



EUROREGION BALTIC ANNUAL REPORT 2009



Mr Per Ole Petersen, ERB President in 2008 hands out the insignia of the ERB Presidency to Mr Jacek Protas appointed to hold the Presidency in 2009

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EUROREGION BALTIC COUNCIL

Jacek Protas, Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship in Poland chaired the **Euroregion Baltic Executive Board** that consisted of nine other representatives:

Cajsa Augustzen, Chair of the ERB Youth Board, Södra Småland, Sweden
Arūnas Burkšas, Governor of Klaipeda County, Lithuania
Marie-Louise Hilmersson, Chair of the Regional Council, Södra Småland, Sweden
Bernth Johnson, Chair of County Council, Blekinge, Sweden
Jan Kozłowski, Marshal of Pomorskie Voivodeship, Poland
Åke Nilsson, Member of the Regional Council, Kalmar, Sweden
Per Ole Petersen, Member of the Council of Regional Municipality of Bornholm, Denmark
Mihail J. Pluhin, Minister for Municipal Development of Kaliningrad Oblast, Russia
Joanna Zielińska, Chair of Association of Polish Communes ERB (since 5th November 2009)

During the Polish Presidency **Euroregion Baltic Executive Board** met on 6th April 2009 (online), 9th June 2009 in Gdańsk (Poland), 7th October 2000 in Brussels (Belgium) and on 21st January 2010 in Gdańsk (Poland).

Euroregion Baltic Council held its meetings on 25th February 2009 in Ryn (Poland) and 5th November 2009 in Stare Jablonki (Poland). On 6th November 2009 **Euroregion Baltic Council** held a joint session with the delegates of the **General Assembly of the Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic**.

In 2009 - 2010 **Euroregion Baltic Council** was constituted by 38 members:

Bornholm - Denmark

1. **Ken Bolmar**, Member of Regional Council on Bornholm (replaced by **Martin Sten Jörgensen**)
2. **Per Ole Petersen**, Member of Regional Council on Bornholm
3. **Bo Damgaard Nielsen**, Member of the Youth Board
Anders Damgaard Nielsen, substitute for **Bo Damgaard Nielsen**

Klaipeda - Lithuania

4. **Arūnas Burkšas**, Governor of Klaipeda County, Lithuania
5. **Vaclovas Dačkauskas**, Mayor of Klaipeda District
6. **Dalia Makuskiene**, Chief Officer of Foreign Relations Office in Klaipeda County
7. **Virgilijus Pozingis**, Mayor of Silute District
8. **Rimantas Taraskevicius**, Mayor of City of Klaipeda
9. **Evaldas Stonkus**, Member of the Youth Board (replaced by **Algimantas Seselskis**)
Simonas Gentvilas, substitute for **Algimantas Seselskis**

Kaliningrad - Russian Federation

10. **Boris Batalin**, Member of Kaliningrad Region Duma
11. **Victor Koshelev**, Deputy Head of Baltijsk Municipality
12. **Alexander Kuznetsov**, Member of Kaliningrad Region Duma
13. **Mihail Pluhin**, Minister for Municipal Development of Kaliningrad Oblast
14. **Nikolai Tsukanov**, Chair of Association of Municipalities of Kaliningrad Region
15. **Fedor Yaroshevitch**, Head of Baltijsk Municipality
16. **Alexander Yaroshuk**, Chair of Municipal Council in Kaliningrad
17. **Evgenija Demina**, Member of the Youth Board
Irina Piliukova, substitute for **Evgenija Demina**

Pomorskie Voivodeship, Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship, Association of Polish Communes - Poland

18. Jan Kozłowski, Marshal of Pomorskie
19. Maciej Lisicki, Deputy Mayor of Gdańsk
20. Bożena Olszewska-Świtaj, Mayor of Górowo Iławeckie
21. Marian Podziewski, Governor of Warmińsko-Mazurskie
22. Jacek Protas, Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie
23. Jerzy Szmit, Deputy Mayor of Olsztyn
24. Roman Zaborowski, Governor of Pomerania
25. Joanna Zielińska, Chair of Association of Polish Communes ERB
26. Karol Sosnowka, Member of the Youth Board (replaced by Anna Czerwień)
27. Magdalena Zydek, Member of the Youth Board
Pawel Sudara, substitute for Magdalena Zydek
Kamila Tkaczuk and Małgorzata Piaścik, substitutes for Anna Czerwień

South-East Sweden

28. Bo Frank, Chair of Municipal Council in Växjö
29. Monika Haider, Member of Regional Council in Södra Småland (replaced by Carl-Olof Bengtsson)
30. Kerstin Haglö, Member of Regional Council in Blekinge
31. Robert Gajos, Member of Regional Council in Blekinge
32. Marie-Louise Hilmersson, Chair of Regional Council in Södra Småland
33. Bernth Johnson, Chair of Blekinge County Council
34. Roger Kaliff, Chair of Municipal Council in Kalmar
35. Åke Nilsson, Regional Council in Kalmar County
36. Cajsa Augustzén, Member of the Youth Board (Södra Småland)
37. Karin E. Ekelund, Member of the Youth Board (Kalmar, replaced by Marta Åkesson)
38. Elise Wählin, Member of the Youth Board (Region Blekinge)
Camilla Håård-Andersson, substitute in Södra Småland
Karolis Dineika, substitute for Cajsa Augustzén
Suzanne Svensson and Bo Löfgren, substitutes in Region Blekinge
Bo Lundgren, substitute in Kalmar
Linnea Malmström, substitute for Elise Wählin

ADDRESS BY ERB PRESIDENT

Between 25th February 2009 and 5th March 2010 Euroregion Baltic was under the political leadership of the Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship, **Mr Jacek Protas**



The year of Polish Presidency in Euroregion Baltic (ERB) has come to an end. As the Marshal of the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship, I felt both honoured to have held the position of its President and encouraged to work intensively. In order to face changing circumstances, ERB has had to react actively to emerging challenges. The expression of this was among others the 2009 - 2010 Action Plan, prepared together by Polish and Lithuanian Parties and approved by the ERB Council at its meeting in Ryn in February 2009. Here I would like to recall that the main goals of cooperation included in the Action Plan were:

- effective implementation of Joint Development Programme,
- integration of local communities within ERB regions, and of youth in particular,
- improving internal and external communication and promotion of the ERB brand; and
- strengthening institutional capacities and preparation for implementation of joint project.

This report describes in more detail how the ERB has worked towards the accomplishment of these goals while I will focus here on some specific aspects of the ERB cooperation which I personally consider to be of high significance.

First of all one should emphasize intensive political activity of the ERB on the international arena. New European Union initiatives, such as the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and Eastern Partnership have had a vital importance for our cooperation. The importance of relations with the Committee of the Regions has also been growing. This was reflected by organising jointly such events as the seminar: “Around Baltic - European Inspiration” in Ryn in September, focusing on interregional cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region and cooperation with Ukrainian partners, or holding a seminar on implementation of Baltic Sea Strategy in Brussels in October. ERB has taken active part in debates on the future of EU policies and become a recognizable brand around Europe.

Secondly, the significance of people-to-people contacts on the ERB agenda, especially among youth, has grown. ERB Youth Board has rooted well in our structure. This has proved possible mainly due to the Yc³ youth project which began in 2009 generating opportunities for youngsters to demonstrate their initiatives and make good use of their enthusiasm. In October ERB youths came to a painting-photography open-air in Olsztyn, of which remained photos and fond memories.

Finally, the ERB cooperation review process has started. Our organisation needs to adapt to new challenges and modify its structures, listening more attentively to the voice of the people and considering the requirements of sustainable development. This ongoing internal debate must lead us to become an even more efficient and recognisable organisation.

I believe that the ERB work and attainments let us look forward with optimism and the perspectives of the cooperation for the benefit of our communities are promising.

Jacek Protas
President of Euroregion Baltic, 2009-2010



IMPROVING SOCIO-ECONOMIC COHESION

Joint actions aimed at the improvement of socio-economic cohesion in Euroregion Baltic have been designed within the framework of the implementation of the ERB Joint Development Programme (JDP) which has been conducted by the ERB Working Groups.

