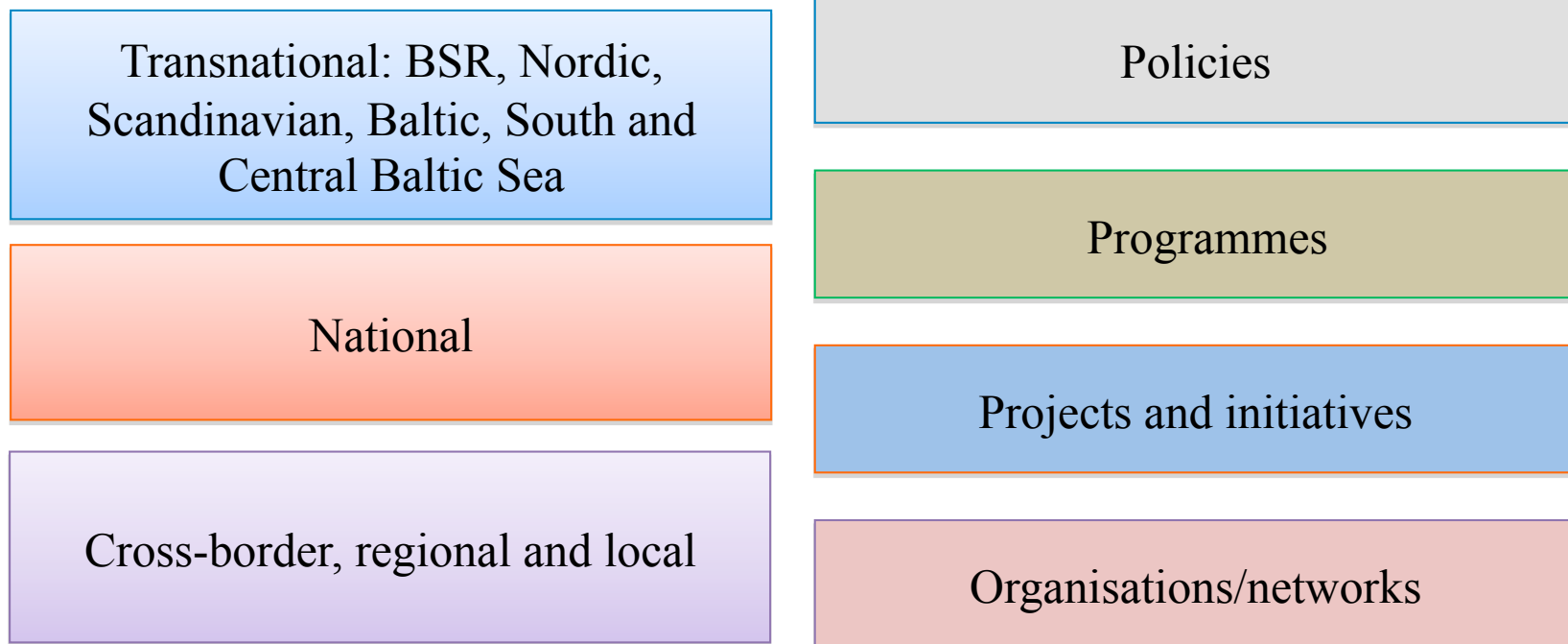
...attracts Japanese film industry talents to the BSR by launching a **co-production workshop** in connection with a Baltic Sea film festival

Place Branding and Place Promotion Efforts in the BSR – a Situation Analysis

- Map different initiatives, projects, organisations and networks
- Alignment, identify stakeholders and avoid duplication of work
- Make full use of complementarity and synergy
- Facilitate discussion on marketing and attractiveness of the BSR







Holistic profiling and branding

Policies: EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

Programmes: Baltic Sea Region Programme (Interreg IV B), Central Baltic and South Baltic Programmes (Interreg IV A), Nordic Globalisation Cooperation

Projects and initiatives: "Branding the Baltic Sea Region" (2001-2007), Balticness (2007-08), **BaltMet Promo**, "BASAAR" (Baltic-Sea Asia Agenda for Regions in a Globalising World)

Organisations/networks: Baltic Ports Organization, ScanBalt Bio Region, Union of Baltic Cities, Baltic Metropolises (BaltMet), Nordic-Baltic 8 ('NB 8')

Articulating/building identity

Policies: Horizontal action “building a regional identity” of the EU Strategy

Programme: BSR Programme 2007-2013, Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture

Projects and initiatives:

- BSR: Balticness (2007-08), Baltic Sea Identity, AGORA 2.0 – Heritage Tourism for Increased BSR Identity, Parks and Benefits, Four Corners Heritage
- Nordic: Nordic Culture in the World, Nordic Culture Forum

Organisations/networks: Baltic Sea Cultural Heritage Cooperation, ARS Baltica, NB 8

Tourism promotion

Policies: Priority 12 of the EU Strategy for the BSR (Tourism, Health and Education)

Programmes:

EU Strategy tourism flagships:

- "Promote cultural heritage and unique landscapes"
- "Developing strategies for sustainable tourism"
- "Attract tourists to rural areas especially coastal ones"

Tourism promotion

Project and initiatives:

- BSR: Baltic Sea Tourism Forum, Cruise Baltic, AGORA 2.0, Parks & Benefits, Four Corners Heritage, SEASIDE, United in Diversity, Branding Scandinavian Islands
- Baltic: One vacation – Two countries, Grate Baltic Travel

Organisations/networks:

- BSR: Baltic Sea Tourism Commission, BDF (2004-2007), UBC Tourism Commission
- Scandinavian/Nordic: Scandinavian Tourism Board (Asia-pacific and New York)

Final observations

- Many projects, networks and organisations working to brand and market the Baltic Sea Region, or seek to build a common identity
- No lack of will and ambition; “mental maturity” for branding and promotion
- Some fragmentation and lack of long-term perspective, few attempts to coordinate the various activities
- More scope for collaboration, synergy and pooling of scarce promotional resources to:
 - achieve critical mass internally
 - impact and outreach externally

Recommendations for future marketing of the region

- All efforts tell a different story of the region, different target markets
- Common platform for communication and marketing
- Perception research and wide consultation process
- Identify priority areas, sectors and target markets:
 - E.g. investments: Cleantech and renewable energy, ICT, life science and biotech, logistics and maritime industry, or tourism themes
 - E.g. tourism: Cruises, city holidays, nature-based experiences, culture and heritage tourism

IV. Questions to discuss

- Is the Baltic Sea Region primarily a ‘community of values’ or a ‘community of interests’? Can you build a brand for place that shares interests but not values? Can you brand ‘diversity’ – (e.g. the EU – united in diversity)
- Why and when is it beneficial to be part of a macro-region?
 - E.g. product/destination development, internal critical mass, external promotion, outreach/impact, cost-efficiency/pooling of resources

Thank you for your attention!

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