

New Ways of Supporting the Internationalisation of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

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Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) soon have an opportunity to receive support in developing (in entering international markets / in expanding to international markets) into international markets. There are great examples of large international enterprises, like Skype, Google, Facebook etc., but often SMEs say that for them expanding to international markets is very complicated/challenging. Now, the internationalisation of such companies will be supported by an European Commission (Central Baltic Interreg IV A Programme) funded project.

The most crucial objective of the project is to train the business advisors. In order to reach its targets, the project has taken a slightly different approach from the usual: the main task is to strengthen the business advisors' internationalisation know-how and their ability to identify right international markets for the potential products and services. Organisational and regional operational models will be developed in a way that local actors are able to provide high-quality internationalisation services. After this, the enterprises, which are interested in internationalisation, will be identified and they will be helped to network with each other and with business advisors. Finally new ways of activating SME internationalisation will be searched for.

Central Baltic Interreg IV A Programme's funded BASIS (Building up Availability of SME Internationalisation Services) project started on the 1st of January 2011. There are 14 partners from Estonia, Latvia, Sweden and Finland in the project. There are universities and regional development centres involved from each country. The partners from Finland are: University of Turku, Loimaa Region Development Centre, Posintra Business Development Centre, Turku Region Development Centre, Ukipolis Ltd. Technology Centre and Yrityssalo Oy. Turku university's Brahea Centre for Training and Development serves as the lead partner for coordinating the programme. The project will last for three years with the kick-off seminar taking place in Tallinn on the 4th and 5th of April 2011. More information is available at the project website: www.ttu.ee/basis

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