SME & Innovation Working Group

The SME & Innovation Working Group focused on the implementation of the DISKE Project, which had been developed in order to facilitate the drafting of a analysing research institutions and business resources in the ERB, as recommended by the JDP.

DISKE Project Kick-Off Event

The event was held in Elbląg, Poland on 14th and 15th October 2009. The first day of the conference was mainly dedicated to the Elbląg Technology Park but presentations also focused on the importance of EU funds for development of innovations and Research & Development activities, modern cross-border infrastructure in support of new technologies and development of entrepreneurship in the cross-border areas, significance of special economic zones in local and regional development based on the example of such a zone in Elbląg, cooperation of universities with Science and Technology Parks, operations of Science and Technology Parks, and last but not least, cooperation between enterprises, local authorities and scientists. The second day focused solely on the DISKE activities, with particular focus on benchmarking of the Science and Technology Parks' tenants.

DISKE Study Visits

1st Study Visit was held in Greifswald, Germany between 26 and 27th November 2009. The agenda of the first day of the visit included lectures on "Technology and transfer in the University of Hanseatic town Greifswald- a close cooperation in the town" and "The network of technology and research transfer", and a guided tour of The Leibniz Institute for Plasma Science and Technology (INP Greifswald e.V.) which is the largest non-university institute in the area of low temperature plasmas in Europe.



The meeting of the representatives of the economy sector was held in Elbląg, Poland on 19th January 2010. During the meeting benefits arising from investing in the park were introduced and advantages stressed for entrepreneurs to achieve from the DISKE Project. At the end of the meeting five investors handed in the letters of intent in which they stated their willingness to invest in the area of the Elbląg Technology Park. Among them

are a foreign company which uses modern technologies in its production and Polish entrepreneurs of the following branches: steel constructions, furniture, metallurgic.

The second study visit took place in Gdynia, Poland on 21st January 2010 and the third was held in Gdańsk, Poland on the 22nd January 2010. The Partners visited Gdansk Science and Technology Park's Tenants: ThyssenKrupp Engineering Systems and Invicta. The closing meeting was held in Gdansk Technical University, Faculty of Electronics, Telecommunications and Informatics.

DISKE Office

From 2nd November 2009 companies cooperating or willing to cooperate with partners in the Southern Baltic Sea region and all partners of DISKE project can access Diske Office. The office is situated in Pomeranian Science and Technology Park and is equipped with the necessary equipment, such as laptop, printer, scanner, telephone, fax, flipchart and wireless internet. Office is opened from Monday to Friday from 8.00 till 16.00 and during weekend after individual agreement. Hiring is free of charge.

Rural Development Working Group

International Conference for Local Action Groups, 4th August 2009, Olsztyn, Poland

This International Conference for Local Action Groups and non-governmental organisations was held jointly by Warminsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship, Local Action Group "South Warmia" and Regional Municipality of Bornholm. The conference was entitled: "Village - here I live, work and rest" and co-financed by the "Small Cross-Border and Inter-Regional Grant Fund" run by the Polish Association of Communes Euroregion Baltic, as well as the Polish "Programme for the Development of Rural Areas 2007 - 2013". Among the participating guests were the representatives of Local Action Groups and NGOs from Poland, Russia, Ukraine, Denmark, Sweden and Estonia, the Polish Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Office of the Marshal of Pomorskie Voivodeship and members of Euroregion Baltic Rural Development Working Group.

The aim of the Conference was to promote initiatives of international character, and in particular:

- to deepen cooperation in development of rural areas through exchange and dissemination of information on establishment of non-governmental organisations and the activities they are involved in on the international arena;
- to identify and analyse best practices;
- to exchange experiences;
- to create a common platform for cooperation among non-governmental organisations from EU states;
- to transfer „know-how” to non-EU member countries.

During the conference each of the countries presented organisations which are active in the development of rural areas in specific regions, counties and communes. The second part of the meeting was called “Marketplace of ideas”. The participants could respond to a number of questions asked in relation to their activities and initiate cooperation initiatives among each other. The attending Local Action Groups acknowledged that the meeting proved to be the first opportunity of this kind which has let them know each other better in the atmosphere of cooperation and not one of competition. All parties agreed that the conference was a good beginning of cooperation among Local Action Groups in the Baltic Sea Region.

Rural Development Working Group Meeting, 5th August 2009, Olsztyn, Poland

The meeting was held on the 5th August 2009 at the Office of the Marshal of Warminsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship in Olsztyn and attended by the representatives of Regional Municipality of Bornholm, Office of the Marshal of Warminsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship (Department for Rural Development and Agriculture, Office for Quality and Regional Labels), Office of the Marshal of Pomorskie Voivodeship, Kaliningrad Oblast, Local Action Group from Blekinge and Karlshamn Municipality. The Working Group hosted the guests from the Administration of Rivne Oblast (Ukraine) and Local Action Group from Estonia.

The Centre for Regional and Tourism Research on Bornholm presented its activities within the social and economic area of rural development, focusing on these three priorities:

- Master's course “Management on Rural Areas” (MOLLY) conducted together with Roskilde University, designed for adults and helping them to deepen their knowledge on such subjects as peripheral areas, tourism, food. From 2011 on the course will be offered to participants from abroad via internet;
- “Fokus” project, i.e. trainings for coaches from rural areas;
- 2-week tailor-made courses for specific target groups, e.g. LAGs, local authorities).

The participants of the meeting believed all efforts aiming at the establishment of the South-Baltic Rural Development Centre should be made step by step and with the use of existing capacities. First, the Local Action Groups should share information on their work, then promote their current training offers and upcoming conferences on rural areas in the ERB regions. Finally, after needs and wants are analysed, they could start educating people in the regions. The offer from Bornholm seemed helpful in achieving this goal. The participants also discussed the promotion of culinary heritage, pointing out to its specificity and differences in the food production conditions in across European. In this context the right tool to promote traditional food which guarantees high quality is the European Network of Culinary Heritage with active units of in ERB member regions.

Rural Development Working Group Online Meeting, 9th November 2009

It was agreed that Pomorskie Voivodeship would host an annual conference for Local Action Groups from Euroregion Baltic in 2010. An invitation to new members representing Local Action Groups from all interested regions was sent out. Concerning the promotion of culinary heritage, the Working Group decided to continue working on the participation of

partners from the ERB member regions in the annual Baltic Festival in Karlshamn where they could present their regional cuisine. The future project will need to be implemented within the existing European Network of Regional Culinary Heritage. The Warminsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship declared that it was ready to organise preparatory workshops before the upcoming Baltic Festival. The workshops could take place in Olsztyn in April 2010.

The Working Group stated that it was possible to submit an application to the Norwegian Financial Mechanism in order to provide funding for these plans. This project could serve a preparatory role for a bigger project which could be financed by the South Baltic Cross-border Cooperation Programme. The Office for Quality and Regional Labels will exchange information with the Karlshamn Municipality on this matter. Four Local Action Groups have already shown interest in promoting their regional cuisine.

Transport Working Group



STATEMENT BY THE EUROREGION BALTIC ON THE TEN-T REVISION



Euroregion Baltic Transport Working Group held two meetings (on 9th June 2009 in Gdańsk, Pomorskie Region in Poland and on 5th November 2009 in Stare Jabłonki, Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region in Poland) during which the representatives of the ERB member regions discussed and monitored the EU transport initiatives concerning the involved territories. Main interests centred around small and medium sized ports in the Baltic Sea and development of new ferry and air connections between the ERB member regions. The most significance part of their activity however was the contribution to the EU TENT-T Revision. The Group drafted the text of the joint statement which was approved by all the ERB stakeholders and adopted by the ERB Council on

5th March 2010 (enclosed on pages 28 - 31 further in this Annual Report). The statement was sent to the EU Commissioner for Regional Policy, Mr Johannes Hahn and EU Commissioner for Transport, Mr Siim Kallas.

Social Working Group

The Social Working Group focused their activities on the preparations for the BaltNet Project which related to the first action recommended within the social dimension field of the JDP, i.e compiling a report on the labour situation within the ERB with concrete proposals of ERB actions concerning labour market issues.

