



ANNUAL REPORT Calendar year 2008

1. Summary and highlights

BALTECH activities in 2008 focused around conferences, mobility of students and administrative staff, student union support and initiation of education and research projects. In addition to this BALTECH put an effort to expand external contacts with organisations such as Nortek, Baltic Development Forum and AF-Consult.

Highlights in 2008:

- IRO meeting in Tallinn, January 22 – 23
- Conference in Kaunas on mechatronics, March 5 – 6.
- Implementation of the ÅF-Grant, spring 2008
- BALTECH Student Unions meeting in Riga, March 13.
- BALTECH conference in Riga, March 13 – 14. *Attractiveness of Science and Technology Education – Problems and Solutions With Student Enrolment in Science and Technology Programs*
- Nordplus application, April 2008
- BALTECH rectors' meeting in Riga, March 14
- Participation at the Nordtek annual conference on Svalbard, June 28 – 30
- BALTECH Student Unions meeting in Helsinki, December 25.
- TKK BALTECH conference in Helsinki, September 25 – 26. *Lifelong Learning and Qualifications Framework in Higher Education.*
- Admissions Officers meeting in Tallinn, Nov 24 – 25
- Participation at Baltic Development Forum in Copenhagen Nov 30 – Dec 1
- Information meetings in Kaunas, Vilnius and Riga on scholarships, December 15 – 16
- Preliminary agreement with Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs to arrange a BALTECH meeting as part of the official Swedish EU presidency in fall of 2009
- BALTECH Intercultural Exchange Program, eight two way visits during 2008.

One of the main BALTECH objectives has been to focus on topics with a common interest for all member universities involved. BALTECH is an important forum of exchange of information and ideas on what is going on within the education, research and administration between member universities in the region.

2. Collaboration in research

The Baltech research projects are jointly called Task Forces. The aim of the Task forces has been to identify research areas of common interest. The Task Forces have been rather dormant and it is time to look into the usefulness and outcome of the task-forces.

On-going projects:

Product Development – discussions on another phd course have started

Clean Energy - partly working.

Integrated Management Systems – is working.

Nanotechnologies - was initiated with a work shop in Riga in 2007. Action plan will be submitted.

Phased out projects:

Eco Systems Management
Sustainable Transport

As from 2008 the web is open for proposals for task force projects.

3. Collaboration in education

3.1 Erasmus Mundus

BALTECH has applied for funding of two Erasmus Mundus, since a number of years. Both projects *Environmental Management and Cleaner Production* and *Industrial Engineering and Management* were rejected in 2007. Next deadline is March 30, 2009.

3.3 Nordplus

Financing from Nordplus was again made available for the Baltic region in 2008. A joint application for funding from the *Nordplus Higher Education* program was handed in, in April 2008. The application covered more or less the areas within which BALTECH has been working. Unfortunately the application was not approved of.

4. Collaboration between administrative staff

Two meetings for administrative staff were arranged during 2008, one for International Relations Office workers and one for Admissions Office workers. The aim was to look into everyday work routines and to learn from each other.

5. Conferences

5.1 BALTECH conferences

5.1.1 "Attractiveness of Science and Technology Education"

The 2008 conference topic was "Attractiveness of Science and Technology Education - Problems and Solution with student enrolment in Science and Technology". The conference took place in Riga on March 13 – 14, 2008. The target group was academic and administrative staff at universities working with questions related to the conference topic.

5.1.2 Lifelong Learning and Qualifications Framework in Higher Education

TKK celebrated its centennial in September 2008. In connection with this a BALTECH conference on Lifelong Learning and Qualifications Framework in Higher Education was arranged.

5.2 External Conferences and contacts

5.2.1 Nortek Annual Conference

BALTECH was invited to take part of the Nortek annual conference on Svalbard on June 28 – 30. Toomas Käbin gave a presentation of BALTECH in one of the working groups and presented BALTECH during a dinner speech. Further, BALTECH was invited to the Nortek annual conference on Iceland in June 2009.

