

Atlas of maritime heritage as an excellent tool attracting visitors to Baltic coastal regions

1.

Maritime Heritage Atlas of Baltic Sea is one of the main outputs of Seaside project (performed between 2008-2011) financed within South Baltic Program. You can still find it under the link www.maritimeatlas.eu.

The idea of Atlas development leading by National Maritime Museum in Gdańsk has been uploaded to EU Strategy for Baltic Sea region, to culture priority area. Having the opportunity to participate in the first call of Seed Money Facility (Seed money is EU funding to prepare projects that contribute to one of the priority areas or horizontal actions of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region) the Museum prepared the application for the proposal of **MARATABAL project** that was happily approved in June 2013. MARTABAL (MARITime heritage Atlas BALtic sea) is the one year project run from June 2013 to September 2014, under the Priority Area Culture - Developing and promoting the common culture and cultural identity.

The MARATABAL project aims to enhance the existing prototype of the Atlas and create a complete portfolio of the Baltic Maritime Heritage including historic sites and objects, constructions, museums, lighthouses, historical ships and warships, ports and shipyards, natural attractions which belong to maritime heritage, cultural and touristic events. It is a first step responding to the growing demand of high-quality products in the field of culture, tourism, nature and 'edutainment'.

The Seed Money project gives the opportunity to explore and research in detail the options of the Atlas development within the scope of content creation, new IT technology and tourist sector requirements. Moreover, it will allow to identify the most promising network of individuals that would open up a platform for collaboration around the startup idea.

MARTABAL as the technical project will work out necessary components to prepare the application to the EU or national funding sources e.g. the European Structural & Investment Funds programs 2014-2020 or European Territorial Cooperation (Interreg) V, Creative Europe or the Research Framework Program HORIZON 2020. It will include a description of activities and outputs, the composition of the partnership and the indicative budget of the future main project.

2.

According to the project plan we organized the first workshop in Gdansk, 6-7 November last year. The next one will be held in Turku, 22-24 of April.

These workshops embrace brainstorming sessions, mind-mapping and in-depth discussion and also are supported by experts in the fields such as commercial dimension, technical issues (mobile applications), touristic offers, etc.

Gdansk meeting was focused on the definition of the Business Model, based on the Canvas methodology. This exercise delivered core elements to discuss the shape of the main project.

Workshop in Turku will be organized in conjunction with Network of Maritime Museums of Baltic Sea region conference. The representatives of the museums will be invited to participate in the Atlas creation.

In order to achieve a broad exposure and wide partners' involvement the list of invited experts will outline the range of commercial operators:

- tourism operators (cruise and ferry lines, hotel chains, web offers, travel agencies, etc.)
- city tourism promoters, regional development agencies
- web and mobile app developers
- web and mobile app providers

3.

The identification of the future shape of Atlas and approach towards its development depends on the selection of crucial pillars - **culture**, **tourism** and **technology**.

Three scenarios of the main project are predicted:

1. Primarily Culture related, as a catalogue of heritage sites serving to the main objectives of museums (research, dissemination, education and preservation) for further on-line and off-line exhibitions and catalogues;
2. Mainly Tourism focused, as a tool for facilitating visits and attracting tourists with practical information about organizing leisure time or finding the best place to stay in Baltic coastal destinations;
3. With a strong link to Technology, where the maritime heritage and the tourism dimension can be an emblematic case study for demonstrating the benefits of the new technological development in the creative industries.

There are variety of goals we want to achieve through the Atlas launch. Firstly, inspire greater interest and engagement in cultural heritage preservation and educate by knowledge offer. Secondly, we want to enrich tourism offer and promote regional identity.

The action plan consists of several activities –

- Conducting researches and broadening the knowledge
- Applying digital media solutions
- Engaging city and tourism stakeholders and authorities
- Harnessing museums' resources
- Integrating a variety of strategic partners