A project consortium was established, including the Office of the Marshal of Pomorskie Region (as Lead Partner), Voivodeship Labour Office in Gdansk, Job Centre Bornholm, the Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic, Public Employment Service Blekinge, Region Blekinge and the Pomeranian Chamber of Crafts for Small and Medium Enterprises. The project objectives focused on the exchange of information, standards, methodology, regional employment policies etc. (with particular focus on demand and supply of labour force, recognition of professional qualifications, vocational training and education, recruitment procedures and professional requirements).

In January 2009 the BaltNet Project application was submitted to the South Baltic Programme and subsequently approved. In July 2009, however, the Office of the Marshal of Pomorskie Region withdrew from the project due to worsening economic situation. Currently, the partners are considering the re-launch of the BaltNet project in the coming calls of the South Baltic Programme.

Water Working Group

Implementation of MOMENT Project

During 2009 the main activity within the ERB Water Working Group centred around the preparations for the MOMENT project which aims at developing local and regional methods for effective management of water with special focus on decreased outlets of nutrients and hazardous substances from small and diffuse sources. The project was approved in April 2009, but under conditions, which caused additional work.

The official start of the project was on 1st of September 2009. The very first meeting was held with the project's Working Group in Karlskrona on 28th and 29th September 2009. The MOMENT's official kick-off seminar was held between 29th and 30th Oct 2009 in Gdansk.



During the seminar it became obvious that the group shared a common interest in dealing with environmental issues that affect the Baltic Sea. In the evening the members of the Working Group participated in a guided tour of Gdansk's Old Town during which they gained a historical perspective on the history of cooperation within the Baltic Sea Region.

The project's first reporting period was characterised by building networks that would involve strategic stakeholders and organising the projects groups, i.e. Working Group, Steering Committee, ERB Water Group in order to ensure a successful implementation of the project. The project's six pilot areas, soon to be seven, have been identified and connected to respective catchment water users, some of whom have already held their first Water User Partnership meetings. This, among other things, required describing the pilot area including main diffuse and pollution sources, and physical characteristics, i.e. hydro morphological data, land use, catchment size etc. Furthermore, the pilot areas have also started their work on concrete measures aiming at the reduction of nutrients and hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea. So far, the work has been dominated by scanning for new techniques, gaining necessary knowledge about the pilot areas and establishing contacts within these areas.

The overall work has gone according to plan and followed the timetable set up in the application. A seventh pilot area in the Kaliningrad region has been secured which will increase the dissemination of activities and strengthen the project impact on the improvement of the environmental situation in the Baltic Sea.

During 2009, more regional politicians and experts have been appointed to the ERB Water Working Group. The first meeting of the extended group will be held in March 2010. Except for the clear role within the MOMENT project, the ERB Water Group will also be able to take new initiatives.

Environment Working Group

Generating projects to eliminate Helcom Hot Spots

In 2009 the Environment Working Group held the regular meetings with the representatives of the Administration of Baltijsk Municipal District, the Atlantic Branch of P.P.Shirshov Institute of Oceanology of the Russian Academy of Science, and Immanuel Kant Russian State University to discuss the preparation of a project application concerning the Helcom Hot Spots №73 (Vistula Lagoon) and № 49 (Sovetsk Pulp & Paper Mill) within the framework of the ENPI CBC Programme Lithuania-Poland-Russia. In addition, the Group maintained close contact and held regular working meetings with the director of Ecological monitoring and supervision service of the Kaliningrad Regional Government.

The Group was involved in the organisation of the seminar entitled "Information background for the complex management of cross-border regions' coastal zones" on 26th February 2009 and seminar on environmental protection at the Kaliningrad Regional Parliament on 19th November 2009. Its members participated in the international scientific conference at the Kaliningrad Institute of Law entitled "Legal environmental cooperation in the Baltic: status and perspectives of development" on 10th December 2009, as well as the seminar of the ENPI CBC Programme Lithuania-Poland-Russia on the Hot Spot № 49 in Sovetsk on 20th December 2009.

At the beginning of the year the Association of the Vistula and Kaliningrad lagoons and the Primorskaya Bay (ViKaPri) was established in the Kaliningrad Region in order to facilitate cross-border cooperation, a.o. in the area of environmental protection. On 23rd July 2009

the representatives of the ViKaPri Association and of the Municipal Union of the Vistula Lagoon Communes in Poland met in Braniewo and signed a cooperation agreement.

Energy Working Group

The Energy Working Group focused on the implementation of the LED Project, which had been developed in relation to the activities recommended by the JDP, i.e. building platforms to run business development projects within the energy area and promoting regional activities within the energy field both internally and externally for the ERB region.

The LED project is based upon national energy action plans that present national strategies on how the EU Member States intend to achieve their adopted energy savings target by 2016. It aims at providing verified arguments for a conversion of city & road lighting to the energy-saving, environmentally friendly and versatile LED-technology, promoting the LED-technology, creating know-how and raising the awareness for energy-saving. It shall create test pilots and best practices on innovative methods of public lighting in cities and regions.



LED Project Events

The seminar on energy saving, with emphasis on using LED technology in street lighting on 2nd September 2009 in Rostock where the participants exchanged ideas with local authorities/convincing arguments for installation of/conversion to LED street lighting. They also had discussion/exchange of experience with external expert concerning layout and design of the planned information board. They published an information placard in the test area about the installation and the design (with LED technology) which will make the contents of the project with emphasis on the energy saving aspect clear to the public.

The kick-off meeting was held in Munich between 8 and 9th September 2009 with 28 participants and the demonstration of a street lamp for test purposes and awareness raising with users including the evaluation with local authorities in Bad Doberan County on 25th September 2009. The inventory of different design solutions for LED lighting was made to find out existing design solutions for different user types and applications in different areas and gaps were identified. A system of implementing LED technology into the street lighting system of Klaipeda has been developed; the trichotomic and dichotomic models of qualitative transition have been defined.

The analysis of best-practice examples of LED lighting in different environments of cities & regions (worldwide) is in progress. The introduction & adoption to cities' light planning in areas of the South Baltic are being examined. The road safety and traffic analyses in different light situations is under way. Lighting demands & test areas are being defined.

ENHANCING CULTURAL & SOCIETAL INTEGRATION

Joint actions aimed at the enhancement of cultural and societal integration within Euroregion Baltic have been designed and implemented by the ERB Youth Board and the ERB Working Group on Local Communities.

ERB Youth Board

ERB Youth Board was established on at the ERB Council Meeting in Elbląg on 22nd February 2008 and its main activity in 2009 centred around the implementation of the YC3 Project.

Implementation of the YC3 Project



Yc³ Youth Cross-border Cooperation and Communication is a project aiming at providing young people around the south Baltic Sea with an opportunity to influence politicians on subjects they are interested in.

The project also intends to be a platform for networking where young people can meet in order to exchange ideas and cooperate with other young people in the area.

The project is started by Youth Board that consists of young people from Sweden, Denmark, Poland, Russia and Lithuania. Youth Board is a part of Euroregion Baltic (ERB) and has therefore the opportunity to influence political issues that are important to young people.

In order to determine issues which are of importance to young people, the project will form an arena for participation, influence, intercultural dialogue and cross border cooperation, all of which constitute major ingredients forming the main content of the project. This will be realised through networking and meetings devoted to such themes as entrepreneurship, equality, mobility and environment.

Meetings

The project partners convened for the first time in Gdansk on 9th-10th June 2009 for a Kick off meeting. During the discussion it was decided to have following themes for the following partner regions:

Kalmar - Entrepreneurship, Warmia Mazury - Intercultural Dialogue & Mobility, Klaipeda - Democracy & Equality, Pomerania - Education, Bornholm - Tourism, Blekinge - EU Baltic Sea Strategy & Future Projects, South Småland - Environment and Influence, Kaliningrad Oblast - Youth Policy Networks.

The first theme based seminar in the project took place in Kalmar on 18th-19th September 2009. It was titled Baltic E-Day and concerned the issue of *Young Entrepreneurship*.

Four Swedish organizations participated in this seminar and presented the methods of cooperation with young entrepreneurs. After this presentation representatives from each partner region participating in the project elaborated on the situation of young entrepreneurs in their countries. During the discussion the participants compared different approaches to the issue of young entrepreneurship.