5.2.2 Baltic Development Forum

BALTECH took part of the Baltic Development Forum annual conference in Copenhagen on Nov 30 – Dec 2. It is the most important and honourable gathering of its kind for politicians, business, R&D and academia.

As a concrete result of the participation, BALTECH university students were invited to take part of the annual conference on energy and environment as arranged by Energy Crossroads in Copenhagen on March 10 – 12, 2009. Energy Crossroads promised to cover accommodation costs and BALTECH set aside money for travelling.

5.2.3 The Swedish EU presidency

Sweden will host the EU presidency in the period July 1 – December 31, 2009. Discussions were held with the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs who gave a preliminary acceptance to BALTECH to arrange a seminar during the presidency. This would fall within the official umbrella of the Presidency.

6. Student activities

The main activity of BALTECH Student Body (BSB) in the year 2008 was to facilitate short exchanges between field-specific student organizations. This program under the name BALTECH Cultural Exchange resulted in eight two-way visits between student associations during 2008. There were five associations involved from RTU, two from TUT, two from TKK and 7 from KTU. Each exchange was supported by BALTECH up to 300 euros based on a written grant application.

There were two BSB meetings in 2008 - first on the 13th of March and second on the 25th of September. The results of the Cultural Exchange were reviewed at the later meeting and BSB decided to continue the program.

7. Scholarships

7.1 BALTECH mobility scholarship

Mobility scholarships (6.310 Euro) were awarded to six persons in 2008. The mobility scholarships has been in operation since 2007. The scholarship is open for short term (maximum eight weeks) study tours, field trips and conferences. The number of applications has been rather small. This can be explained by a generally low interest for mobility within the Nordic-Baltic region. Besides, information on the scholarship has been poor. In order to counter this, information meetings were arranged in Vilnius, Kaunas and Riga in December 2008. Next a meeting will be held in Tallinn.

7.2 ÅF-Grant

ÅF Consult, one of the leading technical consulting companies in Sweden, set aside 300.000 SEK (28.000 Euro) for master students at the Baltic BALTECH universities, to be used in 2008. The scholarship is administered by BALTECH, who was also being compensated for work done by a service fee. ÅF-Grant faced the same difficulties as the BALTECH mobility scholarship – poor interest. The number of applications was small - all in all three scholarships were awarded - all from VGTU. ÅF Consult however, was very pleased with the outcome and one of the scholars was later offered a job with ÅF in Vilnius. In order to make the grant more attractive, it has been extended to cover second year bachelor, master and PhD students. Whereas it was initially only open for second year master students. In addition to this, the application dates have been modified to meet the needs of students better.

8. Rectors' meeting

A rectors' meeting took place in Riga on March 14, 2008. Rectors were mainly represented by pro-rectors and other academic staff.

Difficulties to arrange joint rectors' meeting is a recurring problem, thus it would be advisable to look into the BALTECH meeting forms.

9. Board meetings

A board meeting was arranged in Helsinki on September 25, 2008.

10. Management

10.1 Management

The Secretariat of BALTECH tries to meet once a week. The following persons participate: The Chairman of the Board (prof Jakob Kübarsepp), the Secretary (Toomas Käbin), the web administrator (Hedvi Valgemäe) and a representative of the IRO (Maret Hein). Other categories are invited when needed.

The Secretariat is responsible for the management of BALTECH.

Pertinent information on all Baltech activities is constantly provided to the board members, who in turn are requested to carry the information on in their respective university.

10.2 Agreements

BALTECH has the following agreements:

- Lennart Nilsson/KTH as a coordinator of the Task Forces.
- Käbin Consulting OÜ/Toomas Käbin as secretary of BALTECH.

11. Finances

BALTECH is financed by members. The annual membership in 2008 was 5.000 euro. Revenues amounted to 86.830 Euro (including 2007 surplus). Costs amounted to 52.314 Euro. The surplus was 34.516 Euro. The financial report is enclosed.

All BALTECH funds are administered by the university hosting the secretariat, which at present is TTU.

12. Web page

The web-page www.baltech.info is outdated. First steps for changes have been made and they have to be finally implemented in 2009.

Jakob Kübarsepp
Vice rector

Toomas Käbin
Secretary