The second theme seminar in the project took place in Stare Jablonki, 5 November. The seminar was called Baltic M-Day (M for mobility) and concerned the issue of *Intercultural dialogue & Mobility*. The evaluation showed that the seminar proved to be very successful. The results from the workshop were compiled in one document and on 1st Dec 2009 were sent to the EU Commission as a response to the EU Green Paper on "Promoting the learning mobility of young people" to the EU Commission.

Communication

In order to facilitate communication among the project partners a decision was made to establish a website www.youthboard.eu/yc3 and an intranet portal. Both the website and portal contain a forum, news section, information about meetings and poll questionnaire. The website has been available online since the end of November and so far has been visited by about 200 users. Most of the visitors are from Sweden and Poland as well as other partner countries. However, the website is also read by internet users from the United Kingdom, Germany and South Africa.



A distinctive graphic profile and an eye-catching logo were designed for the website. Moreover, a brochure that sums up the project was printed and templates for power point and letter head were made. Finally, two issues of the e-Magazine containing useful information about previous seminars, were sent out to the project network.

The project itself as well as the members of the Executive Group are now active on Facebook, Twitter and GG in order to be able to disseminate results and keep a dialogue with members within the project network. The communication and dissemination plan was also developed during 2009. During this period the project also held 5 online meetings with the participation of the project secretariat and the Executive Group. The meeting mostly concerned previous and upcoming seminars, the website and the issue of communication.

The members of the project also attended various seminars and conferences in order to promote the Yc³ project and establish new contacts for the project network. For example, the members of the Youth Board attended a conference on young tourism and entrepreneurship in Kaliningrad, the political gathering in Almedalen and the chair person Cajsa Augustzén was invited to speak at a seminar concerning the Baltic Sea Strategy in order to present Youth Board's perspective on this issue. The project coordinator and one representative from the Executive Group joined the Steering Group/ERB Board meeting in Brussels, 7 October and presented a report on the implementation of the project.

Results

The project network gradually started to expand and at the end 2009 it included 114 members and 25 organizations/political parties actively contributing to the network. Working groups started to make considerable project outputs; the Youth Influence Concept and Youth Vision as well Action Plan were set and the plans were made for future seminars. The first progress report was sent to the Joint Technical Secretariat with a positive result.

Local Community Initiatives Working Group

The Local Community Initiatives Working Group was established at the ERB Council Meeting in Ryn on 24th and 25th February 2009 and since then it held two meetings.

9th June 2009, Gdańsk, Poland

During the meeting in Gdańsk the participants approved the Group's action plan for the years 2009-2012. In the course of the meeting the representatives of the Starogard Gdański Town Hall submitted a proposal for organising ERB Youth Games for participants from all 5 ERB countries. The Games could be co-financed by the South Baltic CBC Programme.

Second proposal concerned the extension of the existing Polish - Russian Culture Council with partners from Denmark, Lithuania and Sweden. This project could be financed through the Cross-border and Inter-Regional Small Grand Fund managed by the Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic. The representatives of the Warmia and Mazury Region proposed to initiate work on a possible project presenting the culture of ERB regions and countries while Russian and Swedish partners proposed to organise a Baltic Youth Camp - a summer camp for around 180 teenagers from Sweden, Lithuania, Kaliningrad, Poland and Germany. Finally, a proposal was made to organise an exchange project between libraries within the ERB. The project could be co-financed by the Cross-border and Inter-Regional Small Grand Fund (FMGTM). The aim of the project would be to exchange experience and best practices between libraries regarding their work with children, youth and handicapped people. It was decided that the project application would be submitted by Elbląg and Vaxjö libraries to the Fund's 3rd call. Additionally, the participants discussed the issue of possible coordination of ERB participation in the Baltic Sea Festival in Karlshamn, Sweden, in July 2009.

4th November 2009, Stare Jabłonki, Poland

During this meeting the Working Group pressed ahead with proposals submitted during its previous meeting in Gdańsk. Apart from that, some new project proposals were discussed by the members of the Group. One of them, titled the Culinary Project was proposed by the Karlshamn City Hall. Another project proposal, the Spanish-Polish project, was being prepared by the Elbląg City Hall and it concerned the organisation of workshops for administrative personnel dealing with culture. In conclusion, as the Working Group deals with issues concerning local initiatives, it decided to invite representatives of regional NGOs to participate in its future meetings.

MORE RECOGNISABLE EUROREGION BALTIC

ERB partners have engaged themselves in joint actions aiming at improving internal and external communication activities promoting Euroregion Baltic, as well as enhancing its participatory role in EU debates. The objectives have been to make ERB more recognisable nationally, in the Baltic Sea Region and in the EU.

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

Almedalsveckan, Gotland 29th June 2009

The role of local and regional authorities was the subject of the seminar during the Almedalsveckan, organised by the regions of Blekinge, Kalmar and Södra Småland together with the SIDA unit on Gotland. More than 50 people participated in the seminar with contributions from inter alia Mr Anders Lindholm (DG Regio), Mr Olle Schmidt (Swedish MEP), Mr Uno Aldegren from the EU Committee of Regions and several other representatives. Euroregion Baltic was represented by the leader of the ERB Youth Board, Ms Cajsa Augustzén, who in her speech activated the audiences asking them to come up with concrete proposals on how to involve the youth in the implementation of the Strategy. Also Mr Niels Chresten Andersen from Bornholm represented ERB, having a short speech on the role of cross border organisations. He made it clear that Euroregion Baltic fully supports the initiative to have an EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region with the four proposed thematic areas, fifteen recommended priorities and so far seventy-eight examples of flagship projects included in the document.

Seminar in Brussels, 7th October 2009

On 7th October 2009 Euroregion Baltic organised a seminar in Brussels the participation of the ERB Executive Board, representatives of the BSSSC, UBS and Baltic 7 Islands, as well as invited guests representing Polish Permanent Representation to the EU, European Offices of London, Highlands & Islands, Pomorskie, South Sweden, Turku-Southwest Finland and Warmińsko-Mazurskie regions, as well as member regions of Euroregion Baltic. The seminar investigated possible ways for the regions of Europe to strengthen the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The participants looked for answers to some of the key questions regarding the implementation of the Strategy and possible continuation of the cooperation between the six organisations which launched a common position towards the Strategy last year (these organisations being BDF, BSSSC, B7, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, UBC and Euroregion Baltic).

While discussing specific areas for these organisations to focus on in relation to the Strategy, the attendees pointed out to the efforts guaranteeing the participation of representatives of the territorial governments at the local and regional level in the High Level Group of Member State representatives that the European Commission is about to set up in order to monitor the implementation of the Strategy. No local or regional authorities were mentioned in the Group composition. Another idea was to propose one representative of the organisations into the Group. Secondly, the organisations should continue to promote the governance model which includes the levels of European Commission, Member States, local and regional authorities, and non-governmental organisations providing a

wider perspective involving local communities, and creates a horizontal platform for political cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region. Thirdly, in the dialogue with the national authorities the organisations will need political support from their member regions, counties, cities and towns, which will strengthen their voice and representativeness. Fourthly, the six organisations believe that strengthening of the macro-regional aspect of the cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region should not be made at the expense of existing cross-border and inter-regional programmes. Local and regional actors must be able to continue to make use of these instruments in the new financial perspective.

Meeting in Stockholm, 16th November 2009

The Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Polish Ambassador in Stockholm hosted a meeting of the heads of Polish embassies and consulates around the Baltic Sea Region with the aim of discussing multilateral context of the Polish foreign policy in the context of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. Among the invited organisations were Euroregion Baltic, represented by the Head of the International Secretariat, Mr Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański, the Office of the Committee for European Integration and Northern Dimension Partnership for Public Health and Social Well-Being. The role local and regional authorities, and non-governmental organisations was stressed as crucial in the successful implementation of the Strategy, thus providing a wider perspective and a horizontal platform for political cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region.

ERB Council Meeting in Elbląg, 4th March 2010

ERB member regions discussed the development and implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. They voiced strong support for more active involvement of Russian partners in future cooperation activities, considering the ERB an excellent platform to coordinate, consult and communicate joint efforts within the framework of the Strategy. Moreover, the regions thought a new joint project related to the Strategy could be a tool to strengthen ERB, making it a more recognisable and attractive platform for regional cooperation. Such a joint project would greatly contribute to the added value of the ERB cooperation.

Territorial Cohesion & Territorial Cooperation

In 2009 the European Commission organised the public consultation on territorial cooperation. The goal of the ensuing debate has been to come to a better and shared understanding of territorial cohesion and its implications for policy. As pointed out by Commissioner Danuta Hübne viewing cohesion from a territorial angle calls attention to themes such as sustainable development and access to services. Also underlining that many issues do not respect administrative boundaries and may require a coordinated response from several regions or countries, while others need to be addressed at a local or neighbourhood level. Building on the experience of the European Territorial Cooperation objective we can now look at the ways to further improve the co-operation between regions within the Union and with the neighbouring regions outside.

Euroregion Baltic took active participation in the consultation and developed its joint response towards the European Commission's Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion

(enclosed on pages 25 - 24 further in this Annual Report). ERB representative also attended the seminar on territorial cohesion and territorial cooperation which was organised by the Territorial Cohesion Unit of the DG Regio on 25th September in Brussels, where he had its presentation alongside other cross-border and inter-regional cooperation structures.

Europe 2020 Strategy

Following our contribution to the public consultation which took place in 2009 on "territorial cohesion" and in view of the recent coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty, Euroregion Baltic was invited to present its views on the broad policy considerations contained in the new Europe 2020 strategy. On 15th January 2010 Euroregion Baltic Executive Board has adopted the text of the joint position and submitted it to the European Commission (enclosed on pages 26 - 27 further in this Annual Report).

On 4th March ERB member regions discussed the Strategy proposal regions have been involved in the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy, mainly through regional growth programs, strategies, forums and the use of the structural funds, and, except for the Klaipeda County, were engaged in the open consultations concerning Europe 2020. The participants emphasised the importance of this Strategy for the future of the ERB and welcomed the fact that the ERB contributed to its preparation by presenting a joint position. Finally, it was reiterated that the ERB is a very important political platform of successful regional cooperation and its capacities should be strengthened so that it could meet future challenges.

South Baltic CBC Programme

Euroregion Baltic continued to take active part in the implementation of the South Baltic CBC Programme. ERB cooperation was evident at different levels. Firstly, ERB was represented in the formal Programme bodies: Steering and Monitoring Committees. Secondly, the ERB member regions had their own representatives in the Steering and Monitoring Committees, as well as ran the Programme Contact Points at home. Finally, projects were initiated directly by the joint initiatives of the ERB partners, e.g. DISKE, MOMENT, LED and YC3, and thus contributed to the implementation of the ERB Joint Development Programme (see more on pages 6, 10, 12 and 13 of this Annual Report, respectively).

Between February 2009 and March 2010 three calls were concluded, regular second and third calls of the Programme plus an additional call for a Capacity Building Project in which the South Baltic Programme was looking for a partner consortium consisting of potential members representing umbrella organisations able to cover the whole programme area in order to reach more potential beneficiaries of the Programme target group and thus help to make the Programme more successful. ERB became a project partner in the winning application submitted by the Pomeranian Centre for Research & Technology. This Capacity Building Project was commenced at the beginning of March 2010.

During the regular second and third calls of the Programme 40 project applications were submitted. After the formal assessment (both technical and quality) 21 projects were approved for implementation at the total value of around 20 MEUR worth of co-financing.

Five winning applications resulted from the efforts of the ERB working structures: BaltNet (Social Working Group), DISKE (SME/Innovation Working Group), LED (Energy Working Group), MOMENT (Water Working Group) and YC3 (ERB Youth Board).

Other Important Events

Forum of Polish Euroregions in Głuchotązy, Poland 15 - 17th June

Representatives of Euroregion Baltic took part in the 18th Forum of Polish euroregions which was held between 15 and 18 June 2009 and hosted by Euroregion Pradziad (Euroregion Praděd) on the Polish - Czech border. EU Commissioner on Regional Policy, Ms Danuta Hübner was a special guest at the Forum. The Forum took place in Głuchotązy, in the Region of Opole. Around 50 representatives of the following Polish euroregional structures participated in the event: Baltic, Beskidy (Beskydy), Bug, Glacensis, Nysa (Neisse, Nisa), Pradziad (Praděd), Puszcza Białowieska, Sprewa - Nysa - Bóbr (Spree-Neisse-Bober), Pro Europa Viadrina, Śląsk Cieszyński (Těšínské Slezsko), Silesia and Tatry.

The debates at the Forum centred around the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), and the effect these might have on the cross-border cooperation in Europe. Ms Danuta Hübner informed eight such structures have been established so far and around fifteen more are in the establishment process. The Polish Euroregions decided to work towards a closer relation with the Committee of the Regions' experts group monitoring the process of setting up EGTCs. It seems of utmost importance that Euroregions, which have been implementing cross-border cooperation in their local environments, remain relevant partners in discussing the objectives and practicalities of territorial cooperation in the European Union.

The Forum resulted with the adoption of conclusions, including the establishment of an inter-euroregional working group which will develop a process leading to the initiation of a formal structure associating all Euroregions in Poland which will represent them in a dialogue with the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of Interior and of Regional Development. This dialogue should most of all concern matters related to the development and management of CBC programmes but also such EU policies as Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Eastern Partnership and future Cohesion Policy.

Eastern Partnership & Baltic Sea Strategy seminar in Ryn, Poland 15 - 17th September

On 16th September 2009 a seminar entitled 'Around the Baltic - European Inspirations' was held in Ryn and hosted by the Marshal of Warminsko-Mazurskie Region and ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas, in a joint initiative of the Warminsko-Mazurskie Region, Committee of the Regions and Euroregion Baltic.

Opened and chaired by the Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region and ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas, the seminar included presentations of Mr Istvan Serto- Radies from the Committee of the Regions, Mr Victor Matchuk, Governor of the Rivne Oblast in the Ukraine, Mr Ryszard Górecki, member of the Polish Senate, as well as of Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański from Euroregion Baltic.

Executive Board Meetings

6th April 2009 in Kalmar and online

Euroregion Baltic Executive Board discussed the issue of holding annual youth events around the ERB area and watched the presentation of the newly designed ERB website, which would enhance the visibility of ERB and promote its activities, but also facilitate the coordination of ERB work. Other topics concerned the implementation of the ERB Joint Development Programme, especially the problem of missing links in ERB cooperation and the process of mid-term evaluation of JDP implementation. The participants also discussed the preparation process of an upcoming ERB seminar on the Baltic Sea Action Plan to be co-organised with the Committee of the Regions. Finally, they debated on the current implementation of the South Baltic Cross-border Cooperation Programme. The Board was informed about the results of the Programme's 2nd Call for Proposals and also about an idea of a project enhancing the capacity of potential beneficiaries of the Programme.

9th June 2009 in Gdańsk



Euroregion Baltic Executive Board focused its discussions on the future cooperation within Euroregion Baltic. The participants shared the view that ERB Working Groups should be responsible for implementing specific tasks of the Joint Development Programme. This would be achieved through four projects developed and submitted to the South Baltic CBC Programme related to the development of a network of labour

market organisations (BaltNet), the establishment of a knowledge exchange network of incubators and science and technology parks (DISKE), the increase of energy saving through conversion to LED lighting in public spaces (LED), and modern water management (MOMENT). Euroregion Baltic would also commit itself to further integration of local communities and youth. Current and new challenges related to such EU policies as EU Cohesion Policy, Baltic Sea Strategy, European Neighbourhood Policy, and Eastern Partnership would constitute a natural arena for Euroregion Baltic to test its institutional and organisational capacities. The Board took time to discuss a request to extend the composition of the Board with a representative of the Association of Polish Communes and a thematic scope of a future joint ERB project. Such a project, it was agreed, should bring added value to the ERB cooperation.

7th October 2009 in Brussels



Executive Board meeting was preceded by the ERB seminar concerning the role of regions in the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The participants of the seminars looked for answers for some of the key questions regarding the implementation of the Strategy and possible continuation of the cooperation between six organisations (BDF, BSSSC, B7, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, UBC and Euroregion Baltic) which in 2008 launched a common position on the Strategy. ERB Executive Board discussed internal issues concerning current ERB cooperation, including the administrative reform in Lithuania, the issue of ERB presidency, preparation of a joint ERB project entitled SupERB - Sustainable Policies for Economic Revival, ERB Youth cooperation and projects implemented by ERB Working Groups. The Executive Board also recommended to the Council the adoption of the revision of ERB Statutes concerning the membership of the Association of the Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic in the ERB Executive Board.

21st January 2010 in Gdańsk



The main theme of the meeting in Gdańsk concerned the strategic review of the ERB cooperation. Therefore, the Executive Board decided to establish a task force to effectively manage the process of reviewing the ERB cooperation. The task force would consist of representatives of the member regions responsible for a.o. territorial cooperation and regional development issues. The task force would also be open to other key stakeholders of the ERB cooperation (business sector, knowledge institutions, social partners). The Board decided that the review process would start on 11th February in Copenhagen and would later be finalised by the Council in November 2010. Other issues discussed during the meeting concerned the position paper in response to the consultation process on the EU 2020 Strategy, and the upcoming project entitled Restart - Regional Strategies of Sustainable Development for Economic Growth to be implemented within the Small Cross-Border and Inter-regional Grant Fund.

STRENGTHENING ERB INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES



ERB Board and Council held a number of internal debates whereby regional and local politicians discussed important issues in ERB cooperation, including strengthening of institutional capacities of Euroregion Baltic. In this respect, ERB Council, together with the General Assembly Of Delegates Of The Association Of Polish Communes, debated on a possible application of the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation legal status on 5th November 2009 in Stare

Jablonki, Poland. The goal of the meeting was to proceed with first discussions on the EU legislation allowing the establishment of European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation and its possible consequences for Euroregion Baltic. This first discussion aimed at hearing views from the ERB partners on whether such a legal facility can be of benefit for Euroregion Baltic, considering advantages resulting from a possible establishment of a formal international structure on the one hand, and disadvantages resulting from limited participation of the non-EU member states. Other important aspects were also brought up, including the scope of EGTC activities, whether these could be formed around some general objectives for the ERB cooperation or more specific tasks undertaken in ERB.

ERB Board also initiated the process of reviewing the ERB cooperation in order to assess the implementation of the ERB Joint Development Programme, put into use good governance, transparency and subsidiarity, discuss future challenges and regional development strategies in all member regions, debate on the involvement of member regions in the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, identify thematic priorities and foci of the ERB cooperation in the future, as well as to review of institutional and financial capacities of Euroregion Baltic. The process will be concluded in the autumn 2010.

ERB Board, assisted by the secretariats, also began discussing an idea of a new joint project within Euroregion Baltic. ERB member regions indicated their areas of interest and the joint theme related to climate change was identified as a common priority. A draft of the project outline was subsequently developed under the working name of “supERB - sustainable policies for economic revival”. This project outline will be further discussed in 2010.

Political meetings

On 24th February 2009 members of ERB Council: Alexander Wendt (vice-chair of Blekinge Regional Council) and Robert Gajos (member of Blekinge Regional Council) met the representatives of the Polish Civic Party (PO) in Elblag to discuss systematic solutions

regarding the self-government in Poland and Sweden. The hosts were Pawel Jankowski, the head of the Civic Platform Committee in Warminsko-Mazurskie Regional Council, Tomasz Lewandowski, the head of the Civic Platform Committee in Elblag Municipal Council, and Jerzy Wcisla, vice-chair of Elblag Municipal Council. Both, the Moderaterna Party in Sweden and the Civic Platform in Poland are within the European People's Party in the European Parliament. Both parties have also their chairmen holding the position of Prime Ministers in Sweden (Fredrik Reinfeldt) and in Poland (Donald Tusk) after winning parliamentary elections in 2006 and 2007, respectively, and forming coalitions.

Between 19 and 20 August 2009 members of Kalmar's Regional Council Executive

Committee visited two Polish regions within Euroregion Baltic. The Swedish delegation was headed by the Chairman of the Regional Council in Kalmar County, Mr Leif Larsson and met the Marshal of Warminsko-Mazurskie Region and ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas, the Marshal of Pomorskie Region, Mr Jan Kozlowski, and the Mayor of Elblag, Mr Henryk Slonina. While in the capital of the



Warminsko-Mazurskie Region, the Swedish guests also visited the Warminsko-Mazurskie Regional Development Agency. The aim of the visit was to strengthen inter-regional relations within Euroregion Baltic, with specific foci placed on the issues related to the EU Baltic Sea Strategy, environmental protection and the youth. In addition, future directions for the development of the Euroregion were discussed, including topics concerning next ERB joint project, EU policy agenda, and European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation.

On 21st October 2009, ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas, ERB Vice-President, Mr Arunas Burksas, and Head of ERB Secretariat, Mr Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański met in Vilnius with the Lithuanian Minister of Interior, Mr Raimundas Palaitis. During the meeting, the Lithuanian Minister of Interior was informed about the difficulty that the Klaipeda County will have in holding the ERB Presidency in 2010 to the planned termination of the Klaipeda County Governor's Administration in July 2010. He was glad to hear that this problem can be solved with the alteration of the ERB presidency rotation sequence. He also stressed that Lithuanian partners should have to continue their cooperation within Euroregion Baltic and said that Klaipeda County as an administrative unit will remain until new, bigger and stronger regions are established in 2014. Until the time it will be the Regional Development Council of Klaipeda County acting as a partner within Euroregion Baltic. He mentioned the possibility that the Council will have an office to support their work since July 2010. Mr Palaitis also suggested that Lithuania will be ready to appoint their candidate for the ERB President in 2012. The candidate will be put forward by the Regional Development Council of Klaipeda County. The meeting was held in a very positive atmosphere and more communication was being planned after details of the reform are disclosed in the future.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY ERB COUNCIL AND BOARD

EUROREGION BALTIC

Response to the European Commission's public consultation on the Green Paper: Territorial Cohesion – turning territorial diversity into strength.

Euroregion Baltic (ERB) welcomes the initiative taken by the European Commission to launch a debate leading to a better and shared understanding of territorial cohesion and its implications for policy.

ERB fully agrees with the notion of the territorial diversity of the EU as a vital asset that can contribute to the sustainable development of the EU as whole. ERB comprises various areas with a highly sensitive and vulnerable environment.

ERB welcomes territorial cohesion as a new objective in the EU Cohesion Policy whose impact on different territories of the Union will now be measured with more indicators than just such economic and social criteria as GDP and unemployment rate.

ERB strongly believes that focus of territorial cohesion should be placed on relationships binding EU territories at different levels, as well as numerous forms of cooperation, coordination and partnerships, also including neighbouring regions. ERB consists of EU members and the Kaliningrad region within the Russian Federation.

ERB acknowledges the fact that the Baltic Sea Region has been selected a prominent example of the pursuit of territorial cohesion. With its dynamic growth in the recent years, the region continues to pose challenges, e.g. with regards to its geographical extent.

Definition

Territorial Cohesion aims to ensure a balanced, polycentric and sustainable development in all parts of the Community, and to allow all citizens to benefit equally from the basic freedoms set out in the Treaties and implemented through the EU policies, including access to knowledge as well as basic social and health services.

The objective of territorial cohesion also aims to turn the territorial diversity into strength to the benefit of the whole Community, ensuring environmental sustainability, accessibility and fair competitiveness, even for those territories suffering from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps.

Cross-sectoral approach and the governance issue

Territorial cohesion should not be limited to the EU Cohesion Policy, but should encompass all EU policies, especially those with a strong territorial impact, including:

- the Single Market Policy, with focus on the free movement of persons, goods, services and financial capital, in order to ensure competitiveness in all parts of the Community based on fair and equal opportunities;
- the Common Agricultural Policy, inclusive of the rural development policy in order to improve economic diversification, urban-rural links, as well as competitiveness and accessibility;
- the Integrated Maritime Policy and the Common Fisheries Policy;
- the policies for development of basic educational, social and health infrastructures;
- the transport policy and the Trans-European Networks, with the view of safeguarding accessibility to more remote and less populated territories of the Union, and to the neighbouring regions;
- the environment, climate and energy policies, in order to enhance the environmental sustainability, especially of the most vulnerable territories;
- the neighbourhood policy, with the view of strengthening territorial cooperation with the neighbouring regions;
- the culture policy, in order to improve intercultural dialogue and to turn cultural diversities into strength;

- the state aid rules, in more detailed consideration of specific development conditions and vulnerabilities of territories with severe permanent natural or demographic handicaps.

Not only does territorial cohesion require a cross-sectoral approach, but it also poses an important governance challenge. The European Commission has already demonstrated its commitment to promoting good governance while working on the integrated maritime policy and EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the step welcomed in Euroregion Baltic.

With this paper ERB would also like to express its support towards the idea put forward by the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions (CPMR) to launch a European Territorial Pact involving all stakeholders from the local to the European level and incorporating all policies with territorial impact. We strongly believe stakeholders from the private and NGO sectors will be crucial partners to be involved in such a European Territorial Pact.

Better cooperation

Stakeholders in the EU and its neighbours must be given proper instruments for long term cooperation. Maritime borders must not be seen as obstacles to territorial cohesion.

Territorial cohesion is tightly linked to regional and local initiatives. Growth is created on local and regional levels and has impact on the overall EU growth strategy. Local and regional actors must be able to continue to make use of interregional cooperation programmes and instruments.

Effective pursuit of the territorial cohesion goals will require improvements in the existing forms of territorial cooperation, legislation and tools. EU territorial and neighbourhood cooperation programmes should to a higher degree be based on existing cooperation structures such as euroregions and similar cross-border cooperation structures, especially those with well-elaborated long-term development strategies and solid, politically anchored cooperation structures.

That such structures can fully benefit from the available EU legislation also ought to be in focus. In particular, euroregions and similar CBC structures should be able to apply the legal status laid down in the EU regulation for the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC). Several member states have not yet implemented the EGTCs into their national legislation systems, while some member states having implemented the regulation, do not allow inclusion of partners with limited responsibilities, hereby creating barriers for territorial cooperation structures with partners from neighbouring countries.

The importance of political cooperation must also be emphasized. EU Cohesion Policy should actively support the development of regional political cross-border co-operation and institutional platforms such as euroregions and EGTC's.

Indicators

To monitor and evaluate territorial cohesion ERB would like to propose the following quantity indicators:

- population density and demography,
- remoteness, accessibility and the level of severe permanent natural handicaps,
- climate vulnerability and environmental emissions,
- energy supplies and safety.

To monitor and evaluate territorial cohesion ERB would like to propose the following quality indicators:

- attractivity based on natural and cultural heritage,
- number of NGOs and their activity level,
- access to knowledge (education and libraries),
- access to basic social and health care services,
- traffic death rate, level of criminality and substance abuse (alcohol and drugs).

EUROREGION BALTIC



Response to the European Commission's public consultation on the future EU 2020 Strategy.

Euroregion Baltic welcomes the initiative taken by the European Commission to design the EU 2020 Strategy as the successor to the current Lisbon Strategy, with a vision to achieve a sustainable social market economy, a smarter and greener economy.

Euroregion Baltic fully agrees the proposed key priorities of basing growth on knowledge, empowering people in inclusive societies and greener economy constitute good foundations for the EU to make a full recovery from the current economic crisis as well as help to prevent a similar one in future. Nevertheless, it should be emphasised that this is not only the crisis that should lie at the roots of the Strategy but the profound conviction of the need to strengthen the effectiveness of the European economy.

Surprisingly though, the specific priorities are very similar to the 24 priority areas listed in the integrated guidelines for the EU Growth & Jobs Strategy from 2005. This does not indicate a specific new or ambitious orientation of the strategy, though we do appreciate the more concretely underlined need to combat poverty and social exclusion, to prevent youth from leaving school too early, to take advantage of the potential in the creative industries as well as the need to develop smart, upgraded transport and energy infrastructures.

Euroregion Baltic partners propose that the Commission includes specific priorities aiming at improving transport accessibility to peripheral and maritime areas, as well as specific priorities linking the agriculture and rural areas more closely to the development of a greener economy, which seems rather obvious. In addition, we would like to observe that a proper linkage of transport and energy should make a significant impact increasing the competitiveness of the EU. Therefore, projects of this kind should be considered with appropriate attention.

Euroregion Baltic argues that the EU Cohesion Policy should be retained as one of the EU's core priorities. This objective co-funds projects in the fields of innovation, entrepreneurship, environmental protection and human resources thus being very much in line with the proposed priorities of the EU 2020 Strategy.

Euroregion Baltic would also like to stress the importance of the principles of territorial cohesion and sub-national subsidiarity, enshrined in the Treaty of Lisbon which has come into force. EU 2020 Strategy should accommodate these principles accordingly. The new macro-regional strategies such as the EU Baltic Sea Strategy should be considered as one of the key elements in the implementation, and the role of the regional and local

authorities should be more clear, as expressed on 6th October 2009 by Commissioner Mr Pawel Samecki¹

Euroregion Baltic believes that the involvement of regional and local authorities in policy implementation and a bottom up approach, both in the delivery of the Strategy and in its development are vital to safeguard ownership and governance among all the Strategy stakeholders. The Cohesion Policy principle of partnership would be the ideal partnership approach in the implementation of the EU 2020. To our disappointment the role of regional and local levels as implementers of the proposed goals and actions is not clearly defined in the document. We strongly believe it to be true that, as the Lisbon Treaty points out, a more open, effective and democratic EU could only be reached if the regional and local dimension is considered.

Euroregion Baltic fully supports the proposal to achieve clearer governance and a more effective implementation of the strategy. We propose a major reform in order to align the EU funds and programmes, as several existing funds and programmes at present overlap each other. In particular, we propose that Community programmes such as the Competitiveness & Innovation Programme (CIP), the PROGRESS programme and parts of the rural development, fishing development, LIFE, lifelong learning and research programmes be integrated with the structural fund programmes, and thus a much more coherent and coordinated approach is adopted to implement the EU 2020 strategy with its economic, social and environmental dimensions, which correspond to the Cohesion Policy objectives. This process will also improve transparency and not at least ensure a genuine partnership approach including both the elaboration, implementation and evaluation stages.

Euroregion Baltic considers it extremely important that cross-border co-operation should be highlighted throughout the Strategy, and as a key element in the goal of building a European system of flexicurity where it will be of benefit between schools and enterprises, as well as between national employment services.

Euroregion Baltic would like to see an information and communication plan accompanying the EU 2020 Strategy with the view of making it more visible and more accessible to a larger number of people within the European Union.

Euroregion Baltic would also like to note the fact that public consultation of the EU 2020 Strategy should have started earlier. Consultations over the holiday period will most certainly not have allowed sufficient and efficient process.

Jacek Protas

President of Euroregion Baltic

¹ "The European Commission regards the association of local and regional authorities in all aspects of the new (2020) strategy, from its elaboration to its implementation, as a key to its successes." (Reference: Speech at the Open Days Workshop 06A13: Presentation of the outcome of the consultation of European regions and cities on a new Lisbon Strategy after 2010)



Joint political statement of Euroregion Baltic Council regarding the ongoing revision of the TEN transport corridors in Europe

On 5th March 2010 the Council of Euroregion Baltic unanimously adopted this political statement with reference to the ongoing revision of the TEN transport corridors in Europe. Euroregion Baltic (ERB) was established in February 1998 and is a politically solid and well-anchored cooperation in the south-east of the Baltic Sea region, consisting of eight regions of Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Sweden. It was the first Euroregion to have formally included a partner from the Russian Federation. Since its early days ERB has been pursuing the goals of improving life conditions for its inhabitants, promoting bonds and contacts among local communities, and providing measures for a more sustainable development within the region. Comprising the regions from both old and new EU Member States, and the Russian Kaliningrad Oblast, ERB constitutes the operational network of substantial and effective links across the borders, facilitating the promotion of political dialogue and reform, as well as sustainable, economic, social and environmental development, and thus strengthening local democracy and fostering people-to-people contacts between civil societies. The co-operation actively involves both local and regional authorities, private and public sectors, and NGOs. Within the framework of the INTERREG III B BSR financed Seagull Project, in 2005 ERB partners elaborated a long-term development strategy based on four strategic priorities, including economic and social development, implementation of the EU policies regarding environmental protection and promotion of renewable energy sources, as well as improving the infrastructures in order to provide better access to the Trans European transport networks, all corresponding with the revised Lisbon Strategy and the development of Four Common Spaces between the European Union and Russia.

The Directorate-General for transport and Energy (DG TREN) of the EU Commission invited stakeholders from all over Europe to give their comments on the Green paper on the TEN-T policy review until the 30th of April 2009. The Commission has announced that they will send out a message on the strategy for the future TEN-T policy first quarter 2010.

With regards to this and to the process of the ongoing revision of the TEN transport corridors in Europe the Council of Euroregion Baltic would like to take political actions in order to highlight new facts (that were not known at the time for commenting the Green Paper) that should be considered within the review of the TEN-T policy.

Since 30th April 2009 several key conditions have changed and ERB would highlight these new facts to the Commission and the national authorities concerned. All said herein is in accordance with the Euroregion Baltic Joint Development Program.

Upgrading the TEN-T structure will mean that the main transport infrastructure in Euroregion Baltic will be able to add considerable value to the development of a sustainable European transport system in the Baltic Sea and Europe. TEN-T ports in the ERB region - Karlshamn, Karlskrona, Oskarshamn, Bornholm, Klaipeda, Gdansk and Gdynia, as well as the ports of Baltijsk / Kaliningrad in the Kaliningrad region (RU) have a central role in linking the main TEN corridors on both sides of the Baltic countries, the Nordic Triangle, and Via / Rail Baltica.

Within the ERB area two Motorways of the Sea projects have recently been approved. This means that the two links Karlshamn – Klaipeda and Karlskrona– Gdynia are envisaged as high priority links within the TEN-T network. However both the Swedish ports, as well as Klaipeda and Gdynia have missing links with the priority corridors in the TEN-T network (Nordic Triangle, Rail Baltica and Railway/Road axis no.23 and 25).

From a European point of view it is of utmost importance that Euroregion Baltic area will be a fully integrated part in the European multimodal transport network. In consequence of the approval of the new Motorways of the Sea projects, the Council of Euroregion Baltic strongly supports the upgrading of following transport corridors:

- E22 as part of the TEN-T system although not in the category A. Referring to the fact that the E22 encompasses 3 Swedish category A TEN-T ports (Karlshamn, Karlskrona, Oskarshamn) with direct links to the Nordic Triangle and the Via/Rail Baltica, E22 is accordingly a transport route of strategic importance which should be upgraded in the TEN-T system;
- Baltic Link railway/road axis from Gothenburg to Karlskrona in Sweden and from Gdynia to Warszawa in Poland must be included in the prioritised TEN-T network; in other words, connection to the Nordic Triangle no. 12 in Sweden and railway/road axis no. 23 and 25 in Poland;
- East West Transport Corridor from Denmark to Vilnius via Karlshamn / Karlskrona and Klaipeda and Baltijsk / Kaliningrad must be included in the prioritised TEN-T network, in other words connection to the Nordic Triangle and Rail Baltica.
- Northern Corridor (so-called Coastal Corridor) must be included in the prioritised TEN-T network. It integrates the South coast of the Baltic Sea from Germany via Szczecin, Gdańsk, Olsztyn and Ełk to Lithuania (encompassing roads as well as complementary railways) and constitutes an important missing link of the area to Rail Baltica.

In addition:

Apart from the above, but well in accordance with the Euroregion Baltic Joint Development Program, the Council of Euroregion Baltic would like to take this opportunity to still argue for and give support to the upgrading of the transport routes described below.

The railway connection: Klaipeda port - Siaulai must be linked to the priority project no. 27 in order to secure its accession to the Baltic Sea.

The island of Bornholm should be connected to the Northern Corridor, which will then create a transport connection from the northern Poland via Bornholm to Ystad / Skåne Region and thus the Öresund Region.

Another ongoing initiative in the area that remains of interest is the Baltic Tangent transport infrastructure network connecting Jönköping / Nässjö in the Nordic link via Oskarshamn - Ventspils to Riga with the link to Moscow. The initiative involves close cooperation of the TEN-T ports in Oskarshamn and Ventspils with the dry ports of the Nordic triangle, respectively Rail Baltica. The initiative is developing a coherent east west link between the two main TEN corridors with direct rail/road connections to Moscow.

Summary:

In line with the above, the Council of Euroregion Baltic strongly supports the upgrading of the connections between the Swedish ports of Karlshamn and Karlskrona to the Nordic Triangle, and the connection between the Lithuania port of Klaipeda to Rail Baltica. In consequence, these corridors should also include the attention of European Road 22 (E22) in its entire Swedish alignment and the Northern Corridor via Gdańsk to Lithuania. Furthermore, Euroregion Baltic will highlight the importance of the Polish routes from the ports of Gdynia / Gdansk down to Brno / Bratislava – Vienna, Priority Project no. 23 and 25.

Jacek Protas

President of Euroregion Baltic

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. Protas', written over the typed name and title.



STATEMENT BY THE EUROREGION BALTIC ON THE TEN-T REVISION



0 50 100 200km

2009 FINANACIAL RESULTS

INCOME:

Lp	Item	Planned for 2009: I-XII in EUR	Planned for 2009: I-XII in PLN: 1 EUR = 4.0 PLN	Actual as of 31.12.2009 in PLN
1	Result as of 01.01.2009	-2 000,00 €	-8 000,00 PLN	-7 736,51 PLN
2	Region Blekinge	6 900,00 €	27 600,00 PLN	29 956,35 PLN
-	membership fee	6 900,00 €	27 600,00 PLN	29 956,35 PLN
-	contribution to projects	0,00 €	0,00 PLN	0,00 PLN
3	Regionförbundet Södra Småland	6 900,00 €	27 600,00 PLN	31 735,17 PLN
	membership fee	6 900,00 €	27 600,00 PLN	31 735,17 PLN
	contribution to projects	0,00 €	0,00 PLN	0,00 PLN
4	Regionförbundet i Kalmar Län	6 900,00 €	27 600,00 PLN	31 824,87 PLN
	membership fee	6 900,00 €	27 600,00 PLN	31 824,87 PLN
	contribution to projects	0,00 €	0,00 PLN	0,00 PLN
5	Bornholm	6 900,00 €	27 600,00 PLN	31 088,64 PLN
-	membership fee	6 900,00 €	27 600,00 PLN	31 088,64 PLN
	contribution to projects	0,00 €	0,00 PLN	0,00 PLN
6	Pomorski Urząd Marszałkowski	3 450,00 €	13 800,00 PLN	13 800,00 PLN
	membership fee	3 450,00 €	13 800,00 PLN	13 800,00 PLN
	contribution to projects	0,00 €	0,00 PLN	0,00 PLN
7	Warmińsko-Mazurski Urząd Marszałkowski	3 450,00 €	13 800,00 PLN	13 800,00 PLN
	membership fee	3 450,00 €	13 800,00 PLN	13 800,00 PLN
	contribution to projects	0,00 €	0,00 PLN	0,00 PLN
8	Lithuania	2 300,00 €	9 200,00 PLN	10 369,09 PLN
-	membership fee	2 300,00 €	9 200,00 PLN	10 369,09 PLN
-	contribution to projects	0,00 €	0,00 PLN	0,00 PLN
9	Russia	2 300,00 €	9 200,00 PLN	9 293,38 PLN
-	membership fee	2 300,00 €	9 200,00 PLN	9 293,38 PLN
-	contribution to projects	0,00 €	0,00 PLN	0,00 PLN
10	BaltNet Refund	6 400,00 €	25 600,00 PLN	0,00 PLN
11	Seagull II Tacis Refund	1 000,00 €	4 000,00 PLN	0,00 PLN
TOTAL INCOME		44 500,00 €	178 000,00 PLN	164 130,99 PLN



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